KOREAN QUESTIONS and THINGS TO COME

The Military Situation

It would be foolish to underestimate the gravity of the situation in Korea. The story is one of continual falling back by the American forces. But it is all too easy also to consider this withdrawal an irreparable defeat. What else than a withdrawal can we expect when the Americans are outnumbered by 5 to 1 in manpower and 4 to 1 in armour? Whatever advantages in air they possess are greatly diminished by the bad weather conditions which, July being the month when Korea receives most of her quota of 40 inches of rain. And the rainfall impedes not only air sorties and accurate bombing but also naval bombardment and the bringing up of troops and tanks from Japan to the frontline which is quite a distance from the coast. Up to August 15 weather conditions will continue to be more or less uncertain and the same period of time may be said to be necessary for America to muster superior armour and manpower. Till then, achievement is to be judged by understanding General MacArthur's strategy of withdrawal. He has to use every natural or artificial obstacle to slow down the enemy's advance and sell ground as dearly as possible. In the words of a military expert, the defending army's job "is not to defeat the enemy but to stick fast enough in successive positions to compel him to deploy for a full-scale attack. By the time that attack is mounted the main part of the rearguard should be five miles back occupying the next position. It is the hardest manoeuvre in war, for a battalion commander must keep his old positions firm for long enough to compel a full-scale attack and to provide the air force with good targets." The phrase is important, for the Red troops have to be made to pay for their passage not so much to the ground troops oppose them as to the fighters and medium bombers. This strategy has to be repeated until the last line of resistance is reached round about Pusan, the main port for American landings. Here an area comparable in size to the Normandy beach-head held by General Montgomery six years ago must be kept safe. When this area is reached, the first objective for the first week of August—the November army should be sufficiently bled and fatigued and enough American troops, tanks, anti-tank weapons and ammunition should be landed. In the meanwhile we have to look at the way MacArthur's strategy has been carried out and the way the Americans have given battle. As far as the weather has permitted, the fighting has been excellent on the whole and, under the circumstances, we may say that all signs point to a decisive turn of the tide in the near future. The falling back which so far has been inevitable is, in view of the various disparities, so little of a debacle that we should be the least inclined to defeatism.

Agrression and the U.N.'s Blunders

Defeatism, however, is not the only folly into which our minds may tend to fall at all the time. Some people are still talking as if any doubt remained on the issue of aggression. The very fact that the South has failed so miserably to stand up to the North's drive into southern territory and that this drive has been so effective with all limits of the army in full activity and co-ordination, and that the Americans have been found so unfortunately unprepared shows unmistakably the side on which aggression was planned and from which it was unleashed. Besides, there is the glaring fact that one-third of the southern army was on leave when the 38th Parallel was crossed at dawn on that fateful Sunday by the North. It is high time the infamy of northern aggression got faced by all of us as it is faced by our Prime Minister who, for all his usual suspicion of western powers and Mao nature not to offend the Russian blue, has no alternative but to condemn the Communists in Korea as violators of the U.N. Charter. He is here in accord with 48 members of the U.N. against only two opposing votes. It is high time also we brushed aside Groucho's contention that the U.N. resolution was illegal in the absence of a permanent member like Russia. When Article 28 clearly demands that in no circumstance should the U.N. "functioning either for or against a cause be hampered, it is impossible to see how voluntary absence can be taken as anything except as an evasion of duty. It is a non-action, and it leads to the absurdity that the U.N., which in the case of a minority vote, imposes itself on the majority, in the case of voluntary absence is itself a piece of illegality, because this Article definitely implies continual participation by all the members: the only non-participation accepted is by way of abstention from voting. Moreover, there is the stark inconsistency that Law and measures passed, like the present, will, if in Russia's voluntary absence were tacitly obeyed by her: no charge of illegality was made against them. Illegality cannot suddenly come into being just because the present resolution does not suit the Kremlin.

America's Defence of Formosa

Some voices in India keep piping: "What about General MacArthur rushing to help Korea even before the second resolution of the U.N. called upon the members to give military aid?" Common sense is surely at a low ebb in certain quarters. Both the U.N. Charter and international law permit military action as a defence measure—especially when, as in the case in question, such action is taken after a call by the U.N. to the aggressor to cease fire has been completely ignored. America's reversal of policy towards Formosa is also nothing to be criticised. Technically speaking, the status of Formosa is such as to leave room for a policy manoeuvre. Morally the island may be said to belong to China: legally it belongs to Japan until a peace treaty is signed with her. The right and the wrong, therefore, of the U.S.A.'s interference is not a matter of clear white or black; action here is to be justified or condemned according to the need of the situation. Every sound observer is aware that North Korea is only a pawn in the hands of Stalin and is part of a plan to carry Communism to the ends of the earth. Hence the situation at the moment does not permit Truman to let any Chinese military move by Communist in East Asia go unopposed. The moral of the Asian people would be greatly affected and America would suffer an undeserved slump in their esteem. Moreover, operations in Korea would be made more difficult by Communists in full occupation of a strategic island in the rear—particularly if by any chance Red China gets involved in the Korean war up. And the British in Hong Kong would certainly be rendered more uncomfortable. From every point of view the despatch of the Seventh Fleet to intercept the threatened invasion of Formosa by Mao is beyond blame. And here we have to remember that Truman has tried his best to be just and fair as between Mao and Chiang. He has asked the latter to stop all action against the Chinese mainland, The Nationalist blockade and bombing of Shanghai had as good as paralysed that important coastal city with the result that, as John Strohm remarks, production had been in a tailspin. To hold the balance between the two Chinese groups Truman has also turned down Chiang's offer of sending 35,000 seasoned troops to fight for South Korea. In a small but efficient air force to help the American army—an offer whose successful reception would have substantially strengthened the U.S.A.'s hard-pressed front-line. What Truman has done about Formosa is perfectly legitimate and honourable. Luckily it is most effective as well, for it has given a stable, nay to speak of and the Seventh Fleet will render Formosa's "liberation" impossible.

China in the U.N.O., Russia's Boycott and Nehru's Peace Move

In connection with the reversal of American policy about this island we may note that it makes little difference to the question of Nationalist China's future in the U.N.O. Formosa's admission to the United Nations will have no definite handle of logic to Chiang's enemies. Unfortunately, among these enemies India figures prominently and she is trying very hard to secure a majority vote against Chiang's representative both because she has recognised Mao and because she believes that with the admission of his delegate...
KOREAN QUESTIONS and THINGS TO COME

Continued from page 1.

Russia will walk back into the U.N.O. and the prolonged drifting apart of the two blocks will end. But with Communist North Korea on the march, in cynical disregard of the international consensus but a remarkable show of determination and a jolt to sympathy by Mao for the aggressor, is little chance of Mr. B. N. Rau succeeding.

Here it should be said that our delegation is working under a serious misapprehension of fundamentals. There has never been any legal or moral inconstancy in the Chinese Nationalist representative sitting and voting in the U.N.O. A grave charge is pending against Russia. That in various ways she has set at nought all international covenants and violated the territorial integrity of Nationalist China and that as a consequence Mao is now in power. Unless this charge brought by the Nationalist Chinese representative holds, our delegation should have oppugned Indian eyes to this threat. But a curious mythos persists. And there is added to the delusion about Red China the singular misconception that, if Mao's delegate is in the Security Council and Russia is back, peace in Korea will be easier than before. The obvious eye fact is that while whole process against Red Korea is illegal and that the U.N.O. should order the Americans to withdraw from South Korea instead of harping the North's armed campaign of forcible unification. Since what she asks for is pre-population the U.N.O. will never consent, there is at the moment hardly any possibility of peace through Russia's re-entry into the Security Council. Once we get into this heads we shall assess correctly the ultimate value of Pandit Nehru's peace move.

Stalin's prompt welcome of our Prime Minister's appeal has no genuine meaning. It is due to the very reason for which America has rejected the move. The whole basis of the move is the upsetting of Chiang's representative in the Security Council. The whole fate of Korea war is not now in the hands of the world because Mao's delegate had no seat. What sense can there be in mixing up the issue of peace with this utterly irrelevant point? To bring it in is simply the trap of opposing Mao's man: the bait of peace could prove so strong that the members might forget all other considerations, however righteous. No wonder Stalin has blessed the project. But there is not a sign that he authentically wishes to talk peace. His mention of the necessity to hear representatives of the Korean people is obviously double talk. Who are the Korean people now? Half of South Korea is under the North's heel. So, unless the invaders withdraw behind the 38th Parallel, Stalin's puppets will represent three-fourths of Korea. Toes the official Russian news agency, has already reported in a message from Peking that elections to provincial, district and village councils will soon be held in South Korean areas "liberated by the national army." Plebiscites under a reign of terror will show all these areas "enthusiastic" about Communism. The real South will be either dead or dead. And, as always when the withdrawal on paper is made, the knife is essentially hung, his reply is a hoax. The hoax is meant not only to waste the U.S.A.'s military effort but also to create everywhere the impression that Russia is eager for peace while America is bent on war. Naturally America has refused to be taken in; and the peace move has left us exactly where we were, with one additional danger—namely, that in the muddled minds of the common people who are anxious to snatch at peace Stalin's stock may shoot up.

The Issue of Unification

Russia will not seriously contemplate coming to terms in the Security Council unless North Korea is beaten in a short time, for then she will be convinced that international mandates cannot be flouted with impunity. Should the war drag on, she would be disposed to trot out the argument for unilateral truce of the old days of the Far East, recalling from Russian violations of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance of 14 August, 1945 and Soviet violations of the Charter of the United Nations.

Communists invade South Korea to compel 20,000,000 non-Communists to accept a Red Government all over the country, what we have is not a desire to win the war for the world, but rather to make the world a Communist empire which is violated. And if North Korea is justified, what is to prevent justification of Soviet Azerbaijan staging a putsch against Persia and of Bulgarian Macedonia executing a Bolshevik tug against Yugoslavia and Greece? To drive the Russian bull out of the barn is more serious. We should say the street analogy to Kim Jong- Hwang attacking Syngman Rhee in the name of unification is not Nehr attacking Hyderabad but Karim Razi attacking India. What sort of unification would it have been if the Razaks had successfully launched an armed offensive against the Nether? But even if the Razaks were disproved, Mao's maneuver and the threat of Moscow is a matter of life and death to India. The Sri Lanka is a small matter, but an island is a minority is acting the thorn in the majority's side. North Korea which is not a majority cannot even talk of attempting unification on its own terms. And the parallel with India's action against Hyderabad does not hold in the least. Nor are the circumstances similar. Hyderabad was tyrannical and the bulk of the people were clamouring for redress: it is a Hindu-majori- rity province whose population was eagerly seeking accession to India and was not only prevented from joining the Union but subjected to fanatical persecution by the Razaks clique who had broken constitutional relations with India and indulged in dangerous fire-eating.

The Shape of the Future

To return to our point: if the Korean war drags on and America is heavily committed Russia may engineer attempts at unification elsewhere too. Tito is the argument being used, but it may trump up some other ploy. In short, she may take the next step in the Communist plan for world-conquest. Indeed her calculations about Korea have ganged agley in her own mind since, for she could not see an easy victory and never dreamed that the U.N.O. would act so promptly and decisively. If Stalin would fail to go all out in support of the South. But if Truman cannot deal the North a swift crippling blow and somehow a large portion of American manpower is diverted to Korea and American resources strained by a protracted campaign, she may dare to turn the cold war into hot in other places. There are several danger spots at her disposal. Three we have already mentioned—Persia, Yugoslavia and Greece. There are three more— Germany, Austria and Tibet. To guess where the next configuration may occur in case the Korean hostilities are not swiftly terminated, we must bear in mind one factor. Russia is not exactly ready for world war: she is still not up to the mark in atomic weapons. So she will endeavour to keep herself out and make her satellites do the dirty work. If Soviet influence is not checked, Russia will be directly involved. If East Germany attempts a coup with her 90,000 fully equipped army camouflaged as Police's People, there could be a pretence of German threats it will amount to nothing, but since Soviet Occupation troops are still in East Germany as Americans in the western zone, the face of Stalin will be easily seen through the mask of the Bureaucratic and Russia will soon be in the soup. Austria, for several reasons, does not seem at present a likely point of departure. But Yugoslavia could very well be the theatre for the next act. Tito has long been Stalin's special bête noire because he spells internal danger to Russian Communism. He is an enemy within the gates, so to speak. His appeal to resisting sentiment of the satellite Communist states is most danger- ous: the recent purges in eastern Europe are a sign of just such feeling told against Stalin's security. It is because Yugoslavia blocks the way to Greece that the Communist rebels failed in that country and a new endeav- our to swallow it up is improbable. Albania is almost entirely ringed round by Yugoslav territory and depends on economic aid from Tito and therefore must sooner or later desert from Russia. Again, because of Tito, Stalin is baulked of passing beyond the south bank of the Danube to threaten Trieste and dominate the Adriatic. All this is falling in the extreme to the Kremlin. But the satellite states of Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania can easily be used to wreak vengeance on Tito. Reports of extensive prepara- tions for troop-movements by land along the borders of Yugoslavia are beginning in. Yugoslavia, of course, has nearly half a million men under arms and she is one of the five European countries—Britain, Turkey, Greece and Spain are the other four—which have a resolve will to fight and are free from the infection of downfall. Her armament is rather meagre and her air force negligible. Although Russia will not gather her like a daisy, she cannot stand for long against a joint attack by her neighbours backed by Stalin's resources. In addition, Stalin knows that Yugoslavia is not a significant to the Atlantic Pact and there may be some hesitation on the part of the European countries to go to her aid. He may even count on America thinking twice before committing herself with her hands already busy in Korea.

But he will be thoroughly in error. Truman will stand no nonsense. Still valid is the explicit assertion of the U.S.A. on January 5: "If it is the U.S.S.R. to oppose Tito by opposition to Yugoslavia which is clearly threatened, if we are to listen not only to the words of Soviet propaganda but also to the official statements of high Soviet authorities such as Molotov. America is fully sympathetic to the efforts of Yugoslavia to
MOTHER INDIA, JULY 23, 1950

Three

of MICE AND MEN

By "Cynic"

"When the voices of children are heard on the green, And whisperings are in the dale, The days of my youth are gone away, in my mind,"

Before I could finish, I was interrupted by a voice—"Monsieur, Monsieur!"
I got up at once, and saw a man approaching. He was dressed in clothes of eighteenth century France; behind him was another man, obviously his servant. He was carrying on his back a huge volume. "Monsieur!", the man said, "let me introduce myself." "There is no need to," I replied, "you are Monsieur de Voltaire, and that is your famous Philosophical Diction- tionary. He laughed and said, "You are very sharp, Monsieur." "One has to be—in this cut-throat world," I replied. He came closer to me and said, "I require your help. I have finished my Dictionary, but only one word remains to be defined—Mahatma. You who have knowledge of Indian spiritual philosophy should be able to furnish me with a suitable definition." "Of course," I replied, "anything to oblige a cynic. The word Mahatma literally means a great soul—it is formed by combining the two words Maha and Atman. In the old days this word was used for a person who after attaining union with the Divine Reality refused to pass out of the world into its Transcendence, who declined to merge his individual divine essence into the Absolute, and instead chose to remain in the world to help his fellow-beings to attain to the divine consummation. Inwardly poised in a spiritual consciousness, he outwardly did the works of the eternal verities, Love, Truth and Righteousness. Of course, the important and basic thing about a Mahatma is his realisation of the Divine Reality, without which he remains just an unregenerate atheist, however good-hearted and noble he may be. But this definition is useless for you; I mean it has only a historical value, for, at present, a Mahatma is supposed to be one who makes long speeches on moral force, and comes out without invitation as a peace-maker when the descendants of Arjun are fighting the descendants of Duryodhan."

"What do you mean?" asked Voltaire.

"I was referring to the progressive and evolutionary forces fighting against the anarchic forces of God-denial which are at present trying to dominate the world."

"Ah! I can see that all Indians are not muddle-headed,"—chuckled Voltaire. "Thanks for the compliment," I replied, "but one does not have to be a sage to understand things which should be obvious even to a second-rate intelligence." Voltaire was about to reply when the dream faded away.

When I got up it was three in the morning. I switched on my table-lamp, jotted down all that had transpired in the dream for Dr. Freud's inspection, and went to sleep again.

KOREAN QUESTIONS and THINGS TO COME—Continued from opposite page

"maintain her independence and freedom. America's determination to oppose aggression would apply even to guerrilla tactics or infiltration if assisted from outside."

These brave and humanitarian words come like a clarion, lifting our hearts above dejection and altering our minds to the greatest menace to human liberty the world has seen. The U.S.A. is ready to undertake the heaviest responsibilities for the sake of civilisation. Nowhere will the challenge of totalitarianism go unanswered. Not only on two fronts but on half a dozen she will fight. And she has the capacity to make the fight virile. If Stalin's plan is for doomsday, America will be ready to follow him back from help, helping Yugoslavia because Korea is engaging his attention of that America will not come out on top everywhere, he will commit the most serious mistake of his life. The stakes may be all the more perilous for himself because it is questionable whether America will not consider him to be directly involved if satellites so closely geared to Russian purposes put a match to the powder keg.

A diversionary adventure in Tibet by the Chinese Communists is also in the cards as the next move at Russia's inspiration. Tibet, bordering China, is the Achille's heel to this northern neighbour of India's. The Tibetans may consider the country to be Mao's henchman. But as long as the rest of Tibet holds out the day will be saved and there will be no danger to India either. The point is: Can the Tibetans resist the Chinese Reds? Ideologically they appear to be strong enough to reject the spurious promises of Marxism. Dr. Goldhane who was recently among them assures us in this matter. But ideological resistance is not everything: the Chinese Reds are not flinchy about democratic principles. They care a hoot whether the Tibetan mind wants Communism or no. The only check on their unscrupulous ambition is India's attitude, with the weight of Britain no less than the U.S.A. behind it. India is willing to concede Chinese suzerainty over Tibet but she insists that Tibet should be perfectly autonomous—that is, autonomous in fact and not merely in name. This attitude runs counter to the Korean story. Communism's original assumption that the U.N. would prove impotent and America would not risk a head-on clash with the invaders has proved wrong. The turn taken by events has sensibly perturbed the military pundits of both Moscow and Peking. The whole plan of swift triumphant thrusts at various key-points all over the old world has received a jolt from which it may never recover. But a patch-up is proposed on the new assumption that America will be occupied with Korea in a long bloody war. If even this assumption can be shattered and the C.I.'s roll back by the meaning I mean it the Parley within a short time by a massive attack both on land and in the air and in the air and on land will make a second surprise impossible, then a straight look will have gone home that will make Communism suddenly take a step back and shake in its shoes wherever it catches sight of the star-spangled banner!

Have we grounds for hope that such a virtual K.O. can be connected with the aggressive jaw thrust across South Korea? Most certainly. Those who take at its face-value the bad news pouring in at present from day to day hardly realize the gigantic "crack"-Truman will soon have at the drunken war-lord mentality of Stalin's Korean stooge.
THE DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT AND ITS EXPRESSION

BY THE HONBLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE, M. CHAGA

This is the brilliant spirit that has inaugurated the Spring Lectures' Series at Poona for the present year. Although it has delivered some months ago it has not been reported everywhere in full. Its complete text is given below for our readers' consideration of views that have lost no part of their relevance at the moment.

It gives me very great pleasure to inaugurate the Spring Lectures' Series for the year 1950. Poona is the home of dialectics. It has produced a demagogue, a demagogue of whatever kind or nature and it possesses an academic atmosphere in which scholarship can thrive. It is the greatest city that such a place should hold a lecture series to, which, in the unique manner, the most distinguished men and daughters of India. This series was started by Mr. Ranade, one of the greatest judges our High Court ever had. He was not only a great politician but he was a great thinker. He was free from the foreign yoke and it lies entirely with us to mould and shape the great future of India whatever lies nearest to our heart's desire. Our country is not only sovereign, it is not only a republic, but most important of all it is a democracy. Democracy is not a form of Government or merely the trapping and an outward form of personality and there must be a constant readiness to permit everyone to experiment with his own life and to work his own way to salvation. The other equally important aspect Upon the Legislative is the democratic spirit, and it is only to the extent that our rulers understand that spirit and believe that spirit that democracy would succeed in our land.

Law-making and Law-abiding

What the democratic spirit connotes in the first instance it is a mental attitude of the state and there must be a constant readiness to permit everyone to experiment with his own life and to work his own way to salvation. The other equally important aspect upon the Legislative is the democratic spirit, and it is only to the extent that our rulers understand that spirit and believe that spirit that democracy would succeed in our land.

The democratic spirit connotes in the first instance it is a mental attitude of the state and there must be a constant readiness to permit everyone to experiment with his own life and to work his own way to salvation. The other equally important aspect upon the Legislative is the democratic spirit, and it is only to the extent that our rulers understand that spirit and believe that spirit that democracy would succeed in our land.
The Democratic Spirit and Its Expression

Continued from opposite page.

the men who drafted the American Constitution. It is thewidest interpretation to the famous clause in the fifth amendment that no person shall "be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law. This interpretation has given the courts of the land the power to test the validity of every law passed and to declare it to be invalid if it violates these guarantees. The question is not whether we should not come together as a general body of citizens to see that the laws of our state are reasonable and of the legislature is authority that must always be prepared to be challenged. The tendency of the final objective of law is to make society perfect and to bring about social happiness. Men must be prepared to sacrifice their individual liberty for these glorious ends. But for nothing short of this, for this, no one else consideration can liberty be called upon to make a sacrifice. I am not suggesting a policy of laissez faire on the part of the State. That doctrine has always been and must be consigned to the limbo of worn-out ideas. Our State must not merely be a Police State; it must be a Welfare State. It must actively work for the welfare and betterment of the citizen because the permanent welfare of the citizen can never be achieved by denying to him of the path that leadeth to follow in the pursuit of happiness. The quality that there is in individual choice and personal experience is completely absent in a decision that is impersonal, made by a machine. The welfare of society as a whole that the State must act must not be brought about by a machine individual. Liberty must only be controlled to the extent that its exercise becomes anti-social or undemocratic. The State scope for the Critical Spirit

The right to express opinion, however critical it may be of government or of society as constituted, is one of the most fundamental rights of the individual in a democracy. Government may take the shape of the spoken or the written word and it may not expressed individuals or associations. Democracy can only truly function when there is full scope for the critical spirit, because a Democratic Government never sets unless it has understood and appreciated the different aspects of a question or a problem. A facile concurrence with the policy of the rulers is not necessarily a sign of patriotism or loyalty. It more often betrays a lack of independence of thought and expression and thus the drying up of the very springs which should perpetually supply vigour to the life of democracy and keep it healthy and strong. The question as to how far independence of opinion, which is based, is by no means easy to decide. If security of the State is of paramount consideration, which is subservient or likely to undermine the safety of the state may not be permitted to be given undue emphasis. But law-makers should be careful to ensure that expression of opinion is not necessarily its disappearance. Such opinion has a tendency to be held more fanatically and in larger numbers. To Rome, Christian opinion was highly dangerous to the might and majesty of the Empire. Its attempted suppression only resulted in Christianity becoming a world religion. It may be said that Christianity became Christianity represented the truth. But who shall say among the opinions current today that the genuine and authentic hallmark and which is merely spurious and a snare for the unwary. It is only the verdict of history that finally settles the issue and it would be audacious if not presumptuous to anticipate that verdict.

There are two real safeguards that liberty of opinion, in the fact that the validity of an executive act can be challenged in a Court of law. The president lays a bill in the eternal vigilance that the public must show in preventing executive legis- lative encroachment upon liberty. It is a mistake to think that if the liberty of an individual or of a section of the people is sacrificed the majority in unaffected. Every time there is a total sacrifice of freedom its very foundation is weakened and more and more such trespasses are tolerated the weaker becomes the whole edifice till one day it collapses giving place to dic- tators or fascists and democracy lies in ruins.

"EDITOR'S NOTE: It may be remark- ed that if democracy with its insinuates on the liberty and importance of the in- dividual is eminently desirable, then the opinion which denies this liberty and im- portance was the totalitarian collective State functioning because the individual is considered likely to bear "the genuine and authentic hallmark." For, such an opinion would oppose the Government never for the sake of the individual's liberty and importance but only for the overthrow of the very essence of the democratic ideal. In that case, we do not have to wait for the vindication of history: even now we should know that this kind of State would be anti-progressivist.

The Crimean Edge

A hand lies on the crinoline of mind. Like a dark blue and overspread with clouds, which streams the cloud of the blind Man of mass—humanity—who live to die. No yearned—for circumstance or purpose gleams on the surface. In the depth of the mind, no beauty finds response—they dream no dreams For which the higher mortal ever strives; And yet have claim to human heritage: A jewel and a crown. The passport which allows, from age to age, Each soul to journey to its fairest need. Upon the crimean edge a moment-light Flickers and flames, and there is no sight.

NORMAN C. DOWSEPP
There is nothing in the art and literature of the world so moving, so inspiring and so exalting as the expression of man’s love for the Divine. The soul’s beauty and its crimes are imprinted in the poetry of the mystics, and no human relation has ever reached the depth, the amplitude, the consuming intensity of passion which characterises the relation between the human soul and its eternal Beloved. Life becomes a Paradise, and even its crosses are transmuted into crowns by the magic of this love. Poverty, starvation, suffering, slander, persecution, all tend but to feed the soul’s sacred fire of love which burns brighter and brighter as it leaps up towards its sempiternal source. The incredible happiness, the unfailing and clear-sighted faith and trust that it exhibits in the midst of defeat and desolation should be evidence enough even to a sceptic and a materialist of the reality of its passion and the truth of its spiritual vision. Even a half-awakening of this love elicits the divine qualities of tenderness, compassion, forgiveness and forbearance, patience and endurance, equality and selflessness which nothing else in life can inspire and induce to an equal extent. No materialist creed can ever hope to make out of common clay a St. Paul or a St. Francis, a Tulsiadas or a Sui. The power that produces this miracle is no illusion or fiction; rather it is a pitiable self-delusion in the modern man, enclosed in the dim cell of his reason, to deny the eternal Foame above and swear by the temporal waters on which he so helplessly floats.

Psychic Love

The most sincere and poignant expression of love for the Divine is essentially psychic. It is the soul in man that alone can pierce through the veil of appearances and deliver itself to the Divine with the unreserved self-surrender of an absolute love. Neither words nor the surface aspect of fugitive emotions can have that passionate seeking and aspiration, that self-effacing surrender which we find in a Mirabai or a St. Catherine of Genoa. The hungering physical, the craving vital, the straining and clinging emotional and the gripping mental being of man are constitutionally incapable of concentrating on the Divine and making Him the sole object of their pursuit, unless the soul has awakened and infused its fire-passion into them. The soul is made of love and joy, and it is not by any effort or outer influence, but by an inner, spontaneous urge that it turns to the Divine and offers itself to Him. It is the central being in man, embodying the central truth and purpose of his existence—the union with and the manifestation of the Divine in Matter. But this truth and purpose are realised by love and by nothing else—love which is, in Dante’s words:

The ineradicable thirst that draws
Towards the realms of God’s own form . . .

(Paradiso, Canto 1)

In some of the Prayers and Meditations of the Mother this psychic love finds an exquisitely sweet and melting expression:

“Like a flame that burns in silence, like a perfume that rises straight upward without wavering, my love goes to Thee; and like the child who does not reason and has no care, I trust myself to Thee that Thy Will may be done, that Thy Light may manifest, Thy Peace radiate, Thy Love cover and enfold and offer itself to Thee. When Thou wilt I shall be in Thee, Thyself, and there shall be no more any distinction; I await that blessed hour without impatient of any kind, letting myself flow irresistibly towards it as a peaceful, untroubled stream flows toward the boundless ocean.”

(Prayers & Meditations—P. 8)

“O my divine Master, my love aspires after Thee more intensely than ever; let me be Thy Living Love in the world and nothing but that! May all egotism, all limitations, all obscurity disappear; may my consciousness be identified with Thy consciousness, so that Thou alone mayst be the will setting through this fragile and transient instrument.

“O my sweet Master, with what an ardour my love aspires for Thee!

“Grant that I may be only Thy divine Love, and that in everything this Love may awake powerful and victorious.

“Let me be like an immense mantle of love enveloping the whole earth, penetrating all hearts, murmuring to every Thy divine message of hope and peace . . .”

(Ibid. P. 106)

Though we have cited these two Prayers as an illustration of the psychic love, we can already discern in them something transcending it, some wider, mightier, sovereign Love occupying the Mother’s consciousness, shaping, stimulating and transmuting her psychic love into its own image and pouring out upon the world to redeem and illumine it. Let us quote another Prayer in which are, as it were, distilled into the love-lyrics of the mystics, and no human relation has ever reached the depth, the amplitude, the consuming intensity of passion which characterises the relation between the human soul and its eternal Beloved. Life becomes a Paradise, and even its crosses are transmuted into crowns by the magic of this love. Poverty, starvation, suffering, slander, persecution, all tend but to feed the soul’s sacred fire of love which burns brighter and brighter as it leaps up towards its sempiternal source. The incredible happiness, the unfailing and clear-sighted faith and trust that it exhibits in the midst of defeat and desolation should be evidence enough even to a sceptic and a materialist of the reality of its passion and the truth of its spiritual vision. Even a half-awakening of this love elicits the divine qualities of tenderness, compassion, forgiveness and forbearance, patience and endurance, equality and selflessness which nothing else in life can inspire and induce to an equal extent. No materialist creed can ever hope to make out of common clay a St. Paul or a St. Francis, a Tulsiadas or a Sui. The power that produces this miracle is no illusion or fiction; rather it is a pitiable self-delusion in the modern man, enclosed in the dim cell of his reason, to deny the eternal Foame above and swear by the temporal waters on which he so helplessly floats.

“O Lord, Thou of whom I would be constantly conscious and whom I would realise in the smallest cells of my being, Thou whom I would know as myself and see manifested in all things, Thou who art the sole reality, the sole reason and the sole aim of existence, grant that my love for Thee may go on increasing day by day so that I may become all love, Thy every love, Thy divine and sovereign Love, Thy Thine, Thou Thyself, Thy Love, may I unite integrally with Thee. May this love become more and more intense, complete, luminous, powerful; may this love be an irresistible clau towards Thee, an irresistible means to possess Thee. May all in this being become pure love profound, disinterested, divine from the unfathomable depths to the outermost substance. May the God in form who is manifesting in this aggregate be wholly moulded of Thy complete and sublime Love, that Love which is at once the source and the realization of all knowledge; may the thought be clarified, classified, enlightened, transformed by Thy Love; may all the forces of my life, solely penetrated and moulded by Thy Love, become irresistible purity and constant energy, power and rectitude, . . . and may this body, becoming a burning brazier, radiate Thy divine, impersonal, sublime and calm Love through all its pores . . . May the brain be reconstituted by Thy Love. Finally, may Thy Love overflow, inundate, penetrate, transform, regenerate, animate everything with the power, splendour, sweetness and force which are its very nature. In Thy peace, in Thy Love is joy, in Thy Love is the sovereign lever of work for Thy servitor.

“Thy Love is vaster than the universe and more enduring than the ages; it is infinite and eternal, it is Thyself. And is it Thyself that I would be and that I am, since such is Thy Law and such Thy Will.”

(Ibid. Pp. 119/120)

This important Prayer foreshadows some detail the working of the divine Love in the Mother’s being for enlightening and transforming her thought, reconstituting her brain, moulding her life-forces and making her body radiate “Thy divine, impersonal, sublime and calm Love through all its pores.” The working continues, the transition is effected and the Sun of the divine Love blazes forth at last against a throbbing, incandescent background of a pure psychic consciousness. This rapturous union of the two loves, the psychic and the divine, is beautifully brought out in the Prayer of 31st May, 1914 (P. 127).

“If it is a sweetness to be Thy divine Love at work in the world, it is an even greater sweetness to be the aspiration which raises towards Thee, and not to be able to change thus, to be successively almost simultaneously, that which receives and that which gives, that which transfigures and that which is transfigured, to be identified with the sorrowful darkness as with the all-powerful splendour, and, as its very nature, to discover the secret of Thy sovereign oneness, is it not a way of expressing, of fulfilling Thy supreme Will?”

Divine Love

What is Divine Love? What is it in essence and in manifestation? Can a human being incarnate it in its purity and radiate it on the world? Does it consist only of delight and sweetness, or is it also a Force? What is its proper function in the material world?

Describing Divine Love, the Mother says, “Love is a supreme force which the Eternal Consciousness sent down from itself into an obscure and darkened world that it might bring back that world and its beings to the Divine. 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 doing so there banishes darkness, puts away the earthly Love, and the Creation the Divine Love and Grace. Love cannot exist in its pure beauty, love cannot put on its native power and intense joy of fullness until there is this interchanging, this fusion of Love from the Divine to the creation and from the creation to the Divine. This world was a world of ‘I love it, I love it, till Divine Love descended into it and awakened it to life. Ever since it has gone in search 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.
THE maximum it has reached is what seems to human beings love in its highest form, its purest and most disinterested kind, like the love of the mother for the child. This human movement of love is secretly seeking for something else than what it has yet found; but it does not know where to find it, it does not even know what it is. The moment man’s consciousness awakens to the divine Love, pure, independent of all manifestation in human forms, he knows for what his heart has all the time been truly longing. That is the beginning of the soul’s aspiration, that brings the awakening of the consciousness and its yearning for union with the Divine. All the forces that are at the ignorance, all the deformations it has imposed must from that moment fade and disappear and give place to one single movement of the creation answering to the Divine Love by its love for the Divine. Once the creation is conscious, awakened, open 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 becomes constant and complete.

(Words of the Mother—P. 111-112)

This long paragraph—is it not rather short, considering the great delving of love consciousness, co-ordination, harmonising the diametrically opposite questions we have put to ourselves. Love is not only joy and sweetness, but a supreme, probably the supreme, Force of the eternal Consciousness. Its function is to release the submerged Spirit in Matter and carry it to union for extinction or immolation, but for a revelation of divine splendours in creation. We shall understand this better if we go a little deeper to glimpse the origin and essence of love. The very primitive principle of creation is delight, Ananda, from which everything in creation is derived. Ananda is the first, the purest, the chief, in which the Spirit of love itself for individual manifestation. It is at once the womb of the universe and its eternal sap and sustenance. Out of this essential delight of the eternal Existence, Love emerges, the first-born of the delight. It is the delight itself, but with a significant qualification: it is a seeking and uniting delight. It seeks, discovers and unites God’s multiple self-representations; it is the one principle that makes for the infinite interrelations of the universe. A beauteous blossom of essential identity, it is the one all-pervading current, the supreme element of the universe. But for Love the world would have gone to pieces, its relatives clashing and colliding and its magnificent planetary systems, harmonies of harmony and rhythm, disintegrating in a dance macabre. Speaking on this cohesive aspect of Love, the Mother says:

“Love is nothing else than the tie which unites and holds together all the flowers of Thy divine bouquet. It is a role unobtrusive, modest, not recognised; a role essentially selfish, which, only in this impermanency, can find all its utility.

“It is because I become more and more this tie, this link, assembling the scattered fragments of Thy consciousness and enabling those fragments, by grouping them, to reconstitute better and better Thy consciousness, at once single and multiple, that it has been possible for me to see clearly what love is in the play of the universal forces, what is its place and its mission. It is not an end in itself, but a supreme means. Active everywhere and between everywhere, everyvthing is veiled by that very thing which it unites, and which, while undergoing its effects, sometimes does not even know of its presence.”

(Prayers & Meditations—P. 270)

If we can step aside in consciousness, be it even for a moment, from the stupendous whirl of the cosmic forces, we shall be able all the better to study the role Love plays in the world of multiplicity. A conscious, eternal, universal Force, it moves amongst the divisions, differences and disparities of limited consciousness, no desire, no hunger for possession, no self-regarding attachment; it is, in its pure movement, the seeking for union of the self with the Divine, a seeking absolute and regardless of all other things. Love divine gives itself and asks for nothing.

(Words of the Mother 4th Edt. P. 105).

Divine Love can be incarnated in a human being if psychic love has changed its place and nature, and met all the selfish distortions and the individual has opened wide—receptively wide—to its mighty influx. Often it is seen partially and temporarily occupying the being of an individual and working through it; it retires as soon as egoism or the unredeemed obfuscations of the nature re-assert themselves. Except in a few extremely rare cases, it has not been possible to house this “guest of the marvellous hour” permanently in a human body. Even a most developed psychic love leading the heart and mind may not be able to incarnate the divine Love so long as the body and the general physical consciousness have not been radically converted by the conquest and illumination of the sub-conscious that exerts such a fundamental sway over them. It is only a completely psychically changed man who may take which divine Love can take its stand and base its operations in the material world.

Human Love

A derivative of divine Love, human love is dwarfed and distorted in the ignorance of man’s nature. It is infected with desire, clouded by mental ideas and darkened and weighted down by the dross of the physical being. It has become an inconstant, hectic hunger, clamouring for possession and exclusive enjoyment; giving, but only to receive; insisting on its demands and receding if there is no requisition. It has degenerated into a barter, an unabashed shop-keeping and bears little trace of its universal origin. Even psychic Love, although it has a short shriveled form, is kept in its present form by the contrary elements of nature and nipped by the frosts of life. But whenever it survives these assaults and grows into its full stature, it betrays something of its divine birth and shines like a star over the grey dust of earthly existence. However brief it may be, it is one of the most beautiful movements of life. But “if the movement does not last, it is because it is not conscious of its own aim and seeking; it has not the knowledge that it is not the union of one being with another that it is seeking after, but the union of all beings with the Divine.”

The Mother thus indicates the issue out of the cramping intensity of human love, the point of release. Love has not to be killed: a loveless life is a dreariest of lives, and all love is death. Love has to cure itself of desire and soar above attachment; it should be a bond of union between the individual and the Divine, and through the Divine between the individual and all beings. It has to transcend all personal limits and widen itself into infinity and impersonality. What it has really been seeking after is not any particular finite form of a furtive duration, a sparkling bubble on the moving ocean of Time, but the Timeless in time, the Archetype of all forms, the eternal and transcendent one who beams and beckons in and through all forms. He is everywhere, embodied in all things and all beings, and to be united with Him in them all, not abolishing the awareness of but embracing and enjoying Him in all phenomenal distinctions, is the immost urge of love. The discontent and the persistent sense of insecurity, disorder and disintention only point to the intrinsic infinity of its seeking, which no finite, perishable form can ever fulfil. It is only the Infinite that can fulfil it and it is the Infinite, the infinite Being or Purusha whom love has been seeking in the ignorance of the terrestrial nature. The awakening of man’s consciousness to this truth of love is the end of the night of his ignorant quest and the dawn of a new life of growing light, happiness and harmony.

Love the Victor

The sole business of human life is to strive to rise superior to the witchery of the sense and the importunities of desires and evolve the psychic love to such an extent that it pervades and possesses the whole being and makes it a single consecration and appeal to the Love of the Divine. This appeal is echoed in the Mother’s Prayer of 27th August, 1914:

“To be the divine Love, love powerful, infinite, unfathomable, in every form, in all the worlds of beings—indeed, this cross is to Thine, Lord. Let me be consumed with this Love divine, love powerful, infinite, unfathomable, in every activity, in all the worlds of being! Transmute me into that burning brazier, so that all the atmosphere of the earth may be purified with its flame.

“O, to be Thy Love infinitely!”

When the entire being has become one psychic flame, pure and intense, the divine Love descends and unites with it and carries on with a victorious might its work of the transfiguration of the earth-consciousness. It is a long and extremely difficult work involving a dive into the sub-terranean bases of life and a deadly fight with the ages-old forces of ignorance and inconsciouness. But the Force that has released the Spirit from the cavern of “supreme obscurity” can and will transform that cavern in an illuminated temple and instal the Spirit there as the undisputed sovereign of the material world. Love the initiator of evolution will consummate its mission of divine manifestation in Matter as Love the Victor.
A man like AE does not happen frequently anywhere; much more is he a rarity in the modern west. On the 17th of this month falls the fiftieth anniversary of his death. Most appropriate to the occasion is the intimate and vivid sketch below of his life and work as given by one of his best friends and admirers. The author is AE's own son and the essay was written in 1915 in an essay in The New Statesman.

By DIARMUID RUSSELL

In his home life AE was not what one would call a domestic man. Because of his many activities, we tactfully understood that he was not to be bothered with domestic details. One of the family stories about my early days relates how I once answered the door. When a visitor inquired for "Mr. Russell", I answered "Yes", turned the key in the lock, and then looked over my shoulder to say "Oh! You mean George. He's not my father. He just lives here.

This might suggest that I suffered from lack of attention, but in fact I had a happier life than most children. My father and I were each glad to be in separate ways, and our relations were confined to dispensing my allowance and to cleaning my palettes for a small sum and fetching his Sunday papers. So for most of my childhood he was little more than a bearable figure, kindly but rather remote. Children, I think, take parents for granted; and though I had vaguely gathered that my father was a little out of the usual run of parents, I had put this fact down to his beard. At that time not many men had beards, and though there might have been other things to distinguish him from other men, a beard was a noticeable fact and a difference that a child could understand.

Later on in life, for a period of three years, I acted as his assistant on the Irish Statesman, of which he was editor. The office of the Statesman was a pleasant place, a large room in the old Georgian houses which surround so many Dublin squares. The walls were covered with what looked like brown wrapping paper, and on these walls Father had painted scenes of trees and glades with human beings and fairies. It was, indeed, the way he saw life, the way he was himself, a mixture of realistic hard-headedness and mysticism that must have puzzled many people. Incidentally his pen name "AE" came about because of his illegible handwriting; a printer could not make out the pen name "Eon" attached to a letter, and printed as much as he could make out—the first two letters.

In this room was a desk so covered with piles of old letters and other documents that, in order to see AE, visitors had to circle around to the side. I myself was quietly obsessed by an ancient roll-top desk, and from this niche was able to listen to conversations and to become acquainted with the innumerable sides of Father's character as represented by the varied people who came to see him—pilgrims, clerical men, politicians, artists, writers, Hindu mystics, young poets with their first verses. It was surprising that he managed to do any work, and it was only his remarkable powers of concentration that allowed him to bear the many interruptions patiently. Often an editorial might be interrupted half a dozen times, and after each interruption he would turn to writing again without hesitation, his mind having completely switched away from the subjects he might have been discussing—co-operation, poetry, painting, or mysticism, in all of which he had a wide knowledge.

It is not because he was my father or because of his activities that I think of him as being more memorable than anyone else I have known. But he possessed, more than any other person I have met, an air of spiritual power, an avowed observation of sweetness and tenderness that was perceptible as the light from a lamp—and as hard to describe. Our language is ill-equipped to say what the essence of a man is, rather than what he does or looks like. But all who met him were affected by it. Although Father's views on religion would not have been accepted by any of the churches, it was a good Catholic who remarked of him, "The peace of God which passeth understanding lies all about him," and this is perhaps as good a way as any to describe his personality.

Nevertheless, his reputation for his parents was responsible for his character. He was himself as much his own creation as his poems or his paintings. He was always saying, "You become what you contemplate," or in another form, "you become nobly like what you love and ignorably like what you hate." As he spent a great part of his time studying the religious literature of the world, and as these, above all, writings, exact what is noblest and best in man, it is perhaps natural he should have taken on some of these aspects himself. Whether by act of will or unconsciously, he became like what he admired.

Spiritually-minded people are often thought of as being unfit for the grim struggle of life, as if there were no possibility of reconciling practical affairs with spiritual aspirations. Father seemed to find no difficulty in reconciling these two aspects of existence. For some years he held a dull job in a dry goods store, and I am told he was so efficient that he could have had a career there if he had so wished. But he moved on to the co-operative movement through the aged of his friends.

For a number of years he acted as an organiser, travelling all over Ireland, by train, by jaunting car, and on a bicycle. It can't have been an easy job, even for in his later years, when time had mellowed details, he would speak to me of the wretchedly long journeys involved and the miserable rawness of the weather. But it must have had its romantic moments, for he wrote to one friend about being met in the middle of nowhere late at night by a small child who led him over mountain paths to where a meeting was to be held; and when the child asked if some small hand was waiting to lead him back. But the experience of organizer, if strenuous, gave him the firsthand knowledge of farmers and their problems which he displayed when he became editor of the Irish Homestead—later the Irish Statesman. It was not the kind of life for an impractical person—or a lazy one—for added to his editorial duties were the tasks of testifying before government commissions and drawing up bills to be put through Parliament; and on the outside he still found time to see his innumerable friends, to paint pictures, and to write books. On occasions he would precipitate himself into more public affairs, such as his defence of the workers in a protracted transport strike in Dublin and his speech in Albert Hall in London during the last war, made at the request of the English Labour Party.

The versatility of these activities can be set down to his strong belief that a man can always do what he wants to do. A friend remembers walking with him when AE was in middle age. While they were resting on a wall, the friend remarked that a branch of a nearby tree was a good low jump away. "You can do it," said Father. "I could not," said the friend, who was sensibly aware of the effects of age on energy. "Well, I can," the friend was astonished to hear him say, and with that he made the leap.

Although he was born in and worked in Ireland all his life, he was in many respects curiously American in his principles. Perhaps for this reason he found so much to like in this country, when, in later life, he came over here. I remember his attack on some fusty an eminent man who had been lecturing here and who had returned with nothing but adverse comments in his mind.

Father had no use for any kind of aristocracy save that of character and merit. He might well have thought otherwise, for whom he had spent his youth more often than not sacrificed efficiency for friendship. Nor had he any use for the hampering hand of tradition, which lay heavily on his country. An exasperated appeal to the younger generation to dismiss the past and the idea of doing things as they had been done before was the motive behind the poem which ended:

We would no Irish sign efface, But yet our lips would pluckier hail The passing splendour of the Gael. No blazoned banner we unfold— One charge alone we give to youth, Against the accepted myth we hold The golden heresy of truth.

He always had hopes and liking for young people and they in turn liked him. Around him, at one time or another, gathered most of the young Irish writers: James Stephens, Fred Higgins, Frank O'Connor, Sean O'Faolain, Liam O'Flaherty, and many others, to all of whom he gave what aid and encouragement he could. It might easily have been a temptation to him to inculcate in them his own ideas. He was noticeably free from this tendency, and I can remember his delight when one of the younger writers in effect called him a has-been. I repeated the statement myself, but he said, "No young man should really respect his elders. In other countries people respect a name. In Ireland, if you stick your head up, someone will throw a stone at it, and it stops you getting a swelled head."

His combination of hard-headedness and mysticism was rather like Emerson's, an author he much admired. He discerned the spiritual basis in the qualities of independence and self-reliance. He was, in his way, a determined individualist who wanted all people to stand on their own feet. The co-operative movement did not appeal to him so much because it brought economic gains to the Irish farmer as because it showed the farmer how to prosper by his own efforts. He had a contempt for the spineless apathy of the man or woman without will power who was always crying for help. It was not that AE was unaware of social injustices, but he thought that gifts of money were only temporary help and that real aid should arouse the spirit of independence.

In one occasion, indeed, he spoke against the acceptance of a government grant for farmers, partially because he thought the farmer would fall too easily into the habit of dipping into the government pocket, but also, I think, because he had a deep-seated dislike of the growth of government power. He once remarked, "When we speak of a government, we have what is called good government. When there are good habits in a country the business of the State dwindles." He was, however, aware of the growing power of the State; in an essay written in 1915 he remarked
prophetically that in twenty-five years the State would be the single most important influence in people's lives, and that its actions and power would reach into the lives of the most obscure and humble persons.

Of his reputation as a mystic, AE was not entirely a nuisance or a distraction. Mystical experiences could not be disproved or proved. He did believe that faculties of a higher order than those normally exercised lay latent in all human beings and could be aroused and controlled by certain means, mainly exercised through the imagination. It is a belief that has been held by many people in many countries over a long period of time. He told me it was many years before he could concentrate for as little a time as five minutes. I tried myself for some months the exercise he told me he had practised. At first he would sit for a few minutes and then try to hold it in the imagination steadily. I can testify that it is not an easy exercise, for the mind is a natural rebel against discipline.

Of what particular value this similar and similar exercises may have proved, no outside person can assess. There were a sufficient number of incidents to suggest that he had powers of an unusual kind. On several occasions he told people facts about themselves he could not possibly have known. One friend of mine gave an example of this to him all day and suddenly wondering what the time was. He started to reach for his watch and was interrupted by Father, who said, "Let me tell you what the time is." Father knelt before him to do, and he was never troubled by the exercises of the kind for which the time was the watch showed. During the first performance of his play, Deirdre, the impulse took him to try to suggest to the audience the idea of water at a certain point in the play. Many people the next day spoke of the queer illusion they had of water pouring out over them from the stage.

Out of my own knowledge I can only recall one incident. A childhood friend of Father, living many thousands of miles away, wrote a letter which said that he never, in all his life, had required a moment of his attention, because he was so engrossed in his own thought, and he wondered if Father could receive it. As a result of this, Father painted a picture of a distinctive head which lacked all hair, even eyebrows and eyelashes. Later came a letter, enclosing the translation, which was the English translation of a Roman general who had lost all his hair as a result of a fever.

But incidents like these can be regarded as mere curiosities and Father disliked having attention called to them. He has written about this in his book Conception: A Vision. The experience itself - may indirectly have had something to do with his character. In speaking to me about them he continually stressed the fact that, for one step forward in knowledge, three must be taken in rejection, the burning - for instance - of the previous passage. As it happened, that book, borrowed fifteen years before by an anonymous friend, had that day been returned equally anonymously. The book itself was out of print and I felt sure he could not have read it since it had been returned. I asked him if he would look at the passage he referred to and he repeated five pages of prose with not more than two or three minor slips - this after fifteen years and in a prose work with none of the aids to memory that poetry gives.

His beliefs certainly made his life free from the doubts, perplexities, and compromises that harass most people. I did not think he was immune to the sad accidents of living. He was, in a sense the older he grew, the more he was able to look back and see the way the discomfort and hatred of the past had been in his life, and the way the past had been the cause of his torment.

What he was free from were all questions of what was right and proper, and a desire not to be different. To accept the good or evil that came to him, without the feeling of envy or hatred. His life was so faultless that George Moore could only complain that he didn't know the difference between turbid and halitose. Another critic, in a mildly exaggerated way, referred to his flawless moral nature. Perhaps it was this, and the absolute rejection of the past, and the only weaknesses in Father's nature were some small vanities, so innocent and childlike as to be more lovable than anything else. He would, for example, assert the superiority of his own smoking mixture, made by adulterating his tobacco with the herb collobidion. And he used to argue with me, occasionally with some asperity, about the merits of billiards and cricket players, although neither of us knew anything about either subject.

Contrary to popular thought about mystics, he was not at all an eccentric-looking man, with a pipe in his mouth. Someone remarked that he looked as if an angel had come to earth and seized the first human body it had come across. New suits wrinkled in a day and his overcoats were new. As if it had been put on with a shove. He was also indifferent to food as he was to dress, thinking his body with fuel as a boiler is fed with coal. He was, in fact, without worldly sophistication, and had none of the vanities that go with that quality. Although he was an efficient and practical person in business, he was far from being materialistic. He never wanted, or tried to get, more money than would take care of the essential needs - food, clothing, housing, and an education for his children. These taken care of, he thought further money refereed to a hindrance of some sort. On special occasions he turned down offers that would have brought him in as much money for a week's work as he normally earned in a year. To anxious friends who reproached him he would say, "Let the joy be in the doing and not in the end." He did not consider this work did not help his company and the people in it, and in which he found pleasure. I believe he thought no man's work was worth more than some small amount to take care of the necessities of existence. I learned that he had once turned down a commission of around pounds a year - but had said he would do the work for two hundred.

As he grew older and his reputation spread, many people came to call on him, and to all - even the unknown and the young - was the same, always giving of his best. I have seen enough of well-known people to realise that this side of Father was particularly charming - and also rather instructive. There are many moments when, through boredom or with the feeling that what we have to say will be wasted, all of us turn into a kind of superior apathy. It would never have occurred to Father to give less than his best - and more important, he would never have thought so badly about people as to think anyone could deserve less than the best. There was something in his way of speaking and wisdom about good butter, the soul, or international politics. William Lyon Phelps recalls with delight a visit Father paid him in which AE talked for ten hours more or less continuously. But the many friends he acquired would not gather in a circle just for the delight of his conversation. His presence was as warming as a fire, and people not only felt better to be with him but were better.

"He is a tribunal before whom the ignoble dwindles," a friend declared.

"It would be a distressing thing not only that of his presence; it could, on occasion, be practical. Only a few months ago a friend revealed to me that he had once visited him, obviously ill and needing a course of expensive treatments beyond his resources, and he had pressed on her the not inconsiderable amount of money required. He had never sought wealth and so could not have had much to give away, but I think he must have given when he could, and more than his family knew about. Another friend reports with gratitude, and some astonishment, his conscientiousness in taking over affairs after the sudden death of her husband. In a somewhat lighter vein a friend told me how he was incomparably trying to get a meal, having arrived home unexpectedly, when Father called. "Man," he said, "you don't need all that. I am going to buy you a couple of potatoes. You can have all the potatoes. You slice the potatoes while I cook the cutlets."

And so the astounded friend stood aside to let the mystic prepare the meal.

For people in general he had nothing but a vast understanding and toleration, for he seemed to know intuitively why people acted, what moods or emotions dominated them. His lifelong friend, the poet, Yeats, said of him: "He has the capacity, beyond any man I have seen, to put with entire justice not only the thoughts but emotions of the most opposite parties and situations and of each other without being reconciled because each heard his enemy's arguments put into better words than his own."

It is difficult to talk or write of Father, for in a sense his chief work was himself, and the things for which he was known seemed a by-product. His poetry contains his thought in a concentrated and somewhat difficult verse, but there are many instances of people who found it in great spiritual or practical help. In the first world war many soldiers were comforted by its poetry was the one thing that kept them sane during the horrors of war. The Municipal Art Gallery in Dublin has paintings by Watts, the English painter, sent by him because his wife, in an illness in which her life was despaired of, murmured some of AE's poetry to herself and felt that it carried her through to health. Two viceroys of India, the Earl of Lytton and Lord Curzon, also found solace in his poems when dying.

In America he was touched - and surprised - when two reporters who had written for some years of his life, were turned away as he resented or was he asked to write for them, at the last moment. I asked him what he meant at his poems at their request. What can be found in the poems could be found in the man himself; the recognition that here, at least, was one man who had been able to make all the extant emotions that make life a turmoil by a vast comprehension for all men. Perhaps, as Oliver Schreiner says in The Story of an African Farm, "to be holy is to have great compassion."

It was inevitable that AE's poetry and that of Yeats should have been compared, not only privately but publicly, because the two were at the time by general recognition the two leading poets in Ireland. They had been friends since boyhood, and I once asked him if the situation had never been a source of embarrassment. He only laughed and said, "Willee is a better poet than I am." He was an expert at his art and can spend days reworking a line or a verse till it has reached his ultimate in perfection. I, on the other hand, have to do many, many things, some by desire and some by compulsion."

He went on to explain the distinction - in his way - to be in the imagery. I got the feeling, though it was never openly stated, that he thought Yeats with his marvellous technique and command of language sometimes used his art on poor subjects. His remarkable memory made it easy for him to recall any poem he had written, and he would say, with perhaps a slight touch of vanity, that if all his books were burned, he would
Æ – GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL

be able to rewrite all of them without difficulty. Yeats’s memory, I gather, must have been more defective, for Father used to chuckle over the fact that once, when Yeats had been rather sooring his own early poems, he had recited a number of them to him. Yeats was excited and pleased over the poems and asked who wrote them—and was disappalled when he was informed that he himself was the author.

I suppose Father had favourites among his own poems, but I would not know what they were; for if asked to recite he would ask what poems were wanted. Perhaps here again his faint vanity about his memory was responsible, as if he wanted to show that nothing he had written had been forgotten. I know he was pleased with Yeats’s liking for the poem which began:—

Dusk wraps the village in its dim cares;
Each chimney’s vapour, like a thin grey rod,
Mounting aloft through miles of quietness,
Pillars the skies of God.

Whether he agreed with Yeats’s liking, I don’t know. I myself think the verse entitled “Promise” are as lovely as anything he ever wrote.—

Be not so desolate
Because thy dreams have flown
And the half of the heart is empty
And silent as stone,
As age left by children
Sad and alone.
Those delicate children
Thy dreams, still endear
All pure and lovely things
Wend their way to Pure.
Sigh not: unto theوذ
Their way was sure.
Thy gentlest dreams, thy fairest
Even those that were
Born and lost in a heart’s-beat,
Shall meet thee there.
They are become immortal
In the memory.
The unattainable beauty
The thought of which was pain,
That flickered in eyes and on lips
And vanished again;
That fugitive beauty
Thou shalt attain.
The lights innumerable
That led thee on and on,
The Masque of Time ended,
Shall grow into one.
It shall be with thee for ever
Thou traced done.

What merit there is in his poems, as well as the faults, probably comes from their origin. He told me poems came into his head and were usually written down quickly, needing few changes, and that they arose from a process of subconscious meditation. Sometimes one verse would come and he might have to wait a few days or a week before the other verses would spring into his mind—in one case there was a gap of thirty years between first and succeeding verses.

I don’t think it would be wrong to say that what he would have liked most to do would have been to paint. Summer after summer he would depart for Donegal to bring back twenty or thirty canvases sufficiently finished so that he could work on them during the winter at his leisure. He told me that one time the urge to paint was so strong that he had contemplated doing nothing else, but had been restrained by some feeling that a single pursuit would be bad for him; in a similar fashion, years before, he had been censured by mystician and the same austerity had made him relegate to being just a part of his life.

He must have had considerable strength of will to relegate painting to being just a hobby, for he not only found great pleasure in painting but competent people thought he could have been a great painter. A former director of the National Gallery in Ireland remarked that he had ever taken lessons he would have become one of the foremost painters of his time; and an old friend, a Dublin art dealer, on my last visit, offered it as his opinion that AE would be remembered as an artist long after his poems were forgotten.

His prices for paintings must have infuriated other artists, for Father felt he had no right to make money out of a hobby, and so had calculated carefully the cost of the materials—canvases and paint and oil brushes. Adding a small charge for his time—which couldn’t have amounted to fifty cents an hour—he had arrived at the figure of five pounds for a small canvas and ten pounds for a large one. This figure was revised upwards a little as costs increased over the years, but other Irish artists may have felt aggrieved at the unfair competition. Maybe Father felt there was something in this for he stopped showing his pictures and kept them in the house, where only friends could see them.

These numerous interests—composition, painting, poetry, mysticism, the editing of a weekly journal—were all kept going by a gigantic energy which left little time for relaxation. The latter usually took the form of mystery stories, of which he read from six to ten a week, and it was one of my household duties to see that a constant supply was at hand at all times. If the output of mystery stories—sometimes happened—didn’t equal his capacity for reading them, he would prove unhappily about the house, hoping that somewhere or other one would materialise.

I might have wondered why, in an age of specialisation, he had not chosen to become a master of one talent, if he had not once used an illuminating phrase in discussing with me a famous scientist. “He is not really intelligent,” he said, “for his mind embraces little outside his profession. A candle does not shine light only in one direction.” It was a revealing sentence, for it made me see that his real preoccupation had nothing to do with worldly success, but was with the completion of his own character. It was the kind of pursuit of self-perfection which mystics through the ages have been impatient upon, and in Father’s case it produced a kind of warm serenity, a sinlessness of character so moving and so lovable that when he was dying, as a friend wrote, “even the surgeon, whose skill must defend itself against sentimentality, turned away for a moment in tears.”

A BRIEF INQUEST ON COMMUNISM

Continued from opposite page

that have occurred were undeniably caused by some perversion sense of religiosity, or hatred, distrust and folly masquerading as religion. In our own times have we not seen wars fought for unification’s sake and exploitations of the weaker peoples by the stronger ones justified in the name of good government and justice? But who can say for that matter that unification and other government and justice are very bad things.

An examination of Communism reveals to us the fact that the philosophic cover it takes is a thin and very faulty one and the appeal it makes to humanity is not one weak and unreasonable but even dangerous and threatens to destroy some of the finest values in human nature. It seeks to reduce human individuals to mere automata working insecurely under some mechanical cooperative scheme. It denies the possibility of some noble and closely uniting human beings under a disciplined order of living. It magnifies economics beyond all forces and makes dialectical forces appear as the supreme with the universal drama. Guided by a purely mental, and even at that a superficially mental, approach to life and its problems as Communist is, it is apparently insufficient and too wooden to be adopted as a technique in collective life to suit the complex and profound purposes of the fast evolving humanity of the present day.

JEWEL CREATIONS

by

CHIMANLAL MANCHAND & CO.
NEW QUEEN'S ROAD, BOMBAY.
In a world full of bitter conflicts and disappointments coming as essential consequences of the existing mode of life, one would like to examine Communism, proposed and calculated to be the next step in the formation of a human community, as an approach to something like an essential step after democracy. We established and examined democratic institutions; we organised our political life on the lines of democracy (which had come out of the mediavelal way of life) something not sufficient to suit the altered conditions in human life, have begun to look for some other technique. Communism is alleged to be seen emerging as the immediate possibility.

However, we must examine it before we find out which claims to acceptance of Communism on the simplest and most practical level: the fact that being and a suggested step forward is not only desirable and optional but a blunder, of the worst type. Communism is not only an attempted technique in political and social life seeking to touch and alter the conditions of life through the corresponding fields of politics and society, but it is something more amiable to us it posits a philosophy of its own. It seeks to touch and examine the fundamental issue, the issue of life and its meaning, the truer meaning of life, the deeper and more profound. And it is in this evolving life of man is not characterised by democracy and is not a result of purely mental deliberation. It is not an issue of the stress or stresses through which human life is passing. The insufficiency of the communal and democratic techniques to suit the altered conditions in life has driven mankind to new experiments or for that matter to examine Communism more closely before stock, of course briefly, of the stresses through which human life is passing today—the conditions that prevail now upon the earth.

Democracy and Communism

It is a fact that the evolving individualities—the component units of the complex human society—conform to certain social time-honoured authority of a man or a monarch in mechanical obedience to duty and to provide for that matter to examine Communism more closely before stock, of course briefly, of the stresses through which human life is passing today—the conditions that prevail now upon the earth.

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Democratic and Communist philosophies.

Our life is now passing through a crisis which is characterized by a growing sense of insecurity. Therefore, in the context of the theme, we consider it appropriate to examine Communism as a philosophy and ask what it has to offer us as a solution to the problems that face us today. Communism is a philosophy that seeks to transform society through collective action, aiming to create a world where everyone is equal and free. But, what are the challenges that we face in implementing this philosophy in our present context?

Firstly, the issue of power and control. In Communism, power is seen as a means to an end, and the end is the creation of a society where everyone is free and equal. However, the struggle for power and control often becomes a hindrance to achieving this goal. How can we ensure that power is not used to suppress others, but rather used to empower them?

Secondly, the issue of individual freedom. Communism emphasizes the collective over the individual. This can sometimes be seen as a limitation on individual freedom. How can we strike a balance between the collective and the individual in a society?

Finally, the issue of economic equality. Communism aims to create an economically equal society. However, achieving this goal is not easy. How can we ensure that the resources are distributed fairly and equitably?

In conclusion, while Communism offers a philosophy that seeks to transform society through collective action, there are still many challenges that we need to address in order to implement this philosophy effectively in our present context.
LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

Q. 1: The growth of democratic and socialist tendencies in recent years has everywhere raised the demand for a true art and poetry which had been previously confined to the culture, few, to the general mass of humanity, to the common man or the man in the street as he is called. Only that art and poetry which is considered valuable appeals to the taste of the common man and can be easily understood by him; all the rest which is difficult for him to appreciate without special training or which does not appeal to his uncultivated tastes is dismissed as meaningless moonshine or an useless extravagance. How far is this demand justifiable?

A: "I do not know why so much value is put on general understanding and acceptance. Really it is only the few that can be trusted to discern the true value of things in poetry and art and if the general run accept, it is usually because acceptance is sooner or later imposed or induced in their minds by the authority of the few and afterwards by the verdict of Time. There are exceptions, of course, of a wide spontaneous acceptance because something that is really good happens to suit a talent or a demand in the general mind of the moment. Poetic and artistic value does not necessarily command mass understanding and acceptance." Moreover, the majority of minds "do not respond to "artistic" beauty at all—something inartistic appeals much more to what sense of beauty they have or else they are not seeking beauty, but only vital pleasure."

Q. 2: Why is the work of a poet or an artist differently estimated by different critics? The same poet or artist is sometimes praised in the highest terms by some eminent critics but is condemned outright by other equally eminent critics. What is the explanation for this?

A: "All criticism of poetry is bound to have a strong subjective element and that is the source of the violent differences in the appreciation of any given author by equally "eminent" critics. All is relative here, Art and Beauty also, and our view of things and our appreciation of them depends on the consciousness which views and appreciates. Some critics recognize this and go in frankly for a purely subjective criticism—this is why I like this and disapprove of that, I give my own values. Most, however, want to fit their personal likes and dislikes to some standard of criticism which they conceive to be objective; this need of objectivity, of the support of some impersonal truth independent of our personality, is the main source of theories, canons, standards of art. But the theories, canons, standards themselves vary and are set up in one age only to be broken in another."

Q. 3: Does this mean that there is no objective beauty of art independent of the differing temperaments of the observers? Is our experience of beauty a construction or a creation of our minds but not having any objective existence otherwise?

A: "In that case Beauty is non-existent in Nature, it is put upon Nature by our minds through the ages. But this contradicts the fact that it is in response to an object and not independently of it that the idea of beautiful or not beautiful originally rises within us. Beauty does exist in what we see, but there are two aspects of it, essential beauty and the form it takes. 'Eternal beauty wandering on her way' does that wandering by a multifarious variation of forms appealing to a multifarious variation of consciousness. There comes in the difficulty. Each individual consciousness tries to seize the eternal beauty expressed in a form (here a particular poem or work of art), but is either assisted by the form or repelled by it, wholly attracted or wholly repelled, or partially attracted and partially repelled. There may be errors in the poet's or artist's transcription of beauty which mar the reception, but even these have different effects on different people. But the more radical divergences arise from the variation in the constitution of the mind and its difference of response."

Q. 4: But is it not possible for a catholic critic of art to overcome these limitations?

A: "A critic cannot escape altogether from these limitations. He can try to make a talent or a classical and objective and find the merit or special character of all he reads or sees in poetry and art, even when they do not evoke his strongest sympathy or deepest response. I have little temperamental sympathy for much of the work of Pope and Dryden, but I can see their extraordinary perfection or force in their own field, the masterly conciseness, energy, point, metallic precision into which they cut their thought or their verse, and I can see too how that can with a little infusion of another quality be the basis of a really great poetic style, as Dryden himself has shown in his best work. But there my appreciation stops; I cannot rise to the heights of admiration of those who put them on a level with or on a higher level than Wordsworth, Keats or Shelley—I cannot escape from the feeling that their work, even though more consistently perfect within their limits and in their own manner (at least Pope's), was less great in poetic quality. These divergences rise from a conception of beauty and a feeling for beauty which belongs to the temperament. So too Housman's exaltation of Blake results directly from his feeling and peculiar conception of poetic beauty as an appeal to an inner sensa-tion, an appeal marred and a beauty deflowered by bringing in a sharp coating or content of intellectual thought."

Q. 5: Does this mean that a critic cannot render any real help to others in the appreciation of beauty?

A: "The critic can help to open the mind to the kinds of beauty he himself sees and not only to discover but to appreciate at their full value certain elements that make them beautiful or give them what is most characteristic or unique in their peculiar beauty. Housman, for instance, may help many minds to see in Blake something which they did not see before. They may not agree with him in his comparison of Blake and Shakespeare, but they can follow him to a certain extent and see a better that element in poetic beauty which he over-sights but makes at the same time more vividly visible." K. G.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The next issue of "Mother India" will be a Special August 15 Number and will come out on the 12th instead of the 5th. The issue after it will be on the 19th.

There will be important contributions by writers foreign as well as Indian. Among the Special Features will be some unpublished Talks of the Mother and Essays by Sri Aurobindo.