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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute,

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



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MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. LXXI

No. 12

“Great is Truth and it shall prevail”

CONTENTS

FROM STEP TO STEP, FROM TRUTH TO TRUTH . . .

(A compilation with a focus on learning, growth and progress, a movement towards the future, an eagerness for perfection)

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*From step to step,
from truth to truth . . .*

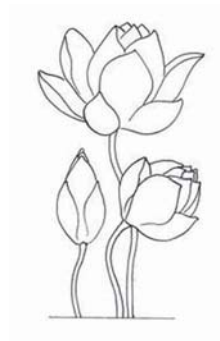
Sri Aurobindo does not belong to the past nor to history.

Sri Aurobindo is the Future advancing towards its realisation.

Thus we must shelter the eternal youth required for a speedy advance, in order not to become laggards on the way.
(M13: 5)

*

Sri Aurobindo's message is an immortal sunlight radiating over the future. (M15: 187)



THE FUTURE

We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future. (S19: 10)

*

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 may be ready to receive them. (M12: 112)

*

*In Your message of 2 January 1972, You have said:
"The future is for those who have the soul of a hero."
Will You please explain what You mean by "a hero" in
the above message?*

A hero fears nothing, complains of nothing and never gives way. (M12: 315)

*

For each person, everything depends on knowing whether one belongs to the past that perpetuates itself, to the present that is exhausting itself or to the future that longs to be born. (M15: 71)

*

Never has the past counted so little for its own sake, — its tradition is still effectual only when it can be made a power or an inspiration for the future; never has the present looked so persistently and creatively forward. (S26: 122)

*

... the will to conquer the future, the will to always look ahead and to want to move on as swiftly as they can towards ... what will be ... (M12: 402)

*

The future: a promise yet unrealised. (M15: 74)

*

The future is full of possibilities for those who know how to prepare themselves for it. (M15: 74)

*

The Future is full of promise. Prepare yourself for it.
Blessings.

(M12: 115)

*

For the spiritual eye is not only able to see the divinity in man as he is, the divinity in his struggle and victory and failure and even in his sin and offence and littleness, but the spirit is master of the future, its past and present in time not

only the half-formed stuff of its coming ages, but in a profound sense it is the call and attraction of the future that makes the past and present, and that future will be more and more seen to be the growth of the godhead in the human being which is the high fate of this race that thinks and wills and labours towards its own perfection. (S26: 274)

*

... the individuals who will most help the future of humanity in the new age will be those who will recognise a spiritual evolution as the destiny and therefore the great need of the human being. (S25: 265)

*

A gnostic superman is the future master of the earth and rescuer of the divine meaning out of the ambiguous terms of this great world-enigma. (S12: 262)

*

Each new dawn brings the possibility of a new progress.

We move forward without haste, for we are sure of the future.

(M15: 74)

*

The world is preparing for a big change.

Will you help?

(M15: 175)

*

Blessed are those who take a leap towards the Future.
(M15: 175)

*

Give us faith in a glorious future and the capacity to realise it. (M15: 216)

*

The future is necessarily better than the past. We have only to push forward. (M15: 73)

*

Forward! Towards a better future, the realisation of tomorrow.
(M15: 74)

*

Of one thing you can be sure — *your future is in your hands.*
(M12: 122)

*

Do not aim at success. Our aim is perfection. Remember you are on the threshold of *a new world*, participating in its birth and instrumental in its creation. There is nothing more important than the transformation. There is no interest more worthwhile. (M12: 120)

*

... everything that happened in the past was to prepare what is taking place now, and ... everything that is taking place now is nothing but a preparation for the road towards the future, which is truly the most important thing for which we must prepare.

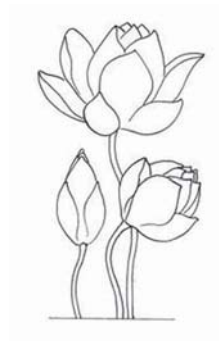
It is by cultivating intuition that one prepares to live for the future. (M12: 168)

*

Think rather of the future than of the past. (M12: 168)

*

I propose that we should simply do what is right and fair, without thinking too much of the future, leaving it to the care of the Divine's Grace. (M15: 74)



ETERNAL YOUTH

Eternal youth: it is a gift the Divine gives us when we unite ourselves with Him. (M15: 115)

*

To know how to be reborn into a new life at every moment is the secret of eternal youth. (M12: 124)

*

Eternal youth, constant growth, uninterrupted progress.
(M13: 41)

*

Youth does not depend on the small number of years one has lived, but on the capacity to grow and progress. To grow is to increase one's potentialities, one's capacities; to progress is to make constantly more perfect the capacities that one already possesses. Old age does not come from a great number of years but from the incapacity or the refusal to continue to grow and progress. I have known old people of twenty and young people of seventy. As soon as one wants to settle down in life and reap the benefits of one's past efforts, as soon as one thinks that one has done what one had to do and accomplished what one had to accomplish, in short, as

soon as one ceases to progress, to advance along the road of perfection, one is sure to fall back and become old.

One can also teach the body that there is almost no limit to its growth in capacities or its progress, provided that one discovers the true method and the right conditioning. This is one of the many experiments which we want to attempt in order to break these collective suggestions and show the world that human potentialities exceed all imagination.

(M12: 257)

*

You are young, you have plenty of time before you. And to be young, to be really young, we must always, always keep on growing, developing, progressing. Growth is the sign of youthfulness and there is no limit to the growth of consciousness. I know old people of twenty and young people of fifty, sixty, seventy. And if one does manual work, one keeps in good health. (M13: 313)

*

To be young is to live in the future.

To be young is to be always ready to give up what we are in order to become what we must be.

To be young is never to accept the irreparable.

(M12: 122)

*

What is Sri Aurobindo's call to the youth?

To become the builders of a better future in the light of the Supramental consciousness. (M12: 314)

*

Sincerity, humility, perseverance and an insatiable thirst for progress are essential for a happy and fruitful life. Above all, one must be convinced that the possibility of progress is unlimited. Progress is youth; one can be young at a hundred. (M16: 431)

*

Keep always this youth which is the faculty to progress; for you the phrase "it is impossible" will have no meaning. (M12: 269)

*

Only, one is always in too great a hurry, one wants it to be over very quickly. When one has made an effort, "Oh! well, I made an effort, now I should get the reward for my effort."

In fact, it is because there is not that joy of progress. The joy of progress imagines that even if you have realised the goal you have put before you — take the goal we have in view: if we realise the supramental life, the supramental consciousness — well, this joy of progress says, "Oh! but this will be only a stage in the eternity of time. After this there will be something else, and then after that another and yet another,

and always one will have to go further.” And that is what fills you with joy. While the idea, “Ah! now I can sit down, it is finished, I have realised my goal, I am going to enjoy what I have done”, Oh, how dull it is! Immediately one becomes old and stunted.

The definition of youth: we can say that youth is constant growth and perpetual progress — and the growth of capacities, possibilities, of the field of action and range of consciousness, and progress in the working out of details.

Naturally, someone told me, “So one is no longer young when one stops growing?” I said, “Of course, I don’t imagine that one grows perpetually! But one can grow in another way than purely physically.”

That is to say, in human life there are successive periods. As you go forward, something comes to an end in one form, and it changes its form. . . . Naturally, at present, we come to the top of the ladder and come down again; but that’s really a shame, it shouldn’t be like that, it’s a bad habit. But when we have finished growing up, when we have reached a height we could consider as that which expresses us best, we can transform this force for growth into a force which will perfect our body, make it stronger and stronger, more and more healthy, with an ever greater power of resistance, and we shall practise physical training in order to become a model of physical beauty. And then, at the same time, we shall slowly begin and seek the perfection of character, of consciousness, knowledge, powers, and finally of the divine Realisation in its fullness of the marvellously good and true, and of His perfect Love. (M8: 19-20)

*

Only those years that are passed uselessly make you grow old.

A year spent uselessly is a year during which no progress has been accomplished, no growth in consciousness has been achieved, no further step has been taken towards perfection.

Consecrate your life to the realisation of something higher and broader than yourself and you will never feel the weight of the passing years. (M12: 122)

*

It is not the number of years you have lived that makes you grow old. You become old when you stop progressing.

As soon as you feel you have done what you had to do, as soon as you think you know what you ought to know, as soon as you want to sit and enjoy the results of your effort, with the feeling you have worked enough in life, then at once you become old and begin to decline.

When, on the contrary, you are convinced that what you know is nothing compared to all which remains to be known, when you feel that what you have done is just the starting-point of what remains to be done, when you see the future like an attractive sun shining with the innumerable possibilities yet to be achieved, then you are young, however many are the years you have passed upon earth, young and rich with all the realisations of tomorrow.

And if you do not want your body to fail you, avoid wasting your energies in useless agitation. Whatever you do, do it in a quiet and composed poise. In peace and silence is the greatest strength. (M12: 123)

*

You will become the man you *want to be* and the higher your ideal and your aspiration, the higher will be your realisation, but you must keep a firm resolution and never forget your true aim in life. (M12: 122)

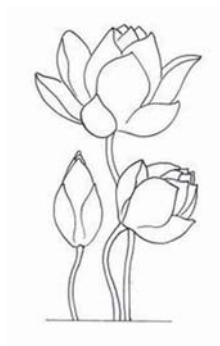
*

If the growth of consciousness were considered as the principal goal of life, many difficulties would find their solution.

The best way of not becoming old is to make progress the goal of our life. (M12: 123)

*

One must learn always not only intellectually but also psychologically, one must progress in regard to character, one must cultivate the qualities and correct the defects; everything should be made an occasion to cure ourselves of ignorance and incapacity; life becomes then tremendously interesting and worth the trouble of living it. (M12: 124)



TO KNOW ONESELF AND TO PERFECT ONESELF

An aimless life is always a miserable life.

Every one of you should have an aim. But do not forget that on the quality of your aim will depend the quality of your life.

Your aim should be high and wide, generous and disinterested; this will make your life precious to yourself and to others.

But whatever your ideal, it cannot be perfectly realised unless you have realised perfection in yourself. (M12: 3)

*

... never forget the purpose and goal of your life. (M12: 34)

*

In the world as it is now the goal of life is not to secure personal happiness, but to awaken the individual progressively to the Truth-consciousness. (M12: 18)

*

... consciousness has been given to man so that he can progress, can discover what he doesn't know, develop into what he has not yet become ... (M9: 305)

*

... all life is an education pursued more or less consciously, more or less willingly. (M12: 19)

*

The world is in perpetual transformation. Even were I to live a thousand years and more upon earth, I should continue to learn without stopping, and I am sure I would always learn something new, because what was true yesterday is no longer so today, and what is true today will no longer be so tomorrow; the world is perpetually changing, therefore, one can learn perpetually. And after all, I don't know if that is not the very reason for the world, an objectification of oneself in order to know oneself in all detail; there are many details, it can last a very long time, and they are unexpected ones!

(M6: 167)

*

... everything is in a state of perpetual progressive development, that is, the whole creation, the whole universe is advancing towards a perfection which seems to recede as one goes forward towards it, for what seemed a perfection at a certain moment is no longer perfect after a time. (M9: 34)

*

“We are not aiming at success — our aim is perfection.

“We are not seeking fame or reputation; we want to prepare ourselves for a Divine manifestation.”

What is perfection?

Some people put perfection at the apex. It is generally thought that perfection is the maximum one can do. But I say that perfection is not the apex, it is not an extreme. There is no Extreme — whatever you may do, there is always the possibility of something better, and it is exactly this possibility of something better which is the very meaning of progress.

Since there is no extreme, how can we attain perfection?

If we make some progress, could it be said that we are going towards perfection?

You are mixing up perfection and progress. You do not necessarily progress towards perfection. In progress there is perhaps a certain perfection, but it can't be said that progress is perfection. Progress is rather an ascent.

Perfection is a harmony, an equilibrium. (M4: 14)

*

Perfection is not a summit, it is not an extreme. There is no extreme: whatsoever you do, there is always the possibility of something better and exactly this possibility of something better is the very meaning of progress. (M15: 78)

*

Even to a little baby I may ask questions. I always feel that one can learn something, always. (M6: 167)

*

If you want to learn, you can learn at every moment. As for me I have learnt even by listening to little children's chatter. Every moment something may happen; someone may say a word to you, even an idiot may say a word that opens you to something enabling you to make some progress. And then, if you knew, how life becomes interesting! You can no longer get bored, that is gone, everything is interesting, everything is wonderful — because every minute you can learn, at each step make progress. (M5: 48-49)

*

Essentially there is but one single true reason for living: it is to know oneself. We are here to learn — to learn what we are, why we are here, and what we have to do. And if we don't know that, our life is altogether empty — for ourselves and for others. (M6: 15-16)

*

When one has the true attitude, everything can be an opportunity to learn. (M16: 276)

*

... with goodwill and a steadfast aspiration, you will be able to create a harmonious atmosphere which is very conducive to progress. (M12: 58)

*

It is through steadfast aspiration that one learns. (M16: 431)

*

To learn constantly, not just intellectually but psychologically, to progress in regard to character, to cultivate our qualities and correct our defects, so that everything may be an opportunity to cure ourselves of ignorance and incapacity — then life becomes tremendously interesting and worth living.

(M16: 432)

*

... you must learn, love to learn, always learn, not waste your time in ... well, in filling yourself with useless things or doing useless things. You must do everything with this aim, to enrich your possibilities, develop those you have, acquire new ones, and become as complete, as perfect a human being as you can. (M7: 309)

*

Every hour of my life I have learnt that one can learn something; but I have never felt bound by the opinion of others, for I consider that there is only one truth in the world which

can know something, and this is the Supreme Truth. Then one is quite free. And it is this freedom that I want of you — free from all attachment, all ignorance, all reaction; free from everything except a total surrender to the Divine. This is the way out from all responsibility towards the world. The Divine alone is responsible. (M4: 91)

*

... to love to learn always and everywhere, so that all circumstances, all happenings in life may be constantly renewed opportunities for learning more and always more.
(M12: 25)

*

... it is interesting. And all the time one can have surprises, always learn something one didn't know, meet with an experience one did not have before, find something one was ignorant of. It is surely very interesting. And the more one knows, the more aware does one become that one has everything to learn. Truly, I could say that only fools believe they know. That indeed is a sure sign, someone coming and telling you, "Oh! I know all that; oh! I know all that"; he is immediately sized up! (M6: 16)

*

One's cocksureness is in proportion to one's unconsciousness; the more unconscious one is, the more is one sure of oneself. The most foolish are always the most vain. Your stupidity is

in proportion to your vanity. The more one knows . . . In fact, there is a time when one is quite convinced that one knows nothing at all. There's not a moment in the world which does not bring something new, for the world is perpetually growing. If one is conscious of that, one has always something new to learn. But one can become conscious of it only gradually. One's conviction that one knows is in direct proportion to one's ignorance and stupidity. (M5: 29)

*

. . . one has the impression that after having lived so long, one is only beginning to know a very little.

Yes, exactly, it is just like that. This is because the farther one goes, the more does one realise that there is everything to understand and everything to learn. And consequently, if one has behind him some sixty years, it is nothing. One would like to have hundreds and hundreds of years behind oneself to be able to do the work. It is like that, you are all little children, you see, so the years seem to you long, because you have not lived much; but you will see, the more one advances, the more does one realise that there is a long road in front, long, very long, and one would not like to have to begin all over again, for it is so much more time lost. (M4: 330)

PROGRESS

The purpose of earthly life is progress. If you stop progressing you will die. Every moment that you spend without progressing is one step closer to your grave. (M15: 75)

*

Progress: the reason why we are on earth. (M15: 75)

*

When one does not progress, one gets bored — old and young, everybody — because we are here upon earth to progress. If we do not progress every minute, well, it is indeed boring, monotonous; it is not always pleasant, it is far from being fine. “So I am going to find out today what progress I can make in this class; there is something I do not know and which I can learn.” (M5: 48)

*

We are on earth in order to progress and to perfect ourselves in the course of many successive lives. What we cannot do this time, we shall do next time; and every progress we make this time will help us then.

Kali always helps those who call on her, and with her help the progress comes more quickly. (M17: 368)

*

Everybody and everything can always progress and I am always working in view of a possible improvement, knowing that the greatest difficulty brings always the greatest victory and I trust that you are with me for that. (M15: 77)

*

What you must know is exactly the thing you want to do in life. The time needed to learn it does not matter at all. For those who wish to live according to Truth, there is always something to learn and some progress to make. (M14: 5)

*

One has always something to learn and a progress to make, and in each circumstance we can find the occasion of learning the lesson and making the progress. (M15: 75)

*

Each new dawn brings the possibility of a new progress.

We move forward without haste, for we are sure of the future. (M15: 74)

*

There is no end to progress and every day one can learn to do better what one does. (M15: 76)

*

... we must progress at each moment, we must use yesterday as the stepping-stone to tomorrow.

Life is in perpetual movement, in perpetual transformation. However great or learned or wise one may be, he who does not follow the great current of universal life in an ever ascending march, inevitably moves towards downfall, towards the dissolution of his conscious being. (M2: 97)

*

Remorse is of no use; you have to feel the joy of the possibility of making further progress. (M16: 45)

*

Progress: to be ready, at every minute, to give up all one is and all one has in order to advance on the way. (M15: 75)

*

Without inner progress there is no possible outer progress. (M2: 150)

*

It is quite obvious that nothing can be manifested which is not previously contained in what exists. One can't bring something out of nothing. One can make what is there emerge, manifest, express itself, develop; but if nothing had been there, nothing would ever have come out. All progress, all

perfection is the result of an inner effort of “something” that is present and seeks to manifest. That is to say, absolutely, the principle comes first and the expression afterwards. As we go on reading *The Life Divine*, Sri Aurobindo will prove this to you in every possible way. If there were not an eternal principle, if there were not — we give it all the names we like, can’t we? — a Supreme Reality, there would never have been a universe, because nothing comes out of nothing. (M9: 222)

*

True progressive evolution, an evolution which can lead man to his rightful happiness, does not lie in any external means, material improvement or social change. Only a deep and inner process of individual self-perfection can make for real progress and completely transform the present state of things, and change suffering and misery into a serene and lasting contentment.

Consequently, the best example is one that shows the first stage of individual self-perfection which makes possible all the rest, the first victory to be won over the egoistic personality: disinterestedness. (M2: 69)

*

An atmosphere of spirituality is sometimes a far greater help than an exchange of words; the most beautiful thoughts cannot make us progress unless we have a persistent will to translate them within ourselves into higher feelings, more exact sensations and nobler actions. (M2: 63)

*

When some progress needs to be made, you must set to work to make it, without excusing yourself on the grounds that others are not making it.

Each one is responsible first for himself; and if you aspire to help others, it is by giving an example of what one should be that you can help them most effectively.

And the Divine Grace is always there, marvellously effective for all those who are sincere. (M17: 370)

*

I feel as if I am stuck, unable to take a step forward.

Sometimes it is precisely when one is dissatisfied with oneself that one makes the most progress. (M17: 120)

*

... life seems to endow everyone not only with the possibility of expressing an ideal, but also with contrary elements representing in a concrete manner the battle he has to wage and the victory he has to win for the realisation to become possible. (M12: 19)

*

The divine Grace is behind everything, even shortcomings, and with Its help there is nothing that cannot be made an opportunity for progress. (M17: 193-94)

*

. . . it is always like that, for every time one wants to realise something, the first difficulty one meets is the opposition of all that was inactive before and now rises up to resist. All that does not want to accept this change naturally wakes up and revolts. But that is of no importance. It is the same thing as in the individual being: when you want to progress, the difficulty you want to conquer immediately increases tenfold in importance and intensity in your consciousness. There is but to persevere, that's all. It will pass. (M9: 175)

*

What is indispensable in every case is the *ardent* will for progress, the willing and joyful renunciation of all that hampers the advance: to throw far away from oneself all that prevents one from going forward, and to set out into the unknown with the ardent faith that this is the truth of tomorrow, *inevitable*, which must necessarily come, which nothing, nobody, no bad will, even that of Nature, can prevent from becoming a reality — perhaps of a not too distant future — a reality which is being worked out now and which those who know how to change, how not to be weighed down by old habits, will *surely* have the good fortune not only to see but to realise. (M9: 159)

*

. . . But there are two types of progress, not only one; there is the progress that consists in perfecting more and more the capacities, possibilities, faculties and qualities you have — this is what is normally obtained by education; but if you go in for a little more thorough development by approaching a

deeper truth, you can add, to the qualities you already have, other new ones which seem to be asleep in your being.

You can multiply your possibilities, enlarge and increase them; you can suddenly bring up something you did not think you had. I have already explained this to you several times. When one discovers one's psychic being within, at the same time there develop and manifest, quite unexpectedly, things one could not do at all before and which one didn't think were in one's nature. (M9: 396)

*

If we want to progress integrally, we must build within our conscious being a strong and pure mental synthesis which can serve us as a protection against temptations from outside, as a landmark to prevent us from going astray, as a beacon to light our way across the moving ocean of life.

Each individual should build up this mental synthesis according to his own tendencies and affinities and aspirations. But if we want it to be truly living and luminous, it must be centred on the idea that is the intellectual representation symbolising That which is at the centre of our being, That which is our life and our light.

This idea, expressed in sublime words, has been taught in various forms by all the great Instructors in all lands and all ages.

The Self of each one and the great universal Self are one. Since all that is exists from all eternity in its essence and principle, why make a distinction between the being and its origin, between ourselves and what we place at the beginning?
(M2: 40)

BURNING FIRE

Give up all personal seeking for comfort, satisfaction, enjoyment or happiness. Be only a burning fire for progress, take whatever comes to you as an aid to your progress and immediately make whatever progress is required. (M12: 33)

*

... the only important thing is just to keep the true orientation in one's aspiration and a living will for progress. (M9: 31)

*

Today You gave me a flower meaning "Psychic flame", but I really didn't understand what you mean to tell me.

Agni is the will for progress, the flame of purification that burns up all obstacles and difficulties. By giving you the flower, I am encouraging you to let it burn in you. (M17: 146)

*

The true Agni always burns in deep peace; it is the fire of an all-conquering will.

Let it grow in you in perfect equanimity. (M14: 159)

*

Agni: the flame of purification which must precede all contact with the invisible worlds. (M14: 159)

*

Mother, I would like to know something about this flame of Agni.

It is the flame of purification, the will for progress. (M17: 80)

*

Let us keep flaming in our heart the fire of progress.
(M15: 76)

*

For the inner flame to burn, one must feed it; one must watch over the fire, throw into it the fuel of all the errors one wants to get rid of, all that delays the progress, all that darkens the path. If one doesn't feed the fire, it smoulders under the ashes of one's unconsciousness and inertia, and then, not years but lives, centuries will pass before one reaches the goal.

One must watch over one's faith as one watches over the birth of something *infinitely* precious, and protect it very carefully from everything that can impair it.

In the ignorance and darkness of the beginning, faith is the most direct expression of the Divine Power which comes to fight and conquer. (M9: 352)

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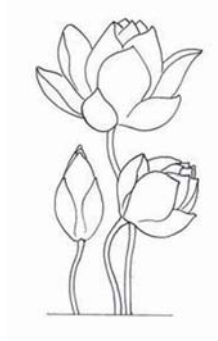
The light should always bring with it the joy of new progress.
(M17: 189)

*

Learn to radiate and do not fear the storm: the wind carries us far from the shore but shows us the world. (M1: 332)

*

It takes a great courage and a great love of progress to consent to examine one's existence in the light of thoughts that are deeper, and consequently more independent of the customs and usages of the environment. (M2: 80)



DIFFICULTIES

In all Scriptures meant to help mankind to progress, it is always said that you must be very grateful to those who show you your faults and so you must seek their company; but the form used here is particularly felicitous: if a fault is shown to you it is as if a treasure were shown to you; that is to say, each time that you discover in yourself a fault, incapacity, lack of understanding, weakness, insincerity, all that prevents you from making a progress, it is as if you discovered a wonderful treasure.

Instead of growing sad and telling yourself, "Oh, there is still another defect", you should, on the contrary, rejoice as if you had made a wonderful acquisition, because you have just caught hold of one of those things that prevented you from progressing. And once you have caught hold of it, pull it out! For those who practise a yogic discipline consider that the moment you know that a thing should not be, you have the power to remove it, discard it, destroy it.

To discover a fault is an acquisition. It is as though a flood of light had come to replace the little speck of obscurity which has just been driven out. (M3: 220-21)

*

To discover one's weaknesses and imperfections is already a great progress. The first step towards progress is a sincere humility. (M17: 160)

*

If you want to learn to work *really well*, you must be modest, become aware of your imperfections and always maintain the will to progress.

One does not progress through boasting. (M17: 164)

*

The purpose of individual existence is the joy of discovering the Divine and uniting with Him. When one has understood this, then one is ready to gain the strength to surmount all difficulties. (M16: 423)

*

A victory won over the lower nature gives a deeper and more lasting joy than any external success. (M16: 424)

*

Each time you receive a blow from life, tell yourself immediately, "Ah, I have to make a progress"; then the blow becomes a blessing. Instead of tucking your head between your shoulders, you lift it up with joy and you say, "What is it I have to learn? I want to know. What is it I have to change? I want to know." This is what you should do. (M4: 122)

*

And all your difficulties are there just so that you may learn to transform them into the truth they are hiding.

Once you have understood this, many worries come to an end and you are very happy, very happy. If one finds one has very black holes, one says, "This shows I can rise very high", if the abyss is very deep, "I can climb very high."

(M4: 118-19)

*

The true attitude is to take life as a field of perpetual study, where one must never stop learning and think that one knows everything there is to know. One can always know more and understand better. (M12: 376)

*

When you are full of goodwill, when you know that you know nothing, that you have everything to learn, then you begin to become a little plastic and when there is a force which puts a pressure, you answer. (M6: 300)

*

... provided you take the trouble and know the method, your capacity for growth is almost unlimited. (M8: 387)

*

You must increase your concentration, your aspiration and your trust and with the new help which comes to you, make a new programme, work out other means to replace those you have left behind. This is how one progresses stage by stage.

But you must take great care to apply at each stage, as perfectly as possible, what you have gained or learnt.

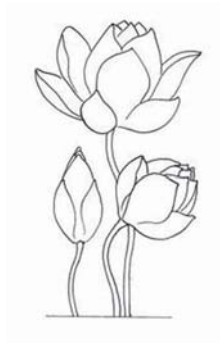
(M4: 181)

*

He who wants to advance on the path of perfection must never complain about the difficulties on the way, for each is an opportunity for a new progress. To complain is a sign of weakness and insincerity. (M14: 221)

*

Never complain of the behaviour of anyone, unless you have the power to change in his nature what makes him act in this way; and if you have the power, change him instead of complaining. (M12: 34)



STEPPING BACK

In Nature's economy, moments of respite are given to men to rediscover themselves but they do not know how to make use of them. (M4: 205)

*

Always do with pleasure the work you have to do.
Work done with joy is work done well. (M16: 113)

*

Try to take pleasure in all you do, but never do anything for the sake of pleasure. (M12: 34)

*

Have no ambition,
above all pretend nothing,
but be at every moment
the utmost that you can be.

That is the ideal state in the integral life—whatever one does. And if one realises that, well, one is certainly very far on the path of perfection. . . . But it is obvious that a certain inner maturity is needed to do this in all sincerity. You may set this as a programme for yourselves. (M9: 98)

*

You must learn to stand back and detach yourself from the lower, external movements. (M17: 103)

*

You must always step back into yourself — learn to go deep within — step back and you will be safe. Do not lend yourself to the superficial forces which move in the outside world. Even if you are in a hurry to do something, step back for a while and you will discover to your surprise how much sooner and with what greater success your work can be done. If someone is angry with you, do not be caught in his vibrations but simply step back and his anger, finding no support or response, will vanish. Always keep your peace, resist all temptation to lose it. Never decide anything without stepping back, never speak a word without stepping back, never throw yourself into action without stepping back. All that belongs to the ordinary world is impermanent and fugitive, so there is nothing in it worth getting upset about. What is lasting, eternal, immortal and infinite — that indeed is worth having, worth conquering, worth possessing. It is Divine Light, Divine Love, Divine Life — it is also Supreme Peace, Perfect Joy and All-Mastery upon earth with the Complete Manifestation as the crowning. When you get the sense of the relativity of things, then whatever happens you can step back and look; you can remain quiet and call on the Divine Force and wait for an answer. Then you will know exactly what to do. Remember, therefore, that you cannot receive the answer before you are very peaceful. Practise that inner peace, make at least a small beginning and go on in your practice until it becomes a habit with you. (M3: 160)

*

Never get excited, nervous or agitated. Remain perfectly calm in the face of all circumstances. And yet be always alert to discover what progress you still have to make and lose no time in making it. (M12: 34)

*

It is true that the path is very long, but for one who follows it with *sincerity*, it is *really very interesting*, and at every step one is rewarded for one's trouble. (M16: 375)

*

The path is long. That is why one must have patience and an unflinching sincerity towards oneself. (M17: 370)

*

To see clearly, to see one's way, where one is going, why one is going there, how one is to go there and what one is going to do and what is the kind of relation with others . . . But that is a problem so wonderfully interesting — it is interesting — and you can always discover things every minute! One's work is never finished. (M5: 200)

*

You must have a great deal of sincerity, a little courage and perseverance and then a sort of mental curiosity, you understand, curious, seeking to know, interested, wanting to learn. To love to learn: that, one must have in one's nature.

(M5: 200)

*

Whenever there is sincerity, you find that the help, the guidance, the grace are always there to give you the answer and you are not mistaken for long.

It is this sincerity in the aspiration for progress, in the will for truth, in the need to be truly pure — pure as it is understood in the spiritual life — it is this sincerity which is the key to all progress. With it you know — and you *can*.

(M3: 192)

*

It is only in the calm that one can know and do. All that is done in agitation and violence is an aberration and a folly. The first sign of the divine presence in the being is peace.

We are here to do better than elsewhere and to prepare ourselves for a supramental future. This should never be forgotten. (M12: 114)

*

The noise made by all the words, all the ideas in your head is so deafening that it prevents you from hearing the truth when it wants to manifest.

To learn to be quiet and silent . . . When you have a problem to solve, instead of turning over in your head all the possibilities, all the consequences, all the possible things one should or should not do, if you remain quiet with an aspiration for goodwill, if possible a need for goodwill, the solution comes very quickly. And as you are silent you are able to hear it.

When you are caught in a difficulty, try this method: instead of becoming agitated, turning over all the ideas and

actively seeking solutions, of worrying, fretting, running here and there inside your head — I don't mean externally, for externally you probably have enough common sense not to do that! but inside, in your head — *remain quiet*. And according to your nature, with ardour or peace, with intensity or widening or with all these together, implore the Light and wait for it to come.

In this way the path would be considerably shortened.
(M9: 422-23)

*

. . . Yet one must learn to act without any preference, free from all attractions and likings, taking one's stand solely on the Truth which guides. And having chosen in accordance with the Truth the necessary action, one must carry it out without any desire. (M4: 1)

*

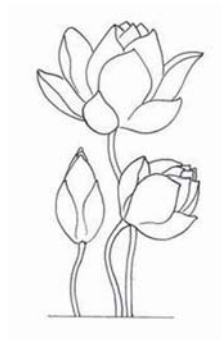
Live in the consciousness that things are altogether impermanent, never become attached, if you are to be free to progress with the universe and grow according to the eternal rhythm. This one understands. But what is important is to practise it. (M3: 272)

*

When you work, if you are able to concentrate, you can do absolutely in ten minutes what would otherwise take you one hour. If you want to gain time, learn to concentrate. It is through attention that one can do things quickly and one does them much better. (M5: 124)

*

To solve a problem, to learn a lesson, a lot of concentration and attention is needed, everyone knows that — an intellectual attention and concentration. But concentration is not only an intellectual thing, it may be found in all the activities of the being, including bodily activities. The control over the nerves should be such as would allow you a complete concentration on what you are doing and, through the very intensity of your concentration, you acquire an immediate response to external touches. To attain this concentration you need a conscious control of the energies. (M4: 4)



EACH YEAR THAT PASSES

No institution can live unless it is progressive.

The true progress is to come always closer to the Divine.

Each year that passes must be marked by a new progress towards perfection. (M15: 77)

*

Each year that passes should be — and is necessarily — a new conquest. (M15: 77)

*

Another year has passed, leaving behind it its burden of lessons, some hard, some even painful.

Now, a new year begins, bringing possibilities of progress and of realisation. But to take full advantage of these possibilities, we must understand the previous lessons.

(M12: 113)

*

Everything that has been done is always nothing compared with what remains to be done.

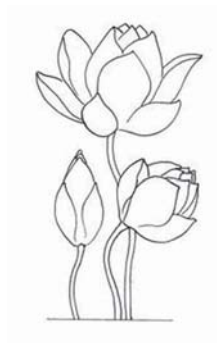
Do not look behind. Look ahead, always ahead and go forward always. (M3: 238)

*

Do not look behind, look always in front, at what you want to do — and you are sure of progressing. (M15: 76)

*

What cannot be done today will surely be done later on. No effort for progress has ever been made in vain. (M15: 76)



THE CALL

... if you think in a particular way, it is certain that the other won't be able to think in the same way. And if you are a person of a certain type, it is absolutely certain that the other cannot be of the same type. And what you ought to learn is to harmonise, synthesise, combine all the disparate things in the universe by putting each one *in its place*. Total harmony does not at all lie in an identity, but in a harmonisation which can come only by putting each thing in its place. (M9: 56)

*

Live always in the aspiration of realising your most complete and most true perfection. (M12: 128)

*

Soar ever higher, ever farther, without fear or hesitation!
The hopes of today are the realisations of tomorrow.
(M15: 73)

*

Get out of your mind to have the true intelligence.
Get out of your sensations to have the true feelings.
Get out of your sensitiveness to have the true dynamism.
(M14: 366)

LIGHTS ON THE WAY

From step to step, from truth to truth, we shall climb ceaselessly until we reach the perfect realisation of tomorrow.

(M15: 74)

*

... let one thing come inside and in front of the consciousness as *the* important thing: the discovery of the very purpose of existence and life, to learn what one is, why one lives, and what there is behind all this. This is the first step . . .

(M7: 349)

*

... one must be very persistent, very stubborn and have an aspiration which rises straight upwards, that is, which does not go roaming around here and there, seeking all kinds of things.

Only this: to understand, understand, understand, to learn to know, to be. (M7: 235)

*

To want only what the Divine wants in us and for us, is the one important thing. (M14: 3)

*

The divine discovery is the discovery of the Divine in oneself.
(M8: 35)

*

Yes, to live in the consciousness of the Divine Presence is the only thing that matters. (M14: 3)

*

Let this be our one need in life, to realise the Divine. (M14: 3)

*

Tapasya is the discipline one imposes upon oneself to arrive at the discovery of the Divine. (M4: 343)

*

Sri Aurobindo always reminds us of the fact that the Divine is everywhere and in everything, and asks us to practise a true compassion, as is so beautifully expressed in this aphorism which I am just commenting upon, "Examine thyself without pity, then thou wilt be more charitable and pitiful to others." (M13: 144)

*

Life is meant for seeking the Divine. Life is realised when finding the Divine. (M14: 3)

*

Never forget the goal. Never stop aspiring. Never halt in your progress, and you are sure to succeed. (M15: 79)

*

Life has a purpose.

This purpose is to find and to serve the Divine.

The Divine is not far, He is in ourselves, deep inside and above the feelings and the thoughts. With the Divine is peace and certitude and even the solution of all difficulties.

Hand over your problems to the Divine and He will pull you out of all difficulties. (M14: 5)

*

Individual existence has been created to make possible the joy of finding the Divine and uniting with Him. (M17: 368)

*

Only one thing is important, it is to find the Divine.

For each one and for the whole world anything becomes useful if it helps to find the Divine. (M14: 3)

*

Every human being carries hidden within him the possibility of a greater consciousness which goes beyond the bounds of his present life and enables him to share in a higher and a vaster life. (M12: 30)

*

You must find, in the depths of your being, that which carries in it a sense of universality, limitless expansion, unbroken continuity. (M12: 33)

*

Whatever you do, never forget the goal which you have set before you. There is nothing great or small once you have set out on this great discovery; all things are equally important and can either hasten or delay its success. (M12: 34)

*

Whatever you do, whatever your occupations and activities, the will to find the truth of your being and to unite with it must be always living and present behind all that you do, all that you feel, all that you think. (M12: 5)

*

Wake up in yourself a will to conquer. (M15: 146)

*

You are here to contact your soul, and that is why you live. Aspire persistently and try to silence your mind. The aspiration must come from the heart. (M14: 6)

*

. . . if we truly want to progress and acquire the capacity of knowing the truth of our being, that is to say, what we are truly created for, what we can call our mission upon earth, then we must, in a very regular and constant manner, reject from us or eliminate in us whatever contradicts the truth of our existence, whatever is opposed to it. (M12: 3)

*

The starting-point is to seek in yourself that which is independent of the body and the circumstances of life, which is not born of the mental formation that you have been given, the language you speak, the habits and customs of the environment in which you live, the country where you are born or the age to which you belong. You must find, in the depths of your being, that which carries in it a sense of universality, limitless expansion, unbroken continuity. (M12: 32-33)

*

It is through this psychic presence that the truth of an individual being comes into contact with him and the circumstances of his life. In most cases the presence acts, so to say, from behind the veil, unrecognised and unknown; but in some, it is perceptible and its action recognisable and even, in a very few, the presence becomes tangible and its action fully effective. These go forward in life with an assurance and a certitude all their own; they are masters of their destiny. (M12: 32)

*

The psychic being always has an influence on the thoughts and actions, but one is rarely conscious of it. To become conscious of the psychic being, one must want to do so, make one's mind as silent as possible, and enter deep into the heart of one's being, beyond sensations and thoughts. One must form the habit of silent concentration and descent into the depths of one's being.

The discovery of the psychic being is a definite and very concrete fact, as all who have had the experience know.

(M16: 399)

*

This work of unification requires much time to be brought to some degree of perfection. Therefore, in order to accomplish it, we must arm ourselves with patience and endurance, with a determination to prolong our life as long as necessary for the success of our endeavour. (M12: 4)

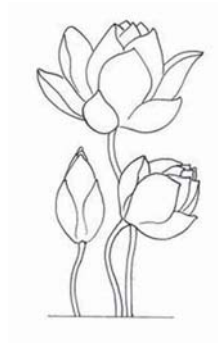
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... the truth we seek is made up of four major aspects: Love, Knowledge, Power and Beauty. These four attributes of the Truth will express themselves spontaneously in our being. The psychic will be the vehicle of true and pure love, the mind will be the vehicle of infallible knowledge, the vital will manifest an invincible power and strength and the body will be the expression of a perfect beauty and harmony.

(M12: 8)

*

For the mind — knowledge.
For the heart — love and joy.
For the life — power.
For the matter — beauty. (M14: 366)



PRAYERS

Thou hast willed, O Lord, that the being should grow wider and richer. (M1: 321)

*

Fill our hearts with the delight of Thy love. Flood our minds with the splendour of Thy light. Grant that we may effectuate Thy Victory! (M1: 178)

*

Let Thy Light be in me like a Fire that makes all alive; let Thy divine Love penetrate me. I aspire with all my being for Thy reign as sovereign and master of my mind and heart and body; let them be Thy docile instruments and Thy faithful servitors. (M1: 3)

*

To grow from joy to joy, from beauty to beauty, is this not more natural and also more fruitful than always to suffer and toil in an ignorant struggle unwillingly undergone? If Thou allowest the heart to blossom freely at the touch of Thy divine Love, this transformation is easy and comes of itself. (M1: 349)

*

Let the Truth be your master and your guide.

We aspire for the Truth and its triumph in our being and our activities.

Let the aspiration for the Truth be the dynamism of our efforts.

O Truth! We want to be guided by Thee. May Thy reign come upon earth. (M12: 113)

*

We pray that the Divine should teach us ever more, enlighten us more and more, dispel our ignorance, illumine our minds. (M15: 208)

*

With peace in our hearts, with light in our minds, we feel Thee, O Lord, so living within us that we await events with serenity, knowing that Thy path is everywhere, since we carry it in our own being, and that in all circumstances we can become the heralds of Thy word, the servitors of Thy work.

With a calm and pure devotion we hail Thee and recognise Thee as the sole reality of our being. (M1: 70)

*

Teach us to be really sincere in our effort towards the Truth. (M12: 115)

*

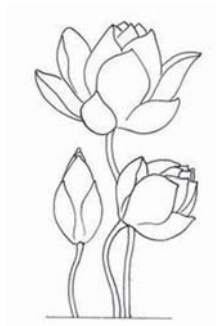
O Lord, I pray to Thee, guide my footsteps, enlighten my mind, that at every moment and in all things I may do exactly what Thou wantest me to do. (M15: 213)

*

O Lord, eternal Teacher, Thou whom we can neither name nor understand, but whom we want to realise more and more at every moment, enlighten our intelligence, illumine our hearts, transfigure our consciousness; may everyone awaken to the true life, flee from egoism and its train of sorrow and anguish, and take refuge in Thy divine and pure Love, source of all peace and all happiness. (M1: 103)

*

Teach us always more,
Give us more light,
Dispel our ignorance,
Illumine our minds,
Transfigure our hearts,
And give us the Love that never runs dry, and makes
Thy sweet law flower in every being.
We are Thine for all Eternity. (M1: 51)





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