NO RECOGNITION FOR RED CHINA

INDIA’s mind still remains to be made up about Red China. What is perhaps even worse is that we are trying to inject our hesitation into the minds of Britain and America who already have their own temptations. Britain is instinctively inclined to be business-minded and if by some magic India were to be sure of securing her commercial interests she would like to do so. America is not indifferent to making a good bargain, but side by side with commercial interests what weighs with her is a certain strong sympathy with the Chinese people. She would like to believe that the Chinese Communist is somehow different from the Russian brand and this belief is inspired not so much by commercial wishful thinking as by a genuine “appetite” about the common masses whom Pearl Buck and others have lovingly delineated. Luckily there is at the same time a very powerful counterpoise on the ideological level, almost an anti-Communist faith and passion matching the fervour which the convinced Communist brings to his job of preparing the ground for a world-revolution in the name of Stalin. This semi-religious opposition on America’s part is in practical politics today the one rallying-point for the forces of civilisation and it is to be hoped that no hesitation by any country will ultimately count against it. Already its influence is telling, but we are not clearly aware of its rights and an effort continues to be made to darken counsel and there is lacking on our side a willing co-operation with the trend set by the American attitude.

We are showing a disposition to stick to three fancies. We say to ourselves: “Mao’s regime is an established fact; we must lose no time in acknowledging it.” It is also associated with very valuable agrarian reforms: we must not hinder the beneficial process. Again, the people of China are backing up Mao: we must not stand in the way of their wishes.” In a previous editorial, Mother India attempted to show clearly that Chinese Communism cannot be divorced from Stalin, that to overlook the freedom-stifling character of it by being taken in by a show of agrarian reform is capital folly, that it is purblindness to confuse the resentments against the Kuomintang rule with genuine allegiance to the Communist creed, that signs of a definite character are not wanting to indicate open revolts by the Chinese people wherever the strangle-grip of Mao happens to be insufficiently sustained and that recognition would immensely help the activities of the Communists everywhere and especially in India. What we purpose to do now is to bring together certain points that have come more and more into the light.

Is the Constitution of Red China Democratic?

Shrewd students of Chinese affairs have not been slow to perceive that the very constitution of Red China published by Mao gives the lie to his claims of reforming the millions under his yoke. This constitution is cut and cut centralised. The phrase used in article 2 is “democratic centralism.” But it is not difficult to see that the adjective “democratic” is particularly meaningless in the present context. For article 1 speaks, among other things, of “various nationalities within the country.” If China consists of various nationalities, the only government which at least on paper can call itself democratic would be a federal one. Where the governmental structure makes no pretence in even theory to be federal and be fashioned upon the lines of the nationalities, how can there be a people’s government? There is indeed talk of coexisting in the future an All-China People’s Congress on the basis of universal suffrage, but till such time that this happens it is self-contradictory to speak, in the same breath, of “centralism” and of government by the people. The Soviet Constitution, on which the Chinese is supposed to be modelled, is at least free from such centralism in theory. It claims to be federal and tries to exhibit in certain respects some resemblance to those of the western democracies. The resemblance means very little in actual practice: as Pandit Nehru remarked in the U.S.A., Soviet Russia is an extreme form of centralisation and regimentation, reducing freedom to almost a cypress. So we can gather from its historical precedent that the All-China People’s Congress, even if it brings in federalism, will not constitute authentic democracy. But at a moment when drastic centralism is explicitly ordered the order of the day is it absurd to suggest that Mao stands for the common people. We look in vain for any mention of fundamental rights of citizens in the constitution he has set up. It is pure and simple dictatorship or at best the grip of a selfish and greedy clique. Mao’s régime may please one who plied that the unsettled condition of China calls for a military centralism, but such a defence, even were it valid, is quite different from holding that the military centralism is actually a people’s democracy!

Is there Sense in Hurry to Decide?

To be insistent, therefore, on recognising the Peking régime is to betray the democratic cause in the most extreme sense. At the least we must watch and wait. One wonders why in addition to blocking the all-too-pure path of a thrilling militarist there is the hurry to decide this way or the other. Several new governments have had to labour on for a long time before getting recognition. The U.S.A., for instance, did not recognize Soviet Russia for seventeen years. Franco’s Spain has had no recognition up to now, although she is of one mind with Britain and America as regards Communism. Even the government of Chiang Kai-shek which overthrew the Manchu Dynasty in 1912 was refused full recognition by President Wilson for a whole year. And, remember, there was little doubt anywhere about Chiang’s régime. If under such circumstances there was no precipitate decision, why the feverish canvassing for a quick vote in Mao’s favour when he comes with, to put it mildly, very questionable credentials?

Even to wait and see is foolish enough. There is opinion in some quarters that the act of abstaining from flat refusal to recognise Mao would produce on him an impression of friendliness. Of course he would be highly gratified if India did not set her face against him; it would serve his purpose excellently. But would it ever make him look upon India as friendly? Whatever be India’s own feelings, she will remain an enemy in Mao’s eyes no less than Stalin’s so long as he is non-Communist. To be non-Communist is to be, in their view, a confederate of “Fascist beasts.” Not even a Socialist régime is regarded by Stalin and his followers as being amicable. They make no distinctions in the final summing-up. No country is accorded by them the right to choose its own government. No country is considered good-neighbourly unless it goes Red. Pandit Nehru’s much emphasised neutrality produces not the least warming of the cockles of Stalin’s heart. Neither is Mao rendered the least bit affectionate by Nehru’s unwillingness to be teamed up with either bloc. We have only to tune in to Peking Radio to realise with our own ears the attitude of Red China towards us. Recently a series of talks was begun against the imperialism of India in South-East Asia. Pandit Nehru was attacked together with Doctor Hatta. And there was the uncompromising statement that all existing non-Communist East-Asian Governments would be swept away and “democratic people’s republics” set up instead. Whether India recognises Red China or not, she never ceases to be marked out as a field for subversive activity leading to the downfall of everything that

Continued on page 3
More than eight years ago, I made up my mind to enrol myself as a ‘member of the Indian National Congress’ to fill the membership form. I just casually sought the help of a friend of mine to upfoud a picture of the Mother India if and when Congress came to power. I started writing resolutions purporting to abolish capital punishment and abolish the death penalty. I held to my belief in rel. on reading it because from my childhood the harrowing tales of those who were hanged before me bed my heart. It seduces one to see the apathy of the government and they are who are immured in condemned cells for months together.

Indeed the manner in which we treat criminals is responsible for the thrill of horror that passes through the corporeal body of a human being, handcuffed and fettered, escorted by armed police to the jail. The murder at once ceases to be a human being in its eyes and appears something like a mad dog or at best a man harried and caged like a beast if it is not large. The result is that nobody even makes a sympathetic approach to the prisoner to allow him to probe into the deep roots of crime. I remember how, when a child, I used to be howled past, and I saw someone behind the bars or handcuffed and fettered, I noticed that policemen also wore rough fibres who could handle such delinquent persons.

Criminals at Close Quarters

Last month I was called to court imprisonment as a Satyagrahi and placed me sometimes in the milieu of peonesses, robbers, dacoits and last but not least habitual criminals like pilleers and pick-pockets. I got a chance to talk most intimately with criminals, robbers, thieves and assorted persons. I was surprised that I found the strangest element of human kindness among them. The day of my trial, I was brought in the prison van. Theibr lock-up, along with other under-trial prisoners. All of them came from the country and they clustered round me when they came to know that I was among them, I was not actually one of them. The judicial lock-up affords the prisoners an opportunity to relate the incidents that led them to their imprisonment. Some of them had been hanged, some were banded and so the vision of the gallows haunting them. The 1942 disturbances were in full swing then and everywhere it was expected that every government would come down with a crash. Those arrested under section 322 I.P.C. asked me, ‘Is there any hope for our emancipation also?’

Surely, ‘I replied, you must remember that the Congress has already abolished the death penalty if it comes into power again and I am happy to be with you forever and the prisoners used to pray for the victory of the Congress.

The capital offenses shut me up in a solitary cell and the adjoining cells were inhabited by dacoits and murderers who had abscended and even had the audacity to shoot at the police car. If there is any murderer, the second person commits another murder, he is afterwards compelled to commit a murder. It is also well known that the specter of death that begins to loom large on his horizon.

Soditude and Suspense

Few persons know what a solitary cell is. Even the jail world is shut away from you, so much so that the convict wardens who are on parole duty are forbidden to talk with those living in the solitary cells. They provide you with a pan for your ex- istence, a cup of water if you are very fat that Coleridge’s mariner.

Alone, alone, all alone.
And never a saint took pity
On my soul in agony.

There is no other wall that separates the Sessions Court and the jail wall. People read in the papers that a culprit had been arrested and that the Sessions judge in turn again read that the sentence has been pronounced.

Between the arrest And the sentence Falls the shadow.

For the public the real punishment starts when a sentence of death or transportation is pronounced. It takes months to pass the appeal and the appeal is filed in the High Court, the accused are kept in jail waiting for the appeal to be heard and the judgment can take so much time that the accused becomes a victim of the jail world.

The Psychology of Murderers

Now let us turn to the actual murderers. A sympathetic approach will reveal that firstly these people are not so evil and their existence is not so dangerous as it appears when we see them handcuffed and fettered with a garrote in the hands of the police. Moreover, we should not judge a man by his crime only.

Human nature is a very complex affair. There are many currents in the mind to which the intelligence of the natural man is subject to the influence of his heredity and life. The human mind is not easily influenced by the forces of action and beyond the superficial light. Even the human consciousness is haunted by the shadow of life as an evil man.

The prisoner can keep some contact with his kin and kith. If his behaviour is good, he gets remission and also becomes a convict warden and thus becomes the owner of the rigours of jail. The judgments of the Sessions Judge and the High Court prove that the number of the prisoners who are not guilty and yet arrested under the Sections 322 and 323 and then tortured by the police is very great. The world is now quite familiar with the third current of methods that are employed to extort confessions from people. But it is well known that there are cases in which hidades and torture have been committed and in such cases the victim is not crushed by the wicked people for them must be brought to book. But if we abolish the death penalty the heavens will not be opened and when the innocent people whom we have to right to try them with the constant fear of death by hanging will be spared all that misery.

There have been innumerable cases in which innocent people have been executed, many others in which the last moment of grace came to their rescue and some men were saved by the realisation of the spectra of death that begins to loom large on his horizon.

I am told that the Lord Jesus Christ “fear to understand how I could stoop so low”.

It is time that we discarded our old ideas about criminalology and considered the problem of the death penalty as the subject for a new approach. A better and more comprehensive order of society based on spirituality would treat in its ideology the innumerable cases of the innocent from the criminal not as the units of a social problem to be passed through in the course of skilful devised machinery and, either flattened into the course of the material, or smashed out of it, but as souls suffering and tangled in a net and to be saved, souls growing and to be encouraged to grow, souls grown and from whom help and power can be drawn.

Persons with some insight into the human psyche should approach these people and study the many psychological complexes at the root of their crimes. In my view the country the majority of the murders are committed because of the ideas of honour and respectability deeply ingrained in their minds. In foreign countries these ideas have ceased to cause ribald laughter. If, for instance, a man falls in love with his daughter, then he must be killed out of hand and if my daughter also is responsive then she must be done away with before she gets a baby and becomes a blot on the name of the family. There is no greater crime than love before marriage. There have been a number of cases in which the Vala family had to leave the village because one of its members became attracted to the daughter of Amritsar to Lahore. When I saw a young Sikh, stout and hulking, going to the court, I was aware that he was quoting from his eyes. He was an accused in a murder case in the Sessions Judge and was being transferred to Lahore to be caged in a condemned cell. The policeman told me his pathetic story. He was a poor man and his wife became destitute. He administered her times out of number. One day he fell into an exasperation and gibed flung at him by his neighbours. He assassinated her. When I saw him, he was sobbing and hinking farewell to his daughter who had given evidence against him. He had no grudge against her. At Lahore, we said it away and parted. I offered him an orange. He declined to take it and said in utter depondency, “It cannot heal my agonies. But peace be to the soul.” The countenance continued to shadow me for a long time. Again and again I would imagine him in the condemned cell, full of remorse.

These people seldom go to sleep in the night from the recollection of the intimate association of death with life. Their mind, once done away involuntarily. Comparably, with nothing but the shadow of
No Recognition for Red China —Continued from page 1.

India should allow herself to be fooled by no superficial argument. And perhaps the most superficial is the pretence of what is termed “realism”. Authentic realism can mean for India nothing else save a constant sense of the real and perfect reality that is the Divine, a persistent effort to co-operate with the evolutionary urge in the world higher and higher towards the full emergence of this reality, a refusal as much as possible to give to the dead and lifeless a new mask to cover the pure cry of the innocent for its supreme Self in the Godhead, an effective understanding of the truth that what manifests or aspires the least after the Divine and the Eternal is of all the least real and should never be allowed to sustain its simulacrum on our attention and acquiescence. It is a sham realist who never looks beyond appearances and the impact of the crudely immediate. Even the West which is supposed to be spiritually short-sighted has shown how it can be an abode of authentic realism in its own way. Britain has taken note of the increasing evidence of Mao’s alignment with Stalin and recently tempered her original colour for recognition on business grounds. But, ironically enough, high governmental circles in India often show a much more esoteric approach. Some may reason that this move may go out of their way to persuade the other members of the Commonwealth Conference due soon at Calcutta. The general state of mind in the country is, at best, hesitation. Instead of being hesitant, India should give the west, the very glorious lead in knowledge of the future, and then ultra-nationalists will commit a deliberate violation of her deepest nature. Whatever be the attitude of other countries, her recognition of Red China will be not only an egregious error of judgment but also a symbolic act of national and cultural suicide.
Akbär had an argument with Birbal over the relative merits of Allah and the Gods of the Hindus. "Without doubt, Allah is the Powerful!" he said. "Look at the large concourse of devotees at the gates of the Delhi mosques; do you think they were born as Hindus? But the matter presented itself to me in this way."

Birbal demurred: "It is just a question of faith, your highness." he said. "But the matter presented itself to me in this way."

"The question is the faith of the God of the Brahmins, the Lord of the Yashoda or the Allah of the faithfull!"

Akbär would not agree and there the topic was dropped. Birbal, however, as the chief minister of the king and the presiding judge of an imposing edifice, a temple in the countryside. He arranged to have it removed from the ground and then he remonstrated with the monarch to the temple and asked who to see who was the God that drew such large crowds. Akbär stepped inside the sanctuary to the altar; it was covered with cloth, but he was able to behold all that mirenable sandals on the altar! Birbal beamed; Akbär bowed and admitted the truth of Birbal's contention that Faith is God.

Whether or not the story is accurate history is quite immaterial for the purpose of the moral that is intended in the context. There can be no doubt that it is undoubtedly a striking illustration of certain characteristic features of Birbal, Akbär and the genius of men. The unflagging wit and superior skill of the brilliant minister was both a practical and a clear-sighted and timely appreciation of Akbär, his power and influence. The implied and incisive, politically wise of the Mogul in addition to his superior judgment and conviction, and a general magnanimous submissiveness. The courage and the arresting fact of the story. But when this is quoted to show that faith or God is the ultimate and supreme goal of life and that the flock always and forever does not think, work and fight, it is only a way to safeguard the story and make it acceptable to the faith. But let us turn to another story.

Ekalavya, son of a hunter-chief, desired to acquire proficiency in the art of archery. He knelt down and prayed, 'O Lord of the ages, grant me the grace to achieve proficiency in the art of archery.' The Lord appeared and presented him before the preceptor with due respect and some incantations. But the preceptor declined: "Thou art born in a Nishad race—slave race," he said. "I am sure that the spirit would have broken. Undismayed, the boy bowed, took the dust of the Master's feet and departed. On return, he got ready a clay idol of the Acharya. This boy of faith saw it in and worshipped the Guru day by day and practised with his bow and arrows. He thought—so the story goes—he acquired so much dexterity and command that even the incomparable Arjuna recognised his superiority in him. Drona became alarmed and later warned Ekalavya, this perturbate with him in obedience to the wishes of Drona, so increasing his power. Ekalavya in turn, in order, though he had to become second to Arjuna, only to Arjuna. When we come across stories of this kind we may not dismiss them, as old wives' tales; yet we are apt to repeat parrot-like the old saying, "Faith bears fruit" vishwambha phalashayak and pass on. We do not pause to grasp the truths embodied in the narrative. In the story of Ekalavya there is a secret, a great secret. The truth we may say, that we had so much faith in the teacher, that though there was no direct teaching he was like the Guru to whom we had been taught through the power of sheer faith.

We may ask ourselves: what is this Faith? What are its qualities and modus operandi? And what is its place in the life of man?

Faith is primarily an attitude of the unconscious being towards some conviction in the mind, for it is based upon the soul's perception of the object. In some instances this may not be aware. Something which is being glimpsed, which is seen as central and radical part ascertains to it in a definite way. It is an aura of this vision and ment that reaches the mind in the form of what we call faith. One may not and does not really know why he has an unshakable belief in all that is of moment to him. One may be able to give some reason or justification for this personal feeling of one who has come to faith, every often succeeds in improving a "rational" explanation, but not always. The fact is the faith is very self-based. It is constant and is in the same way when the normal faculties of the mind are suspended, for instance in sleep; the faith is present. It is the constant theme in the consciousness of our being. Even when faith appears to be a result of the reasonings of the general environment it is just an appearance. The object of faith may be anything; a truth underlying a phenomenon in the material existence, truth in an ideal, the reality of the Invisible. There is a truth of faith that appears in creation and it may be any of those that have been seized by the inner being which seeks to realise and express it.

"Every being in the universe has some faith or other as a natural attitude in its very existence. In fact, it is really a will-to-be. For every living object has a certain kind of cohesive force which is a 'will-to-be' in the lower grade for a sensation. Otherwise they simply could not be. The active energy deployed by the supreme Consciousness for the up and world as we know it the soul, the core of being. The animal and man, in the same way, the dog, the cat, the character and value of shuddhata, the untranslatable Sinhalk word of which faith is the feeler. Each is equivalent. The seers of the Rig Veda address their prayer with fervor to the Deity of Faith invoking her to bless them, to bestow her grace and bestow her on them (Rig Veda X: 51), and hint at the means by which it can be attained when they sing:

"Faith one gains by the heart's yearning, by Faith the Riches"

Shradhabhikriyata akutyata, 
Vichhaivali vandite vasu

Yes, it is by the heart's yearning one wins the Faith. It is the cry of one's core of being, the very voice of the soul and so the mind seeks it with all its intense potency. It is this faith, not the sham faith of the Birbal story, that the ancient Brahmin of the Mahabharata appeal to and draw from Dronacharya, not from the unwill-

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MOTHER INDIA, DECEMBER 10, 1949

FROM OLD MOORINGS

By: M. P. PANDIT
Living and accurate expression of mystical and spiritual experience is rare. To convey the realities of this experience, in all their many-sidedness, and to show what the immense reaches of yogic evolution are, this series will present extracts from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

WHAT a hymn of thanksgiving should I not be raising at each moment unto Thee! Everywhere and in everything around me Thou revealdest Thyself and in me Thy Will and Consciousness express themselves always more and more clearly, even to the point of my having almost entirely lost the gross illusion of "me" and "mine". If a few shadows, a few flaws can be seen in the great Light which manifests Thee, how shall they bear for long the marvellous brightness of Thy Splendour for Love? This morning, the consciousness that I had of the way Thou art fashioning this being which was "I", can be roughly represented by a great diamond cut with regular geometrical facets, a diamond in its cohesion, firmness, pure limpidity, transparency, but a brilliant and radiant flame in its intense ever-progressive life. But it was something more, something better than all that; for nearly all sensation inner and outer was exceeded and that image only presented itself to my mind as I returned to conscious contact with the outer world.

It is through that making the experience fertile, Thou who renderest life progressive, Thou who compellst the darkness to vanish in an instant before the Light, Thou who givest to Love all its power, Thou who everywhere raisest up Matter in this ardent and wonderful aspiration, in this sublime thirst for Eternity.

Thou everywhere and always; nothing but Thou in the essence and in the manifestation.

O Shadow and Illusion, dissolve! O Suffering, fade and disappear! Lord Supreme, art Thou not there?—

THE MOTHER

Prayers and Meditations.

November 26, 1912

His self's infinities began to emerge,
The hidden universes cried to him;
Eternities called to eternities
Sending their speechless message still remote.

Arisen from the marvel of the depths
And burning from the superconscious heights
A superlight in great horizontal gyres
A million energies joined and were the One.

All flowed immeasurably to one sea:
All living forms became its atom homes.
A Panegyric that harmonized all life
 Held now existence in its vast control;
A portion of that majesty he was made.
At will he lived in the unoblivious Ray.

In that high realm where no untruth can come,
Where all are different and all is one,
In the Imperial's ocean without shore
The Person in the World-Spirit anchored rode;
It thrilled with the mighty marchings of World-Force,
Its acts were the comrades' of God's infinite peace.

An adjunct glory and a symbol self,
The body was delivered to the soul,—
An immortal point of power, a block of poise
In a cosmicity's wide formless surge,
A conscious edge of the Transcendent's might
Curving perfection from a bright world-stuff,
It figured in it a universe's sense.

There consciousness was a close and single web:
The far and near were one in spirit-space,
The moments there were preexistent with all time.
The superconscious's screen was ripped by thought,
Idea rotated symphonies of sight,
Signs was a flame-throw from identity,
Life was a marvellous journey of the spirit,
Feeling a wave from the universal Bliss.

In the kingdom of the Spirit's power and light,
As if one who arrived out of infinity's womb
He came new-born, infant and limitless
And grew in the wisdom of the timeless Child;
He was a vast that soon became a Sun.

A great luminous silence whispered to his heart;
His knowledge an inviwey caught unfathomable,
An outview by no brief horizons cut:
He thought and felt in all, his gaze had power.
He communed with the Incommunicable;
Beings of a wider consciousness were his friends,
Forms of a larger subtler made drew near;
The Gods conversed with him behind Life's veil.

Neighbour his being grew to Nature's crests.
The primal Energy took him in its arms;
His brain was wrapped in overwhelming Light,
An all-embracing knowledge seared his heart:
Thoughts rose in him no earthly mind can hold,
Mights played that never coursed through mortal nerves:
He scanned the secrets of the Overmind,
He bore the capture of the Overmind.

A borderer of the empire of the Sun,
Attuned to the supernatural harmonies,
He linked creation to the Enerman's sphere,
His finite parts apprised them their attributes,
His actions framed the movements of the Gods,
His will took up the reins of cosmic Force.

SRI AURORIBDO

Savitri: Bh. II, Canto 15.
LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

One of our chief aims will be to provide authentic guidance in regard to the many perplexing questions with which the common man is faced today. Considering these questions in the light of Sri Aurobindo's writings, because Sri Aurobindo is not owned by a Master of Yoga in the possession of the Eternal Spiritual Truths, he is a Guide and Helper of mankind in the many trying situations that arise in the course of its day-to-day existence. To bring home the light of this guidance and to make it applicable to the concrete problems of life, a series of questions of common interest along with precise answers directly taken from Sri Aurobindo's writings will regularly appear in these columns.

Q: 1. What were the principal effects of the vital subjectivism to which the modern mind arrived in its recoil from the intellectual objectivism of the nineteenth century and which very strongly influenced not only its philosophy, art and religion but also its political and social life?

A. "After the material formula which governed the greater part of the nineteenth century had hardened men with the heaviest servitude to the machinery of the outer material life that he has ever yet been called upon to bear, the first attempt to break through, to get to the living reality in things and away from the mechanical idea of life and society, landed us in that surface vitalism which had already begun to govern thought before the two formulas inextricably locked together lit up and flung themselves on the hard pyre of the world-war. The vital dies brought us no deliverance, but only used machinery already created with a more feverish insistence, a vehement attempt to live more rapidly, more intensely, an inordinate will to act and succeed, to enlarge the mere force of living, to pile up a gigantic efficiency of life."

Q: 2. But could this adverse result not have been averted if the vital subjectivism had taken a profound and complete form instead of remaining shallow and incomplete?

A. "It could not have been otherwise even if this vitalism had been less superficial and external, more truly subjective. To live, to set, to grow, to increase the vital force, to understand, utilise and fulfill the intuitive impulse of life are not things evil in themselves: rather they are excellent things, if rightly followed and rightly used, that is to say, if they are directed to something beyond the mere vitalistic impulse and are governed by that within which is higher than Life. The Life-power is an instrument, not an aim; it is in the upward scale the first great subjective supraphysical instrument of the Spirit and the base of all action and endeavour. But a Life-power that sees nothing beyond itself, nothing to be served except its own organic demands and impulses, will be very soon like the force of steam driving an engine without the driver or an engine in which the locomotive force has made the driver its servant and not its controller. It can only add the uncontrollable impetus of a high-created or broad-based Titanism, or it may be even a nether flaming demon to the vital men of the future, except when as its servant, an impetus of measureless unresting creation, appropriation, expansion which will end in something violent, huge and 'cosmical', foredoomed in its very nature to excess and ruin, because life is not in nor the soul's truth nor the sanction of the gods and their calm eternal will and knowledge."

Q: 3. Beyond the vital subjectivism there is the possibility of mental and psychic subjectivism. What would this greater subjectivism be able to achieve if it succeeds in exerting a powerful influence on the life of the individual and society?

A. "This greater idea would realise that the elevation of the human existence will come not through material efficiency alone or the complex play of his vital and dynamic powers marshalling through the aid of the intellect the energies of physical Nature for the satisfaction of the life-instincts, which can only be an intensification of his present mode of existence, but through the greatness of his mental and psychic being and a discovery, bringing forward an organisation of his vast subliminal nature and its forces. It would see in life an opportunity for the joy and power of knowledge, for the joy and power of beauty, for the joy and power of the human will mastering not only physical Nature, but vital and mental Nature. It might discover her secrets yet undreamed-of mind-powers and life-powers and use them for a freer liberation of man from the limitations of his shackled bodily life. It might arrive at new psychic relations, a more sovereign power of the idea to realise itself in the act; means of overcoming obstacles of distance and division which would cast into insignificance even the last miraculous achievements of material Science. A development of this kind is far enough away from the dreams of the mass of men, but there are certain pale hints and premonitions of such a possibility and ideas which lead to it are already held by a great number who are perhaps in this respect the yet unrecognised vanguard of humanity. It is not impossible that behind the confused morning voices of the bare a light of this kind, still below the horizon, may be waiting to ascend with its splendours."

Such a turn of human thought, effort, ideas of life, if it took hold of the communal mind, would evidently lead to a profound revolution throughout the whole range of human existence. It would give it from the very start a new tone and accent. Life would open up wider horizons, a greater aim. It might easily develop a science which would bring the powers of the physical world into a real and not only a contingent and mechanical subjection and open perhaps the doors of other worlds. It might develop an achievement of Art and Beauty which would make the greatness of the past a comparatively little thing and would save the world from the astonishingly callous reign of utilitarian ugliness that even now affects it. It would open up a richer and freer interchange between human minds and, it may well be hoped, a kindlier interchange between human hearts and lives. Nor need its achievements stop here, but might proceed to greater things of which these would be only the beginnings."

Q: 4. Would this mental and psychic subjectivism be free from the dangers that are found in the vital subjectivism?

A. "This mental and psychic subjectivism would have its dangers, greater dangers even than those that attend a vitalistic subjectivism, because its powers of action also would be greater, but it would have what vitalistic subjectivism has not and cannot easily have, the chance of a detecting discernment, strong safeguards and a powerful liberating light." But still this subjective age of mankind "must be an adventure full of peril and uncertainties as are all great adventures of the race. It may waver longer before it finds itself or may not find itself at all and swing back to a new repetition of the cycle."

Q: 5. But is there also not this danger that the effort of mental and psychic subjectivism may succeed only with individuals but fail with the mass of humanity even if this day and age is firmly entrenched in its physical mentality? Is it conceivable that the average physical man can be rapidly uplifted to the mental and psychic heights and to the farther elevations of the spirit?

A. "This was the one principal reason of the failure of past attempts to spiritualise mankind, that they endeavoured to spiritualise at once the material man by a sort of rapid miracle, and though that can be done, the miracle is not likely to be of an enduring character if it overleaves the stasis of his ascent and leaves the intervening levels untrodden and therefore unmastered. The endeavour may succeed with individuals—Indian thought would say with those who have made themselves ready in a past existence to take the mass. When it passes beyond the few, the forceful miracle of the spirit flags; unable to transform by inner force, the new religion tries to save by machinery, is entangled in the mechanical turning of its own instruments, loses the spirit and perishes quickly or decay slowly. That is the fate which overtakes all attempts of the vitalistic, the intellectual and mental, the spiritual endeavour to deal with material man through his physical mind chiefly or alone; the endeavour is overpowered by the machinery it creates and becomes the slye and the victim of the machine. That is the revenge which our material Nature, herself mechanical, takes upon all such violent endeavours; she wants to master them by their concessions to her own law. If mankind is to be spiritualised, it must first in the mass cease to be the material or the vital man and become the psychic and the true mental being. It may be questioned whether such a means of progress or conversion is possible, but if it is not, then the spiritualisation of mankind as a whole is a chimera."

K. G.
SRI AUROBINDO, THE LEADER OF THE EVOLUTION

PART II OF "THE WORLD CRISIS AND INDIA"

BY "Synergist"

SECTION II: THE SPIRITUAL VIEW OF EXISTENCE

(c) THE THREE STAGES OF INDIA'S ANCIENT CIVILISATION: THE VEDIC, THE POST-VEDIC AND THE PURANO-ANTHRIC.

Continued from previous issue

"The time in which these Vedantic truths were seen and the Upanishads took shape, was, as we can see from such records as the Chhandogya and Brihadranyaka, an epoch of intense and strenuous spiritual seeking in which the truths held by the initiates but kept back from ordinary men brought barrows, swept through all the higher mind of the nation and fertilised the soil of Indian culture for a general growth of spirituality. It was not as yet entirely universal; for it was chiefly men of the higher classes, mainly Kshatriyas and Brahmins trained in the Vedic system of education, who, their might swayed, held the outer truth and the works of the outer sacrifice, began everywhere to seek for the highest word of revealing experience from the sages who possessed the knowledge of the One; but also we find among those who attained to it and became great teachers, men of inferior stock in birth like Sataparana Jabali, son of a servant-girl who knew not who was his father. The work that was done in this period became the bed-rock of Indian spirituality in later ages and from it gush still the life-giving waters of a perennial inspiration. It created the whole difference between the evolution of Indian and of other civilisations. It had come when the original Vedic symbols were to lose their significance and pass into obscurity, as did the inner teaching of the Mysteries in other countries. The old poise of culture between the crude or half-trained naturalness of the outer, physical mind, and the inner and secret psychic and spiritual teaching for the initiates could no longer suffice as a basis of spiritual progress: the race in its cycle of civilisation needed a larger, a more and more generalized intellectual, ethical and aesthetic evolution to help its whole life into the light of the ultimate and essential India as in other lands. But the danger was that the greater spiritual truth might be lost in the reign and domination of the self-supported intellect and reason. That was what actually happened in the West, Greece leading the way, although the philosophical speculations was a general aim a culture of the vital and physical man by the power of an intellectualised ethos, aesthetics and reason. The spiritual truth and the spiritual tendency were saved in India from this collapse by the immense effort of the ages and of the Vedic spirit which took the oldest and most simple expression of intuition and experience, yet in a form which could lead itself to intellectual and philosophic statement and appreciation. The result was a great upbuilding of an intellectual, aesthetic, ethical and social culture guided, uplifted, and more and more penetrated and suffused by the saving power of spirituality.

The second or post-Vedic age of Indian civilisation, distinguished by the rise of the great philosophies, a vast epic literature, a vigorous and complex society, the beginnings of art and science, the formation of large kingdoms and empires and manifold formative activities of all kinds, great systems of living and thinking, was as elsewhere a high outgrowth of the intelligence working upon life and the things of the mind to discover their reason and evolutionary development and use. Vedanta was the basis of the whole and its general aim a culture of the vital and physical man by the power of an intellectualised ethos, aesthetics and reason. The spiritual truth and the spiritual tendency were saved in India from this collapse by the immense effort of the ages and of the Vedic spirit which took the oldest and most simple expression of intuition and experience, yet in a form which could lead itself to intellectual and philosophic statement and appreciation. The result was a great upbuilding of an intellectual, aesthetic, ethical and social culture guided, uplifted, and more and more penetrated and suffused by the saving power of spirituality.

Indian religion following this line of evolution, kept its inner continuity with its Vedic and Vedicante origins, while it changed entirely its mental contents and outward environment. It was as if the mind moved to keep itself within the frame and not to lose the special stamp of the Indian cultural idea and was compensated by a deepening of the intensities of psycho-religious experience, while every excess of emphasis on the splendid and richness, the powers and pleasures of life has its recoil within itself as the other. The two trends, the extreme of the richness of life experience and the extreme of a pure intensity of the spiritual life, accompany each other, interact and preserve with whatever loss of the earlier harmony and synthesis the balance of Indian culture.

By "Synergist"
true of the One in many aspects,—the Trinity is a triple form of the one supreme Godhead and Brahman, the Shaktis are energies of the one Energy of the highest divine Being—but this was now brought more powerfully, widely and intensely home to the general mind of the people. Even the so-called henotheism of the Vedic idea was prolonged and heightened in the worship of Vishnu or Shiva as the one Deity, the universal and highest Godhead of whom all others are the forms and powers. The idea of the Divinity in man was popularised, especially the manifestation of the Divine in humanity which was the basis of the worship of the Avataras. The systems of Yoga developed themselves on the same basis and led through psycho-physical and psycho-spiritual methods to a union with the Supreme, One and Divine which is in various forms the aim of all Indian spirituality. The whole of this Purana-Tantric system, it looked at in its totality and real significance and with an intelligent understanding of its forms, is an endeavour to raise man from a basis of generalised psycho-religious experience through knowledge, works and love to a supreme spiritual experience and spiritual status.

This stage is not the highest reach of spiritual or religious evolution. As the Vedite training of the physically-minded man made possible this development, this raising of the basis of religion to the inner psychical mind, so that again by its training of the psychically-minded man ought to make possible a still higher development and a raising of the basis of religion to the spiritual mind itself as the leading power of life. The first stage makes possible the consumption of the whole mental, psychical living and brings him more directly into contact with the spirit and divinity within him; the third should render him capable of taking up his whole mental, psychical living into a first beginning at least of a generalised spiritual life. This endeavour has manifested itself in the evolution of Indian spirituality and is the significance of the latest philosophies, the great spiritual movements of the sants and bhaktas and an increasing resort to the various paths of Yoga. But unhappily it synchronised with a decline of Indian culture and an increasing collapse of its general power and knowledge, and in these surroundings it could not bear its natural fruit; but at the same time it has done much to prepare such a possibility in the future. If Indian culture is to survive and keep its spiritual basis and innate character, it is in this direction, and not in a mere revival or prolongation of the Puranic system, that its evolution must turn, rising so towards the fulfilment of that in which the Vedite seers saw as the aim of man and his life thousands of years ago and the Vedantic sages cast into the clear and immortal forms of their luminous revelation."

* * * *

This essay, and the preceding ones by Sri Aurobindo clear a number of misconceptions and throw light on important philosophical and cultural issues. First, they make it quite clear that spirituality is not synonymous with life-negation, and that Buddhist Nihilism and Shankarite Illusionism are only certain spiritual tendencies which took an extreme form. Spirituality need not be life-negating; it can also be life-affirming. Those spiritual systems based upon the realization of the Impermanent, Immutable and Static Self existing apart from the world-manifestation, which consequently seems to be a phenomenal existence super-imposed upon it, naturally lead to life-denial. The type of spirituality advocated and practised by Sri Aurobindo, as it arises from the vision of the Integral Divine Reality attained through the realization of the Supramental Truth-consciousness, does not deny life, because it recognises the Impermanent and Static Self as only one aspect of the Divine—the Silent Self impartially supporting and sustaining the whole of creation and brooding equally in all things—it goes further and affirms that the personal and dynamic aspect of the Self is also real, the Self who manifests out of the depths of His Being this cosmos of myriad worlds. This means that the Supreme is the Lord of all Existence and appears to the human consciousness as a Reality that is Impermanent as well as Personal. The very nature of his realisation makes Sri Aurobindo accept life, for he sees the world as a manifestation and expression in Time of the Timeless Reality.

Then we saw how a metaphysic created out of the truth realised in spiritual experience can become the basis of the cultural life of a nation, and finally, how the double principle of persistence and mutation works in the evolution of a nation's culture—the permanent spirit in things, the persistent sanadharmas or law of being, and "the less binding system of laws of successive formulation,—the last obeying the mutations of the ages, purushadharman." In each new phase of the cultural evolution of a people, the outer forms have to be destroyed when they cease to answer to the spiritual, psychological and social needs of its evolving consciousness and new ones created through a renewed contact with the inner spirit. This can be seen in the growth of India's social and cultural life before her decline. The spirit of her culture has been always the same, but its form has undergone changes. This was inevitable, because the cultural evolution of a race is the result of the psycho-social evolution of its members. As we have seen in The World Crisis and India, the particular character of a culture is primarily determined by the type, range and level of the consciousness that creates it; the more humanious and wide the consciousness and the greater its apprehension of reality, the more enlightened the culture. Hence, a culture created out of the living spiritual experiences of seers-philosophers and risked will definitely be greater than the ordinary rationalistic and utilitarian culture. This problem of the cultural growth of a race depending upon the evolution of consciousness of its individual members, is connected with the more fundamental problem of the reality of the individual, his place and significance in the cosmic process and his relation with the Transcendent Divine Reality.

This brings us to Section III: The New World View. In this section, the spiritual philosophy of Sri Aurobindo will be presented, as far as possible in his own words, and then an attempt will be made to show how man can grow into a diviner nature by taking the next step in his evolution with Sri Aurobindo's help and guidance.†

† Refer to Section II. (b) The Spiritualisation of Life. (Refer to the last Essay in "The World Crisis and India," where this point is discussed.)

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Sri Chaitanya

O thou whose body's every atom drips
Compassion—whose every thought's inspired by love,
Whose every conscious movement of life keeps
Tryst with the lone presiding Power above!

Whose radiant smile redeems and manifests
The kinship the topless peak feels for the abyss;
In whom the desolate pauper soul still rests
And the delirious consciousness is healed with bliss.

Who'll dare assert: our earth is dark and old
Where thou incarnatest in all thy Grace
Delights of a fadless light of loveliness?

Where thou still comest thy message to proclaim:
"He is and He shall answer with tenderness
All who'll repeat His all-absolving Name
And none's so low but He leans to embrace."

Our life is not a maya's dismal dream,
We know when thy feet's dust we hug and kiss,
O thou whose celestial dances are ageless
With hints of deathless glory we glimpse but miss.

And so thou bendest to mortality
From age to age thy marvellous flute to play
And sing: "For all is everlastingly
My garland as for night the boon of day."
Books in the Balance

The books that will be reviewed here are not only those that have been published. Those published some time ago but still deserving special attention will also be in the "balance".

A Life-Story That Is a Philosophy

An Autobiography by R. C. Collingwood

To the story of the lives of great men are more interesting than their works. Very few can read with relish the writings of professional philosophers, if their manner is heavy and their matter abstruse, though their highmindedness and determination is sometimes strong with assent. To a large extent it is the fault of philosophers, in that their style or lack of style has created a prejudice against their theories of the philosopher, as one whose feet are not on this earth, though his head may or may not be amid a crown of stars.

To philosopher, freed from the vanities of life, is supposed to discourse in a strange tongue about super sensible entities which have as much bearing on our practical life as the stars have on the moon in man's mind. Thus to the mass of men, who regard themselves as guardians of sound common sense, the philosopher commits two grave errors of renouncing Practice in the practice of pure Theory and of ignoring all considerations of literary style in giving expression to his barren ways of thought.

No "IVory Tower" Philosopher

And yet there have been philosophers, like Plato, Berkeley and Hume, to mention only a few, whose writings on a difficult theme could be called as pure literature, and if the layman holds that even the most difficult things are not such as he who runs may read, it is sufficient to say that the rich man begets a race, all things is not for those who can do less than run through their readings. Prof. Collingwood is one of those who believe and insist that the philosopher must observe literary manners when he writes, for indeed to him philosophy is literature.

"The ivory tower" is the poet's invention to philosophers to "think on the wing", as the poet's word with the vulgar." But this is hardly enough. The philosopher may think as the poet does, but the poet provided he go to school with the man of letters and spend his life in the province of letters. Prof. Collingwood's Autobiography, as indeed all his books, and amongst his books his Philosophy of Good is also good literature, for he writes in a style which would call for praise from the best of men of letters. What is more refreshing is that Professor Collingwood is no "IVory Tower" philosopher, for he would say with Aristotle that philosophy is an art and only a guide to the best mode of life, that is the best mode of life, and that in some senses philosophy is the art of life, and dies ingloriously as in the case of the Realism of the "minute" philosophers, which he describes as "the undischarged bankrupt of modern philosophy".

The autobiography is also a complete piece of philosophical thinking, for as the writer remarks in the preface, "the autobiography of a man whose business is thinking should be the story of his thought." It is the business of every one who is engaged in the profession of philosophy to think. Scientists and philosophers do their business in the same way and in the same sense for the man, but perhaps it is the privilege of the philosopher and the artist to think about thought itself. A large part of the book is devoted to examining the way in which the mind works in dealing with scientific, philosophic

cal and historical problems. A clear understanding of the nature of the universe is also important for the scientist concerned with special problems, even if the vague and imponderable handling of human situations created by political and economic conditions, which, when they get out of control, lead to war, with all the subsequent consequences.

Logic of Question and Answer

After giving us the bare glimpse of his truly amazing mental powers, he gets a child, the poet, to tell us that at the age of nine he had devoted his PRINCIPE which let him into the secret of the natural sciences; that they do not contain bits of truth piled into a heap, but form an organic whole capable of endless modification and that their meaning is not the same age from errors of truth, but that every word and idea is an essential part of the development of our insight into truth. He discovered later, through his own historical research, the importance of the method proposed by Bacon in acquiring knowledge, where the one asking the question is inquiring the answer to the proposed question.

In a rather outspoken criticism of the "minute" philosophers he points out that their theory of knowledge as a simple intuition of independent facts described something other than the Oxford Idealists were concerned with, which he had learnt about knowledge in connection with his historical research. Professor Collingwood develops the view that all knowledge is an answer to a definite question which we ourselves proposed, into a systematic logic of question and answer, where he thinks differs not only from the Realism of the "minute" philosophers, but also from the Idealistic logic of those with whom otherwise he is in great sympathy. But the distinction he draws between his position and that of the Oxford Idealists seems to be a distinction without much difference. No doubt Collingwood feels himself to be a very isolated thinker in a university which in recent years has been quick in giving up its old traditions and following the lead of Cambridge. Philosophy of colling: the ideology of isolation is perhaps what leads him to remark, "so far as my experience goes, the life of a Cambridge philosopher is not a life of isolation. I am now cut off not only from the 'realist' school, but from every school of philosophy which is popular in England, and in almost all the world."

The logic of Question and Answer according to which the truth or falsity or even the significance of a statement is never determined in itself, but is relative to a context in which the statement is made and in which the statement is an answer to a question, is not the Idelistic logic which lays stress on the relevant context or universe of discourse for determining the value of the ideas. The truth underlying these two logics is that one idea is or is not a part of a whole body of truths and as such cannot exist in isolation. Thus, to take an extreme case, if a person or even a friend steps into the street in order to repair a broken chair, it is no longer possible to see the statement as we make we present merely the surface of our mind and the meaning is never contained within the four corners of our expressed statement. No man ever means merely what he says, or to put it differently no man ever speaks what he means. If this truth was more universally recognized, many futile educational and social errors would be avoided and commotion between minor parties would not be hasty in convicting our opponents of error. Even if the author himself or his colleagues had trained ourselves never to allow the face value of a statement to prejudice us, we should not be able to probe into its underlying significance to be sure that we react the correct "why you are considering or never think you understand any philosophical statement until you have decided with the utmost possible accuracy what the question is to which it is meant for an answer.""Historical Thinking"

This, as the writer truly points out, is an historical way of dealing with problems. The "minute" philosophers tended to discourage the study of the history of philosophy, for they believed that the ideas of philosophy of each philosopher was either the same or different and the only solutions differed with different philosophers and thus failing to reconstruct the problems, they were too prone to dismiss the solutions as mere errors.

This insistence on historical thinking in philosophy brings about a rapprochement between History and Philosophy and what is needed is a true philosophical historian. Professor Collingwood equally erudite as a historian and as a critic in the teaching of history will be delighted to read his "scarcely a page is omitted that is of any value" history, according to which history is a closed sub ject in which we get from set authors a narration of events which are just and bad events. This conception of history until the latest nineteenth century when the conviction that event occurred, which leads one to expect that History will occupy in our times as the same place of importance that natural science occupied during the three centuries. This revolution consisted in treating history as an open subject, in which the historians, disregarding the set authorities, proposes his own questions and tries to elicit answers, without laying his hands on it.

History then is not the study of a dead past, but a past which survives in the present which is simply a transformation of the past, so that in a sense all history is history of our present times. Further it is not a study of events that happened, but of the thoughts and purposes of men that were responsible for them; and to study the thoughts of men of the past, it is necessary that the historian should put himself into their minds. This training gives him unique insight not only for human situations in the present and enables him effectively to deal with the challenges of the day, but his training may hope to become a school of moral and political wisdom.

Thought and Action

The solution which Professor Collingwood offers for the grave crisis which threatens European civilization is a fresh study of history and the development of the historical instinct. In every age and at every time emphasised the need for a new understanding of the causes of war. But we should now recognise that it is history and not the hybrid science of psychology which is the true and most comprehensive science of human nature to be the most significant thing in the world and not provide us with a body of ready-made rules for dealing with fresh situations. Rules, even if they be rules of right conduct such as the moralists preach, keep action at a low potential, for they enable us merely to react to certain situations instead of meeting them in their individuality. The highest moral actions, like the creations of art, are always improvised, while actions, according to rules, character ise what Socrates called the morality of the marketplace.

This rapprochement between Philosophy and History brings about a further rapprochement between Thought and Action; the rejection of the false division of humanity into thinkers and men of action. Philosophy gives understanding, it is understanding which completes itself only as a whole. It is the historical insight which enables us to meet the concrete situations of our practical life. Prof. Collingwood thus gives us unique insight into the philosopher-king. To him the ill of the world will continue to be our heirloom until philosopher-king are kings.

J. N. CHUBB.
Instinctively we divide mankind into friends and foes—trends towards whom we have the capacity for co-operation, foes towards whom we have the capacity for conflict. But this division into friends and foes is constantly changing. In times of safety we can afford to hate our neighbours, but in time of danger we must love them. It is this that makes the difference between peace and war.

A world State, if it were firmly established, would have no enemies to fear and no friends to love. It would be breaking down through lack of cohesive force. Religion, morality, economic self-interest, the mere pursuit of survival, all supply to our intelligent and enlightened arguments in favour of world-wide co-operation, but old instincts rise in indignation, feeling that it is robbing it of its power if there were no one to hate, that strength is the essence of life and that in the world where we all loved one another there would be nothing to live for. If the unification of mankind is ever to be realized, it will be necessary to find ways of circumventing our largely unconscious and irrational fears of our fellows by establishing a reign of law, and partly by finding outlets for our competitive instincts.

This is not an easy problem, and it is one which cannot be solved by morality alone. I do not think that ordi- nary morality is the answer. We talk of giving up war. We should not, therefore, attempt to abolish competition but only to see that it takes forms which are not too injurious. What is right with present forms of competition is that they form too small a part of the lives of ordinary men and women. I am not sure that the elimination of all danger makes for happiness.

The problem of the social reformer is not merely to seek means of security but to build in the security the degree of security which is essential to the species forms of adventure and danger and contact with the civilised way of life. Perhaps it may be possible, even in our mechanical world, with our mechanical impulses which are now confined to the laboratory, to build in by the mechanical method by which a great man could in solitude were apt to be more beneficial than the help of the powers that be.

The inferiority of our age in the arts is an inevitable result of the fact that the degree of social security which is essential to the species forms of adventure and danger and contact with the civilised way of life is not at all the same degree of social security which is essential to the species forms of adventure and danger and contact with the civilised way of life. There is something about local rivalry that is essential in such matters. It should play its part even in the building of Europe’s cathedrals, because each bishop wished to have a finer cathedral than the neighbouring bishop and each city could develop an artistic pride in the products of its own shrewdness, and if each had its own school of painting, not without a vigorous competition for the school of the best. But local patriotism does not easily flourish in a world of empires and global social security.

Economic security has been one of the most important aims of modern states. Legislation intended to make the average age removed from the lives of wage-earners a great deal of good, but it is not a very effective way of reducing the average length of life and diminishing the amount of illness.

Security, although undoubtedly a good thing, may be sought excessively and become a fetish. A secure life is not necessarily a happy life; it may be rendered dismal by boredom and monotony. Many people, especially while they are young, welcome a spice of adventure. We cannot be at our best if we are self-satisfied alone, or imagine that it can bring the millennium.

Justice, especially economic justice, has become, in quite recent times, a governmental purpose. Justice has come to be interpreted as equality. Political injustice, economic injustice, has been aimed at since the days of the American and French revolutions, but economic justice in our time, and requires a much greater amount of govern- ment power than any of our political socializers—rightly so, in my opinion—to involve State ownership of key industries and a considerable regulation of foreign trade.

Conservation, like security and justice, demands action by the State. It is the subject of a matter of importance to which very little attention has been paid. During the past hundred and fifty years nothing has altered the raw materials of industry and the soil upon which agriculture depends, and this wasteful expenditure of capital has proceeded with ever-increasing speed. Certainly, in modern technolog- ical the most striking example is air. Already the need for it has reached the point of becoming a risk of its contrib- ution to the bringing about of a third world war. And no longer available in large quantities a great deal will have to be exchanged in our way of life. True, we have been able to find materials which will not only in exhaustion of the world’s supplies of uranium and thorium. Industry must continue and, as it con- tinues, development, will in the face of the increasing cost of raw materials, and, as it continues, will in the face of the increasing cost of raw materials.

Even more seriously, according to some authorities, the problem of preserving the country from famine and agriculture. Except in a few favoured areas (of which Western Europe is one) the present methods of agriculture are using the soil rapidly exhaust it. The growth of the dust storms in America is the best known example of a de- structive process which is going on in most parts of the world. As a matter of life, the population increases, a disas- trous food shortage, is inevitable within the next fifty years unless drastic steps are taken. The question of a reform in agriculture is perhaps the most impor- tant that the governments of the world will have to face, except the prevention of war.

I have spoken of security, justice, and conservation as the most essential of governmental functions, because these are things that only governments can bring about. I have not meant to say that they are the only governmental functions. But in the main their func- tion would be to encourage non-governmental groups and to create opportunities for their ex- istence in significant ways.

Uniformity, which is a natural result of State control, is desirable in some things and undesirable in others. In certain cases, for instance, it is desirable that there is vigorous discussion between different groups, and in the personal world there is said to be said in favour of a struggle, and the Off next page

NEW TRENDS IN WESTERN THOUGHT: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTHORITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

BY BRANDT RUSSELL

Summary of the Keith Lectures in "Mirror"
survival of the fittest.

Artists and writers are nowadays al-
most the only people who may with
lack exercise a powerful and important
influence on "individuals" and not in
connection with some group. But the
initiative of the writer, though as yet
it survives, is threatened in various
ways. If book-production is in the
hands of the State, as it is in Russia,
the State can decide what shall be pub-
lished, and, unless it delegates its power
to some completely non-partisan
authority, there is a likelihood that no
book will escape except those pleasing
to leading politicians. The same thing applies, of course, to news-
papers.

If in scientific research only those
are eligible who are considered ortho-
dox in current controversies, scientific
progress will soon cease, and will give
way to a subservient reign of authority
such as stifled science throughout
the Middle Ages.

Differences between nations, as long
as they do not lead to hostility, are
by no means to be despised. Living
for a time in a foreign country makes us
aware of virtues in which our own
country is deficient, and this is true
whichever our country may be. Our
views diverge, our differences lie
between different regions within one
country, and of the differing types
depends the Uniformity of character and uniformity of culture are to be neglected.

The control of greedy or predatory
impulses is imperatively necessary, and
therefore States, and even a whole
world, are needed for survival. But we
cannot control the hordes, never-
rather than desist; we wish to live hap-
ply, vigorously, creatively. For this
the State can provide a part of the
necessary conditions, but only if it does
not, in the pursuit of security, stifle the
largely uncontrolled impulses which
give life its savour and its value. The
individual must be subjected too completely to the control of vast
organizations. To guard against this
danger it is very necessary in the world
that modern technique has created.

I wish now to relate social and poli-
tical doctrines to the individual ethica
by which a man should guide his per-
nance, and after the evils we have
recognized and the dangers that we
have acknowledged, nevertheless,
certain high hopes for the not too
distant future of mankind, which I,
for my part, believe to be justified on
a sober estimate of the possibilities.
Bodies that have a certain indepen-
dence of the State, such as universities
and learned societies, have great value.
It is deplorable to see men of science
compelled to subscribe to obscurantist
non sense at the behest of scientifically
ignorant politicians who are able and
willing to enforce their ridiculous de-
cisions by the use of economic and
dictatorial power. They should not pre-
sume to decide what is good music,
or good biology, or good philosophy. I do not wish to see such matters
decided in this country by the personal
taste of any Prime Minister, past, pre-
ent, or future, even if, by good luck,
his taste were impeccable.

But liberty is not merely a personal
matter. No man is wholly free, and no
one man's liberty is independent of any
to the extent to which a man has freedom
he needs a personal morality to guide his
conduct. If a man seriously desires to
live the best life that is open to him
he must learn to be critical of the cus-
toms and beliefs that are generally ac-
ted among his neighbours. Man has
thoughts and feelings and impul-
ses which may be wise or foolish,
wise or base, filled with love or in-
spired by hate. And for the better of
these thoughts and feelings and im-
pulses, if his life is to be tolerable,
there must be scope. Few men can be
happy in a community which allows no
freedom of individual action.

A society should exist to bring a good
life to the individuals who live in it. It
is in the individuals, not in the whole
that ultimate value is to be sought. In-
dividual man is the bearer of good and
evil, and not any separate part of a
mass. Yet the collection of everyone to
believe that there can be good or evil in
collection of humans ever and above the
good or evil in the various individuals is an error; more
over, it is an error which leads straight
to totalitarianism, and is highly
dangerous. The "State" is an abstrac-
tion; it does not feel pleasure or pain,
it has no hopes or fears, and what we
think of as its purpose are really the
interests of the individuals who direct
it.

Between those who care most for so-
ial cohesion and those who primarily value
individual initiative there has been an
age-long battle over the time of the Greeks. In every con-
sideration there is more to be truth
both sides. There is not likely to be a
clear-cut solution, but at best one in
volving various advantage, and
dress. I believe that in our
day there has been too much tendency
wards authority and too little care for
the preservation of initiative. Men in
vast organizations have been
ed to be too abstract in their outlook,
to forget what actual human beings
are like, and try to fit men to
ystems rather than systems to men.

The world has become the victim of
dogmatic political creeds, of which, in
our day, the most powerful are capi-
talism and communism. I do not be-
lieve that either, in a dogmatic and
unmitigated form, offers a cure for prevention and capitalism: it
opportunity of initiative to a few; com-
munism is the destruction of initia-
tive through use of scientific technique, to provide both opportunity for all and security
for all... It is not only the experi-
ence and the fear of war that oppresses mankind, though this is perhaps the greatest of all evils of our time. We are oppressed also by the great imper-
ialist forces that govern our daily life,
making us still slaves of circumstance
though no longer slaves in law. Ener-
genic men have worshipped power
rather than simple happiness and friendship; men of less energy have acquired,
or have been deceived by a wrong diagnosis of the sources of

In seeking justice by means of ele-
borate systems we have been in dan-
ger of forgetting that justice alone is not enough. Daily joys, time from care, adventure, and oppor-
tunity for creative activities are at
least as important as the opportunity
about a life that men can feel to be
living. Spontaneity and individuality of
kind of personal expression are neces-
sary for happiness. The pride of
the artist, the discoverer, of the man
who turned a wild-natured into a garden or who has brought happiness where there would have been despair—his kind of pride is good, and our social
system should make it possible not only
for the few but for very many.

When security has been achieved the most important factor for those who seek
human welfare will be to find for man's
ancient and powerful instincts as many
outlets as possible that give joy and
freedom to man's evolution. Of this
we may see an example in the cur-
ning, as a result of the growth of
scientific intelligence, and we know
better, year by year what should be
done to prevent famines and pestil-
cences, but work is still necessary, but
only because we are unaware; given
peace and co-operation we could sus-
ciant on a very moderate amount of toil.

But there are still wars, oppression
and hideous cruelties, and greedy men
still snatch wealth from those who are
less skilled or less ruthless than them-
selves. Love of power still leads to
tasty tyrannies; and fear—deep, scare-
ly conscious fear—is still the domi-
nant motive in very many minds. All
this is unnecessary. I disagree com-
pletely with those who infer from our
combative impulses that future
demands war and other destructive
forms of conflict. I maintain that con-
mative impulses have an essential part
to play, but in their harmful forms can
learn to understand and control to
terrify exting the forces of nature
without those that are em-
bodied in ourselves. It is only through
a wider understanding of human needs
than is assumed by most politicians
and economists that we can find our way
through the realization of those hopes which, though as yet they are largely frus-
trated by our folly, our skill has placed
within our reach.

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MOTHER INDIA, DECEMBER 10, 1919

Eleven

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTHORITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL (Continued from page 10)

WHEELER'S & HICCNIBOTHAM'S RAILWAY BOOK-STALLS.
In a certain class of so-called sensible and well-trained judges that can be passed on any idea or phrase in "Oh, that's only poetry!" Well, this last phrase is, without the least doubt, the opposite of all that one would consider poetic: it has no imaginative fire, no power to cast a spell by its words, no subtext of reality. But has it even a core of sensible idea?

Poetry and A Beautiful Face

What is the crime with which poetry is charged? The crime is precisely its quality of haunting word-music carrying with it a vision that holds the mind in an ecstasy. Such imagination, it is said, takes one's thought away from things that matter in the actual world, and sends it roaming among unrealisms. But do not the detractors of poetry see that whatever it does is primarily by means of beauty and that there is no reason why a poet's beauty should be condemned as a slip-hole into unreality while no one condemns the beauty of a woman's face which makes a man turn round again and again—an enemy he deems quite worth while for the sake of such ravishing perfection? Surely, if beauty is real and valuable in a woman dressed in a human being, it is just as real and valuable when its marvelled leaps at us from that rarer creation, a faultless poem?

Has Beauty Any Use?

An objection may be raised: "A beautiful woman is useful; what use is poetry?" But this is to shift the ground of the argument. We are talking of beauty. What is the use of a woman's beauty? A woman as such has many functions—she may be of use as a daughter, as a wife, as a mother, as a friend, as a member of society. Her beauty, in itself, has no use. What is used is never her beauty, for to no use, as commonly defined, can beauty be put. The same is true of the Niagara Falls or a Himalayan summit or the Acropolis of Athens as a human being. They can be used scientifically, but not as matters of beauty. And when we choose a beautiful place to build our house in, or hang up our pictures in our house, we may serve various ends but the sheer sense of the beautiful can be justified only if it is not made contempt of. It is justified only because it gives a specific inner experience which we feel to be somehow enriching life. So, everything that is beautiful, is real as use is concerned, on an essentially equal footing.

"A Light that Never Was . . ."

One may still argue: "Poetry brings about beauty by expressing our imaginary things that have no bearing on earth-realities, 'a light that never was on sea or land.'" Is there a world upon which such matters a distraction from vital issues? The answer is: "Even if poetry did express a light of this kind, would not our acceptance of beauty as a valuable experience equal the value of that light? After all, beauty does not produce just a sensation of pleasure: it brings a 'transport' in one degree or another, a thrilled amanuend as if at an ideality that is more than of the earth, a response as though to some supremely blissful Secret of the universe. The more, therefore, we have in beauty the power of a light that never was on sea or land, the more truly and profoundly do we have the presence of the beautiful and the greater is the power to enrich life and to manage earth-life with the touch of a hidden Perfection.

Winged Journey

Besides, all poetry is not of the mystical order and does not express even a seemingly unearthly substance. No doubt, it weaves a chain of similes and metaphors but the last is often a surprise to the realist sworn to call a spade if not a 'bloody shovel.' And, as the familiar Latin tag tells us, every simile limps—this is falls short in some respect of commonly observed straightforward fact. But if similes and metaphors limp, they also have the power to fly—maybe because limping interferes with walking but not making a wretched journey! Now, what is the benefit of flying? It shortens the long laborious route taken by feet that are not, like the Mercury feet of poetic metre, shed with pinions. This shortening of the usual route brings distant objects or ideas closer, removing the gap of difference, of strangeness, that lay between them. The sudden closeness is expressed in poetry by similes and metaphors comparing apparently dissimilar things, and discovering in them a kinship that pulls open our eyes to wonders and significance in life are we liable to ignore with our pedestrian mindmovements harrumphed to forget one thing before reaching another that is far away.

Take any fine burnt of poetry as an instance:

"Love took up the hark of life and amite on all the chords with might—"

"Smeote the chord of Self that, freed, dancing, passed in music out of sight!"

All of us have seen a chord vibrating so rapidly when plucked that it becomes invisible; still, Tennyson alone could use this simple observation to lay bare the exquisite loss of selflessness, the thrill of freedom from us, that is caused by the harmonious touch of love. It is a flight of the imagination with the help of metaphors, limping metaphors, yet how unerring and revealing its quick reaching out from foot to deeper fact.

Poetry and Action

Poetry, it is also argued, is often like a dope unnerveing us from effective action of a practical kind. It may give us a rich inner life that brings a high quality of happiness and harmony, but does it render us dynamic? I am afraid history provides evidence to disappoint the enemies of poetry. Several of the most tempestuous men of action have been those whose nervous tiptow to the magnificent sweep of vivid verse. Cromwell passed his days constantly under the spell of translated Hebrew poetry—the Old Testament. The Moors rushed across half the earth on the breath of the Koran which at its best has all the rhythmic word-passion of poetry. And what was the chief spur to that terrible outburst of energy known as the French Revolution? Le Maratésia—a poem, a mere poem! What was the means by which England's awakening to the need for freedom? The brain may have ratted with political slogans but the heart was moved to the "mandals" of Vende Matérnem! The fact is that steeling poetry is born of the highest activity possible to the human consciousness—the activity of that mysterious gift, intuition. Intuition, of course, is not confined to poetry: it can take many forms and yet when it comes on poetry's breath of rhythmic ecstasy it does most intensely its work of seeing deep and seeing far and gripping both the inner and the outer. It may miss its aim in us if we are not properly prepared. But in itself it is above blame and is most precious. So, when it is said, "Oh, that's only poetry!" the true retort is: "Why, what more can anything ever hope to be?"

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