

MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

SEPTEMBER 1976

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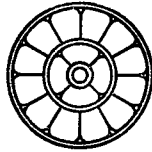
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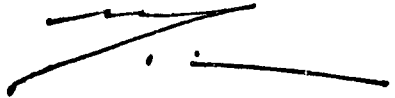


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute,

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



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MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XXVIII

No. 9

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail."

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WORDS OF THE MOTHER

**A GOOD ADVICE
TO ALL THE ASHRAMITES IN THEIR DEALING WITH VISITORS
AND FOREIGNERS
(AND EVEN AMONG THEMSELVES)**

WHEN you have nothing pleasant to say about something or somebody in the Ashram,
keep silent.

You must know that this silence is faithfulness to the Divine's work.

WORDS OF SRI AUROBINDO

It is an express rule of the Ashram not to give inner information of the Ashram life to people outside.

MONEY AND THE DIVINE

FROM A TALK OF THE MOTHER ON MAY 3, 1951

If someone has acquired a lot of money by dishonest means, could some of it be asked for the Divine?

SRI Aurobindo has answered this question. He says that money in itself is an impersonal force: the way in which you acquire money concerns you alone personally. It may do you great harm, it may harm others also, but it does not in any way change the nature of the money which is an altogether impersonal force: money has no colour, no taste, no psychological consciousness. It is a force. It is like saying that the air breathed out by a scoundrel is more tainted than that breathed out by an honest man—I don't think so. I think the result is the same. One may for reasons of a practical nature refuse money which has been stolen, but that is for altogether practical reasons, it is not because of divine reasons. This is a purely human idea. One may from a practical point of view say, "Ah! no, the way in which you have acquired this money is disgusting and so I don't want to offer it to the Divine", because one has a human consciousness. But if you take someone (let us suppose the worst) who has killed and acquired money by the murder; if all of a sudden he is seized by terrible scruples and remorse and tells himself, "I have only one thing to do with this money, give it where it can be utilised for the best, in the most impersonal way", it seems to me that this movement is preferable to utilising it for one's own satisfaction. I said that the reasons which could prevent one from receiving ill-gotten money may be reasons of a purely practical kind, but there may also be more profound reasons, of a (I do not want to say moral but) spiritual nature, from the point of view of tapasya; one may tell somebody, "No, you cannot truly acquire merit with this fortune which you have obtained in such a terrible way; what you can do is to restore it", one may feel that a restitution, for instance, will help to make more progress than simply passing the money on to any work whatever. One may see things in this way—one can't make rules. This is what I never stop telling you: it is impossible to make a rule. In every case it is different. But you must not think that the money is affected; money as a terrestrial force is not affected by the way in which it is obtained, that can in no way affect it. Money remains the same, your note remains the same, your piece of gold remains the same, and as it carries its force, its force remains there. It harms only the person who has done wrong, that is evident. Then the question remains: in what state of mind and for what reason does your dishonest man want to pass on his money to a work he considers divine? Is it as a measure of safety, through prudence or to lay his heart at rest? Evidently this is not a very good motive and it cannot be encouraged, but if he feels a kind of repentance and regret for what he has done and the feeling that there is but one thing to do and that is precisely to deprive himself of what he has wrongly acquired and utilise it for the general good as much

as possible, then there is nothing to say against that. One cannot decide in a general way—it depends upon the instance. Only, if I understand well what you mean, if one knows that a man has acquired money by the most unnamable means, evidently it would not be good to go and *ask* him for money for some divine work, because that would be like rehabilitating his way of gaining money. One cannot ask, that is not possible. If, spontaneously, for some reason, he gives it, there is no reason to refuse it. But it is quite impossible to go and ask him for it, because it is as though one legitimised his manner of acquiring money. That makes a great difference.

And generally, in these cases, those who go and ask money from rascals use means of intimidation: they frighten them, not physically but about their future life, about what may happen to them, they give them a fright. It is not very nice. These are procedures one ought not to use.

I LOVE THEE...

I LOVE thee for the scented rumour, clinging
 To thy pure limbs, of amaranthine peaks—
 O luminous form whose every line goes singing
 The immortality which void earth seeks.

Unto my shadow-calm thy beauty's passion
 Glows like an inward-surgingspirit-force:
 Over thy body's rhythm of adoration
 My floating eyes attain eternal shores.

AMAL KIRAN

THE MOTHER ON SOME ANIMALS

EXTRACTS FROM A TALK

Q: If the inner truth, the divine presence in the psychic is so conscious in the child, it could no longer be said that a child is a little animal, could it?

WHY not? In animals there is sometimes a very intense psychic truth. Naturally, I believe that the psychic being is a little more formed, a little more conscious in a child than in an animal. But I have experimented with animals, just to know; well, I assure you that in human beings I have rarely come across some of the virtues which I have seen in animals, very simple, unpretentious virtues. As in cats, for example: I have studied cats a lot; if one knows them well they are marvellous creatures. I have known mother-cats which have sacrificed themselves entirely for their babies—people speak of maternal love with such admiration, as though it were purely a human privilege, but I have seen this love manifested by mother-cats to a degree far surpassing ordinary humanity. I have seen a mother-cat which would never touch her food until her babies had taken all they needed. I have seen another cat which stayed eight days beside her kittens, without satisfying any of her needs because she was afraid to leave them alone; and a cat which repeated more than fifty times the same movement to teach her young one how to jump from a wall on to a window, and I may add, with a care, an intelligence, a skill which many educated women do not have. And why is this?—because there was no mental intervention. It was altogether spontaneous instinct. But what is instinct?—it is the presence of the Divine in the genus of the species, and that, that is the psychic of animals; a collective, not an individual psychic.

I have seen in animals all the reactions, emotional, affective, sentimental, all the feelings of which men are so proud. The only difference is that animals cannot speak of them and write about them, so we consider them inferior beings because they cannot flood us with book on what they have felt.

*
**

Just imagine, there are plants which are vain! I am speaking of plants one grows for oneself. If one pays them compliments, by words or by feelings, if one admires them, well, they hold up their head—with vanity! It is the same with animals. I am going to tell you a short amusing story.

In Paris there is a garden called “The Garden of Plants”: there are animals there also, as well as wells. They had just received a magnificent lion. It was of course in a cage. And it was furious. There was a door in the cage behind which it could hide. And it would hide itself just when the visitors came to see it! I saw that and one day I went up to the cage and began speaking to it (animals are very sensitive

to spoken language, they really listen). I began speaking softly to my lion, I said to him, "Oh! how handsome you are, what a pity that you are hiding yourself like this, how much we would like to see you..." Well, he listened. Then, little, by little, he looked at me askance, slowly stretched his neck to see me better; later he brought out his paw and, finally, he put the tip of his nose against the bars as if saying, "At last, here's someone who understands me!"

6 January 1951

THE TRAVELLER TO THE LAND OF ETERNAL LIGHT

TRUDGING along the perilous verge of precipices
I have lost my foothold times without number.
Thrown from the craggy height of the path
I have struggled incessantly to recover my poise.

Anxious nights and troubled days
Have been the lonely companions of my soul;
They have hugged and cradled me with maternal care.

Highways and bypaths many I have left behind me,
Waylaid and raided by unfriendly forces
That have jeered at my success and cheered at my fall.

Bogged down in my own weakness
And trammelled by my shortcomings
I have sat wearily by the side of the road,
And looked in vain to the dawn for strength and the night for repose.

Destitution, despondency and lost faith
Have chased me with a persistence yet unknown.
Strange voices have I heard from all around
That sought to lure and misguide my destined journey.

But still I survive and go on and on ever forward.
I am the traveller to the land of Eternal Light.

9-6-1953

MANODHAR

A POEM OF NIRODBARAN WITH SRI AUROBINDO'S CORRECTIONS AND COMMENTS

has taken *peace seizes*

A WIDE inexpressible Peace seizes my soul: *is cacophonous.*

A Presence pervading space, inscrutable,
Pervading the spaces a profound Presence I feel
Is round me
Inscrutable, vaster than the sea, sky-still.

on *roll*

What rapturous pageants before my vision unroll!

and *and green*

The deep emerald ocean, those verdant trees,
A
The drunken horizon, white wings that soar on high
And time-greyed towers against the evening sky,
now
All vibrate with throbs of silent Bliss.

such

Alas, how rare are those bright moments—brief
they leave
Smile-flickers of the Unknown, leaving life dry,
A *like*
And barren tract as the yonder rugged cliff
ed by
Bleach(ing) in the blazing sun—a desert-cry!

O, shall (that) eternal Peace be ever mine—
Messenger unseen,
Unseen messenger angel of Love divine?

15.2.36

In substance and diction it has all the character of a fine poem—the defect is in the rhythm or lack of rhythm. You call it an anapaest poem, but the anapaests in it are not true anapaests and the rhythm has not the anapaestic swing which is indispensable. One has to take it as a stress poem or an iambic base freely variegated with amphibrachs and all other possible modulations of the iambic movement. But a true stress rhythm is absent and the licentious modulation has not the simple sweetness and ecstasy of a satisfied license. Just see,

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
 A wide in/expressi/ble Peace/ seizes/ my soul/

Pervading/ the spaces/ a profound/ Presence/ I feel
 Inscrutable, vaster than the sea/ sky/-still
 What rapturous pageants/ before/ my vision unroll!
 The deep/ emerald/ ocean,/ those verdant trees/

Can't do! So I have had to remodel a little for the sake of the rhythm only—only slightly meddling with the choice of words and not at all with the ideas and substance. It is now a true (though irregular), sonnet, iambic with occasional amphibrachs—there are three in the first line, one in the second, two in the sixth and some unobstrusive variations elsewhere. And a very fine sonnet at that.

16.2.36

Myself: Mother, one more poem. Amal was not available. I have tried to stick to the normal form, unless my scansion is wrong. I have shown the scansion. I find that in the foregoing ones my scansion was wrong. For instance, I scanned:

A wide/ inexpressible Peace/ seizes/ my soul,
 Pervading the spaces a/ profound/ Presence/ I feel
 Inscrutable, vaster than/ the sea,/ sky-still.

Sri Aurobindo: That is a mathematical scansion, not rhythmic. If you scan like that, there is no prose that cannot become verse. I have scanned in that way your prose.

Mother/ one more/ poem/ Amal/ was not/ avail/able.—

I have tried/ to stick/ to the normal form,/ unless/ my scan/sion is wrong/.

The stress in “thousand” is on the first syllable, not the second. The natural stresses are “Illú/mined by thoú/sand resplen/dent suns.” If you stress the unstressed “by” and the unstressed “and” and destress the strongly stressed “thou” in “thousand”, then no law of accent remains, you land yourself in pure license and there is no reason why you should not scan

“Illu mined by/ thousand/ resplen/dent suns”/ and make a trochaic line of it. You cannot ignore stresses in the English language.

I really cannot see how you find iambic rhythm in “Pervading the spaces a profound Presence I feel”. If there is any rhythm, it is the rhythm of free verse, not of any fixed metre.

You have to train your ear to recognise (1) the difference between the various basic rhythms iambic, trochaic, anapaestic and the various lengths pentameter etc. (2) the extent to which other feet can be admitted without upsetting the basic rhythm. These two things are indispensable.

THE TWO SMILES

A LETTER TO A WESTERN VISITOR TO INDIA

May 11, 1952

I THINK that during those few hours we met I smiled at you sufficiently to make up for all the unsmiling faces you have encountered in Delhi! And I assure you that you will find many smiling ones in various parts of India. The trouble is that mostly they are scattered, because the conditions that make for the Indian smile do not prevail in strength enough all over the country.

I should like to make a few remarks about the Indian smile and the Western smile. Of course, human beings have the same qualities everywhere and authentic happiness beams out from the same source in all places. But there are differences in disposition of qualities and also dissimilarities in stress on one quality or another. As a result it happens that the Westerner can smile with some genuineness even when inwardly sad. He lives with a certain intensity of life-force which shows out in smiles as a reflection of the sheer love of earthly existence: this love, in spite of all wounds and frustrations, retains its pleasure in the very act of breathing. No doubt, the intellect too is very prominent in the West, but it is turned more upon the active material scene than upon the secret supra-physical background of our universe: therefore, even its nihilist moods catch something of that vital pleasure and the blackest intellectual despair still remembers that sunshine and shadow make an exciting composition, that the moment as it flies is a call to chase nature's secrets and that the colourful jostle of fellow-creatures gives warmth and wonder to the senses. As long as these familiarities as well as surprises are left, one can smile.

There is nothing intrinsically wrong in drawing satisfaction from the vision of the world dynamically going on. In fact, the capacity thus to smile has in general a positive value inasmuch as the material scene does not get neglected: the material scene is very important as the basic field of the manifestation of man's potentialities. But there is the danger that too much emphasis on it for its own sake may slow down the mysterious pressure that is in man towards the bringing out in him of the more-than-human.

India's intellect is not essentially unworldly or other-worldly as people sometimes make out, but it wants to value the material scene mostly in the light of what it can find in the secret background of the physical cosmos—the occult, the mystical, the spiritual. Occasionally, preoccupation with this background takes away its feel of the reality of the material scene and then we have the illusionist attitude wearily regarding the earth as a mere dream. When, however, the Indian intellect's hunger for that background is not fed, the material scene naturally becomes the dominant reality but it is not capable of satisfying that intellect. The drama of the days, the challenge of passing beauty, the stir of bright bodies are not sufficient to bring smiles.

Further, the intellect itself is not for the Indian the acme of consciousness: he lives neither in the life-force nor in the mind so much as in a sense of "soul" to which the occult, the mystical, the spiritual are more or less directly "given" and the intellect is merely the instrument for formulating what the soul-sense perceives or intuits. So, when, as has happened with quite a number of people at present, the soul-sense gets covered up and the intellect has only the earth left to hug, the vital-physical movements, though not unpleasurable, lack the sparkle which is necessary to make smiles automatically break out even when no real happiness glows in the heart. The Indian smile, when it does make its appearance and is genuine and not just a formality or a social habit, is born of a real happiness that has its roots in the more-than-human. This smile you will discover wherever Indians live in tune with their own historic genius—wherever the national consciousness is at its truest.

True India is the life of subtle vision and inner experience to which the Divine is a concrete reality—a reality not only beyond the cosmos but also within it, permeating all things and beings and manifesting itself in a thousand different yet harmonious ways. True India, therefore, consists at present of those who feel the reawakened national soul as a face and front of some universal Goddess-Power making for a many-hued profound national vitality as well as for a grand symphonic world unity on a basis of actual inner experience of the one Self of selves. All those who intellectually and emotionally respond to this Presence in some mode or other and serve it through art, literature, philosophy, politics, social life or even common labour are also true India, though they are more open to doubts and confusions than those whose touch on this Presence is more direct. Most clearly and intensely true India are the few who make a conscious and consistent attempt to be in touch with hidden spiritual truths—and this, not through rigid rules and stereotyped disciplines, though these too have their limited uses when charged with authentic inspiration, but through a plastic spontaneous multi-aspected movement under the creative and compassionate eye of one who has realized those truths in actual experience. That is why I asked you not to miss paying a visit to the Ashram in Pondicherry and know something about Sri Aurobindo and meet the Mother. Here you have a nucleus in which the historic genius of the country is alive with a new brilliance which is directed more towards the future than towards the past and has all dynamic modernity within the Light that has been through the ages. You will see a lot of the genuine Indian smile in the Ashram—and most radiantly focused on the lips of the Mother, a smile at once of bliss and love taking you up into a luminous freedom and wideness and strength and world-rapport.

There is no need for you to be disappointed so soon with what you observe of our country. Even Delhi is perhaps not so bad as it may seem. Possibly the heat of the season has slowed down people's activities and given you the impression that the leaders of the masses are lethargic and evasive, "waiting for miracles without moving their finger". But I must admit that even where there is a fair amount of doing things, it is often doing without knowing—expenditure of physical and nervous force without proper light from the brain and proper warmth from the heart. A considerable

number of people are in a state of confusion. They don't know what sort of government they want at home, how exactly the country's life should be directed and organized and what our attitude should be in international politics. But all this ignorance, as well as every other ignorance, is part of the general ambiguity in people's minds owing to a degree of obscuration of India's true spirit. True India, however, is, as I have said, not completely submerged and is very far from being defunct. In fact, in one place it is burning with a gathered fire as never before and towards that fire all the scattered flames that are difficult at times to discern will finally be drawn and a vast new life take birth, destroying our present confusion, challenging with undeniable authority the anti-soul heresies rampant today over the globe and providing real leadership to the whole world which is so ravaged and baulked and sorrowful behind all its smiles.

AMAL KIRAN

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 June 1976)

10

“COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS”, SRI AUROBINDO’S “SUPERMIND” AND HIS VISION OF THE DIVINE LIFE, THE DEMANDS OF AN EVOLUTIONARY WORLD-VIEW, TEILHARD’S “PLEROMA”, HIS LATE CONTACT WITH SRI AUROBINDO’S THOUGHT

(b)

BEGINNING with *Sat*, Zaehner¹ states: “ ‘Being’ is the Absolute, the absolutely transcendent, but also the ‘father, giver of the seed’, as the Gita (14.4) puts it, ‘the seer, the Father’, who ‘sat on the high-priest’s throne’², ‘he who is the overseer in highest heaven’³, God transcendent, the ‘Person than whom there is nothing higher, the goal and the all-highest Way’⁴. The second aspect or ‘Person’ in its original meaning of ‘mask’ or ‘character’ is *Cit*, ‘consciousness’ or ‘thought’, the Logos or the rational principle through which all things cohere and are what they are in the context of an all-embracing unity. This is the principle of which it is written:

In him were created
All things in heaven and on earth:
everything visible and everything invisible,
Thrones, Dominations, Sovereignities, Powers—
all things were created through him and for him.
Before anything was created, he existed,
and he holds all things in unity...⁵

But this Logos... is also the eternal life by which Paul lived and which he identified with Christ, the ‘more minute than the minute’ which is yet ‘greater than the great’ who is ‘hidden in the heart’⁶ of men. Last, there is the Holy Spirit, the God who is Love⁷, the ‘seed’⁸ from which the new Adam, the spiritual All-Man was born, substantial ‘peace and joy’⁹—the *ānanda* of the Hindu Trinity. What place, then, does the Holy Spirit occupy in the total Godhead? Primarily he is the love that unites the Father to the Son, Being to the Logos. But this love is also creative, the equivalent

¹ *Evolution in Religion: A Study in Sri Aurobindo and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin* (Oxford University, Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 103-4

² *Rig-Veda*, 10.81.1. ³ *Ibid.*, 10.129.7. ⁴ *Katha Upanishad*, 3.11. ⁵ Colossians, I. 16-17.

⁶ *Katha Upanishad*, 2.20 ⁷ *Svetāśvatara Upanishad*, 3.20. ⁸ I John, 4.8. ⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.9.

⁹ Romans, 14.17.

of sexuality in the eternal world.”

Doubtless, it is possible to speak in general or popularly of Sachchidananda in terms of God the Father who is creative Will and God the Son who is the creative principle of ordering and unifying Knowledge and God the Holy Spirit who is Love uniting and creating. But, philosophically speaking, Sachchidananda is the “essence” of reality and none of these terms, which involve willing, knowing and loving, can be equated to that essence: that essence can only be defined as Existence, Consciousness (or Consciousness-Force, Chit-Tapas) and Bliss. This point emerges in an analysis by Sri Aurobindo when a disciple asks:

“You have written: ‘Beauty is an expression, a form of Ananda.’ In that case, is not Beauty itself part of the essence of the Divine, as are Ananda, Consciousness and Existence? If it is, should not one think that Love, Knowledge, Force, Light, etc., are also expressions of Sachchidananda?”

Sri Aurobindo replies:

“The word ‘expression’ means only something that is manifested by the Ananda and of which Ananda is the essence. Love and Beauty are powers of Ananda as Light and Knowledge are of Consciousness. Force is inherent in Consciousness and may be called part of the Divine Essence. Ananda is always there even when Sachchidananda takes on an impersonal aspect or appears as the sole essential Existence; but Love needs a Lover and Beloved. Beauty needs a manifestation to show itself. So in the same way Consciousness is always there, but Knowledge needs a manifestation to be active, there must be a Knower and a Known. That is why the distinction is made between Ananda which is of the essence and Beauty which is a power or expression of Ananda in manifestation. These are of course philosophical distinctions necessary for the mind to think about the world and the Divine.”¹

Thus, philosophically, both the Son and the Holy Spirit, because of their being Knowledge and Love, cannot be given counterparts in Sachchidananda. Analogously the Father too does not fall inside it. And when we read the lines just preceding the passage Zaehner has quoted—the lines which say of Christ:

He is the image of the unseen God
and the first-born of all creation²

and which mean that God the Father holds knowledge of Himself in that primal projection of His, the Son—when we read these lines and add their declaration to the one in Zaehner’s passage which says that in the Son all things in heaven and on earth were created, then we at once understand how the Father cannot have in Sachchidananda His counterpart. For, we find Sri Aurobindo³ writing: “The supreme supracosmic Sachchidananda is above all. Supermind may be described as its power of

¹ *Guidance from Sri Aurobindo — Letters to a Young Disciple*: Nagin Doshi (Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry, 1974), pp. 240-241.

² Cf. Zaehner, *Dialectical Christianity and Christian Materialism* (London, Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 90.

³ *On Yoga*, Part II, Tome One (Sri Aurobindo International University Centre Collection, Vol. VI, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1958), p. 261.

self-awareness and world-awareness, the world being known as within itself and not outside." Again, Sri Aurobindo¹ tells us: "I mean by the supramental the Truth-Consciousness... by which the Divine knows not only his own essence and being but his manifestation also." For our ends we should aver that in the Supermind Sachchidananda manifests both itself and the world. Thus not only the Son and the Holy Spirit but the Father as well belong to a plane of Sachchidananda's manifestation. But can we really put them all on the plane of its archetypal manifestation that is the Aurobindonian Supermind?

We cannot. This Supermind has a bearing very different from the Christian Trinity and even from the Vedantic Ishwara. According to Sri Aurobindo, there is in the Rigveda a vision of the Supermind and an attempt by the Rishis to reach it as an individual goal. The vision persists into the Upanishads but already the presence of what he calls Overmind is beginning to be a power and the basic urge comes to be towards "the formula of the One eternally stable and immutable" though the level of the Many-in-One and the One-in-Many is not neglected. The Gita, in its concept of Purushottama, the Supreme Being or Person, with His Para-Prakriti, His Higher Nature-Power, points towards the Supermind and lays great emphasis on work in the world through a relationship of the soul's love with the Supreme Being. But there is no direct awareness of the Supermind's specific character or special power: the Overmind's manifold grandeur of Cosmic Consciousness at its highest is in the forefront, and for all practical purposes the face of the Purushottama is haloed with it. Later Indian spirituality made no distinction between Supermind and Overmind and took the latter to be the ultimate dynamic Godhead. Sri Aurobindo says that Overmind is indeed a mighty-delegate of Supermind and it is hardly surprising that one should not look beyond it. Here too is a divine model of what is being worked out in the mental-vital-physical mould. But this model is not dynamic enough to transform that mould. That is why neither in the East nor in the West has there been the clear and effective sense of a world moving towards a divine perfection realisable in time and space themselves. A vague sense could not help being there, for the flawless and omnipotent ideality of the Supermind is involved here. But some shortcoming in the Overmind has led to the conviction that, whatever we may achieve here, the final fulfilment is in the Beyond. Wherever that conviction reigns we have the proof that the Supermind has not been truly and properly known. Supermind as God possesses the pissance to bring about in space and time a completely divine mentality, vitality and physicality as evolved instruments of a soul fully awakened and developed into manifesting on earth a supramental play of the One and the Many, whose archetypal dynamism, along with the Absolute Existence, Consciousness-Force and Bliss, constitutes the "higher hemisphere", the transcendent Reality.

The Christian Trinity—like the Vedantic Ishwara who also was later described as a Trinity of Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Shiva the Destroyer, three Divine Persons whose functions are not precisely identifiable with those of the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—the Christian Trinity, never having been invested with the specific “puissance” we have spoken of as supramental, is not a vision of Supermind. It is a vision of Overmind in one of its grandest aspects.

We say “one of the grandest” because of the ideas associated with the role of the Son in world-history: the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Millennium in which would be a Kingdom of God on earth and Christ would rule over a community of Saints living in undecaying bodies like his own, either “resurrected” or “transformed”. These ideas catch a bright shadow of the divine destiny which Supermind can bring about. No more than a shadow, however, for the new bodies would not be divine ones organically developed and thereby truly earth-fulfilling, nor would the Kingdom be anything except a golden-age interval, a sort of thousand-year resting house on way to the Beyond. And about it in general we may say what Sri Aurobindo¹ has said in a letter about a similar dream of Indian religion: “The Idea of a temporary kingdom of heaven on earth is contained in the Puranas and conceived by some Vaishnava saints and poets; but it is a devotional idea, no philosophical base is given for the expectation.”

Even with regard to the state of consciousness to which Christianity aspires in its millenarian hope Sri Aurobindo has some pertinent remarks in another letter. He finds there no exceeding of what Indian psychology terms *gunas*, the three modes or qualities of Nature: *tamas*, inertia and obscurity—*rajas*, energy and desire—*sattva*, order and enlightened thought. He finds also an exposure still to the play of dualities—sin and virtue, attraction and repulsion, pain and pleasure, etc.—because what is aimed at is still an enrichment and enlargement of the mere human person, the mental “I” or ego limited by life-force and body. Nor does he find even in the extreme advancement possible within such a formula a key to a collective stability. Sri Aurobindo’s comment² runs:

“There is no connection between the Christian conception [of the Kingdom of Heaven] and the idea of the supramental descent. The Christian conception supposes a state of things brought about by religious emotion and moral purification; but these things are no more capable of changing the world, whatever value they may have for the individual, than mental idealism or any other power yet called upon for the purpose. The Christian proposes to substitute the *sattwic* religious ego for the *rajasic* and *tamasic* ego, but although this can be done as an individual achievement, it has never succeeded and will never succeed in accomplishing itself in the mass. It has no higher spiritual or psychological knowledge behind it and ignores the foundation of human character and the source of the difficulty—the duality of mind, life and body. Unless there is a descent of a new Power of Consciousness, not subject to the dualities but still dynamic which will provide a new foundation and a lifting of the centre of consciousness above the mind, the Kingdom of God on earth can only be an ideal, not a fact realised in the general earth-consciousness and earth-life.”

While we are about the Christian Trinity, it may be of interest to note what Sri

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 89. ² *Ibid.*, pp. 142-3.

Aurobindo took it to signify. In his own spiritual system the Divine has three aspects for us: "1. It is the Cosmic Self and Spirit that is in and behind all things and beings, from which and in which all is manifested in the universe—although it is now a manifestation in the Ignorance. 2. It is the Spirit, the Master of our own being within us whom we have to serve and learn to express his will in all our movements so that we may grow out of the Ignorance into the Light. 3. The Divine is transcendent Being and Spirit, all bliss and light and divine knowledge and power, and towards that highest divine existence and its Light we have to rise and bring down the reality of it more and more into our consciousness and life."¹ And about this triplicity of the Divine he² declared to a somewhat critical disciple:

"The distinction between the Transcendental, the Cosmic and the Individual Divine is not my invention, nor is it native to India or to Asia—it is, on the contrary, a recognised European teaching current in the esoteric tradition of the Catholic Church where it is the authorised explanation of the Trinity,—Father, Son and Holy Ghost,—and it exists in all spiritual disciplines that recognise the omnipresence of the Divine—in Indian Vedantic experience and in Mahomedan yoga (not only the Sufi, but other schools also)—the Mahomedans even speak of not two or three but many levels of the Divine until one reaches the Supreme. As for the idea in itself, surely there is a difference between the individual, the cosmos in space and time, and something that exceeds this cosmic formula or any cosmic formula. There is a cosmic consciousness experienced by many which is quite different in its scope and action from the individual consciousness, and if there is a consciousness beyond the cosmic, infinite and essentially eternal, not merely extended in Time, that also must be different from these two. And if the Divine is or manifests Himself in these three, is it not conceivable that in aspect, in His working, He may differentiate Himself so much that we are driven, if we are not to confound all truth of experience, if we are not to limit ourselves to a mere static experience of something indefinable, to speak of a triple aspect of the Divine?

"In the practice of Yoga there is a great dynamic difference in one's way of dealing with these three possible realisations. If I realise only the Divine as that, not my personal self, which yet moves secretly all my personal being and which I can bring forward out of the veil, or if I build up the image of that Godhead in my members, it is a realisation but a limited one. If it is the Cosmic Godhead that I realise, losing in it all personal self, that is a very wide realisation, but I become a mere channel of the universal Power and there is no personal or divinely individual consummation for me. If I shoot up to the transcendental realisation only, I lose both myself and the world in the transcendental Absolute. If, on the other hand, my aim is none of these things by itself, but to realise and also to manifest the Divine in the world, bringing down for the purpose a yet unmanifested Power,—such as the supermind,—a harmonisation of all three becomes imperative. I have to bring it down, and from where shall I bring it down—since it is not yet manifested in the cosmic formula—if not from the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 483. ² *Ibid.*, p. 484. *

unmanifest Transcendence, which I must reach and realise? I have to bring it into the cosmic formula and, if so, I must realise the cosmic Divine and become conscious of the cosmic self and the cosmic forces. But I have to embody it here,—otherwise it is left as an influence only and not a thing fixed in the physical world, and it is through the Divine in the individual alone that this can be done.

“These are elements in the dynamics of spiritual experience and I am obliged to admit them if a divine work has to be done.”

We have here an excellent outline of Sri Aurobindo's ultimate vision of Reality and Spirituality and, in addition, a sidelight on what he considered “esoteric” Christianity and Mohammedanism. Beatrice Bruteau, in her penetrative book on Sri Aurobindo, remarks in a footnote that she “is not aware of this interpretation as the ‘authorised explanation of the Trinity’ by the Catholic Church”.¹ On the face of it, it seems impossible that the Catholic Church, even in its esoteric moods, should countenance a Cosmic Divine in the same sense as the Vedanta, though some Catholic mystics like Meister Eckhart might imply it in certain of their pronouncements. But the Aurobindonian view of the Trinity catches the truth of Teilhardism as we have sought to free it from Teilhard's own ambivalences and his co-religionist expositors' covering up of his “hyper-Catholicism”. Sri Aurobindo, by referring to “spiritual disciplines that recognise the omnipresence of the Divine” and by identifying the Son with the Cosmic Divine, discloses the inmost sense of Teilhard's Cosmic Christ and lets a piercing light fall on Teilhard's attraction to pantheism through what, in a letter to Père Auguste Valensin, he calls “the urgency to venerate an omnipresence”². It is by arriving at the Aurobindonian view of the Trinity that Teilhardian Christianity can come nearest to being the spirituality of the future. What, of course, would still keep it at some distance is the lack in it of the intuition which would combine Evolutionism with the sense of the earth-fulfilling Supermind pressing from its free status above and pushing from its “involved” condition below.

(To be continued)

K. D. SETHNA

¹ *Worthy is the World: The Hindu Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo* (Teaneck, N J. Fairleigh Dickinson University, 1972), p. 259.

² Emile Rideau, *Teilhard de Chardin: A Guide to His Thought* (Collins, London, 1967), p. 292. Letter of 8 August 1919 in *The Making of a Mind*.

SOUND FROM SILENCE

TWO POEMS

I

LORD, artist of wonder,
Where is your music inexplicable?
I hear just the body's beat
Pound the ground.
Ochre fantasies arouse
The memory of crystal syllables
Dripping down
From peaks of frozen truth
Seduced by the heart's urgent fire.
But I find on my page
the fantasies of my mind
and my ego's desire.

2

Orchestra of light
Saturates with silent smile the cells,
woos the orchid bud within
to release its precious perfumed sound.

Love's companion consciousness
poised yet pervading all
Austere in electric whiteness
Yet familiar and warm.

Weighed with an ether luminous
lids slide close
to give voice to the inner gold.

MICHELE

TWO ESSAYS BY A GIRL OF 15

If I were the Mother's Chair

If only God would ask me for a wish, I would just ask Him to make me the living chair of the Mother.

Oh! then what joy it would be to be always with Her! Leaving this world of falsehood, darkness, attachments and desires, I would be inhaling her wonderful atmosphere. She would sit on me and do Her work; and would play the piano. Oh! I would simply hold Her and be one with Her, in Her heavenly music. She would treat me as a living being: I would talk to Her and listen to Her sweet talks. At night I would observe Her sleeping and She would take me with Her to Her spiritual world in dreams. The night would be silent and peaceful, birds twittering at times; flowers dreaming in their wonderland and I would be sitting silently beside Her, gazing at Her splendidly illumined face.

Someone in the morning would undress me, clean me and again dress me up in bright soft cushions and clean clothes. I would be surrounded with elegant cheerful blooming roses, whose strong perfume would pervade the whole room. The Mother, dressed in Her simple handwoven shining gown and snow-white socks, would come and sit on me. She would close Her brown eyes and go into a trance, and I too would follow Her quietly. After some time She would start Her daily work of interviewing people and I would be the only witness listening to all the interesting stories being recounted to Her.

It would be a great joy and a golden opportunity for me to hold Her forever.
How I long for this wish to be fulfilled!
If God could only grant it!

A Dream

It was Thursday, and I was exhausted after the group, for it was our athletics day. After my dinner, I read one of the Mother's books; then I fell asleep.

Suddenly I found myself soaring up and up; soon I landed on a mystical world. The atmosphere was splendid, and there was a pure and unbroken silence all over. A golden light was pouring out from an invisible pot.

I felt that my feet were not touching the ground but a golden velvet carpet which was spread all over the place. Each and every ray that came from the invisible pot above carried Truth. The rays were brilliant near their source, but as they came down the brilliancy diminished. There was a constant presence of God all around.

I looked, but there was no sign of a human being; instead, there were a few subtle beings. They had a unique smile of supreme joy and satisfaction on their faces. I was overwhelmed by their beauty and by their behaviour. They did not talk to one

another with the mouth, but from consciousness to consciousness and the work was done. They made communication by feelings. What a wonderful life!

Suddenly I felt as if the lower nature's desires, attachments, falsehood and heap of darkness had been snatched out of me; and I was transformed into some spiritual light, love and sincerity. The Divine Consciousness was being poured into me. Soon I became one of those heavenly beings.

Alas! what is this? I was in my cosy bed with the Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's photos in front, smiling mysteriously at me.

And can you guess what I saw in their bright eyes? I saw a golden flame of light vanishing in them. I was extremely sorry to quit that wonderful world, and I shed a few silent tears.

Oh! Lord when shall I again visit the world of Truth and Light?

UMA JOSHI

MEMENTO MORI

BENEATH this robe of radiant flesh
Lies bitter bone
Kin to the wood,
Brother of stone;
And when this shining flesh must die
The bone within dark earth will lie.

Within the bone, there lies a dream,
And underneath this cloak of earth
The bones of yearning rock
Lie dreaming of a truer birth.

Beneath this skin of mortal fact
The core of all created things
Already burns with perfect Light
And rock and bone and flesh all lie
Bathed in a glory that can never die.

THREE QUESTIONS

A SHORT STORY

It was the period of Kings, Nawabs, Rajas and Maharajas. Kunwar Dil Bahadur Singh was the reigning king of Magadha. His Majesty was renowned for his dynamic spirit and always kept his State in a festive, lively and jubilant mood through multifarious activities carried on throughout the year.

Naturally the King had gathered round him in his Darbar a dazzling galaxy of persons possessing extraordinary and specialised qualities. There were Musicians, Dancers, Artists and Artisans, Humorists, Actors, Mono-actors, Athletes and Players, Magicians and Jugglers, Acrobates, Playwrites, Story-tellers, Astrologers, Palmists, Diviners, Scientists, Doctors, Engineers, Architects, Educationists—Wise Men all talented or geniuses.

These people were provided with every sort of living comfort and facility according to their nature, status and needs and they were always respected and kept happy.

To this court of the King of Magadha, once came a person, handed his credentials and claimed to be a wise man and a person of God-realisation. He introduced himself as "Satya Chaitanya Giri" from Prabhat Giri, a hallowed name in those times, Satya Chaitanya had a charming personality and serene face. The King was much impressed and so he accepted him as a Darbari.

As months and years rolled by, Satya Chaitanya Giri began to live a luxurious and comfortable life, feeling no responsibility and having no work to do whatsoever; perhaps the King also forgot about him and never called him to the Darbar.

But other courtiers and Darbaris had to be very active and work hard in their own professional fields to keep themselves fit, perfect and in practice display since on any day and on any occasion anyone could be called by the King to show his talents and give a performance before Royalty.

In the course of time all Darbaries felt very jealous of Satya Chaitanya Giri. So one day they met together and sent a representation to the King as to why such a useless and lethargic person was being maintained and allowed to continue in the Darbar, a person who never worked and was simply a drone, enjoying free luxuries of life. In the representation they also said that he was setting an unhealthy example and thus creating a very bad precedent atmosphere for others.

The King realised that there was perhaps some truth in their representation and thought that such a person should not be allowed to continue in a living Darbar like his. So one day he called Satya Chaitanya Giri and asked him, "You will remember when you came to me and presented your credentials and professed to be a wise man, but since then you have never come forward and proved to be the wise man you claimed to be nor acted upon your words.

"Now today I ask you three questions. You must give answers which would have

to satisfy me for you to be allowed to continue staying in the Darbar; otherwise you will be charged for cheating, and punished. The punishment for cheating, as you know, is the gallows!"

The questions the King asked were:

1. Where does God live and what is His bungalow like?
2. Which side does He face and look—East, West, North or South?
3. What does He do? And what is His occupation?

Satya Chaitanya Giri was thoroughly shaken, felt confused and bewildered. He prayed to be granted a fortnight's time to think and prepare himself. His prayer was granted by the King.

Satya Chaitanya now started his great search. But how and from where could the answers come? He consulted the numerous holy books and all the scriptures he knew but could never find anything good enough to answer the king's questions. And day by day he became weak owing to constant anxiety, worry and fear and waiting for the day of doom, the gallows! All appetite left him and he began to shun food and so grew thinner and thinner.

But this wise man had a devoted, faithful and wise servant, Jagannath by name. This servant was anxiously watching the miserable condition of his master and felt very much concerned. One day he took courage to ask his master the reason for his worries. The master could not say anything as there was nothing tangible which could be conveyed to his mere servant. But Jagannath insisted upon knowing everything.

Jagannath was adamant and pleaded with his master to appear before the Darbar in place of his great wise master. But how could this be agreed to by the King, who wanted to test the wise man himself and not the servant? Ultimately Satya Chaitanya was persuaded to yield to the entreaty of his servant, and since he himself had found no answers at all the ultimate end was as good as known. Jagannath also had assured his master that he would see that the King would not be angry for representing the master.

Dawned the appointed day for audience with the King. At the auspicious hour of high noon Jagannath presented himself in the Darbar and explained how his master was in deep Samadhi and it was but seemly not to disturb the trance and therefore he himself had come to answer the three questions on behalf of his master.

The King was taken aback for a moment. So was the entire galaxy of wise and great men in the Darbar. The Darbar was fully packed and crowded, so great had been the excitement. That Satya Chaitanya not only absented himself but his illiterate servant had come to answer the King was a surprise and shock to all. All now watched the proceedings with utter silence.

However, because of the Divine Will, or whatever you think, the King accepted the situation and allowed the servant to answer the great philosophical questions now to be put to him by the King himself.

The servant Jagannath very humbly, sweetly and firmly said, "My Lord, you are

the King and you want to know about God and Divinity. So naturally your position is of an inquirer and seeker whilst my position at the present moment is that of a wise man and Guru, whom you would be asking these questions. As such you have naturally to bow and come down to the place for a questioner and instead put me in the higher seat—the throne, on which you are seated. That would be most proper and only then shall I be able to answer your questions fully well.”

The King felt insulted and uneasy but at the same time realised that there was some wisdom, reasonableness and truth in the man’s approach and so he agreed. He came down from his throne and asked his courtiers to escort Jagannath on to the dias and make him sit on the throne, while he himself stood just in front.

The whole audience was wonderstruck and alarmed at the amazing scene, all stood dumb and still, waiting for the next enigmatic moment.

Now the King started asking questions one by one, “Where does God live?”

Jagannath the servant in the position of the wise man sitting on the King’s throne looked at the hundreds of courtiers, the whole audience and then looking right and left and up and down turned towards the King and asked him with a great sense of confidence to order a bowl full of milk. When such a bowl was brought, he asked the King in a challenging tone to look at the bowl of milk and say where the butter and fat in the milk were! The King spontaneously answered: “It is in the milk itself.”

The servant, the wise man, sharply replied: “So God is also in the Universe but could not be seen as the butter and ghee could not be seen in the milk. Those who could labour hard, devote themselves and churn their souls could find God, would see Him and realise Him.” The King felt that there was wisdom and truth in the answer and so he was satisfied.

He put the second question: “Which side is God looking?” Jagannath, the wise man, now requested the King to get a candle and light it. It was immediately brought and lighted by the King. Jagannath now said: “O King, seeker of Truth, tell me, which side the flame of this candle is facing.” The King said: “All sides!” Jagannath exclaimed: “You will surely now believe that in the same way God is facing and looking on all sides.” The King was again surprised at this simple answer and yet so appealing and satisfying.

Thereafter the King asked the third question: “What does God do?”

Jagannath sprang up from the throne with a loud guffaw saying: “Have you not experienced how God made you get down from the throne and stand before the Court of Knowledge, Wisdom and Justice, and made me sit on the throne instead? This is what God does.”

The King felt in his heart that if a servant of a wise man could give such beautiful and perfect answers, what must be the height and might of his master!

The whole Darbar bowed with one heart to the King and looked at the triumph of the servant with joy and satisfaction.

The King in his magnanimity granted to Jagannath a title and since then Jagan-

nath sat along with the other wise Pandits in the Regal Darbar.

Satya Chaitanya, when he came to know all this and also received King's presents, was astonished beyond imagination at the turn his Destiny had taken—from the Gallows to Honour. He felt he had a social and moral debt to pay and it was said that from that very day Satya Chaitanya devoted every hour of his life to the service of the State, did great work for the people, and gave all he had, to the poor, weak and down-trodden. And so the State of Magadha became still more renowned—for the King and for Satya Chaitanya Giri.

Glad to say, the servant and the master—Jagannath and Satya Chaitanya—continued to stay together, in the same spirit of servant and master.

SURENDRA NATH JAUHAR

MIRACLES OF FALLING

BOBBY Hall, the young American sky-diver who recently jumped from a plane 3,300 ft. up, is still alive, though the parachute failed to open.

Even more remarkable was the escape of Sergeant Nicco Alkemade, an RAS rear gunner, who fell from his plane without a parachute in 1944. He plunged 18,000 ft., and struggled to his feet unhurt. He had landed on a 4 ft. deep pile of snow in Westphalia, Germany.

World War I produced an escape so incredible that no one would believe it if it occurred in action. During an air-attack on the German lines in 1918, an observer, J.H. Hedley, was thrown out of his plane at 15,000 ft. as it went into a dive. He fell several hundred feet in direct line with his aircraft and landed on its tail. The pilot levelled out and brought Hedley safely from a height of 10,000 ft.

One of the strangest escapes after falling into the sea was reported off the Coast of Nicaragua, Central America, in 1963. A young Korean deck-hand slipped from a tanker on to a passing turtle and managed to cling to its shell. The creature supported him for 15 hours until they were sighted by a Swedish freighter and he was hauled aboard.

Equally fortunate was Charles Arter, a Yorkshire miner, who toppled down a 1,550 ft. deep shaft. After falling some distance he landed on the lift cage that was taking miners to the bottom. He rode the remainder of the drop and climbed off the cage uninjured.

The religious-minded would attribute all these events to God's intervention. In that case what may be called a negative miracle, which we may attribute not to God but to the Devil, happened to John McAdoo, an American steeplejack, who was too sure-footed ever to fall from a great height but who died when he fell 18 inches out of bed a few years ago, hit his head on a radiator and died from a brain haemorrhage.

DIALOGUES

(Continued from the issue of August 15, 1976)

Synopsis:

(The journeying soul as Oshichi, nurse to the Japanese feudal princess, Fumiko, passes through the harrowing experience of the military defeat of her lord, the princess's father. She sees the princess killed before her eyes and the castle ransacked and set on fire. But she herself miraculously manages to walk away from the scene of devastation unmolested.)

Chapter IX

LIKE a mad woman, Oshichi rambled on, off the trodden path that led from the flaming castle, and in amongst the great pines, seeing nothing, feeling nothing but the totality of an immense, all-encompassing shock. It encircled her like a grey universe of near-unconsciousness, until she fell upon the soft bed of pine needles on which she found herself and dropped into a deep, protracted swoon. Seemingly ages later she came to.... But why had she not died, what was the need to return to this aching, time-worn body? Why had the goddess brought her back to a life where she no longer had the slightest function, nor home, nor food, nor work or thought or love?

She gazed up into the intercrossing branches of the pines. Through the chinks she could see the sky dotted with puffs of scudding clouds. A bird trilled with a few notes of an all-but-supernatural brilliance, another answered. And from somewhere a secret voice said to her:

"I am still here. Isn't it beautiful? Isn't everything still the same? Fumiko was mine too. I sent her as a message of beauty and now I have taken her back—that is all. For myself, I am still here as I always was. Let us be together then for once—just you and I."

"Just you and I.... Just you and I? But is it not too late?" Oshichi's deepest heart whispered. "Is this body not too old and not too spent to go on? Without shelter or rice, fire or water, should I too not slip away as all the others have done? My goddess, you have spared me the terror of a death by the sword, but take me now peacefully, I beg you, as I lie here on my bed of pine needles. I want to see my princess again. For anything else, it is too late. I have neither breath, nor thought, nor will to go on. Inside me all has broken. All memories of settled life, of sense and order, of correctness and harmony fly around as jagged pieces in a whirlpool of self-destruction. No, my goddess, Oshichi has gone mad, and raves only for death."

"Sleep then, my child. It is not yet time for you to awaken...Peace, little one. Fling all the broken pieces into the far silences around you. Cast the demons away as you asked Fumiko to do. Send them back to the hell out of which they arose, and

glance not even once at the horrific, receding forms.

“Away misery and wretchedness, stark fear and stunning shock. This spot, this body, this being I claim for the soft tranquillity of a re-awakening, a rebirth of spirit. Let all be sacred perfection here, all darkness flee from this soul I hold in the palm of my hand.”

When Oshichi awoke a second time it seemed that days had passed. Now a light drizzle of rain as gentle as sun-warmed spray was settling on her face. All around her the forest stirred. The trees whispered, and rags of mist snagged first one branch and then another. She felt strangely refreshed, her head had cleared and her madness seemed to have passed from her. The terror and the trauma were no longer at the immediate forefront of her consciousness—only a dullness, a deep inner resignation, a greyness that blended with the mist and the rain, and a nagging little worry as to what she would eat, for hunger was telling upon her at last.

But the great Spirit was once again at hand, and led the old woman to bushes of berries and beds of succulent wild mushrooms. The next day she gave her at dawn a shimmering, evanescent flash of peace that was no longer grey, but golden green with forest sunlight; and the lightest, faintest touch of joy as the wild wonder of her surroundings drove the nightmares in Oshichi's heart a little further into the darkness where she could no longer see them clearly. The same afternoon Oshichi gathered together enough presence of mind to build herself a shelter of fallen pine boughs propped against the great venerable trunk of a forest patriarch. There slowly, day upon day, she learnt to live again and be content. She felt the fabric of tranquillity gradually reconstruct itself in her fragile, shattered being. She learnt to trust all her little existence to the great goddess who, it seemed to her, permeated every living thing in the pine forest—every tree and fern, bush and bird and insect. She learnt to observe, and contemplate, and silently listen to the eternal cycle of events and happenings and moods of a place where no man had ever lived or interfered. She learned to smile to herself when birds' eggs hatched, and when she saw fish playing underwater in the running stream by her shelter. She learned above all to be attentive when the great mother Spirit spoke to her, particularly at dawn when the goddess communed with her the most easily.

At the approach of winter, one morning, Oshichi felt a wordless urge to walk. Hour upon hour, in her aged careful manner she picked her way through the trees, until finally at some far verge of the forest, she came upon a small monastery. Then only did she understand that the goddess had wanted her to eat through the winter, for here she would find rice when the berry bushes fell bare. In a passion of gratitude, she sank to the ground where she was standing and wept.

Two years passed, and now month by month old age crept ever deeper into Oshichi's bones. Yet each night when she slept in her pine bough shelter, the light of the great Spirit's presence would be more brilliant, more soothing, more full of delight than before. At last an evening came when Oshichi could no longer move and her goddess was the most marvellous of all.

“My darling child,” she murmured as she placed a resplendent hand on the old woman’s brow. “How happy I am with you and how beautiful you are. Come—I will give you a new dress. The one you have on is so dear to me—sweet, beloved form that has gladdened my eyes and my forest for all these many days—that I would wish it to lie here always beneath my pines and their carpet of warm, thick needles. So let us leave it here where it is safe in its wooded shelter—rest and be at peace, gentle body.

“Now come, my darling, away. Hide your face in my breast as we fly, and remember nothing ... nothing but love and brilliance and the ocean of dulcet light where all things are re-born.”

Oshichi did so without a word until she neither remembered nor knew anything but the perfect delight of being in her goddess’s arms.

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It was a long time before she re-awakened, an eternity of a dreamless tranquillity and a soul-reviving bliss, until finally she perceived that in the language of the earth life, she was alive again.

Once again, everything had changed about her. She found herself surrounded by a new and unparalleled richness. Yet though she brought no memories with her, she felt herself to be old inside, old, mellow, and strangely desireless, even strangely languid as though with some ancient inner fatigue.

Nevertheless, she could see that the world around her had been made for joy and pleasure and beauty, and that all within her reach had been created almost expressly for her benefit alone ... for her, Isabella, the young Italian noble-woman ensconced at this moment of time in her palazzo amidst the green luxury of her abundant lands stretching away to all the four corners of the horizon. Since childhood, she had been her father’s favourite at his small but sumptuous court, and as the most outward token of his love he had already had her portrait painted several times by the best artists he could attract to his northern estates. But perhaps it was because neither Leonardo da Vinci nor Michelangelo nor any of the other most renowned names of Rome or Florence ever came that way, or perhaps because the young princess’s qualities were not easily captured on canvas, that the old man had never felt truly satisfied with any of the paintings. Indeed, though the great pictures hung prominently in his private chambers, he lavished his attention not only on his daughter, the adored subject and focus of his efforts, but on every new artist that came to him, who might possibly have had the capacity to immortalize her successfully in paint or marble.

So it was that Isabella found herself now, as she revived within herself to this new human existence, draped in lustrous folds of crimson velvet. Her golden hair was caught up in strands of pearls and a net of gold thread, and her hands were heavy with jewelled rings. At all this her awakened self looked with a sense of vague surprise—from where had it all come? How was it that she—she who had been born from

nothing and nowhere—had come by it all? Then at once a cloud seemed to drift in and darken the clear openness of her inner wondering. This cloud too was familiar—she sensed that it had pursued her since her birth, though perhaps she had never been as concretely aware of it as at this moment. She had known it before merely as an indistinct fear or foreboding of nothing in particular. But now she knew. She knew with the clarity of an inner being aroused that the cloud she saw was the aura of another human being, and that that human being was her own father.

Now a page stood before her. “Your Lordship awaits the Lady Isabella in his private study,” the boy was saying. Lovely child, she thought, as she looked at him. So finely made, like a performer in some divine dance not so far devised on earth. Yet here was the dancer perfect in every detail, with no man yet born to write his music or compose his steps.

“Lady Isabella!” It was a more insistent, nagging voice this time. Ah, that one, she thought, that courtier whose name I can never remember. But what is it that they all want?

“Your Lordship, my Lady ...” She did not want to go, for the cloud within her had turned into a hand that was clutching coldly at her heart. But she had no choice; was she not, after all, the possession of this other human being, this father who had given her everything? And why should she not be his, and his alone, when he doted upon her to distraction? Regally demure, the train of her magnificent robe gliding behind her, Isabella passed down the corridors of the palace and entered her father’s private study. From his great carved chair, the prince eyed his daughter as though hypnotized.

“My beauty,” he croaked, for he had crossed his eightieth year and his voice had long since lost all tone and vibrance. “Where have you been? No, come nearer, nearer—here where I can feel you next to me. Give me your hands. . . Ah, I see you have put on the new solitaire. It suits you, but perhaps the setting is too heavy—I will discuss it with Antonio. He is a good goldsmith but his judgment is not yet formed—too young, too young. Gifted but not fully trained.

“And your hair, ah, my darling, but they have not plucked the hair-line back far enough. The brow of genius and perfection which you possess, none can appreciate it fully unless your maids can first be taught to look after it, to bring out its beauty—Paolo, I want to see them all immediately. Send them to me at once....”

Slowly, slowly as the aged voice, the wrinkled, nervous hands fussed and worried on incessantly over her person, something in Isabella fell dormant. It had been so for many years—as many years as she could remember of her short life of eighteen years. Whenever she was with her father or even near him, all at once she would cease to hear or see or feel. She would relapse instead into a sort of waking coma where somewhere deep within she abandoned herself to floating in a silent blue ether as benign as the summer sky outside her windows. Only once had she had a nightmare when she had inadvertently fallen truly asleep near midnight, the old man having kept her an hour longer than usual. She dreamt that she had died and left her body at a

distance while she herself fled from it. Suddenly, as she ran, her attention was distracted by a great flock of vultures. She saw them converge from every side and fall upon her corpse, while at the centre of the jostling, pecking huddle of birds, a scaly griffon-like creature sat, having emerged apparently out of the ground, and took her lifeless body in his appalling embrace.

She awoke gasping, but the whole scene had only been a flash, and the dream never recurred. Meanwhile, the old demented prince had noticed nothing, for he had been thoroughly engrossed discussing with the unfortunate artist the fine points of a marble bust of his daughter.

Now at last Isabella's latest protracted morning with her father came to an end, and gradually, as she drifted back to her own quarters, she started to live again, to perceive and to respond to the world around her. Yet even physical reality was not as clear to her as it used to be. Images would not flow before her vision as they used to do, they would not change smoothly as she passed her eyes from one thing to another. Instead she would see a single picture at a time—a great hall of the palace, or the countryside from the patio outside her room, or a single human face or figure like that of her father's little page—and it would remain fixed before her even if she should turn away, fixed as an impression that wanted to force itself into the consciousness, but somehow could not, and lingered.

Nor was it that she remained entirely unaware of her unnatural condition. She knew that as an outgoing human being she scarcely existed. There was neither need nor scope to exist, for the external being had already been seized upon and devoured, and, whenever it attempted to put out fresh shoots, would be devoured anew. Her own way of perceiving, arrested and fragmentary though it was, made up for everything. Despite the periods when she lived hour after hour in states of mental blankness akin to deep sleep, there would always be those moments when she would return to inhabit her own private world of beauty and quiet delight that she shared with no one. For, as in the form of Oshichi she had seen the divine goddess in all things from carp to flowers, from sunlight to breeze-shaken patterns of shadow, now she saw the same gentle presence in whatever scenes presented themselves to her—scenes that she saw as splendid coloured pictures, with lines and shapes but no coherent meaning as other human beings would have understood the word; and always, always in that same slow motion, that same delayed reaction of mind and sight. But what did it matter? The only thing she found important was this very capacity to retreat somewhere into herself where either all was nothingness, or life moved at its own unhurried understandable pace. For the frantic world that existed beyond, she abandoned all thought or care.

Even the memory of the outer world's last cruel jab she had allowed to retreat into its own corner of oblivion. It had penetrated to her during one of her rare moments of clarity when she had heard her two maids conversing at the far end of her room.

“Mad,” she had heard one say.

“Yes, yes,” the other had answered. “Now even the visitors can see at a glance that she has no wits.”

“It’s the old man who’s driven her out of her senses.”

“Of course, and she used to be such a lovely child.”

“Intelligent, we had all thought her, remember?”

“A blessing on his Lordship’s house.”

“Now just look at her, will you—staring into space for all the world like an idiot.”

“With a maniac for a father.”

That had been some time ago. Now she did not even need to listen.

(To be continued)

BINA BRAGG

WORDS AND WISDOM

I

2

DEFEAT,—victory,

Both

Are words of pride.

To a sadhak

They stink.

Where is victory,

Where is defeat,

When there is no other

To contend with?

What is wisdom?

To know

That others

Are as dear to Him

As I am dear.

To know

That others

Are as free

As I am free.

Wisdom

Is power to enjoy unhampered

Unity as well as diversity.

GIRDHARLAL

PSYCHE

A PLAY IN VERSE

(Continued from the issue of August 15, 1976)

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

Olympus

Aphrodite. Eros.

- EROS: For her it has been many years.
- APHRODITE: Yes, child.
- EROS: And now she has come to you.
- APHRODITE: Yes, now she has come.
- EROS: And not only has she agreed without complaint
To live here like a slave, though born a queen,
But all that you have asked of her is done.
First you commanded that she separate
The different food-grains in the granary—
Millet and barley and corn and lentils and wheat—
That all lay heaped together chaotically
Meticulous labour, tiresome drudgery;
But now the threshing-floor is as clear and clean
As a wind-swept plain beneath an autumn sky
Or a calm untroubled mind whose thoughts have been
All sorted neatly, each in its own place.
- APHRODITE: Ah yes, the work is done, but, child, I know
By whom it was done, I watched as she sank down
In the storeroom, overcome with helplessness,
Unable to sort out more than a meagre pile
Of millet or barley or corn or lentils or wheat,
Weeping in her despair; but then I saw
Great swarms of helpful and industrious ants
Appear, as if directed by one will;
Hundreds and thousands, wave after wave they came
And silently set to work. When she awoke
She only had to come to me and say
The work was done. At least she did not claim
That she herself had done it, as most men
In all their ignorant vanity would have done.
- EROS: But she did come and all she got from you

Was a bed of straw and a few stale crusts of bread
 And, when she woke, another, more difficult task.
 For you sent her then to shear the glittering wool
 Of the golden rams that run wild in the field,
 Butting against each other in violent sport
 And brandishing their horns and stamping their feet
 And guarding their glowing fleeces with sharp teeth:
 Beautiful, deadly creatures as hard to tame
 As the vehement uncontrollable rush of desire.
 But from that field that even the bravest men
 Refuse to enter, she, a mere girl, returned
 With both arms full of precious golden wool
 And laid it all religiously at your feet.

APHRODITE: Ah yes, she brought the wool, but child, I watched
 As she went down and how she shook in fear!
 Turning in panic, throwing the shears far away,
 Resolving to take her own life in despair.
 But while she was standing on the bank of the stream
 That flows down through the pasture, swift and deep,
 Ready to end it all, just then she heard,
 And I heard too, the whispering of the reeds,
 The low reassuring whispering of the reeds,
 Telling her how the rams grew tired at noon
 And went to rest at the far end of the field,
 In the cooling shade of the eucalyptus trees,
 And how the bushes where they had romped and played
 Were loaded down with precious golden wool.
 It was an easy task when midday came
 To go and gather all she could take away.

EROS: Then another task awaited her: to draw
 A jar of water from the source of the Styx,
 The river that flows from heaven down to hell.
 And that too she has done.

APHRODITE: Yes, child, I know.

EROS: She has just now returned.

APHRODITE: I saw her, child.

EROS: Three labours you have given her, all three
 She has accomplished, Mother, and proven herself
 An obedient child, one worthy again to receive
 The love that longs to give itself to her.
 Release her. Let her ascend. Let her come to me.

APHRODITE: Her works are done, but I am well aware

- By whom, child. Do you think I do not know
 Who missioned the ants, whose whisper was in the reeds
 And who sent the bird that filled her jar. Come, child.
- EROS: I confess my part; but you know as well as I
 That man on earth does nothing without the aid
 Of powers that are to him invisible.
 He thinks he does the labour, but all the time
 It is the gods or demons that drive his deeds.
 If I have aided her it only means
 That she is open to my influence
 And rare is the heart that can bear the touch of love.
- APHRODITE: Her heart is indeed a crystal rarity.
 I do not blame you, child, for helping her.
- EROS: Then you'll release her from her servitude?
 She can come to me? We can live together again?
- APHRODITE: Not yet, my child, one labour yet remains,
 One last small errand and then she is free.
 I want her to go to the world beneath the earth,
 And to ask a favour of Persephone.
- EROS: Persephone! But you can't send Psyche there—
 Into the pit of hell, the midnight world
 Where black-browed Pluto rules the helpless dead.
 What do you want of his infernal queen
 That you would send the one I love to her?
- APHRODITE: A little of her beauty.
- EROS: Beauty! But this world
 Is made of beauty and the air we breathe
 Is charged with the power of the all-beautiful
 And you are beauty's fountainhead and sea
 And all things beautiful belong to you.
 Why should you have to go and beg from her?
 She was fair, perhaps, but when Death ravished her,
 She was transformed, the lovely maid of spring
 Became the horror men call Hecate,
 The dreadful goddess of the triple way.
- APHRODITE: It is true that I am beauty's fountainhead
 And sovereign queen of all things beautiful;
 But this refined uplifted atmosphere
 Although immaculate is not complete.
 The beauty and bliss of heaven are absolute
 Because it is walled off from earth and hell.
 Beyond the boundary line of paradise

Those fallen worlds of ugliness and pain
 Are kept from the sunlight. Only scattered rays
 Of heaven's loveliness fall here and there.

EROS: Then why seek there for beauty?

APHRODITE: Hear me, child.

Deep, deep down, in the very heart of hell,
 The beauty earth cannot yet manifest,
 The beauty Hades tries in vain to destroy
 Exist, compressed by their resistant powers
 Into an attar of all-loveliness
 That is in the keeping of Persephone.
 I want a drop of that sublime perfume;
 For to the beauty of this paradise,
 My beauty, there must always be a lack
 Without the touch of the deadly beauty of hell.
 I will go now and inform her. Fear not, child.
 If she trusts in love and does not disobey
 The inward guidance that is always there
 She will return unharmed and dwell with you
 Forever in supreme felicity,
 If such is her soul's choice.

EROS: What other choice

Would she want to make? She longs for that alone.

APHRODITE: Of course, child. I will go now. We shall see.

SCENE TWO

A desert place

PSYCHE *alone.*

PSYCHE: All I could bear except to have no love
 And I have none. I cannot deceive my soul.
 I have no love, but I am almost glad
 To be free of love's illusions and vain dreams.
 My heart is an unlettered palimpsest,
 My force of life a virgin field that waits
 For the seed of new creation to be sown.
 But yet I have no love. The intense regret,
 The pangs of guilt since Eros has left have made
 My soul as barren as this treeless plain
 No creature calls its home. What sound is that?
 Sweet voices, like the voices I once heard
 In Eros' mansion singing their songs of love.

A SPIRIT:
(SINGING) When the fire on the altar has dwindled
 And your heart feels abandoned and forlorn,
You must wait for the flame to be rekindled;
 You must wait until love is reborn.

When the emptiness gathers around you
 With its cold contradiction of delight
And the voices of hopelessness surround you
 And the stars are engulfed in the night;

And the gloom gives a substance to sorrow
 But your eyes are unable to weep
And you turn from your troubles to the morrow
 And succumb to the seizure of sleep

And you dream you are lying with your lover
 Through the night, but awaking with the dawn,
You reach out to embrace him and discover
 To your grief that your lover is gone

And you fear that he no more will take you
 In his arms, bringing joy into your life,
But that this time will utterly forsake you
 And deny you were ever his wife;

You must wait till the sunlight returning
 Reilluminates the chamber where the fire
That without interruption has been burning
 Lifts its flame again brighter and higher.

SPIRITS: Psyche! Psyche! Psyche!

PSYCHE: Ah, my friends,

My lovely little friends, you have returned
Even to me, the most hateful of all
Women that have betrayed the one they love.

EURUS: O Psyche, Psyche, no, don't think of the past
The past that is dead and gone. Look up, the sun
The new sun of a new and glorious day
Is rising in the rose and golden east.

THERME: Psyche, today, today, today, today,
Your labours will end at last and you will hold
Your lord and lover in your arms again.

PSYCHE: Who told you this?
 THERME: The mother of Love herself.
 AUSTRALIA: Aphrodite!
 EURUS: Yes!
 THERME: And now she's going to come
 And tell it to you in person!
 AUSTRALIA: Look in the sky!
 Look in the sky! a gold and ivory car
 Drawn by a cloud of cooing snow-white doves.
 EURUS: It's Aphrodite!
 THERME: Her car is landing! Look!
 AUSTRALIA: How beautiful she is. Oh, who but she
 Could be the mother of Love?
 THERME: She's getting down!
 EURUS: She's placing her rose-white feet upon the ground!
 THERME: And where she steps bright blossoms break into bloom:
 EURUS: Yellow and red and orange and violet
 AUSTRALIA: And fill the air with wonderful fragrances.
 EURUS: Oh Aphrodite!
 THERME: Look, she's coming this way.

[Enter APHRODITE attended]
 Aphrodite!

AUSTRALIA: Reverend goddess!
 EURUS: O Mother, Come.
 Sit here.
 THERME: I'll get a cushion for your feet.
 AUSTRALIA: And I'll bring breezes from the balmy South.
 EURUS: What's wrong with Psyche?
 APHRODITE: Psyche, beloved child,
 Do not shrink back. Come to your mother's arms,
 These arms that are stretched out lovingly to give
 My blessings and my bounty and not to strike.
 Come and receive my love.
 PSYCHE: You talk of love,
 Throughout these long and anguished years of toil
 Since I first went to beg on bended knees
 For leave to see my husband I have heard
 Much from your lips of love, but have not seen
 The one I love, no, nothing have I received
 Except incessant harshly phrased commands
 To rude and thankless labour. When will it end?

How long will you stand between your son and me?
It's him I love, not you!—O Aphrodite,
Daughter of Zeus, forgive me.

APHRODITE: Peace, my child.

Much you have done these many earthly years,
These years that were to us a few brief days,
All you have done that I have asked of you
And now one single task alone remains.
Do it and he is yours. You must descend
To Pluto's palace where Persephone
Is held unwilling queen and ask of her
A little of her beauty, enough to fill
This box. She will receive you graciously
And give you what I ask for, of this be sure.
You have no cause for fear.

PSYCHE: No cause for fear!

But she is the wife of Death and Death's house lies
Beyond the waters of the Styx; they say
That those who cross that stream can never return.

APHRODITE: Pay no attention, child, to what men say.
There is no danger if your heart is pure.
Soon Zephyrus will come and will explain
All you must know and give you all you need
To go to the palace of Persephone.
If you do all he says you will return
Unharm'd from Hades and, you have my word,
Will dwell with Eros for eternity.

PSYCHE: Oh, let it be true.

APHRODITE: Come, take the box, my child.

PSYCHE: O gracious Aphrodite, with all my heart
I humbly thank you. I will prove myself
Worthy of this trust, worthy to be the wife
Of him I love.

APHRODITE: I know you will, my child.
I must depart now, for the morning star
Is fading, and our work awaits. Good-by.
My blessings will be with you. [*She turns to go*—One thing more:
Whatever should happen you must not open the box.
Do not forget.—Come, nymphs and graces, come.
The world longs for the touch of loveliness
That we alone can bring. Sweet child, good-by.

PSYCHE: Good-by.

[APHRODITE and her attendants go out.]

- EURUS: O Psyche, you have almost won the prize.
A little labour and one errand more
And you will be with Eros like before.
- THERME: And everything will be just like before—
The laughter and the kisses.
- AUSTRA: No, this time
It will be much better, hundreds of times more,
Because you'll have what you never had before:
Complete possession of the one that you adore.
You'll see him, touch him, talk to him all the time.
- EURUS: Just one more labour.
- THERME: A little journey.
- PSYCHE: Yes.
Just one more journey—to the depths of hell.
- EURUS: O Psyche, you sound so solemn.
- THERME: She sounds afraid!
- AUSTRA: O Psyche, you heard what Aphrodite said.
Just do what Zephyrus tells you and nothing bad
Can possibly happen.
- PSYCHE: But to enter hell!
No Greek has ever visited that world
While he yet lived—except for Orpheus,
That mystic singer,—but I have no harp
To charm Persephone.
(Enter ZEPHYRUS)
- ZEPHYRUS: You will need no harp.
But only what I have brought you.
- PSYCHE: Zephyrus!
- ZEPHYRUS: We meet again.
- EURUS: And after a long long time.
- PSYCHE: Oh Zephyrus, what have you brought me. Let me see.
- ZEPHYRUS: You will need little for the path leads down.
- PSYCHE: But what of the boatman Charon, he who plies
The black and winding waters of the Styx?
- ZEPHYRUS: He is a greedy slave. This gold will buy
Your passage, make him take it with his own hand.
This for the crossing and this for the return.
- PSYCHE: And what of the dog that guards the palace gate,
The huge three-headed monster Cerberus,
How will I pass him?
- ZEPHYRUS: Feed him with these, sweet cakes

- Flavoured with honey and alchemic herbs.
 Fear not; when he has eaten he will sleep.
- PSYCHE: This for the boatman, this for Cerberus;
 But is there nothing for me? no golden bough
 To bear before me, no mystic amulet
 To ward off evil?
- ZEPHYRUS: But that you already have.
 Look, Psyche, deep within your heart and see.
- PSYCHE: Within my heart, but all is darkness there,
 A shifting mass of shadowy figures.—No.
 I see a stairway and it leads down down.
 Now nothing; now again the staircase; now
 A door that opens wide. Again the stairs.
 Down down down down. Another door, but closed.
 I must get past it. Now it opens. Now
 The stairs again. Down down down down. Still dark
 But warm and close like velvet. I can see
 A tiny light, a bright pinpoint of light
 Like a tiny star alone in boundless space.
- ZEPHYRUS: Look closely at it Psyche.
- PSYCHE: Yes, I see
 A face there, like my face, but calm and wise;
 A wide untroubled brow and two calm eyes.
 So clear.
- ZEPHYRUS: Gaze, Psyche, deep into those eyes.
- PSYCHE: There is no wall of person. Down, deep down
 And I reach the bottom. Oh, a little shrine
 Just like the place where I was born and, see!
 A little new-born child how beautiful!
 And see, the star again, but golden now.
 It seems to hold the whole wide universe
 And all existence glows in that one point.
- ZEPHYRUS: It is a spark of the immortal fire
 And is itself the whole ecstatic flame,
 A boundless portion of the Infinite.
 O you who have that hidden in your heart,
 What need have you to carry golden boughs
 Or mystic amulets?
- PSYCHE: Oh, oh, the light
 Is fading. I am drawn back, swiftly back.
 What worlds are streaking by me? A long bridge.
 And now this old familiar world of forms

And things to do, so much to be done.

ZEPHYRUS:

And I

Am here with you. Come, Psyche, the time is short.
The adamant gates of hell gape open wide
Only when evening's half-light hesitates
One melancholy moment on night's verge
Before the last slow-beating wings of day
Take flight into the darkness and that place
Where hell breaks out to meet earth's atmosphere
Is far from here. We must be on our way.

PSYCHE:

But what of our friends?

ZEPHYRUS:

They must remain behind

This journey you must make alone.

PSYCHE:

Good-by,

My little ones.

SPIRITS:

Good-by, Psyche, good-by!

ZEPHYRUS:

We must not linger, Psyche.

PSYCHE:

Lead the way.

[*Turning*] O sacred spot if earth that brought to me
My first glimpse of the soul's immortal fire
Good-by!

(*To be continued*)

PETER HEEHS

CONSCIOUSNESS APPROACH TO BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

(Continued from the issue of August 15, 1976)

APPENDIX III

BUSINESS AND SPIRITUALITY

A Letter by Sri Aurobindo

I MAY say, however, that I do not regard business as something evil or tainted, any more than it is so regarded in ancient spiritual India. If I did, I would not be able to receive money from A or from those of our disciples who in Bombay trade with East Africa; nor could we then encourage them to go on with their work but would have to tell them to throw it up and attend to their spiritual progress alone. How are we to reconcile A's seeking after spiritual light and his mill? Ought I not to tell him to leave his mill to itself and to the devil and go into some Ashram to meditate? Even if I myself had had the command to do business as I had the command to do politics I would have done it without the least spiritual or moral compunction. All depends on the spirit in which a thing is done, the principles on which it is built and the use to which it is turned. I have done politics and the most violent kind of revolutionary politics, *ghoram karma*, and I have supported war and sent men to it, even though politics is not always or often a very clean occupation nor can war be called a spiritual line of action. But Krishna calls upon Arjuna to carry on war of the most terrible kind and by his example encourages men to do every kind of human work, *sarva karmani*. Do you contend that Krishna was an unspiritual man and that his advice to Arjuna was mistaken or wrong in principle? Krishna goes further and declares that a man by doing in the right way and in the right spirit the work dictated to him by his fundamental nature, temperament and capacity and according to his and its dharma can move towards the Divine. He validates the function and dharma of the Vaishya (merchant) as well as of the Brahmin (priest) and Kshatriya (warrior). It is in his view quite possible for a man to do business and make money and earn profits and yet be a spiritual man, practise Yoga, have an inner life. The Gita is constantly justifying works as a means of spiritual salvation and enjoining a Yoga of Works as well as of Bhakti and Knowledge. Krishna, however, superimposes a higher law also that work must be done without desire, without attachment to any fruit or reward, without any egoistic attitude or motive, as an offering or sacrifice to the Divine. This is the traditional Indian attitude towards these things, that all work can be done if it is done according to the Dharma and, if it is rightly done, it does not prevent the approach to the Divine or the access to spiritual knowledge and the spiritual life.

APPENDIX IV

CONSCIOUSNESS APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT

A Letter from an Industrialist

An industrialist approached us last year on some of his problems. Two of his three factories were on strike for months. During a discussion it was explained that men, machines, market, cycles of production, money, etc., would readily respond if they were not treated as material objects or items for utility but considered as centres of consciousness. One must see the external industrial situation as the extension of his inner state of consciousness expressed in outer life. The keys are really inside. The business world will lend itself to be managed from an inner poise. He tried earnestly. Life responded. Strikes were withdrawn. Trouble spots offered to leave the establishments on their own. Production commenced. Business witnessed a phenomenal expansion. Members of the staff collectively approached him for guidance in matters spiritual. Expansion is so much that to manage with that is now a problem. Here below we give an extract from his letter.

“You sent me a note in February 1973, explaining Sri Aurobindo’s line of approach to industrial management. Though I had read it earlier, I took it up for deeper thinking when I was preparing a plan to expand the cardboard production. Some of the things in the note were tried and we benefitted. For us, men were a problem. Now they are no longer so. I have found that men, though irresponsible and willing to exploit any situation, show responsibility when carefully initiated, and respond to care, love and attention. Machines and materials also respond to care, love and attention. Many instances I shall quote when I meet you next.

“Your note sent to me is a very valuable work and I would like this to be of use to managers of all industrial establishments. I would like to send this note to all my friends who are in the field.

“I studied our capacity and handicaps in terms of machinery, water supply, drying arrangements, etc., and made a fresh approach on many points with reference to your note. Men were always a big problem, a handicap and a limiting factor. Expansion means more men, and more men means more problems for me, then. Now with a new approach, I am confident of managing them.

“I am consecrating this new plan of expansion to the Divine and seek blessings.”

(Concluded)

GARRY JACOBS

EUROPE 1974

A TRAVELOGUE

(10)

AFTER Cologne we never saw a hill, not even a hillock or a mound. All around were green meadows as far as the eyes could go. A small village or a few cows broke the monotony once in a while. We were leaving Germany, and fast approaching Holland. Holland forms part of the Great European Plain which, starting from Normandy in France, includes in its sweep Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland, and then switches north-east towards Prussia and fades into the great Steppes of Russia. When the canals, the windmills and the rivulets started coming along then we knew that we had arrived in Queen Juliana's kingdom. The Queen must be very much preoccupied with her new grandchild. For about a hundred and fifty years no male child was born to the Dutch Royal family. A few years ago the Crown Princess Beatrix gave birth to a son. Queen Juliana was having a banquet that night when the telephone rang. Prince Bernard, the Queen's husband, answered the call, and came back to announce with great eclat, "Oh, boy, it's a boy." Queen Juliana is supposed to be one of the richest women in the world. This is no surprise if we remember how sturdy and resourceful the Dutch people are. They have all along fought against tremendous odds yet always come out victorious. For this they have been held in great esteem even by the greatest generals in European history. The love of freedom and undaunted courage of the Dutch people are a lesson for everyone.

Before the 15th century there was no kingdom on the map of Europe marked Holland. The rulers of the various towns and principalities of this land were vassals of the Duke of Burgandy. At the end of the 16th century this country passed into the hands of the Spanish king. Philip II of Spain was a staunch Catholic while the Dutch were mostly Protestants. Philip treated the Dutch with unheard-of cruelty and vengeance. The blood-thirsty Inquisition was ever active in Holland under Philip II. The Dutch rose in revolt against his general Alva, and the governor the Dutchess of Parma—a cruel silly woman whose actions only served to alienate the Dutch.

Fortune favoured the Dutch. Philip II, one of the richest and stupidest kings of the 16th century, spent all his fortune in fitting out the famous Armada in order to destroy England and its heretic queen the great Elizabeth. Her indomitable sea-men, Drake and Hawkins, shattered the Armada in no time. Very soon the country that in future was to be called Holland declared itself free and called itself the United States. For the first few years the ruler was called Stadtholder and not King. The Duke of Marlborough (the hero of Blenheim), whose ally the Dutch were during his wars with Louis XIV, gave the Stadtholder the title of King. Like any other kingdom Holland passed through many a vicissitude. It had started as a republic, then at one time it became a kingdom and again a republic. Napoleon made his brother Louis

king of Holland. However, by the Congress of Vienna Holland was made into a kingdom again with a king from among the old ruling family. After three Williams the last king died without a son. His daughter was Queen Wilhelmina whose daughter Juliana is the present Queen.

Throughout history the Dutch have been great sea-farers. The sea was their friend. During the 15th and 16th centuries they competed with such great powers as England, Spain and Portugal. They founded colonies in the West and the East Indies. Even on the mainland of America, Holland had a colony called New Amsterdam which later became New York. In the East Java, Bali, Sumatra and Borneo were hers. Apart from her own spice trade, Holland thrived on a very lucrative carrying trade which was the envy of all the other nations. Holland had a foothold on Indian soil too and a colony in Malaya. Cromwell stopped the carrying trade of Holland by his Navigation Act in 1651. Fate took revenge, for within forty years the Dutch had the unique honour of having their ruler installed as the king of England. James II was a Catholic and, when a son was born to him, the English invited William the Stadtholder of Holland to be their king. William III was a Protestant and the husband of Mary daughter of James II.

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“God created the world and the Dutch made Holland”: this is no hyperbole. As everyone knows vast areas of Holland are actually below sea level. The sea has been like a gold mine for the Dutch. When the Dutch wanted more land they did not engage themselves in sanguinary wars; instead they made a pact with the sea. The sea lent them more land and is still doing so. By constructing dykes and dams they have been able to reclaim and add thousands of square miles to their country. And the work is going on ceaselessly. They are pumping at a rate of 1,061,000 gallons a minute. The idea first came, they say, some 700 years ago. During these centuries 3000 square miles have been recovered. The Zuider Zee which had been a bit of a nuisance to the Dutch has been turned into a sweet-water lake. The name too has been changed and it is now called IJsselmeer, from the beautiful river IJssel that flows into it. There is a story that Frederick William I, king of Prussia and father of Frederick the Great, had a passion for tall soldiers. His army was in fact the show-piece of Europe. And his own bodyguard known as the Potsdam Guards was his darling. The tallest men in Europe were enlisted in this guard. Once some of his men when off-duty went to pray in a church. There they found an extremely tall priest preaching from the pulpit. The very next day they kidnapped the priest and brought him to the king, who forthwith enlisted the priest in his Potsdam Guards. Now once Frederick invited the ruler of Holland to a review of his troops. It was no doubt a dazzling show. When everything was over Frederick asked the Dutch ruler what he would do if such an invincible army invaded his country. He answered quietly, “We would open the dykes and the sluices.” In fact that is what the Dutch actually did when Louis XIV invaded

Holland. The sea to the Dutch meant agricultural land whenever they needed it, and an army when they required one.

When we were some twenty miles from Amsterdam we stopped at a wayside village to have tea. To our utter amazement we found that it was impossible to get out of our coach. The wind blew with such terrific velocity that our hats and umbrellas and saris and skirts simply ran away with the wind. Our hair, in spite of the lacquer, was wild in a few minutes. Margaret Mitchel must have visited Holland before writing her famous novel *Gone with the Wind*, otherwise the idea of giving her book that title would not have occurred to her. This incident, however, reminded us that we were in the land of the windmills. Unfortunately the windmills are fast disappearing in Holland. Once there were some 9000 windmills, now only about 960 remain. Even these do not operate regularly except for some 75 of them. We were disappointed to find that the colourful costumes and gull-winged lace caps have all become almost obsolete. In the cities and larger towns the girls have taken to skirts or slacks and only at wayside villages one may come across girls wearing their old native dress. The Dutch are not Dutch to us if they are not wearing their own dress and wooden shoes. As the moon itself has become profane, so has the line, "Winking and Blinking and not one night sailed in a wooden shoe". What a pity.

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Our driver took us through some twenty-five cities and townships in Europe and not once did he ask anyone the direction nor did he ever consult the map, a very remarkable thing we should say. There was, however, one and only one exception. Our rooms had been booked in an annexe of the biggest hotel in Amsterdam called Hotel Amsterdam. This building was new and our driver for once stopped to ask the whereabouts of this place. As in Rome we were given a real fête that night. In Germany the food was good and sufficient but slightly uninteresting. In Amsterdam they made it up for us. The Dutch eat well. With the long coast line and the sea so easily accessible, sea-food is plentiful in Amsterdam, and so are birds and chicken, which come from the farms that abound in Holland. And Dutch cheese is simply delicious. At dinner some fifteen kinds of preparations were laid out on the table in buffet style. They say the Dutch invariably have at a banquet thirty items on the menu. There was a Jain in our company and he was strictly vegetarian. Without knowing he helped himself to a piece of ham and cheese. When half way through he commented, "This is delicious." We were dumbfounded to see what he found so delicious. But there was nothing to be done about it. He had already eaten his ham and cheese. So we kept our mouths shut though we were shouting within. For if we had tried to enlighten him then, God knows what the result might have been. That reminds us of another incident. Throughout Italy the food was excellent. However, there was one inevitable course, the spaghetti. Those who did not fancy this stuff found it boring to have it at every meal. So when we were about to cross over to Austria someone came out with:

“Oh, the last day of Spaghetti.” But when day after day and night after night European cuisine in its very plain form appeared on the table, they wondered if after all the spaghetti was not better. In Rome on the first two nights we were given a tremendous fête, for at least twenty-five kinds of Italian preparations were laid out on the table and we were told to try all. Not only that, but we had music throughout the meal by a gentleman whose voice was really beautiful.

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The sightseeing in Amsterdam was done in a whirlwind. We were rushed through the royal palace, some of the museums and the university buildings at a breakneck speed. What can one see at such speed? “Oh, you will see a lot of Rembrandt and Van Gogh in London and in better halls,” said our escort.

The Rijksmuseum and the Rembrandt House are really worth visiting. We cruised along the canals; there are about a hundred canals and a thousand bridges in the city itself. Then we were taken out into the Ijsselmeer (the former Zuider Zee). It was a wonderful experience. We had a splendid view of the city and harbour. Finally we were taken to the diamond factory, where diamonds from all over the world are sent for cutting and polishing. We were shown the process in detail. In the show room above, about two hundred diamond rings of all shapes and sizes were shown to us. We could even buy from them if we chose. Then the assistant manager came to say that no one was to leave the room until all the boxes were examined and closed. There was a slight grumbling in our group. He apologised again and again saying that tourists came in huge numbers and if some sort of rule was not observed then some of the jewels might disappear and this would be a tremendous loss to the factory. The murmur died down and we came out as soon as the counting was over.

At night we went out for an Illumination drive. No city in Europe looks so enchanting at night. There is no dearth of electricity and the whole city and miles around it are simply flooded with light. One can drive on and on for hours without ever getting out of the enchanting place. And it seems that there is not a single window in Amsterdam that is kept dark at nightfall. It is a gala occasion in Amsterdam every night. The night cruise in Amsterdam is very different from sailing on a gondola at night on the Grand Canal in Venice. In Venice it is all dreamy and almost mystic. In Amsterdam it was carnival and an eternal fête. We have never seen so much light in our life. It reminded us of the Mother's line:

All was gold and gold and gold, a torrent of golden light
pouring down in an uninterrupted flow...

The lights were all golden.

“Dam” is a word attached to many places in Holland as “piazza” in Italy and “square” in England. It has nothing to do with the English damn, though. But we were awfully tired of sightseeing, for we were tourists and our time was short. The knees ached and the shoes pinched and seemed to get smaller and smaller. We arrived

at a place where our escort rose from his seat and said, "This is Dam Square." He did not move nor did he explain as he usually did at other times but stood there smiling. Someone took the cue and shouted, "Damn that Square". It was another occasion for hilarious laughter. We all liked Amsterdam immensely. Happy and tired we went back to our hotel and slept like logs. Next morning we were to start for Bruges.

(To be continued)

CHAUNDONA AND SANAT K. BANERJI

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S A B D A

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Supersenses: Our Potential for Parasensory Experience by Charles Panati, 274 pp. Cape. £ 4.95.

THE situation in parapsychology is a cruelly ironic one. Those involved in the research know that, while good work is being done, it is on a tiny scale, it is chronically starved of funds and its findings, such as they are, are tentative, insecure and difficult to interpret. At the same time, large fortunes are being made by authors and publishers who know how to dress up these findings to feed the public's insatiable appetite for the sensational.

Charles Panati, physicist and science reporter for *Newsweek* magazine, is not, I am happy to say, one of these parasites. He is a genuine enthusiast and, more to the point, he has done his homework. He has read widely in the field and has made personal contact with most of the leading researchers and he gives references to his sources. The result is an up-to-date survey of the parapsychological scene that is refreshingly unhackneyed. If there are still any readers who imagine that parapsychology began and ended with the guessing of Zener cards, they will get a sharp surprise. *Supersenses* illustrates well the diversification of the field during the past decade as it ramifies into sleep research, altered states of consciousness, bio-feedback, paranormal healing and much else besides. Despite being padded with anecdotal material and some unfounded speculation, it could have been the kind of readable introduction for the layman that is so badly needed.

Unfortunately, the book is marred by two fatal weaknesses: there is too much sales talk and, worse still, there is a deplorable lack of critical judgment. The sales talk begins on the jacket where we read: "The computer age began in the 1950s, the space age in the 1960s and certainly the psychic age has begun in the 1970s." The unglamorous truth is that every decade has produced its crop of psychic wonders which, by the next decade, have fizzled out and been forgotten by all but a handful of specialists. Nothing that Mr. Panati relates here suggests that the 1970s will be any different. The psychic age will commence when we have discovered how to produce reliably the phenomena we are trying to study, but that time has not yet come.

In the same vein the author tells us in his opening chapter: "Today the Soviet Union has more than twenty-five centres for the study of parasensory perception with an annual budget in excess of twenty million roubles (about twenty-one million dollars)." It is hard to know quite what is meant by "centres" but the fact is that there is no official institute for parapsychology in the Soviet Union, no journal and, as for the funding, I doubt if anyone knows how much the Russians spend on this or on anything else. Why, then, does Mr. Panati make such claims? The reference makes it clear that he is repeating what he read in *Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain*,

that chatty bestseller by two American journalists, S. Ostrander and L. Schroeder, who retail the stories they picked up in the course of their travels in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe. This mine of misinformation is cited in almost every chapter.

Again and again Mr. Panati betrays a willingness to suspend critical judgment that I am quite sure he would never allow himself when reporting other fields of science. Space allows for only one example. In 1968, Cleve Backster, an expert on lie-detector techniques, published a brief article in a now defunct parapsychological journal putting forward the astounding claim that plants could respond emotionally to such events in their vicinity as the destruction of plant or animal life or, even, to hostile thoughts on the part of the experimenter! These responses could be detected by recording changes in electrical resistance when electrodes were attached to the leaf of the plant. Although his claim was never taken very seriously by the parapsychological community it caught the public imagination and scientists all over the world were sufficiently intrigued to try replicating the experiments in their own laboratories. When fluctuations in humidity and other such variables were properly controlled, however, as at the University of Washington, or at Cornell, no effect whatever was observed. Mr. Panati chooses to ignore this and mentions only the one or two workers who did obtain effects superficially similar to those of Mr. Backster. He admits that the claim is controversial but says "to reject flatly the core philosophy of Backster's work is to deny the possibility that plants in some way interact with humans". This is nonsense. It is one thing to acknowledge the possibility that some people may exert a psychokinetic effect on plant growth (there is some quite good evidence for this that ante-dates Backster), but quite another to attribute emotions and telepathic powers to plants, which is precisely what Mr. Backster means by his "primary perception in plants". By discussing Mr. Backster's claims in the context of a chapter on telepathy Mr. Panati is contributing to this confusion.

The reader will also encounter in these pages one James Davis. Mr. Davis is credited with the amazingly successful series of experiments demonstrating ESP in rodents, using a fully automated set-up. Later he is also credited with demonstrating PK in chickens, and even in fertile eggs, which appear capable of influencing mentally an electronic randomizer controlling the switching mechanism of a lamp. In consulting the references, however, the reader may be puzzled to note that Mr. Davis's achievements are attributed to someone else, to W. J. Levy or, sometimes, W. J. Levy *et al.* Since the author has here been less than frank with his readers it is my unpleasant duty as reviewer to explain this mystery. Last summer, Dr. Levy, who had recently been appointed by J.B. Rhine as research director of the Institute for Parapsychology of Durham, North Carolina, was caught faking his data by Mr. Davis and other colleagues. He was, of course, promptly dismissed and Dr. Rhine published a statement to say that judgment should be suspended concerning the validity of all the work with which Dr. Levy had been associated at any rate until independent replications could be carried out. A year later no supporting evidence has yet been published by the institute. This scandal broke after the American edition of this

book was already out but, for the English edition, the author has simply substituted the name of Davis for that of Levy. Parapsychology is at all times a pitifully vulnerable field; it will not be served by authors who, however enthusiastic or well-meaning, relax from the highest standards of responsible reporting.

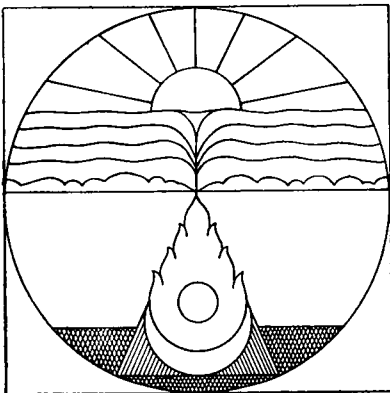
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(With acknowledgments to *Times Literary Supplement*,
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