**A DEFENCE OF HINDUISM**

The attack Dr. Ambedkar recently made on the Hindu religion has shocked many people and created extra resistance in the Hindu mind to the Code Bill that is being mooted. For, Dr. Ambedkar is one of the chief architects of the Bill and it would be hard for the Hindus to believe that one so “aggressive” to Hinduism could spell any good to their society. If the Code Bill is a necessary and beneficient measure, immense harm has been done to its cause by the vituperations of the Law Member against the Hindu religion. If it is not, he has done immense though unintentional good by rendering it such. But in any case he has not added to his own reputation in the eyes of his thinking compatriots. For, his dicta are so patently fantastic that one wonders how a man credited with a keen logical and logical intelligence should have indulged in them.

Dr. Ambedkar contrasts Hinduism to Buddhism. He has himself embraced the latter because of any appreciation of philosophical, much less spiritual and mystical shades, but because he happened to belong to the scheduled classes which held an unenviable position in Hindu society and which seemed to him a pointer to a lack in Hinduism of the sense of human brotherhood. The institution of untouchability was indeed a blot on the social scheme that had got established in India. But with the advent of the modern age the conscience of the best Hindus has always rebelled against it. As far back as the days of Ram Mohan Roy the progressive movement started and reform organisations like the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj fought untouchability for decades on end. The biggest uproar against it came from a Hindu—Gandhiji. And the Indian Constitution which expresses a good deal of the contemporary Hindu mind has abolished untouchability. It is absurd to claim that untouchability is part and parcel of Hinduism. It is certainly no part of those foundational institutions of the Hindus: the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita. In ancient India the castes were guilds for different crafts and professions, with no odious distinctions or taboos. Later they got rigid. In the days of India’s decline they became more and more innumerable, particularly observable and several millions outside the pale. But even when we condemn the injustice to so many it is well to remember that injustice of this type in general is not something peculiarly associated with Hindu society. Will Durrant, the famous American writer on civilisation and culture, pointedly asks: "Does the attitude of a Brahmin to a Pariah differ, except in words, from that of a British lord to a n-navy, or a Park Avenue banker to an East Side huckster, or a white man to a negro, or a European to an Astdad?" What is clear from Durrant’s question is that there is a deplorable tendency in human nature towards unjust discrimination. And a social structure with Buddhism as the religious ingredient of it is as likely as Hinduism or Christianity to become gradually stratified and to develop superiors and inferiors. If Buddha preached brotherhood, so did Christ and so did the ancient Hindu seers and saints. In fact the essential oneness of all things, the basic equality of all creatures was never so forcefully declared as by the mystics of Hinduism who saw the Divine everywhere.

In viewing historical India, both past and present, it is necessary to distinguish between the genuine and the spurious in the Hindu religion. Opposed to the fear-infested, delusion-darkened hotchpotch that is the masses’ spurious Hinduism, there is the splendid many-sided unity of the genuine one, a grand harmony of a thousand truths. Its fundamental tenet is the old Rig-Vedic formula: “The One whom the sages call by many names.” Unity and multiplicity, simplicity and complexity, the super-cosmic and the cosmic, the universal and the individual—all these are blended together in Hinduism and express themselves in the large number of aspects of man’s culture and social life possible. A million gods revealing and concealing a million facets of the inexpressable Divine and of the infinite Eternal, a supreme trinity-in-unity personifying the creative, preservative and destructive qualities of the Supra-cosmic putting forth the cosmos and incarnating Himself again and again in the world, an ultimate Mother-force or Shakti bringing out for manifestation the secrets of the one Lord and Master of all existence—this is Hinduism. And it is also Hinduism that man can experience and realise the Divine, become unified with the Infinite, act as a channel of the Eternal, for a man can only do that. The Supreme and man’s nature can be through Yoga a form of the Supreme’s dynamic. Hinduism recognises three Yogas to suit the three types of men—the intellectual, the emotional, the kinetic—and the Bhagavad Gita combines the three Yogas in a synthesis. What is more, it throws the synthesis open to all without distinction. To realise the One everywhere and see the One in the Many as well as the Many in the One is the goal of the Hindu mystic, the climax of the Hindu religious experience. And Sri Krishna in the Gita declares that even a Chandra, an untouchable outcaste, can become a knower of God and stand with the highest.

In the face of such a declaration and doctrine it is difficult to understand how anybody could identify genuine Hinduism with inflexible as well as tyrannous caste system and the belief in untouchability. Beverley Nichols committed an indeed mountainous “howler” when he said, after talking of reforming Hinduism, that if by reform you knocked the caste system and untouchability out of it you would find that there was nothing left to reform. Dr. Ambedkar seems very nearly of the same opinion. Probably Nichols whose two idols in India were Mr. Jinnah and Dr. Ambedkar owed his missapprehension to them. But regrettably enough some Hindu leaders have also been too vinegarful.

The most famous of them said: "I would rather that Hinduism perished than untouchability survived. This amounts to making Hinduism stand or fall by pariahdom. In other words, one would be satisfied even if there were no such spiritual inspiration in the country as has been inspired and lived in a Vasishtha or a Yajnavalkya, a Chanitaya or a Mirabai, a Tukaram or a Tulsidas, a Ramakrishna or a Vivekananda—provided there were no scheduled classes! One may inquire what sort of life would there be on earth without the rishi, the saints, the mystics, the Yogis. Man would be just a higher kind of brute or, rather, a worse kind of brute, since he would have nothing of the innocence of the animals but only their ferocity developed and gilded by a soulless reasoning ingenuity. Admittedly, religion which gives birth to the Beatific Vision in some may also degenerate in others to cruel bigotry and hidebound superstition, caste-ridden orthodoxy: we have to be on guard and strive ever for its pure and clear and luminous manifestation, but to be prepared to throw away its higher reaches merely because it has also lower ones that accemodate things like untouchability is to be victimised by a hundredaries of humanism. Humanism is a very worthy sentiment and creed, yet it cannot be balanced against spiritual experience, against God-realisation, against concrete communion with the Eternal. Hinduism stands or falls primarily and essentially by its ability to produce embloms of such experience, realisation and communion. Although a vast brotherhood, a profound parity as between all classes, is indeed one of its tenets, this brotherhood and parity is a tenet not of mere sociology but of a spirituality which is rooted in the universal Self of selves or the single Lord whose undying sparks are all evolving souls. To be ready to forgo this spirituality just because the social structure within which it first flourished and still flourishes has become decadent in many respects and is resistant in many ways to the influence of spirituality—to value more the abolition of untouchability than the existence of the God-knowers and God-lovers who open up for man the possibilities of a further evolution: this is a capital mistake, a loss of right proportion, a blurring of correct perspective, a degrading social force that deforms in the long run put a radical rather than a superficial and therefore temporary end to the inequities that in different shapes are the sad lot of millions not only in

Continued overleaf
India but also abroad and even in countries where Buddhism is practised. It is another form of the Ambedkarian heresy that if Hinduism bore the caste system for several centuries it has failed "to yield anything substantiv-

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हम दोनों के लिए सुपर मैन के सिद्धांत की भीड़ के एक बहुत भावनात्मक परिवर्तन हासिल करने के कारण, सुपर मैन के लिए सुपर मैन के परिवर्तन का स्क्रीन, या किसी यथार्थ पालन के जन्म दिल्ली की रिलायस रिपोर्ट की समस्याओं के साथ-साथ सुरक्षा करने का रहा है। और यह बिजली सुरक्षा है, सुरक्षा है। कूद के प्राप्ति पर पता चल रहा है। इस विषय में हम पहले काफी कुछ सुरक्षा अवसर मिल गए थे, लेकिन यह स्पष्ट रूप से स्पष्ट रूप से स्पष्ट रूप से दर्शाता है कि यह सुरक्षा है। कूद के प्राप्ति पर पता चल रहा है। इस विषय में हम पहले काफी कुछ सुरक्षा अवसर मिल गए थे, लेकिन यह स्पष्ट रूप से स्पष्ट रूप से स्पष्ट रूप से दर्शाता है कि यह सुरक्षा है।
मुंहका या शाह डिने की बात
बहुत लोगों को ऐसा प्रश्न उठाता है कि यदद की विश्वास की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है। अब के बाद हार्मोनी का भाषा की धर्मतत्त्व या धर्मतोलक का ध्यान लगातार है।
चाहते हैं?

सिष्ट ने कहा कि मया को जीना चाहता है। सुनहरा में विव-कलेव सुहा है, कहते हैं। 

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इस प्रकार बताएँ हैं कि यह भी वही समस्या है जो हमारे जीवन में पहले काम में लापता होता था। निस्त्रोह और दुःखशील क्रोध है। बुद्धि की जीवन में भी हमें उसी समस्या का उद्देश्य दिखाया जाता है। इस रूप में यह सिद्ध भी है कि हमें निरोग और स्वस्थ होने के लिए स्वस्थ जीवन और दिन दिन हमारे जीवन में लापता होने की आवश्यकता है।
"THOSE WHO ARE NOT WITH ME ARE AGAINST ME"

THE CHOICE BETWEEN CIVILISATION AND THE TRADITION

By DILIP KUMAR ROY

Historians are legion—those who call events to register in chronological order. No doubt they merit the approbation of all good citizens, the votaries of chronicles as such. There are, however, tasks which can be more commendable to our aspiration. One of these is to record the heart's deep cry against something which happens to upset spiritual values. By no means an easy task, because for this one must be equipped with an artist mind, a living palette and the heart's hue. But the compensation is that, when achieved, it stands out bolder than history: the moving picture of an atmosphere and yet elevating.

It is just such a picture which has been achieved of late by a gifted Russian, Victor Kravshenko, the author of I Chose Freedom. He is an authentic Russian, from crust to core. But he is more: he is an authentic man, a human being who can be thrust by a dogma. And the Russians are amazing. This I realised first nearly three decades ago, when I read the autobiography of another Russian, an artist of the pen and a humanist at heart, Prince Kropotkin the great revolutionary socialist who was arrested in Genoa. I first worked in England in the early twenties when Netaji Subhas Bose was in the making and it was one of the books that had taken a hand in making him. For I well remember how he used to discuss the Prince's irrepressible spirit, often with a queer in his young ardent eyes when he did not get messages from home. And how we used to marvel as we discussed together a singular remark of the Prince, that the Russian exhibited a curious blend of soaring nobility and abysmal brutality. For the henchmen of the Tsar, wrote the Prince, betrayed a fierce delight in系统的 and calculating cruelty: it was almost as if they rejoiced in cruelty for the sake of cruelty alone, while, on the obverse of the medal, he stressed, bloomed some of the whitest flowers of humanity: Turgenev, the artist; Dostoevski, the seer; Chekov, the humanist and, last though not least—the almost incredible phenomenon, Count Leo Tolstoi.

Hope and Misgiving

During my one year's stay in Berlin—between 1921 and 1922—I used to have truck mostly with the Russians who happened to be there. Those formed a motley group: there were among them officials (Bolsheviks); anti-revolutionaries (convinced or otherwise); artists (idealists and Utopians); refugees who had lost everything (some of them Bolsheviks who capitulated to the Germans); some who “died of a revolution” (as the English used to say) and lastly, the Tolstoyans (sentimental anarchists) whose personalities attracted me almost as much as their sentimentality repelled me. From this heterogeneous brood I gathered contradictory reports about the state of affairs in Russia, which were bewildering. The consensus was that I oscillated continually between two poles: at one end, a rosy optimism that the Russian Revolution was going to bring overnight the millennium on earth; at the other, a gnawing doubt that the millennium might become another form of ruthless intolerance. The hope was born out of the fiery idealism of the official agents I had met; the misgiving inspired by the disenchantments idealists whose arguments, boiled down, came to what has been lately summed up powerfully by Arthur Koestler in his astounding biographical novel, Darkness at Noon, in the indictment of Rubashov, the disillusioned recantor: "Our Press and our schools cultivate Chauvinism, militarism, dogmatism, conformism and ignorance. The arbitrary power of the Government is unlimited and unexamined in history; freedom of the Press, of opinion and movement are as thoroughly exterminated as though the proclamation of the Rights of Man had never been. We have built up the most gigantic police apparatus, with informers made a national institution. We whip the thinking masses of the country towards a theoretical future happiness which only we can see. For the merities of this generation are exhausted; they were spent in the Revolution; for this generation is black white and there is nothing left of it but a meaning, numb, apathetic lump of sacrificial flesh. . . . To me it sometimes seems as though the experiments had torn the skin off the victim and left it standing with bared tissues, muscles and nerves."

It so happened that at this time I met Sri Manabendra Neth Roy who sought me out and with his marvelous inquisitorial mind convinced me that "a new sunrise" was visible in Russia to every genuine seeker of light and he got me an official invitation to visit Moscow. I understand he too is now thoroughly disillusioned about Bolshevikism in practice as against its theory, but he has retained for "the new era, not annihilated by the Bolshevik humanitarians" all but swept me off my feet and I would have accepted his invitation had I not just then come upon two books on Russia which made a great impression on my avid mind: The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism by Bertrand Russell and The Next Million Years by H. G. Wells. Both men were shocked by what they had seen in Russia. Also my German friends warned me that in Russia the tourist had no freedom of movement and could only see what he shone and was not what was actually happening under "the new era." Besides, when one did not know the language of the country, whom could one contact save those the autho- rities had kept stationed for the all-too-pullivible visitor's edification? This I was told banteringly by an Indian whom I had just met who had been to Russia and spoke Russian fluently. He knew Russia well and sighed for the bleeding heart of the sentimental and the most unhappy country in the world" as he put it emotionally, and he related to me an experience which I shall never be able to forget. He had a Lithuanian friend whose only son of ten was caught playing with a tennis ball of British make. As such bizarre articles were rather, at the time, the taboos, the net result of course was that he be made an example of. "It's all very well, Dilip," said my friend cynically, "to talk of the safety of the State and about its need to be protected from saboteurs and the machinations of the anti-revolutionaries, but an ounce of cold-blooded blood-thirstness is ten thousand eloquent slogans about the much vaunted 'new era' ushered in by the new Sunrise.'"

I abandoned my project of visiting Russia. My friend, I was persuaded, had not lied deliberately, for the simple reason that he had had no axe of the police rule of the terror grinding. Besides, he was reputed to be a truthful man on top of being esteemed universally as a man of character and culture. But though deeply shaken, I was yet in two minds about it. Was it not my official duty to find out for myself, that my friend had been led astray by having seen things from too close quarters? Could one be ever so prudently positive that one had not lost the true perspective when one was splayed out such too much by personal hurts and disappointments? "Things regrettable did happen in every country," countered the Bolshievik friends, "but one could certainly maintain for a moment that the talk of the Bolshevik leaders of the great Revolution, men who had staked their all for the common man, had not been fired and upheld by an indomitable hope, an invincible determination to root out the evil inherent in the Capitalist order of society?" Such was the refrain of their championship of the new regime caught up ecstatically from the heralds of the "new era". And these al- ways ended on the heart-warming cadence: was not Lenin a Prince among Princes; was not the tyranny in the name of love of man kind? My friend only smiled at my vacillation. "But, you know, Dilip, do you not telling me the other day about what your friend Subbash Bose said: that good Viceroy might come and go but the enslavement of India went on forever; I do not defend the Capitalist tyranny. All I say is that you cannot end tyranny by replacing it with a worse oppression. I tell you, Dilip, that if the tree is to be judged by its fruit then you cannot acclaim Bolshievism in practice—as against on paper— as a boon-giver, far less as a guarantor of human happiness. For it is a fact that people were far happier under the Tsar—I have seen them so with my own eyes—and in way they cannot even dream of being today ever again . . ." and so he went on, whenever he spoke of Russia.

Complete Disillusion

I must confess I could not quite know what to make of it all, my faith in his veracity notwithstanding. Sometimes I decided he was overstating things and so defending his cause even though many of my Russian friends bore him out. With the passage of time, however, the cat mewed too loud even though the bag kept her still out of view, and one meaning evolved that of many another, emboldened as well as desperate, especially after Lenin's death. The world eagerly pursues the (the procedure of which, with the things that happened at each purge behind the scenes, has been graphically described in I Chose Freedom); the weeding out of Lenin's dearest friends and comrades one after another; the muzzling of the Press; the official rules of N. K. V. D.; the vast army of exiles who worked miserably in Siberia and elsewhere in ceaseless toil found no relief even in the hollowed, almost ubiquitous till even parents were betrayed by their children turned informers: in a word, the utter reversal of all values of kindliness and honour cherished universally heretofore—all leaked out like "mudler". And yet those who came to power in Russia have been the ones that they had to defend it somehow—anyhow, with the result that a new race of slogan-builders had to be fostered. These, to put it in Koestler's words, were "men of an entirely new species: militant philosophers," who "dreamed of power and succeeded in giving object of abstraction over the people to them from the habit of being ruled", and so on. The great victor of Kurukshetra, Yudhishthira, declared tranquilly: "Satyam tu me raja-hi- na-ratnam: 'Tis Truth I long to save and not the kingdom." Russia has simply put it in the other way: equal trail for sages and kings.

All this came back to me as I glanced upon the passionate outburst of Kravshenko in his unforgettable autobiography. And one of the reasons why his denunciation of the Bolshievik oligarchy convinces me is that he too
"Those Who Are Not With Me Are Against Me"—Continued from page 3

MOTHER INDIA, MAY 27, 1950.

S.R. are condemned to forced labour; this is probably an over-estimate, but the number certainly amounts to many millions. And there is no doubt others are worse off than the are.

I quote from Russell’s brilliant article at some length not only because he is regarded —and rightly—as one of the top-ranking creative thinkers of today—whose verdicts on history and contemporary happenings are often having serious and far-reaching effects. Russell there because his “abhorrence of the aims and methods of the Soviet Government” expressed emphatically in 1920 came subsequently to be underlined by most of the impartial thinkers of the East and West and borne out more and more by some of the most outstanding Communists whose brilliant mouthpiece Kravchenko happens to be. And how fully he bears out Russell I will illustrate by a moving excerpt from his book, part of a dialogue between the author and his noble father who were having serious young people for having plotted against the Tsarist regime) countered his son, then a loyal Bolshevik official, when the latter held the brief for the doings of the Stalinist regime:

Of course, Victor, of course. But revolutions are not made for factories and railroads. They are made for the people. The essence of the matter is in personal rights and liberties. Without these, without human dignity, men are slaves no matter how industrialised their prison may be. When you, Commissars, boast of new factories, the implication is that nothing better lives. Well, now, do they; in the to make the physical facts are not as important as the political and spiritual facts.”

He then went on to say that under the Tsars “at least we could think what we pleased. There were many political parties, factions, etc.” No, not at all. In Khruschev’s eyes, the Tsars were no different from the Soviet police.”

Sure, the Tsar’s police used to beat and sometimes shot strikers and often shot or exiled revolutionaries. But the whole scale was different. We counted our political prisoners by the thousand, not as, now, by the million. And every injustice evoked protests, demonstrations. Today we have only the silence of the cemetery.”

This is true as ever an impartial visitor to Russia will testify. And the reason is that in Russia, unlike anywhere else, “a condition for the survival of the flowers is secrecy—black impenetrable secrecy, not only about this or that, but about everything that goes on in the creation of an Utopia. In Tsarist days there was a famous book, Who Can Be Happy and Free in Russia? No such book could be published in Stalin’s Russia.”

Problem For All Humankind

But it is precisely because an ominous hue is regnant in Russia that it is so difficult to lay one’s finger on the groanings overlaid by this ubiquitous “silence of the cemetery.” In Koestler’s novel this silence feels almost like pressure on one’s chest, a pressure which just allows you to breathe but not to talk except in whispers. It is stifling. In Kravchenko’s book, too, curiously, you feel this horror which continues as it were to be indefinable even after the author’s giving a shape to the nightmares soon in day-time. Never have I known so very lover of freedom, of truth and of humane feelings ought to read these two books. They will perhaps make you say just because—they are both grim books whose data make one feel like putting them away if only to turn to something more cheerful, more credible and less menacing to one’s faith in the basic goodness of human nature. One ought to, because (to quote from the Postscript of Kravchenko’s autobiography):

“The Communist dictatorship in the U.S.S.R. is not a problem for the Russian people only, or the democracies only. It is the problem for all humankind. The world dare not continue indefinitely to turn its back on the martyrdom of a great segment of the human race inhabiting one-sixth of the earth’s surface. This segment is ruled by a deified group of leaders and their cohorts of the Politburo and a gigantic police force. The hundreds of millions of people in the U.S.S.R. have no voice in shaping their own destinies and are completely cut off from the peoples and the movements of thought in all other countries.”

Precisely. For, in the last analysis, the question whether the Russians themselves favour such a regime or not is a question which we can ask today, one day, none nation, however, vast, should be able to perpetuate a mechanism of Government in which the natural kindly feelings of the heart love and the feeling of individual liberty are punishable offenses, the less when, as it has happened in Russia, the hundreds of millions of people in the U.S.S.R. have no voice in shaping their own destinies and are completely cut off from the peoples and the movements of thought in all other countries.”

1 Quoted from Russell’s article, “The Intellectual Error of Communism.”

2 See important man have given their reasons for resonating in an important and valuable book, The God that Failed. These six men: Arthur Koestler, I. Milan-Sellon. Richard Wright, André Gide, Louis Fischer and Stephen Spender—alld had different reasons for leaving the Communist Party, but in every case they had reasons of which it would be difficult, except for a blind fanatic, to question the validity. In each case the reason of disillusion was terrible in proportion as the new faith and profession and the old world were.

3 The Intellectual Error of Communism by Bertrand Russell, World Review, March 1950

2. How terrifying and literally true this is in modern Russia! Victor Kravchenko, given various instances of spies employed by official Russia on even those who have served them with flawless loyalty. Here is a sample episode. Victor Kravchenko while in prison was told by their guards to clean the prison yard. He started cleaning and was soon noticed in getting out to avoid doing the task. He must have not be seen the mother of a suspect. How could one be kind to a mother whose son was a suspect?

“Thank you, thank you for your work, my dear—I am so miserable. I may God grant that your may your own mother may not suffer as I’m suffering; that she may not have to endure what my poor boy is enduring.” My chauffeur turned round. “Comrade Director,” he said. “Is this perhaps one of those who are not with us? I see no one who is not with us. I see no one who is not with us. I swear by my mother that I will not report this time. My own son is 18 years old, is a fine lad like this one. But I love her and, my son, you too, Victor Andreychyevich, as one Russian to another.” And Victor Kravchenko was a trusted engineer at the time and rose still higher later on.
It was pointed out in the Essay: "Sri Aurobindo’s Vision of the Future of the Human Race," that when the mind, habituated to dealing with the finite, approaches the Infinite and attempts to understand its nature, it must become plastic and not insist on thinking only in terms of its own categories. It must recognize the limitations of its own narrow logic, and realize that it is ill-equipped to comprehend a Reality, the multi-poiend and pleromatic nature of which can only be known in a vision higher than the mental—a vision that can see its luminous totality. The mind is in its essence a consciousness which cuts out forms of things from the whole and regards them as units complete in themselves. It measures, divides and cuts up reality into parts in order to know it, and then by an imperfectly understood causality tries to connect them together without a real spiritual intuition in the Supermind or their significance in the whole. When it tries to reconstruct the whole, which is yet a part of a larger configuration, it generally succeeds in creating only an assemblage of parts or a summation. It is regarding this tendency of the mind to divide and limit in order to know the Supermind. Sri Aurobindo writes: "It is this essential characteristic of Mind which conditions the workings of all its operative powers, whether conception, perception, sensation or the dealings of creative thought." "Mind is an instrument of analysis and synthesis, but not of essential knowledge."

But this, as we have seen, does not imply that mind is an instrument of Ignorance, one that distorts truths or fabricates falsehoods. It is a product of knowledge—ignorance in terrestrial existence, but in its inner reality it is a subordinate principle. Sri Aurobindo points out that the Supermind is not even approximated in knowledge from its source of knowledge, the Supermind, says Sri Aurobindo. Therefore, if the mind is passive and receptive to the light of the Supermind, it can reflect its truths, or it can seize these truths by a spiritual intuition, or it can, by breaking its boundaries, break through to the ecstatic and transcendent through the ascension into the gnostic ranges of the Supermind.

In the following extracts taken from "The Life Divine," Sri Aurobindo stresses the same point and then explains the nature of the ultimate Reality and the various aspects in which it is apprehended by the human consciousness.

"There is then a supreme Reality eternal, absolute and infinite. Because it is absolute and infinite, it is in its essence indeterminate. It is indefinable and inconceivable by finite and defining Mind; it is ineffable by a mind-created speech; it is describable neither by our negations, nor its—so far we cannot limit it by saying it is not this, it is not that—but by our affirmations, for we cannot fix it by saying it is this, it is that, it is it. And yet, though in this way unknowable to us, it is not altogether and in every way unknowable; it is self-evident to itself and, although inexplicable, yet self-apparent by knowledge of its identity. And that spiritual being in us must be capable; for that spiritual being is in its essence and in the individual consciousness and intimate reality not other than this Supreme Existence.

But although thus indeterminable to Mind, because of its absoluteness and infinity, we discover that this Supreme and Eternal Infinite determines itself to our consciousness in the universe by real and fundamental truths in its being which are beyond the universe and in it and are the very foundation of its existence. These truths present themselves to our conceptual cognition as the fundamental aspects in which we see and experience the omnipresent Reality. In themselves they are seized directly, not by intellectual understanding but by a spiritual intuition, a spiritual experience in the very substance of our consciousness; but they can also be caught in conception by a large and plastic idea and can be expressed in some sort by a plastic speech which does not insist too much on rigid definitions but offers wider and subtler ideas to the mind.

The supreme Truth-aspect which thus manifests itself to us is an eternal and infinite and absolute self-existence, self-awareness, self-delight of being; this founds all things and secretly supports and pervades all things. This Self-existence reveals itself in three of its essential natures: instrumental, self-conscious being or spirit, and God or the Divine Being. The Indian terms are more satisfactory—Brahman the Reality is Atman, Purusha, Ishwara; for these terms grew from a root of Intuition and, while they have an all-embracing preciseness, are capable of a plastic application which avoids both vagueness in the use and the rigid form of a too limiting intellectual concept. The Supreme Brahman is that which in Western metaphysics is called the Absolute; but Brahman is at the same time the omnipresent Reality in consciousness, that reality that exists as its forms or its movements: this is an Absolute which takes all relativities in its embrace. The Upanishads affirm that all this is the Brahman; Mind is Brahman, Life is Brahm, Matter is Brahan. . . . All realities and all aspects of reality are the effects of this power. They are the effects of the Brahma, the Supreme and incomprehensible, the Supracosmic Existence that sustains the cosmos, the Cosmic Self that upholds all beings, but it is too the self of each individual: the soul or psychic entity is an eternal portion of the Ishwara; it is his supreme Nature or Consciousness-Force that has become the living being in a world of living beings. The Brahman alone is, and because of It all are, for all the Brahman; this Reality is the reality of everything that we see in Self and Nature. Brahman, the Ishwara, is all this by his Consciousness-Force put out in self-manifestation; he is the Consciousness Being, Soul, Spirit, Purusha, and it is by his Nature, the force of his conscious self-existence that he is all things; he is the Ishwara, the omniscient and omnipotent All-ruler, and it is by his Shakti, his conscious Power, that he manifests himself in Time and governs the universe. These and similar statements of the comprehensive: it is possible for the mind to cut and select, to build a closed system and explain away all that does not fit within it; but it is on the complete and many-sided statement that we must take our stand if we would acquire an integral knowledge.

To be continued in the next issue.

"Those Who Are Not With Me Are Against Me" Continued from page 4 on the lower. Therefore however modern and progressive a State may happen to be in its industrial undertakings and five-year plans, it cannot possibly be cooperated with when it puts a premium on hatred breeding inhuman cruelty, suspicion fathoming omnipervasive espionage and last, though not least, a materialistic ideology pinning down the aspiring soul to a pointless life in an endless round of pleasure or power-seeking activities. Such a State must gravitate towards an alliance with the forces of darkness and therefore must, sooner or later, find itself in utter opposition to the forces which invoke the Light. That is why the Christ said so emphatically: "All who are not with me are against me." So even that great Messiah of Mankind had, ultimately, to utter an ominous warning to those who stood phalanxes against right vision longing to right vision and must cling together in the house consecrated to the Divine...if you call for the Truth and yet something in you chooses what is false...then always you will be open to attack and the Grace will recede from you."
"The material world in its darkness and ignorance had forgotten the Divine. Love came into the darkness; it awakened all that lay there asleep; it whispered, opening the ears that were sealed. There is something that is worth waking to, worth living for, and it is love! And with the awakening to love, there entered into the world the possibility of coming back to the Divine. The creation moves upward through love towards the Divine and in answer there learns downward to meet the creation the Divine Love and Grace. Love cannot exist in its pure beauty, love cannot put on its own power and intense joy of fulness until there is this interchange, this fusion between the earth and the Supreme, this movement of love from the Divine to the creation and from the creation to the Divine. This world was a world of dead matter till Divine Love descended into it and awakened it to life. Ever since it has gone on growing, each of this divine source of life, but it has taken in its search every kind of wrong turn and mistaken way, it has wandered hither and thither in the dark. The mass of this creation has moved on its road like the blind seeking for the unknown, seeking but ignorant of what it sought. One element of creation, the love to love for the Divine, the Divine Love pours itself without limit back into the creation. The circle of the movement turns back upon itself and the ends meet; there is the joining of the extremes, supreme Spirit and manifesting Matter, and their divine union begins and complete."

(WORDS OF THE MOTHER PP. 157-159.)

With the pregnant simplicity of these revelatory words, the Mother outlines the whole evolution of the Earth from her state of being "dead Matter" to her union with the supreme Spirit and transformation into its manifesting channel. The primary state is that of insensitivity, inertia and the utter obliteracy of absolute ignorance. It is a total involvement of the Sat, the infinite, eternal Existence, an apparent negation of the Light and Bliss of the supreme Reality. Out of this state of involution evolution starts, entering into the Divinity above,—love, the most virginal, powerful enough of all divine forces, and releases into self-expressive play, first, Life with its prolific energies, multi-form shapes and dim, dawning consciousness, and then Mind with its developing consciousness and variegated volitions. But the process of evolution does not—because it cannot—stop short at Mind: Love has to liberate the involved principle and power of the Supreme Mind which is the infinite dynamic Consciousness-Force of the Divine Creator of the universe. The consummation of this evolutionary process is called the self-revelation of Sachchidanda on earth.

Ancient wisdom saw the potential greatness of the earth. In the Vedas the earth is called the foothold of God and the mother of all creatures whose father is heaven. In the Atharva Veda we have: "I am a son of Earth, the soil is my mother..." May she lavish on me her manifolds treasure, her secret riches... May we speak the beauty of thee, O Earth, that is in thy villages and forests and assemblies and wars and battles." (XII. 1. 44, 56.)

The secret riches prayed for are the infinite, involved riches of the Spirit which the earth yields to the aspiring soul of man under the pressure of the descending Light from above. Again in the same Veda the Rishi prays, "May Earth, sovereign over the past and the future, make for us a wide world... Earth that was the water in the ocean and whose course the thinkers follow by the magic of their knowledge, she who has her heart of immortality covered up by the Truth in the supreme ether, may she establish for us light and power in that most high kingdom." (XII 1. 18.)

It is held by most of the religions in India that this Earth is the Karmabhumi, the only place where man can change his consciousness, his nature and his whole life by his thought and action and rise from the animal-human to the divine-human level of existence. The other worlds are, according to the Bhagavadgita, where he can only enjoy the fruits, good and evil, of his actions. It is only here that the soul can liberate itself from the meshes of ignorance and recover its infinity and immortality. It is only here that the individual can regain his universal and transcendent and unite with the supreme Divine. It is only here, on this earth and nowhere else, that the highest Truth can be realised and expressed. It is said—and it is a fact—that even the gods, if they desire liberation and union with the Supreme, have to be born here, on this earth, and assume the human form. They may be in possession of high knowledge and power in their own realms, but the highest knowledge and the utmost perfection are only open to man upon this earth. Chinese spiritual tradition regards Chien (Heaven) as the Father and Kuan (Earth) as the Mother of all terrestrial existence. The union of Earth and Heaven has been the ideal not only of Christian eschatology but also of many of the more ancient forms of spiritual mysticism.
modest plant joins in my formidable aspiration, and all this lifts itself towards the Earth, to the conquest of Thy love and light, scaling the peaks of the being to attain to Thee, to ravel Thee from Thy immobile beautitude and make Thee penetrate into the shadow of suffering so as to transform it into divine Joy, into sovereign Peace. And this violence is of an infinite and gives itself and of a confident serenity which smiles in the certainty of Thy perfect Unity."(Pp. 122-123)

The above two passages bear eloquent testimony to the identification of the Mother's being with the Earth, but this identification by itself cannot deliver the Earth from darkness and suffering and make her the field of divine revelation, unless there is an equally complete identification of the Mother's being with the being and consciousness of the Supreme and a sovereign working of His Will through the Mother upon the Earth. Of the latter there is no dearth of evidence in the Prayers and Meditations. We cite here only one or two of those that bear directly and definitely upon the Earth and her destiny:-

"Mother Divine, Thou art with us; every day Thou givest us the assurance, and, closely hid in an slender that grows more and more thick, more and more constant, 'we turn to the Lord of the universe and to That which is beyond in a great aspiration towards the new Light. All the Earth is in our arms like a sick child who must be cured and for whom one has a special affection because of its very weakness. Cradled on the immensity of the eternal becomings, ourselves those becomings, we contemplate, hushed and glad, the eternity of the immobile Silence where all is realised in the perfect consciousness and immutable Existence, miraculous gate of all the unknown that is beyond. As we remain, the inexpressible Glory uncovered, and, suffused with the ineffable Splendour, 'we turn back towards the world to bring it the glad tidings.'" (Pp. 202-3)

"O Thou wonderful Unknown, Thou who hast not yet manifested Thyself, Thou who art not visible; the suspiros to the supreme power to act as an intermediary between the Spirit and Matter, does not ensure an easy accomplishment of her work. The stark resistance of Matter, the stubborn refusal of darkness to admit Light, the inertia of the long-established habits of Nature oppose the double movement of liberation and transformation, and in spite of the divine pledge and the prophetic experiences of the Mother, the work seems well-nigh impossible.

"O my sweet Master, why hast Thou asked me to leave my blessed place in Thy heart and return to the earth to attempt a realisation which everything seems to prove impossible?... What does Thou expect from me that Thou hast torn me away from my divine and marvellous contemplation and plunged me again into this dark world in conflict?" (Pp. 171-72)

But even this double identification, which is the secret of the Mother's mission on earth and her supreme power to act as an intermediary between the Spirit and Matter, does not ensure an easy accomplishment of her work. The stark resistance of Matter, the stubborn refusal of darkness to admit Light, the inertia of the long-established habits of Nature oppose the double movement of liberation and transformation, and in spite of the divine pledge and the prophetic experiences of the Mother, the work seems well-nigh impossible.

"O, Lord, the whole Earth is convulsed; she groans and suffers, she is in anguish... It must not be that all this suffering has fallen upon her in vain; grant that all this blood which has been poured out may produce a more rapid germination of all the seeds of beauty, light and love which have to flower and cover the Earth with their rich harvest. From the depth of this abyss of darkness, the integral terrestrial being cries to Thee that Thou mayst give it air and light; it stifes, with Thou not to restore its life.

But the work of the tremendous, transcending work has to be accomplished: Matter has to be churned and delivered of the Spirit it holds imprisoned in itself, and darkness has to be lashed into Light for, the aspiration of the Earth for the "benediction of Thy illumination and the beatitude of Thy Love" must be realised. And such too is the decree of the Divine: "Thou hast said that the Earth would die, and it will die to its old ignorance. Thou hast said that the Earth would live, and it will live in the darkness of Thy Power." Such, too, again, are the signs betokening the longed-for Advent:

"This sorrowful world kneads before Thee, O Lord, in mute supplication; this tortured Matter nestles at Thy feet, it is so imploring Thee, it adores Thee, it seeks whom it neither knows nor understands! Its prayer rises like the cry of one in a last agony; that which is disappearing feels confusedly the possibility of living again in Thee; the Earth awaits Thy decree in a grandiose procrastination. Listen, listen; its voice implores and supplicates Thee: What will be Thy decrees, what is Thy sentence? O Lord of Truth, the individual world pleads Thy Truth which it knows not yet, but which it calls, and to which it adores with all the joyful energy of its living forces. "Death has passed, vast and solemn, and all fell into a religious silence during its passage. A superhuman beauty has appeared on the earth.

"Something more marvellous than the most marvellous bliss has made felt the impress of its Presence."

According to the Mother the Earth is the epiphan of the universe. All the cosmic principles, powers and potentialities are concentrated here, those of light as well as those of darkness and evil, and a long-drawn-out, eventful battle has been raging between these contrary forces for the conquest and possession of this evolutionary planet which is destined to be the scene of the most perfect manifestation of the Divine. It is, therefore, incumbent on us as children of the mother Earth to help her realise her inmost truth and fulfil her destiny by a complete and definitive victory over the opposing forces. Stricken and sorrowful, marvellous, though unconscious of its greatness but fraught with glorious possibilities, the Earth waits in mute and patient aspiration for the birth of a new Force, "unknown to her till now," the Force that will unseal her heart and set flowing the streams of divine glories. The ageless sorrow of the Earth is not a curse, but a blessing in disguise,—it is the greatest spur to evolution, to the transcendence of the inert and murky origin. It is, to quote Sr. Aurobindo, "the red and bitter seed of the raptures seven." The obscure, dumb, anguish Earth is not a hopeless derelict doomed to perdition; she has a might and a light which, once enkindled, can overcome all obstacles and justify the poet's assertion:

I, Earth, have a deeper power than Heaven
By me the last feverent exults,
To reach the last infinity's unknown."

The self-manifestation of the Divine in transformed Matter, the outflowing of His splendidors in terrestrial life, the unimpeded fulfillment of the purpose and purpose in the New Creation, the evolution of the supramental race of men and the establishment of the Life Divine, the life of inalienable unity and harmony and dynamic peace,—this, is the destiny of the mother Earth. Neither wars nor catastrophes can balk her of it, neither disasters nor surging darkness. Whatever the chaos and catastrophic conflicts of the present, if one steps behind the burning surface, one is sure to discover an urge for Unity, an urge for Peace and an insistent urge for spiritual fulfillment. This triple urge is the fermenting seed of the future efflorescence. The hectic heat and wave will subside, the greed and hate and insatiable power—lust will be transformed into love and harmony, and mankind will live as a single family of the children of Light, doing God's work and serving God's ends on earth.

In many a Prayer the Divine asks the Mother to "turn towards the earth" and warns her that "the time of a small, tranquil, uniform and peaceful life will be over. There will be effort, danger, the unforeseen, insecurity, but also intensity." "Thou wert made for this role. After having agreed for long years to forego completely, because the time had not come and also because thou wert not ready, awake now to the consciousness that it is very truly thy role and that it was for this that thou wert created." In obedience to the divine Will and in order to accomplish her mission, the Mother had to descend into the very matrix of the Earth, the frozen core of tenebrous Matter and invoke from Thence a descent of God's delivering Grace. Her Prayer rushed up towards the Divine and, as she describes it, "from the depths of the abyss I beheld Thee in Thy radiant splendour; Thou didst appear and Thou saidst to me: 'Lose not courage, be firm, be confident,—I come.'"

Here is the pledge and prophecy of the divine fulfillment of the destiny of the Earth who "seems to be passing through a decisive crisis."
PEGASUS AND "THE WHITE HORSE"
OF G. K. CHESTERTON
K. D. SETHNA

G. K. C. said in characteristic vein: "Bowling down in blind incredulity, as is my custom, before mere authority and the tradition of the elders, superstitiously swallowing a story I could not test at the time by experiment of private judgment, I am firmly of the opinion that I was born on the 28th May, 1874, on Campden Hill, Kensington." In celebration of that fortunate day this year, we offer our readers an appraisal of his most substantial poetic work "The Ballad of the White Horse."

It is often thought that to call G. K. Chesterton a poet is to mistake for the high and authentic light of inspiration mere rhetorical shades masquerading as poetic significances. But the fact is that in G. K. C. there is a genuine poet buried under the clever journalist. His mass of militant controversies has obscured the silver bow of poetic power which he brought in his multifariously armoured, the too frequent thunder of his excursions on a ponderous-bodied though nimble-footed charger of prose style has led us to forget that on occasions he rides out on a more Pegasus-like hoof-stroke. In short, we fail to recognise that he has fought his way, though with many falls, into the kingdom of poetry with his Ballad of the White Horse.

As a vehicle for narration, the ballad-form can be stirring and ringingly, or else sweet, in a popular way; but to sustain it in a story which keeps a tense edge of magical or splendid suggestion is a proof of real genius. Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" is the utmost we have, a picture of pathos worth the poetic surprise. Even the admirable seven-eighths is not as uniformly transfigured as Coleridge's work, yet there is sufficient to show what a fine poet Chesterton might have been if the inspired part of him had found mere play in his work and learnt to sustain itself. That prominence is a sure claim to immortality than being the most indefatigable coiner of pun and paradox in one's generation.

Though Chesterton's paradoxes make his ideas "kick", they are, in general, not really impressive: we get tired of the game and suspicious whether it is not a device to paint intellectual platitude with a beggarly, or the other hand, his ideas begin to glow with an inner originality because some eye of his imagination has opened, some permanent chord in us is touched and we perceive whatever truth there is, partial though it be, in what he thinks, at least the heart of vision in the man is conveyed to us and that heart is always a fine melody. His use of its echo or its indifference to our own. Chesterton's humour, autocratic and energetic, which accompanies his paradoxes or rather prepares their witty point, has a more genuine freshness than they, but he possesses also a rarer exuberance—an imagination fantasy as audacious and energetic, with an additional tinge of revealing splendour. The sterling virtues come in a pure and recurrent boldness of deep-sighted speech in the White Horse, deep-sighted by either a vivid adequacy or a significant exaggeration.

The former is to be found on almost any page. He says of Mark the man from Italy, one of Alfred's allies against the Danes, that he came from

The glittering tresses,
Where pale white details show,
watching the exact effect of the Italian atmosphere.

The smoke of evening food and ease
Rose like a blue tree in the tree.

as a suggestion of Weazex farms glimpsed at a distance. The note of exaggeration has in poetry a triple face: an object is seen to be a magnified version of something minute, something commonplace and unpretentious, as Homer describes the elders on the walls of Troy as sitting and chanting like grasshoppers, in order to convey to us the fact of their thin screening voices and their lean legs; or an object is compared to something physically big and imposing with a view to express an inner magnanimity, importance of status, unusual heat of self-transcendence, as in any of the old epic similes—a hero like a falling poplar, like a fit of wind in a waste land, like a forest on fire; or else an object is conceived under an aspect ordinarily quite incongruous with it and so a pregnant strain is created which may be defined as the miraculous interpretation of one sense in terms proper to another. Perhaps Chesterton's imaginings of the snow-covered mountain Kailasa to be the laughter of the god Shiva. Often the three forms of exaggeration grade off into one another and it is difficult to distinguish them: most of Chesterton's splendid effects are such, but he has individual examples of each kind, too. Thus, the reggness of the army led by Colin the man with the Celtic strain in him, another ally of Alfred's, is pictured by a synecdoche:

Grey as cobwebs hung
The banners of the Uth.

The words about Wessex enjoying an isolated condition of order and safety while confusion and war were all round in the country are a similar stroke of inspired homeliness—verging somewhat on the third degree of exaggeration as well:

And Wessex lay in a patch of peace
Like a dog in a patch of sun.

A grandiose simile suits Chesterton's genius very well, for he loves to sketch with a sweeping brightness and in huge proportions; his soul lives in a state of elemental wonder in which loud colours and gigantic images are almost a part of everyday experience. But he does not lack in tender touches: the loud and the gigantic are really framed in those wide open windows, the eyes of his childlike heart. And the stanza about Eldred, "the Franklin by the sea", the third companion found by Alfred for his forever hope, reflect this twofold psychology of Chesterton, making a skilful play of contrasting magnificence and simplicity:

As the tall white devil of the Plague
Moves out of Asian skies,
With his foot on a sea of cities
And his head in a cloud of flies
Or purple and peacock skies grow dim
With a moving locust-tower;
Or tasty sand-wrinds tall and dry,
Like hell's red banners beat and fly.
When death comes out of Araby,
Was Eldred in his hour.
But while he moved like a messenger
He murmured as in sleep,
And his words were all of love:
Hesns and little fields and sheep.
Even as he strode like a pestilence,
That strides from Rhine to Rome,
He thought of his home in his beans might be
If ever he went home.

Exaggeration in the third variety, the gripping an image incongruous with an occasion and the plucking from it a sudden aptness, is beautifully illustrated by lines about the voice of the Virgin Mary as heard by Alfred when, grief-striken with his repeated failure against the Danes, he sees at the beginning of the story a vision of her:

And a voice came human but high up,
Like a cottage climbed among the clouds.

Perhaps more truly felicitous a surprise are several examples Chesterton provides of a mixed exaggeration, the three types interblended. Here is one—the closing metaphor about the illuminated pages in a medieval copy of the Bible:

It was wrought in the monk's slow manner,
From silver and sanguine shell,
Where the scenes are little and terrible
Keyholes of heaven and hell.

But surely the most impressive lines Chesterton ever wrote are among those describing in this manner the general state of chaotic indecision after the fall of Rome, the portentious change known to history as the Dark Ages, a wild phantasmasoria of invasion from the savage parts of Europe and from the unknown East—both the Roman power and the Roman peace broken by the iron heel and the brazen cry of hordes from the earth's remotest corners. Chesterton's effects at once majestic and weird the suggestion those times carried as of a universal dissolution:

For the end of the world was long ago—
And all we dwell to-day.

As children of some second birth,
Like a strange people left on earth.

After a judgment day.

For the end of the world was long ago,
When the ends of the world wavered free,
When Rome was sunk in a sea of slaves, 
The sun drowned in the sea of tears.
When Caesar's sun fell out of the sky
And whose heart seared
Could only hear the plugging
Of the nations in the night.
When the ends of the earth came marching in
To torch and crestless gleam,
And the roads of the world that lead to Rome
Were filled with faces that moved like foams,
Like foams in a dream.

The stanza about "Caesar's sun" is almost worthy, I think, of Aeschylus, for the imaginative tension reached there in a style that just falls short of the true epic.

Here the falling short is in consequence more of the ballad-form than the poet's inspiration. It is necessary to point out this distinction both in justice to Chesterton's genius and for fear lest his admirers should rank him beyond his deserts. For, his idea and diction may be epic and yet his rhythm be found wanting. There is a certain strongly calm self-mastery in the true epic, which the joc-trot ballad-rhythm tends to dissociate.

As Matthew Arnold with his usual fine ear perceived, only a deep lyric impulse—that is, an impulse which introduces a poignant, wistful or delicate flow—can charm away the ballad-jeer, while the ample sweeping stress of the epic unites striving rather to coincide with than to smooth out that jerk broken up by it even when not narrowed down by a pause in sense at the end of each short line. This, apart from quality of genius, should deter us from committing the mistake of comparing with Homer's battle-pieces any episode in Chesterton's account of the battles of Ethelfrith fought between King Alfred and the Danes within sight of that mound of rock called the White Horse which gives the poem its name. But if the ballad is incapable of the large yet contained sweep of strength, the mighty and harmonious self-poetry, with which no epic style at its finest, it can still do play compass and power and imaginative passion. Its movement tends to be narrow because the lines are mostly end-stopped, but there is nothing in the measure itself to keep a poet from stretching out his sense beyond the line, so that the expression of unity would be eight or six syllables but a longer average, the variations on that average poetically answering change of mood, shift of scene, the necessity to clear-cut or grade off a picture or an idea. And this is precisely what Chapman often does. It may surprise some to hear that Chapman wrote ballad-poetry, but as he never distributes a word between the fourth foot and the fifth, the fourteener couplets as handled by him divide naturally into lines of eight syllables alternating regularly with those of six—the form Wordsworth took for his Lucy Gray; only, in the latter case the first lines do not rhyme with the third and so his frequent prolongation of the sense up to the fourteener syllable is not interrupted by any marked sound-clinch at the height. Hence it has compass enough: what Chapman lacks is the epic grand style of narration, because, even when he is without tortured and extravagant conceits, his power is rough rather than harmonious; his muscular vigour, suit driven, nervous rhythm, have not the serene lift by which Homer's elemental enthusiasm expressed itself, the godlike eagerness in which Virgil's dignified pensivefulness found voice, the soaring yet mountain-secure intimacy to which Dante shaped his compulsive vision. The whole is here, the small and the great, the gossamer and the solid, pursued in the pursuit. The style of their lines the first three are as good as absent. I submit, however, that, at three places in the above, Chesterton executes finely three fourteener progressions:

Chapman's general inferiority is due on the one hand to his not being a genius of the supreme kind and on the other to his ballad metre which constantly intrudes its jog-trot even when nobility and the grand style are throwing on him the bright shadow of their pinions.*

G.K.C.'s manner is akin to Chapman's with regard to audacity, an ex- ploiterower, either curious or clever, which can give a high and excellent level of poetry though not its ne plus ultra. In spite of his using many anapests the essential manner and movement are unmistakable: write out his couplets as single lines or his quatrains as couplets and you have often the Chapmanian fourteeners:

As Weazel lay in a patch of peace like a dog in a patch of sun,
Where the seracs are little and terrible key-holes of honks and hells.

As the tall white devil of the Plague moves out of Asian skies,
His foot in a waste of cities and his head in a cloud of flies.

When Caesar's sun fell out of the sky, and whose heart seared
Could only hear the plugging of the nations in the night.

Even when the stanza, are longer and the fourteeners are divided by intervening eight or less feet, there is as skilful a play of rise and fall, ripple and eddy, within the persistent plunge onward, as the keeping of the ballad-measure would allow, and bold imaginative streaks shine out amid fibres of a coarser stuff. The lines already quoted about the moving lichen-tower and the twining ferns are a striking example. Elsewhere too Chesterton makes effective music:

Whirling the one sword in his hand,
A great wheel in the sun.
He sent it into the stream of the sky,
Falling: flying before the shaft could fly—

It smote Earl Harold over the eye,
And blood began to run.

Colan stood weaponless, while Earl Harold with a ghastly smile of defiance stumbled dead.

Then Alfred, prince of England,
And all the Christian ears,
Unlocked: unlooked: and held them up
Each offered to Colan like a cup
Of chrysolepis and pearls.

And the king said, "Do you take my sword
Who have done this deed of fire,
For this is the manner of Christian men,
Whether of steel or priestly pen,
That they cast their hearts out of their ken
To get the heart's desire."

True poetry has a breadth and depth of voice, besides mere length. Through most of these lines the first two are as good as absent. I submit, however, that, at three places in the above, Chesterton executes finely three fourteener progressions:

The soldiers of the burning ships might satiate his eyes.

As in a stormy day
In thick-set woods a ravenous fire whips in his fierce repair
The wild beasts come by the road, and toss them into air;
Even so beneath Atrides' sword flew Troy's flying heels.
Their horse drew empty chariots, and sought their thundering wheels
Some fresh directors through the field, where least the pursuer
Thick fell the Trojans, much more sweet to vultures than
Their wise.

For the tone and rhythm of the true epic style, free from gesticulating loudness, to this:

Millions of Spirits for his fault a merced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendidurs sung
For this reprobate, till they who stood,
Their glory withered; as, when horses
Hath soaked the forest oaks or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath.

In writing this whole paragraph I am indebted to several illuminating suggestions made by Mr. Aubin.
Out of the mouth of the Mother of God, Like a little word come I.

If she has not spoken to him about the end of his enterprise, she has left him to "go gaily in the dark", but her face uns as like an open word Where brave men ask and onely choose; The very colours of her coat Were better than good news.

So he brings with him a convinced prophecy that what seems impossible shall be done—the Durer's tyrant shall be trod down, their hearten creem destroyed, and the English live to see, with the Virgin's help, A tale where a man looks down on the sky That has long looked down on him.

Here we have the cryptic at its most audacious, as also when Alfred during his incongote reconnoisance in the Swiss canton as a poor harper sings to them the Christian idea of man and the first fall and how, since it was due to the divine freedom with which God had gifted him and not to some in- The White Horse of the White Horse Vale Was hoary on the hill.

If the ballad-swing and jaunt had not interfered, the thought and the cast of phrase would have reached a unique perfection. As it is, too, it is worth while marking a place whereby the antiquity of the White Horse is increasingly hinted: the passing of the sunrise is mentioned before the actual dawn. Then, the word "hoary" is an absolutely feliciteous pun with its double meaning of "white" and "old"; Chesterton must have written it with a whole delight. But the sincerest stroke to enshrine the immemorial is the phrase: "the gods made the gods"—a cryptic turn in which was summarised the Norse feeling that there was vista on inscri- But the White Horse of the White Horse Vale Was hoary on the hill.

The thing on the blind side of the heart, The wrong side of the door, The green plant groweth, menacing Almighty lovers in the spring, There is always a forgotten thing, and love is not secure.

Every line here is fine cryptic poetry and high seriousness: and what a verbal gem is that "almighty", with its rare suggestion of the elated joy and flux and godlike power felt by young love. An equally fine passage in this interterpretive vision, with a couple of exceedingly magical moments—the end of the third and the fourth verses—is about Colan and the Celtic twilight ever in his thought:

He kept the Roman order, He made the Christian signs: But his eyes grew often blind and bright, And the sea that rose in the rocks at night Rose to his heart like wine.

He made the signs of the Cross of God. He knew the Roman prayer, But he had unreason in his heart Because of the gods that were.

Even they that walked on the high cliffs, High as the clouds were then, Gods of unbearable beauty That broke the hearts of men.

And whether in seat or saddle, Whether with frowns or smiles, Whether at feast or fight were he, He heard the noise of a nameless sea On an undiscovered Isle.

Christian idealism finds often a memorable expression in the course of Chesterton's foils, and as such it should, though, considering that almost the entire poem strains to be such an expression. Alfred goes gathering comrades after his vision of the Virgin, and to each of them he conveys its compulsive inspiration, for he is fired by a reality greater than his personal self:

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PEGASUS AND THE "WHITE HORSE" OF G.K.C.—Continued from page 9
LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS—Continued from page 12

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Q. 1: Art and poetry in recent years, especially amongst people influenced by communistic ideology, have concerned themselves almost exclusively with the real and actual life. Any preoccupation with things that have no direct, real and near contact with actual life is deemed as going on a subservient and shadowy illusions or remote and airy imaginations and fancies of no value to the individual or the race. How far is this insistence on realism incompatible with the true function and aim of art and poetry?

A. "The demand for activity and realism for a direct, exact and forceful presentation of life in poetry proceeds upon a false sense of what poetry gives or can give us. All the highest activities of the mind of man deal with things other than the crude appearance or the first rough appeal of existence. A critical or a scientific thought may attempt to give an account of the actual as it really is, though even to do that they have to go far behind its frontage and make a mental reconstruction and surprising change in its appearance. But the creative powers cannot stop there, but have to make new things for us as well as to make existing things new to the mind and eye. It is no real portion of the function of art to cut out palpable things from life and present them as it is and smoking or well-cooked for the aesthetic digestion. For in the first place all art has to give us beauty, and the crude actuality of life is not often beautiful, and in the second place poetry has to give us a deeper reality of things and the outside and surface faces of life are only a part of its reality and do not take us either very deep or very far. Moreover, the poet's greatest work is to open us to new realms of vision, new realms of being, our own and the world's, and he does this even when he is dealing with actual things."

Q. 2: But is it not a fact that some of the greatest poets like Homer and Shakespeare, real events and actualities successfully as the actualities of their time in the themes and characters of their work?

A. "Homer with all his epic vigour of outward presentation does not show us the heroes and deeds before Troy in their actuality as they really were to the normal vision of men, but much rather as they were or might have been to the vision of the gods. Shakespeare's greatness lies not in his reproduction of actual human events or men as they appear to us buttoned and cloaked in life,—others of his time could have done that as well, with less radiant force of genius, yet with more of the realistic crude colour or humdrum drab of daily truth,—but in his bringing out in his characters and themes of things essential, intimate, eternal, universal in man and Nature and Fate on which the outward features are borne as fringe and robe and which belong to all times, but are least obvious to the commonplace appearance when not seen, life presents to another face and becomes something deeper than its actual present mask. That is why the poet often instinctively prefers to go away from the obsession of a petty actuality, from the realism of the prose of life to his inner creative self or an imaginative background of the past or the lucent air of myth or dream or on to a greater outlook on the future."

Q. 3: Does this mean that art and poetry should turn away from the immediate actualities of life and deal mainly with things of universal and eternal interest?

A. "Poetry may indeed deal with the present living scene, at some peril, or even with the social or other questions and problems of the day,—a task which is now often laid on the creative mind, as if that were its proper work; but it does that successfully only when it makes as little as possible of what belongs to the moment and time and the subject brings out its roots of universal or eternal interest or their suggestion of great and deep things. What the poet borrows from the moment, is the most perishable part of his work and lives at all only by being subordinated and put into intimate relation with less transient realities. And this is so because it is the eternal increasing soul of man and the intimate self of things and their more abiding and significant forms which are the real object of his vision."

Q. 4: Is it likely that the poetry of the future in recovering its complete aim and purpose will outgrow its present preoccupation with the surface actualities of normal life and widen its scope by entering into the vaster realms of the greater life of the Spirit?

A. "The poetry of the future can least afford to chain itself to the outward actualities which were too often mistakable for the true of life, because it will be the voice of a human mind which is pressing more and more towards the very self of the self of things: the very spirit of which the soul of man is living power and to a vision of unity and totality which is bound to take note of all that lies behind our apparent material life. Verses are not gifts of God and himself and his race and Nature and the spiritual, mental, psychic and material worlds in which he moves, his backward look upon the past, his sweep of vision over the present, his eye of aspiration and prophecy cast towards the future, his instinct of seeking and self-exceeding, his reach beyond the three times to the eternal and immutable, this is his real life."

Q. 5: But poetry in the past has already sung of this greater life of the Spirit, of God and the gods and other worlds and the deeper truths of Nature and Man's life. Will the poetry of the future in returning to these subjects only repeat the old visions and the voices of the past or give us a new interpretation of them?

A. "Poetry in the past wrote much of the godshead and powers behind existence, but in the mask of legends and myths, sometimes of God, not often with a living experience, often in the set forms taught by religions and churches and without true beauty and knowledge. But now the mind of man is opening more widely to the deep est truth of the Divine, the Self, the Spirit, the eternal Presence not separate and distant, but near us, around us and in us, the Spirit in the world, the greater Self in man and his kind, the Spirit in all that is and lives, the Godhead, the Existence, the Power, the Beauty, the eternal Delight that broods over all, supports all and manifests itself in every turn of creation. A poetry which lives in this vision must give us quite a new presentation and interpretation of life; for of itself and at the first touch of seeing restructurates and reimagines the world for us and gives us a greater sense and a vaster, subtler and profounder form of our existence. The real faces of the gods are growing more apparent to the eye of the mind, though not yet again intimate with our life, and the forms of legend and symbol and myth must open to other and deeper meanings, as already they have begun to do, and come in changed and vital again into poetry to interpret the realities behind the veil. Nature wears already to our eye a greater and more transparent robe of her divine and her animal and her terrestrial and cosmic life and a deeper poetry of Nature than has yet been written is one of the certain potentialities of the future. The material realm too cannot for very much longer be strangled in the world of experience for the partitions which divide it from psychic and other kingdoms behind it are wearing thin and voices and presences are beginning to break through and reveal their impact on our world. This too must widen our conception of life and make a new world and atmosphere for poetry which may justifiy as perhaps never before the poet's refusal to regard as unreal what to the normal mind was only romance, illusion or dream. A larger field of being made more real to man's experience will be the realm of the future poetry."

Q. 6: But why has the modern mind considered these greater realms of the life of the Spirit as unreal dreams or illusions? Are they not as real as the world of our normal experience?

A. "These things are often given an appearance of remoteness, of withdrawal from the actuality of life, because to discover them the mind had at first to draw away from the insistent outward preoccupation and live as if in a separate world. The seeker of the Self and Spirit, the God-lover, tended to become the cloistered monk, the ascetic, the mystic, the eremite and to set the spiritual apart from and against the material life. The lover of Nature went away from the noise of man and daily things to commune with her largeness and peace. The gods were found more in the lights of solitude than in the thoughts and actions of the men. The scene was often shut out by the voices and faces of supernature. And this was a legitimate exclusion, for these are provinces and realms and presences and one has often to wander apart in them or live secluded with them to know their nearest intimacies. The spirit is real in

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