

MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

DECEMBER 1981

Price: Rs. 2.50

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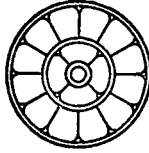
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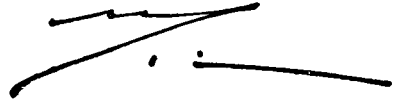


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute,

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



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All correspondence to be addressed to:

MOTHER INDIA, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry - 605 002, India

Editor's Phone: 4782

Publishers: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust

Editor: K. D. SETHNA

Managing Editor: K. R. PODDAR

Published by: P. COUNUMA

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM TRUST, PONDICHERRY - 605 002

Printed by: AMIYO RANJAN GANGULI

at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry - 605 002

PRINTED IN INDIA

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

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MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XXXIII

No. 12

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail."

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**SRI AUROBINDO'S FIRST FAIR COPY OF HIS
EARLIEST VERSION OF *SAVITRI***

SÂVITHRÎ

BOOK II

(Continued)

Then the dire god inflicting on her soul
The immortal calm of his tremendous gaze:
"Yet since no victory in heaven's order is lost 1170
And thou hadst strength to journey on unslain
Through the brute void which never shall forgive
The primal violence that fashioned thought
Forcing the immobile vast to suffer and live,
Thou hast a claim upon the living gods. 1175
The gods who watch the earth with unmoved eyes
And lead its giant stumblings through the void,—
They gave to man the burden of his mind,
And forced on his unwilling heart their fires
He shall not quench, their storms he may not rule. 1180
Troubling his transience with their infinite breath,
They gave him hunger that no food can fill.
He is the cattle of the shepherd gods.
Therefore he feels incurable unrest
Nor knows his cause nor wherefore he was born. 1185
The gods who hope by him to live for ever,
They gave the wisdom that is mocked by Night,
They breathed the courage that is met by Death—
He planning travels still his obscure road,
Tireless his journey that foresees no goal. 1190
Not easily shalt thou, O soul, prevail
Nor lay thy yoke upon eternal Death,
Nor yet thy ancient longing flame fulfilled
The hopes which shake the order of my worlds.
Yet since I am law and life and its rewards 1195
Take from me natural boons which death-bound hearts
Can soar at." But she spoke, she answered now :
"Why speakest thou of the order of thy worlds
And offerest boons of which thou art the lord?
All I can take in my own strength, O god, 1200

For I have come who am your kindred birth.
 Yet that thy words may not have breathed in vain
 Since they are flames of the eternal Truth
 I bind thee by its Will thou canst not break,
 Not for my own joy but the soul I love, 1205
 To give on earth whatever Suthyavân,
 My husband, waking from the forest's charm
 And from his long pure childhood's solitude
 Desired and had not for his beautiful life."
 Death swayed his dreadful brows in vast assent, 1210
 "I give indulgent to the dreams I break
 Such close of life as transient men desire
 To his blind father. Rich morns and fortunate eyes
 I give and the brief kingdom he has lost,
 To see with gladness of his unsealed gaze 1215
 Bright forms of grandsons, beautiful, brave and wise,
 And gather them into ungrouping arms
 And see again the cheerful light of earth.
 For that this man desired. Back to thy world
 Return swift-footed lest to slay thy life 1220
 The great laws thou hast violated, moved,
 Open at last on thee their dreadful eyes."
 The woman answered, "Me thou shalt not slay,
 Neither with seas nor with celestial flame;
 They have no strength to make my being vain: 1225
 For in me the invincible goddess lives.
 And neither can my mortal purpose fail,
 Nor my immortal spirit be destroyed.
 My soul exceeds the laws whose might thou vauntst.
 My will too is a law, my strength a god 1230
 And trembles not before their awful gaze.
 Out of thy shadow, give me back again
 Into earth's flowering spaces Suthyavân
 In the sweet transiency of human limbs
 To do with him my burning spirit's will. 1235
 Else where thou leadst him me too thou shalt lead.
 Long I pursued him through the tracts of Time,
 Parted and found, breaking the bars of life.
 Now I behind him seek whatever night
 Or dawn tremendous." And to her replied 1240
 A voice of puissance and tremendous scorn,
 The almighty cry of universal Death.

“Frail creature with the courage that aspires,
 Hast thou the wings or feet to tread my stars
 Which I have made before thy thoughts were formed? 1245
 I, Death, created them out of my void
 And all that lives within them I made for food
 And Love and Strength and Wisdom for my prey.
 I, Death, am god and Hunger is my name.
 Mortal whose spirit is my wandering breath, 1250
 Whose transience was imagined by my smile,
 Go clutching thy poor gains to thy hurt bosom
 Scourged by my pangs. Turn yet before¹ attempting
 Forbidden luminous spaces thou perceive
 Lightnings unknown and from the wrath of God 1255
 Terrified flee like a forsaken deer
 Sobbing and hunted by the shafts of heaven.”
 And Sāvithrī made answer, scorn for scorn,
 The mortal woman to the dreadful Lord:
 “Who is this God, imagined by thy Night, 1260
 Contemptuously creating worlds disdained,
 Who has anger and treads down high-aiming souls?
 Not He who has built His temple in my heart.
 The God I adore flames here within my breast;
 He has wed me,—to His kiss I bore the worlds. 1265
 Who shall prohibit or hedge in His course,
 The Wonderful, the Charioteer, the Swift?
 Equal my strength behind my husband’s steps,
 Whether I press the sword-paved courts of Hell
 Or over luminous flowers in Heaven I walk. 1270
 The wings of Love have power to fan thy void,
 The eyes of Love gaze starlike through the night,
 The feet of Love tread naked all the worlds.”
 But Death made answer to the human soul:
 “O seeker of heaven, by thy earth obscured, 1275
 What is thy hope? to what dost thou aspire?

Line 1168: “eyes” as alternative to “soul”.

Variant for the beginning of line 1229. “And I exceed”.

Alternatives to lines 1247-49:

- (1) And Love and Strength and Wisdom for my prey
 And all that lives is a vast Hunger’s food.
- (2) And Love and Strength and Wisdom for my prey.
 All creatures I have made, I eat for food

¹ A comma is to be understood here as well as after “spaces” in the next line. (Editor)
 Line 1275. alternative to “seeker” is “claimant” and to “obscured” “oppressed”.

This only is thy keenest earthly joy
 For a few more years to please thy faltering sense
 With honey of physical longings and embrace
 The brilliant idol of a fugitive hour. 1280
 And thou, what art thou, soul, thou glorious dream
 Of brief emotions made and fluttering thoughts,
 A dance of fireflies speeding through the night
 Or dragon-wings upon the inconstant stream?
 Wilt thou claim immortality, O heart, 1285
 Crying against the eternal witnesses
 That thou and he are endless powers and last?
 One endless watches the inconscient scene
 Where all things perish, as the foam the stars.
 One is for ever! There no Suthyavân 1290
 Changing was born and there no Sâvithrî
 Claiming her ancient joy from grief. There Love
 Came never with his fretful soul of tears.
 No gaze, no heart that throbs, It needs no second
 To aid Its being and to share Its joys, 1295
 But lives apart immortally alone.
 If thou desirest immortality,
 Be thou alone. Sufficient to thy days
 Live in thyself. Forget the man thou lov'st;
 Think him the wandering vision of a dream." 1300
 But Sâvithrî replied for man to Death:
 "O Death who reasonest, I reason not;—
 Reason that doubts and breaks and cannot build.
 I am, I love, I will." Death answered her:
 "Know also! Knowing, thou shalt cease to love 1305
 And cease to will, delivered from thy heart.
 Then shalt thou rest for ever and be still,
 Consenting to the impermanence of things."
 But Sâvithrî replied for man to Death:
 "When I have loved for ever, I shall know. 1310
 I know my being is a flame self-lit;
 I know that knowledge is a vast embrace;
 And man was born beneath the monstrous stars
 Dowered with a mind and heart to conquer thee.
 For one who lives in us, came masked by death." 1315
 Death swayed his awful brows and ceased from speech;
 Through the long fading night by her compelled,

Line 1287: alternative to "powers" is "truths".

Gliding half-seen on their unearthly path,
 Phantasmal in the distance moved the three.
 But not for long the darkness' reign endured. 1320
 For as they moved all widened, all grew pale.
 The dismal twilight brightened now its hues
 And soon the sorrow of the Night was dead.
 Into a happy misty twilit world
 Surprised by a blind joy with gripping hands 1325
 She slipped,—vague fields, vague hedges, rainy trees,
 An air that dared not suffer too much light
 And scenes dim-hearted in a drifting haze
 Vague cattle white roamed glimmering through the mist;
 Vague spirits wandered with a bodiless cry; 1330
 Vague melodies touched the soul and fled pursued
 Into harmonious distances unseized
 Wishing no goal for their delightful steps.
 Through vague ideal lands strayed happily
 Or floated without footing or else paced 1335
 Led by a low far chanting as of gods
 Forms and half-luminous powers. In this sweet chaos
 A strange consistency of shapes prevailed;
 A victory of initial light was born,
 A spirit of purity and elusive presence 1340
 Of faery beauty and ungrasped delight
 That sweeter seemed than any ecstasy
 Earth or all-conquering heaven can quivering seize.
 Their bold formations are too absolute;
 Carved by an anguish of divine endeavour 1345
 They stand up sculptured on the eternal hills
 Or quarried from the living rocks of God
 Win immortality by perfect form.
 They are too clear, too great. This only touched
 The flying feet of exquisite desires, 1350
 Strange sweet beginnings of perfection, first
 Happy imaginings of a heavenly world,
 Which rest in a dim passion of pursuit
 Thrilled with their first far joys that will not cease.
 All in this world was shadowed forth, not limned, 1355
 Like shapes of colour in a tinted blur
 Or fugitive landscapes of suggested forms,

Line 1343: "vibrant" as alternative to "quivering".

A glimmering Eden full of faery gleams.
 Here in its magic lanes that fled her feet,
 Past vanishing hedges, hurrying hints of fields, 1360
 Assailed by sweetness of its voices dim,
 Treading she found no end. Then turned the god
 And cried, "Into a void eternity
 Escapes this world, for never has it lived.
 Shadowing out glories it shall never seize 1365
 It builds up images illusion feeds
 With cloudy colours and aerial hues
 To escape from the coarse cruelty of things.
 Hope begets hope, the old bright vainness new,
 Cloud gratifies happy cloud, phantom by phantom 1370
 Sweetly is chased. O child of earth, behold
 Thy infinite seeming of desires enjoyed!
 Vainly thou torturest, vain soul of man,
 The hour's delight to reach infinity's
 Long void and fill its gulfs. Chastise thy heart 1375
 With noble knowledge and unhood to see
 Thy nature raised into clear living heights,
 The Heaven-bird's view from unimagined peaks.
 But if thou give thy spirit to a dream
 Soon harsh necessity will smite thee awake. 1380
 Coarse, fleeting are the happiest human things.
 Thy passion is a sensual want refined,
 Thy love a hunger and one day shall cease
 By bitter treason, or wrath with cruel wounds
 Separate, or thy unsatisfied will to others 1385
 Depart, when first love's joy lies stripped and slain.
 Purest delight began and it shall end.
 Then shalt thou know thy heart no anchor swinging
 Thy happy soul moored in eternal seas.
 How can the winging aeons clamp their flight 1390
 To one, a helpless wanderer like thyself? Ah, cease!
 Vain are the cycles of thy brilliant mind.
 Renounce, forgetting hope and joy and tears,

Line 1366: there seems to be an alternative reading:

The soul builds images illusion feeds

Lines 1367-8: A variant has been attempted:

With misty colour and aerial hue

.. pictures form of what fair world may be

Other than the coarse cruelty of things.

Perhaps "That" was meant to fill the gap in the second line here?

Thy passionate nature in the bosom profound
 Where Love lies slumbering on the breasts of peace." 1395
 And Sâvithrî replied to the dim god:
 "Another language now thou usest, Death,
 Melting thy speech into harmonious pain.
 But I forbid thy voice to slay my soul.
 Allowed by Heaven and wonderful to man 1400
 Passion sweet fiery rhythms chants to Love,
 And when the strains are hushed to high-winged souls,
 Into empyreans vast its burning breath
 Survives beyond, the core of heavenly suns,
 A flame for ever pure. Surely I know 1405
 One day I shall behold my great sweet world
 Put off the dire disguises of the gods,
 Unveil from terror and disrobe from sin.
 One who was love and lover and beloved
 Is the sweet cause of all our bitter griefs. 1410
 From the bright vision of his soul a Child
 Eternal built himself a wondrous field
 And wove the measures of a marvellous dance.
 There in its circles and its magic turns
 Attracted he arrives, repelled he flees. 1415
 Bearing a sweet new face that is the old
 His bliss laughs to us or it calls concealed
 Like a far-heard, unseen, entrancing flute
 From moonlit branches in the throbbing woods
 Tempting our angry search and passionate pain. 1420
 In the wild devious promptings of his mind
 He tastes the honey of tears and puts off joy,
 Repenting, and has laughter and has wrath,
 And both are a broken music of the soul
 That seeks out reconciled its heavenly rhyme. 1425
 He for my heart was always Suthyavân.
 Has he not lain in wait for me through lives
 Unnumbered, in the thickets of the world
 Pursued me like a lion through the night
 And clasped me like a happy ruthless flame 1430
 And touched me like a soft persuading breeze,
 Sometimes with wrath and sometimes with sweet peace
 Desiring me since first the world began?
 And if there is a happier greater God,
 Then let him wear the face of Suthyavân 1435

And let his soul be one with him I love,
 So let him seek me that I may desire;
 Since one heart only beats within my breast
 And one God sits there throned. Advance, O Death,
 Beyond the phantom beauty of this world,
 Of its vague citizens I am not one,
 Nor has my heart consented to be foiled.
 I cherish, god, the fire and not the dream.”

1440

(To be continued)

Line 1443 has “there” as an alternative to “god”, with both the commas needing to be removed: actually the first comma alone stands deleted. The original version of the line was:

I cherish, O god, the fire and not the dream.

and stood without the line which precedes the present one. Looking at the state of the commas, one is left wondering whether the new “god” in place of the old “O god” was meant simply as a substitute or as part of a novel reading:

I cherish god the fire and not the dream.

But the non-capitalisation of the “g” gives one pause; for the small “g” goes always with a vocative term applied to Death in this context.

THE MOTHER ON THE CREATION OF AUROVILLE

FOR me now, things are no longer exclusive, not at all. I see very well the possibility of using the most opposite tendencies *at the same time*... It is not exclusive. I do not say: "Ah! no, not that!" No, no, no. All, all together. That is what I want: I want to be able to create a place where all the opposites can unite.

Unless that can be done... (*gesture of turning round and round*) it goes on and on and on.

31 December 1968

YESTERDAY—TODAY—TOMORROW

WORDS OF THE MOTHER

THE most dangerous thing for people to believe is that things cannot be worse for them.

Communism is of yesterday. The Communism of tomorrow will have the Divine as its centre.

28 December 1968

Before you take up the work of physical transformation, which is of all things the most difficult, you must have your inner consciousness firmly, solidly established in the Truth.

THE ONE THING NEEDFUL

SOME REMINDERS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

THE realisation of the Divine is the one thing needful and the rest is desirable only in so far as it helps or leads towards that or when it is realised, extends or manifests the realisation.

In speaking of the divine body I entered into some far-off speculations about what might become possible in the future evolution of it by means of a spiritual force, but obviously the possibilities could not be anything near or immediate, and I said clearly enough that we should have to begin at the beginning and not attempt anything out of the way. Perhaps I should have insisted more on present limitations, but that I should now make clear. For the immediate object of my endeavours is to establish spiritual life on earth and for that the first necessity must always be to realise the Divine; only then can life be spiritualised or what I have called the Life Divine be made possible. The creation of something that could be called a divine body could be only an ulterior aim undertaken as part of this transformation, as, obviously, the development of such a divine body as was visioned in these speculations could only come into view as the result of a distant evolution and need not alarm or distract anyone. It might even be regarded as a phantasy of some remotely possible future which might one day happen to come true.

To be a Yogi, a Sannyasi, a Tapaswi is not the object here. The object is transformation, and the transformation can only be done by a force infinitely greater than your own; it can only be done by being truly like a child in the hands of the Divine Mother.

If there is a refusal of the psychic new birth, a refusal to become the child new-born from the Mother, owing to attachment to intellectual knowledge or mental ideas or to some vital desire, then there will be a failure in the sadhana.

To want to be a Superman is a mistake. It only swells the ego. One can aspire for the Divine to bring about the supramental transformation, but that also should not be done till the being has become psychic and spiritualised by the descent of the Mother's peace, force, light and purity.

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

Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on The Mother (1953), pp. 421, 423-4, 490, 491, 631.

AN UNPUBLISHED FRAGMENT CONNECTED WITH *THE FUTURE POETRY*

The fragment reproduced below was found in a notebook used by Sri Aurobindo in 1920. Evidently intended for The Future Poetry, it is closely linked to the last chapter of that work, which was published in the Arya in July 1920. One might suppose that the fragment was intended to be part of the last chapter, or that it is the beginning of a new chapter that was never completed. The subject which the fragment hints at does not seem to have been given full treatment anywhere in The Future Poetry.

THE poetry of the future will be whatever

The poetry of the future will be unlike that of the past in one very important circumstance that in whatever languages it may be written, it will be more and more moved by the common mind and motives of all the human peoples. Mankind is now being drawn to a fundamental unity of thought and culture among all its racial and national differences to which there has been no parallel

GENERAL MACARTHUR, THE U.S.A. AND THE MOTHER

The *New York Times* recently reported from Washington a news-item which was reproduced in the Madras daily, the *Hindu* (p. 5) on 21 September:

Memorial which Revives a Controversy

Amid the boom of cannon and the beat of drums, President Reagan came to the Pentagon on a sunny Thursday afternoon to dedicate a memorial to the late General of the Army, Douglas MacArthur.

The President, accompanied by the General's widow, Mrs. Jean MacArthur who is 82, told a gathering of dignitaries and a parade of military men and women assembled in the north hall of the Pentagon that MacArthur was an authentic American hero.

The memorial corridor, like MacArthur's life, was not without controversy. Admirers of the General, who led American forces through the long island-to-island campaign from New Guinea to Okinawa in World War II, had been urging for several years that he be honored with a memorial corridor like those commemorating his contemporaries such as General of the Army, Dwight D. Eisenhower and General of the Army, George Catlett Marshall.

But the former Secretary of Defence, Mr. Harold Brown, refused, according to Pentagon officers, because MacArthur had been dismissed from his command during the Korean war for what Truman considered to have been insubordination.

The present Secretary of Defence, Mr. Caspar W. Weinberger, however, served under MacArthur during the Pacific campaign as an infantry platoon leader and later as an intelligence staff officer. He arranged for the \$150,000 memorial, the officials said, and on Thursday afternoon called MacArthur "a dauntless patriot and an extraordinary soldier".

This news-item must gladden the heart of every Aurobindonian. The Korean War of 1950-51, drew at its very beginning from Sri Aurobindo a message which has since become famous, to the Editor of *Mother India*, clarifying the world-importance of the U.S.A. making a stand against the pro-Stalin North Korean invaders and throwing into the balance all the help possible to give. The Mother always expressed a very high opinion of General MacArthur who had been put in charge of the defence of South Korea. She considered him one of the great military figures of history comparable to soldiers like Wellington.

There was also an appreciation of his bent of mind *vis-à-vis* Stalinist Communism and its force at work in Mao's China in the early days of Mao's triumph over Chiangkai-shek. As long as MacArthur was commanding the American forces in

Korea one might expect the right decisions in the necessary work of containing Stalin's ambition to get a hold over the entire world step by step after succeeding in the initial experiment in that country.

Truman sacked MacArthur for putting forth suggestions aggressive towards Red China which was at that time completely pro-Stalin and served as a base for the supply of electric power to North Korea besides sending out an unofficial army of a million Chinese "volunteers" against MacArthur's troops. MacArthur believed that readiness to strike by air beyond the Yalu River which formed the frontier between North Korea and China would best induce the latter to withdraw the volunteers and deter her from open future participation in the war, a participation which could lead to Russia coming into the picture against America and thereby swelling the hostilities to global proportions. Truman held that MacArthur's attitude was highly provocative in the international context and, if encouraged, would lead to a world-disaster.

The Editor of *Mother India* wrote a long article exposing the folly of Truman's act. In the whole field of journalism at the time, both in India and abroad, it was the only forthright expression which took up cudgels on behalf of the dismissed General. The stand taken was amply vindicated by subsequent events. The negotiations with North Korea went on for nearly nine months, during which America lost more lives than during the time when MacArthur had been in command. The North Koreans would not put their signatures for a cease-fire and a rational agreement but went on prolonging the discussions. At last the then Secretary of State, Mr. John Dulles, sent word to them through a neutral party that if they did not sign he would order bombing of the Yalu electric plant—just as MacArthur had threatened to do. The documents were immediately signed.

Soon after Truman had taken away the American forces from MacArthur the Mother gave to the Editor of *Mother India* a paradoxical-sounding thought-provoking message on the situation. On 17 April 1951 she declared:

"We are sorry to say that the dismissal of MacArthur may well be one more big step towards a new world-wide war."

NIRODBARAN'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH SRI AUROBINDO

THE COMPLETE SET

November 20, 1935

Dr. Nibarān says he doesn't at all believe that R had anything to do with the cure.

That is the allopath's prejudice.

I quite believe that homeopathy has a place. I've heard from Mother to that effect and, from other authoritative sources, of some miraculous cures by it.

Dr. Valle himself, who is an allopath and not likely to be bamboozled, has studied homeopathy and uses it in many cases.

R has enormous self-confidence and a capacity to create confidence in others.

That is his real strength along with the magnetism and power of suggestion. The man is a tower of vital strength and a dynamo of vital force but with all the turbidity of a vital force.

I can't altogether dismiss his treatment as rubbish and make-believe, because you yourself have said that if the diagnosis is correct and appropriate medicines are administered the Force can work quickly and effectively.

Yes, certainly. On the contrary when there is a grave error in the treatment as in R's encouragement of the bilious vomiting and of the orange-fed hyper-acidity, then the Force has to fight that as well as the illness, and it becomes difficult.

I hear you have said that it's because S surrendered himself to the Mother that he was saved.

? No, certainly not. I never said that—to whom should I say it? Besides, he was not saved till now. And S's surrendering would be a greater miracle than anything else.

I've learnt something from R—calmness, self-confidence and faith.

Right—that is the thing every physician should have.

If my ego is a "chubby chap", R's seems a giant.

Pretty big at any rate.

But is such size of ego a sign of greatness?

Not always, sometimes only a sign of great egoism.

I can't say I have done miraculous cures, because I haven't.

Yes, but even if R had not done miracle-cures, he would say he had and people would believe him.

All that about S's surrender is rubbish, he is not surrendered at all. But the man has a belief in Yoga-force and that helps; only he had gone so wrong that at first his body was not responding. Even I was not able to put much force, the contrary forces surrounding him were so thick that the higher Shakti refused to act except in a half-hearted way. I was hoping you and Becharlal being accustomed to him would pull him out as the old Doctor who knew the right way with him had done—in spite of the greater danger this time, with the limited help I could give. It was only when the heart began to misbehave seriously that, as often happens, in response to the danger a big Force began to come down and S's body also responded—it was that response that saved him, not any surrender. At the same time I resolved to give R a chance because energy and élan were needed and he had them, also I had certain [proof of] how effective he had been in one or two cases of which I had knowledge.

All the same I think the Force can take more credit than R's medicines, although the latter were very useful, one might say an indispensable assistance. Yet it was whenever a big Force came in that S made a bound forward and each time on the lines indicated by the Force, first the heart's recovery, next the deliverance of the liver, third the overcoming of the hyper-acid excesses. R was an obstacle as well as a help,—twice. First, in his confounded decision to encourage "yellow fever"—the bile had to be cleared out of course, but not in that dangerous way—next in his "lime juice" excesses, the orange juice was useful, but frantically overdone. As soon as he dropped his first mistake, the bile set itself right—as soon as he dropped his second to some extent and administered orange juice and medicine reasonably, the rest ameliorated. That is at least how I read it. And if so, it was because the Force got a chance to work straight—helped and not impeded. Now the only thing is to confirm the cure and convalescence. I hope there will be no farther difficulties. But that is R's weakness, he is as energetic in going wrong as in going right and his colossal bluff and bunkum in trying to show himself in the right even when he knows he had made a mistake or rather most when he knows, that doesn't help at all. There!

November 21, 1935

I'm glad to announce that R has again become active. He has taken up the suggestion of milk and S is digesting it well.

That is good. I suppose it is the best diet if he can digest it.

Dr. Valle was right about S's case being ulceration of the duodenum and inflammation of the gall-bladder.

After so careful an examination and with his long experience he was not likely to be wrong.

Now all symptoms are subsiding. Pt. will soon become all right.

What the deuce is pt., O Aeschylus?

If you could induce the "big Force" to come down once more, we shall see him safely landed on the shore of convalescence.

Shall try, but that kind of Force comes when it wants. To simulate it gives only small results.

What about R's subtle suggestion to take up the case of B now?

A subtle silence.

November 22, 1935

R gave S soup with a very strong dose of pepper and ginger which was burning his throat.

Mother has told Dyuman now that pepper, ginger etc. should not be put.

My mistake was that I didn't ask Dyuman what soup he intended to give and I should have tasted it myself.

Yes, it is better to see to these things. It is difficult for the kitchen in these darshan days to do things specially, so they must be giving the soup of the vegetables cooked. But all vegetables are not proper for an invalid, esp. an invalid of this illness. So it is better if you see to that. R is of no use for this, he seems to be entirely ignorant. He actually asked for soup of spinach. But spinach water is poisonously unwholesome

and spinach is never boiled in its own water which is carefully thrown away. This is done more than once even so that no trace of the ...¹ shall remain. Then fancy soup of spinach—S would have sailed on it to Paradise. But R's syllogism was simple. Greens are good for health. Spinach is a powerful green. So spinach soup must be powerfully good for Sarat's health. You see how logic can mislead!

Do you want me to write about S, tomorrow being the eve of the Darshan?

Not tomorrow evening. No correspondence allowed then.

November 25, 1935

S is now almost all right. I've nothing to say against the treatment except that R gave the patient potato salad supposed to be prasad. Fortunately the patient vomited it at once.

Merciful Heavens!

So shall I take leave now and resume my hospital attendance?

Yes.

Well, Sir, has your brand new formula [in reference to the letter of 17.8.35] worked out well? Has anything descended? From my own experience I am unable to say anything whatsoever.

My formula is working out rapidly, but it has nothing to do with any Darshan descent. It is my private and particular descent, if you like, and that's enough for me at present. The tail of the Supermind is descending, descending, descending. It is only the tail at present, but where the tail can pass, the rest will follow.

After so much expectation everything seemed to me so quiet, homely and comely. It seems as if the Darshan passed away long ago.

Quiet was all I wanted—there were many alarms and excursions. Just before that it looked as if the 24th would be a day of mud, whirlpools and tempests (in certain quarters of course). However all quieted down by magic and everything was peaceful, peaceful.

I hope others felt the Force, the Descent. Some say there was a great descent; others say that nothing came down.

¹ Word illegible.

How do they know, either of them? Personal experience? It was a personal descent or a personal non-descent.

Some say there was so much resistance that Sri Aurobindo could not do much in spite of himself.

Didn't try, sir, so that's bosh. The attempt to bring a great general descent having only produced a great ascent of subconscious mud, I had given up that, as I already told you. At present, I am only busy with transformation of overmind (down to the subconscious) into supermind. When that is over, I shall see if I can beat everyone with the tail of the supermind or not. At present I am only trying to prevent people from making hysterical, subconscious asses of themselves so that I may not be too much disturbed in my operations—not yet with too much success.

November 26, 1935

I went to see S at about 6 p.m. He whispered to me that R is overfeeding him with things that one wouldn't venture to give. In consequence he had a heated condition of the stomach, vomited copiously.

Why did he not object to being stuffed like that if what he say is true? When the old Doctor was treating him, S was always fighting to eat but found the Doctor adamant. Now he has got what he wanted—a doctor who will stuff him to repletion. I don't want to interfere, for if I do, R will want to throw up the case.

R told me that S hasn't been happy all day because he took coconut water in the morning without telling him! You can see, judge and act.

I can't if the patient himself swallows without a murmur.

Dr. Manilal prescribes for J's asthma, sneezing, eczema etc. thyroid extract, adrenaline, calcium-lactate, milk injection for protein shock. He wants your opinion.

It sounds rather formidable. I can't pronounce any opinion. It is your business to opine.

November 28, 1935

N dropped in, complaining of urgency of micturition. Dr. M and myself found nothing serious. N wants a microscopic examination of urine to exclude T.B. bacilli. I told him that it is very difficult to do this for we have to inject a guinea-pig. Shouldn't we avoid it?

Unless it is imperative. I think I prefer not to awaken the suggestion of T.B. in the breast of N—also to spare the harmless guinea-pig. Let us rather put our trust in enema and pepsin mixture.

(This last was recommended by Dr. Manilal.)

ƒ is being lactated and adrenalised with some good effect.

Lactate away then.

I am wallowing again in the morass of the 3 Ds, now that I am free from my attendance on S.

Stand up, man, and don't wallow! Stand up and fix your third eye on the invisibly descending Tail of the Supramental.

If I could apply myself to some pursuits that would be obligatory!

How to make them obligatory unless you do something which will take you to jail!

Interest in poetry and in reading has dwindled, and now I'm on the way to be a "sub-conscient ass".

Why not become a conscient one?

UDAR'S COMMENT APROPOS OF NIRODBARAN'S REJOINDER TO A FOOTNOTE OF SATPREM'S IN THE *AGENDA*, VOL. XI

I MUST congratulate Nirodbaran on his article in the October 1981 issue of *Mother India*. He has written with strength and dignity and well expressed the pain he feels at the way things have been misrepresented by the editor of The Mother's *Agenda*. He has also clearly shown how a lot of material which, as we know quite well, The Mother would never have permitted to be published and even some which was expressly forbidden by Her has been broadcast with arrogance and a complete indifference to Her wishes. I should like here to go a little further in the subject than Nirodbaran.

I may draw attention to a fact which is not generally known. The first copy of the transcript of The Mother's tape-recorded talks used to be kept in safe custody in Her own room and, pointing to the place where it was, She gave instructions to some veteran disciples not to let anything be published without careful scrutiny as to what was suitable or not for publication. This copy disappeared from The Mother's room and what was meant to belong to the Ashram Trustees is no longer there.

The Ashram Trustees have unanimously and distinctly written to the editor of the *Agenda* that all the words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are the sole copyright of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust formed by the Mother Herself and so he has no right to publish the *Agenda* without permission from the Trust. He has ignored this declaration, as he knows that the Ashram will not, of itself, initiate legal proceedings. But curiously, when the Journal of *Sri Aurobindo's Action* started to publish certain chosen extracts from the *Agenda* in English translation, he is known to have consulted legal opinion on proceeding against it for copyright infringement. I really hoped that such proceedings would be started, as then we would defend ourselves and expose the whole racket. But, unfortunately, no action was taken: he seems to have been advised not to proceed.

One may wonder with what face the present editor could have proceeded against *Sri Aurobindo's Action*. The *Agenda* which he is publishing contains an amount of material which originally appeared with The Mother's sanction in the Ashram's *Bulletin of the International Centre of Education*, with copyright vested in its editor and publisher, Nolini Kanta Gupta, and subsequently it was brought out in copyrighted book-form. Without reference to the copyright-holder and without any permission being taken, it is impudently appropriated and set before the public again.

I shall now give an extract from the introduction to the *Agenda*, Vol. I (1951-60), which will show the editor's hostility towards the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and its members and his arrogance as well as his ugly intentions. Here are his words, translated officially by his own people into English. I have only italicised some phrases to

better focus the reader's mind on the drift of the extract:

This mystery we call Mother, for She never ceased being a mystery right to her ninety-fifth year, and to this day still challenges us from the other side of a wall of invisibility and keeps us floundering fully in the mystery—with a smile. She always smiles. But the mystery is not solved.

Perhaps this AGENDA is really an endeavor to solve the mystery in the company of *a certain number of fraternal iconoclasts*.

Where, then, was "The Mother of the Ashram" in all this? What is even "the Ashram", if not *a spiritual museum of the resistance to Something Else*. They were always—and are still today—reciting their catechism *beneath a little flag*: they are the owners of the new truth. But the new truth is laughing in their faces and leaving them high and dry at the edge of *their little stagnant pond*. They are under the illusion that Mother and Sri Aurobindo, twenty-seven or four years after their respective departures, could keep on repeating themselves—but then they would not be Mother and Sri Aurobindo! They would be fossils. The truth is always on the move. It is with those who dare, who have courage, and above all *the courage to shatter all effigies*, to demystify, and to go TRULY to the conquest of the new.

From this extract one can judge for oneself the intentions of the editor of the *Agenda* without much explanation from me. I have only a few things to point out. What is the "little flag" that he ridicules? It is the flag of The Mother over Golconde that the Mother said should always be kept flying. Now it becomes a subject for fun by this person. Then, who are the "fraternal iconoclasts" and what are the "effigies" that they will "shatter"? The most important effigy, in the sense of a memorial image, we have at the Ashram is the Samadhi of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. Does that company of "fraternal iconoclasts" propose to break it up? Are some of them planning this? Are they already installed in the Ashram as a fifth column?

AT THE FEET OF THE MOTHER AND SRI AUROBINDO

RECOLLECTIONS BY SAHANA

(Continued from the issue of November 24, 1981)

IT WAS perhaps in 1940 that the Mother and Sri Aurobindo decided to turn our sadhana into a distinctly collective activity. I am quoting here a portion of a letter of the Mother in which she has spoken in general about collective sadhana:

“Truly speaking, this is the first question that arose when I met Sri Aurobindo. Should we do an intensive individual sadhana withdrawing from the world, that is to say, having no contact with others any more, and arrive at the goal: then, thereafter, deal with others. Or should one allow all those others to come who have the same aspiration, let the group form itself in a natural and spontaneous way and march all together towards the goal? The two possibilities were there.

“The decision was not a mental choice, not at all. Quite naturally, spontaneously the group formed and asserted itself as an imperative necessity. There was no choice to be made.

“And once you start that way, it is done, you have to go right through to the end.

“If you want to do the work all alone, it is absolutely impossible to do it in a total way, for the entire physical being, however complete it may be, even if it is of an altogether higher quality, even if it had been created for a very special work, can never be but partial and limited. It represents only one truth, one law of the world; it may be a very complex law, but it is only one law—what is called Dharma in India—and the totality of transformation cannot be done through that alone, through one single body.

“That is why spontaneously the multiplicity has been created.

“You can attain all alone your own perfection. You can become in your consciousness infinite and perfect. The inner realisation has no limits. But the external realisation, on the contrary, is necessarily limited and therefore if you want to have a general action a minimum number of persons are required.”¹

Although collective sadhana had been there in principle, 1940 began a special new chapter in our Ashram life. Before this, we were a small group of sadhaks, occupied with our individual sadhana in a quiet and comparatively secluded manner. Now, we began to move forward hand in hand along with all others on the wide open royal road. The Mother and Sri Aurobindo, after they had taken this decision, flung open the door of the Ashram to all seekers, and the number of pilgrims went on increasing. I could perceive very clearly that a vast and varied new world was being created, a new life with a new consciousness.

¹ Published in the February 1960 *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.*

“Whatever you have said, will happen, because it is true—it will be
 realised in time,
 Every word of it will come true, the whole world
 Will see on that day—your promise is not a mere word,
 A vain utterance; Time will prove its prophetic truth.”

The life that we lead here is not for seeing the truth; it is a life of becoming the truth. So one has to become to some extent in order to be able to see.

After paying my homage and pranam at the feet of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo let me now conclude the reminiscence-part of the old days of my Ashram life with a description of my first Darshan-experience of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo when I arrived in Pondicherry.

I started by the noon-train from Bangalore to Pondicherry on 21st November, 1928. Reaching Madras, I passed the remaining few hours at the Egmore Station. My mind was in a terrible turmoil. On the one hand it was ecstatic, swayed by the buoyant hope of having the Darshan of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo; on the other hand a sense of mixed excitement and anxiety in the extreme eagerness to come in close contact with such a great Power; on the one hand the dream of taking up an entirely unknown life, on the other the anxiety of falling into a quite different milieu. All these created a kind of pressure under which I found myself living. At 9:30 p.m. the train left for Pondicherry. Somehow my being became collected and the night passed in a sort of meditative trance. Next morning at 5 a.m. we arrived at the Pondicherry Station. It was still dark—the morning star was shining bright. Some few lights were dimly burning in the station.

The way to Pondicherry came to an end—leaving behind the past life. I got down. It was 22nd November. In tune with the first awakening steps of the dawn, my dawning life too in Pondicherry stepped forward towards the Ashram. Two sadhaks from the Ashram had come to receive me; one of them had long hair running down his back. Putting me in an unusual-looking carriage, they themselves walked by my side. Such carriages were called “Push-push” (French “Pousse-pousse”) because they were pushed from behind by the driver. They had some resemblance to the old phaeton carriages of Calcutta, which were perhaps a little higher and wider. The Push-push rode on two wheels under it and had one smaller wheel in front, connected with an iron rod which extended into a handle for the passenger to turn according to the direction he wanted to follow.

The two sadhaks left me at my lodging and said that Nolini would come to see me at 7:30 a.m. I was given the front room facing the street in the present Embroidery department of the Mother. On the other side, was the “Main Building” where the Mother and Sri Aurobindo used to live. I could see the windows of the Mother’s house through my window. The house gave me a great surprise, for I had expected that I would have to live in a thatched cottage and practise severe austerities. Instead, I found a fine *pucca* building open on all sides, a room furnished with a cot, table,

chair and glass-almirah and a carpet spread on the cot. It seemed the Mother had sent that carpet from her own place. I was deeply touched by this unusual consideration on her part and I felt I had received something indefinable from her. I was quietly thinking of her when Nolini came with another person having long hair, a moustache and beard, a cheerful face and kind sweet eyes. His talk at once gave me the impression of a witty person—humour was as it were his natural manner of expression. There was not much talk, but it was very pleasant. He was introduced to me as “Amrita”. I had already heard of Nolini, especially as a famous writer of essays. But his appearance was quite unlike what I had imagined. I had thought he would be a man of impressive appearance with a well-developed body and a grave poise, but what I saw was a slim and quiet man; his forehead was broad, eyes deep and uncommon. He said at once, “Mother will see you at 9:30 a.m. Come a little earlier, I shall wait for you at the gate.” I perceived that he was a man of few words.

“The Mother had called me, she would see me and I would go and see her.” I was entirely possessed by this thought. Within I was as quiet as a cloudless sky. I was sitting with my doors closed and did not want to see anyone. But there was a knock and I opened. It was about 8:30 a.m. A female servant had brought my breakfast in a covered enamel dish. The quantity of food was staggering. A large bowl of “phoscao”—a kind of French beverage, more tasty than cocoa—6 or 7 slices of toasted bread and one banana. It seemed too much for one person’s breakfast. There was a water-jug and a tumbler in the room—everything appeared to be well-ordered. The servant left after doing her work of sweeping and cleaning.

It had never occurred to my mind that I would have to do my sadhana in such comfort and ease. There was a deep satisfaction in seeing everything neat and clean. Even the brass knob of the door was shining.

As soon as I stepped into the Ashram, I felt that the atmosphere there was pervaded with some other element. The difference was palpable. There was such a calm silence everywhere that the mind of itself turned inward. Though at the first glance one could see nothing beyond the common, yet behind it an imprint of uncommonness could be perceived by a seeing eye. The inmates seemed to be quite contentedly busy with something or other as if they did not belong to this world and their dealing was with some invisible domain.

A little before 9.30 a.m. I arrived at the house where the Mother and Sri Aurobindo were living. Nolini met me at the main gate and led me to the room on the first floor to meet the Mother. As we were quietly climbing these steps, in the surrounding stillness even a slight noise startled me. We entered a room on the right-hand side and saw at the end a small room somewhat dark owing to a hanging curtain. The Mother was indistinctly seen sitting on a sofa in a cross-legged posture. Her face was slightly turned to one side and the right hand held a veil over her head. As I stood in front my eyes fell upon her and at once I could feel that though she had a human body she was not human. I was seeing a figured Divinity. My two hands folded by themselves and I, in that attitude, stood looking at that divine image with an enchan-

ted gaze. She smiled and lifted her eyes towards me. What a smile, what a look! That it could not be of any human being was clear to me. I bowed down at her feet; she laid her hand on my head. Her touch poured into my heart something that acted like a soothing balm, it seemed to melt my whole being into a cool delight. When she took off her hand, I sat near her feet. Again she touched my head and my eyes closed of themselves. Then the consciousness began to rise above; at the same time a power descended, and passing through the head it spread itself in all the chakras of the body, in all the nerves. I felt that the body was a vessel which was getting so filled up that it began to swell and become hard; the body went on expanding—that was my feeling. The Mother was touching my head from time to time. Perhaps she wanted me to open my eyes, but I could not. Every touch of hers made me go deeper. At last she put one of her fingers for a while on the middle of my brow and I opened my eyes. Still I was under a spell and my eyes were closing. Suddenly I saw that she was steadily looking at them. Her look seemed to penetrate into the very depths of me, she was transfusing something into my very core. A frail body, yet what eyes—as if a source of all power! Since then, I have witnessed many varieties of her eyes' expression. She now asked me if I had anything to say. I told her several things of my life and as if with rapt attention she heard them. At the end she drew me with her two hands towards her bosom and kissed my head. Words are impotent to express that touch. After a while she lifted my face and gazed at me—a divine smile on her face, a supreme assurance in her look. She had accepted me. My eyes were overflowing with tears.

As I descended the stairs to go back to my home, a few unknown faces were curious to know my impression of the Mother. But I was in no mood to speak, and without giving any reply I walked to my room and locked it from inside. Tears started pouring, a flood of tears. God knows where they came from and my whole body began to shake with this flood. All the time I felt I saw the Mother—her look, her smile floated before my eyes, giving an intense sensation in the heart and evoking a cry from it. I did not know why the cry had arisen, I only knew there was a hitherto unsavouried satisfaction in it.

Next day at 5 p.m. the Mother came to my room, having already given previous notice of it. I had kept for her a chair beautifully arranged, in which she sat. I bowed at her feet. She asked me to sing. I sang a devotional song of Mirabai: "Lord, keep me as thy servant." She wanted to hear a second song and I sang about four of Mirabai's "bhajans". Before the Mother departed, I again did pranam. She told me very affectionately that I should not hesitate to inform her in case there was any discomfort or if I needed anything. She seemed the very embodiment of Grace and my entire being was full to the brim with love and gratitude.

The next day was 24th November, the day when the Ashram would have Sri Aurobindo's Darshan. From our very childhood we had heard his name and since then was born in our hearts a spontaneous love and devotion for him. In our life he had taken his seat. We learnt to adore him and offer our soul's deepest homage. We

had heard that he was a very great man, a friend and benefactor of mankind. His uncommon qualities of character, his supreme intellect and unparalleled love and self-sacrifice for the country—all these had been like fairy tales which had filled the air and which we children used to hear with avid attention and rapture. Now he came into my life as my Guru.

The atmosphere of the Ashram had changed. A good number of people had come from outside for the Darshan. The inmates were all a picture of brightness and their faces shone with an intense glow.

The Darshan was to take place at 7 a.m. in the same room where the Mother used to meet people. In front of the staircase was a board on which the names of the pilgrims and their Darshan-times were written. A carpet had been spread in the adjacent hall for people to sit and meditate and await their turn for the Darshan. Complete silence reigned everywhere. Incense and flower-fragrance helped to kindle the flame of aspiration. The pilgrims with flowers and garlands in their hands were silently going up to the temple to have their Darshan of the Deity, and were returning with an inexpressible radiance on their faces. Then came my turn.

It was the rule that one had to wait on the last step of the staircase until the preceding man had come back after the Darshan. As soon as the man before me entered inside, I took my stand on the highest step and glimpsed Sri Aurobindo sitting majestically on a sofa slightly leaning against it—bright and immobile like the Himalaya. He was of a fair complexion and wore a white silk *dhoti* and *chaddar*; the bust was half covered and the hair and beard mixed together hung down to the chest. As I came near what a serene, collected and eye-enrapturing figure it was that I saw! All luminous, the Mother was sitting on his right side. As I bowed down to her, she placed her two hands on my head and poured her ineffable honeyed smile as her blessings, as I found when I looked up. Then my eyes turned to the feet of Sri Aurobindo. How beautiful they were! I laid my head on them and did not want to get up at all! My whole being prostrated itself in a complete and secure reliance. I marked a strange thing: when I was coming up for Darshan, my heart was palpitating with an unknown excitement, as if someone was striking it with a hammer, but the moment I saw him from a distance and stood before him and put my head on his feet, a totally different experience took place instead. Slightly leaning forward, he put his right hand on my head. Oh, how soft was the touch! I could not say what magic was in the touch or what I expected from it, but the fact was that I received something inconceivable which I had not received anywhere else, and that touch awoke an intense eagerness to give myself without the least reserve, free from all bondage. As I looked at his eyes, I could not turn away from his gaze, and the very bottom of some immeasurable sea was, as it were exposed to my vision. He then lowered his sight and I got up and turned to go. As to how I found myself back in my room or how the whole day passed, I had no idea. That image of eye-entrancing beauty filled my entire being.

At last, I had had his Darshan for which I had craved and brooded nights and days. I decided that if I could not take up his yoga, life would not be worth carry-

ing on. To reach him alone, I had launched on a perilous voyage across a shoreless ocean. Whenever I thought of God, it was Sri Aurobindo's face that came to the front again and again. And now at last I had obtained his Darshan.

Was it as a guru?

"No," my soul assured me, "Sri Aurobindo is more than a guru."

Was it as a great seer or a great yogi?

"No," was the reply, "Sri Aurobindo is not even that."

As a creator of Purna Yoga?

"Even if it be so he is not that alone."

As what then?

"Only as Sri Aurobindo."

Sri Aurobindo is Sri Aurobindo. He does not fall into any category. He is one without a second. He is only Sri Aurobindo.

And Sri Aurobindo is my only refuge.

(To be continued)

(Translated by Nirodbaran from the Bengali)

THE PRAYER FOR LIGHT

The dawn unveils the One Supreme,
 The Lord of Light, Delight and Love,
 The souls of flowers on symphony's wings
 Ascend to receive the One above.
 The nymphs of light begin to dance
 With the waves of joy in fond embrace,
 In rhythmic cadence the footsteps fall
 To receive from above the descending grace.
 The Lord peeps out from the aureate arc
 To ascend the eastern crimson stair;
 The Earth displays her tears of joy
 To be kissed away by His smiling care.
 The prayer of the Earth for Light though mute
 Is answered by the Soul of souls, the Absolute.

BHANUSHANKAR BHATT

THE STORY OF A SOUL

BY HUTA

(Continued from the issue of November 24, 1981)

The Mother's Message

This is the
interesting story of
how a being succeeds
the Divine Life



5

ON New Year's Day 1956, the Mother sent me a lovely card with a painting on it of a snow-white swan flapping its wings in an ocean in order to rise above it. The whole picture was indeed symbolic. She wrote :

“À Huta,
Bonne Année.”

Sri Aurobindo has described in his Centenary Edition, Volume 23, p. 976, the significance of the swan:

“The Swan is the Indian symbol of the individual soul, the central being, the divine part which is turned towards the Divine, descending from there and ascending to it.”

I also love to quote one of Sri Aurobindo’s poems from the Cent. Ed., Vol. 5, p. 568:

“...One with the Eternal, live in his infinity,
Drowned in the Absolute, found in the Godhead,
Swan of the supreme and spaceless ether wandering winged through the
universe,
Spirit immortal.”

The same day the Mother distributed this Message to people at the ‘Prosperity’:

1956

“The greatest victories are the least noisy
The manifestation of a new world is not proclaimed by beat of drum.”

The touching explanation the Mother gave about the Message is in her Centenary Ed., Vol. 8, pp. 9 & 10:

“This means perhaps something very simple: that it is better to let things happen without speaking about them. If you ask me, I think this is what it means: that it is much better to say nothing about what will happen before it happens. Otherwise it becomes what I call ‘beat of drum’, what could be called publicity.

“It is like those who ask, ‘What will it be like?’ We shall see! Wait, at least we should get a surprise!... And I reply, ‘I know nothing about it!’ For I put myself immediately in the consciousness of the world as it is, to which is announced that extraordinary things are going to happen, and which is quite incapable of imagining them—for as I told you once, if one begins to imagine them it means they are *already* there. Before you can imagine something, it has to exist, otherwise you cannot imagine it.

“Yes, in our higher being we can have a very clear, very exact, very luminous perception of what it is. But if one comes down into the material consciousness, one has to say, ‘Well, I know nothing about it.’ When it is there, I shall tell you what it’s

like—and probably I won't even need to tell you, you will be able to see it. I hope you will be among those who are able to see it. For, there again, there are some who won't be able.

“And so, what's the good of it? What is the use of going round telling people, ‘It is there, you know, it is like this’? They will reply, as in that play which was staged here: ‘But I can see nothing!’ Do you remember, it was in *Le Sage*? Don't you remember that in *Le Sage* the messenger says that the Divine is there listening to you, that He is present? And then someone replies, ‘But I don't see Him!’ It is like that.

“It is like those people who come to visit the Ashram and say, ‘But there is no spirituality here!’... How could they see it? With what organs?

“But still I do hope that when something manifests, you will be able to see it.

“Naturally, if all of a sudden there were luminous apparitions or if the outer physical forms changed completely, well, then, I think even a dog or a cat or anything whatsoever would notice it. But that will take time, it can't happen right now. It can't happen right now, it is farther off, for a much later time. Many great things will take place before that, and they will be much more important than that, mark my words.

“For, indeed, that is only the flower which blossoms. But before it blossoms, the principle of its existence must be there in the root of the plant.”

Perhaps the Message was the bright hint of what would take place on 29th February 1956—The manifestation of the Supramental Force, Light and Consciousness.

When I went to the Mother to receive the Message, as usual she bestowed on me her solicitude and affectionate blessings.

After the day's activities, at night once again I looked at the symbolic card which the Mother had sent to me. I lapsed into a happy reverie of getting wings to attain the New World.

But the more I tried to rise above the dark sea of unconsciousness, the more I was tossed about by the huge waves of the lower elements. I fell ill because of terrible resistance in some parts of my being which refused to turn to the Mother's Light. When I wrote to her about this, she answered:

“I am very sorry indeed that you are still feeling unwell. But I am convinced your case is not a case for doctors and medicines. And however much you try to get relieved by these exterior means it will not succeed.

“There is in your consciousness some tight knot or habit that opens the door again and again to the attacks. It is that knot that must be loosened, and then you will get a true and lasting relief.

“I am working to loosen the knot, but as it is resisting strongly, it may take a little time yet.

“So keep patience and courage. Finally we shall succeed.

“With my love and blessings.”

The inner struggle went on unceasingly—I was like a pendulum swinging between smiles and tears. The Mother alone was aware of what I had been going through. She sent me on the 3rd the book, *The Life Divine*, along with a card saying:

“My dear little child,

Here is the Life Divine. In the classes it is understood that those who do not have the book must ask for it. But I suppose you did not know.

“With my love and blessings.”

Now the Mother was translating certain chapters of *The Life Divine*.

As a matter of fact, I understood nothing at that time, but much later I read the book. It fascinated me beyond bounds.

The prayers of my soul never stopped and in answer to one of them the Mother wrote:

“I had written some reply to your letter yesterday, but I see by the letter you gave me in the evening that although I had no time to send the letter, you had quite well received my answer—which is quite a good thing.

“And now, I have only to say that with all my heart I grant your prayer to be a good and humble child of mine and I will always help you to become truly mine.

“My love and force are with you always.”

My innermost heart aspired for the Truth alone but my outer being was completely enmeshed in the falsehood.

Once again I received a letter from my family asking whether I required anything. I informed the Mother. She replied:

“You did quite well to write to me what these people told you. In answer you can write to them that personally you need nothing, but the work being done in the Ashram is a very big work and a lot of money is required for it. So if they feel like sending you something you will be glad to offer it to me on their behalf.

“With my love and blessings.”

So with the Mother’s approval, I wrote to my people. They sent me Rs. 1,250. Rs. 250 were to be my pocket money and Rs. 1000 were for general expenses. I, however, wished to offer Rs. 1000 to the Mother on behalf of my family. From Rs. 250 I wanted the Mother to have Rs. 150. I wrote to her about this. She answered on 4th January:

“As I know you are happy to give, I shall accept the Rs. 150 and keep them for myself.... But your parents have told positively that an account must be opened in the bank in your name, and they would be displeased if it were not

done. So on the Rs. 1000 for general expenditure I shall take Rs. 150 and open in the United Commercial Bank (my bank) an account in *your name*. They will send you papers to sign, so that you can negotiate this account when you wish to do so. Like that everybody will be satisfied.

“I hope your health is all right today.”

I was bewildered. I wrote back to her explaining that I had no intention of opening an account in my name. My parents had probably acted as they had, because they had felt that I was very young and they had been worried about my future. It was not important anyway. However, I would take Rs. 100/- from the Mother and with the rest she could do as she pleased. At once she responded:

“All right, my little child, I shall do as you like and not open an account for you. To tell the truth it is better like that—and we shall speak frankly to your family.

“With my love to my sweet little Huta, blessings.”

My family had already turned towards the Mother, so they understood her. Also they were kind enough to send me pocket money. The Mother wrote:

“My child, I always felt that your people were very nice and this is one more proof of it. The Divine Grace and blessings are always with them to help and protect them in all circumstances.

“Love and blessings to you my child.”

*

In the evening of the 7th January I stood with others near the French class, waiting for the Mother. She came smiling and secretly gave me a tiny red flower which she had brought in her closed hand. I kept looking at it during the lesson. I did not know its significance and wondered why the Mother had given it to me so mysteriously. Next day she replied.

“My dear little child,

“The little red flower I gave you yesterday signifies ‘The Divine’s help’ and when giving it I wanted to tell you that the loving Divine’s help was always with you.

“There is no doubt that you are becoming more and more conscious and it brings much hope that soon you will be free from your troubles.

“My love is always with you—it never leaves you, not even for a moment and my blessings too.”

During the daily distribution of sweets or groundnuts, the Mother's expression would change constantly for each one according to his or her needs. Sometimes she smiled, sometimes she became serious and even looked severe. Indeed, none except her knew what she was doing.

Once the Mother told me that she saw human beings through and through as one sees water in a glass. She also told me that when people came towards her for blessings, she knew before they reached her their past, present and future, along with their intention in coming to her. The Mother tells in one of her talks—in the *Bulletin*, November 1969, p. 49—how she knows all about a person :

“Not merely by looking into his eyes. I know the character of a man by self-identification. And then externally, if you so want, the eyes are like doors or windows: there are some who are open and you enter within, deep inside and you can see whatever happens there. There are others who are just a little open, and a little closed; there are others with a veil, a kind of screen; there are still others who are locked and bolted; these doors are so closed that they cannot be opened. Well, it is an indication even so; it gives an indication as to the degree of the inner life, the sincerity and the transparency of the being. So, I enter by those doors that are open and I identify myself with the person within. And I see what he sees, I understand what he understands, I think what he thinks and I could do what he does (but generally I withhold myself!) and thus I come to know what people are like. And it does not take time; it is quickly done....”

Truly, the Mother's blue-grey eyes, which were of a changing colour, seemed to look right through a person and to read exactly what the person before her was actually thinking. She also had the habit of following people with her eyes as they went away from her.

I cannot resist quoting the Mother's own experience, which was stated in her *Cent. Ed.*, Vol. 9 pp. 299-300:

“...We must rise above, spring up into Light and Harmony or fall back, down into the simplicity of healthy unperverted animal life.

“But those who cannot be lifted up, those who refuse to progress, will automatically lose the use of the mental consciousness and will fall back to a sub-human level.

“I shall tell you about an experience I had which will help you to understand better. It was shortly after the supramental experience of the third of February [1958: experience of the ‘Supramental Ship’] and I was still in the state in which things of the physical world seemed so far off, so absurd. A group of visitors had asked permission to come to me and one evening they came to the Playground. They were rich people, that is, they had more money than they needed to live on. Among them there was a woman in a sari; she was very fat, her

sari was arranged so as to hide her body. As she was bending down to receive my blessings, one corner of the sari came open, uncovering a part of her body, a naked belly—an enormous one. I felt a real shock.... There are corpulent people who have nothing repugnant about them, but I suddenly saw the perversion, the rottenness that this belly concealed, it was like a huge abscess, expressing greed, vice, depraved taste, sordid desire, which finds its satisfaction, as no animal would, in grossness and especially in perversity. I saw the perversion of a depraved mind at the service of the lowest appetites. Then, all of a sudden, something sprang up from me, a prayer, like a Veda: 'O Lord, this is what must disappear!'

"One understands very well that physical misery, the unequal distribution of the goods of this world could be changed, one can imagine economic and social solutions which could remedy this, but it is that misery, the mental misery, the vital perversion, it is that which cannot change, doesn't want to change. And those who belong to this type of humanity are condemned in advance to disintegration.

"That is the meaning of original sin: the perversion which began with the mind."

"That part of humanity, of human consciousness, which is capable of uniting with the supermind and liberating itself, will be completely transformed—it is advancing towards a future reality which is not yet expressed in its outer form; the part which is closest to Nature, to animal simplicity, will be reabsorbed into Nature and thoroughly assimilated. But the corrupted part of human consciousness which allows perversion through its misuse of the mind will be abolished...."

*

On the 10th the Mother sent me a letter, which said:

"My dear little child,

I am sending herewith the invitation to the dortoir of which I spoke to you yesterday.

I am sending one to Stephanie also, like that you can come together.

"With my love and blessings."

It was the anniversary of the Boarding School. The children staying there staged a drama every year. This was the house in which Sri Aurobindo had lived for several years. His rooms which I have seen were the corner ones to the north-west. Here he used to walk vigorously up and down for hours on end in deep contemplation while doing his Yoga. His feet actually dug a path right across. When he left this house, the path was cemented over, but it could be clearly distinguished from the

rest of the floor. Later the whole house was repaired and the floor was redone, with the unfortunate result that the sacred marks got effaced.

Stephanie—my American friend—and I went joyously to see the drama. It was really recreative. The Mother was watching the drama very attentively. Her eyes were lit up time and again with amusement and admiration.

Afterwards she distributed toffees to all. While giving me one, she smiled at me and the smile did not stop at her lips but lingered in her blue-grey eyes, which changed light and shade.

Slowly the days went on. The night of the 14th I was seized with a spell of sheer loneliness. I cried deep inside me in despair. I thought of my family members and there was no full-stop to my vagrant thoughts.

At last I took pen and paper and started writing a letter to my elder brother Lalji-bhai. It was in Gujarati. I am translating it into English:

Respected elder brother,

Loving greetings along with the Mother's blessings.

Thank you for your two letters, which I translated into English for the Mother to read them. I also told her about your dream-vision. She gave me a blessing packet for you, which I am enclosing. Please do keep it with you always. It will be beneficial.

Besides, I have given to the Mother a magazine—*Trade Industry*—which you had sent me. She told me that she would go through it and give it back. I said that there was no need to return it. She smiled and said that she would send it to the Sri Aurobindo Library.

Oh, I can't tell you how I felt in the Mother's presence! She gave me a flower—*Plumeria*. The Mother has given the significance to it: 'Perfect Psychological Perfection—Psychological Perfection in all parts of the being.' She also kissed my forehead—and her sweet smile moved my heart. No words can do justice to her love.

I wish you all to come here. Please bring our mother also. I am truly anxious to meet all of you. I shall complete one year here on the 10th February. How time flies! I do not feel like going away from the Ashram. So please let us all meet here in the Mother's presence.

I do remember my sister-in-law very much.

Our mother has written to me from Rajkot according to her nature. For, she is worried too much about my welfare. But let us forget all about it. She writes to me from time to time and she is well.

She has sent to me for the Divine Mother a gold saree-pin studded with real pearls, which I will offer to the Mother on behalf of all of you.

I have realised one thing after coming here—that in the ordinary world or here no matter how good people may seem one never knows what they are. So I should trust only the Divine—concentrate only on the Divine. Of course,

I have good will towards all. But my sole reality is the Divine. I cling to the Truth alone.

The Divine Mother wants only the love from the heart. It is not necessary that all of you should give huge amounts of money and a car in spite of your heavy debt! The Mother wishes only for the sincere and loving heart.

It is true that from the material point of view a lot of money is required for the development of material things.

Please do not worry about the debt. I do understand the situation of the sugar mills there, which were bought from the previous owner, who cheated us by telling that abundant crops of sugarcane had been sown and later nothing was found. Moreover, the drought slows down the growth of sugarcanes. Yes, all of you are meeting terrible difficulties and setbacks. I am really sorry.

I only request you all to pray constantly to the Mother. For, she is now guiding and protecting you all. Her Force will never go in vain. Everything belongs to the Divine. We are her instruments. Whatever she will do, She will do the very best.

I am amazed to know that my elder sister—Mangala—and her husband have postponed their visit to the Ashram. They should not have lost such an opportunity. Work is always there. But the golden opportunity doesn't come often.

When is our father coming here? Please ask him not to worry about the present situation of finance.

I have been receiving letters from all. I pray to the Mother for all of you.

I hope you all are well. Kindly remember me to everybody and give my love to the children. My kindest regards to our father.

I am quite all right.

With kindest regards, Huta.

I never mentioned to my family about my dreadful attacks and the constant struggle—both inward and outward—because I knew from their letters that they had difficulties and troubles of their own. Why increase them? Besides I thought that if they knew my troubles they might take me away from here.

Many a time I tried over and over again to fight clear of the millrace of coursing emotions and thoughts. My head seemed going round and round. However hard the fight I had put up to break up the attachment I was totally beaten.

Besides, a kind of subtle fear gripped me. It caused an awful fluttering sensation in the pit of my stomach and stopped me from going to the Mother lest she should scold me because of my defects. She wrote as follows:

“I am sorry you fear me and do not approach me with a happy heart, because it is this fear that prevents you from feeling that towards you I am only love and compassion and will that you should be happy.

“This fear must go and it will go.
“With my blessings always.”

Undoubtedly I got some solace from the Mother's most sympathetic letters, but joy and happiness did not last long. Again, if something went wrong with me I got upset, thinking that nothing was right, there was no Divine and so on. The whole trouble was that I did not pause to think rightly and deeply. I just acted on some adverse impulse and according to the suggestions of the devil who was prompting to turn my whole being topsy-turvy, and whatever he pointed out seemed to be the living reality.

One day I had a dreadful attack and became aggressive and wrote to the Mother under the influence of the dark forces. She answered rather severely:

“My dear little child,

“It is purposely that I have not answered your letter of yesterday—and now I must repeat to you what I have already told you. It is that I cannot answer your letters whenever you lend your brain, your hand and your pen to the *adverse force* that is trying to destroy you, because I do not want you to be destroyed, and I give no right to this nasty force to influence you and to make you do things that I do not approve.

“When it is *Huta* who will write, I shall always answer. And again I repeat: Do not welcome this devil, do not listen to him and to his devilish suggestions. It is the only way of getting out of your difficulties—the only way of becoming *Huta*, yourself, and to be peaceful and happy.

“With my love and blessings.”

I was torn between the divine and anti-divine forces. I was shattered by fleeting resentment and over-sensitiveness, but my soul's prayer reached the Mother and she answered:

“My loving little Huta,

“I am, indeed, very glad to receive your letter so sweet and nice.

“Surely, I am hearing your prayer, and my will is that this bad enemy of yours should be defeated once for all so that it is impossible for the enemy to come and disturb you again.

“Let him go for ever and never come back.

“My love and my power are with you, in you, around you to protect you, help you and save you from all dangers.

“Blessings to my dear little child.”

To give me courage, once again the Mother sent me a pretty card with these words:

“The Grace is sure to be victorious one day.

“With my love and blessings.”

At that moment my stupid mind was still singing a forbidden tune. These hostile forces were innumerable. They came in battalions, in all sorts of guises and deceived me all the time. It was not easy to cross the endless layers of dense and dreadful darkness. In spite of my restless mind, I felt sometimes a sweet warmth in my heart and sometimes a soothing coolness there. I asked the Mother about this, and she replied:

“It must be the warmth of love and the coolness of peace.”

These evil forces now wanted me to discontinue the Mother’s French class because they knew very well that there the Mother’s Force could work directly on me. They started giving me obstructive notions and once again I had a feeling of inferiority. I informed the Mother that owing to my lack of knowledge I did not feel like attending the class. She wrote back:

“My dear little child,

“I have read your letter and tell you that we (you and me) shall be patient and persistently drive the enemy away—one day he will have to go for good.

“As for the translation class, I had told you to come, hoping that you would like it and profit by it—but if it is painful and makes you tired, surely I do not want to impose that on you. So, come only if you feel like coming—otherwise it is not an obligation.”

For some reason I felt offended and was also panic-stricken. I felt a sinking sensation. I thought the Mother had no more interest in me—she was abandoning me. My mind was torn with a hundred conflicting thoughts and emotions. I had all sorts of ideas in my head. When my right eye throbbed I felt it was not a good omen; something bad would surely turn up and I became nervous. This is what the Mother revealed:

“As for the throbbing of your right eye, there is nothing to fear about it—it is no sign at all neither good nor bad. It is only the fear that made you uneasy.

“With my love and blessings.”

Once again a sense of unwantedness crept over me. I wrote to the Mother and she replied:

“I have received your letter of last night in which you write: ‘Then where is Thy Will?’

“Something you must understand. I never *impose* my will on anybody. It is only when somebody asks me what is my will in order to obey it, that I say clearly what my will is. But if afterwards this same person shows displeasure or discomfort in obeying that will, I never insist upon it or use coercion. I leave each one free to do what one feels best.

“For the translation lessons, when I told you to come, I knew quite well that you could not follow the French, but I called you so that you could pass one quiet hour in my physical presence—and I told you that much also. I saw quite well also that most often you were dozing, but I did not attach any importance to it because even in sleep you can benefit by the atmosphere. It is only because you wrote you were feeling ashamed that I told you to come only if you felt like coming, that there is no compulsion. But indeed, I persist in my conviction that it is better for you to come, even if you only sleep.”

Yet I still hesitated to go to the translation class and once more the Mother wrote:

“My dear little Huta,

“Come to the class—follow the lesson as much and as long as you can; when you feel tired you will keep quiet, close your eyes, and go to sleep, if sleep comes to you—it does not matter at all.

“Au revoir à tout à l’heure.

“With my love and blessings.”

After that I never stopped going to the class. I did exactly what she had asked me to do; when I was sleepy I slept. Sometimes when I was out of sorts, I silently shed tears, hiding my face in the crook of my arm and putting my head on the bench. I was conscious of the fact that the Mother watched each and every movement of mine and I felt strongly that there too her Force worked continuously and directly to free me from my predicament.

I could act as I did in her class because she was the Mother, full of wisdom and compassion. Otherwise nobody would dare to doze in a class.

It may be the Mother’s tremendous Force which made me drowsy by Its pressure.

After the lesson she gave me a delightful smile for a moment or two with her shining eyes penetrating my whole being. But when I revolted against the Truth, I simply turned my face away from the Mother. Nevertheless, in the depths of my heart I loved her dearly.

There are a few lines in *Savitri* which describe human nature accurately—people outwardly revolt against the Mother but inwardly still want her and love her:

“They were moved by her towards great unknown things...
Some turned to her against their Nature’s bent;

Divided between wonder and revolt....
Impatient subjects, their tired longing hearts
Hugging the bonds close of which they most complained,
Murmured at a yoke they would have wept to lose,
The splendid yoke of her beauty and her love....”

Cent. Ed., Vol. 29, p. 364

(To be continued)

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LETTERS ON POETRY

3

MOODS AND MODES OF POETIC CREATION

I

YOU ARE right in saying that the true objective of poetry is not merely expression but also communication. A poet should not care solely to please himself or one or two of his own mind; he should try to establish *rapport* with the large number of cultured men who are receptive to poetry. Yet, to make easy communication his entire ideal would be unfaithfulness to his own inspiration, particularly if he happens to be a mystic. "Clarity winged with beauty" is indeed a fine thing finely stated and some of the world's greatest verse conforms to this type—but clarity is a relative term and what is clear to one may be obscure to another and what may be clear on one plane of consciousness may be on another pretty obscure, at least at the start.

If we take the mass of men as our criterion we confine ourselves to the mental plane which is at present our general status. There are many other planes deeper and higher than the little bit of individualised mind which *homo sapiens* enjoys, and they have their own concrete and harmonious and vivid contents—like Sri Aurobindo's

Sun-realms of supernal seeing,
Crimson-white mooned oceans of pauseless bliss.

Why should poetry convert everything into a mental clarity? I do admit that poetry errs when it is undisciplined and has no moulding of significant form. Does it err, however, when it transmits a state of consciousness which is not familiar to most men, even most men of culture, and into which they cannot easily enter?—an Aurobindonian state, for instance:

He who from Time's dull motion escapes and thrills
Rapt thoughtless, wordless into the Eternal's breast,
Unrolls the form and sign of being,
Seated above in the omniscient Silence

or

My soul unhorizoned widens to measureless sight.

Poetry has its obligations to men but it has also its obligations to the Gods: it is not altogether a man-made thing and so other planes than that on which man is normally at home have their rights of expression—and expression in their own modes and not just in the modes of the human intelligence. If we say Nay to these modes on the

ground that they would not be found vivid and vibrant by us at the first blush, we set up a rather rigid and unnatural standard, besides shutting out influences that would evolve our consciousness by mingling with it the patterns and tempos of the ultra-mental in an undiluted form. Art is not only recreation: it is revelation too, and it need not be understood or appreciated easily. Even in recreation there is some strain: one does not hit a boundary or score a goal without the least fatigue! You have gone to the extent of conceding that poetry succeeds if its meaning can be even "dimly divined by anyone and everyone whose mind, imagination and spirit are in a sufficient measure capable of appreciating beauty and art." But don't you think the dim divination is somewhat arbitrarily defined as happening almost at once and without any strain? Of course if a poem remains a total Sphinx for ever and yields no significant suggestion to a cultured man in spite of his brooding on it and absorbing it and living with it, there is for all practical purposes failure. What I want to claim is that a poem should not be considered to have missed its objective if it does not yield its purport immediately. One must try to open oneself to it, let its figures and rhythms sink into one and stir layers of consciousness subliminal and supraliminal. I do not wish to defend the pretentious gibberish that is often written by modern poets and labelled Surrealism. Perhaps even those who style themselves Symbolists are at times guilty of a mere musical mystification. I am pleading only for those who convey authentic figures and rhythms of the subliminal and the supraliminal—as Nishikanto does with

O Sleeping Lion in the caverned darkness
Of the rock heart of every sentient thing!
Give us thy glance, if only for a moment,
Of a child up-gazing in its slumbering—

or Dilip Kumar Roy with

O deep starry secrecy
Twinkling in my heart—

or Sri Aurobindo himself with

The dragon tail aglow of the faint night
and

Swan of the supreme and spaceless ether wandering winged through
the universe...

I dare say I may thus give the benefit of the doubt to many an ingenious purveyor of abracadabra—but the insistence of the French savant you quote on "No Fatigue" and yours on simplicity and clarity of the mental kind run the risk of condemning what is beyond the mind's threshold in a genuinely inspired and beautiful

way, together with what is confused and chaotic, nebulous and nonsensical.

To be involved in construction and precious in language are faults if one goes in for these things for their own sakes. However, if a certain state of being cannot be fully brought out in a simple and straightforward manner or with easy and ordinarily poetic words, hasn't one to be true to one's complex vision and to the atmosphere of a rich rarity that envelops that vision? You will perhaps declare that there is nothing that cannot be said clearly and simply. Well, some people declare that there is nothing that cannot be said sufficiently in prose. Poetry, in my view, comes in to say what prose cannot; and in poetry, complexity and out-of-the-way speech come in to do what simplicity and so-called natural speech cannot. When the vision is not complex and the atmosphere not a rich rarity and still the poet tries to make them out to be such, it is then that he produces spurious work—manufacture and mechanism instead of creation and organism. Not otherwise. And this holds for non-mystical poetry no less than mystical; poetry of the mental plane as well as of planes beyond the mind. I do realise that we must spare no trouble to bring our vision to a focus, we must not luxuriate in the hazy and the slipshod. The point I am trying to make is that there can be a focus in which several shades of light mingle and there can be a multi-faceted distinctness and a crowded accuracy.

You mention Greek poetry as being the opposite of the involved and the complex. I must admit Greek poetry to be superb and to be in the main, despite Aeschylean and Pindaresque elements, "clarity winged with beauty." But I wonder what the Greeks would have thought of Shakespeare at his most Elizabethan, at his extreme of mercurial mood, metaphor-gorgedness, word-variety, protean syntax. More or less the same, I suspect, as what Voltaire did. The French have an intellect very much like that of the Greeks, though in other respects they are very different, and most probably Aristotle would have proclaimed like Voltaire that Shakespeare was a drunken barbarian. And would the Greeks have got hold of the Romantic Movement in its Shelleyan, ethereally entangled aspects by the right end? And would they have relished the bold and colourful intricacy that is so magnificent in certain portions of Francis Thompson? Would the Celtic twilight of Yeats with its labyrinths of vanishing iridescence found any place in their subtle yet "sunny" consciousness? Intellectual criss-cross and sophisticated mazziness are definitely objectionable in poetry—and I am of the opinion that it is these that Milton excluded when he talked of poetry being simple as well as sensuous and passionate. Milton himself—as compared to a poet like Homer—was far from simple. I don't believe his construction and his mode of thought were even as simple as those of Sophocles or Euripides. His "simple", therefore, I understand as "unforced" or "fresh" or "alive with a natural vigour" : it is opposed not to "complex" but to "mechanically constructed" or "dryly devious" or "artificially abstract". To be "simple" in the Miltonic sense one must have authentic vitality, a force as of Nature. Is Nature of authentic vitality always simple in your sense? Is an organism uncomplex? Are the formations of the life-force quite straightforward? The important point appears to be that whatever

the complexity there must be a harmonious working, a fine unity of effect—what the Greeks called the quality of being felt as a whole.

The means for achieving such an end can be elaborate or ingenuous, multiply-wrought or plain-built, highly coloured or crystal-clear, remote in suggestion or of the earth earthy, precious in language or direct-dictioned: does it matter a hoot what manner of thought and word the poet employs so long as the manner is appropriate and there is the creative *élan*? Sometimes the impression of the involved and the precious is given us because an unfamiliar plane of consciousness is manifested; the manner of thought and word may be in itself quite simple on that plane without seeming simple to the plane we commonly bring to poetry. But even when the expression is actually not simple and straightforward on any plane, I am disposed to think it has a right to exist as a legitimate manifestation of the poetic spirit; there is nothing in it intrinsically opposed to the play of genuine inspiration.

2

Your original position which amounts to saying that mysticism is an affair unusual enough and that its poetry, if not simple and clear, becomes useless to the world at large is quite definite though open to serious dispute. What puzzles me is the qualifications to it you are prepared to make. Besides adding that at least dimly the mystical poet should make himself understood you affirm that even this he should do at not necessarily first sight. Your “at least dimly” and much more the lease of time you are ready to grant a poem for delivering its purport—don’t they take away the edge of your formula of “simple and clear”? A poem which gives a dim sense of its drift at the start and especially a poem which gives it only after effort by the reader through a period of time can never be called clear or simple. Intricacy and complexity and preciousness are admitted as soon as you relax the demand for crystalline disclosure and quick communication. It is just this relaxing, on behalf of a certain type of inspiration, that I was asking for in my letter. Where then do our ways part? Do they part solely in that you personally prefer clear and simple poetry while conceding a firm *locus standi* to the other sort and that I enjoy the two sorts equally in general while personally preferring the latter when it is the result of allowing planes higher and deeper than the mind to speak straight away in their own mode of consciousness? Perhaps the crucial parting lies in one thing alone: the native speech of the ultra-mental planes.

In the light of your relaxing your demand, your reference to the frustration and irritation most readers feel with a great many modern poets acquires a special meaning: their work, to you, is such as to yield nothing at all to the bulk of readers although it may be studied again and again. And since your discouragement of the native speech of the ultra-mental planes is almost in the same breath as your reaction against those modern poets, I take it that according to you the communication by this speech to the bulk of readers is nil and hence this speech must be eschewed, no mat-

ter how deep and high it may be, until humanity has evolved beyond its present level by means of the poetry which converts mysticism into terms mentally understandable.

But is it true that here general communication is nil? What I declared to be naturally lacking was "mental clarity", the absence of which is not the same as the mind's hold reduced to zero. The speech I am talking of may not be *clear* to the mind, but it does give some hold to our mental awareness: a dim hold at the outset or a hold dim or otherwise after effort by the reader. It differs from intricate or complex verse of the mental type not by denying the mind any hold but by addressing its appeal to layers of consciousness in us that are hidden at present and by making their response a condition for the development of the hold afforded. In the appreciation and absorption of all poetry, to see and feel and intuit are as important as to understand: in fact, understanding has to be brought about by them instead of *vice versa*. It is because of this that rhythm with its strangely moving, subtly suggestive potencies, and metaphor with its impact on sight, on imaginative association, on "empathic" powers in us have been regarded as so vital since the dawn of literary history. The peculiar mode of poetry would lose its *raison d'être* if mental understanding which is the arbiter of prose were deemed the chief recipient of impressions here. Now, what the direct poetry from planes higher and deeper than the mind does, while giving the mind a small initial hold either immediate or after effort, is to push through the more important avenues of seeing and feeling and intuiting towards the ultra-human background in us; stirring that background, it supplies the understanding mind with a species of revelation which on analysis satisfies the demand for significance. Communication, therefore, to the mental understanding is not nil. It is achieved after difficult contact with secret forces accessible to the seeing and feeling and intuiting side of us—secret forces which, in the case of the large run of poetry, are never substantially stimulated but which in a kind of surface-projection are always evoked by all genuine poems of the mental plane since it is always on what we vaguely name the soul that poetry presses for essential appreciation and absorption.

"After difficult contact," I have said. What counterbalances the difficulty of communication, however, is the value of it. For the contact with the ultra-human background is of the utmost use in our progress beyond our present level. Though you admit the need of progressing to the planes deeper and higher than the mind you consider the best method to be mental instruction in the matter of them. I believe that one of the most important methods is to expose, through poetry, humanity as much as possible to them in their own original form instead of "mentalising" them. The responses called forth by such exposure are dynamic in a manner that nothing else can equal. Mental explanation and elucidation and interpretation of the mystical Beyond by poetry can be helpful in preparing humanity for a step inward and upward; yet we cannot dispense with the help of a direct touch of the In-world and the Over-world. The two helps are something like the Guru's precept and his example, his teaching and his personal influence, his putting us in the way of his books and his permitting us to sit at his feet in meditation.

Deeming ultra-mental poetry to be an immense aid to human evolution, I hesitate to stop trying my hand at it side by side with writing mental poems. And I feel sure that if you who have so keen and sensitive yet critical approach to the Muse gave closer thought to the question you would discern all the abyss that gapes between this class of verse and the product of the high-brow coteries from whom you seceded during your literary life in England. I myself am no apologist for the various schools of dadaists, surrealists and futurists nor the intellectual contortionists and abstractionists and those who elaborately manufacture private symbols. I think it is these men you refer to in your interesting account of the change of outlook undergone by you—writers who tap the chaotic side of the subconscious in one mis-shape or another and who employ the ingenious outer brain with this or that faddist penchant. Not only is no small initial purchase permitted by them to the mind in the midst of their obscurity but even the obscurity they go in for is cut off from the roots of inspired living, is sterile, is haphazardly intricate or deliberately recondite. The vital breath is missing in such obscurity—there is not the afflatus and the enthousiasmos without which poetry can never make us see and feel and intuit. Authentic mysticism is very far indeed from the cult of the modern unintelligibles. It is a mode of intense living, charged with the concreteness and directness of warm throbbing intimate experience. Even the peace-aspect of it is not arid and artificial and unfruitful but fresh, fragrant, all-enfolding and most creative by stilling the diverse petty confusions that hinder and impair the founts of spontaneity. The obscurity of authentic mysticism has an atmosphere of wide reality—it is not haughty or exclusive or self-satisfied—it does not stand apart from vital springs. Neither the chaotic side of the subconscious nor the ingenious outer brain can produce art. Authentic mysticism comes with a fire in the emotions and a light in the imagination and a golden glow in the intuitive self, it strikes harmonious chords in our being and finds a most natural outlet in artistic activity. It is entirely different from the “modernism” from which you broke away. The latter is incapable of being truly inspired and consequently has no evolutionary value. Wanting in that value, it has no justification for being obscure—nor, I should add, the power to overcome the neglect into which it may fall, for only when an obscure work is inspired the possible neglect of it by people will pass because of its innate drive towards their seeing, feeling, intuiting faculties. Sooner or later it is bound to become a force in the general life of the world and deliver the illumination which is hidden in its apparent obscurity.

I do not aver that all mystical art should be ultra-mental or that, when the ultra-mental confronts us, there will always be difficulty in getting through its “door of dreams”. I am just putting my finger on the merits of the ultra-mental art; they are undeniable, be the difficulty what it may. One of the most profound merits is in connection with the meaning you give to the term “democracy”: the basic brotherhood of man. I agree that the universal acceptance of the spiritual principle of human brotherhood is not assisted by the esoteric doctrines, narcissism and intellectual snobbery characterising the work of the modern exponents of poetry among whom you

began your literary career and whose inadequacy and wrong-headedness you soon realised. But to be intellectually democratic does not travel a long way. It is, no doubt, a worthy thing—yet if it occupies the whole domain of literary endeavour it becomes a menace by shutting out still more puissant agents. Together with it, there should be the direct sweep of the ultra-mental planes. For, on these planes alone the brotherhood of man is no sentiment or idea but an actuality of experience, a burning truth of our very being. There the Self of selves is found—and even further than the human formula the spiritual basis extends, underlying all living creatures, unifying the entire cosmos. The inmost throb of the world's oneness is there, a universal unity of conscious existence as natural and indefeasible and immediate as our present sense of distinct individuality. Understanding and sympathy, intellectual democracy and ethical fellow-feeling are fine as far as they go. But they have serious limits: the beast in man and much more the devil in man are too strong to be changed by them. Even mentalised spirituality is not enough; the planes where oneness is an automatic experience should invade us in their own original form. And part of the grand invasion must be through the sort of poetry I am advocating—poetry like that invocation by J. A. Chadwick who was known in Sri Aurobindo's Ashram as Arjava:

Immortal wisdom of gold which was thrice refined,
 Shine in the clear space of holy noon
 On all the upland hollows of the mind:
 May every shadow-harboured thought be strewn
 With solar vastness and compelled
 To feel all fear and all self-limits quelled.

Such poetry, more than any other, creates in us the turn of consciousness which opens into the Upanishad's One who has gone forth and grown many.

K. D. SETHNA

TWO MOTHERS

Two Mothers merged in one embrace
reside in my small heart;
unfolding sweet and joyful grace
they form a calyx of truth's art.

My earthly mother gave me all
her love she had from God obtained,
then followed his redeeming call
and left her body as a saint.

The halo round her lovely head
was shining bright and pure,
and everyone came to her bed
to see her smiling and endure.

Before she slowly closed her eyes
to join the inmost endlessness
she looked at me assuring, wise:
"There is no reason for distress."

She comes to me on many nights
in almost every dream
and guides me up to marvel heights
where all is plunged in Heaven's gleam.

I think she is the Mother's child,
of the Divine we all adore,
and helps Her to spread out the light
to make us conscious more and more.

I feel her soft and soothing hand
and her protecting arm.
Wherever I may go and stand
she is within me calm and warm.

I listen to her gentle voice,
the music of her soul,
urging for my eternal choice
to make my being wide and whole.

My earthly mother Wilhelmine
and Mother Mira, the Divine,
you are the two on whom I lean,
united in the centred shrine.

URSULA

THIS FIRE IS THE UNBORN SON

The fire that burns in the coal-fields is the fire of the spirit,
It is the fire that burns in the ruby-red and in the lotus-pond,
It is the fire established in the architecture of the electron.
The breath that blows in the reed-grass is the breath of the spirit,
It is the breath that blows in the woods and in the sky-streams,
It is the breath that upholds on wings the purple of the mid-air.
The voice that rises in the heart is the voice of the spirit,
It is the roar of the hidden sea and of the lion and the hero,
It is the thunder that claps in the subtle-blue cave of the ether.
This fire is the elder brother of the ether and of the breath,
This fire is the friend of stars and the strong guardian of night:
Therefore these tongues eat the substance of the blazing speech.
It is the golden mass of the sun that became these many fires.
It is the waters that became the rustling waves and the monk-fish,
It is the silence that leaned down and became the orchard-warbler.
And the breath entered into these forms and occupied the quarters,
And the ether entered into these several bodies and became the Word,
And the fire entered the virgin's bed and became the birth-knower.
They asked: What is this fire that went to the ether when it rained?
It is the fire that burns in the seeds and in the roots of things.
They asked: What is this fire founded in the speed of the Wind?
It is the fire that consumes food in the belly of the universe.
They asked: What is this fire that dwells in the Inconscience?
Of Man and Woman this fire is the unborn son nourished by Death.

R. Y. DESHPANDE

LISPINGS

BECAUSE you are perfection I must love you,
For when my soul came down it was proclaimed:
“You must reach out to that which is above you
And worship until it has been attained.

“The essence of Myself is there within you,
But if you would make it yours you must depart
From the very place you are and must continue,
Until you find it seated in your heart.

“For though the way is long the destination
Is closer than the closest thing that is
And only by an identification
With it will you ascend again to bliss.

“The world is made of difference, but existence
Is only one, because there is no more;
Its unity dissolves the myth of distance
And the way to unity is to adore.”

And so it is, my Lord, that I adore you,
I love you as the sunflower loves the sun;
And as I mutely worship I implore you
To grant soon that our love will make us one.

O Lord, I think if I should die tomorrow
And was condemned to the infernal flame.
I would not feel the sting of any sorrow
If I could think of you and say your name;

Because the power of that contemplation
And of that prayer, when love has filled the heart,
Gives mind a glimpse of identification:
Even in hell we would not be apart.

When I am stung by doubt and hesitation
And hostile forces drill holes in my back
And frustrate life foreswears its consecration
And everything around is turning black,

I think awhile about your single being,
And though it yet remains unreal and far,
Thought brings its form into the range of seeing,
As does a telescope a distant star.

And, even more, when I can softly whisper
The sacred syllables that make your name,
As might an unsophisticated lisper
Or a girl in love, without self-conscious shame:

The sacred syllables Sri Aurobindo,
Beloved verbal body of the One,
That to my life's dark chamber is the window
That opens on truth's sole and splendid sun,

There rises in my heart such exultation,
Such sweet delight that nothing, Lord, I know,
Can keep from me that identification
That was proclaimed and promised me long ago.

PETER HEEHS

THE NATURE OF LOVE

FROM A LETTER OF FLORENCE RUSSELL

RECEIVED your book, *The Sun and the Rainbow*, and must say so far have concentrated on Sehra. Her spirit pervades the words which can be summed up in one word, as the Mother said she loved.

Which leads me further into a little research. As not any of us as yet know or can use Divine Love because we are not prepared for it, the best of the many versions known as love is a spontaneity of response. When the mind or emotion enter, it is brought from a higher area down to egoic mental or emotional levels. If we have to discuss it, it's not love—if we have to think it over, it's not love—if we have to make excuses, too much work, too tired, no inspiration, it's not love. If we are afraid the loved one is going to disturb us, interfere with our comfort, our bank book, whatever, it's not love. Good wishes and sense of goodwill, yes—but all of us should face it that we really as yet don't love. The poets, I think, were more often in love with their own work or their viewpoint. Few have psychic love. The spontaneity of love, which leaps forward as a flame when necessary, remaining a warm comforting glow at other times, again leaping spontaneously forth when needed, is sadly lacking in all of us. If it all goes well from one side the other side is not receptive; the love is not satisfying a need.

Even Elizabeth Barrett Browning, though her love was sincere in its area, grasped only some essential details, and that too in a woefully limited way, in "Never Call It Loving."

I think Sehra without thinking or expecting just loved the Mother. How many hang on in spite of everything because Her beloved Lord wanted to transform the earth? Not too many. A few pertinent spiritual experiences and they are off to the higher realms to further their expansion of consciousness or make further personal progress (never did understand this one). All these persons insist they love everyone.

Merely some thoughts filled with obvious loop-holes are here for the guy who loves to argue.

6.9.81

THE ETERNAL AVATAR*

FOR all the disciples and the devotees, all the followers and the admirers of Sri Aurobindo, his birthday, the 15th of August every year, is a solemn occasion to recollect the great significance of his birth and his life, his work and his teachings, not only for themselves but also for India and the whole world and the human race.

The best way to realise the great significance of Sri Aurobindo's birth is to remember what the Mother once said about it. She once spoke of Sri Aurobindo's birth as "eternal in the history of the universe". When asked what exactly she meant by "eternal" in this sentence, she explained:

"The sentence can be understood in four different ways on four ascending planes of consciousness:

1. Physically, the consequences of the birth will be of eternal importance to the world.
2. Mentally, it is a birth that will be eternally remembered in the universal history.
3. Psychically, a birth that recurs for ever from age to age upon earth.
4. Spiritually, the birth of the Eternal upon earth."¹

The "Eternal" of whom the Mother speaks here is the Supreme Divine, God, and His birth upon earth is the Divine Incarnation, the Avatar, as we call it in India. Sri Aurobindo's birth therefore, according to what the Mother has said, signifies the Incarnation, the Avatar of the Supreme Lord.

But the Mother has also said that it is a birth that "recurs for ever from age to age". This means that the Avatar comes upon earth not only once in one age but in several successive births in successive ages. It is a recurrent phenomenon intended to carry the earthly evolution to higher and higher levels of consciousness. As the Mother says: "In the eternity of becoming, each Avatar is only the announcer, the forerunner of a more perfect realisation."² He is the same Supreme Lord who manifests again and again but in each successive birth reveals a greater glory of his divinity. Applying this to Sri Aurobindo, we can say that there have been several incarnations of his in the past and there will be several more also in the future. It is for this reason that the Mother once said:

"Since the beginning of earth history, Sri Aurobindo has always presided over the great earthly transformations, under one form or another, one name or another."³

In his present birth Sri Aurobindo, the Supreme Lord, came specially to manifest the supramental Truth in earthly evolution. When a disciple once asked him:

* A speech delivered at the 18th Annual Conference of the New Age Association held on 16 August 1981.

¹ *Collected Works of the Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 10. ² *Ibid.*, p. 22. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

“Is your real work this invocation of the Supramental?” he replied, very simply, “Yes, I have come for that.” But the history of earth’s evolution is not yet finished and so we can be sure that he will come again to continue his work of carrying that evolution to yet greater heights. For we must remember that even the Supermind is not the last rung of the evolutionary ladder; there are rungs even beyond that level. Here again we may recollect the Mother’s words:

“The Lord is Eternal and Infinite. Even when the supramental will be fully realised upon earth the Lord will infinitely exceed this realisation which will be followed by other manifestations of the Lord *ad infinitum*.”¹

But the remarkable thing is that once the Supramental is established upon earth, the Lord, that is Sri Aurobindo, will not have to leave his body and come again in a new body for his new Incarnation, as he had to do till now. This is because the full manifestation of the Supermind implies complete transformation and divinisation of the body. And a fully divinised body is immortal, not subject to death. All the previous Incarnations manifested only a partial divinity in a human body, and therefore were subject to death. All of them therefore had to die. But when the new Avatar comes in his Divine Body, that body will be deathless and therefore he will remain permanently on earth in the same body. Of course, there will be still further Incarnations of the Lord to carry the evolution beyond the supramental level, and for that purpose his divine body will undergo change after glorious change; but all these changes will be of the same body without any necessity of dissolution and death. The Mother herself has said that Sri Aurobindo will be the first to come upon earth in a Divine Body;² so, evidently, when he comes, he will remain for ever upon earth in the same body. There are people who say that Sri Aurobindo was the last Avatar; but that, as I have just explained, has really no meaning if we understand the true purpose of Avatarhood in relation to the ever-continuous evolutionary process. As the Mother herself remarked: “He is probably the last Avatar in a human body.”³ But in evolution, as the human body has replaced the earlier animal body, so the human body itself will be replaced by another—the ageless and deathless divine body. It is in that immortal body that Sri Aurobindo will come back in his new Incarnation and remain on earth, never to depart.

Actually, he would have immortalised even the body which he left in 1950 and would have remained with us for ever—and so also would have the Mother. That was, in fact, once the plan. But that plan had to be changed. Why?

Well, going by what Mother herself said in 1953, the unreceptivity of earth and humanity was responsible for it. Let me quote her words:

¹ *Collected Works of the Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 123.

² On 11. 4 1952, she also wrote in a message: “When I asked Him (December 8, 1950) to resuscitate his body, He clearly answered: ‘I have left this body purposely. I will not take it back. I shall manifest again in the first supramental body built in a supramental way.’”

³ *Collected Works of the Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 10), p. 255.

“Sri Aurobindo has given up his body in an act of supreme unselfishness, renouncing the realisation in his own body to hasten the hour of collective realisation. Surely if the earth were more responsive, this would not have been necessary.”¹

But we must remember that he was not compelled to leave his body. He left it by his own free choice. Again to quote the Mother’s words: “Sri Aurobindo was not compelled to leave his body, he chose to do so for reasons so sublime that they are beyond the reach of human mentality.”²

But, one thing is absolutely certain: it is that he left his body, as the Mother has said, “to hasten the hour of collective realisation” (*Italics ours*); which means that by leaving his body he has quickened and intensified the work of transformation, rather than delayed, suspended or abandoned it, as some people seem to believe.

Finding that humanity was not ready, not giving the necessary collaboration in the work of transformation, he had to change his original plan of accomplishing that work while remaining in the same body, which was in fact the very centre and base of that work. But it was only a change of the plan and not a failure or an abandonment of it. In the grim battle with the cosmic forces opposed to his work of manifesting the supramental Truth upon earth, his leaving his body meant not a defeat, but only a strategic move to fight that battle more effectively from another vantage-ground to bring the hour of victory nearer. Certainly, it was a heavy price that he paid, but it was not paid in vain. On the contrary, by paying it he gained an enormous recompense—which is, to repeat the Mother’s own words which I have already quoted, “to hasten the hour of collective realisation.”

All this is not my conjecture. I am simply repeating the Mother’s own pronouncements in which, I am sure, you have complete faith. In addition to those to which I have already referred, I mention two more which she made after Sri Aurobindo’s passing in order to emphasize the point that the purpose of his deliberate departure was only to accelerate and intensify his work to accomplish it sooner than would have been possible without it. She said: “He sacrificed his physical life in order to help more fully his work of transformation.” (*Italics ours*) Again she said: “There is a difference in the power for action. He himself possesses more action, more power for action, now than when in his body. Besides it is for that he left, because it was necessary to act in that way.”³

Keeping firm faith in the Mother’s words, we must resolutely refuse to believe that Sri Aurobindo’s departure from his body meant that his work has failed or has been delayed or that he has abandoned it and withdrawn into the supreme silence. All such pessimistic, defeatist, gloomy ideas, by whomsoever they are held, are utterly false and we must never give any credence to them. On the contrary, we must take to heart what the Mother has persistently told us after Sri Aurobindo’s passing, that he “has not left us”, that he “is constantly among us”, that “though he

¹ *Collected Works of the Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 9. ² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³ *Notes on the Way* (*Collected Works of the Mother*, Vol. 11), p. 329.

has left his body, he is still with us, active and alive”, “guiding and helping all those who are receptive and open to his influence”.

The successful realisation of Sri Aurobindo’s great work for earth and humanity ultimately depends upon the Will of the Supreme and therefore it is independent of any conditions for its fulfilment. As the Mother has categorically pronounced: “The mighty work of Change taken up by Sri Aurobindo is going to culminate in success. For that indeed is a fact; there is not a shadow of doubt as to the issue of the work we have in hand... the transformation is going to be: nothing will ever stop it, nothing will frustrate the decree of the Omnipotent.”¹

“The decree of the Omnipotent” being imperative and irresistible, the success of Sri Aurobindo’s work does not ultimately depend on any conditions. Yet, in the dynamic process of earthly evolution even what is decreed and inevitable is realised as an outcome of the working of contending cosmic forces in which the success of the eventual inevitable result seems to depend upon the fulfilment of certain conditions. A certain readiness on the part of earth and humanity which creates a responsiveness to the supramental Power, which is now pressing to manifest upon earth, is in this sense a necessary condition for the success of Sri Aurobindo’s work. But humanity in general is not capable of giving this response. It is therefore a special responsibility on the part of those who profess to be Sri Aurobindo’s disciples and devotees to make the necessary effort to respond to the urgent call at this critical hour. Sri Aurobindo from his side went to the extreme limit of sacrificing even his body for the sake of earth and humanity—and so did the Mother. And even after his passing he is insistently and urgently preoccupied with that work. But the question on which we should ponder on this occasion of his birthday is: are we from our side doing what is required of us? It is high time that we squarely faced this question without any evasion or pretext; for, as the Mother has said, “The choice is imperative.”

The success of Sri Aurobindo’s great work is inevitable and assured; nothing can eventually stand against it. But if instead of offering our conscious collaboration, we blindly create obstructions in the way, then we lose the supreme opportunity offered to us at this critical juncture when earthly evolution is poised for a decisive leap in the future. Not only so, but something worse may happen; since the descending supramental Power will not tolerate for long any obstacles in the way of its manifestation, it may be compelled to break them, which would create catastrophic upheavals in the world. But let us hope that this will not be necessary. Let us hope that at least some will respond and receive and open to the New Power and by doing so save the world from calamities or, to use the Mother’s phrase, “crashing circumstances.”²

KISHOR GANDHI

¹ *Collected Works of the Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 3), pp. 139-40.

² In August 1964 the Mother said in a message: “ it is left to men to decide if they will collaborate for this change or it will have to be enforced upon them by the power of crashing circumstances. So, wake up and collaborate.” (*Collected Works of the Mother*, Cent. Ed. Vol. 15, p. 66)

SRI AUROBINDO ON EDUCATION

(Continued from the issue of October 1981)

BY mental education, Sri Aurobindo means what we generally understand by education in a restricted sense which is a consciously directed process to achieve some definite end. Education as traditionally understood implies acquisition of knowledge relating to different spheres of human experience. It stands for the knowledge accumulated from different sources which must be preserved in the memory for subsequent utilisation. Notwithstanding so many significant changes that are taking place all around, the traditional concept of education as the accumulation of memorized knowledge still engages our attention. As a matter of fact, our educational system in all its details is overshadowed by this conception of education. Sri Aurobindo, however, does not accept education as erudition. Mere accumulation of different varieties of knowledge without proper assimilation is nothing more than a chaotic mass of information which does very little to develop the intellectual life of an individual.

The true education of the mind, according to Sri Aurobindo, is one which prepares a man for a higher life by drawing out what is best in him. The Mother has stated five principal phases of mental education, these are:

“(1) Development of the power of concentration, the capacity of attention.

(2) Development of the capacities of expansion, wideness, complexity and richness.

(3) Organisation of ideas around a central idea or a higher ideal or a supremely luminous idea that will serve as guide in life.

(4) Thought control, rejection of undesirable thoughts so that one may, in the end, think only what one wants and when one wants.

(5) Development of mental silence, perfect calm and more and more total receptivity of inspirations coming from the higher regions of the being.”¹¹

It is to be noted that here the Mother has placed emphasis mainly on the development of certain mental capacities and organisation or systematisation of all that comes about and not on accumulation of information, not even the acquisition of encyclopaedic knowledge. This by implication suggests that intellect or Buddhi which is the instrument of mental education must be properly cultivated and developed and the rest will follow smoothly. A little reflection makes it abundantly clear that in the context of accelerated progress taking place in recent years in different branches of human knowledge, it is humanly impossible to be equipped with all the up-to-date details in any department of man's intellectual enterprise. Moreover, mere loading the brain with factual knowledge without effecting transformation in the poise of consciousness might have a disintegrating effect. And in such a case knowledge turns out to be a burden instead of becoming a source of joy and discovery.

Further, the Mother has also rightly pointed out that education is not a point-less pursuit, it must centre round ‘a higher ideal or a supremely luminous idea.’ No

doubt, some great educators and social thinkers of the present century advocate different aims of education, such as ideal character (Russell), complete living (Spencer), good citizenship, fullest development of individuality (T.P. Nunn), social efficiency (John Dewey) and so on. But keeping in view the essential nature of man and his ultimate destiny upon earth, it is to be determined whether any of these ideals by itself can be considered to be really 'a luminous idea'—the crowning end of education. Sri Aurobindo's educational philosophy gives a clear answer to this question.

The mental education or intellectual training which he envisages is due to the instrumentality of the intellect and it includes a wide range of faculties which he divides into two important classes, "the functions and faculties of the right hand, the functions and faculties of the left hand. The faculties of the right hand are comprehensive, creative and synthetic, the faculties of the left hand critical and analytic. ...The right hand mind is the master of knowledge, the left hand its servant. The left hand touches only the body of knowledge, the right hand penetrates its soul.... Both are essential to the completeness of the human reason."¹² This division of faculties into two seems to have some relation with the classification of knowledge into Humanities and Science. Of these two, the former is related to the faculties of the right hand, the latter the left hand. And since both are 'essential for the completeness of human reason', Sri Aurobindo does not visualise any conflict which we nowadays artificially introduce between Humanities and Science. As a matter of fact, each branch of knowledge requires both classes of faculties though in varying degrees. Hence he rightly points out that both are complementary and essential. In recent years, however, Science has been assigned a more dominating role to play in the life of man. Humanities are pushed to the background or sneered at. In this age of scientific and technological development, the modern mind is dazzled by the marvellous inventions and discoveries of Science. But we should not forget that Science and Technology are not all. We are already on the way to perceiving the consequences from sole dependence on Science and Technology. Again, in recent years, we hear a cry for a synthesis between Science and Humanities in different quarters. It might be reasonably asserted that no such synthesis between the two is really possible. What is needed is a rapport, a collaboration between the two in a comprehensive system of education.

In addition to these two classes of faculties, Sri Aurobindo speaks of another layer of faculty which, though not yet fully developed in man, is 'in the process of wider development.' According to him, this is the 'highest stratum of knowledge, which manifests itself in intuitive perception or direct vision of truth. At present it is found surely in genius alone. Buddhi is a faculty that reveals knowledge and gives it logical form and cohesion but to genius or intuitive insight truth is directly seen or realised. But since this faculty had not yet fully blossomed in man, its powers "are greatly distrusted by the critical reason of mankind. ...yet it is clear that humanity could not have advanced to its present stage if it had not been for the help of these faculties."¹³

Mental education has both individual and social aspects, for education is not only an individual affair but a social process as well. Apart from acquiring and applying knowledge, what real gain can an individual expect from a well-organised and thorough mental education? The individual aspect of mental education is culture. Culture is not mere acquisition of Knowledge, but a perpetual process of personal mental enrichment. It is rather an attitude than an achievement. When knowledge is properly assimilated and integrated, it transforms one's whole outlook and way of life, thus preparing for the realisation of higher truth. Evidently cultural enrichment, according to Sri Aurobindo, is opposed neither to natural development of man's inner capacities nor to social efficiency.

The social or collective aspect of education is functional and utilitarian. It is connected with the professional life of an individual and with inter-subjective social relationship. These two aspects of education are discussed under the heads: vocational education and social education, respectively. In our present social and economic set-up, vocational education has assumed great importance. Vocational education is the training imparted to men or children so that they may "perform with skill a utilitarian task"¹⁴ or, in Whitehead's language, it is the "training in the arts of utilising knowledge for the manufacture of material products."¹⁵ Vocational education is considered essential not only for enabling an individual to become economically self-dependent but also for making him efficient to contribute his share for increasing economic productivity of the society. Needless to add that vocational and general education must go hand in hand and the former should not be allowed to "degenerate into mere teaching of tricks and fabrication of gadgets without any explanation why they work" (Ulich). Social education is concerned with the production of social consciousness and social solidarity among people by making them aware of the rights and obligations of citizenship both as individuals and as members of the community. Among modern thinkers, the French Sociologist Durkheim puts exclusive emphasis on the social significance of education. The function of education in preparing the child for a particular milieu in society, as Durkheim defines it, means socialization of new generations by preparing them for the membership of a particular group in the social hierarchy. In the light of Sri Aurobindo's thought, however, this view seems to be partial and misdirected. Nevertheless the art of social living can never be the product of social education alone and, as a matter of fact, it results from the total cultural embellishment of an individual.

In his theory of education, Sri Aurobindo speaks of the development of the moral and religious nature of man which he considers equally important as intellectual training. The development of the whole man, the integrated personality, which is the overt aim of education, therefore includes the development of his moral and religious consciousness. Moral life consists in regulating impulses and instincts and forming wholesome habits which are designed to bring about personal well-being and also to ensure social order and security. Sri Aurobindo pays due attention to moral and religious education. Now the question is: how to develop the moral sense

and improve the moral life of a man? He does not believe that man's moral sense can be improved by including some moral text-books in the curriculum. In our present discourse we had the occasion to refer to his apprehension as regards mechanical moral training. He therefore lays emphasis on the method of suggestion by which the teacher should inspire moral feelings in the pupils. The teacher should endeavour to improve their moral sense by setting before them the noble and lofty ideals of the past as recorded in biographies and historical treatises. In imparting moral training, the teacher is to play the predominant role. Suggestion and example, practice and act are better than theoretical training or the dinning of precepts in the student's ear. And the theory of suggestion may be supplemented by the application of Raja Yoga. Similarly, religious instruction imparted through books is also likely to be fruitless for a child cannot be made religious by teaching him the dogmas and doctrines of religion. Moreover, this may lead to bigotry and religious intolerance and misunderstanding. Hence Sri Aurobindo suggests the use of different kinds of religious exercises, meditation and prayer, since he says, "Religion is to be lived, not learned as a creed."

(To be continued)

RANJIT KUMAR ACHARJEE

¹¹ *The Mother on Education*, p. 38.

¹² *A System of National Education*, pp. 19-20.

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁴ P. Gisbert: *Fundamentals of Sociology* (Orient Longmans, Calcutta, 1965), p. 229.

¹⁵ A. N. Whitehead: *The Aim of Education* (Mentor Book edition), p. 59.

THE SECRET OF THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

AN AUROBINDONIAN APPROACH

(Continued from the issue of November 24, 1981)

Kacha and the Sanjivani Mantra (Contd.)

IN this guru-śiṣya relationship, the swallowing motif is the central one. Kapali Sastry points out,²¹ “We have it explicitly stated in a hymn in the Atharva text (11.5.3) that the Āchārya initiating the disciple takes him into his womb and bears him for three nights in his belly and when he is newborn the gods come down together to behold him... the mystic initiation is a self-effectuating process introduced into the system of the disciple who keeps himself under the care of the adept until the new birth, the spiritual birth of the Initiate becomes a settled fact... it is the epiphany of the Immortal in the mortal, the Seer-Will coming to the front from behind the veil of darkness, the Flaming Force that burns to ashes all that obscures and obstructs, and brightens the passage of the Gods for the human march.” It is obvious how closely this applies to the symbolic significance of the Kacha-Śukra myth. It is this experience which forms the essence of the rite of *upanayana* whereby the initiate becomes *dvija* “twice-born”. Dange has analysed the ritual at length to show how the eating of Kacha by animals, his rebirth from Śukra and reviving of Śukra, his being sent to Śukra by Bṛihaspati and his returning to the gods with the secret of immortality—all are echoed in the *upanayana* rite.²²

An interesting analogue of the swallowing motif found in the *Kathaka Samhitā*, XXXVII.14 has been quoted by Dange.²³ The setting is again the same, namely the devāsura war. Now it is the dānava Śuṣṇa who revives slain asuras by breathing upon them. Perceiving this, Indra converts himself into a lump of honey which Śuṣṇa swallows. Thereupon Indra changes into Śyena, the eagle-hawk, and emerges snatching amṛita from Śuṣṇa’s mouth. The *Samhitā* adds that the way to gain immortality is to be breathed out after having been taken in. In this episode the association of amṛita with breathing out corresponds to the uttering of the sañjivani mantra by Śukra and to the Creative Word which is the power of Bṛihaspati in the Vedas to uncover the Sun of Truth which also gives immortality.

The *Skanda Purāṇa*, Vaiṣṇava Khaṇḍa, 16, also features the swallowing motif. On hearing of Śukra’s reviving of dead asuras in the battle with Andhakāsura, Śiva seizes the sage and swallows him. Thus the gods defeat the asuras and then Śiva allows Śukra to emerge through his penis, terms him his son, and names him Śukra (Semen). Here Kacha’s experience is undergone by Śukra, with Śiva acting as the preceptor reborn as the son with the secret lore. This incident is retold in the *Mahābhārata* as well (Śānti Parva, chapter 289) with the slight difference of setting in that Śiva swallows Śukra because he has stolen Kubera’s wealth.

In the context of the *upanayana* rite, Dange has also suggested that the name *kacha* may hint at the tonsured initiate in this ritual in which the Sun (Savitā) is said to tonsure the initiate who is Soma.²⁴ Kacha, therefore, could signify the one with hair tied up or with shaven head. The story thus becomes a myth of Initiation. In this rite the theme is that of the oneness of the preceptor and the initiate, the swallower and the swallowed, along with the motif of immortality won through a symbolic death.

The mixing of Kacha's remains as ashes with *surā*, which is drunk by Śukra, resembles the mixing of Soma with *surā* during the Rājasūya yajña²⁵ and suggests an equation of Kacha with Soma. It is significant that Soma is addressed in the Sāma-veda as "best of the Aṅgirasas" and as "son of Kavi", along with "son of Bṛihaspati". Kacha of course fits all these descriptions. Further, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, speaks of the oneness of Soma the sacrifice and the sacrificer: and the "killing" of Soma, when it is pressed out by the stone *upāṅśu* or *āditya*, is supposed to be reflected in the symbolic "death" of the sacrificer too. This is followed by the regeneration of Soma when the pressed shoots are immersed in *vasatīvāri* waters, corresponding to the sacrificial expiatory bath, *avabhṛit* of the sacrificer, from which he emerges rejuvenated. The sacrificer is also supposed to wrap himself in the cloth in which the Soma plant has been tied.²⁶ Kacha is thus akin not only to the initiate consecrated for Vedic knowledge, but also to the sacrificer in the sacrificial rite. This, again, is really a single identification because the initiatory rite itself is in essence a self-offering, a yajña, in which the Sāvitrī-Gāyatrī mantra is imparted to the initiate as the secret of immortality, *sañjivani mantra*. It is fitting that this should be the preserve of Śukra because, as a Bhārgava, he is a power of the Sun-Truth, and the Gāyatrī mantra is nothing but an invocation to this Truth-consciousness to pervade the being of the invoker. The linking of regeneration with Śukra can also be seen in the Soma-rite in which the pouring of Soma from the *Manthin*-cup into the *Śukra*-cup is said to be followed by the rebirth of all beings.²⁷ Moreover, the *Śukra*-cup is also identified with the Sun, and called the "eater" which "eats" the *manthu*, which is the Moon (linked to Soma)²⁸ just as Śukra swallows Kacha. Interestingly enough, after the Soma has been poured by the Pratiṣṭā; from the *manthin*-cup into the Adhvaryu's *Śukra*-cup, this is again poured into the cup of the *hotṛ*, suggesting the disgorging of Kacha²⁹ by Śukra. This image structure is, thus, seen to operate on more than one level. The "eating" of Soma by Śukra when it is poured into the Adhvaryu's cup parallels, on the ritual level, the swallowing of Kacha by Śukra dissolved in wine, which, in turn, corresponds to the cosmic phenomenon of the moon-Soma being eaten and disgorged by the sun-Śukra.³⁰ Finally, underlying all these is the profound spiritual experience of Initiation into the devayāna, the path of the gods, which is a process of re-birth through the "death" of the entire being which is really a metamorphosis into something rich and strange.

Another element in the Kacha myth which links it with the Utaṅka story and the general structure of rituals of initiation into occult Mysteries, is that of sexual temptation. Vyāsa specifically refers to Devayāni sporting with Kacha in privacy (*ra-*

haḥ) (Śloka 26, chapter 76). This culminates in her frank offering of herself to him. Kacha's refusal of the offer crowns his mission with success, brahmachārya being the basic pre-requisite for discipleship and for an initiate. This echoes Uttānka's spurning of the advances made on behalf of his guru's wife.

How does Devayānī fit into the Vedic symbol structure? We have already brought out the significance of the name as the path of the gods. A valuable amplification of this has been referred to by Dange.³¹ The Maitryānī, Taittirīya and Kathaka Saṁhitās use the word as an epithet to refer to the nights belonging to the Sun. In the Veda, the Night of Ignorance holds within it the luminous Dawn which is the opening of the Sun's light of the supreme knowledge and illumination. In analysing the Uttānka myth we have referred to the alternations of Day and Night which are inevitable in man's spiritual progress, "opening up of our darkness and its settling upon us once more, till the celestial Birth is accomplished and again till it is fulfilled in its greatness, knowledge, love and power."³² These "godly" nights are not those infested with the enemy powers of the nether darkness, but "the pleasant nights, the divine and blessed ones who equally labour for our growth... the revealing lustres of the brighter goddess are known in the pleasant nights even through the movements of the darkness."³³ That is why these are nights belonging to the Sun, being illuminated in stages by the divine Dawn, Ūṣā. Devayānī, thus, could be linked to Ūṣā.

The identification of Śukra with the Sun³⁴ shows how Devayānī became the daughter of Śukra. This is also in keeping with the intimate connection in the Veda between Ūṣā and Surya. Ūṣā ushers in the Sun-Truth on all the planes of our existence and creates the divine path for the sacrificer:

Arise, life and force have come to us, the darkness has departed, the Light arrives; she has made empty the path (of enemies) for the journey of the Sun; thither let us go where the gods shall carry forward our being beyond these limits. (I.133.16)³⁵

The fact that the sacrificial altar is also called Devayānī³⁶ indicates the close connection with Agni and Soma, which are also features of Ūṣā. It is Ūṣā who gifts Agni in the mortal with inspired knowledge (cows) and plenitude and vast energy (horses) and it is she who establishes the honey of Bliss in the "heaven" of the sacrificer (the plane of Pure Intelligence, Svar).

Dange refers to an interesting legend or myth in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* in which Gāyatrī stands between the devas and the asuras, being invited by both. She joins the gods, following Agni their messenger, whereby the asuras are defeated. Devayānī similarly stands between Śukra and Kacha, and actually between Kacha, the messenger of the gods, and the asuras who wish to destroy him. She is instrumental in providing him with the sañjivanī mantra which is akin to the Gāyatrī. Further, Vāk, mother of the metres, of whom Gāyatrī is one, is identified with

the path, Devayāna leading to heaven.³⁷ Thus, Vāk and Devayāna are one, and their offspring, Gāyatrī and Devayānī are also identical, and in turn symbolised by sañjivani.

The role played by Vāk in the process of spiritual initiation has already been discussed. To recapitulate in brief, Vāk is that agitation in the infinite calm which results in the manifestation of creation. It has been represented by AUM, the primal sound or word of creation. Its work in the initiate is to waken Agni, the voice of the godhead in man, to preside over the act of self-offering. Thus, in II. 6.6. we find :³⁸

O Messenger, O youngest Power, come at our word for him who aspires to thee and craves for thy safeguard, arrive, O Priest of the Call, strong for sacrifice.

Again, in I.127.7, Ṛishi Puruchhhepa chants the marvellous power of the Word:³⁹

(When the Bhṛigus) have made obeisance and spoken to him (Agni) the Word, when they have churned him out by their worship, the Fire becomes Master of the riches.

It is in the 125th sukta of the tenth maṇḍala that we find the apotheosis of the concept of Vāk which is celebrated in the 71st sukta as the means of communication between heaven and earth during the sacrifice. It is in the latter that we find the famous ṛik which hints at the esoteric meaning of the Veda:⁴⁰

Those who do not know the inner sense are as men who seeing see not, hearing hear not, only to one here and there the Word desiring him like a beautifully robed wife to a husband lays open her body. (X.71.4).

The glorious chant of sukta 125 deserves being quoted in full:⁴¹

I travel with the Rudras and the Vasus, with the Ādityas and Viśvadevas
I wander.

I hold aloft both Varuna and Mitra, Indra and Agni, and the pair of
Aśvins.

I cherish and sustain high-swelling Soma, and Tvaṣṭar I support, Pūsan,
and Bhaga.

I load with wealth the zealous sacrificer who pours the juice and offers
his oblation.

I am the Queen, the gatherer-up of treasures, most thoughtful, first of
those who merit worship.

Thus Gods have established me in many places with many homes to enter and abide in.

Through me alone all eat the food that feeds them,—each man who sees, breathes, hears, the word outspoken. They know it not but yet they dwell beside me. Hear one and all, the truth as I declare it.

I, verily, myself announce and utter the word that Gods and men alike shall welcome.

I make the man I love exceeding mighty, make him a sage, a Ṛiṣi, and a Brahman.

I bend the bow for Rudra that his arrow may strike and slay the hater of devotion.

I rouse and order battle for the people, and I have penetrated Earth and Heaven.

On the world's summit I bring forth the Father: my home is in the waters, in the ocean.

Thence I extend o'er all existing creatures, and touch even yonder heaven with my forehead.

I breathe a strong breath like the wind and tempest, the while I hold together all existence.

Beyond this wide earth and beyond the heavens I have become so mighty in my grandeur.

Once, therefore, the sañjivani mantra has brought to life the Mystic Fire, Agni the Seer-Will, within the aspirant, this godhead carries out a threefold task in three stages. The initial stage is that of uplifting the sacrificer's activities to the higher planes of consciousness by purification and consecration. This is succeeded by the descent of the gods, divine powers, into the worshipper's being to partake of the activities, each activity offered to its proper deity. The final stage is that of fixing this descent permanently in the human being resulting in the divinisation of the mortal. The crucial importance of the mantra lay in the fact that it was a vehicle of spiritual progress, a chariot of the gods, as much for the ṛiṣi composing it as for other initiates, for "It rose out of his soul, it became a power of his mind, it was the vehicle of his self-expression in some important or even critical moment of his life's inner history. It helped him to express the god in him, to destroy the devourer, the expresser of evil; it became a weapon in the hands of the Aryan striver after perfection, it flashed forth like Indra's lightning against the Coverer on the slopes, the Wolf on the path, the Robber by the streams".⁴²

(To be continued)

PRADIP BHATTACHARYA

NOTES

- ²¹ *Lights on the Ancients, op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.
- ²² *Op. cit.*, pp. 194-200.
- ²³ *ibid.*, pp. 167-168.
- ²⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 216-218, also *devayāna* is the most auspicious time for initiation *vide* p. 230, *ibid.*
- ²⁵ Dange, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-4.
- ²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 186.
- ²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 224.
- ²⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 179-80.
- ²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 181.
- ³⁰ *op. cit.*, Dange, pp. 178, 180.
- ³¹ *ibid.*, p. 231.
- ³² *The Secret of the Veda.*
- ³³ Dange, *op. cit.*, p. 180.
- ³⁴ *The Secret of the Veda, op. cit.*, p. 433
- ³⁵ Dange, *ibid.*, p. 231.
- ³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 232.
- ³⁷ Kapali Sastry: *Lights on the Ancients, op. cit.*, p. 50.
- ³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 49.
- ³⁹ *Hymns to the Mystic Fire, op. cit.*, p. 6.
- ⁴⁰ Griffith, *op. cit.*, p. 631.
- ⁴¹ *Sri Aurobindo Archives & Research*, Dec. 1978, p. 132
- ⁴² *The Secret of the Veda, op. cit.*, p. 10.

THE LORD OF HORSES

A NOVELLA

(Continued from the issue of November 24, 1981)

IO

WHERE was I to go now? What would become of me? In this huge country to which I was a stranger? I had lost all taste for everything. And then I resolved never to frequent horses again. As long back I had resolved to flee the company of men, so now I resolved to flee the company of horses.

But then what remained in my life? Nothing, absolutely nothing.

I only knew one thing then: the world is cruel and in many forms do we meet it.

It could come as the savage and ferocious cruelty of Abouaf-the-Terrible.

It could come as the jealous and vindictive cruelty of Mitia Kuzmitch.

It could come as the cruelty of the hypocritical Tedda.

And it could come as the cruelty of the heartless Goldie.

Cruelty was everywhere. And this cruelty threatened our joy and our freedom.

Still, I tried not being overcome with despair. Because I knew also that there lived along with this cruelty a little bit of goodness in this painful world.

And this goodness was the goodness of Mohammed-bin-Moktar's sense of justice.

This goodness was the radiant goodness of the two Sages of the Great Desert.

This goodness was the mischievous goodness of Boubinoff.

This goodness was the simple goodness of Ramon.

And this goodness too was everywhere. But it did not rule. And I could not understand why the world chose to be swayed by cruelty.

And I also asked myself whether I who wanted only joy would find it some day. And I asked myself also whether I had been good enough to deserve it. Because joy is only to the deserving. And like the Great Desert joy too must be won with much effort.

And I tried to remember all that I had done since the passing of Mohammed-bin-Moktar. And I found out that sometimes I too had been cruel.

I had been cruel in leaving Ourida-the-Rose. I had been cruel in leaving Boubinoff-the-Gentle. I had been cruel in leaving Ramon. I had also been cruel to my companions of Nevada, Copper and Silver. I had been cruel because I left all those who loved me. And great was their love.

So I asked myself how I could now undo the cruelty I had done not knowing even that I was giving pain to them all. I decided to go back to Ramon. Because the mustangs did not want me any more. And because Mongolia was too far away, too far for me to return and bring solace to Boubinoff. And because I could not go back to my own country which was very, very far too, too far for me to return and

thank Ourida-the-Rose for her love and her understanding. And so I decided to go back to Ramon.

But perhaps Kismet did not wish that I return to Ramon and become a cinema-star. So I lost my way. In spite of all my efforts I could not find the place where the huge iron-bird had landed, the place where I had left Ramon and run away at full gallop.

I felt sad. To console myself I watched the surrounding landscape. And soon enough I discovered in front of my eyes some very strange posters. During my search for the land of Nevada I had become accustomed to posters which boasted about the quality of a particular beer or a certain soap or even an ice-cream. But the posters I saw now were altogether different.

They were pasted on trees. Almost on all the trees around. And all of them said the same thing:

“You who seek peace and happiness, you who believe in the kingdom of Love, you who hold all things in reverence, leave your cities and come and live in our midst, we who are your brothers in Truth, your brothers in Joy, your brothers in Love. Your brothers: the Kinkars.”

And the posters also said:

“Your Kinkar-brothers have found the secret of happiness. And they wish to share this secret with those who seek and have not yet found. For is not man condemned to misfortune and madness if his life is without love and without happiness? And are not animals condemned too? And the whole earth?”

I did not even have to think. I had decided. I had decided to go and live with the Kinkars. Once again I was full of hope and cheer. I started to gallop happily. And very soon I arrived before a city.

The city was all pink and white. It was built on a hill so steep that I thought at first the houses would slide down any moment. But nothing of the sort happened. And I could continue watching the city.

I have never liked cities very much. They have a mystery about them, a feeling of temptation, a thing of complication that eats away one's own simplicity. And this city that rose in front of me appeared even more frightening than other cities. And I understood why the Kinkars were right in asking people to quit cities. And I asked myself where the Kinkars could be then.

Just then I had a feeling that I heard a funny grunt. I turned around. And indeed it was a rosy pig. He continued grunting softly and shaking and swaying his head gently. And I remarked that with the sound of the grunts was mingled the sound of jingling bells. I noticed that he wore a little collar of tiny golden bells. He also sported a big red flower behind his left ear which almost made me laugh. A rosy pig sporting a big red flower behind his left ear. It was too funny but I did not laugh.

I remembered what the two Sages of the Great Desert had told me about the pigs. They had told me that the pigs were more intelligent than the horses. And now

that the horses had disillusioned me I knew that the Sages must be right about the intelligence of pigs.

And I started neighing with joy:

"Peace," greeted the pig. "I'm Pinky. And you?"

"Salaam," I replied. "My name's Saïd. Saïd, the Lord of Horses."

Pinky shook his head and once again I heard the tiny bells jingle around his neck.

"There are no lords around here," she answered. "No, Saïd, here there are none because here we're all the same, we're all equal."

At first I was disappointed. Because I felt that Pinky was like Mitia Kuzmitch, the chief of the tarpans. And I almost told him this. But Pinky said, "We are all equal." And I wondered who these "we" were. Were there other pigs in these parts and how many were there? My curiosity was greater than my earlier disappointment. And so I asked:

"Are there other pigs around here, Pinky?"

Pinky started to laugh but without any trace of malice.

"Oh no, Saïd," she answered. "I am the only pig of the region."

"Then, Pinky, why did you tell me that 'we're all equal'?"

Pinky regarded me with a lot of attention and his tiny eyes were full of tenderness. Then he said:

"There are men not far from here, Saïd. Not in the city you see before you. But beyond the city. And these men are very kind. It's they who are the Kinkars. And they look upon me as their equal. And upon all that exists: the animals, the trees, the flowers, the skies. Everything I assure you. Because they have found the secret of happiness. And their secret is this that we are all One."

My heart beat fast. I had finally arrived there where lived the Kinkars. And I was glad that they did not live in that frightening city but beyond it. And the Kinkars would treat me as their equal. And living with the Kinkars I would be happy. Then I too would have found the secret of happiness. I too would look at all things with an eye full of love, full of oneness. Like Pinky. I would not know hatred then nor contempt. I would only know Love. And I would always pray that Love be victorious and everything be fine on this earth. I had always known this and always wanted it to be so. Because all IS fine in reality. And one has only to know it. It is enough that all is fine to be happy. When things are contemplated with love all becomes indeed Joy.

"I would like to live among the Kinkars," I said to Pinky. "Because I believe in what they believe."

Pinky grunted with satisfaction and shook his head. And the little bells jingled around his neck. And he said to me:

"Come then, Saïd. Prepare yourself to enter the kingdom of joy and simplicity.

And he started to trot on his tiny pink legs. And at each step the little bells jingled and the red flower rose and dipped behind his left ear. But I had not the slightest

desire to laugh at him. I knew he was happy. And I respected his happiness.

And I docilely followed Pinky the pig. I, pearl-grey horse who had been compared to lightning, son of Drinker of Air and Daughter of the Wind, "my holy fury" Mehhi had called me, I, who had crossed so many countries after having had the privilege of crossing the Great Desert that none had ever crossed, I, who had been recognised as the Lord of Horses, I followed now a pig. A pig who was all pink and wore a golden collar of tiny golden bells, and a big red flower behind his left ear, a pig whose name was Pinky and who lived among the Kinkars. And as I went after him I was happy with a happiness so calm and so fulfilling that I felt I had discovered the truth of all things.

(To be continued)

CHRISTINE & ARCHAKA

(Translated by Maurice from the original French)

MANHOOD

I am a man and bold.
I am the dark, the light,
The glare of death,
The flash of stars.

Yet a bud crushed,
A soft but unthought act,
A child's innocent surprise
Dissolves me, and I'm gone.

I am a tree and firm.
I need no watering.
My roots go deep;
They touch Earth's core.

But buds blooming
Without effort, cringe;
The child's pained portent
Cuts me, and I fall.

I am in the Lord,
The Source of Strength,
And thus my weakness—
...I would faint.

DHRUVA

LET US BE HELPFUL IN CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

IN the year 1953 when The Mother's little booklet *Ideal Child* was published, on its cover was printed 'Let this book reach every child'.

All that we have not been able to do shall be done by the child of tomorrow; only let us respect him as "the father of the man" instead of what we have been doing so far—ignoring him as a mere child—and give him opportunities for development.

It does not matter that to-day we are passing through periods of the heaviest storm or that we are lost in the deepest darkness. Remember that we are also beholding the shining glimmer of the morning sun and that there is no doubt about the sparkling and scintillating invigorating brightness this shall produce now in no time.

To date, this little booklet has been translated into 14 Indian languages (Gujarati, Hindi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Marathi, Urdu, Panjabi, Bengali, Oriya, Assamese, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada) and 6 European languages (English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Flemish). It is still being translated into other languages.

About 9,00,000 copies have been distributed free to children of various countries of the world and orders and letters for the same have been received from almost all the 24 States of India, also the lands around India, namely, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Fiji Islands, countries of Europe, namely United Kingdom, Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Gibraltar, Denmark, Sweden, and Soviet Russia; countries of Africa, namely, Nigeria, Kenya, etc; Australia and much of North America, namely, New York State, the States of Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Virginia, California, Maryland, Florida, South American countries, namely, Mexico, Cuba, Argentina, Columbia, Peru, Panama, Bolivia, etc. and world organisations such as the United Nations, Rotary International, Jaycees International, Universal Children's Garden, Unity in Diversity Council and Goodman Counselling centre, etc...

Following is a portion of a letter from Argentina, South America:

"We have received your letter of 27-7. If you will invite us to join in the distribution of the book 'Ideal Child', let us say that we are conscious of the importance and the responsibility thereof. We shall deem it our good fortune that the Divine Mother gave us such an opportunity and if we shall fulfil her wish we shall not only develop ourselves but shall come closer to The Mother spiritually. In that booklet is contained the essence of The Mother's message. If we can plant this divine seed in the minds of the children, we shall be making a small contributory offering in the evolution of the future Man."

In India there are about five crores or more of children and to distribute one copy each free to them, a minimum sum of one and a half crore of rupees is required. Any individual wishing to cooperate in this work can do so by sending us a con-

tribution of Rs. 300/- for 1000 copies or Rs. 150/- for 500 copies for free distribution anywhere in India and if he wishes us to despatch them in India or anywhere in the world arrangements will be made to do so on his behalf on letting us know the name and address together with the contribution. All payments made will be issued receipts which are income-tax free.

All cheques or Bank Drafts may kindly be made payable to "Sri Aurobindo Ashram" Pondicherry and sent to Keshavji, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry-605002, India. For overseas orders the contribution for 1000 copies' despatch by surface mail is Rs. 600/- or \$ 80 should be made payable to "SABDA, Pondicherry", in U.S. Dollars payable in India or in U.S.A.

The present scheme outlined here is to enable all children of the world to have each a copy of the booklet "Ideal child" by The Mother. We invite everyone who sincerely wishes to do this work to cooperate with us and help us. Once more we remind you about an offering in this Sacrifice being performed for the development of the children of the world.

KESHAVJI

PRAYER OF THE STUDENTS

"Make of us the hero warriors we aspire to become. May we fight successfully the great battle of the future that is to be born against the past that seeks to endure; so that the new things may manifest and we be ready to receive them."

THE MOTHER

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Sri Aurobindo Circle—Thirty Seventh Number. Sri Aurobindo Society Annual—1981. Pages: 96.

FOR all those who love to collect the varied photographs of the Divine Mother, Sri Aurobindo Society with all good will gives them three or four photographs every year. Here too four photographs of the Mother's radiant and gracious face welcome us and we, the blessed creatures, enter into the palace of the Annual under review, which is usually furnished with erudition and wisdom.

The two talks of the Mother relating to the action of the supramental power upon the world are collected under the heading 'The Golden Power Now Pressing Upon the World', in which the Divine Mother makes us understand that the will from above is translated into a vibration and "that vibration exerts a pressure on people, things, circumstances, to mould them according to its vision. And it is irresistible. Even people who think the opposite, who want the opposite, do what is wanted without wanting to; even the things that by their very nature are opposed to it are turned around". It is all because of the "tremendous power".

Sri Aurobindo's 'Results of the Supramental Descent', 'Integral Yoga' and the second instalment of a compilation of Sri Aurobindo's unpublished letters to a sadhak, arranged in chronological order, under the title "Letters on Yoga", follow. In all these the Master Yogi explicates the character of his integral yoga which is a synthesis of various yogas and the supramental yoga whose first and last words are only 'surrender'. The fifth instalment of A.B.'s 'Conversations with Sri Aurobindo' tells the difference between animals and man and defines patriotism according to Sri Aurobindo. In fact, A.B.'s piece is of great historical value, especially as regards the communal troubles of 1926. It also pronounces the personal opinions of Sri Aurobindo on Gokhale, Lajpat Rai, the Hindus, the Mohemedans and the Christians. 'A Theory of the Human Being' consists of two separate writings that are incomplete parts of a work by Sri Aurobindo on the origins and development of man.

Romen's two new poems 'The Descent of Fire' and 'The Mother of Love' are welcome additions to the Aurobindonian School of Poetry. To the present reviewer the better of the two is the first, in which every word sparkles and we find a fusion of the Greek and Indian mythologies.

K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar in his well-thought-out as well as finely written article 'An Integral Approach to the Problem of Human Unity' studies step by step the predicament of man under the current conditions and warns in 'brutally plain language': "We the 4000 million inhabitants of this planet should either learn in time to swim together in amity and understanding, or we would just sink together and leave not a rack behind."

What is mysticism? What is its role in society? What is the function of a mystic? How can the mystics help us? What have we to learn from them?—these

are the questions that Sisir Kumar Ghosh answers in his thought-provoking and rewarding literary piece 'Mystics and Society'.

The concluding instalment of Prema Nandkumar's admirable article 'Sri Aurobindo's Interpretation of Indian Culture: the Veda' shows the writer's depth of knowledge and understanding. She unfolds to us the influence of Sri Aurobindo on the renowned Tamil Poet Subramania Bharati. And the poems and prose works she cites to substantiate her views are magnificently rendered into English by herself. Here and there we find in the piece the author's commentaries on 'Savitri', the marvellous epic of Sri Aurobindo.

The final article 'Integral Psychology' by A.S. Dalal is an outline of the psychological thought implicit in Sri Aurobindo's Yoga. The author defines 'integral psychology', reveals to us its scope, distinguishes between the metaphysics and psychology of Integral Yoga, explains the various methods of integral psychology and explicates its terms and concepts. Lastly he imparts to us the special significance of integral psychology.

This Annual certainly is not every man's cup of tea but truly it is a 'must' for the learned.

P. RAJA