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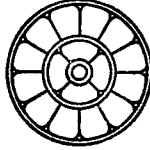
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All correspondence to be addressed to:

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

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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.

AN APPEAL TO OUR WELL-WISHERS

Mother India has again to call for financial help. Our last appeal brought a very good response and we are deeply thankful. Costs have been steadily rising in everything. Our immediate need is to stock paper for half a year. We have to pay Rs. 5,000. This will make a big gap in our resources. So we badly require donations of any amount that can be spared by our well-wishers.

The scheme of Life-Membership is still in force. If attended to, it can also help.

Advertisements too can be a good contribution. Tariff cards can be had on application.

Increase in the number of subscribers is always welcome.

We shall be grateful for help in any form, and particularly in the form of donations.

The donations will be tax-free if sent ear-marked for us through the Ashram Trust.

MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

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"Great is Truth and it shall prevail."

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MEDITATION ON AUGUST 15, 1962

A MESSAGE BY THE MOTHER

SRI Aurobindo immense and very concrete (in the subtle physical) was sitting over the whole compound during the meditation.

28-8-1962

LANGUAGE AND SRI AUROBINDO'S WRITING

A COMMENT BY THE MOTHER

ALL language is a language of ignorance. Our entire way of expressing ourselves, everything we say and the way in which we say it, is necessarily ignorance. And that is why it is so difficult to express something which is concretely true; this would require explanations which would themselves be full of falsehood, of course, or else extremely long. This is why Sri Aurobindo's sentences are sometimes very long, precisely because he strives to escape from this ignorant language.

7 July 1961

IF A WORLD WAR BREAKS OUT

A STUDENT'S QUESTION AND THE MOTHER'S ANSWER

If a world war breaks out, it may not only destroy the major portion of humanity but may even make living conditions for those who survive impossible due to the effects of the nuclear fall-out. In case the possibility of such a war is still there, will it not affect the advent of the Supramental Truth and of the New Race upon earth?

ALL these are mental speculations and once you enter the domain of mental imaginations there is no end to the problems and their solutions. But all that does not bring you one step closer to the truth.

The safest and most healthy attitude of the mind is like this one:

We have been told in a positive and definite way that the supramental creation will follow the present one, so whatever is in preparation for the future must be the circumstances needed for this advent whatever they are.... And as we are unable to foresee correctly what these circumstances are, it is better to keep silent about them.

29-I-1967

DISAGREEMENT AND ITS SOLUTION

SOME WORDS OF ADVICE BY THE MOTHER

WHenever there is a disagreement on any matter, such as a decision to be taken, or an action to be carried out, one must never remain closed up in one's own conception or point of view. On the contrary, one must make an effort to understand the other's point of view, to put oneself in his place and, instead of quarrelling or even fighting, find the solution which can reasonably satisfy both the parties; there always is one for men of goodwill.

From *The Science of Living*

SRI AUROBINDO ON THE MOTHER

In the Mother India of February 21, 1978, the Mother's Birth Centenary Issue, the series of articles entitled "Our Light and Delight" by Amal Kiran started with a letter of Sri Aurobindo's to Arabinda Basu. The quotation was made from a note taken from the transcript of a talk by Basu to the Ashram students. As Basu was in America when the article was to be published, it was not possible to check the note. The form in which it appeared has been found to be incomplete as well as partly incorrect, though the essential drift is well conveyed. Later, Nirodbaran obtained the proper version from Basu and included it in his book, The Mother—Sweetness and Light. We are now giving some passages, slightly edited, from this book, pages 203-05, in which whatever is available from that extremely important letter is fully reproduced.

SRI Aurobindo himself has in a letter summarised the Mother's role in his yoga and work. Here are extracts from that letter dictated to me and sent by him to Arabinda Basu on 17th August, 1941. Sri Aurobindo saw and approved the written version. It runs thus:

"The Mother is not a disciple of Sri Aurobindo. She has had the same realisation and experience as myself.

"The Mother's sadhana started when she was very young. When she was twelve or thirteen, every evening many teachers came to her and taught her various spiritual disciplines. Among them was a dark Asiatic figure. When we first met, she immediately recognised me as the dark Asiatic figure whom she used to see a long time ago. That she should come here and work with me for a common goal was, as it were, a divine dispensation.

"The Mother was an adept in the Buddhist yoga and the yoga of the Gita even before she came to India. Her yoga was moving towards a grand synthesis. After this, it was natural that she should come here. She has helped and is helping to give a concrete form to my yoga. This would not have been possible without her co-operation.

"One of the two great steps in this yoga is to take refuge in the Mother."

In answer to Arabinda Basu's inquiry, *à propos* this observation of Sri Aurobindo, as to what was the other great step, Sri Aurobindo said, "Aspiration of the sadhak for the divine life." Sri Aurobindo's voice appeared to stress the phrase 'divine life.'

THE COMBINATION OF NUMBERS IN DATES

A TALK WITH THE MOTHER

Mother, do the numbers 4.5.67 have an occult significance?

Occult?

(Silence)

Four, five, six, seven, it is a very rare combination, we don't often come across it. It exercises an extraordinary power over the earth-atmosphere: for example, to bring down something. Recently there was a very interesting combination: 6.6.66. Four sixes—this represents the complete square of the Creation. Six is the number which represents Creation. Four sixes—this is very rare. Such a date occurs only once in a century. Lately we had 5.5.55, and as for 7.7.77, when will that come?... It will be very long before we have this combination.

But 6.6.66 is very important. You know, the old Kabalists said that God created the world in six days, and the sixth day represents Creation—you know the others—and on the seventh day He rested—which is not true,... for on the seventh day, after completing the Creation He stretched Himself out and lay relaxed in absolute realisation in order to see His work better. It is eternal rest in an immobile and absolute realisation. This is why it has been wrongly thought that the Lord rested, but it was Self-realisation he had undertaken. The Supreme does not rest. It is a wrong notion. In truth, He withdrew into Himself for other realisations, for infinite progress. This will never end. For this He always goes forward to something new. For Him too there is something still to realise. That's how it is... it goes on.

You see, then, why four sixes are so important, for that makes the square of Creation. (*Mother draws a square on the table with her finger.*) On that day someone was born here—here, in the Ashram. It is good: he has many possibilities. It is interesting—how these dates which have an occult significance influence physical domains also. We shall see in this child.

Somebody else also had an experience on this day and, besides, it was at 6 in the evening. There is an additional 6 which makes five sixes—which has a still deeper significance.

4.5.67—what does this signify? Do you know? Manifestation, Power, Creation, Realisation. Four is manifestation, five is power, six creation and seven realisation—quite a combination! This is what you must aspire for and what you must realise. You will see what it is. It will be a great day—something will descend... something... the beginning... of the Divine.

Then there is 5.6.78—no, first there is 7.7.77, but that also—it is very far.

No, Mother, it is only eleven years from now.

But for the combination 4.5.67 we have still to wait for the day... and 5.6.78—that too is a very important occasion.

But, Mother, there is still one very important date which you have left out—21.2.78.

Oh, yes, that is my centenary. I'll be a hundred, then; yes, in '78 I'll be a hundred.

Mother, it will be very important for us.

Yes, we shall see what we can do then.... It is an event in life to be present at a hundred and look back at the hundred years of one's life.... Yes, a hundred years, it is a long time.

And 5.6.78... this also is an occasion. Above all, there is the number 8 which represents a double manifestation and a double protection. Well, we shall see what it brings us.

Reported from memory by MONA SARKAR

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A TALK WITH SRI AUROBINDO

JUNE 22, 1926

KHITISH C. DUTT: What is the relation between the inner mental, inner vital, inner physical being and the psychic being?

SRI AUROBINDO: The mental, the vital and the physical are the instruments for expression. You can say that they are formulations of the psychic being for manifestation in this earth-evolution. It is the psychic being which supports the physical, vital and mental activities here. It stands behind them. The psychic being is what the Europeans call the soul. It is the true person, the innermost being in the lower nature.

It is the direct representative of the Divine in that nature. The psychic being is generally supposed to be behind the heart. It is truly behind the emotional activity which is its surface manifestation, but ordinary emotional activity is not psychic. True psychic emotion in the nature is very deep and it is pure, what we may call pure spiritual emotion. The psychic being opens directly to the higher Truth and it is that in us which receives it here.

K. C. D: Is it the psychic being which governs man's mental, vital and physical being?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, but man is not conscious of the governance, though the psychic being is conscious of it.

There is a veil, that is why most people are not conscious of their innermost being. But in Jyotish Ghose's case I used the word "psychic" in the ordinary sense. He had broken the veil between the outer being and the mental and vital planes and opened himself to the worlds behind and he was unable to bear all that followed. There I used the word in the sense of subliminal self.

A. B. PURANI: Are not most of the activities of the psychic being in the inner mental, etc. subconscious?

SRI AUROBINDO: Everything that one is not ordinarily conscious of is subconscious to one. It means, anything that happens behind of which the surface movement has no knowledge. (You can even say that the superconscious is subconscious but, really speaking, nothing is subconscious.)

PHILLIP B. ST.-HILAIRE: What is the Supermind in relation to the psychic being?

SRI AUROBINDO: The psychic is not the Supermind. For instance, one can by breaking the veil somehow get into the psychic being but one cannot get to the Supermind like that. The psychic being opens to the higher truth but it is not that truth, it receives it. The Supermind is above, the psychic being is what is behind but not above the mind, life and body.

ANILBARAN: What is the difference between the psychic being and the spiritual being?

SRI AUROBINDO: There is no spiritual being except Sachchidananda which

is not individual. The three principles Sat, Chit-tapas and Ananda are above; mind, life and the physical body are below, and between the two groups is what I call the Supermind. You can't get to the real Sachchidananda, but you can have—as most people do who say they have realised Sat, Chit, Ananda—the experience of it in the mind or in the vital being. But you can't organise it here though you may reflect it.

The organisation of the Infinite Consciousness can only be done by the Supermind.

P. B. ST.-H: When somebody dies and reincarnates, does the soul survive and remain the same? What is meant by the Kārana Sharīra?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is not the psychic being which presides over reincarnation but the Jiva, the central being, which according to its needs gathers the materials from nature. The Kārana Sharīra generally means the supramental body.

A. B. P: In the orthodox terminology, though the Kārana Sharīra means the Vijnanamaya Kosha yet they speak of it not as a means of development but as a means of escape. To them the use of going to the Kārana Sharīra is to burn out the seed of everything that is in nature. And they believe that unless the seed is burned there one can't really get liberation.

DORAISWAMY: It is supposed to be the cause—the Kārana—of everything.

SRI AUROBINDO: That is true, because the seed of everything you see here is in the Supermind; and unless you get to the Supermind you can't really get rid of the imperfection of nature. For example, take filial love. Generally it represents something of the above but the form it takes here entirely misrepresents the higher truth. Now if you want to remove the error, you have not merely to keep it down and repress it. Then it is not really wiped off. You have to offer it up to the higher truth and when you know the Truth that is behind it then you are no longer subject to the false forms it generally takes; and so it is for everything else.

A. B. P: They generally try to get to the seed of all imperfections here and then they try to escape from this world.

SRI AUROBINDO: That was the old idea. It was based on the assumption that the Truth cannot be organised here in this world, they saw that everything here was imperfect, false and that mind failed when it tried to organise the Truth in this world. Therefore they thought that going into the Truth meant leaving life, mind and body. By an exaggeration of that same idea the world was said not only to be imperfect but to be an illusion, a maya. Coming back to life meant for them coming back to falsehood. That is what is meant by the Upanishadic image of "escaping through the doors of the sun". If you want to come back you can do so as long as you are in the rays of the sun. But as soon as you enter the body of the sun, no return is ever possible. We start from another assumption: that is, that life is false and imperfect, but that we can manifest truth and perfection here.

Reported by A. B. PURANI

OUR LIGHT AND DELIGHT

RECOLLECTIONS OF LIFE WITH THE MOTHER

(Continued from the issue of July 1978)

9

The Mother's Blessings — Soul and Body — St. Augustine and the Early Christians — A New Disciple's Birth — A Great Moment — Then and Now

LIFE with the Mother, life away from the Mother, life again with her—this briefly was my lot from the end of 1927 to the beginning of 1954. And running through that threefold movement of time was the basic theme: life in the Mother.

I say “basic” in a double sense: the support underlying all and the support not always showing itself through all the overlay. As I had appealed to the Mother never to let go her hold on me, no matter how much I might appear to deviate from the path, there was no question of her not being with me, but the possibility existed of my not being fully with her in my conscious parts. Here lies the relevance of the second meaning of “basic”. And it is pinpointed in an exchange of letters between us some thirty-six years ago in the context of a course of action on which I had launched and which she had dubbed “silly”. Referring to a communication from her, I asked: “Why have you omitted those words which mean so much to me and with which you have always ended: ‘Love and blessings’?” She replied: “It is purposely that I have omitted the words ‘love and blessings’, because I did not wish you to think that I am blessing your enterprise—I do not—just because I find it silly. So, do not be misled if I end by love and blessings. These words are for your soul of which you are not just now very conscious, and not for your exterior being.” (18-6-1942)

A similar note is struck in another statement of the Mother's: “Understand that blessings are for the best spiritual result, not necessarily according to human wishes.” The implication here is that the Mother's blessings may bring about in the exterior life even what we commonly consider misfortune. If seeming ill-luck figures in her vision as the shortest cut for the soul to evolve towards the Divine, the blessings will allow it to happen. Usually, they work for exterior good provided this good does not markedly go counter to the soul's profit. Most often the two are compatible and in many cases no special issue of a spiritual kind is involved, so that health, success, prosperity flow freely. But when blessings do not manifest themselves in a favourable outer consequence we must refrain from considering them inoperative: we must try to extract the golden honey of their grace from the core of an apparent disaster. Then the very difficulty will prove to be Sri Aurobindo crushing our ignorance with his mighty embrace.

The soul's benefit, the soul's progress are the Mother's central concern. No doubt, she does not pit the soul against the body in the life of Yoga. It is never her

belief that in order to develop spiritually we should neglect physical welfare, as though with the waxing of the soul we should expect the waning of the body. The old asceticism, the ancient mortification of the flesh, the puritanical disdain or rejection of external beauty—these have never been encouraged by her. Even fasting for the sake of chastising the body—leave aside for using it as a tool of moralistic blackmail against a supposed wrong—she did not countenance. Prolonged seclusion itself found little favour if its aim was a shying away from the challenges of outer existence. Indeed a Yoga called “Integral” could hardly subscribe to a lopsided growth of the being and would court failure if anything was deliberately done to harm the physical instrument of the evolving psyche: the final result envisaged of the Integral Yoga is a transformed, divinised body.

Yes, physical welfare is an ever-present objective for the follower of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. But it is an objective fundamentally linked to the benefit, the progress of the soul. Apart from that central concern it loses ultimate importance. Simply to save one’s skin and ensure corporeal happiness cannot, for all the acceptable common sense of it, be an imperative ideal. Otherwise no risks would be worth running for a great cause, no deadly struggles with a force like Hitlerism could be faced. And in a certain confrontation that I have observed between the psychic being and the body’s life the Mother’s procedure was unequivocal.

I recollect the time when a philosopher friend of mine lay unconscious with an attack of meningitis. A telegram came from his sister saying that only a miracle could save his life and that the Mother should be informed. The Mother very gravely received the appeal. Evidently it was a significant moment of crisis and not an ordinary phase of illness. The next day she told me: “I have put the decisive force.” I asked what that would mean and whether it would mean a saving of my friend’s life. She explained: “The decisive force should ensure that the soul’s will would win. If the soul wants to stay in the body but somehow physical conditions tend to push it out, it shall not be pushed out. If, however, the soul wants to leave the body and somehow physical conditions are holding it back, they shall not prevail. The soul knows what is right and my sending the decisive force will give it victory.” Obviously, my friend’s soul had no wish to cut short its philosophising career. For, it made him survive the crisis, thanks to the Mother’s intervention on its behalf.

I have spoken of “life in the Mother” with regard to my deep-down relation with her whether near her in the Ashram or at a distance from her in Bombay. The phrase has for me a special connotation. I shall elucidate it by recalling a brief talk with the Mother about the way I felt Sri Aurobindo’s presence. Whenever I have been at his Samadhi I have not been aware so much of him in my heart as of myself within him. I told the Mother of this peculiar sense. “Sri Aurobindo is too big for my heart to hold him. I am conscious of being included in his great form. I nestle in his heart, a small creature enveloped by his huge divinely throbbing love. Always he carries me. I live in him rather than he in me.” The Mother commented: “It is

really the same thing, but what you have said is the truer manner of putting it." My "life in the Mother" is an identical phenomenon.

I seem to repose in her, either with a trance-like yet profoundly aware absorption or with a faint far-away feel of the real Me separate from the superficially engrossed ego. In both experiences She the grandiose Goddess contains Amal the meagre Man, suffusing the latter with something of the truth the Chhandogya Upanishad enshrines: "There is no happiness in the little—immensity alone is felicity." A hint also of the truth treasured in the second line of that magnificent Sonnet-close of Sri Aurobindo's is divined:

My vast transcendence holds the cosmic whirl;
I am hid in it as in the sea a pearl.

Lastly, the truth St. Augustine catches in his "confessions" to God has come home with a touch of its poignant depth to the world-wanderer who had sought with half-blind eyes through year on year the elusive Ineffable to whom the poet in him had endeavoured to give name after mysterious name: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee."

These words of Augustine which I knew before making acquaintance of the Upanishads or establishing familiarity with Sri Aurobindo's writings stood out as the motto of my life the moment I read them in my twenty-second year. Some other utterances also of this multi-mooded Christian of the fourth century kept ringing in my ears. There was that powerful insight into the Divine Nature and its strange dealings with the world, which might be considered to have flashed out to Francis Thompson the "majestic instancy" of his *Hound of Heaven*: "And lo, Thou pressing at the heel of those who are fleeing from Thee, God of Vengeance and yet Fountain of Pity, who turnest us back to Thee in various ways." At the other end of the Augustinian gamut is the simple solution of all problems of conduct in relation to the Deity: "Love, and do what you will." Once the heart is truly given to the Supreme, an infallible truth-feeling ensures that all our actions move along the right lines. The soul's sweetness and light are the forces featured together here—sweetness of the inmost being's devotion spontaneously generating a decisive light at all times in the direction of the Divine. An analogous simple touch of intuition on the immediacy of the psyche's gestures and perceptions creates the utterance: "In the thrust of a trembling glance I arrived at That Which Is." Such enchanting formulas of experience, however, were not reached easily. The frailty in the young seeker found tongue in an endearing all-too-human aspiration: "O give me chastity—but not yet!" This turn of temperament was no stranger to me. Finally, how could I fail to remember those words of piercing regret which still breathe a profound fulfilment?—"Too late have I loved Thee, O Beauty of ancient days who art ever new, too late have I loved Thee!"

The words refer to Augustine's thirty-third year in which he accepted open baptism and entered the Church. I was more lucky, since I discovered Sri Aurobindo

and his Ashram when I was twenty-three, but I too could not help an Augustinian cry, urged by the unique intensity of the soul's taste of God to deem no age young enough to excuse the absence of that taste earlier:

Enhaloed love, why flowerest thou to bless
So late with fume of God my wilderness?

Haven of glory, all-transfiguring peace—
Won with what travail through the heart's dim seas!

O the vain dreams ere this eternity,
O the void hours ere thy Vast flamed in me!

Sri Aurobindo's comment was: "The lines are very good." It consoled me that the Incarnate Divine should accept my despair both as genuine in itself and as expressed in authentic art. But, though I came to know with an undeniable intimacy the adorable Dweller in the deepest and there were spells during which his proximity and even absorbing presence were constant, the ultimate direct inseverable poise in him lacked. When some photographs were taken a year and a half after my first settlement in the Ashram, the Mother remarked both that I was very photogenic and that I resembled the Early Christians. I had cultivated a fine beard and let my hair grow long. The beard was meant to be in imitation of my old favourite iconoclast Bernard Shaw rather than of any Greek father of the first Christian centuries. But, in the context of the new life I was leading, the comparison with the religious who fled into the desert of the Thebaid to escape the world, the flesh and the devil was more apt.

In the course of time the beard and the hair grew more and more short until, when in 1938 I paid Bombay my third visit, the hair became normal and the chin had no hirsute appendage at all. But some fundamental affinity with the Early Christians and with Augustine among the slightly later followers of Jesus lingered. In 1950 my wife Sehra's sister Mina received the initial fire-touch of Sri Aurobindo. When Sri Aurobindo passed away at the beginning of December that year she was startled into the awareness that so grand a being had lived and she had not realised his existence in spite of my having spoken of him time and again to her. She frantically looked for a way to come to Pondicherry while his body lay in state for over five days, but failed. What she felt with a remarkable intensity may well be summed up in four lines that occurred to me apropos of the strange heart-shattering yet soul-stirring event of December 5:

Till the fall of your body a void was my day.
You sank like a sun and made me your west:
O Deathless who died since in no other way
Could you be buried forever in my breast!

Yes, Mina was struck awake to the marvel of the spiritual life, even if the final resolve had not come. And in the meanwhile another influence was brought to bear upon her by a Christian friend who was preparing to be a nun. She presented her with St. Augustine's *Confessions*. After reading it, Mina passed the copy on to me. I for the second time in my life plunged into it. Although its author fascinated me, Christianity as such had no attraction by now; and Mina too outgrew its temporary influence when she accompanied me on a visit to the Ashram in 1952.

It is not too much to say the Mother proved for her an overwhelming experience. Her deepest self broke open. That typical sign of the psychic's budding forth was in ample evidence: the almost constant vision of all kinds of wonderful flowers the moment the eyes were shut. A harmonious happiness overflowed her being. After she had responded thus to the Mother's light and love I took her to an institute of nuns in Pondicherry where some embroidered materials she had wanted were on sale. Its contrast with the Mother's presence and with the Ashram's atmosphere was tremendous. Once and for all the vacillation vanished. Like Sehra, like me, she went through the new-birth that creates the disciple of Sri Aurobindo; she became the Mother's child for good.

My own connection with Christianity remained only in the fact that I kept harbouring the Augustinian struggle towards the Divine. There was no draw towards the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as revived in the Vatican's Father in Heaven, no draw even towards the figure of Jesus. What was common to Augustine and Amal was a complex questioning intellectuality, an imagination on fire with the world's varied colourfulness, a passionate heart wide in its sympathy but acute in its leap to the excitement of the senses, a spirit questing for immutable peace in the midst of "this mortal coil". On finishing a re-perusal of *Confessions* I wrote a general impression of its author:

"Augustine, besides being a powerful and piercing mind, is certainly a man led by the soul in him—the spark of God—towards the Light eternal and he lives in vibrant contact with this Light. But the contact is not complete: he does not feel the soul in a direct and total manner all the time. He is deeply, highly, keenly, hugely religious and touched by marvellous spells of the spiritual as understood in Yogic India, but he is not the full-fledged spiritual man in the Yogic sense. He does not seem to have taken indefeasibly his central seat in the soul: his seat is still in the ordinary human consciousness though at a great elevation or interiority in that consciousness's domain, so that he mainly dwells close to the soul even if not always within it. But it is often by the mind's will and not with a natural poise that he sustains his halo, and just this difference between abiding in the soul and residing very near to it and only sometimes merging in it distinguishes the religious saint from the saint who is spiritual. In the latter category are Francis and Teresa and John of the Cross. Although I do not have Augustine's morbidity about 'sin' nor his attachment to a formal pietism, he is a magnified and consummated version of what I am at the moment. His characteristic disposition markedly antici-

pates me and his conversion prefigures my own. But once the conversion comes, I should like to pass beyond him to a permanent soul-centredness."

When I next met the Mother during a trip to the Ashram, I mentioned my feeling of the Augustinian Amal. She replied: "Yes, Augustine was a fellow very much like you." I told her also that I was tired of my life in the ordinary world and asked her to do something to pull me out of it. She smiled assent.

The great moment arrived in the afternoon of February 12, 1953. I was alone, resting in bed. Suddenly, in some bright amplitude above the head a silent command was given with the strongest emphasis to go and live in the Ashram. I felt one with the source of the command. I got up with a start and stood beside my bed. Almost simultaneous with the overhead impulsions which had strangely absorbed me into it, there was a pull from behind my back on a level with the heart and I seemed to exist no longer in the body but in some inmost profundity of flame, independent of my personal physical form. The words issued from my mouth: "I have made the crucial choice. May Mother and Sri Aurobindo help me."

Sri Aurobindo has said that our true "I" is the Jiva or Jivatman, a non-evolutionary portion of the Supreme, an expressive part of the many-ness inherent in the One: it presides from the above-mind region of Cosmic Knowledge and ultimately from the Transcendence over the series of births in Cosmic Ignorance and guides its own delegate or representative there, the Antaratman or Chaitya Purusha, what Sri Aurobindo calls the Psychic Being, the inmost Soul that develops from life to life through a new mental, vital and physical personality each time. Sri Aurobindo has also said that when the Jivatman decides a turn in our career the absolutely definitive step is taken. Automatically this turn is reflected in the Antaratman. My "great moment" appeared to be an action of the true non-evolutionary "I", immediately echoed by its evolving truth-image. A sense of something radical and undeniable hung about my being and I knew that the road to the Ashram had at last been victoriously cleared.

But the experience of that afternoon was not merely a short outburst of Grace. It persisted for a number of weeks, during which I hardly had the sensation of living in my body. The body existed without its usual reactions to the world. Although it did everything as before, I lived exclusively high up and out behind. In this condition I visited Pondicherry for the darshan of February 21. I told the Mother that she had done what I had requested her to do.

In an attempt to catch the strange event in a poem plumbing the present posture of things for their pointers to things to come, I wrote:

Above my head I am one with God's huge gold,
Behind my heart God's white-fire depth am I;
But both these freedoms like far dreams I hold,
Wonderful futures caught in a cryptic eye—
A light without lids—suspended timelessly

Twixt flickering glimpses of mortality.
 I am they and yet no part of body or mind
 Shares in their splendour: a nameless strength alone
 Possesses every limb. A block of stone
 Dead to all hungers, void of smile or sigh,
 The outer self endures the strokes of time,
 But feels each stroke flash from beyond, behind
 The world of man, a smite of the God on high
 And the God at my back to rouse from the rapt peace
 Of my stone-mass a shapeliness sublime
 That shall be God to the very finger-tips
 By the falling of brute superfluties.
 Treasuring that sculpture yet unborn, I wait
 For the luminous outflowering of my fate—
 Blindness that is a locked apocalypse!

Of course, for the apocalypse to be unlocked must take a long series of years: the Aurobindonian fulfilment is a glory beyond the dreams of all past Yogas—the total divinisation of gross matter itself. Many lives would be required now that the Mother is not on the scene to carry us forward willy-nilly and to expedite the process of transformation. But after certain critical experiences one acquires an inner surety because one feels that, however slow the movement, there will be no turning back.

In the wake of what happened on February 12 of 1953 there was the exodus to the Ashram with Sehra (and my dog Bingo) for final irrevocable settlement a year later, followed by a surprising little statement by the Mother when I harked back to a feature of 1929. Among the several photographs of mine, recalling the Early Christians, one was particularly striking. Whoever has seen it has admired it for the suggestion of spirituality. I found it among my mementos of the old days and showed it to the Mother on May 24, 1954. I had written behind it: "To my dearest Mother with gratitude for what she can make of me in spite of myself." The Mother gazed at it quizzically. I said: "If it were not my own picture, I would call it 'A Study for the Head of Christ'." "Yes," she replied. She continued to gaze and remarked: "Very interesting." Then I asked her: "Why do you say that?" She explained: "There is an element of acting and pretending. I should like to ask you why you were playing Christ. It is different from your present state. At that time you were trying to look spiritual. Now there is a great change."

This was such a bewildering announcement that I cried out: "It sounds like a paradox, Mother. At present I don't at all appear so spiritual." "Yes, but my comment is quite true." Then I asked: "This picture goes back to a period before I may have had the need to look spiritual. There was a truth pressing through." "Even so," she answered, "the reality is now."

The whole talk was at once a disappointment and an immense fillip. It rather spoiled my Christ-study, but it meant that she was very pleased with the new Amal and that my diffidence in the days after the serious business of all-round Yoga had restarted was ill-founded. The words I had written behind the photograph should hold for those very days.

Trying to understand the phrase—"an element of acting and pretending"—I recollected the situation in which the picture had been taken. My mother, brother and sister had come for the first time to see me a year and a half after I had joined the Ashram. I was afraid to meet the contacts of the world I had renounced. I used to meet them no more than twice a week. I would go to the French hotel where they were staying, and I would attempt to create a special mood, practise an attitude of aloofness and call upon the psychic being to put its mark on my outer self, my face towards the world. The new spirituality lacked spontaneous strength. It was like an unearthly phantom which I had to pull down from its ether and throw like an aura around my body. No doubt, there were hours when the aura came of itself and the psyche seemed to flow in the very blood-stream. But, by and large, a steady effort had to be maintained and a kind of fear lurked, fear to confront the common course of human life lest it should prove stronger than the Deity within.

Later than the period of the Christ-photograph something of a wide serenity came as a gift of Sri Aurobindo, along with a fixed tender intensity as a boon from the Mother. But the triumphant sense expressed in the opening phrase of a poem of mine¹

I stand here for all time, rooted in God—

took shape a quarter century after I had originally stepped into the Ashram.

Not that the unending God-rootedness has put a *finis* to every defect of human nature. It may even seem that—to adapt Scott's couplet—

The way is long, the wind is cold,
The minstrel is infirm and old.

Yes, many are the shortcomings to be got over, and the years are flying. But the golden seed sown in a moment of supreme Grace bears, in the midst of all impediments from within and without, the conviction caught in that line of Sri Aurobindo:

I, stumbling, clouded, am the Eternal One.

AMAL KIRAN

(To be continued)

¹ *Mother India*, May 1978, p. 306.

TWO CORRECTIONS

I

IN the *Mother India* issue of May 1978 you have written a few lines about my father André Morisset.

I have appreciated their truth and subtlety. However, one detail needs to be set right: my father has never been an electrical engineer. He studied at the Ecole Polytechnique of Paris which is a military school for officers and engineers highly qualified in all the scientific disciplines. When he graduated, my father became more particularly interested in industrial products of artificial graphite for mechanical, chemical, nuclear and... electrical application: this is probably what occasioned this slight confusion.

Pavitra-da was a graduate from the same school.

Please receive my good wishes and, incidentally, thank you for the anecdotes which were so well told!

POURNA

(Translated from the French)

2

A reader has drawn our attention to a couple of inaccuracies in regard to the Star of David mentioned in "Our Light and Delight" in the June *Mother India*. It is a mistake to say that whereas this Star is a hexagram, a six-pointed figure, the Seal of Solomon is a five-pointed star, a pentagram. The two are in fact one and the same under different names. Again, it is said that the Star of David forms the same geometrical figure as the symbol of Sri Aurobindo except for some additional design in the centre of that symbol: a square, etc. Actually, since the Star of David consists of a pair of intersecting *equilateral* triangles, it is geometrically impossible to construct a square in the middle of it. Sri Aurobindo's symbol, as finalised by the Mother on 6 May 1964, consists of two *isosceles* triangles, within which a square can be naturally fitted. This version alters the resemblance to the Jewish emblem in spite of the six-pointedness of it and produces a combination in which the shape of the Great Pyramid of Giza is presented in two opposite postures intersecting each other.

EDITOR

THE TWO ATMOSPHERES OF THE ASHRAM

DURING the nineteen-forties the Ashram atmosphere seemed to become somewhat thinned. That happened by a mere physical necessity. During the Second World War many visitors brought their children here as they believed this place was the most secure against Japanese bombing and invasion. With the arrival of children other activities followed, the school, the playground, the hostels, etc., as some parents could not stay here but had to go back and earn.

All the children, even the older ones, had not come here with a bent for a spiritual life. So the Ashram atmosphere had to be less intense in order to accommodate them. But this infusion of the youngsters did not mean a compromise with the ideal and aim of the Supramental Yoga for which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother had come down on the earth. Their Yoga naturally demands a strong and vibrant field for its action. So, while maintaining the original Ashram atmosphere at its centre, the Mother seemed to have allowed its attenuation in its outermost part only. Thus we have something like two atmospheres in the Ashram.

The outer atmosphere later got mixed with all sorts of ordinary things which came from the sadhaks' own natures. Let me quote what Sri Aurobindo wrote to me on this subject: "There are two atmospheres in the Ashram, ours and that of the Sadhaks. When people with a little perceptiveness come from outside, they are struck by the deep calm and peace in the atmosphere and it is only when they mix much with the Sadhaks that this perception and influence fade away. The other atmosphere of dullness and unrest is created by the Sadhaks themselves—if they were open to the Mother as they should be, they would live in the calm and peace and not in the unrest and dullness."

But the central atmosphere, that is, the Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's, retains its original quality. Or rather its intensity increased in depth and height as the supramental descent tightened its grip on the earth. Its power later augmented to such a degree that one had but to aspire sincerely for anything in order to get it! The Samadhi in the Ashram has become such a sacred shrine that all our soul's prayers made before it are fulfilled spontaneously.

NAGIN DOSHI

A SONNET BY NIRODBARAN

WITH SRI AUROBINDO'S CORRECTIONS AND COMMENTS

Calm like the mountain, and *inviolable* (immovable)

this

Rises the star out of the morning-sea

Hewn slowly from God's hushed creative will:

First

(The) first word breaking the womb of agony.

A voice it brings and opens the hidden door

Through a narrow fissure of encrusted earth:

A blazing eye of the invisible core

Comes down like an eagle into mortal birth.

's

voiceless

Life is dead, and from its dumb grave of snow

A million

unborn

Million rays (night-and-day) reflect the sun;

Nothing that has lived lone in its white flow

Is ever dead, but a still silence won

Into the throb of hueless matted coils:

rock-stone

A jewel fashioned from stone-rocks of toils.

28.4.37

SRI AUROBINDO: An extremely fine sonnet. The octet is powerful and perfect. Possibly "this" might be better than the vaguer "the". The first two lines here of the sestet have to be changed as metrically they won't do.

29.4.37

Q: In disgust the Inspiration left me this poem last night. I am sure you gave me a heavy dose, for I dozed and dozed and, in between the dozes, wrote this. So not responsible for the consequences. I have simply 'hooked' on but where to I don't know. I find it a surrealist business with here and there realistic touches.

A: Compliments! you have reached the summit with one bound! Magnificent....

Q: 1) Can a star be immovable and rise at the same time? So, ineffable?

A: It can be defended, but to avoid possible censure, perhaps inviolable might be rehabilitated. Ineffable has no force here.

Q: 2) Don't know if a star rises out of the sea, morning or evening.

A: In poetry it does.

Q: 3) *And hushed what? don't get the adjective. Will flame-coloured do?*

A: "Creative" does quite well.

Q: 4) *Narrow fissure, or wide or dark?*

A: "Narrow" is more impressive.

Q: 5) *'Like an eagle'—metre?*

A: Passable if not too freely done.

Q: 6) *Do the rays reflect the sun?*

A: Don't care if they don't—these do. Besides, it's the unborn sun now.

Q: 7) *'Nothing that lives alone', flat?*

A: "has lived lone" is the opposite of flat.

Q: *"Into the throb of hueless matted coils" means what?*

A: Everything!

Q: *"From the throb" will have any meaning?*

A: None!

Q: *"Poisoned coils"? any meaning?*

A: No, sir, no!

Q: *Putting somehow "spoils" will give any sense?*

A: Good Lord, no! don't intellectualise and spoil the whole thing. "Spoils" indeed!

Q: *Stone-rocks of toils?*

A: "Stone-rocks" is tautologous, for all rocks are made of stone. Perhaps rock-stone might do, as all stone is not rock-stone.

Q: *So, this is the effect of hooking, Sir! I haven't said a word about the meaning or rhythm.*

A: About meaning better not. It is perfect as it is.

Q: *The first quatrain understandable, so too perhaps the 2nd, but what follows no. Life is dead?*

A: Life as we know it, of course. The star is the star of promise opening the way to the labouring agony of earth. It makes a narrow passage in its hard solidity, opens the hidden door, brings the secret voice. It is a blazing eye of vision from the invisible core of things. Life is dead in the snow-grave dug by its own tapasya but nothing is really dead that has been able to live lone in that white flow: it lives as a still silence on into the matted coils of the World-Spirit, Shiva and turns into a jewel of the new creation even from the rocks of the great Toil.

UDAR REMEMBERS

XXII

MONA and I joined the Ashram in 1937. The Golconde building was in process of being built at the time. So, even before it was finished, Mona and I have been associated with it. Mother gave charge of Golconde to Mona even then and she, with several ladies to help her, began to prepare the linen for the rooms and other things necessary. I was given the fine work of preparing the furniture.

Later came the question of fitting up the Asbestos Cement Louvres and for that a large number of brass fittings had to be made and thousands of brass bolts, nuts, etc. We needed a foundry, as the Blade Handles had to be cast to the special shape designed by the Architects. It was for this that Mother gave to me for use the building known as Harpagon.

The origin of the name is in itself interesting. This property, so near to the Ashram, had very little building on it and what was there was old and delapidated, but Mother wanted it because of its position. The owner of the property, a very rich person, knew our need and so demanded a very high price and would not budge from his demand. Finally Mother said to pay him his price but that She would name the property after the owner's nature and so She called it Harpagon. In French literature Harpagon is the name of the chief character in Molières play *L'avare* (*The Miser*).

So that is how I came to be set up at Harpagon and put up a foundry there. This foundry has now been shifted to the Coco Garden. We made all the Golconde fittings at Harpagon, cast them in the foundry and hand-finished them in the adjacent shed.

Then we came to the bolts and nuts. Mother had given me a strict order that I should not alter a single line or specification fixed by the Architects. Now in drawing the bolts I do not think they were conscious of being very accurate in showing the threads and just made a nice drawing. When I counted these threads I found that there were $5\frac{1}{2}$ to the Centimeter which is not a standard at all. One can have 5 or 6 but $5\frac{1}{2}$ is all out. So what to do? Where could I get the taps and dies for this odd thread? And yet I was not to alter the Architects' specification. So I finally decided to make our own taps and dies and this I did—very largely by hand and helped a great deal by Pavitra who had a lathe in his Atelier. I worked around 18 hours a day and did so much work with small files—without handles—that there grew a small hole in the palm of my right hand which is still there. It is my "glorious scar" of the Divine's work.

Then I felt that I needed some machines to do this work. Mother agreed but said She could not spare any money for this. All She could give was an allowance of Rs. 200/- per month. How to start a workshop on this small allowance? Nevertheless I did not press for more but accepted what She gave with joyful gratitude. Pavitra

kindly gave me one small hand-drill on a stand. All the others that were needed I got made myself. Later I understood the wonderful gift Mother had given me—the challenge! It is not difficult to set up a nice workshop when one has enough money for it but Rs. 200/- a month is really a glorious challenge and I am so happy now that I took it up, even not understanding it at the moment, and succeeded. It is now a source of perpetual joy of fulfilment.

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O MOTHER of Victory, Mother of Might,
steady our hands that they may day and night
draw the Spirit's true line and in Truth build Your home
where our steel meets Your steel in a visible

OM

We have sworn to perfection our members, O fleet-
darting Promise that moves up before us as sweet
as Your Lover's assenting Word, heart of our home,
the in-dwelling deep-dwelling world-circling

OM

From the depths of our earth rising, depths of the least
of our members aspiring to house You, from East—
where Your Pillar of Harmony first gave it home—
Your infinite heart shapes this vast finite

OM

From the base of each pillar of being we cry
for Your Strength to support us, Your Wisdom, Your high-
reaching fire of Perfection, Your Harmony's home:
Your answer, the symbolled made-visible

OM

It grows up under torrents of cyclone, monsoon,
under NO! of the Night and the pitiless Noon,
under hands of Your workers who praying Your home
build in rings of concrete its reverberant

OM

Like a breathing of Presence, a lifting of Grace
we feel You inhabiting, Marvel, Your place
where we call the Invisible: Live in Your home!
And You answer with Love's deathless limitless

OM

In its Truth all-embracing, in its bright duress
You are forming the soul of our City, its YES!
in its fire to be the Invisible's home
Who answers with You in Your visible

OM

Our gratitude, Mother of Victory, sounds
in the clang of our hammers, in breaking our bounds
as You build us in union and make us Your home,
Your Blessings arched over us, mystieried

OM

Matrimandir Workers Camp, Peace, AUROVILLE

SEYRIL

LEONARDO DA VINCI ASKS THE DUKE OF MILAN FOR A JOB

A LETTER

("Perhaps the most resplendent figure in the human race," Thomas Craven called Leonardo. Certainly it is an amazing catalogue of accomplishments that Leonardo himself sets forth with such modest assurance in his straightforward letter of application. He might correctly have added that he was a geologist, a botanist, and a master of many other arts and sciences.

Born in 1452 a few miles from Florence, Leonardo believed, in accordance with the most modern scientific discoveries, that all things were made of the same basic substance. He thought flying within the realm of human achievement and built a model of a flying machine. The perfection of his paintings, the vitality of his merest sketches, the range of his interests, the copiousness of his writings, the balance and profundity of his thought, all have made him one of the legendary titans of all time. His lifelong motto—and his daily practice—was "obstinate rigour".

Leonardo was thirty years old when, bored and in search of new fields to conquer, he quit his native Florence, decadent now under the Medici, for Milan, flourishing under the rule of Lodovico Sforza. It was to him that Leonardo addressed the following letter seeking employment.)

HAVING, most illustrious lord, seen and considered the experiments of all those who pose as masters in the art of inventing instruments of war, and finding that their inventions differ in no way from those in common use, I am emboldened, without prejudice to anyone, to solicit an appointment for acquainting your Excellency with certain of my secrets.

1. I can construct bridges which are very light and strong and very portable, with which to pursue and defeat the enemy; and others more solid, which resist fire or assault, yet are easily removed and placed in position; and I can also burn and destroy those of the enemy.

2. In case of a siege I can cut off water from the trenches and make pontoons and scaling ladders and other similar contrivances.

3. If by reason of the elevation or the strength of its position a place cannot be bombarded, I can demolish every fortress if its foundations have not been set on stone.

4. I can also make a kind of cannon which is light and easy of transport, with which to hurl small stones like hail, and of which the smoke causes great terror to the enemy, so that they suffer heavy loss and confusion.

5. I can noiselessly construct to any prescribed point subterranean passages

either straight or winding, passing if necessary underneath trenches or a river.

6. I can make armoured wagons carrying artillery, which shall break through the most serried ranks of the enemy, and so open a safe passage through his infantry.

7. If occasion should arise, I can construct cannon and mortars and light ordnance in shape both ornamental and useful and different from those in common use.

8. When it is impossible to use cannon I can supply in their stead catapults, mangonels, *trabocchi*, and other instruments of admirable efficiency not in general use. In short, as the occasion requires I can supply infinite means of attack and defence.

9. And if the fight should take place upon the sea I can construct many engines most suitable either for attack or defence and ships which can resist the fire of the heaviest cannon, and powders or weapons.

10. In time of peace, I believe that I can give you as complete satisfaction as anyone else in the construction of buildings both public and private, and in conducting water from one place to another.

I can further execute sculpture in marble, bronze or clay, also in painting I can do as much as anyone else, whoever he may be.

Moreover, I would undertake the commission of the bronze horse, which shall endue with immortal glory and eternal honour the auspicious memory of your father and of the illustrious house of Sforza.

And if any of the aforesaid things should seem to anyone impossible or impracticable, I offer myself as ready to make trial of them in your park or in whatever place shall please your Excellency, to whom I commend myself with all possible humility.

He got the job, and kept it for sixteen years, until the French invaded the city and captured his employer. . . . Leonardo Da Vinci died in France, prematurely old, at the age of sixty-seven, in 1519. Though hailed by the later centuries as "a universal genius", he felt that his "greatest schemes in science remained unrealised" and that "his quest for perfection in art" was unsuccessful.

(With acknowledgments to an old issue of Imprint, Bombay)

THE MARRIAGE OF SUNDARAMURTI

A POEM

Author's Note

Nambi Arurar, better known as Sundarar or Sundaramurti, one of the four great Shaiva saints of Tamil Nadu, was born some thousand years ago in Tirunavellur, a village in the South Arcot District. (South Arcot is, of course, the district which surrounds Pondicherry.) He was the son of a Brahmin named Sadaiyanar, but early in life was adopted by Raja Narasingha, a "king" sometimes identified with the Pallava monarch Narasinghavarma (builder of the great temple of Kanchi as well as the shore temple at Mahabalipuram), but more likely a feudatory of his. Brought up as a member of the king's household, Arurar, who was given the title "Nambi" or prince, received the education usual for a Brahmin boy of the period. His subsequent history, part of which forms the subject of this poem, is related in the *Periya Puranam*, the partly legendary hagiography that is one of the sacred books of Tamil Nadu.

There is a celebrated copper image of the saint, a photograph of which is reproduced opposite page 257 of the Centenary Edition of Sri Aurobindo's *The Foundations of Indian Culture*. It depicts Sundaramurti at the time of his first illumination, caught in a poise of electric tension, which reflects the spiritual excitement of that moment. He is standing, his body flexed in the graceful *tribhanga* pose, and is wearing the ornaments and the bridal dress that, according to tradition, was his constant garment even after his unusual wedding day.

I

THE low, melodious sound of conch shells blown
By the men assembled on the steps that led
Down to the rippling waters of the tank
Clove the intense hush of the morning air,
And from the temple came the measured sound
Of the great bell. Before the resonance—
The drone of a Gandharva's instrument
Awakening empty space—had died away,
The priests began together to intone
The thousand sacred names of the Great God
Of which the first is Shiva. The red sun
Rose up above the palms. Unnumbered years
Had passed since first its everlasting face
Gazed down upon the pristine ancestors

Of these who stood as they had stood before
 To worship in the dawn's transparent light.
 The centuries had brought no outward change;
 The scene it witnessed then was now the same:
 The reverential band of twice-born men,
 Each with a white cloth cinctured about his loins
 And a white thread across his ash-smeared chest,
 Each head crowned with a pendent crest of hair
 And on each brow the god's insignia.
 In solemn tones the mystic formulas
 That are the verbal body of the Unborn
 Were rhythmically pronounced. Then one stood forth
 Who, facing eastward, passionately exclaimed:
 "Almighty Lord who, single, dost create,
 Preserve and destroy this world of space and time,
 Spouse of Himalaya's white-bodied child,
 Today we do invoke thy special grace.
 Upon this day the ceremony that binds
 Two souls together is to be performed
 By us, thy servitors. Make manifest
 Some token of thy sanction and with a smile
 Of benediction bless this sacrament.
 O Lord of Destiny, send down a sign."
 He ceased. Expectantly into the sky,
 That with each pulse of day turned deeper blue,
 The Brahmins gazed. The breeze died. All was still.
 Then with a poignant cry of rich delight,
 A splendid purling of ecstatic sound,
 A blue-winged bird dove into the tank and rose
 With a glistening fish in his enormous beak—
 A terrible grip of love—and soaring high
 Dissolved in the diaphanous atmosphere,
 Leaving behind a pale white crescent moon.

It was the morning of his wedding day,
 But in his chamber Nambi Arurar slept,
 Untroubled by the clamour outside his door,
 Absorbed in the reality of dream.
 He found himself standing upon the top
 Of a huge world-commanding monolith,
 White with the brilliance of eternal snows.
 Around him stretched a vibrant expanse of blue.

Above immeasurably and to all sides,
As if the primal ether before the Word
Was spoken, it extended soundlessly.
Below, the mountain's alabaster slopes,
Transformed by unastounded phantasy
Into a never-ending flight of stairs,
Descended out of sight. From where he stood
The seven continents and seven seas
Of earth and all the worlds of life and mind
Were visible. He saw the race of men
And Danu's dark titanic brood, the proud
Gigantic princes of the middle air,
And the sweet-voiced Gandharvas and the gods
Immaculate upon their seats of light.
And most with their domains were satisfied:
The gods with their unwall'd felicity,
The demons with their darkness; only man,
The most divine because the least content,
Was drawn from the uncertain fields of life
To the white summit where Arurar stood.
He saw the yogins and the siddhas climb
By force of their tapasya, step by step,
The graded levels of the mountain stair.
He saw too those that by the power of love
And glad submission to the will of God
Ascended by the golden path of light,
Intent on some attractive Form above.
And Nambi Arurar felt that presence too,
The void was filled with an ensouling sky
That was peopled with majestic high-piled clouds.
And at its zenith shone a crescent moon,
As if the crest-jewel in the matted braids
Of some vast universal deity.
All good inhabited that atmosphere
And all the strength that surges out from the source
Of calm immovable virility
To descend and greaten Nature's fecund dream,
Was glowing in that god's impassive eyes,
And all her sap of beauty and ecstasy
Flowed in his veins and flowered in his moon-decked hair.
Then, from the heart of him who stood entranced
On the landing of the marble stairs, alone,

And who by empathy had gathered up
 The aspiration of the lesser worlds
 Into a single heaving high-tide sea,
 An ascending stream of unrestrainable love
 Flowed up, like long-aged sacrificial wine
 Whose effervescent sweetness gushes out
 When the seal is broken and is borne aloft
 In bowls to tables where the thirsty gods
 Drink of it freely and are satisfied;
 So did the Soma of his violent heart,
 Stone-pressed and pressure-strained intensely pure,
 Flow up, and was accepted by the being
 Who now was all except himself that was.
 And Nambi Arurar felt the answering love
 Of that sky-bodied form embracing him
 As with the arms of an indulgent friend.
 It rolled the horizons of his heart's vast sea
 Into a sphere of all-consuming need,
 Encompassing him, and the two were one.

How long he was in bliss he did not know,
 But when self reappeared he was aware
 That the scene had changed and he was not alone.
 He was standing now in a palatial hall
 Whose lightly soaring arches bore the weight
 Of a dome that for its subtle vastness seemed
 A thought projected in etheric space.
 Around him were resplendent figures clad
 In raiment made of living substance one
 With the plastic matter of their sculptured limbs.
 He stood among them as their friend and peer,
 Like them adorned and clad and with each arm
 Around the waist of a bright-bodied girl.
 One's yielding bosom pressed luxuriously
 Against his shoulder, as she laughing reached
 Across his trembling unprotected chest
 To push her rival's mischievous face away;
 For she was advancing with red unctuous lips
 As if to anoint his unsuspecting ear,
 And whispering while her hand caressed his curls,
 "Oh, Sundarar, Sundaramurti, mine, all mine."

With that he woke. He lay awhile half-dazed .

And tried to retrieve the fleeting images
Of that unusual dream. The girls that seemed
Familiar, somehow, he again could see,
And hear their laughter's echoing recede
Across a threshold of unrealised mind
Into a hinterland of memory
And yet bring no remembrance, and could feel
The touch of their quick hands. From them he passed,
As through apotheosis of delight,
To recollection of the god's embrace,
And to the vision of the mountain-stair.
But now the sounds of this familiar world
Broke in upon his reverie. The dream
Dissolved and was expunged from his consciousness.
The day desired him. Looking up he saw
Hibiscuses and jasmines intertwined
About his open window. Slanting rays
Of morning's tender and transparent light
Suffused the air with rose tranquillity.
Now with alert distinctness he could hear
The shrill complaint of an indignant squirrel
At bay in the roof, a sparrow's chattering
And the raucous cawing of a hundred crows.
But then, piercing the humdrum background, came
A blue-winged fisher's unexpected cry,
Liquidly trailing from his vibrant beak,
Announcing that it was a special day.
The boy pursued its secret lazily
Down corridors of his still sleepy mind
Till, all at once, it flashed upon his brain:
Today he would be married. With a smile
He thought about his perfect little bride
And saw her beauty in his fancy's eye:
Her hair, luxuriantly thick and long
And dark as the tamal when monsoon rain
Has given its black bark a lustrous sheen;
A silken net, that when unplaited fell
Behind her slight shoulders, poised languorously
As an idle dancer's, framing a small, round face,
That shone with the rich glow of youth and health:
Bright, full cheeks vying with her sunlit brow
In radiance and making her jet black eyes

Seem darker and more mysteriously profound.
 Such was the outward form of his Pavai,
 The incomparable "doll of perfect art"
 That soon would belong to him. Content, he rose
 And stood before his little bedside shrine,
 Set in a carved stone niche in the bare wall,
 Where, in a lamp held by a goddess of gold,
 The flame he had lit the night before still burned.
 His face grew calmly blissful as he made
 A gesture of spontaneous reverence
 While gazing at the little statuette
 That stood beside the lamp. Almost it seemed,
 In slow revealing beats of inward sight,
 That bared the outlines of another world,
 In slow hypnotic rhythms to describe
 The thousand movements of the cosmic dance
 Of the sole being, and everything around,
 The niche, the room, the palace, the whole world,
 Became that god's adornment and disguise.
 Five syllables in the adoring heart
 Of Nambi Arurar automatically
 Pronounced themselves: NA-MO-SHI-VA-YA, sweet
 The sound, NAMOSHIVAYA, and his eyes
 Were filled with tears, for he could almost see
 The living face of his all-beautiful lord.
 Long silently before the shrine he stood
 Fixed in a posture of immobile prayer,
 Eyes fastened on the image. Then suddenly
 He threw himself out full upon the floor
 As in his abject misery he cried,
 "O Shiva, why have you abandoned me?"

(To be continued)

PETER HEEHS

TOWARDS THE HIGHER LIFE

(Continued from the issue of July, 1978)

CHAPTER V

Descent into the Inconscient

“One who has not seen hell cannot reach heaven.”

(2)

“He tastes not that delight who is unripe and whose body has not suffered in the heat of the fire.”

Spirituality is popularly associated with miracles. And there is a reason for it. For, at times, things happen with such a lightning speed that one is taken aback. But we must assume with certainty that they do happen, owing to the action of the Supreme Grace. No one can say when and how the Grace will act, hence when it does, at an unexpected moment, it appears to the common eye as a miracle.

“As there are Powers of Knowledge or Forces of the Light, so there are Powers of Ignorance and tenebrous Forces of Darkness whose work is to prolong the reign of Ignorance and Inconscience. As there are Forces of Truth, so there are Forces that live by the Falsehood and support it and work for its victory....”¹

The same thought is voiced in *Savitri*:

Man’s house of life holds not the gods alone,

There are occult shadows, there are tenebrous powers. (11.2)

I had several occasions to see the heart become a scene of battle between Forces of Light and Forces of Darkness. When the Sons of Darkness had the upper hand, turbulent thoughts and suggestions seemed to assail the inner recesses of the being and no attempt could stop their intrusion. No prayer could rend the heart of Darkness, nor could sleep bring respite. Then one luminous thought or a glimmer of Light, and the whole scene changed as the rainbow appears after a downpour. But again the adverse forces thrust themselves in. Such was the midnight happening of November 1957 which lasted all the rest of the night. This was not the only vision of such a tragic scene.

A powerful factor to be noted here is the intervention of some higher elements, at times seen openly taking the field but unable to hold out long.

The year 1958 proved for me a crucial year. It was in this year that my sadhana reached its climax. The higher one ascends the mountainous track, the wider becomes the horizon, but one slip and there is no knowing what lies in store.

I had a great attraction for the Mother’s Darshan at the balcony. On

¹ *The Life Divine*, American Ed., p. 537.

December 10, 1958 the word went round that the Mother would not appear on the balcony as she was not keeping well. I felt it very much. "We have lost the Master. How can we live without the Mother?"

The previous night I had a long-continued vision of prophets, gods and goddesses. When all was absolutely still within, there rose a silent prayer from the heart:

"May the Mother be all right. Let my body bear her illness. I offer my body for it. May she be pleased to accept it."

No sooner was the prayer uttered than the whole part from below the navel downward got illuminated and a thrill passed all over the body.

Then I forgot all about myself but was wide awake within. From the depth of that silence rose another prayer. "If for the Divine Work a human body is needed as a sacrifice, then may this opportunity be granted to me. I willingly make an offering of my body."

The prayer being over, something in me raised its head as if to look around and see whether there was any opposing element and it breathed a huge sigh of relief on finding none in any corner. Not only that, the body gave its full consent. When my witness consciousness came to hear an exchange of voices between the mind and the body, the hesitating mind raised a doubt and asked the body: "Do you realise upon what course you are embarking? Have you the capacity and the strength to take upon yourself the Mother's suffering?"

In a feeble but prayerful tone the body made the answer: "By the force of the Mother's name on my lips I shall bear all."

"Remember the consequences, you would be crushed to pieces," warned the lower mind.

The body looked within—there was not one contrary vibration anywhere. The consequent inner elation was strong enough to keep me overwhelmed for three hours. When the consciousness returned I felt surprised at my own action.

This sort of discussion between the mind and the body may not be acceptable in this age of reason. It might be discarded as wishful thinking. But such things do happen when the body consciousness is well developed. The Mother has dealt with the issue in one of her talks:

Q: How can the physical manage to aspire, since it is the mind that thinks?

MOTHER: As long as it is the mind that thinks, your physical is something that's three-fourths inert and without its own consciousness. There is a physical consciousness proper, a consciousness of the body; the body is conscious of itself. It has its own aspiration.¹

When I wrote this chapter I had not the least idea that the body has a

¹ The Mother's Centenary Vol. 5, p. 294.

consciousness of its own. I simply wrote as guided from within. Proceeding, the Mother added:

“When one has developed this body-consciousness, one can have a very clear perception of the opposition between the different kinds of consciousness... there may very well be a discussion among them, and contradictions and conflicts. And one can discern very clearly what the poise of the body is, the need of the body in itself, and in what way the vital interferes and destroys this equilibrium most often and harms the development so much, because it is ignorant. And when the mind comes in, it creates yet another disorder.... Human beings have a much more delicate and uncertain health than animals because their mind intervenes and disturbs the equilibrium.... The instinct of the body is very sure.”¹

As the mind wants to remain merged in the thought of the Divine so the body aspires to be the temple of God.

From the very next day I got a pain in the knee-joint and gradually it increased to an extent that confined me to bed. On the night of the 18th December 1958 when the pain worsened I felt the clear action of the Force on the very spot where the pain was acute and it continued till 2 a.m. At this unsought-for help the heart melted and the eyes shed tears of gratitude. But for this, my suffering would have been unbearable. This was not all. It was but the first round of the battle to reach another phase.

“It did not strike me that fear invites the thing feared:

... fear hastening

Towards that of which it has most terror....

The very thought of gout made me tremble with fear. Its very mention would call up the state of a relative of P whose fingers got so curled by gout that she could never straighten them even for a moment. As regards myself too, the doctor diagnosed it as a case of gout. Though I got terribly shaken, yet a soft voice rose from within, “Let Thy will be done.”

On the 20th the pain grew so acute that even in bed I could not move without assistance. My fear invited all the symptoms of gout, fever, swelling, etc. My sceptic mind which acted as a valet to the Evil in me now questioned: “Did I not warn you? Who committed this folly?”

It seemed the inner being took up the challenge and looked at the body for an answer. There was nowhere any sign of repentance or protest. Lines from *Savitri* like—“Pain is the signature of the Ignorance”—“Pain is the cry of darkness for the Light”—came up ringing in the ear. Once at dead of night, line after line from *Savitri* flashed before the mind’s eye. I could not only read them but even followed their sense.

For twenty-three days I had no sleep at all during either night or day. Not a wink of sleep even in the early hours of dawn. Yet it is surprising that there was no

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

sense of sleeplessness. Had the mind left the body alone, the body would have, in all probability, passed through such tests and ordeals without a murmur. It was fear that brought new waves of disaster.

One night the Mother's photograph, which had hung on the wall in my bedroom, dropped of itself and broke. That was the signal of a coming storm. I clearly saw I was heading towards a catastrophe from which I was powerless to save myself. We looked to the Mother for everything. I wrote a long letter to her, giving full details of my desperate state of health, in the hope of immediate response and redress. Just after that, there was a descent with tremendous pressure on the parts below the navel. Both the thighs were heavy as if filled with quicksilver. Instead of feeling happy, a fear possessed me. Is it not dangerous to enter the lower regions without the Mother's help? This one evil suggestion called into play a host of evils. In *Savitri* the Master says about the hostiles that "even good they make a hook to drag us down". And so was it in my case.

I thought that this descent was the result of the Mother's response to my letter. But when I was told by the secretary that he could not as yet take the letter to her I got rudely shaken. What foolishness on my part! I looked for an outer thing, an outer response. My eyes, densely obscured, could not see how splendid was the inner response.

Next night again there was a powerful descent, I saw a dim white light all over my feet and along with it I felt a 'flower-sweet' touch but it frightened me all the more. Since then the Grace has withdrawn and withdrawn completely, leaving me to my fate. Afterwards even hundreds of efforts could not bring the Mother's 'healing touch' or her inner working. Soon I was reduced to a state where no energy was left in me to make an effort. I was so sealed off from within that I felt I was cut away from all that was good in me. I lay helpless in the jaws of dreadful forces that seemed to chew my bones, bit by bit, with ghoulish gusto. At times it appeared my nerves were twisted and snapped. Virtually my body became a "fort besieged".

Had I at least been able to take the Mother's name inwardly the trouble would not have been so terrible. Obviously I was sundered from the very source of my sustenance. Hence to whoever came to see me my only request was to utter the Mother's name in my ear.

One day a half-eccentric girl acceded to my request. The moment she voiced the word *Ma*, a current passed through the ear to the feet, and the body which was writhing in pain became calm and still. Then began the action of the Mother's Force from below and at once it possessed the whole of my lower parts. The thighs seemed like two pillars. Driving out the powers of Darkness, the divine forces again took hold on the body. Oh the relief I had! This gave rise to a feeling that my trouble was not gout. My suffering was due to fierce resistance in the physical. It was some rigidity there that was being worked out. Then came the blissful feeling: "This body perhaps was accepted for the divine work."

Another remarkable event of that fateful day was the descent of the Force into the

lowest stratum—the lower parts of the legs down to the soles. Till now the action¹ of the force in the lower domain was limited to the ankles. That day it crossed that limit and the soles of both the feet grew red-hot. The radiant vibrations of the forces working there are still fresh in my mind. After such a fine experience, when I hoped for better days, the worst was awaiting its moment. It is said the more one digs, the more one discovers the obscurities.

The very next morning the brain got affected. The organs lost their capacities to work. With the mind reeling, all that was round me looked hazy and shaky. The tongue got twisted and I began to stammer. My face looked pale and haggard. The body was reduced to a lump of flesh which had practically lost its sensibility. I could not follow my own movements. Pain was now in both the knees. People stared at me limping on the way to the Samadhi with a stick in hand. Sensing an inner thunderstorm might burst any moment I approached the Mother through Pranab, one of the four sadhaks having free access to her at the time. She immediately asked Dr. Sanyal to see me and report.

(To be continued)

¹ "The action from below helps to connect the superconscious with the subconscious." (A letter to Pratap Sen from Sri Aurobindo, dated 16-3-1937, *Mother India*, December 1964.)

A HITCH ON THE WAY AND A MYSTERIOUS DEATH

An abridged translation by Dhiraj Banerjee of a chapter from volume 2 of Promode Kumar Chatterjee's 1976 Academy-Award-winning Bengali book, Tantravilashir Sadhusanga.

(Continued from the issue of July 1978)

AT cock-crow, we were bound for Baramekhala. From Dharasu this would be the first stoppage on the way to Jumnotri.

On the border of Dharasu we were delighted to watch the meeting of the Ganges and another unclassified river. I remembered having parted with Ganga devi in Hardwar. It is always a pleasure to come into the company of this ancient holy river. Here she is called the Bhagirathi after the name of Bhagirath who had invoked her to come down from heaven. If Dharasu had assumed any importance it had been because of this confluence of the Ganga and that other river.

We were going like the wind and soon discovered that we had started breathing the air of Baramekhala. There a bunnia played host to us. He himself lived upstairs in his house with his family. Downstairs he had a shop. Adjacent to the shop was a spacious verandah which was used as a dormitory for travellers. Constructed in large part of marble or stone, the building looked impressive. The clean scrubbed floor of the verandah invited us to shake all burden and weariness off our backs. Nowhere could we see any spot, stain, dust or waste. Everything was tiptop.

In one corner of this rather long verandah, on a deer-skin unrolled on the floor, meditated a saintly personage. Considering his total appearance one could be tempted to suppose that he had all that was needed to claim the interest and reverence of the public. The garlands of *Rudraksha* (beads), *Tulsi* leaves and semi-precious stones were but superfluous additions to the countless long locks of matted hair which were sufficient to give his countenance the sure stamp of a powerful and care-free yogi. His flowing grey beard and moustaches matched his grave expression. Below a pair of thick eyebrows shone two small piercing eyes that searched into a person's character. He cut an impressive figure.

Hemanta was sold on him. As soon as he had clapped eyes on this yogi, he started lavishing attention upon him. Having kissed the ground, he touched the feet of the sadhu with deep respect. It intrigued me to follow the movements of my friend, the way he manifested his godliness towards an unknown ascetic. However, this had been our first close encounter with an orange robe since we left Calcutta.

At any event, off with the saint now! "First things first," as Hemanta might otherwise have exclaimed if he had not fallen for that yogi at first sight. We (minus Hemanta) managed the matter of food very well with the services of a Brahmin boy whom we coaxed into cooking for us. I handed him some Dakshina (cash-gift). Hemanta had gone into a huddle with the ascetic. He did not wish to waste his time

on such trivial matters as food, especially when a yogi was about.

When I became free I went and watched the yogi and Hemanta from a distance. Suddenly Hemanta invited me, "Hallo dada, why don't you come here once, please exchange a few words with this *mahatma*—"

I would have gone to the sadhu long before had not Hemanta been engaged in all that hugger-mugger, or if the holy man had been just alone. I didn't like to horn in. But now that my friend himself welcomed me I felt free to go. I joined my palms in quiet respect and sat near them.

Hemanta devotedly trotted out—"Believe me, dada, he is a very powerful yogi. He has strange capacities; he can work wonders. Everything that he has said so far about me is correct."

"How now, is everything, absolutely everything correct? What do you really mean?" I searched his features and discovered that his eyes had turned red, like those of a man in drink.

He raved, "At the first blush sadhubaba found out about a disease-sore I had borne for a long time. Immediately I thought here was an opportunity to get rid of it once and for all. So I begged him to give me a remedy—and promptly he gave me one. I gulped it. (That may be why my eyes have become a little red. Also I feel a wee bit intoxicated just as one may feel after taking *bhang* or some drug."

I shot a glance at the sadhu and demanded reproachfully, "What did you give him?"

He tried to soothe me, "Don't worry, everything will become all right; let the medicine have its swing—the unwanted accumulated heat of the body shall pass away—then he will get up."

Racked by anger and worry I scolded Hemanta,

"You hothead! since you didn't think it necessary to consult me before ingesting that stuff I don't take any responsibility. You can't help sticking your chin out, can you?"

He had gone to pieces before my condemnation. I anxiously asked, "How do you feel now?"

"I feel a little giddy," he drawled, "that's all, nothing else. May I please lie down here, dada, and stretch myself? What do you say?" Without waiting for my reply he laid himself down flat beside the ascetic. The latter simpered and prescribed,

"Don't you worry at all, some milk, give him some hot milk."

What nonsense!—I thought. Where was I to get lost now for procuring milk?

I raced up to the bunnia and related everything to him. He gave me a cupful of hot milk. I was dashing back to my sick friend, but my legs froze on the way. My companion lay motionless, mute, unconscious.

Noting my stupefaction, that fiend in human shape fobbed me off—"Don't you make a thing of this trifling matter. He'll recover in a short time. Let him remain just as he is, don't disturb him—an hour or two, no more, and he shall rise up hale and hearty."

Things however came to a strange pass and the bunnia, his wife and everyone else of his house appeared on the scene and rallied round us. Unable to control my indignation any longer I fired at the charlatan, shaking my fist in his face,

“What have you done, you dunderhead! God forbid! but if the worst comes to the worst then I’m not going to take it lying down, get that well into your head.”

The thug in orange took me up on this: eyes rolling in anger, like an uplifted thunderbolt he shouted back in a hoarse, guttural voice,

“Faugh! what the bloody hell are you going to do, eh? Will you have me hanged? Or are you going to chop off my head?”

With his hackles still up, the dog had the guts to warn me (like one who knew the British legal code),

“Do you want to take the law into your own hands? Are we not in the British Empire?”

I was jolted out of my wits. Not only had he committed a heinous crime but on top of that he had the gall to fly at me. Next best thing to being afraid, I was confused. In vexation I bit my lips.

What ensued was as gruesome as shocking. Slowly the young man’s breathing seemed to stop. My nerves frayed, I helplessly mumbled to that agent of Death, “What would you do now?” I expected that at last he would feel concerned. But there was no reaction. His grey countenance remained unmoved. There was a tense pause. Now for the first time I realized a mortal fear had gripped my heart. By and by inevitably Hemanta’s limbs straightened and became rigid—everybody knows, these are the sure signs of—

I could no longer hold myself back. “Hemanta, Hemanta,” I cried again and again giving knocks on his head. I could vaguely perceive shadows gathering round the spot: it was the crowd. It wanted to witness the novel spectacle of an innocent pilgrim poisoned by an orange robe. Our host and his whole family became restive and noisy. They screamed and ranted at him,

“Ay Sadhuji, woe to you, what have you done!” The two frightened coolies, ashen-faced, started an awful supplication to the suppressor of life and whispered, with folded hands, the holy name of Rama.

The man of Belial stood mute of malice, acting absolute ignorance of all these ghastly developments. Irrepressible sorrow tried to break through my heart—“Alas! friend, is it for this end that you came all the way with me? Were you destined to turn triumph into disaster?” This thought overwhelmed me as it went whirling round in my mind. My eyes swelled with tears. In this unfamiliar surrounding, among unknown people, I was entirely out of my element.

“O help him, you sweet heavens!” I wept. “Please restore to him his health, O heavenly powers!”

Minutes flew past. My companion was hovering between life and death, yet I could do nothing. To calmly observe things going from bad to worse was unimaginable. Holding the wolf by the ears was a harrowing experience.

In my utter helplessness in this almost despaired-of situation I still made one last attempt to menace the impostor,

“*Shaitan*, you have killed him, under the veil of ‘dharma’ you go about murdering innocent householders. I shall drag you to prison, I’ll surely have you hanged.”

These words of threat, alas, fell as though on deaf ears. They were only an ineffectual thunderbolt. That man who never searched his heart kept up his meditative attitude with hitherto-unmatched detachment. No wonder then that my mind should have come to a grinding halt. Mine was a nameless condition. At this critical moment our host whispered something stupidly simple,

“Why not try pouring a little water into the victim’s mouth?”

I had reached a stage where I would have done anything to revive my *saathi*, just as a drowning man would catch at the flimsiest flotsam. Like an inert automaton I took some water to the mouth of the fey, although every vestige of life from that body seemed to have been crushed.

Obviously hardened in mind, that beast of a man as if found another occasion to laugh at me,

“Whom are you going to feed with water? It’s all up with him. His body has now turned into a sagging corpse, can’t you see?”

“What? Did I hear that right?” The ageless mountains reeled before my eyes. “He himself is now admitting, matter-of-factly, that my companion is no more—Hemanta is dead. Ah, murder! Most meaningless, sinister and unnatural murder.”

Feeling utterly forceless and defenceless I could only murmur,

“Do you then admit that you fed him with poison?”

The wolf in sheep’s clothing explained, coolly without a tincture of regret,

“I gave him a powerful remedy thinking that it would do him good, very fast, and cure him. Who knew that he wouldn’t bear it? What can I do, tell me? It’s not my fault.”

I pondered: “Will I then have to accept this as an inevitable fact that my friend has died—not in revolution, not in any fair battle, but meanly in the hands of this charlatan? Can I ever go again and stand in the sight of our gurudev with a free heart and clean hands? A newly married raw man, just how can I have the heart to send this numbing news to the bereaved family? Something must be done, I simply cannot afford so easily to consider Hemanta’s life as written off.”

Being brought down to my knee, I was compelled to drop my aggressive stance. Instead of continuing to show fight and beat the air, I now thought it more expedient to eat my words. Edging closer to the ochre-clad man and showing respect due to his cloth, I plunged my head between his feet in a desperate act of surrender.

“Sadhuji, please save him, somehow—”

Then that big hunk of a man, with his strong hands, lifted my torso and bel-
lowed—

“Pish! sit here—”

I became petrified and sat beside that terror, quite careless of all worries. Little by little my vision grew dim as though some ice-cold stream had poured into my head. An utter serenity seeped through my soul and I sank Lethewards. That intangible something which we term personality dissolved.

How long it was like that I could not know.

Then I heard something, a faint sound from far away,

“Dada, dada, look at me, here I am, please open your eyes—”

But from where was the voice coming? Where was I? Everything muddled up for a spell. Soon my consciousness returned to this cold cruel world of men. My senses bounced back and, with it, coherence and memory. I asked myself: “Has my friend got back life?” While hope and doubt vied with each other in me, I boldly opened my eyes. There he was—Hemanta. He was sprinkling water on my face. In his eyes I could see wild grief and anxiety. His features relaxed when I opened my eyes. My whole body swelled with relief to find my next-of-kin restored back to the world of men. With joy he helped me sit up.

The would-have-been Bad Guy in this sequence, in fact, the ruthless director of this One-Act tear-jerker, or macabre *tamasha*, was sitting erect in his usual posture. Now that I stirred, after examining me narrowly with his searching look he solicitously enquired,

“*Ah kooch accha maloom hota?*”

Of course I felt better. Hemanta and I felt happy to find each other smiling again. We got a new lease of life, I thanked God that our names were spared from the list of Vanished Voyagers.

Grown wise after this experience, my co-traveller made it back to his family there and then, with toes, fingers and faculties intact. However, I persisted with my adventure, it was the up and up which appealed to me then. And, as one may read in Ovid, “Either don’t attempt or else achieve.” To me it was a *Punya Tirthayatra* (holy pilgrimage) and once begun was not to be given up except through *Mrityu* (death).

When at the end of my travel I returned home, I was naturally curious about what had become of that genial young man. The scope of what I learnt was both shocking and sad. From all accounts, he had directly come back to Calcutta where he stayed for three months. At the end of the third month here Fate took a hand again, and he had died—once more, never to rise again.

Even now it baffles me, confuses me.

(The End)

THE IMAGE OF MAN

HIS FOUR FACETS

Facet III: The Frustrated Man

(Continued from the issue of July 1978)

FROM Hemingway we may move to Maupassant. Both are close to life. In Maupassant, however, violence plays a lesser role; but both have a predilection for passion, love, sex and the play of emotions. But he is more varied in his choice of subjects and more catholic in his treatment of human nature. His Gallic temperament and the *sauve* atmosphere of the nineteenth century influenced Maupassant and did not allow him to stoop so low as Steinbeck, Hemingway, Moravia or Lawrence of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The pornographic element in him is minimum. He is an artist of the situation and a lover of life.

In Maupassant's work, the leaning towards the women of the underworld, as in *Boule de Suif* or *Bel Ami* or *Une Vie*, is evident. There are exquisite stories dealing with French middle-class life as in *The Necklace* and *A Piece of String*. There are a number of short stories dealing with the German occupation of French territory in the last part of the 19th century as in *Mademoiselle Fifi* and most of his work concerns itself with amorous adventures.

Conrad, in his preface to Maupassant's short stories, said, "Maupassant's philosophy of life is more temperamental than rational. He expects nothing either from gods or men. He trusts his senses for information and his instinct for deduction." (*Short Stories* by Guy de Maupassant, Preface by Joseph Conrad, p.VII) Not only that, "The earth has for him a compelling charm. He looks upon her august and furrowed face with fierce insight or real passion. His is the power of detecting the one immutable quality that matters in the changing aspects of nature and under the ever-shifting surface of life." (*Ibid.*, p.VIII)

In spite of this, Maupassant was a cynic, a frustrated man who had *liaisons* with several women which are reflected in his stories.

In *Bel Ami* the hero is Maupassant himself, torn between two or three women, bringing dissipation to his friend, the doctor's wife, turning then to a younger woman and neglecting her cruelly.

In *Boule de Suif* he deals with a prostitute who rode the same stage-coach as other respectable women and who helped the latter by complying with their German captor's wishes and the reward for all the selfless service was callous behaviour from both men and women when they reached their destination.

Because his frustration is profound and his restlessness intense, he views all things through the dark glasses of a spent and dissipated man. What saves him is his genius, his insight into his characters, and his inspiration. He is a man of the

senses, a man of sensations and emotions which have a direct bearing on sex. But this sex is not aggressively prominent and what saves his work from being vulgar is the poetic quality which is a real Gallic trait. He is poles apart from Hemingway or other contemporary writers.

In his personal life Maupassant was unhappy, for overmuch sex can only engender frustration and never lead to true happiness. He burned his candle at both ends and died at the early age of forty-three.

Following the same tradition of sex and frustration is a contemporary author, Alberto Moravia. He is a playwright, novelist, critic and short-story writer. He concentrates on the Italian middle class and his central problem is conjugal disharmony, strife and the drama of the war of the sexes. He faithfully portrays the Italian life after World War II with all its bitterness despite the return of wealth in the post-war era. If Silone or Camus speaks of social struggle, Moravia is eminently concerned with domestic unrest.

He has written several books, apart from his critical studies, and the following (the list is by no means complete) are available in fairly good English translation: *Bitter Honeymoon*, *Conjugal Love*, *Roman Tales*, *More Roman Tales*, *Two Women*, *The Wayward Wife*, *The Woman of Rome*, *The Adolescent and Other Stories*, *We Two*, *The Non-Conformist*.

If Maupassant speaks of the aggressive male, Moravia chiefly concerns himself with wayward and capricious women. There is always a touch of sarcasm in all he writes, and the irony at times rises to ruthlessness.

We Two is perhaps the most typical of Moravia's novels. Its focus is on the narrator's genitals, which have been treated as a person apart with scenes and events which are downright ugly, objectionable and pornographic. One indeed wonders what induced Moravia to write such trash. Yet this book is most revealing, most significant, as it depicts the depths of lewdness and filth into which the modern mind has sunk, turning away from the greater and nobler realities of existence.

Reading this novel, one might surmise that Europe is a vast field for sex-orgies and sex-play. But here we would err: Europe has an inherent dynamism for work, for knowledge, a multifarious curiosity and a living interest in all things.

Naturalism has its adherents in India as well. But the impact of frustration is limited here, except perhaps in Munshi Premchand.

Mulk Raj Anand can be taken as a representative of Indian novelists writing in English. He has imbibed the cynicism and the materialistic cult of naturalism. His novels include *Coolie*, *The Untouchable*, *Two Leaves and a Bud*, *The Village* and *Across the Black Waters*.

Turning away from the complacent atmosphere and bourgeois attitude of Tagore, Bankim and other romantic novelists, Anand is closer to Munshi Premchand in his realism in depicting the lower and exploited classes of India.

"Anand has given us a hint of this early fire and drive behind his first novels. In writing of pariah and bottom dogs rather than of the elect and sophisticated, he

has ventured into a territory largely ignored till then by Indian writers." (*Indian Writing in English* by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, p. 289)

The Untouchable deals with the sweeper Bakha, a youth doomed to lead his own profession, though he aspired to raise his status and is frustrated in his attempt. His sister Sohini becomes the target of the lust of a man of a higher social standing and, when she protests, the man exclaims, "Polluted! Polluted!"

The trials, loves and aspirations of this ill-fated boy are painted in this book. Gandhi's sermon against untouchability forms its concluding chapter.

"Bakha is only partially the prototypal 'untouchable', for he is also himself an unique individual, even in some measure an exceptional 'untouchable.' All that happens to him in the novel could have happened—perhaps they still happen somewhere or other today. Only the dramatic telescoping, the juxtaposition, the linking up of so many events in the course of twelve hours is Anand's." (*Ibid.*, p. 268)

Another critic remarks about *The Untouchable*: "Simply planned, the novel has a convincing form. It thoroughly satisfies the three classical canons of aesthetic criticism: unity of action, time and place." (*The Indo-Anglican Novel and the Changing Tradition* by Krishna Rao, p. 36)

Anand's *Coolie* is a character novel, about Monnoo, his life in a Bilaspur village ending in Simla as a richskaw-puller. Krishna Rao comments: "*Coolie* is not only Anand's first novel, but possibly the foremost, 'folk-epic' of Indo-Anglican fiction. In its epic sweep and spatial vastness of society in which the hero exists, it recalls Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*." (*Ibid.*, p. 33)

Two Leaves and a Bud deals with the destiny of Gangu, ranging from Hoshiapur in the Punjab to a tea-estate in Assam where the squalor and poverty of the tea-pickers are depicted against the wealth and callousness of the European community composed of Dr. De la Havre, Barbara, Reggie, etc. A drama of hope, frustration and revolt forms the fibre of the novel.

The Village, Across the Black Waters, The Sword and the Sickle, is a trilogy dealing with Lallu Singh before the war, his war-experience and his conversion to communism.

Krishna Rao assesses Anand thus: "In their rebelliousness and objectivity, minute observation, and broad documentation and environmental magnification and personal minification, the novels of Anand reveal a positive conceptual concentricity with the western naturalistic tradition." (*Ibid.*, p. 28)

In his use of language, Anand uses terms literally translated from Hindi ("rape-sister," "rape-mother," "son of a witch," etc.) which have a ludicrous effect. This tends to blunt his literary *finesse*, it is as if he were too much in a hurry and his exuberant spirit carried him along, unmindful of the literary quality.

Anand, as a novelist, has given us a new species of fiction which has put India on the literary map of the world. But, along with the materialism which he has imbibed from the West, he has called in the inherent cynicism which leads to frustration.

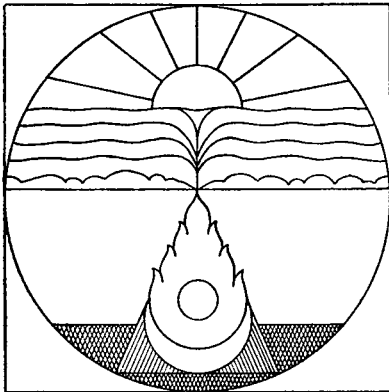
To depict the Indian masses, their poverty, squalor and degradation is in itself

a frustrating experience. But behind all these externalities is a truth of the spirit no Indian novelist writing in English has so far been able to seize. If India's external poverty is real, more real is her spiritual heritage, her sacrifice, her faith and her courage. These are truths Anand has failed to grasp. His novels read like the work of an unrefined Western writer describing India. He lacks the polish of Louis Bromfield, Pearl Buck, Rumer Godden or John Masters or even Kipling.

If we must write about India, we have to go behind the external poverty and by suggestiveness hint at the inner wealth and the deeper realities. This would make the novel a unique creation, instead of aping the western ways of thought, its approach and purblind frustrated vision. For example, has Anand or any other novelist answered this pertinent query, "What makes India go on, in spite of her outer degradation?"

(To be continued)

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THE CHARACTER OF LIFE

CONSCIOUSNESS APPROACH TO SHAKESPEARE

(Continued from the issue of July 1978)

The Yoga of King Lear

VI. Lear's Transformation

THE remainder of Lear's life is spent in his wandering on the stormy heath followed by a brief reunion with Cordelia. The incident of the storm has attracted quite a lot of attention and many critics have observed the relationship between it and Lear's own inner experience. Charles Lamb writes, "... the explosions of his passion are terrible as a volcano. They are *storms* turning up and disclosing to the bottom of that sea, his mind, with all its vast riches."²⁰ Northrop Frye goes further to state that Lear's renunciation of power and its consequences represent a reversion from the civilised world of human consciousness back to the wild state of vital and physical nature:

The royalty of Lear held his society bound to that greater nature which is symbolised by the stars in their course, the world of order and reason that is specifically the world of human nature. With the abdication we are now wholly confined to the lower physical nature of the elements, an amoral world where the strong prey on the weak... nature therefore appears to him in the objective form of madness, which is storm and tempest.²¹

In fact, it is the unregenerate vitality in him that rages forth and dies in the storm. Bradley takes up the same theme:

For imagination... the explosions of Lear's passion, and the bursts of rain and thunder, are not, what for the senses they must be, two things, but *manifestations of one thing*. It is the powers of the tormented soul that we hear and see in the 'groans of roaring wind and rain' and the 'sheets of fire'; and they that, at intervals almost more overwhelming, sink back into darkness and silence. Nor yet is even this all; but, as those incessant references to wolf and tiger made us see humanity 'reeling back into the beast' and ravening against itself, so in the storm we seem to see Nature herself convulsed by the same horrible passions; the 'common mother',

Whose womb immeasurable and infinite breast
Teems and feeds all,

turning on her children, to complete the ruin they have wrought upon themselves.²²

Surely the storm scene represents something more than great dramatic poetry. It is an occasion in which Shakespear portrays more clearly than almost anywhere else the one-to-one correspondence between man's inner and outer life. The storm scene is not mere dramatic device. It is a direct reflection in nature of Lear's passionate inner experience. Lear has shed all the vestments of human society and consciousness and opened himself to the plane of universal life. He became a field for the play of powerful forces which worked within him to destroy his narrow human sanity and about him to destroy the social structure he represented. The forces he unleashed were universal forces of evil and the opening he gave to them was sufficient for these forces to saturate the plane of life in which he lived. Lear himself feels the conspiracy of the elements with his evil daughters:

Rumble thy bellyful. Spit, fire; spout, rain.
 Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters.
 I tax you not, you elements, with unkindness;
 I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children;
 You owe me no subscription. Then let fall
 Your horrible pleasure. Here I stand, your slave,
 A poor, infirm, weak and despis'd old man;
 But yet I call you servile ministers
 That will with two pernicious daughters join
 Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
 So old and white as this. O, ho! 'tis foul! (III.ii.14-25)

The inner convulsion of his being resulting in madness expressed itself in outer life as a violent storm. As Bradley said, they are not "two things, but *manifestations of one thing*."

A further indication of the type of forces unleashed and active is given by the constant reference to animals and animal-like traits in man. Bradley notes, "the souls of all the beasts in turn seem to us to have entered the bodies of these mortals; horrible in their venom, savagery, lust, deceitfulness, sloth, cruelty, filthiness; miserable in their feebleness, nakedness, defencelessness, blindness; and man, 'consider him well', is even what they are."²³ When the crusts of civilisation and culture are removed, the underlying animal nature in man emerges. In Frye's words, the world of order and reason gives way to the amoral world of physical nature "where the strong prey on the weak." The force which unleashed the animal in man is the force of evil.

The experience which Lear undergoes on the heath can be likened to madness but is not sufficiently explained by that state. It represents a destruction of the

king's vital egoism and even for a time his identity. The loss of power and position, the rejection of Cordelia and Kent, the ingratitude of Goneril and Regan, the physical expulsion into the storm, the fall from all kingly trappings, castle, throne, knights, robes and courtly companies, to a stormy heath, a dominating physical nature, weeds, beggars and madmen—all this constitutes a shattering of his ego which was so fully identified with kingship and power. But what remains thereafter is not simply a madman. On the contrary the loss of identity as a being of power coincides with the emergence of self as an emotional being. The brutal suffering which Lear undergoes moves him to make a growth in consciousness from force to feeling. When the huge vital personality is crushed, a heart of great depth and richness opens.

Lear was a man of towering strength untainted by active organised evil. Having lived at the acme of power and having exercised it for many years, his being was saturated with the vital satisfaction of it and felt the urge to make a vertical growth. He decided to renounce his throne and divide his kingdom on the basis of his daughters' professions of love. His idea was to spend his remaining days with his most loving daughter Cordelia. The idea itself was noble, to sacrifice his worldly status in favour of filial love. But, once decided, he could not find the strength to give up power and so at the moment he was to resign it he wielded his strength more than ever before to assert his authority over family and friend. His assertion is successful but its one result is to more fully deprive him of the power he could not consciously give up. Having made a decision and taken an initiative, life compels him to renounce far more power than he ever planned and helps him to discover a love far purer, wider and more intense than he ever imagined. Lear has initiated a movement which gains momentum and carries him to the goal he could not by himself achieve.

Dowden and Bradley have called his experience a process of purification, but it can more appropriately be termed a process of evolution. It is an evolution of Lear's center of consciousness from the vital center of power, force, authority, self-seeking and self-assertion to the higher emotional center of feeling, sympathy, concern for others and self-giving. Lear undergoes rapidly and violently a shift in consciousness towards which the entire race has been gradually moving through the slower natural movement of time. The type of growth he was consciously attempting was of the nature of a yogic effort. He makes the growth, receives that love and affection. In that period of civilisation in which he lived such intense suffering was inevitable as the general consciousness of human life was not sufficiently developed to support an easier transition. A lesser price would not have brought the effort to the right culmination. The props Lear throws away, the methods he resorts to, the forces he unleashes in himself and others are characteristic of those experienced in yoga.

In the court scene Lear's very being bears the aura of majesty and grandeur. His speech is formal, his references to first person are plural—"we shall express",

“we have divided”, etc. His very act of seeking his daughters’ affection is a command and a bribe.

Tell me, my daughters—
 Since now we will divest us both of rule,
 Interest of territory, cares of state—
 Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
 That we our largest bounty may extend
 Where nature doth with merit challenge. (I.i.47)

He still resorts to lower methods to gain a higher prize. His vital demand receives a vital response of flattery from Goneril and Regan and of arrogant truth from Cordelia.

When Cordelia and Kent do not conform to his expectations his commands turn to warnings, passionate curses and precipitate action reflecting his weakened position which moves him to shout threats where a king can whisper orders. The formal “we” becomes the personal “I”. Lear is the head of state who is losing strength in old age and is ready to step aside. His one wish is to be appreciated and loved by his children, at least to be told so and flattered in public. His weakness is vanity and his uncontrollable passion. Out of weakness he asks for affection where a king should demand loyalty. Within his being the shift has already taken place from a seeking for power to a seeking for affection, but the outer habit remains.

George Orwell writes: “Lear renounces his throne but expects everyone to continue treating him as king.” At Albany’s castle he finds the only thing he can command is dinner and soon learns even that is not sure. Goneril’s assertion is a further blow to his prestige and authority. It strikes at the core of his identity and his royal manner begins to crumble.

Does any here know me? This is not Lear.
 Does Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
 Either his notion weakens, or his discernings
 Are lethargied.—Ha! waking? ’Tis not so.—
 Who is it that can tell me who I am? (I.iv.225-229)

He naturally clutches for the authority he has always known but no longer does he have the power to banish and chasten. He can only command himself and does so by a decision to leave the castle. Lear has begun to learn about the nature of human ingratitude, the same ingratitude he expressed towards Cordelia and Kent:

Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend. (I.iv.259)

He resorts to the only power still in his possession, the power to curse Goneril and pray to the gods to make her sterile. His passionate rage is marked now more by tears than by fury:

I am asham'd
 That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus;
 That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
 Should make thee worth them. (I.iv.296)

With this harsh blow, Lear begins to awaken to his own error:

O Lear, Lear, Lear!
 Beat at this gate that let thy folly in (*striking his head*)
 And thy dear judgment out! (I.iv.270)

and "I did her wrong," and with that awakening the fear of his coming madness:

O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!
 Keep me in temper; I would not be mad! (I.v.41)

It is not merely the "monster ingratitude" of his elder daughters that brings on insanity, but at least equally much this recognition of his own folly which is an even greater blow to his self-esteem and self-image. He begins to believe the words of his loyal servant, Kent, who tried to warn him much earlier:

Be Kent unmannerly
 When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man?
 Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak
 When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound
 When majesty falls to folly. (I.i.144)

and the repeated theme of the Fool:

thou hast pared thy wits o' both sides, and left nothing i' the middle.

and

Thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown when thou gav'st thy golden
 one away.

Lear begins to realise that pride and vanity are a form of folly and the man who seeks to satisfy them is more a fool than his boy who wears the coxcomb. Any time a man makes a rapid growth in life, particularly an ascent of his consciousness to a higher level, certain realisations or subtle perceptions will present themselves to him either as thoughts and intuitions in himself or from some external source such as a book or another person. The Fool provides Lear with the self-perceptions required to help him shed his attachment to vital egoism. It is notable that the Fool's bitter jests are combined with a deep sense of sympathy, goodness and affection, the very qualities

Lear is reaching for.

The placing of Kent in the stocks is a further blow which shakes the pillars of Lear's faith. This is the second occasion in which Kent meets strong opposition to his outspoken behaviour. Cornwall comments:

This is some fellow
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature. He cannot flatter, he,
An honest mind and plain—he must speak truth.
“An” If they will take it, so; if not, he's plain. (II.ii.90-95)

Kent, like Cordelia, has spoken boldly what he thinks should be said without regard for his own safety or the requirements of the moment. Like Cordelia, there is an element of pride and arrogance in this trait which evokes a corresponding response from life. Lear listens to Kent's story in disbelief:

They durst not do't;
They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than murder
To do upon respect such violent outrage. (II.iv.21)

But still he fails to recognise his position of impotency and flies into a rage when Regan and Cornwall refuse to meet him.

Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!...
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife. (II.iv. 92, 94)

The last line contains a new measure of restraint. It is no longer a pure command. And then:

Tell the hot Duke that—
No, but not yet. May be he is not well. (II.iv.102)

The recognition dawns and so does despair:

O me, my heart, my rising heart! but, down. (II.iv.119)

In the brief meeting which follows with Regan, Cornwall and Goneril, the full reality of his position is brought home. He shifts back and forth between curses and pleadings. When finally he understands that nothing he does, no power he commands can move them, he turns away and gathers all his remaining strength to save the one thing he still possesses, his sanity.

You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need. (II.iv.270)

and

You think I'll weep.

No, I'll not weep.

I have full cause of weeping; but this heart

Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws

Or ere I'll weep. O fool, I shall go mad! (II.iv.281-285)

In his struggle Lear finally comes face to face with his own nature. At the same moment, the storm rises. The only remaining struggle is within himself, and the storm is an outer expression of the tremendous passions which rock his being. The storm marks Lear's final severance from his old life and the birth of a new consciousness in him. From this moment until the final moments of his life he is removed from the hostility and evil atmosphere of his elder daughters and surrounded by beings of exceptional character, of loyalty, true affection and love. He is free from all that restrained his own heart, all the trappings and temptations of power, and he finds on this barren heath and in the midst of a tempestuous storm what Bradley calls "the inmost shrine of love." Here Lear's heart opens to his companions and widens to embrace all who are poor and weak.

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just. (III.iv.28-36)

Lear is about to enter a hovel to escape the storm and take some much-needed rest, but from within Edgar, disguised as a madman, begins his babblings. Life refuses him rest because something in Lear is not yet ready for peace, there is something more to be given up and something more to be achieved. Still he is plagued by an inner turbulence and recurring thoughts of filial ingratitude. The last vestiges of pride and vanity and vengeance remain. Seeing Edgar he concretely feels there is more to be lost.

Why, thou wert better in a grave than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no

wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton here. (*Tearing off his clothes.*) (III.iv.100-108)

The moment he freely renounces the last physical protection for his' body, life responds and Gloucester comes to lead him to shelter in a house near the castle. Inside the house again vengeance rises. Lear holds a mock trial of his daughters.

To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hissing in upon 'em— (III.vi.15)

and

Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds' about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts? (III.vi.75)

Immediately Gloucester returns to warn of the conspiracy against the king and they are forced to flee just as Lear is about to take some rest. Once again the moment Lear shifts back to the theme of power and vengeance, life deprives him of what little protection he has and throws him out onto the heath.

Lear's madness has grown to full proportions. He wanders in the country near Dover fantastically dressed in weeds. There he meets the blind Gloucester. In his rantings the theme of his daughters' betrayal is intermingled with a growing moral perception of injustice in the world at large.

See how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: change places and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?... And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog's obey'd in office.
Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand.
Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thy own back;
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.
Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it. (IV.vi.152-166)

Lear sees the insufficiency of the one power he always cherished, the power of authority. In his madness he discovers a truth of the heart. Still the pain of his suffering brings forth periodic outbursts of passion, "Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!"

Cordelia's messengers find Lear and lead him to safe quarters for rest and medical care. Lear awakens with Cordelia at his side. Life itself has brought them together again. His mind is confused and does not recognise her. But his heart perceives the truth of her at once, "Thou art a soul in bliss" (IV.vii.46). He feels the first signs of something sweet and light entering his shattered being. "Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?" Slowly his mind and senses return. But no longer is there the former power, passion or self-assertion. His vital personality has been completely crushed. In its place there is a being of softness, gentleness and sweetness, more a child than a man.

Pray, do not mock me:

I am a very foolish fond old man,
 Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;
 And, to deal plainly,
 I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
 Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
 Yet I am doubtful; for I am mainly ignorant
 What place this is; and all the skill I have
 Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
 Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;
 For, as I am a man, I think this lady
 To be my child Cordelia.

Cor.

And so I am, I am.

Lear

Be your tears wet? Yes, faith. I pray, weep not;
 If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
 I know you do not love me; for your sisters
 Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
 You have some cause, they have not.

Cor.

No cause, no cause. (IV. vii.59-75)

Their sweet reunion is interrupted by war.

(To be continued)

GARRY JACOBS

NOTES

20. *Casebook: King Lear*, edited by Frank Kermode, Macmillan & Co., 1969, p. 44.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 266-7.
22. *Shakespearean Tragedy*, A. C. Bradley, Macmillan & Co., 1965, p. 221.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 218-19.

THE IDEAL CHILD

SOME COMMENTS

THIS small booklet containing the Mother's inspiring words will be of immense physical, vital and moral value to the young students, igniting in them a flame of noble aspirations and ideals which alone can counteract the pernicious effects of a Godless, amoral materialism from the West and our own age-old 'tamas'. Even if out of thousands of young boys and girls, only a few catch the spark, it is enough. For it is always a minority, the elite, which leads and acts as a leaven in Society. One is reminded of the words of a great savant, "Kindle the inner life of a man and you have a flame that burns up all lower considerations."

A most apt message of the Mother reads:

India is the country in which the psychic law can and must reign and the time for that has come here. Besides, this is the only solution possible for the country whose consciousness has unfortunately been falsified by the influence and domination of a foreign country, but which in spite of everything is in possession of a unique spiritual heritage. (2-8-'70)

The booklet consists of 4 parts:

- (1) The first is, 'What a child should always remember' and 'An Ideal Child'. This is full of the Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's emphasis on affirmation and strength, based on truth, courage, love, as opposed to doubt, defeatism, weakness, fear, falsehood, spinelessness, the negative and demeaning qualities. Each sentence here is like a Mantra full of the divine vibrations of the Mother who was a living example of the inspiring words quoted.
- (2) The second part contains most efficacious advice for the student on the physical and vital plane, in sports, in games, on the playground and in the class.
- (3) The third part, 'To the Children' is a beautiful summing up of Sri Aurobindo's special Mission on earth.
- (4) The fourth part is an extract from the Mother's famous book, *On Education*, where She has set out Her views on physical, vital, mental, and psychic-spiritual education, corresponding to the four parts of a man—his physical, his vital, his mental and most important of all, his soul, the '*psychic being*', his divine and immortal part with which he should come into contact. It is this great discovery which the ancients meant when they said, 'Know Thyself' or 'Tat tvam asi'. It is this divine self of ours which leads us constantly to truth, light, love, beauty, strength and knowledge. In this fourth part the Mother has, in a most practical manner, set out the steps by which one can come into contact with the divine spark within one—the *psychic being*—and its marvellous effects on our life.

This is the true and integral education—the development of all the parts

of our personality. As stated above, we know that it is only a minority which will be fired by these words, but in the others a luminous seed will be sown which will germinate in the subconscious and eventually sprout and come into the open.

India is at present passing through a critical transitional phase in its history when all problems social, economic, political, cultural and spiritual are thrown, as Sri Aurobindo says, as if in a Medea's cauldron. Out of this churning will emerge the true solution, which again, according to Sri Aurobindo, will not be a solution for India alone but for the whole world. The present politics of hatred, violence, opposition, division, selfishness, falsehood must be replaced by a new spirit, one in accordance with the true soul of Bharat, a spirit of harmony, tolerance, concord, truth, unity and love.

It is here that the dynamic message of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother to youth and the young in heart of India will play its revitalising and resurgent role. In this encircling darkness and falsehood, as if all the negative and destructive forces had gathered together to obstruct Man's march towards truth and light, Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's words strike a note of supreme affirmation.

Nowhere else does the slogan 'Small is great' befit so aptly. The greatest need of our country and the world is not of this ism or that ism, this kind of economics or that, but of character, integrity, strength, fair play, truth. If the young men are imbued with these noble qualities the Divine Grace will pour down its riches on India and the prophecy of the Mother that India is destined to be the spiritual guru of the world will be fulfilled. Fulfilled it will be in any case, but it is a great privilege for us to play our little part as well as we can in hastening its fulfilment.

One great merit of this book is that there is nothing sectarian in it. It is of universal application. The Divine Mother is above all religions and isms. All are Her children. No institution can take the least objection to any word of the book.

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

On The Mother: The Chronicle of a Manifestation and Ministry. Volume One. By *K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar*. Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Pondicherry. 1978. Rs. 75.00 (for volumes one and two).

THIS is solid work, done in record time.

The first full-length and comprehensive biography of the Mother to be published in the English language, it remains a monument of scholarship and scrupulous painstaking work. The second volume is yet to appear, but judging by the size and manner of treatment of the first, the book is likely to cover some thousand pages of small print. The work, says the author, was begun on the Mother's birthday in 1976 and the typescript was ready by the next birthday. How he managed to perform this splendid feat, at his age and with one of his eyes practically out of commission, will remain a marvel of Grace, an unerring sign of the love and devotion of an ardent heart.

He did well to keep the Mother informed of his plan to undertake this stupendous task. The Mother gave her Blessings; and Nolini wrote him an encouraging letter: "I am sure this work will be as successful as the book on Sri Aurobindo. It is more difficult, to be sure; but with the Mother's Grace, you will come out of it brilliantly." Indeed, his life of Sri Aurobindo (also in two large volumes) must have given Dr. Iyengar not only a much-needed courage, but also an experience which he has utilised in full.

I say "courage", for to attempt a biography of the Mother on so large a scale cannot be lightly undertaken; the author himself acknowledges this. The Mother, as we know, seldom relished the prospect of her earthly life being portrayed in a biography. She once jokingly remarked that she feared opening a book someone had written about her, not knowing what stupidities it might contain. In the present instance, one feels sure, she would have had no misgivings. Dr. Iyengar's book is based mainly on her own words, and Sri Aurobindo's. He has gone through everything they have written, made judicious selections from appropriate passages, made connecting links where necessary, and provided a veritable feast. He has at the same time consulted practically all the other material, concerning the Mother, available at the time of writing in the English language. Almost every statement he makes is supported by evidence.

The biography of a great personage is essentially the record of his soul-movements in Time. In the case of the Mother, it must necessarily be so. For, to her, no two moments were ever the same; and her soul, in her human incarnation, never failed to grow through new experience. "I am always learning," was one of her favourite sayings. And she was always changing, however stable within. She could not rest content with any experience, any knowledge, any outward expression, whatever their height, depth or utility for the moment.

Dr. Iyengar has succeeded admirably in depicting this soul-movement in its many-sided rapidity. As we run through the pages, new vistas open up continually, and the many facets of the Mother's personality come into view with an almost bewildering swiftness. This is all the more remarkable; for in spite of his long association with the Ashram, he has never lived here for any length of time as an inmate in close proximity with the Mother, and had to build his story on what he had read and what he had seen during his occasional visits. He has managed all the same to infuse into his story a sense of the living Presence.

In this first volume of the book, the story has been brought to the end of 1950, which marks the end of an era and the beginning of a new phase in the Mother's life and work. He does well to relate the life and the work to her inner development in so far as it can be known from her *Prayers and Meditations* and her published writings and talks. A most pleasing feature is the way Dr. Iyengar brings in *Savitri* and relates it to his narrative. As we know, he taught this epic to his classes in Andhra University, and the extracts he has chosen fit in very well. One would wish there were more of them.

He has naturally given a good deal of space to the Ashram, and many of the disciples figure in the story. They lend a vividness of touch. But the Mother was not simply the "Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram". The Ashram has been a replica of the world-scene, and no biography could neglect the movements of the contemporary world in this context. Students of world affairs will find in this biography some illuminating comments.

In a few places one comes upon some odd things. The Mother, when she finally settled in Pondicherry, is said (p.202) to have first put up at Marie's Hotel. There was no such place. The name should be "Magry", not "Marie". Again, Dr. Rajangam, one of the earliest sadhaks, is declared (p.224) to have been, according to the Mother, present in a previous birth during the period of the French Revolution as "Barat". One has never heard of this name. In fact, there was no "Barat" in all French history. If the final "t" is correct, the person meant must be the famous (or notorious) Marat who was assassinated by Charlotte Corday. Or else the heroic youngster Bara, whom the Royalist troops shot down for shouting "Vive la Republique!" instead of "Vive le Roi!" must be intended. Perhaps these are oversights in the original typescript. But it is a clear mistake to write (p.9) : "When she was about twelve, Mirra used to go for solitary walks from her Parisian home to the neighbouring woods at Fontainebleau..." The stroll is physically impossible. Fontainebleau, with its woods, is nearly 40 miles south-east of Paris. The visits must have had some other starting-point. Or else the place frequented must have been Bois de Boulogne.

However, even this error is less than a spot on the sun. All in all, Iyengar's biography—the first comprehensive one in the English language—will remain an indispensable aid. It may be long before its use is over.

SANAT K. BANERJI

Lotus Grove. Poems. By Pujalal. Published by Pujalal at Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Pages 236. Price Rs.16.

These poems, full of love and devotion, combine in this book those which appeared under the name of *Lotus Petals* (1942-43) and the ones which comprised 264 quatrains on the Divine Mother and were entitled *Rosary*.

Pujalal, whom I have known from the very day I arrived in Pondicherry on 16 December 1927 because he came to meet the train which brought me to this town, is a natural blend of the bhakta and the dedicated worker. For many years, during which we both worked in the Mother's room which was then on the first floor of the main Ashram building, I was an admirer of his selfless and unassuming service. As he justly writes in his poem on page 5, he did not crave for anything except to belong to the Mother and to serve her, feeling the fullness of his life to lie in her presence within him:

I desire not high heaven
Nor the thorny thrones of earth;
In me Thy kingdoms seven
Have together come to birth.

Is it any wonder that the Mother called him "mon poète"?

In another composition, "The Mother on the Terrace" (page 13), he says:

Now the heavens awake from their bright-nighted day,
And reopen their million eyes from above,
For a glimpse of the Mother they are yearning to pray
With a fire of true tears as their offering of love.

This poem has a special appeal to me, for my first glimpse of the Mother was while she was walking on her terrace. It was from the northern window of Purani's room which had once been Sri Aurobindo's and was later to become Amal's. The sole difference was that her walk was in the morning and not in the evening. But the essential heart-stirring impact from a striking elevated environment was the same.

The stanza I have culled is a little masterpiece fusing Pujalal the simple with Pujalal the subtle. No doubt, the rhyme "above-love" is rather a worn-out pair, like "fire-desire" and "God-clod" which also occur in the book, but its setting is highly original and the vision both in general and in detail is unforgettable. The merit lies especially in that the individual components are not original in themselves. The emergence of the stars at night is seen as an awakening of eyes, a turn of speech common enough. But in anticipation the preceding day is figured at once as a darkness and a splendour with the help of that cleverly inspired compound adjective "bright-nighted". Mark also the phrase about the way the

stars make their offering of love: "With a fire of true tears." Here is the intensity of yearning shown by a remembrance of the fiery nature of the stars; here too is the poignancy of yearning revealed by the impression of the stars as if they were glimmering tear-drops. And this impression links up with the earlier reference to "eyes". We have a close-knit happy novelty out of old elements.

Perhaps it may be interesting to cite a stanza from yet another poem which has strength and power rather than wide tender depth but which brings in the eye-motif again. It is from a long piece on Mahakali (page 9):

No evil will can dare withstand
Her courage-melting fiery glare
That burns away the life of grand
Titans with its steel-pointed stare.

I may comment that the run-on technique of the lines and the manipulation of the metre in the last line—trochee, pyrrhic, spondee, iamb—are very skilful.

The examples I have quoted are not quite the prevalent characteristic of Pujalal's Muse. But they were worth giving in order to disclose possibilities of expression which are not always realised. There is an unusual bard hidden in the singer we are familiar with. However, the latter has sufficient charm and his simple direct style mingles felicity of word with high seriousness. Take the two stanzas from the poem "Sri Aurobindo" (page 235):

The lowest hells have known His hands
With patience working there,
Turning their wryness to His will,
Clearing their atmosphere.

He wanted heavens to be born
From the darkest womb of things;
And help the stumbling soul of man
Break forth archangel wings.

Possibly the more devotional verses produce a bit of monotony at times when read at a great stretch. This may be considered a defect in the collection. But a collection like the one before us is to be dipped into rather than imbibed wholesale. With such an approach, one is bound to feel, rising in one's heart, a love for the Divine, for which one has often wished. So, not to own Pujalal's book will be to lose a good chance for kindling the inner flame and recognising one's own psychic being.

LALITA
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Students' Section

THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

SPECIAL FORTY-FIRST SEMINAR

**In Celebration of the Mother's Birth Centenary
18th-19th February 1978**

(Continued from the July issue)

WHAT I HAVE LEARNT FROM THE MOTHER

Speech By Oscar Lasser

BONJOUR!

When I was asked a few days ago whether I could share with you something of my experience with the Mother, it occurred to me that some of you might be interested to hear how I was pushed onto the path of God-Realisation. I hope and pray that I may be able to communicate not only the outer facts but something of the actual experience. I'll try to speak as honestly as possible from my own experience and in my own words, and I beg you to excuse any lack of conformity with a system or book-knowledge.

First, I should probably tell you how I was led to the Mother and to this experience and for this we have to go back to my adolescence in Switzerland. After a solid Swiss education, I started, in 1960, a commercial career, which enabled me at once to acquire a car. But I was not quite satisfied with life; something seemed to be lacking and I had not yet found my true place in it. Moreover I perceived in most adults, especially in those over forty, a hollowness and dissatisfaction with life. "Is this all that life has to offer? Let me travel, have adventures, and see whether I cannot find something better while I am young," I told myself, "then at least I will have no regrets later on." I should perhaps add that at that time I was just a healthy Swiss youth with no interest in Yoga or India. In fact the word Yoga did not exist in my vocabulary (though during the last 15 years Yoga has become quite a well-known word in Europe). So I was perfectly indifferent to Yoga and India. The Scandinavian countries and Alaska attracted me, and I intended to travel there as simply as possible, trying to live with the people of each country and learn as much as possible about their way of life, working and earning my living at the same time. For this adventure I thought I needed a companion and I found one easily. However, there was one difficulty: my friend was obsessed by the idea of travelling to India. No persuasion, no reasoning, nothing could change that.

It was either India or nothing for him. I reluctantly agreed, thinking that it was finally not so important in which direction we started our world-tour. Alaska and Scandinavia would welcome us on our way back.

After this decision there developed a strong opposition to our plan: our parents disapproved violently, and we both lost our cars in accidents, obviously a big financial blow. But nothing could prevail against my single-minded intention (or should we call it obstinacy?) to find out whether there was no better place than Switzerland for me. So finally we started in an old Citroën 2 C.V. car and of course we had many adventures. To my astonishment I had uniformly good or excellent experiences on my travels, and some of my hosts were overwhelming in their hospitality. One valuable lesson which this journey taught me was: See and seek the good in your fellow-man and you will find it—the world is a mirror of yourself.

I learnt another lesson, a rather painful one: that in spite of my good Swiss education I knew nothing. People of different cultural backgrounds, especially communist and Asiatic, had ideas quite contrary to mine, but they seemed equally valid. I discovered that I was conditioned and brainwashed by my environment (as so many are without knowing it). So an intensive thirst for more knowledge which my traditional western education had not quenched was aroused. I looked for an education, in the words of Lord Baden Powell, of body, mind and soul—an all-round education you might call it. This thirst reached its apex in Teheran, which was the turning-point of my journey. Travelling in the desert towards Isfahan I had a dream or vision of something resembling the Ashram Playground activities. Shortly afterwards some tourists in Teheran asked me to guide them to the Post Office, and while I did that they told me they were coming from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry where an Integral Education was offered. I knew instantly that there I would find what I was looking for. The interesting part of the story is that as soon as I had made up my mind to go to Pondicherry, my Swiss friend who had been so eager to go to India told me that he had had enough of adventure and that he was returning to Switzerland with our car. I cannot help thinking now that he was an instrument to put me on the way to India and, looking at this and similar incidents in my life, I feel that some hidden hand was and is guiding me. You may call it the Divine, the Self, the Soul, the universal Shakti, which according to my limited experience are different words for different aspects of essentially the same thing.

When, two months later, at the end of August 1962, I reached the Ashram, I found to my delight that the education which I had “seen” and hoped for was offered by the International Centre of Education, and I take this opportunity to thank my many teachers for their sympathy and infinite patience in replying to my thousands of questions. As a student of the Higher Course I had also to study some of Sri Aurobindo’s books, and I soon felt the desire to find out if what I had read was true. A few other students were also interested in this practical aspect and the matter was put before the Mother by our teacher. She consented to our request and

gave us an exercise of concentration on a symbol, which we practised every day at a certain fixed time. Power of concentration and silence of mind, leading to the experience of Consciousness, were, according to her, indispensable before one could hope to develop more elaborate faculties.

A few months later, in September, my birthday came along and, although I had not decided to start any sadhana, I still wished very much on that date to see the Mother, who seemed to make all the decisions and who according to the Ashramites was God-incarnate. To my disappointment I was told that it was not necessary for me to see her. But I received a beautiful birthday-card with the following aphorism which captivated me immediately:

“Discipleship to God the Teacher, sonship to God the Father, tenderness of God the Mother, clasp of the hand of the divine Friend, laughter and sport with our Comrade and boy Playfellow, blissful servitude to God the Master, rapturous love of our divine Paramour, these are the seven beatitudes of life in the human body. Canst thou unite all these in a single supreme and rainbow-hued relation? Then hast thou no need of any heaven and thou exceedest the emancipation of the Adwaitin.”¹

This birthday card was a bit strange: instead of 10th September 1964 the Mother had written 10th November 1964 on the card. “Oh, she must have made a mistake,” I thought.

My daily life as an Ashram student continued, but with a slight difference. Something started to grow in me, like a tiny seed sprouting into something mighty. Its most important manifestation was perhaps a feeling of joy. It was building up and became stronger day by day until on the morning of the 10th November I just had to write a letter to the Mother, asking her if after all she perhaps hadn't made a mistake, and informing her that “something in me feels very happy, vast and strong and tells me that this aphorism contains perhaps the secret of my life.” At 11.30 a.m., after my classes, I went to the Ashram where Amrita gave me the Mother's reply in a sealed envelope. There was no time to open it, as I had to hurry to our daily concentration-class.

I sat down, quite unsuspecting, and tried to concentrate on the symbol. Suddenly the space between me and the symbol disappeared and I became one with the symbol. Space was abolished, in the sense that “far” and “near” just did not exist any more. At the same time my breathing became very deep and forceful, of the “Bastrika” type (but it came quite spontaneously, I had never even heard of Bastrika) and a “Vibration-Force” entered from above and gradually took possession of my entire body. The body felt like millions of particles in vibration, with each and every cell in joyous participation. It was extremely powerful, a spiritual atom bomb: never in my life had I experienced anything like this.

It took me a few minutes to become my normal self again, and then I opened the Mother's letter which made me fall into an even more blissful trance. She had

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (1977 Edition), p. 88.

underlined the date of my letter—10th November 1964—several times with red ink and marked it with a red cross, writing (in French of course):

“This was, without doubt, the date on which the way would open itself clearly before you. There is no such thing as chance, things are always done on purpose.

“Keep living in yourself the Revelation. Blessings”

These are moments which are deeply engraved upon my Self and I remember even minute material details of the surroundings.

It took me years to understand mentally the magnitude of the experience. Looking back I can say that those few minutes changed the course of my life.

But to come back to the facts of my story: I was told that it would probably be better if I controlled the experience. A few hours later I fell ill with diarrhoea and fever and had to go to the Nursing Home. So—that advice seemed to be quite sound as obviously the experience had been too much for my body. I wrote a long letter from the Nursing Home telling the Mother everything. She wrote back:

“Do not bother about the reaction of others, it has no importance whatsoever, and do not follow their advice. The experience is excellent and you should not try to control it, on the contrary give yourself freely to it.”

You may be interested to know that since then this type of experience has repeated itself many times with very positive results. The spontaneous change in breathing (either becoming very strong or stopping), and spontaneous body-movements might be a necessary stage of purification for some seekers. In certain yoga systems these yogic movements called “Kriyas” have an important place; and it is possible that every yogi goes through this Kriya stage. I read for example a letter by Sri Aurobindo where he mentioned a spontaneous physical movement of his sadhana. I might add that, as time goes on, these Kriyas tend to become less physical and more subtle.

Soon I was well again and after this experience the sadhana really started. During the first seven years the going was very tough, for the sunny heights were followed with terrifying regularity by a deathlike abyss. If I may quote again from one of the Mother’s letters: “The Way is long and difficult, but supremely interesting for those who are sincere and persistent.”

It is said that after such an experience the Divine will not leave you, that he will take you to Realisation. Judging from my own experience there must be some truth in this because even after my experience I did not want to do sadhana, my plans were quite different, for I wanted to be successful in the world. But the Divine dragged me on quite against my will, and in the beginning I felt like a rat caught in a trap. I could not even leave the Ashram any more. This relationship with the Divine has of course changed in the meanwhile and now we are most of the time on very affectionate terms.

From the sadhana which followed, two points seem to me specially relevant under the present circumstances. First: to feel and adore the Divine in the Mother is very good, but as long as we do not feel and see this same Divine in ourselves and in others we are spiritual zeros. I have observed thousands of times that if this inner

contact is not there one blunders enormously sometimes. Second: book-knowledge is useful only if it leads you to spiritual experience. Otherwise it is futile or even an impediment on the path. When for example, in 1972, my Kundalini was awakened¹ (it hit me like lightning out of the blue), I protested: Hey, that's not what's supposed to happen to a sadhak of the Integral Yoga; but the Mother replied: "Have no fear and everything will turn out very nicely." It did, surpassing the wildest dreams I could ever have had. In this instance my mental formations about how my sadhana should develop were gained from books and proved to be more of a hindrance than a help and it taught me how strong mental formations can become an insurmountable obstacle to progress, if the Guru's grace does not intervene.

To quote once more from the Mother:

"All theories, all teachings are, from the ultimate standpoint, nothing but ways of seeing and saying. Even the very highest revelations are worth no more than the power of realisation that comes with them.

"To live the Supreme Truth, even though for a minute, is worth more than writing or reading hundreds of books on the methods or processes by which to find it."

Indeed, the Divine is not far, he is present in each one of us, ready to help us at every step, if we permit him to do so....

¹ By a Tantrik Yogi whom the Mother esteemed highly and with whom she had advised me to meditate.

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1. Find out thy soul. Recover thy hid self. In silence seek God's meaning in thy depths.
 2. The self that thou hast to become is that self that thou art within, behind the veil of mind and life and matter.
 3. The ascent to the divine life is the human journey, the work of works, the acceptable sacrifice.
 4. God lives and moves and acts in us when we live and move and act in him.
 5. The divine compassion is limitless.
 6. The special Grace of the Divine is for the seekers of the Divine; for the others it is the cosmic will acting through their Karma.
 7. It is to the heart that God speaks; it is in the heart that God resides.
 8. The approaches to the Infinite must be infinite.
 9. He who chooses the Infinite has been chosen by the Infinite.
 10. The Divine alone is Truth, Life, Power, Love, Felicity.

Sri Aurobindo Yoga Mandir, Jwalapur (Hardwar)

SADHANA - SATSANG

October 8 to 12, 1978

**Subjects: The Sadhana of Savitri (Finding the Soul)
The Sadhana of Ashwapati (Finding the Godhead)**

How to Reach Jwalapur

Hardwar is directly connected with Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi by rail. Buses between Delhi and Hardwar, too, are most convenient. And Jwalapur is a part of Hardwar and has a railway station of its own, which is prior to Hardwar where express trains too make a halt.

Dr. Sitaram Jayaswal
Lucknow

Dr. K. L. Shrimali
Udaipur

Prof. Bhim Sen
Ajmer

Dr. Indra Sen
Pondicherry

Dr. Hargopal Singh
Hardwar

P. N. Tripathi (Convener)
Jwalapur (Hardwar) 249407

Note: (1) Board and lodging will cost Rs. 5/- a day. For members of Sri Aurobindo Centres, if desired, lodging can be free.

(2) Jwalapur can usually accommodate 50 persons. Organizations connected with Sri Aurobindo and the Mother can arrange camps any time in the year at this centre.
