TO THE REFUGEES OF EAST BENGAL

Every Indian heart aches in sympathy with your sufferings. You who have come over to India after seeing your fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and sons and daughters murdered or mutilated or disabled in history who have left your property and your property behind and borne innumerable hardships and humiliations on the bitter way from your age-old homes—you have indeed drained the cup of human sorrow to its dregs. Holl has been your lot and for a long time to come you will not have gained out of the misery into which you have fallen. Even when there is some rehabilitation you will bear terrible marks on your lives, wounds that may seem to have healed but whose ugly scars will lie across all your days. We who have been lucky enough to be on the hither side of the partition that has left this and the country sick in soul welcome you with open arms and we shall exert every nerve to give you help. In the great struggle for India's freedom your families have fought side by side with us and if we fail to do the utmost we can by way of assistance we shall have betrayed the ideals that have served us as beacon in the past.

But material provision to the best of our ability is not all we should offer you. Bread and water and a roof over the head are indeed life's necessities. They must come to you immediately and various organisations have been started to see that they do come. But your problem is not only that of the famished body. Nor is it fully solved when we find you suitable occupations. Even if we could restore you to a state of property—a task which appears wellnigh impossible for several years—we shall not have solved your problem in entirety. For, you are minds as well as bodies and what has happened to you is not just a physical catastrophe. You are thinking beings and probably your gruesome experience will tinge with your whole attitude to life. And though we are anxiousing to help you in things material the unavoidable difficulty of meeting the needs of a million unhappier must long to be overcome and will make you despair often and may breed in you a sense of hopelessness.

To the keen anxiety darkening your thoughts, to the feeling of frustration gnawing at your hearts, what words of light shall we bring? The first truth to remember is that there is within man a strength which, if summoned, can bear him victoriously through every calamity. This is the strength of the central self in him which refuses to accept defeat. He may have lost all that is ordinarily prized, but this strength is of something that can disassociate its flame from the whole outer being's fallen and ruined condition. Detached, poised, secure in a mighty and lofty pride, aware of life's invincible quintessence in the sheer act of self-consciousness, this central personality has stood unbroken in many an historical figure and cast its brave colour on all external disadvantages and disasters, robbing them of the power to crush the dignity and the joy that are man's rights as a creature developed beyond the animal's uncontrollable reflex and response to circumstance. One of the extreme instances of it was the Saint Bernardus, the greatest general during the reign of the Roman emperor Justinian. Both he and his master had the ill-luck to get snared by dancing girls whom they subsequently married. The new empress—mean of birth—grew frantically jealous of his influence and his authority and cursingly took them away. She had him degraded—all his honours plucked from him and his authority taken away. Later, his wife in whom he had put absolute trust ran away with a disolute monk. In the end the once famous soldier, in whose celebration an Arch of Triumph—a great arch built in Byzantium—had been reduced to begged. He lost even his sight, and used to be observed standing under his own Arch of Triumph—a friendless pauper living on alms. But neither external humiliation nor poverty nor the blight of blindness made him feel that fate had beaten him and cast him out of the community. He even in the look of a leader of men, the general who had won so many victories was yet deaf. In his case there was no sense in the tragedy. An inherent greatness he was aware of, in the midst of all adversities, as being his true individuality, consisting of the realisation so finely phrased by Longfellow:

'The unconquerable will This too can bear—I still
Am Beliarus.'

This realisation is not the mere bravado or rigid resistance of egoism. There is no selfish assertiveness in it, no ramour for wrongs done, no desire for aggrandisement at the expense of others. Nor is it parasitical, the force of the fallen archangel depicted by Milton, the hard hate for whatever opposes. A certain peace is here, commingled with war. There is the result of an intuition of some unchanging inner reality in the midst of earth's vicissitudes. The intuition is not perfect, for it is still in terms of the human personality, no matter what is felt is that personality's centre and core. But behind the intuition is the soul of man, an immortal spirit of divinity, capable of being one with the freedom and bliss of the Eternal, endowed with the possibility of drawing into the frail outer nature not only the deep happiness of the inmost being but also the help, the inexplicable and almost miraculous intervention, of the Supreme Lord of the universe.

We Indians have made history as seekers of the Divine. Not in material things only but much more and fundamentally in things of the spirit we have reposed our trust. Even the presiding genius of our nation, the One whom we feel as the Mother-Soul whose children are the many millions inhabiting this great land, even the National Being we have invoked as a delegate or aspect or emanation of the Ultimate Spirit. God is the secret other in which we have lived down the ages and without our awareness of this pervading light and truth our end would have come long ago as came the death of the old civilisations of Europe and the Middle East. And in the days of the comparative decline that was ours in the near past it was always the sense of Dutra the Divine Mother-Child Krishna the World-preserver that has been our mainstay, our fountain of energy. The entire struggle against British domination was inspired by no ordinary patriotism but by a spiritual vision—the vision of the Eternal Motherhood to whom the central being of our culture, the Rishis, pledged the people who lived at the foot of the immemorial sacred Himalayas, with oceans flaming them on right and left. And the ancient pledging could take place precisely because the Rishis were not passing wonders but the natural flowering of a seed found in the whole race, the high crest of a surge sweeping through the Indian consciousness. It is spiritual India that has attained greatness in times gone by and that has fought for freedom against the alien rulers. All the best that has happened to us or been created by us was born of our instinct of the Divine. And that is why this best has been so extraordinary a phenomenon, with a quality unique in the earth's annals. Through that instinct we shall emerge in the world's future as a leader of the nations towards unity and harmony and manifold fulfilment. Also, our miseries and eclipses have been due to unfaithfulness to that instinct or else to a turning of it in the direction of other-worldliness instead of in the direction of God's manifestation here and now. If we had yielded to our characteristic genius we shall never decline and all seeming declines will only be temporary phases. At present, there is a crisis in our country—not basically economic or political but psychological and it consists in our being divided in mind about what makes Indianness. A shallow scepticism, a preoccupation with superficial factors, a watering down of genuine ethics to weak moralities and sentimental pacifism, a false kind of secularism which forgets that the true secularity for India can lie only in a wide tolerant multi-faceted all-comprehensive thing. All these things have obtained sway over half our mind and the other half that is alive to the Divine's presence is unable to find voice and orientate our interests and occupations towards the light that in Saint and Seer and Yogi is still burning amongst us. Because of failure at one end to keep bright the instinct of divinity and to live bravely in its ancient unfading force and to develop the country according to the authentic temper of Indian culture great continued overleaf
Friends, let me first offer my thanks to the organizers of this meeting for having given me the opportunity of having a heart to heart talk with you. My talk will be mostly personal, and I crave your indulgence for that. After all, is not that the object of a Sahitya Parishad? The English word Literature does not convey the sense of the term Sahitya; the former, for one and all, is a mere mass of women, and as far as you and I are concerned, it is of very little use. Indeed, I feel that Sahitya signifies a close and intimate personal contact; that only is true Sahitya which helps us to have a deep personal communion with the others. The ordinary mental association like to feed very conducive to this, it often leads to mutual ignorance and misunderstandings which is the root cause of all conflict and disharmony in society. Sahitya lifts us for a time to a higher level, gives us the taste of higher happiness together with others, and that is a source of bliss which constitutes the true sense of Sahitya. Indeed, the body, the life, and even the mind do not constitute the real man, they are the instruments of the soul which is the real man. Very often we judge others by these instruments, these means, and that is why we misunderstand them. To really know others we must be able to have a direct contact with the souls of others, and we should judge the outer forms in the light of the knowledge of the soul. This is an illustration of the profundity of the message of the Mother which forms the subject matter of our talk today.

As I said, I shall give my own interpretation of that message from my intimate personal experience. Before the year 1921, Sri Aurobindo was to me, not merely other people, a closed and sealed book. We admired him only as a great political leader and as he had then retired from active political life we regarded him as altogether lost to the country; he might be seeking his own liberation by yogic practice, but what relation could that have any problems in hand? That mental attitude of non-involvement is a very limited and closed; I was deeply attached to my family and also to my work as a Professor of Philosophy. That, I can tell you, is not a very favourable condition, for any spiritual opening. And in fact, though some writings of Sri Aurobindo published in the Arya might have fallen into my hands, I could not understand even a word of them, though I was an experienced professor of Philosophy. Then by Divine Grace a great change came in my life. During the Non-cooperation movement of 1919 I felt an inner voice which advised me to read the book of Sri Krishna himself and I could write like this: that was the judgment of my soul and not of my mind, and nothing could shake that conviction.

I cannot enter here into the whole history of my personal conversion. Every man, of course, has an epic in itself but I leave that for the present. I wonder how the organisers of this movement chose this particular house which has allowed associations for me. It was here that I was received as a guest of Sri Aurobindo. You can imagine my dejected condition; I knew in my inmost heart that Sri Aurobindo was the Divine. I would soon stand face to face before him, he had graciously accepted me as a guest. A guest of the Divine! For a few minutes I was allowed to rest in the verandah downstairs. What did I see then? A young lady coming out of the bathroom and going upstairs where I was, I told a room had been allotted to me. That sight was a real shock. A young women in a place where I had come for spiritual sadhana. I had been brought up in the spiritual tradition of Sri Ramkrishna, who had categorically said that if you wanted the spiritual life you must avoid the presence of women, and if you saw them, and if you went near, and if you touch it, you should wrap yourself with a thick cloth so that the air breathed by a woman might not touch your body and you should fix your eyes always on the feet of women and never on their faces. Accordingly I had visited with a desire to be near the feet of that girl. What a test! But did that shake my confidence in Sri Aurobindo? Not in the least. I argued that as Sri Aurobindo had made or allowed this arrangement he must be the one who is going to benefit from it. Even the sight of the girl was a shock to me. I can confess today that the shock was not unpleasant, but extremely pleasant.

Another great shock was in store for me when I saw that a Pariah girl took and served the food* that I had to take. You know what a Pariah is. The great Shankaracharya called these people moving cremation grounds: I had to accept my food from the hands of a shakamukha amanasa. I did it cheerfully though it went against the very grain of my being. Only after Sri Aurobindo allowed this, it must be accepted as a condition favourable for sadhana.

You would be interested to know about my first interview with Sri Aurobindo. He was waiting for me in the verandah upstairs of the Library House, that is the "Prosperity" verandah now. I slowly went by with an expectant throbbing heart. What did I see? Many people see a halo, a heavenly light surrounding Sri Aurobindo. I had no such opening. I was being a very active mind to have any such experience. I saw in Sri Aurobindo nothing but a real Indian face at close quarters. I was the sort of person only such as I would expect of an "acharya" like Brajendranath Seal or Ramanada Chatterji or poet Rabindranath—but still a man and nothing more, there was nothing supernatural or supernatural about him. But that did not in the least shake my faith in the full divinity of Sri Aurobindo. I argued or rather my soul explained that if the Divine were to appear on the earth, it is in such a body that he would appear. I judged the form by the Master and not the Master by the form. Thus within one hour of my arrival at Pondicherry I was repeatedly tested, and through the grace of Sri Aurobindo I was found not unfit for being his disciple.

The Mother once put a question to me and asked me to reply at once without any thought. I am going to put that very question to you. See what answer immediately comes to your mind. Here is the question:

"What do you know of the ways of the gods?"

I immediately answered "Nothing". The Mother was pleased with the answer. Here at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram we are being prepared for the taste of immortality and the joy of the god-life: the forms and activities here cannot be judged by any human standard however high. As we expect accepted Sri Aurobindo and the Mother as manifestations of the Divine, everything here is to be understood in the context of leading us to the divine life, without allowing our ignorant human mind to raise any question about it. Then only we shall prove ourselves to be initiates. And I think that is the will of the Mother, it will "translate physically the great love that is at the bottom of the worlds." We can realise that, only when we cease to live merely in the body, life or mind and learn to live in the soul for which this Sahitya Parishad is helping us in its last stage, something beyond be raised to the divine level. "But still the essential relations will be that case from which all things flow, love, passionate, complete, seeking a hundred ways of fulfilment, every means of mutual possession, a million facets of the joy of union."

TO THE REFUGEES OF EAST BENGAL—Continued from page 1.

* The cooking and serving since the inception of the Ashram is done by Sudhakar and Sashikant themselves—there being no distinction, however, of caste or colour.
After a long career of literary production (nearly 60 years), Somerset Maugham presents us at last with his own perspective on his notebooks. The “Notebook” he has kept throughout his life is an open and active writing life. Perhaps nowhere is the range of his interests and his command of the world evident as in his notebooks. For Maugham, his notebooks have always been careful to keep his own personality well in the background, and not let his personal feelings and leanings become apparent. Furthermore, they are more than an autobiographical record; they are a deliberate effort to present oneself to the public—these notebook entries represent the spontaneous impressions and the progressive ideas of a modern writer’s development.

The first entry appears under the date 1902 and the last was written in 1944—at the time of his 70th birthday. In between are all the associations and events of a lifetime and varied life, and of a writer who has deliberately gone out of his way to colorize and the colourful things of life. Maugham had travelled all over the world, and some interesting notes of the scenes, types and characters he had encountered are recorded. These colourful sketches, particularly of the South Sea Islands and Malaya, remind one of a writer’s sketchbook where merely a few significant strokes are visible in the background for some future work. In fact many of these brief jottings convey the living atmosphere of the places better than his stories do; for the interplay of imagination always tends to blight the real. In the notes we have the fresh spontaneous picture, clear and succinct—a model for the writer of today. Maugham has always been primarily the story writer, and his main aim will always be to build up his background or framework for his imaginative writing. But he is a writer who has never claimed any literary pretensions, either of style or of technique. Perhaps the account for the fact that he has not as yet been seriously considered in the list of the English novelists is that he has been read and enjoyed by contemporary critics but not by the world at large. For the language is simple and direct, almost conversational, and flows naturally without that highly cultivated element seeking literary honours. But he has the power of portraying with the maximum economy the atmosphere of a place, or the typical characteristics of a person, or the essential gist of an event.

The view of the Individual, Society and Nature

In the Preface Maugham compares his “Notebook” with another published “Journal” of the French writer Jules Renard. Both works in fact represent a writer’s private impressions; but whereas the Frenchman’s “Journal” was more of the autobiography recording the minute occurrences and incidents of the author’s day to day life, Maugham’s “Notebook” is the preparatory material for his published fiction. In both books we get an inside view of an author’s workshop, a peep behind the scenes of his art, a careful and systematically collected and prepares his material. Here we have the “blueprint” of the novels, the essence of a sketch of a story, the outline of an “atmosphere”, or the significant de

"A Writer’s Notebook" (1902–1944)" by W. Somerset Maugham. (Heinemann, London. 12th./6.)

Three

Secret of the Writer’s Mind and Method

The secret of Maugham’s power as a proliific writer of so many varied works—plays, novels, short stories, numbering nearly 60 published books in all—seems to lie in his complete unattachment to any section of life. Throughout his life he has consistently refused to associate himself fixedly with any of the current movements of the times. Unlike so many of his contemporaries Maugham has been more nearly becoming attached to any literary trend, or of pursuing some political aim or social ideal. He has never been content to remain unattached observer of life and the events around him. In this way his ideas are always remaining significant and unpredicted by any preconceived opinions or theories. However, he is always looking for those in the world. “What can you know of life,” he writes, “unless you really have lived?” Sooner or later you unless you have been an actor in the tragic-comedy.” He has been careful, however, not to let himself

Three
THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN ASIA
PROMOTION OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS: A MYTH
By W. N. EWER
Diplomatic Correspondent of the “Daily Herald” (Lond.)

Surely one of the strangest political phenomena in the world today is the Soviet Government’s claim to be the champion of national independence for the peoples of Asia. The fact is that the Soviet Union is the last remnant of the imperialistic age in Asia. It is only within the borders of the Union that Asian peoples are still held under the rule of a European power. “The Union of Soviet Republics” is, in fact, still a Russian empire of which the people are used to being ruled as obediently from Moscow as they were under the Czars from Petersbourg.

In theory, the constituent Republics are self-governing. In practice, they have a vestige of autonomy. The Union is a highly centralised imperial structure.

Central Control

The “Stalin Constitution” professes to be a federal one. But when one examines it, it is nothing of the kind for it reserves to the Central Government in Moscow close control over all administration and all policy.

Under Article 14, it is the Central Government which decides—in the so-called self-governing Republics is such matters as the allocation of revenue between the Union, Republics and local budgets. It is the “principles” of all legislation in such matters as education, public health, labour laws, the criminal code and marriage laws.

It is the Central Government which controls not only the armed forces and state police but all banking and financial institutions, transport and communications, insurance, and the economic planning and administration of all “industrial and agricultural institutions and trading enterprises which are regarded as of ‘all-Union importance’.”

Union Law Prevalence

To make sure that there can be no independence in anything, Article 20 of the constitution lays it down that in the event of a discrepancy between a law of the Union and a law of a Republic, the Union law prevails.

There is no sphere left in which the Governments of the Republics have any freedom of action at all. Protests are merely local administrative organs carrying out, in certain limited fields, the decrees and policies decided in Moscow.

This is all. Ministers of a Government in one of the Republics have no freedom of speech and no real freedom of action. The Union Government has no political parties and no real freedom of the press.

Maugham the Novelist

One outstanding feature of Maugham as a novelist, which is revealed more clearly in his notes, is that he has not made the attempt to become the psychological writer. Rather he has been content to record merely the surface and outer aspects of things. Thus his remarks concerning the portrait painter Velasquez, whom he greatly admired, may be taken to be his own general attitude to life, as he observes, “takes them (his sitters) at their face value... he may be superficial, but he is superficial on a grand scale.” So with Maugham in his delineation of types. But of Maugham we might say that he is superficial on an extensive, almost global scale. He has emphasized a wide field even though he has not delved deeply. It is interesting also to note his almost absolute lack of a conscious style, which is to let the plot unfold itself in a simple and natural way. As a portrait painter he forms his characters to conform to some fundaments of imaginative pattern, but keeps as far as seems possible to the inherent realities of the situations. Therefore, if one examines his main characters on real types, he allows the innate qualities of his characters to express themselves freely and naturally with power and exactness. He does not seek to analyse a character, nor does he probe unnecessarily into the background of his life, as with many modern writers. To present a character as part of a social pattern of violence for the subjection and control of students? Have we not also to consider the reaction of the whole school? Can we, by this means, still maintain the basic purpose of our discipline—that of Mutual Respect? This may have subdued that one child, but have we disciplined him according to the tenets of our creed?

Resorting to Corporal Punishment merely that we have come to the end of our resources, knowing of no other method of controlling that child?—In other words we condone ourselves—conquered by a child? What do you think is the reason of the world-wide decline in the use of Corporal Punishment? Is it not because man’s intelligence has progressed to such a degree that we can find a method of education which is as much as to say that with the need of such a primitive method? Teachers today use their intelligence, where yesterday violence

The real power is exercised by the Committee of the Party and by its “Political Bureau” (the financial police). The person is rinsed to a corporation, responsible to nobody except himself, with Stalin at their head.

Maintained by Force

The fact of the Soviet constitution is that it is the oligarchy in Moscow which today rules over the Asian peoples of the Central Union and despotically as did the Czars. These peoples have no kind of self-government, no kind of national independence, no voice in the management of their own affairs. Any expression of nationalist sentiment is ruthlessly “burnt out with a hot iron.” (And the fact of Stalin’s “Russia in Asia” is only what it always has been—a centralised, efficient and best and maintained by force. That is the reality behind the fiction of the “Union of Soviet Republics.”)

Maugham in The Making

Continued from page 3

The POWER OF TEACHING

that one child quicker by a thrashing, but have we only considered to consider when we once resort to violence for the subjection and control of students? Have we not also to consider the reaction of the whole school? Can we, by this means, still maintain the basic purpose of our discipline—that of Mutual Respect? This may have subdued that one child, but have we disciplined him according to the tenets of our creed?

Resorting to Corporal Punishment merely that we have come to the end of our resources, knowing of no other method of controlling that child?—In other words we condone ourselves—conquered by a child? What do you think is the reason of the world-wide decline in the use of Corporal Punishment? Is it not because man’s intelligence has progressed to such a degree that we can find a method of education which is as much as to say that with the need of such a primitive method? Teachers today use their intelligence, where yesterday violence

... Continued from opposite page

was used. Consider, for a moment, the unconsciousness of youth having just read the words of Christ when Peter came to Him and said, “Lord how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him, till seven times?”—“I say not unto thee, seven times, but unto seventy times seven”; and again, “This ye must not evil: but whatsoever shall be done on thee thine seven chee, turn to him the other also.” The lesson—“This ye must not evil: but whatsoever shall be done on thee thine seven chee, turn to him the other also.” The lesson—“This ye must not evil: but whatsoever shall be done on thee thine seven chee, turn to him the other also.”

* Matthew 18: 21, 22
** Matthew 6: 12, 35

Perhaps greater than any of his other books, the “Notebook” is both instructive and a delight to read,—or even to dip into at any odd moment. It is evenly balanced with broad slices of humour sandwiched in by built-up hymns, and scattered throughout with rich fragments of wisdom. Particularly it should be always needed to the young or novel or short-story writer—if not he is a book, at least an ideal model of the young or novel or short-story writer. The reader should be kept. There are many of the young and aspiring writer; but also those who value of value for who all would enrich the life-long experience of a writer who is not only devoted to his craft, but who has himself learned from the hardest of all schools—the school of life.
Discipline

In a modern school, where students are afforded freedom of expression, and no actual punishment is meted out, it is remarkably easy to overlook the fact that discipline is not only necessary, it is essential—necessary, that is, for the guidance of the pupil, as well as the teacher. Discipline is a word, means mental and moral training—the teacher should not only instruct, and to serve the student to the best of his or her ability, to bring the student under a trained condition, as opposed to an untrained condition. If this is correct, it is obvious that the absence of discipline in a student is a reflection of the necessity of the pupil as a whole. The teacher should be trained in the art of maintaining discipline, not only to maintain order, but to teach the student the meaning of discipline.

Adult and Child Relationship

The relationship between adult and child is a psychological problem which the sincere teacher has always been aware of, since it is the teacher who has the power to change it at once, if it is not to mar the attention and discipline of the whole lesson. It is precisely here that humour can play an important part. A humorous remark at such a time might be invaluable in restoring the right attitude if the teacher has sensed an atmosphere of depression.

It might also be mentioned here that some knowledge of the pupils’ experiences at the preceding lesson consisted of should be borne in mind. For instance, if the teacher has just given the pupils 10 minutes’ rapid dictation in French, one can imagine the consternation of the class if one announces another period of rapid dictation in English; or the class of children who still find some difficulty in writing with ease. The teacher may even know the subject, if he has little idea of maintaining discipline he will find his work difficult, exhausting, and teaching will become a miserable occupation; and to the average headmaster he would be the least of little use.

It was said of one teacher that he could manage two boys: he could hold one down while he taught the other. Many jokes are made of the expense of weak disciplinarians, not without some basis of fact. One teacher was discovered by his headmaster from his classroom, in which Panlemonium reigned. “Return to your class at once!” said the headmaster, “the boys are making a noise, you can’t do no use,” replied the teacher, “they got worse when I am there.”

Without discipline one cannot begin. By giving to the teacher in charge of the class over whom he has power, the teacher can maintain order he must tell the class what he means by making teaching his profession.

Dunville, M.A. (author of Pande-

omium of Psychiology) found that the teacher who has stood, all alone, before a new class of mischievous boys, who has seen the evil look in their eyes, who has been intensively conscious that they were all on the alert to trip him up at every possible point in his procedure, can realise what an important thing discipline is.

Nevertheless there are one or two weapons in a teacher’s armoury which may prove effective. There are those who speak in derision of a teacher who is able to subdue boys with a “shadie”: but let the teacher who possesses it be truly thankful to God for the most valuable weapon a teacher can have. It is the expression of a personality that has power and influence over the teacher, other than physical, demanding respect from the student. Together with these there is another attribute which is of immense importance in obtaining attention—it is the prolonged eye contact, perhaps the eyes fixed on one pupil who is not paying attention. A similar “pause” is often used by actresses on the stage to hold the audience, and to produce a more dramatic effect for their words. It should be used, however, sparingly...
Mankind can be divided into four categories from the standpoint of a goal of life. The first category comprises the preponderant bulk of men who never think of any goal of life, but are content to live from moment to moment with an unquestioning submission to the blind drive of fickle desires and the urgent demands of sensations, without any contemplation. They are born, they grow, they develop and imbibe traits and tendencies, they labour and succeed and enjoy, and fail and suffer, and are whisked away under an imperious summons, they know not why and where. Their crowns and crosses roll together in the dust while they, the travelers, depart for while to return to this earth again—and again, to seek fresh laurels and suffer fresh martyrdoms. Every time a new stage is set and a new role assigned to each of them; something is worked out once more, they know not what, through the tangled knots of combining and conflicting elements. A groaning and a gamble in the helterskelter and an aimless drift and a restless vagrancy on the surface—this is their life.

It is not that this category is made up of the wails and outcries of humanitarians—many strong and sensible men are also found in it; and not that they are all easy-going, unambitious men either, shirking the hardships and shrinking from the hazards of life. Some of them may be intrepid men, avid of adventure and courageous in confronting difficulties; but what distinguishes the men of this category is the lack of a vision of a goal of life, all the more so because there is no vision for it. Their life is a vicious circle and they do not know and never pause to think that it can have a definite issue or a divine purpose. Petty and provisional objectives are fixed upon by some, such as excellence or eminence in a particular field or power or wealth; but there is no sense of an ultimate goal bound up with the harmonious perfection of all or most human parts and the most complete fulfillment of life's deepest yearnings.

The second category is constituted by those who are seeking for a goal, but have not yet found it. Even though they live apparently like the men of the first category, swayed by desires and moulded by the opinions of others, they are vaguely or acutely aware of a want, a deficiency or a lacuna which gnaws at the centre of their being and turns the wine of life into gall and wormwood. Inwardly they fret and fumble for an issue out of the clausures and constraints of their ambitious days and long for something which will give them an unallayed freedom and felicity. Their discontent disturbs the tenor of their lives and discovers a thorn in every rose of pleasure, but it is the herald of a wholesome change and the only spur to self-transcendence and the conquest of the hidden secret of existence.

The third category belongs to those who have glimpsed or envisaged some goal and advances, slowly or smoothly, according to their capacity, towards it. This category breaks off into diverse units proceeding in diverse directions. Some canon to a near and comparatively easy goal; some, drawn by a higher and wider idealism, strive for a greater and more difficult consummation. A selfless service of one's society or country or of humanity, the spreading of the gospel of peace and harmony, the dissemination of lofty truths and the imparting of true cultural education are some of the ethical goals they endeavour to pursue. They renounce most of their personal desires and try to rise superior to the formations of their lower nature, so that their life may get out of the rut of vital-physical preoccupations and emerge into some kind of transparent purity, freedom and noble beneficence. Some go even beyond these shining ideals finding them rather lacking in any fullness and finality, and sacrifice their all to discovery and realize the soul or the Spirit, the Brahman or the Divine. This is a goal which alone seems to them worth attaining, the rest appearing as unsubstantial or illusory. The fathomless peace of the Eternal or the unutterable ecstasy of the Godhead gives a profound satisfaction to the deeper parts of their being and carries with it a limpid freedom and finality which preclude any further quest or seeking. Most of the sacred writings of the world enjoin upon men to seek only the immortality and infinity of the Spirit and give up all other aspirations. An exclusive concentration on the eternal or the supreme Knowledge or Truth has, therefore, been the dominant spiritual note for many a century and claimed the absolute loyalty of some of the rarest men in the world. But even the liberation of the individual soul or the realization of the immutuble Eternal or the bliss of the divine embrace in the depths of the being may seem to some to be a falling short and not the supreme fulfillment. Something more is wanted, something more comprehensive and complete, something that is real not only to the inner or imperishable consciousness, but also to the outermost active personality of man, and patent and palpable even to his physical senses.

The fourth category consists, therefore, of those exceptional souls who hunger for the highest possible perfection and fulfillment in life. They are born with a sense of the indivisible unity of existence and cannot rest satisfied with any experience that cuts up this unity into pairs of opposites: Spirit and Matter, Light and Life, One and Many, Reality and Appearance etc. And the unity they aspire to in X is not only the eternal and essential unity of all existence, but also the unity that breathes and blooms in opulent rainbow splendour even in all that is fleeting and phenomenal. The essential and the expressionals aspects of the one Reality are felt by them as eternal correlates and seizable by an englobing realization. Besides, they feel that the expressionals aspect is not a confused blur of teeming elements, but a real cosmos, an ordered evolution, a mounting harmony, self-conscious, self-sufficing and invincibly purposive. But what has been up to now only a feeling and a vague, if intermittent, aspiration is luminously revealed by the Mother as the very goal of human life and the central secret of the soul's descent into human birth.

"August 29, 1914."

Of what use would be man if he was not made to throw a bridge between what is eternally true, but is not manifested, and that which is manifested; between all the transcendences, all the splendours of the divine life and all the obscurity and sorrowful ignorance of the material world? Man is the intermediary between That which has to be and that which is; he is a bridge thrown over the abyss, he is the great X as the cross, the quaternary link. His true abode, the effective seat of his consciousness, should be in the intermediate world at the joining point of the four arms of the cross, where all the infinity of the Unknownable comes to take precise form for being projected into the multidimensional manifestation.

This centre is the seat of supreme love and perfect consciousness, of pure and total knowledge. Establish there, O Lord, who can, who must and who will to serve Thee truly, so that Thy work may be done, the bridge may be definitively established and Thy forces may spread universally in the world."
"Only to bring God's forces to waiting Nature,
To help with wide-winged peace her troubled labour
And heal with joy her ancient sorrow,
Casting down light on the insistent darkness"

(The Collected Poems of Sri Aurobindo)

Man has to combine with himself, because it is the Divine in him who combines in Himself, the transcendent, the universal and the individual. His individuality is meant to be a focal point and expressive facet of the universal and the transcendent. He is destined to be at once the golden crown of the evolutionary Nature which began her ascent, from the spirit of the Inconscient and the most complete and creative embodiment of the descending Love, Light and beatific Force of the eternal, unconditioned upon earth.

It is a commonplace of spiritual philosophy that God is the ultimate goal of life, and it has also been an experience of countless men, purchased at the cost of many a cruel pang and bitter remorse and cheerless raving in the wilderness of the world. Even the politicians of today, who have forsworn to ply a trade in blustering falsehood and burned hypocrisy, take the name of God and implore His protection at the crises and junctures of their lives. All the hackneyed cay of rationalism is hushed and the pride of bolstered up personality falls to the ground when, at a crucial moment, the soul of man turns to its eternal Master. Even rank atheism sometimes betrays a tremor or a glimmer of faith, a pin-point of hope and trust upon which, as upon a rock of safety, it can rest its tired head in the midst of an unappeasable agony of doubt. God is not only the friend and refuge of the poor and the weak, but also the secret guide and deliverer of the high and mighty.

But all has not been said even when God is affirmed as the goal of life. God—yes, of course; but what do we mean by God? Is God only a static, transcendent, nameless Reality to which the soul has to climb and cease? Is the upward ascent to the sole legitimate monument of the aspiring human consciousness and can it affirm a retreat to its Source as its only goal? Has the soul of man taken upon itself the burden of terrestrial birth only to fling it on the wayside and run back to the Incommunicable? Is not there any glorious performance of this long toil and travail upon earth? The naked soul beating a precipitate retreat to its Maker may rejoice, but

"O Soul, it is too early to rejoice!
Thou hast reached the boundless silence of the Self,
Thou hast leaped into a glad divine abyss;
But where hast thou thrown self's mission and self's power?
On what dead bank on the eternal road?
One was within thee who was all the world,
What hast thou done for His purpose in the stars?
Escape is not the victory and the crown!
Something thou canst not do from the Unknown,
But nothing is finished and the world goes on,
Because only half God's cosmic work is done.
Only the everlasting No has neared
And stared into thy eyes and killed thy heart:
But where is the Lover's everlasting Yes,
And immortality in the secret heart?
A black veil has been lifted; we have seen
The mighty shadow of the omniscient Lord;
But where has lifted up the veil of light
And who has seen the body of the King?...
To free the self is but a radiant pace;
Here to fulfil Himself was God's desire.

The goal towards which the Mother would have us advance is just this full filling of God in the world. So, when she speaks of the union integral with the Divine, she means a union out of which will pour, as from an inexhaustible fountain, His Love and Light and blissful Force upon this obscure material world.

"O divine Mother, Thy march is triumphal and uninterrupted. He who unites with Thee in an integral love journeys uneasingly towards vaster and vaster horizons, towards a completer and completer realization, leaping from peak to peak in the splendour of Thy light, to the conquest of the marvellous secrets of the Unknown and their integral manifestation."

The Mother never tires of insisting on manifestation, the manifestation or revelation of the Divine in Matter, the shaping of His perfect Form in the clay. This, according to her, the work of all works, the Goal of all goals.

"My sole aspiration is to know Thee better and serve Thee better every day. Knowledge, Power, Love, Union—all are harnessed to bring about the manifestation which is the purpose of God in creation."


"Let the pure perfume of sanctification burn always, rising higher and higher, and straighter and straighter, like the ceaseless prayer of the integral being, desiring to unite with Thee so as to manifest Thee."

So long as one is in the material world, living the material life in a physical body, one cannot lead the life of an absorbed contemplative—the ineluctable necessities of this life will constantly pull at his elbow and remind him again and again of the work he has to accomplish and the debt he has to discharge. He may elect to be stone-deaf and content himself with the meditative state of consciousness, and thus his work would be to hasten the earthly transfiguration, for accomplishing Thy sublime work.

What fire-flakes of words to kindle the consciousness of man into the right perception of his goal and the right aspiration for its attainment!

Dwelling on the right attitude man should take for the progressive attainment of his goal, the Mother says, "To be constantly in search of Thee in everything, to will to manifest Thee better in every circumstance—in this attitude is to be found the perfect serenity, true contentment. In it life blooms, widens, spreads out so magnificently, in such majestic surges that no storm can any more trouble it."

The main cause of the human misery, ideological confusion and colossal dissipation of energy in the present world is the lack of a definite goal of life. Men have chosen to be fleasom and jettison upon the tempestuous ocean of life. They're a wandering without an aim, a hopeless, rudderless drift. Depolarized, deflected from the true course, dulled by appearances and seduced by contrary interest and passion, they are driven in the direction of the things of sense, of the perishable, true contentment.

In it life blooms, widens, spreads out so magnificently, in such majestic surges that no storm can any more trouble it."

Give peace and light to them all, O Lord; open their blinded eyes and their obscured understanding, calm their useless torments and futile cares. Turn their regard away from themselves and give them the joy of consecration to Thy work without calculation or mental reserve. Let Thy beauty blossom in everything, awaken Thy love in all hearts, so that Thy eternally a lurid rash without; but he can never arrive at a conquest of the evils of life and a victorious vindication of the omnipotence of the Spirit.

"Even he who might have arrived at perfect contemplation in silence and solitude, could only have done so by extracting himself from his body, by making an abstraction of himself; and thus the substance of which the body is constituted would remain as impure, as imperfect as before, since he would have abandoned it to itself; by a misguided mysticism, by the attraction of supraphysical splendor, by the egotistic desire of being united with Thee for his personal satisfaction, he would have turned his back upon the reason of his earthly existence, he would have refused cowardly to accomplish his mission to redeem and purify Matter. To know that a part of our being is perfectly pure, to commune with that purity, to be identified with it, can be useful only if we subsequently utilize this knowledge for hastening the earthly transfiguration, for accomplishing Thy sublime work.

What fire-flakes of words to kindle the consciousness of man into the right perception of his goal and the right aspiration for its attainment!

Dwelling on the right attitude man should take for the progressive attainment of his goal, the Mother says, "To be constantly in search of Thee in everything, to will to manifest Thee better in every circumstance—in this attitude is to be found the perfect serenity, true contentment. In it life blooms, widens, spreads out so magnificently, in such majestic surges that no storm can any more trouble it."

The main cause of the human misery, ideological confusion and colossal dissipation of energy in the present world is the lack of a definite goal of life. Men have chosen to be fleasom and jettison upon the tempestuous ocean of life. They're a wandering without an aim, a hopeless, rudderless drift. Depolarized, deflected from the true course, dulled by appearances and seduced by contrary interest and passion, they are driven in the direction of the things of sense, of the perishable, true contentment.
In one of the galleries of the Louvre there is a picture by Breughel the Elder. It is a pleasant pastoral scene, a church in the background and in the middle distant fields, cows grazing, sheep and hens rescattering. In the foreground there are six blind men walking and drinking and trying to hold the man in front of him by holding on to his stick. The first is already in the ditch and the second is beginning to fall; it seems inevitable that the remaining four will follow the first two. The name of the picture is “The Parable of the Blind Men.” The Scriptures have it: “If the blind lead the blind shall they not both fall into the ditch?”—and that was how it was: it was becoming common in the story of mankind until a man, or rather a mere boy, no more than twenty years old, was sent by fate to break the spell.

He himself had been blind since the age of three. The sights of his childhood—the little village of Couperay itself, near Meaux in the new province of Brie—had so often preached, and the milling body of the winding River Marne, and the road to Fably—must have been no more than a hazy mist in the boy’s mind, whose keenest delight was the fluctuation and thunder of the organ before his father’s organ, and his blindness made doubly sensitive. Louis Braille could not see the nature of the lesson in these like the other boys of his generation, nor even his heart be pierced by the grievous news of the Engage of the Empire in 1814. While the Imperial Column was working his own undoing in the seepage of Russia misfortune struck down the child Louis Braille. Playing in his father’s saddlers shop, the knife with which he was trying to cut a piece of leather got stuck in trying to pull it out somehow it pierced his eye. Then sympathetic ophthalmia attacked the other eye and left him blind.

Since then he had found to begin compensation for his physical darkness in an exquisitely sensitive ear and an acquired loving of sound brought light to his spirit.

Light

The Quest for Light

Homer tells us how, sailing the Mediterranean on a day when the sun made the sea blue, brought blessed weather and dizzled men, he could not resist looking into the eye of it and its blazing light scattered body and soul alike. Never could fiasco be found nor of a more severe day, to press the infinite tragedy of the man who will never see again.

A light which darkened the eyes and lightened the soul of the poet little by little took possession of Louis Braille and in the course of his childhood and his young manhood his own took shape within him. When he was ten years old his parents sent him to the Prefectural Institute for Blind Children in Paris, founded by Valentin Haüy in 1830, and the first school of instruction for the blind. Here they struggled against infinite difficulties to find the efficient method for teaching reading. The founder first, and later, in 1821, Charles-Philippe de la Cotte de Laffaye, of the order of cavalry, had tried two systems, the first involving the printing of books in ordinary lettering but in relief and the second a system of phonetic signs worked out by Barbier during his military career to enable soldiers to communicate by using the light of a candle.

Louis Braille was twelve years old when Barbier, feeling his system might help the blind, presented it to the Royal Institute. Louis Braille began to realize the imperfections of the two systems by which his vision had been restored and an idea started to bubble in him to which he turned his able and sensitive mind and vivid imagination.

He was an outstanding pupil and was early appointed monitor of the College and later—before he was twenty-one—“profiteur,” the equivalent of a teacher on the establishment. He taught geometry, algebra and music, the great love of his life, and was also organist of several churches in Paris. Nevertheless, the hope of escaping the confines of the establishment in misfortune to whose life his intellect was devoted and who through his suffering had taught him what his intuition had suggested to be true.

Braille’s Genius and Its Results

Braille’s genius devised the system by which the blind (of whom there are more than seven millions in the world) can read and write, or, as he expressed it in his own words, he broke the chain of fate which the Plenish painter illustrated in his “Parable of the Blind.” It is not that the blind cannot build a house, but that they cannot read or write—the withdrawn but sunny smiles which now uplift up their faces in the contrary. Yet that inner life could still be made richer by the delights of reading or creative writing; and if this could be achieved there would be restored to the blind the many satisfactions which physical sight can give.

In 1825, when he was sixteen, Louis Braille completed what with slight modifications which he himself introduced five years later was to become the universal system of reading and writing for the blind. His motive had been to serve the blind, and as a blind man himself he never forgot to give credit to Barbier for the original idea: “If it has been my good luck to have done something which may be useful to my companions in misfortune I ever repeat that my gratitude is owed to M. Barbier who was the first to invent a system of writing by raised, broads for the use of the blind.” Barbier himself admitted in 1839, and again publicly in 1834, the superiority of the method discovered by Braille over that with which he himself had created.

Very briefly the essence of Braille’s invention was the introduction of the 64 possible mathematical combinations of a figure of six raised vertical lines arranged in two rows of three at most, to represent not only the alphabet but punctuation marks, musical figures and mathematical and musical symbols, and a special device of the guide bars and a series of rectangular components enabled the blind to construct the otherwise insuperable difficulties of writing.

With Braille, the gropings of Hauy and Barbier became a practical science which 121 years of experience have served only to confirm. Braille, the savior of the blind, who still brings inner light to those who can no longer see the light of the sun, died of tuberculosis on 6 January 1852 at the age of 43. Since then the intellectual heritage of the blind has been enriched to the extent that a single item of statistics can best indicate: the library of the National Institute of the Blind of France for one day contains 150,000 works all transcribed in Braille.

Study of a World-Problem

However, although the problem has been resolved in theory, the enormous handicap faced by blind persons makes it in practice insoluble; other difficulties limiting the advantage derived from Braille’s excellent invention have been the high cost of printing, diversity of language and the use of more than one Braille alphabet. Moreover, the danger grew greater every day of yet more differences and if a speedy remedy had not been sought the blind would have lost the immense benefit of having with their very Numerical and rational system whereby they had held their fingertips to replace their blinded eyes. Accordingly, when France was asked by the Government of India to study the problem, it decided to make it a major problem.

And so a preparatory meeting was called some months back attended by the most distinguished experts, almost all blind themselves, to study the question of a satisfactory solution through agreement on rules for a gradual adaptation of the alphabet to the many written and spoken—more language of East and West. This first meeting took place in December 1949 and laid down the main lines for the 1950 Conference between 20 and 29 March. Mornings, noon and night the visitor to Unesco House these days is the white sticks and sightless eyes of blind experts from fourteen countries, India, Australia, Japan, New Zealand and many others who had come to perfect the universal instrument destined for their seven million companions.

In the programme of the Conference there is one final item: the tribute of the blind experts to the man who made it possible for them to be modern men of culture. On 29 March the members of the Conference for the Standardization of Braille left Paris on a pilgrimage to Couperay in the department of Seine et Marne.

For two hours as they passed along the road to the village, the rolling landscape of the Ile de France unfolded before them, with the Spring just bursting the buds of the poplars and thorn trees and the first sprouts of tender green beginning to show. The eyes of the pilgrims saw none of it. And when they got to Couperay these men of all races and all peoples, for whom the name of Braille is that of the apostle of their redemption, visited the house where he had been born and his bust in the market place and the tomb in which he lies.

They left Couperay each of the blind experts invited by Unesco to its Conference passed his gloved or beading hands over the calm and noble features of Braille’s statue and each of them fixed those features in his memory that he might later tell his brethren in misfortune, back in his own country, why he had been able to see in the face of the youthful genius who in 1829 opened for them a window to the light of culture.

My thanks are due to M. Pierre Henri, professor in the Institut des Jeunes Aveugles de France, one of the experts attending this Conference, blind like Braille and like him vowed to try to give the blind, for his kindness in giving me information by word of mouth and allowing me to use the most interesting article published in the last number of Cahiers Français d’Information.

(An “Exclusive” from UNESCO)

The Paramour of Soordas

“You deem me a blash That men can die But death comes gathering flowers, And a flower am I. Why do you strain To a little thing Your mouth of limitless Heart-hungering? Tear down this tireful Mask of me: What you desire, O blare, Is Seeker of unflawed Loveliness— Let all your passion of body Inward press Unto a Splendour of total decay. Hold in a powerful Space of sheathing clay The ineffable Spirit Whose mystery Also shall fill your loves Immensity!”

K. D. SETHNA

MOTHER INDIA, APRIL 29, 1950.
NEW TRENDS IN WESTERN THOUGHT
GREEK GIFTS
BY SIR RICHARD CLIFFORD TUTE
The Hibbert Journal

In the days of the old Roman Emperors the Greeks were regarded as the most able exploiters of the art of philosophy. The Greek was proverbially even when he bought gifts, and the concentration with a charge which used to be brought about races and movements against groups and movements not confined to national boundaries.

I
Before the Renaissance the great Christian Church, which then held not only a virtual monopoly of theological learning, but claimed to interpret all learning, became notably decadent. In France it was the chief support of professors to framework of society which was leading to its fall. In England the Reformation started a clearance in political and other pretensions that had little to do with religious whims which had scandalous aspects of which the people and their rulers habitually kept knowledge. It is known, in the downfall of the Roman Catholicism as a ruling factor in the life of the nation.

Meanwhile other forces were moving into recognition. The most important, the experience of Galileo emphasized the futility of permitting churchmen to decide by law matters of observable and therefore science. Isaac's Newcomen Organ placed this matter beyond the range of ecclesiastical interference, and supplied the small band of scientific engineers with a solid philosophical groundwork for their researches. In those days science was a sort of offset of philosophy. Indeed scientific enquiry was looked upon as the appeasement of Natural Philosophy. In France in the century which followed the recognition, a powerful and growing body of educated men made it a fact that truth concentrated on the aspects of which the Church regarded as falling exclusively within its spiritual jurisdiction. These were the Encyclopaedists. The most notable figure among them was Voltaire.

Their chief contribution to the forces which were bringing about the Revolution was the turning away of large numbers of educated men from the religion of their fathers. They not only ceased to believe in the old religion, but they ceased to think about any religion. In its stead they held that the universe is a dead, self-created mechanism, in which man and his creeds are abstractions incomparable to the insignificance of the earth to the infinity of the dead world. They also held that a mechanism that contains a delusion that it is something more important than the religions which profess to worship him. The mischievous and mistaken organisations which in the society are as meaningless as the habits of the social animals and insects.

The French Revolution was followed by a period of supposedly scientific declarations of cosmic truth. Comte, the great materialistic philosopher, initiated the worship of the goddess of reason, and founded a new religion which he called the Religion of Humanity. Churches were erected for the new I am. One was set up in London. The sect had its services a couple of times a week, the number of the faithful about 100 years after the Religion of Humanity was founded. They constituted a fact in a substantial worship by man of himself. The impression I carried away with me was one of futility.

The mathematician Laplace was one of Comte's contemporaries. He is best remembered for the statement that a mathematician of adequate ability, who was supplied with all data on the universe, could accept them without abandoning religious faith. However, as education spread, atheists or agnostics, who constituted a progressive emptiness of the churches. The tenets of the religion of Humanity were simple and for this reason commanded an often unswerving, but apparently unchangeable, acceptance that the effect of the society of writers on social science in its various aspects generally be to base their conclusions on the background of cosmic mechanism. For example the philosopher Malthus held that every kind of living organism tends to increase up to the limit of the subsistence provided by its surroundings. At that limit there is a check, which is a feature of organisms which support their existence with great difficulty, and by dint of hard struggle. This condition, which is often quoted, enabled the great industrialists of the nineteenth century to condone an organisation of industry which is based on an inhuman condition of industry which is based on an inhuman condition of the nation.

The concept of Marx is that this existing attitude and condition for which natural law was responsible, and not the industrialists and those who flourished exceedingly exceedingly with the ex- ploitation of human misery. Many industrialists and their friends attempted to alleviate by private charity appalling conditions for which they believed to cure exist- ed, or could exist. Others, and they appear to have been in the majority, took un ashamed advantage of them. This exposed their incapacity by quoting another supposed economic which missed restricted competition to the level of another nature. Their watchword was laissez faire.

This means what the Darwinian means by the survival of the fittest. As Arthur Conan Doyle has shown in his 'The English Saga', these and other supposedly scientific laws of human nature which have been accepted and acted upon by the governments of the time. Of these the most notable is the one that states that man will not be able to maintain which then led the world in industry, and the industrial condition of the society tolerated were generally accepted abroad as having the in- evitability of natural law. His book shows with convincing clarity that the second half of the nineteenth century saw a great deal of mechanization of the conditions of industry, not, apparently, because industrialists and social philosophers were finding that their views were mistaken, but mainly, or entirely, because the human nature was in itself impractical against them. Many scientists and industrial workers believed in them up to the end of the century. Many of them still believe in them. But many still regard as scientific and of the resultant optical out- look, rejects them. What many still regard as scientific and inevitable is now forgotten on the higher ground that it is humanly impos- sible.

II
For many the Marxist variant on natural law replaces the old scientific declarations. It substitutes for the idea of human inexorability in the proletariat for the Marxian industrialists, and supplies the haughtiness which is new with a brand of scientific fuel. The claim is a claim to scientific. Its claim is in process of being tested, presumably by another world-wide way, which the Marxian science holds to be inevitable and justifiable. His ultimate basis is also strengthened by the Capitalist structure. It is the cold materialistic atheism.

This aspect counts, that which justified the cruel industrialism of the first half of the nineteenth century, and that, which, according to Marx, justifies a hatred that seeks to break up every civilized society, science quoted as the compell- ing cause. In the first case we may follow Comte picturing the god of truth as the presiding deity. In the second she must be seen as enshrined by Marx's new God of Hate.

What we have to note is that science in its early stages of materialism is directly responsible, both for the horrors of the early industrial age, and for the degradation of the working era of Marxian hate, which later blended with the texture of a society that was trying to temper scientific industrialism with unscientific benevolence. Since then Marxism has become the driving force of what can only be called a world-wide religious of necessity.

When an unthinking generation praises science as an unexcelled blessing, these facts should be recalled. Against them we must of course set the material benefits that we owe to science. They are practically innumerable, but hardly any of them are indispensable. The aver- age man is not apt to be better off or worse for having been to send a telegram to his friend abroad. The recommendation on this advance can be doubted by the telephone, though it is hardly uplifting to the soul. We are well on the way of eliminating space, but this merely makes life a little more burdensome than it used to be to the agriculturist, is useful for the establishment of God or the machine have been silenced by the discovery that the relationship between God and man is not as the man has discovered the relationship between energy and mass. It has never existed for the ordi- nary man.

Let us pursue this boast of the pursuit of truth a little further.
We have seen that the new background is drawn from our continuity which lies beyond the reach of science. But the scientific researches which are supposed to help us to hold back this fact in the background. There is a scientific group which exists,
THE BANGLALAKSHMI INSURANCE LTD.,
33, Netaji Subhas Road,
CALCUTTA.

DISCLOSED A COMFORTABLE SURPLUS
IN THE VALUATION AS AT 31-12-48.

Wanted Chief Agents for Bombay and other provinces throughout India on attractive terms.

This is a specimen copy you are receiving; it is an invitation to subscribe.

you find it significant and interesting, don't fail to avail yourself of the subscription form below,

As a subscriber to MOTHER INDIA for

Contents
1. PREDICTIONS AND PROPHECIES—PATE AND KARMA
2. SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS
3. POSSIBILITIES OF LOVE
4. LOVE AND SEX
5. TRANSFORMATION OF SEX-ENERGY
6. THE ROLE OF RELIGION
7. RELIGION AND REASON
8. SUPERSTITION—POPULAR BELIEFS—OCCULTISM
9. COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE DEAD—SUPERFICIAL PHENOMENA
10. THE PROBLEM OF GOOD AND EVIL
11. THE LAW OF KARMA
12. KARMA AND FREE WILL
13. KARMA AND REBIRTH
14. KARMA AND JUSTICE
15. KARMA AND MOBILITY
16. THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE
17. SUBJECTIVISM AND OBJECTIVISM

AVAILABLE NOW IN BOOK-FORM
LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS
(First Series)

Sri Aurobindo's views on important life-problems
compiled and arranged from his writings
by KISHOR GANDHI

Price: Rs. 2/8: SRI Aurobindo Circle, 32 Rampart Row, Bombay.
LIGHTS ON LIFE PROBLEMS

One of our chief aims will be to provide authentic guidance in regard to the many important questions which arise in the minds of thoughtful persons all over the world. This cannot be better done than by considering these questions in the light of Sri Aurobindo's writings, because Sri Aurobindo is not only a Master of Yoga in the possession of the Inner Spiritual Realms, the Helper of mankind in various spheres of life and thought. To bring home the light of this guidance and to make that guidance present accessible to the problems of daily life, an observing intelligence, a series of questions of common interest along with precise answers directly taken from Sri Aurobindo's writings will regularly appear in these columns.

Q. 1. I. A. Richards in his book "Science and Poetry" tries to establish that the aim and function of science are altogether distinct from the aim and function of poetry. Science is concerned with the seeking of truth, but poetry has nothing to do with the finding or expression of truth. He attaches very high value to the aesthetic experience which poetry yields but does not admit that it can in anyway reveal to us truth. Is this true? As the poet can express, in his own peculiar manner the truth of philosophy and religion, can he not also reveal in his distinct fashion the truth which the scientist discovers in his special field?

A: "Infinite Truth has her many distinct ways of expressing and finding herself and each way must be kept distinct and the law of one must not be applied to the law of another form of her self-expression; and yet that does not mean that the material is not for the material of another, though it must be cast by a different power into a different mould, or that all do not meet on their tops. Truth of poetry is not truth of philosophy or truth of science or truth of religion only because it is another way of the expression of Infinite Truth so distinct that it appears to give quite another face of things and reveal quite another side of experience. A poet may have a religious 'creed' or subscribe to a system of philosophy or take himself like his god, or be a poet or certain Indian soul of wonder of things, not the mechanical miracle. The method of these other powers is the order of creation, the rigorous based and patiently self-assured steps of the systematising intelligence and the aspect of Truth which they uncover is a form measured out from the world of ideas and the world of sense by the eye of the intellectual reason. The godpoised philosopher or the discovering scientist cannot indeed do without the aid of a greater power, intuition, 'but ordinarily he has to bring what nearer more suitable intuition, finally, gives him into a more deliberate air under the critical light of the intelligence and establish it in the dialectic or analytical way of philosophy and science before the intellect as judge. The mind of the poet sees by intuition and direct perception and brings out what they give him by a formative stress on the total image, and the aspect to which he thrills is the living truth of the form, the life of that inspires it, of the creative thought behind and the supporting movement of the soul and a rhythmical harmonis of these things revealed to his delight in their beauty. These fields and paths lie very wide apart, and if any voice from the others reach and claim the ear of the poetic creator, they must change greatly in their form and suit themselves to the warmth and colour of his atmosphere before they can find right of entry into his kingdom."

Q. 2. What is the reason of this difficulty? Is it not possible for the poet to overcome this difficulty and present to us, though in a different way, the same essential truth of science, religion and philosophy?

A: "This is another cult and worship and the moment the poet stands before the shrine of the Muse, he has to change his robes of mind, the poet of another, and serve the rites of a different consecration. He has to bring out into the front that other personality in him who looks with a more richly irtised seeing eye and speaks with a more rapturous voice. The others have not the same intensity of the word because they do not feel it to its fountainhead, even though each has its own intense delight, as philosophy has its joy of deep and comprehensive understanding and religion its hardly expressible rapture. Still it remains true that the poet expresses in some way to the one who is the poet in all of us, the same truth in essence as the philosopher or the man of religion or the man of science."

Q. 3. What is the essential difference between the pursuits of the poet and the artist and those of the philosopher, the scientist and the religious seeker?

A: "The difference which separates these great things of the mind is a difference of the principal, the indispensable instrument we must use and of the appeal to the mind and the whole manner. There is a whole gulf of difference. The philosopher sees in the dry light of the reason, proceeds dispensationally by a severe analysis and abstraction of the intellectual content of the truth, a logical progress from idea to pure idea, a method difficult and nebulous to the ordinary, hard, arid, impossible to the poetic mind. For the poetic mind sees in a cone a flood of coloured light, in a moved experience, in an ecstasy of the coming of the world, in a splendid form, in a spontaneous leaping out of inspired idea upon idea, sparks of the hoof-heats of the white flame horse Dhadhrakaran galloping up the mountain of the gods of breath and hue of wing striking into wing of the irised broods of Thought flying over earth or up towards heaven. The scientist proceeds also by the intellectual reason but with a microscopic scrutiny which brings it to bear on an analysis of sensible facts, his correct measure and relation of force and energy as he is seen or the fact of existence, and joins continually link of fact with fact and coil of process with process till he has under his hand at least in skeleton and issue the chain of apparent things. But the poetic mind is a dead mechanical thing for the eye of the poet loves to look on breathing acting life in its perfected synthesis and rhythm, not on the constituent measures, still less on the dissected parts, and his very certain Indian soul of wonder of things, not the mechanical miracle. The method of these other powers is the order of creation, the rigorous based and patiently self-assured steps of the systematising intelligence and the aspect of Truth which they uncover is a form measured out from the world of ideas and the world of sense by the eye of the intellectual reason. The godpoised philosopher or the discovering scientist cannot indeed do without the aid of a greater power, intuition, 'but ordinarily he has to bring what nearer more suitable intuition, finally, gives him into a more deliberate air under the critical light of the intelligence and establish it in the dialectic or analytical way of philosophy and science before the intellect as judge. The mind of the poet sees by intuition and direct perception and brings out what they give him by a formative stress on the total image, and the aspect to which he thrills is the living truth of the form, the life of that inspires it, of the creative thought behind and the supporting movement of the soul and a rhythmical harmonis of these things revealed to his delight in their beauty. These fields and paths lie very wide apart, and if any voice from the others reach and claim the ear of the poetic creator, they must change greatly in their form and suit themselves to the warmth and colour of his atmosphere before they can find right of entry into his kingdom."

Q. 4. But are these great pursuits of the human mind entirely different and separate? Is there no point where they meet?

A: "Their meeting is not here at the base, but on the tops. The philosopher's reasoning intelligence discovers only a system of thought symbols and the reality they figure cannot be gained by the intelligence, but needs direct intuition, a living contact, a close experience by identity in our self of knowledge. That is work not for a dialectical, but a bright revelatory thinking, a luminous body of intuitive thought and spiritual experience which carries us right into sight, into vision of knowledge. The first effort of philosophy is to know for the sake of pure understanding, but her greater height is to take Truth alive in the spirit and clasp and grow one with her and be consciously within ourselves all the reality which we only need to know. But that is precisely what the poet strives to do in his own way by intuition and imagination, when he labours to bring himself close to and to live by sight with the thing of beauty which awakens his joy. He does not always seize the very self of all being, but to do so lies within his power. The language of intuitive thinking moves always therefore to an affinity with poetic speech and in the ancient Spaniards it seems as commonly as its natural vehicle. The Spirit went abroad, a thing pure, bright, unworn, without body or sinew or scar: the Seer, the Thinker, the Self-born, broke into being all around us, decreed of old all things in their nature from long eternal. There sun shines not nor moon nor stars these lightenings blaze nor fire of luminescent only with his light'. Are we listening, one might ask, to the voice of poetry or philosophy or religion? It is all three voices cast in one, indistinguishable in the eternal choir. And there is too and similarly a pure intuitive science which comes into the field".

Continued on page 11