THE CHINESE DRAGON
THE FOLLY OF THE U.N. RETREAT IN KOREA
By "LIBRA"

During the suspension of "Mother India" for a month and a half after the passing of Sri Aurbindo, the following trenchant article was published under a different title in the Delhi weekly, "Thought", on January 5. With acknowledgments to that magazine we are reproducing the still timely message from that article. Certain segments omitted, because of space limitations are restored, a few significant alterations have been introduced by the author, and, in view of recent events, important new matter has been added by him.

To be or not to be at war with Red China is the question that for quite a long while caused puckered brows in the corridors of the U.S. A. More than two months ago, General MacArthur spotted an increasing number of Chinese troops fighting shoulder to shoulder with the North Koreans in the vicinity of the Yalu River. But there was no call by the American Government to the free world to brand Mao as an aggressor. Diplomatic heeds shook this way and that, and without arriving at a definite decision. Then an overwhelming horde of Chinese solidery bore down on the North Koreans and threatened MacArthur with a complete rout. President Truman rose to the occasion and demanded that Red China be internationally condemned: it even seemed as if, in case the U. N. failed, he would proceed independently in sheer self-defense to attack Manchuria with every weapon necessary—the Atom Bomb included.

At this moment, Premier Attlee of England intervened and pleaded that America's action against China would precipitate World War III and, for the sake of out-of-the-way Korea, bring the Russians rolling across Western Europe and pulverizing England herself with an atomic assault. Truman was reined back, with the highly ironic result that a huge withdrawal commenced in Korea of one of the mightiest military powers in the world under the command of one of the greatest living generals. England and Western Europe heaved a sigh of relief: they said that mankind had been saved from a cataclysm and also that the wholesale pulling out of the G.I.'s and other U.N. armies from occupied territories constituted no appeasement of aggressive Communism so long as there was no surrendering of Korea to the Reds without a fight. The first statement is pretty dubious and the second, for all its bravery, is rather fatuous; but Attlee's advice appears to have been easily persuaded into a futility and treachery. What is the cause of this swing away from the determination and the drive that had once characterized her action?

There is, on her part, hardly any palliating where Russian and Chinese Communism is concerned. Her vision of the mind and face of this Communism is quite unclouded, nor is the least attempt made to buy off Mao by presenting him with Farmosa and a seat in the Security Council. But a mixture of certain obscure feelings is perceptible to any keen observer of the general American consciousness—a mixture that, even apart from consideration of the safety of England and Western Europe, interferes with action along correct lines. There is a kind of mythic sense of China as a vast, sulen, brooding mass of endless humanity emerging from the dawn of time and persisting unconquerable through the ages. Out of this sense arises a number of vague conclusions. First, it is not good luck to molest the sprawling old giant. Second, it is dangerous to get involved with an immense population of 475 millions in an almost interminable game of holding life unhinkably cheap. Third, so ancien a race has a phenomenal stamina against which modern nations with their comparatively flabby histories cannot stand for long. Superficially the American mentality, with its roots not going beyond a few experimental centuries and its eagerness for quick results, seems on the surface to be the least fitted for waging war on such a race. Hence the U.S.A.'s reluctance for nearly a month to think even of naming Red China as the aggressor in Korea an act of aggression. America does not shirk war with Communism, but if she can put off the day of tackling China she will hardly be sorry. Fortunately an opposite species of mind is also at work—what we may call the MacArthur mind—which does not let the backlook, so to speak, on historical China remain quite dominant. But a degree of hesitation seems to have been a constant impediment and may, particularly under the pressure of arguments à la Attlee, prove dangerous if the eyes are not fixed on the contemporary Chinese scene rather than on past history.

Before we point out the features of this scene we may dispose of an argument which speaks of the Indian Government have built up to demonstrate the wisdom of India's warning to the U.N. at the time the 38th Parallel was crossed. America is told: "Had you not turned a deaf ear and so outranked China would not have taken a hand in the Korean scramble if you pressed the attack into Korea, you would have avoided the unpleasant situation of fighting Chinese troops. We were the only sober voice in the democratic world and we were not heedless." The argument seems weighty at first but a little scrutiny shows it to be over-stuffed. To begin with, we did nothing apologetic in pointing out the possibility of Chinese intervention, the risk of being faced with Mao's troops. In fact, Mr. George Kennan of the U.S. State Department's former top policy planner, kept consistently advising that the Parallel should not be crossed lest it should provoke Red China. The American Government was well aware of the likelihood of Mao coming to Kim Il-sung's aid. But there were two questions. One was: Would he take any measures which would be really effective? As no aid could be really effective without his being shown to have openly put his finger into the pie, the crucial question was the other: Would he expose himself as aggressor? If the answer could be "Yes", then there would be world war. So everything depended on whether Mao was prepared for a global clash. Those who favoured the crossing of the Parallel were of the opinion that he would not make it the occasion to throw the Chinese who would not all be so much afraid. And what has happened bears them out, though at the same time we must admit that effective aid has been given. This is a bit of a paradox which must be understood before judgment is passed on the crossing. Effective aid has been given only because, contrary to expectation, the U.N. proved morally too weak to cope with the sinuous tactics of the Chinese dragon. Mao, from the start, has officially declared that the Chinese who are fighting in Korea are not Red regulars but only volunteers. That is to say, he is anxious not to commit his country and to lay himself open to the charge of aggression which would directly set him at loggerheads with Truman and the leaders of fifty-three nations. So, while America and her allies have permitted him to get away with his subterfuge and have thereby suffered a terrible jolt, their reading of his mind must be confounded to have been essentially correct.

It may be urged: "This is cold comfort and, though technically China has not even intervened, the 'volunteers' are enough of a steady growing evil which has materialized precisely because the U.N. Forces did not confine themselves to South Korea. What has been gained by providing China with an excuse to start a free flow of 'volunteers'?' The answer is that the U.N. Forces would not have been, on the whole, better off without carrying the war into the enemy's country. If North Korea had not been entered, Kim Il-sung's broken army would have been rebuilt thoroughly with Chinese and Russian help and very soon there would have been a second attack and our men would have been out of South Korea. The Chinese "volunteers" have not rushed across the Yalu merely to defend the hydroelectric installations: their openly avowed aim has been to clear all Korea of the Americans and this aim they could have more efficiently pursued if the 38th Parallel had remained uncrossed by the latter. After the crossing there was a crop of difficulties for China, for MacArthur was close to the Manchurian border and might with ease demolish the entire Korean plant and cripple the industries of Manchuria. He might, if necessary, even attack by air deep into Chinese territory. Determined swamping over North Korea considerably advanced the democratic cause, as indeed must all determined steps to check Communist violence and self-aggrandizement. In fact, this swarming drove Mao to a critical fork in his way: he would have to drop, if the U.N. applied pressure, the hoax of
THE CHINESE DRAGON

—Continued from page 1

"volunteer" help and either take the road of a world war he could not
possibly win or escape towards a haven in which an establish-
ed non-Communist Korea would be felt by him as a permanent thorn
in the side of China.

Yes, it was a mistake to advise MacArthur to go soft when he came
to the end of his runway and found his bases in Manchuria under
protest of the Yalu. The right course was still to go on
hitting hard and take all risks of an earth-wide armageddon rather
than give the slightest ground to the strategists of Moscow and Peking.
Further, it was a mistake to believe at all the naiveté of action even
hindered by those vague conclusions born of a semi-perfect
back-look on historical china. Here the point to remember is that
the China which is hand in glove with Soviet Russia has broken with her own past.
That he was simply perplexed by the enormus
spaces and teeming multitudes, like those of India, had some
consciousness subtly steeped in the sense of eternal Tao or timeless
Nirvana or ancestral Father Heaven, the spiritual half-brother of undying
India of the Avatars and the Rishis and the Bhaktas—that China whose
incoherence led him to the conclusion that he was at the end of the road
in this endeavor. He never quite gave up the inspiring cryptic face.
What confronts us today is the very opposite of this strange self-saving giant of the age who could never be trampled down.
Communist China is in no one case, at the time of the great
unnamed a touch of the perennial Spirit's persistence is there no longer or is
at least not visible in the rear of the great dragon. Meanwhile, if only in the
blinding heel upon the visionary heart of evolving man. Formidable, no doubt, is
his ugliness, but it carries in its own mindlessness materialism the doom of
all things that fight against the growing Godhead in free humanity. She can
be crushed and must be crushed without the least fear the moment she
pools on her neighbours and to pierce the defences of democracy.

The query, then, about being or not being at war with Mao was to be met
by the reply that the Chinese had not accepted. The talk always about China questions whether their
interests would be safeguarded by the duly authorized action in
Korea should have been dropped for good. China had had the fullest assurances
possible. The General Assembly of the U.N. adopted as far back as Octo-
ber 7 a resolution declaring that its troops should not go in Korea
than necessary to achieve the goals of peace and unification. Again, the
General Assembly's interim Committee on Korea proclaimed on November
7 that the Korean-Manchurian border would be fully respected by the
forces of the United Nations. Three days later the Security Council saw
the six-power resolution introduced. which gave once more the assurance
that the Chinese frontier with Korea would be held in vacuo and which
carried a pledge implying protection of China's interests in the power grid
tide the Yalu River. In face of these promises which more than forty
nations had underwritten it was absurd to concede that China might be
intervening in Korea out of sheer apprehension about loss of electricity for
her factories. The question of Manchuria was part of the old myth of
Kim II-sung again on his feet and bow down as many of the U.N.'s men
and machines as possible in Korea. The reason why the direct military action
of the U.N. forces has not as seen the parallel was crossed
but only when the Manchurian front was so approached seems to
have been Mao never calculated on the crossing and was taken by surprise that
the U.N. failed to be foe: he had not made sufficient arrangements.
The idea that the Chinese intervention was merely the activity of action
"volunteers" ought to have been resolutely exposed. The New York Times aptly remarked at the moment, over a month back, when President
Truman appeared to be poised for attack: "It should be fairly obvious that the
tanks don't volunteer. Honest Chinese farmers don't just happen to keep
a supply of jet planes in their back yards so as to be able to rush to the
'volunteer' sites, but they are actually equipped with the
tanks and the Red Government was in one of their commitments with them, with
permitting their planes not only to attack American troops, supply columns
and air bases but also to retreat across the Yalu into what MacArthur called
the 'vacuum.' Streaks of the Manchurian front were not the property of private citizens who had "volunteered" to
liberate Korea from the U.N. Forces. The Red Government was clearly
visible in every move of these massified liberators. And it should
be forced to accept its responsibility for any choice might have
been made to it except total withdrawal or full-blown war resulting in the destruct-
ion of Chinese industry by mammoth air-raids—especially the utter devas-
tation of most of the country's coal production from access of Manchuria's 75 per cent of her steel production, 50 per cent of her coal production and 75 per cent of her electric power—Manchuria where lie most of Mao's aspirations to
peace in man's ever more powerful state. Unless the fateful choice was im-
posed on Mao the situation would be to go on with forces and completely
defeat the purpose to which the U.N. were pledged.

Of course, we must not overlook the fine courageous of the decision to
make these important choice rather than write off China. The Americans are
being the brunt of the boot almost continuous abuse原则。 To have also
the credit for convincing the world that Truman will never surrender
but will keep hammering away in even far-off corners of the world which
seem non-vital to America's safety. Doublesight, what is being done is heroic,
for the time being. The Red China is the best choice that we have to
accomplish even the limited objective its strategy aims at in the Korean peninsula? The objective is threefold: (1) to inflict major losses on the
enemy while holding the U.N. lines to the minimum; (2) to hamper fresh
U.N. aid shipments to the rest of Asia; (3) to destroy the Fourth Field Army which is the best-trained Chinese force and much
which is already deployed in Korea; (3) to win time for the clear formul-
ing of the new U.N. political problem for the development of a
reconstruction programme. The success of this objective can be ensured
only if, at the end of delaying tactics all along the line of retreat, a secure
stand can be made for a long time within a semi-circle of defense around the
rest of the U.N. forces. Naval support and air power may help immensely, but will
the last-ditch resistance be possible without violating the condition on
which alone it has been planned—namely, that too heavy casualties should not
be suffered by MacArthur's men? The answer to this question cannot be
a prompt "Yes."

Even if it can be such as a "Yes" and if sizable Chinese forces of the best
type are engaged and increasingly chopped up, Korea will be as good as lost.
A tiny perimeter held for long in the south-east cannot compensate for
the passing of most of the peninsula into Communist hands. What the
U.N. originally set out to do will fall quite short of achievement. And nei-
erly diplomatic nor economic sanctions such as America wants the U.N. to
inforce will help in the long run, for the U.N. political problem is mainly
alternative, to hope for an honourable cease-fire when there is no compulsion on
Mao to accept it to wait for the moon to fall into our lap. Finally, the
very prospects of hindering Red China from fresh military adventures in
the Pacific area have been .so considerable that this is not altogether insufficient for allies in Indo-China and other
adjoining regions. The U.N.'s retiring strategy can only be of limited use. And, all
things considered, the Chinese have to look on it as an extremely gratify-
ing though indirect appeasement of their power. The folly of it is therefore
potent.

Never to allow the Reds to steal a march anywhere on the democracies
or to get the better of them by means of any subterfuges—such a view was the
continual policy of the countries headed by the U.S.A. If the Reds commit
the slightest aggression—they are likely now to do in Indo-China and
elsewhere—they must be boldly countered and the full consequence of their
crime brought home to them. It is only the old myth of
Stalin's survivals which is meant to stand up against Stalin's
manoeuvres in the European theatre or in the Middle East. President
Truman should see to it that in case China is at open war with him Russia is not
permitted to get away with an insidious neutrality. Otherwise the power
which he possesses to smash Mao will never bear final fruit. Under the re-
cent treaty Stalin is obliged to succour Mao, but he will do his utmost to
get out of the awkward position of having been branded explicitly as the accomp-
lace of an aggressor. He will be Mao's domestic problem to solve the
protect that until he sends his own troops against America he cannot be
regarded as being in conflict with this country he will endeavour to keep his
forces in Indo-China and to keep the old myth intact, for the U.S.A., to court suicide. President Truman must
plainly tell Stalin that as soon as Mao is considered by him to be in the
correct minute longer than it suits American needs will he look on Russia as a neutral. Stalin is not ready for a world war— the whole Peace
Campaign set afoot by him through the instrumentality of the Stockholm
Appeal, with the intention to create both psychological and physical resist-
ance within the democracies to the use of America's far superior atomic
stockpile, shows the unreaswized. Hence it is distinctly to America's ad-
antage to prevent Russia from trying to bleed her white in the Asian theatre
trough a China endlessly supplied from behind and yet herself escap-
ing the awesome bombardment of her land and suffering the
withdrawal of her six-power resolution. America is made aware in unequivocal language that this advantage will be fearlessly
pressed he will shocks a dozen times before egging Mao on a major clash which
had been hinted at by the U.N. Forces. If America is defeated by
Korea, then through the cautious loop-hole of the "volunteer" myth the Chinese will
not only have pulled in their claws. Unyielding firmness is the need of the hour.
Never by any other means—least of all by propaganda or con-
cession—will the Communists, at present, either be restrained from
sensing scattered vulnerable regions and thereby strengthening their position for a future triumph with Asia, or else be compelled to fight a world war with a not of their own choosing.

It is not too late for America to return to the wonderful inspiration
with which she plunged—prepared for all eventualities—into the Korean war
for the safety of civilization. That inspiration alone is the free world's
peace without dishonour and without loss of its cherished ideals and values.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The next issue of "Mother India" will be the Special Anniversary Number, dated February 21—with important articles by writers
both Indian and foreign.
FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM FIRST

On the very day the Communists invaded South Korea, June 25, 1950, some of the finest minds of the Western world met in Berlin to deliberate on the central problem facing mankind today: the fate of freedom. Out of these intense discussions these intellectual fighters for liberty fashioned a world-wide movement—the Congress for Cultural Freedom—organized by the United States, Great Britain, France, and the United Nations. This magnificent assembly of enlightened, free thinking people, including the great minds of France, England, and Germany, as well as many others from other countries, met in Berlin to consider the basic problems of freedom and to chart the course of action necessary to promote and protect this precious gift.

President Truman addressed the gathering and stressed the need for a united front of freedom to combat the growing totalitarian threat. The British delegation, headed by Lord Jowitt, and the German delegation, with Karl Jaspers in the chair, were among the prominent figures present. The American delegation, headed by Senator lounge, included prominent scholars, artists, and writers from all over the world. The Congress was not only a gathering of minds, but also a meeting of hearts, as the delegates from all corners of the globe came together to fight for the cause of freedom.

The Congress was divided into several committees, each charged with the task of formulating specific proposals for the promotion of freedom. Among the most prominent of these committees was the Committee on Education, which was led by the great French educator, Jean-Paul Sartre. This committee worked tirelessly to develop educational programs that would help to spread the message of freedom and democracy.

One of the most significant outcomes of the Congress was the publication of the Declaration of Cultural Freedom, which was adopted by the delegates. This declaration affirmed the importance of cultural freedom as a fundamental human right and called for the protection and promotion of this right around the world.

The Congress was a resounding success, and it marked a turning point in the struggle for freedom. It was a testament to the power of the human spirit to overcome adversity and to the strength of the human will to fight for what is right. The Congress was a call to action, a reminder that the fight for freedom is not over, and that we must continue to work together to ensure that freedom prevails.

In the years that followed, the Congress for Cultural Freedom continued to play a crucial role in the struggle for freedom. Its members worked tirelessly to promote education, culture, and the arts as tools for the promotion of freedom. They also worked to provide assistance to those who were suffering under totalitarian regimes, and to support the growth of free societies around the world.

Today, the Congress for Cultural Freedom stands as a symbol of the power of the human spirit to overcome adversity and to triumph over darkness. Its legacy is a testament to the importance of cultural freedom as a fundamental human right, and to the enduring power of the human will to fight for what is right. The Congress was a call to action, a reminder that the fight for freedom is not over, and that we must continue to work together to ensure that freedom prevails.
In the last essay the gnostic-spiritual levels between Mind and Supermind—the Higher Mind, the Illumined Mind, the Intuitive Mind and the Overmind—were referred to in connection with attaining knowledge of the dynamic and creative side of Reality. Only the Overmind was briefly discussed there because it has a direct bearing on the different aspects of the Divine Reality; but for making the necessary epistemic and gnostic bridging between the two levels of cognition, Mind and Supermind, all these intermediate levels will have to be covered also. The remaining ranges of the inner mind, the inner vital and the subtle physical—ranges of consciousness parallel to the normal—have already been discussed. The gnostic ranges under discussion here are not paranormal; for they belong to a level of the Spiritual higher than the mental or the subliminal mental.

Describing the nature of these supernormal levels, Sri Aurobindo says: "...we perceive a graduality of ascent, a communication with a more and more deep and immense light and power from above, a scale of intensities which can be regarded as so many stairs in the ascension of Mind or in a descent into Mind from That which is beyond it. We are aware of a gradual downpour of masses of a spontaneous knowledge which assumes the nature of Thought but has a different character from the process of thought to which we are accustomed; for there is nothing here, no seeing, no trace of mental construction, no labour of speculation or difficult discovery; it is an automatic and spontaneous knowledge from a Higher Mind that seems to be in possession of Truth and not in search of hidden and withheld realities. One observes that this Truth is much nearer to a direct intuition than to an acquired mass of knowledge in a single view; it has a cosmic character, not the stamp of an individual thinking. Beyond this Truth-Thought we can distinguish a greater illumination instinct with an increased power and intensity and driving force, a luminosity of the nature of Truth-Sight with thought formulation as a minor and dependent activity. If we accept the Vedic image of the Sun of Truth,—an image which in this experience becomes a reality,—we may compare the action of the Higher Mind to a compound and steady sunshine, the energy of the Illumined Mind beyond it to an outpouring of massive lightnings of flaming sun-stuff. Still beyond can be met a yet greater power of the Truth-Force, an intimate and exact Truth-vision, Truth-thought, Truth-sense, Truth-feeling, Truth-action, to which we can give in a special sense the name of Intuition; for though we have applied that word for want of a better to any supra-intellectual direct way of knowing, yet what we actually know as intuition, is only one special movement of self-existent knowledge. This new range is its origin; it imparts to our intuitions something of its own distinct character and is very clearly an intermediary of a greater Truth-Light with which our mind cannot directly communicate. At the source of this intuition we discover a superconcious cosmic Mind in direct contact with the supra-mental Truth-Consciousness, an original intensity determinant of all movements below it and all mental energies,—not Mind as we know it, but an Overmind that covers as with the wide wings of some creative Over-soul this whole lower hemisphere of Knowledge-Ignorance, links it with that greater Truth-Consciousness while yet at the same time with its brilliant lead it veils the face of the greater Truth from our sight, interfering with its flood of infinite possibilities as at once an obstacle and a passage in our seeking of the spiritual law of our existence, its highest aim, its secret Reality. This then is the occult link we are looking for; this is the Power that at once connects and divides the supreme Knowledge and the cosmic Ignorance.

"In its nature and law the Overmind is a delegate of the Supermind Consciousness, its delegate to the Ignorance. Or we might speak of it as a protective double, a screen of dissimilar circulation through which Supermind can act indirectly on Ignorance whose darkness could not bear or receive the direct impact of a supreme Light."

These are briefly the main characteristics of the four intermediate gnostic levels. The following extracts now describe in detail each level, and clearly show how the knowledge attained gets wider and more accurate as one ascends the gnostic levels at the summit of which is the Supermind, the Gnosis itself, which alone can bring to a consummation the Higher Knowledge we are seeking. "Our first decisive step out of our human intelligence, our normal mentality," says Sri Aurobindo "is an ascent into a higher Mind, a mind no longer of mingled light and obscurity or half light, but a large clarity of the spirit. Its basic substance is a unitarian sense of being with a powerful multiple dynamism capable of the formation of multiple aspects of knowledge, ways of action, and significances of becoming, of all of which there is a spontaneous inherent knowledge. It is therefore a power that has proceeded from the Overmind,—but with the Supermind as its ultimate origin,—as all these greater powers have proceeded: but its special character, its activity of consciousness are dominated by Thought; it is a luminous thought-mind, a mind of spirit-born conceptual knowledge. An all-awareness emerging from the original identity, catching the truths of identification in itself, beginning swiftly, vitally, unceasingly, multitudinously, formulating and by self-power of the Ideal actually realizing its conceptions, is the character of this greater mind of knowledge. This kind of cognition is that which emerges from the original spiritual identity before the initiation of a separate knowledge, base of the Ignorance; it is therefore the first that meets us when we rise from conception and ratiocinative mind, our best-organized knowledge-power of the Ignorance into the realms of the Spirit; it is, indeed, the spiritual parent of our concentric mental idea, and it is natural that this leading power of our mentality should, when it goes beyond itself, pass into its immediate source.

"But here in this greater Thought there is no need of a seeking and self-critical ratiocination, no logical motion step by step towards a conclusion, no mechanism of express or implied deductions and inferences, no building or deliberate construction of idea with idea in order to arrive at an ordered sum or outcome of knowledge; for this limping action of our reason is a movement of Ignorance searching for knowledge, obliged to safeguard its steps against error, to erect a selective mental structure for its temporary shelter and to base it on foundations already laid and carefully laid but never firm, because it is not supported on a soul of native awareness but imposed on an original soil of nonexistence. There is not here, either, that other way of our mind at its keenest and swiftest, a rapid hazardous divination and insight, a play of the searchlight of intelligence probing into the little known or the unknown of that higher consciousness. A Knowledge formulating itself on a basis of self-existent all-awareness and mani- fold spiritual reality, a harmony of its significances put into thought-form. It can freely express itself in single ideas, but its most characteristic movement is a mass ideation, a system or a totality of truth-seeing at a single view; the relations of idea with idea, of truth with truth is established by logic but pre-existent and already self-existent in the integral whole. There is an initiation into forms of an ever present but till now inactive knowledge, not a system of conclusions from premises or data; this thought is a self-revelation of eternal Wisdom, not an acquired knowledge. Large aspects of truth come into view in which the ascending Mind, if it choses, can dwell with satisfaction and, after its former manner, live in them as in a structure; but if progress is to be made, these structures can constantly expand into a larger structure or several of them combine themselves into a provisional greater whole on the way to a yet unachieved integrity. In the end there is a greater totality of truth known and experienced but still a totality capable of infinite enlargement because there is no end to the aspects of knowledge, nayapana vientaram ve.

Regarding the next gnostic level, the Illumined Mind, Sri Aurobindo says that it is "a Mind no longer of higher Thought, but of spiritual light. Here the clarity of the spiritual intelligence, its tranquil daylight, gives place or subordinates itself to an intense lustre, a splendid illumination of the spirit: a play of lightnings of spiritual truth and power breaks from above into the consciousness and adds to the calm and wide enlightenment of our mental light a quick descent of peace which characterise or accompany the action of the larger conceptual-spiritual principle, a fiery ardour of realisation and a rapturous ecstasy of knowledge. A downpour of inwardly visible Light very usually envelops this action; for it must be noted that, contrary to our ordinary conceptions, light is not primarily a material creation and the sense or vision of light accompanying the inner illumination is not merely a subjective visual image or a symbolic phenomenon: light is primarily a spiritual manifestation of the Divine Reality, illuminative and creative; spiritual light is a subsequent reproduction or conversion of it into Matter for the purpose of the material Energy. There is also in this descent..."
The Gnostic-Spiritual Levels—Continued from previous page

The arrival of a greater dynamic, a golden drive, a luminous 'enlightenment' which represents a pre-conscious or unconsciously deliberative process of the Higher Mind by a swift, some-times a vehement, almost a violent impetus of rapid transformation.

"The Illumined Mind does not work primarily by thought, but by vision; thought is here only a subordinate movement expressive of sight. The human mind, which relies mainly on thought, conceives that to be the highest or the main process of knowledge, but in the spiritual order thought is a secondary and a not indispensable process. In its force of verbal thought, it can almost be described as a concession made. By knowledge to the oneness, because that Ignorance is incapable of making truth wholly lucid and intelligible to itself in all its extent and manifold implications except through the clasping of things within itself. It cannot do without this device to give to ideas an exact outline and an expressive body. But it is evident that this is a device, a machinery; thought in itself, in its origin and the higher levels of consciousness, is a perception, a cognitive seizing of the object or of some truth of things which is a powerful but still a minor and secondary result of spiritual vision, a comparatively external and superficial regard of the self upon the self, the subject upon itself or something of itself as object for all there is a diversity and multiplicity of the self. In mind there is a surface response of perception to the contact of an observed or discovered object, fact or truth and a consequent conceptual formulation of it; but in the spiritual light there is a deeper perceptive response from the very substance of consciousness and a comprehensive formulation in that substance, an exact figure or revelatory ideograph in the stuff of the being,—nothing more, no verbal representation is needed for the precision and completeness of the thought knowledge of the mind; for it is a transforming consciousness, a consciousness which formulates Truth; it offers that to the mind as a means of holding Truth and making it an object of knowledge; but the body itself of Truth is caught and exactly held in the sunlight of a deeper spiritual light which is the object created by thought and is directly and derivative, powerful for communication of knowledge, but not indispensable for reception or possession of knowledge.

"A consciousness that proceeds by sight, the consciousness of the seer, is a greater power for knowledge than the consciousness of the thinker. The perceptual power of the inner sight is greater and more direct than the perceptual power of thought; it is a spiritual sense that seizes something directly from the substance of Truth as an object; but it is only the mind and not the sight which are communicative; it is also and at the same time takes the significance of the figure, and it can embody her with a finer and bolder revealing outline and a larger comprehension and power of totality than thought conception can manage. As the Higher Mind brings a greater consciousness into the being through the spiritual idea and its power of truth, so the Illumined Mind brings in a still greater consciousness through a Truth sight and Truth Light and its seeing and seizing power. It can effect a more powerful and dynamic integration; it illuminates the thought-mind with a direct inner vision and inspiration, brings a spiritual sight into the heart and a spiritual light and energy into its feeling and emotion, imparts to the life-force a spiritual urge, a spiritual vision and maintains the action of the life-force; for it infuses it into the sense a direct and total power of spiritual sensation so that our vital and physical being can contact and meet concretely, quite as intensely as the mind and emotion can conceive and perceive and feel, the spiritual life, it impregnates them with the spiritual, it strengthens light that breaks its limitations, its conservative inertia, replaces its narrow thought-power and its doubts by sight and pours luminosity and consciousness of the very cells of the body. In the transformation by the Higher Mind the spiritual sage and thinker would find his total and dynamic fulfillment; in the transformation by the Illumined Mind there would be a similar fulfillment for the seer, the illuminated mystic, those in whom the soul lives in vision and in a direct sense and experience: for it is from these higher sources that they receive their light and to rise into that light and live there would be their ascension to their native empire.

"But these two stages of the recent enjoy their authority and can get their own united completeness only by a reference to a third level; for it is from the higher summits where dwell the intuitional being that they derive their inner force and power which turns into thought or sight and bring down to us for the mind's transformation. Intuition is a power of consciousness nearer and more intimate to the original knowledge by identity; for it is always something that leaps out direct from a concealed identity. It is when the thought-mind requires of the subject matter united with the consciousness as an object, penetrates it and sees, feels or vibrates with the truth of what it contacts, that the intuition leaps out like a spark or lightning-flash from the shock of the meeting; or when the consciousness, even without any such manifestation of the mind, turns upon itself and smiles directly upon the truths that are there or so contacts the hidden forces behind appearances, than also there is the breakout of an intuitive light; or, again, when the consciousness meets the Superreal Reality or the spiritual reality of things and being and man has a central union with it, then the more direct, the pure, the blaze of intimate truth-perception is lit in its depths. This close perception is more sight, more than conception: it is the result of a penterating and revealing touch which carries in it sight more than just a perception as something of itself or as its natural consequence. A concealed or aluminous identity, a yet recovered identity, a new self-consonance and identification, it conveys by the intuition its own contents and the intimacy of its self-feeling and self-seeing of things, its light of truth, its overwhelming and automatic certitude.

"In the human mind the intuition is even such a truth-remembrane or truth-conveyance, or such a revealing flash or blaze breaking into a great mass of ignorance and darkness by a new and never before partaken experience of finding—it hides this dependence from itself under the process of a reasoned conclusion or a verified conjecture. An intuition passed injudiciously by the reason ceases to be an intuition and can only have the authority of the reason for which there is no inner source of direct certainty. But even if the mind became predominantly an intuitive mind reliant upon its portion of the higher faculty, the co-ordination of its cognitions and its separated activities,—for in mind there would always be apt to appear as a series of imperfectly connected flashes,—would remain diffused so long as this new mentality has not a conscious liaison with its supranatural source or a self-unifying access to a higher plane of consciousness in which an intuitive action is pure and native.

"Intuition is always an edge or ray or outflap of a superior light; it is as in us a projecting blade, edge or point of a far-off supernormal light entering into and modified by some intermediate truth-mind substance above us and, so modified, again entering into and very much blinded by our ordinary or ignorant mind substance; but on that higher level to which it is brought its light is unimixed and therefore entirely and purely vertical, and its rays are not separated but connected or massed together in a play of waves of what might almost be called in the Sanskrit poetical figure a sea or mass of 'stable lightnings'. When this original or native Intuition being is emptied of all elements of an ascension of our consciousness to its level or as a result of our finding of a channel of communication with it, it may continue to come as a play of lightnings-flashes, isolated or in constant action; but at this stage the judgment of reason begins to act with complete inactivity, just as it is proceeding to summarily or recording the more luminous intimations, judgments and discriminations of the higher power. To complete or verify an isolated intuition or discriminate its nature, its application, its limitations, the receiving consciousness must rely on another completing intuition or be able to call down a massed intuition capable of putting all in place. For once the process of the change has begun, a complete transmutation of the states and activities of the mind into the substance, form and power of intuition is imperative; until then, so long as the process of consciousness depends upon the lower intelligence serving or helping out or utting the intuition, the result can only be a survival of the mixed Knowledge-Ignorance unaltered or relieved by a higher light and force acting in its parts of knowledge.

"Intuition has a fourfold power. A power of revelatory truth-seeing, a power of new inspiration, a power of perception, a power of immediate setting of significance, which is akin to the ordinary nature of its intervention in our mental intelligence, a power of true and automatic discrimination of the orderly and exact relation of truth to truth,—these are the four-fold powers of Intuition. Intuition can therefore perform all the action of reason—including the function of logical intelligence, which is to work out the right relation of things and the right relation of ideas with ideas,—but by its own superior process and with steps that do not fall or fail. It takes hold and transforms into itself not yet rendered light, still incomprehensible, but the heart and life and the sense and physical consciousness: already all these have their own peculiar powers of intuition derived from the higher sense, the pure power descending from above can assume them all into itself and impart to them their due extent on all levels of the brain which perceptions and the divinations of the body a greater integrality and perfection."
Men's eternal quest—the Absolute

What do men seek in life? In their desires and dreams, in their hopes and ambitions, as well as in their spiritual aspirations, what is it they have all been seeking since Time began? Is it not the Absolute? The scientist in his laboratory, the philosopher in his ivory tower of thought, the artist and the poet in their moments of creative inspiration, the mystic in his meditation, the politician on his platform, the farmer in his fields, the soldier in the fury of battle, the grocer in his shop, the beggar in the street, do they not all—without exception—seek an Absolute of Blindness, or Power, of an Absolute of Peace or an Absolute of Knowledge, or an Absolute of Energy, or an Absolute of life-satisfaction? One might go farther and say that even lust and greed and cruelty seek in their own perverse way an Absolute of self-gratification. In fact, all creation, consciously or unconsciously, seeks an—more truly, the—Absolute. No success ever succeeds in giving us permanent satisfaction, no fulfillment ever quenches our heart's desire. In spite of all the power we acquire, all the conquest we achieve, all the glory we win and enjoy, we continue, and we pursue our steps, a feeling as if all these were not enough, as if there was something more, something else.—we know not what—that had to be discovered and possessed. This discontent is so universal, so patent and piercing that even the most confirmed hedonist can hardly deny it. All life struggles, struggles, creates and destroys, falls and rises, crumbles and rushes in quest of something which will give it eternal satisfaction and perfect fulfillment. Everywhere there is thirst, the search for the Absolute in life, the Absolute of all life's values. Give it whatever name you like, it is for the Absolute that all life lives and labours, and to realise that Absolute and express it in its own terms is the ineradicable impulse of all life. Life would have long ceased if its quest had not been the Absolute, and its quest could not have been the Absolute if its origin and source were not the Absolute, assuring a perennial flow of force for a ceaseless advance and adventure. Whether we peer into the past, into the estuary of the temporal stream, or into the future and see the same silhouettes of the Absolute shadowed forth against the dim background of an implacable infinity.

The Absolute—the Life of Life

This Absolute is the Life of all life. It is life's ultimate Truth, its unity and harmony, its force, its beauty and its bliss. We call it God or the Divine whom we seem to have lost in the wilderness of the sense-objects, it is the Divine whom we seek in all our obscurities and groping endeavours, and it is the Divine we aspire to realise and reveal here in our material life. Even the atheist seeks an absolute of atheism, the rationalist an absolute of reason, the hedonist an absolute of life-enjoyment. They too are, therefore, seeking the Absolute, or the same as the Absolute. The distinction may be, that they prefer to deny the divine, they deny the Absolute. The difference and the conflict in our being—parts warring with para, desires with opposing desires—are evidence of the eventual harmony, which is the god as well as the origin or the existence of all things. To point the Absolute in whom alone all the jarring discord will be harmonised; for there can never be an ordered play of relatives, a law of Nature, a system of values, a rule of conduct or a rhythm of evolution in life without an Absolute embracing and leading those in the steps of its own shadowless light. If the relativities are real—with an apology to Shankar—and from which we derive not, the continuous progress of life are real and living, then the Absolute in whom they subsist and grow is also real and living. This real living Absolute is God, the Life of all life.

The Absolute—the Transcendent Transfigurator

The Absolute is not only the immanent substratum and link of all relativities, but also the Transcendent, as Pan-enthusiasts rightly hold. An Absolute confined to and exhausted in the relativities cannot be the ultimate Unity and the inspirer and leader of the evolution of its own multiplicity. The Creator is superior to His creation, the Fount is anterior to its flow, the One is transcendent of the Many. Beyond life and in life, the Life of life is the sole reality, the sole object of human and divine longing, and the goal of all creation and abode of all creatures. If we exclude the aspect of God's transcendence, we condemn life to a horizontal circling and shut out from its vision the golden altitudes from which Truth has often beamed down upon us and besought influences have sought to mould us. The Upnishadic image represents the most perfect and vivid light the eternal relation of the world with its Source: "This is the eternal Ashwathama tree whose roots are aloft, but its branches are downward. It is the soul of the leaf and the branch. It is the age and Brahman and Immortality, and in Him are all the worlds established; none goeth beyond Him. This is the thing thou seest." The roots are above and the branches are downwards, the roots nourish and sustain the branches, which grow through and be reborn in flowers and fruits. This is the true relation, and to forget it is to forget the basal truth of our existence. Besides, transcendence transfigurates. The Hegelian Absolute can weave on endless webs of relationships out of the nothing, can make the universe and within the limits of Time and Space, but it cannot bring down from above to earth the new principle to introduce a revolutionary rhythm, initiate a radical departure. Its crea-

The Approach of Love

The supreme Person is in the eternal essence and archetype of our terrestrial personality, each fibre of which is not only created by Him, but also constituted by His own substance and energy. Our true self is made in His image and for His cosmic work of multiple self-expression. If we awaken to this truth, if we learn to live in our essential identity and union with Him, the somber nightmare of our separative existence vanishes for ever, . . . this identity and fundamental oneness that our love furbles for in the obscenity of ignorance and amidst the spite and offensive objects of the senses. An illumined love discovers Him as a bound and carries us beyond the misery and mortality of our egoistic life into the rapturous heart of the Life of all life, where we enjoy "peace in strength, serenity in action, and unchangeability in the midst of all change and cleavage." Because the supreme Person is our own highest Self, the approach of love is the best and most rapidly fruitful approach, for, love is at once the flower and the seed of identity.

The Supreme Person—the Pivot of Individual Synthesis

The first business of human life, the Work of all work is to find and realize the supreme Person and to join Him with the effective centre

Continued on page 8
SRl AUROBINDO CAME TO ME
By DILIP KUMAR ROY

Apologia

I must start with a curious apology, that I do not feel called upon to apologise for what I venture to undertake, namely, to describe not so much how Gurudeva appeared to me as how I reacted to him. For, when all is said, one can never hope to delineate the greatness of a great person in abstract terms with purple epithets however heartfelt these may be. One might as well say that I have always looked upon the truly great all my life—only portray one’s reactions to them—and even imperfectly at that. I would go further and venture that the greater a personal figure, the more he will elude us. Rabindranath Tagore once told me that we understand more than we think we do. To me the statement has never seemed cryptic. For whenever, in my life’s gropings, I have run across a truly great soul, the impression he has left on me has grown in height and depth; time and I have felt that it profited more than I could assess. I can only express my helplessness if such a statement should appear obscure, or even meaningless, to some of those who may read what I am going to write.

I can only speak of what I know, and since I am persuaded that what I do not even surmise as self-knowledge is an important part of myself, I am entitled to express it even at the risk of appearing somewhat uninter-

telligible to many. Also, I warn my readers—even when I humbly ask them to lend me a sympathetic ear, without which none can possibly hear what another has to say—that I will have, forthwith, to make such state-

ments while remembering about one who came into my life like a storm at once liberating and imperious; whom I courted and yet wanted to draw away from; whom, on numerous occasions, I repelled yet continued clinging to; acclaimed and yet criticized with all my irreverent impetuousity; whom I accused bitterly for being aloof although even his remoteness gave me booms of intimacy and vision which no physical nearness with my dearest friends could have ever accorded. Also I would ask them, while they appraise my statements, to do me only the barest justice of believing in my sincerity; that is, to accept it when I say that I will not be consciously untruthful or dramatic. So that all the above statements I would ask them to credit as at least representing my reactions to one whom I wanted to woo and yet felt so frantically impelled to desert that I had the tenacity to write to him, on several occasions, in a huff, that I had decided to end it all, and that seemed to me, in such turbulent moments, a futile relationship which presupposed conditions in which I could never flower into fulfillment. One of these, as it was, was well-known among all who had to do with him, that he was not expected to grant anybody a private interview except when, very rarely, he himself deemed it necessary. In my spiritual crises, I was sometimes allowed to speak to him, even sing to him but it left the Old Adam in me unappeased, so much so that sometimes I even went the length of apprising him, childishly, that I was going to leave him for good without any regret, when every bone of my heart re-

ceived me for wanting to stifle its breath. I do not know if it has ever been such a strange relationship known to human experience where the recipient felt, time and again, that the donor had not given anything tangible and yet could not regard all the other hoardings that put together, however tangible their gifts, as more important to himself. Reason never threw any light on this enigma, even though I wanted a rational clue to the sense, with all the dispassionateness I was capable of. I can only say now, what I have given against so often is no more than that I regard nothing that I can objectively count as an asset in my personality, such as it is, as not a gift, partial or entire, made by his compassion, a companion beside which the remotest human tenderness I have known so far seems a mere shadow. And yet I may well speak of him from concrete inadmissible experience—to quote his own words—as almost on a par with the “unseen Beloved, the lover whom we think not of”, whom even in this day and age, it is my joy to say, “may perhaps you may come upon us in the midst of the world and seize on us for his own sake whether at first we will or no. He may even come to us at first as an enemy with the wrath of love, only our earliest relations with him may be those of battle and struggle.”

An Explanation

As I look back after having been havened at his feet for well over two decades, I find it still difficult to decide what is that drew a flawed mentality like mine to one so perfect in his flowering. Was it his genius? Or was it the sheer rawness of my nature? or was it his religious feeling, as tagging aptly put it? Or was it the awe-inspiring aura of mystery he had woven around himself in his self-chosen seclusion? Or was it a sense of power he inspired which evoked so many through the silence that had crystallised around him spread itself over to things beyond our ken? Or was it the ocean of peace in which he seemed to float like Narayan calling to us, to which even the poets who clamoured for peace and yet outlawed it, a paradox he wrote about his epic Savitri:

Almost with hate regret the light it brings... Hard it is to persuade earth-nature’s change... The storms of fallen nature are the defence... It turns against the ambient hands of Grace...
I N T H E M O T H E R S ‘ I G H T — C o n t i n u e d f r o m p a g e 6

when, wearied and foiled, he will turn to the Life of his life and receive his first initiation into the mystery of universal unity and harmony, which is the bedrock of all the illumined values of Life. His illusion of concrete, individual consciousness will then perceive that the surface dissonances of life prelude and preclude the victorious emergence of the final harmony, even as the jarring notes of a musical instrument, which is being tuned, herald and prepare the coming of harmony. The Life of life, in its pride of intellectual advancement, has exiled the Divine from its life, it is labouring under a painful illusion and tottering on the verge of a complete collapse, its culture sinking into savagery and its hypertrophied mental powers dragging it into a blind destruction. If human life embodied no divinity, the present crisis might well end in a total ruin; but the indwelling Divinity is inestimable, and its Will to self-evolution invincibly powerful. When the cup of a godless life of exclusive material pursuits has been drained to its bitter dregs, man, defeated and disillusioned, with grim death gaping wide to devour him, and chill darkness closing in upon him, will hear the roaring admonition: “All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.” That will be the final clarity, that will save him from damnation. “All difficulties are solved by taking rest in the Divine’s arms, for the arms of God are always opened with love to shelter us.” “Turn towards the Divine, all your sufferings will disappear.”

The safety from death and damnation is not enough: man has to offer all himself to the Master of his life, so that the Master may offer all Himself to him and the drop and the sea meet in an ineffable embrace of unending ecstasy. “The whole of our life should be a prayer offered to the Master.” Therefore, after the death of the former life and the consignment of the whole, there must be an act of consecration to the Life of life, and the integral, dynamic unity. “One who has given himself to the Divine has no longer any other duty than to make that consecration more and more perfect. The world and those who live in it have always wanted to put human—social and domestic—duty before duty to the Divine, which they have stigmatised as egoism. How indeed could they judge otherwise, they who have no experience of the reality of the Divine? But they must think not only of the world and of the Divine, but also of themselves; regard their own suffering, and they will have no force. These are movements of ignorance, nothing more. Besides, has not mankind proved its utter incompetence in the organisation of its own existence? Governments succeed governments, regimes follow regimes, centuries pass after centuries, but humanity is as humanly the same. It will always be so, as long as man remains what he is, blind and ignorant, closed to all spiritual reality. A transformation, an illumination of the human consciousness alone can bring about a real change in the condition of humanity. Thus even from the standpoint of human life, it follows logically that the first duty of man is to seek and possess the divine consciousness.”

As for our aspiration, the all-consuming surrender to the Life of life will not mean a renunciation or denial of reason, but its sublimation into a higher intelligence, which does not gloss over the surface of things, but looks deep into their truth and essence and visions the one Reality everywhere and in all beings. Our self in its self-life and self-evolution will carry man from reason to supra-rational Light. “Turn from the dead past and look straight towards the future. Your religion, country, family lie there: it is the Divine.”

S R I A U R O B I N D O C A M E T O M E — C o n t i n u e d f r o m p a g e 7

I felt unhappy till mother assured me one day that she had to make certain rules only because no institution could possibly run or corporate life be held together without some laws laid down for general guidance.

“But,” she added categorically with a simple disarming smile which I could never forget nor love enough, “I do meant what I say that I would have no rules at all if the Asram could be run without them, but I am wasting words, and believe that all rules should come from within. So I never concur in formulating more rules or codes of general conduct than are absolutely necessary.” I have put it doubtless in my own language, not hers, but as it is in mine, what makes our idealism and practice ideal as well as in practice, I cannot possibly have misrepresented her here.

About Gurudev this was even more veritably true. And how I discovered this with glee and took a share of it with alacrity! What I want to emphasise, besides, is that as days passed in our peaceful retreat under the aegis of two starlike souls who took charge of our welfare material as well as spiritual, I felt more and more at my ease in the Asram atmosphere and its self-life and consciousness. And, one day during the long summer heat where I had lost it, the more I argued with Gurudev the less ill-at-ease I became, to the amazement of some who, no matter what I said or wrote to him and in what tone,—so much so that in the end he seemed often to encourage me to forget as it were that he was my master, and, emboldened by his tolerance, started criticising him as one would criticise a friend in a title-bête-à-bête or a colleague in an informal debate. This made many people aghast in the Asram as well as outside: e.g. my dear friend and mentor Sri Krishnaprem (Ronalid Nixon) from

Continued on opposite page
POETIC IMAGERY IN "SAVITRI"

BY RAJANIKANT MODY

Continued from the issue of November 25, 1959

From mathematics come images in a very great number. We will note the charms of some of them.

Only was missing . . .

The integer of the Spirit’s perfect sum
That equals the unequal All to the equal One. (32)

This, indeed, is the strange arithmetic of the Spirit. Another instance of the same arithmetic is:

At first was laid a strange anomalous base,
A void, a cipher, to be some secret un
Where Zero held infinity in its sum
And All and Nothing were a single term. (34)

And still another instance:

A chance that chose a strange arithmetic
But could not bind with it the forms it made.
A multitude that could not guard its sum
Which less than Zero grew and more than one. (35)

This is a charming idea expressed in an equally charming figure. The recurring decimals have become an oft-recurring image. This first refers to life:

But now a timeless labour is her fate
In its recurrent decimal of events
Birth, death appear as its vibrating points
The old question-mark margin each finished page
Each volume of her effort’s history. (36)

The following is a lofty image applied to the supreme Oneness:

It took up tirelessly into its scope
Persons and figures of the Impersonal,
As if prolonging in a celestial count,
In a rapportur multiplication’s sum,
The recurring decimals of eternity.
It made all parts fractions of the Unique,
Yet all were being’s secret integers. (37)

And here is a crowded imagery, a procession of images rising one above the other:

Existence seemed a vain necessity’s act
A wrestle of eternal opposites
In a clasped antagonism’s close-locked embrace,
A play without dénouement or idea,
A hunger-march of lives without a goal,
Or, written on a bare blackboard of Space,
A futile and recurring sum of souls. (38)

Then there is another beautiful image in:

Awareness was the sum of the probable,
The hazard of free possibilities,
To account for the Actual’s unaccountable sum.
Necessity’s logarithmic tables, drawn,
Into a scheme the triple act of One. (39)

And the next one which follows almost immediately after this, is also an excellent one:

Out of the chaos of the Iribale’s moods
Destined the calendar of Destiny,
How much is suggested by this simple single-looking image! All the problems of Destiny and Freewill, of Destiny and the Divine’s Will, of Destiny and Divine Grace seem to be lurking behind this magnificent figure and trying invisibly to draw the reader’s attention to them. And then,

The diameter of Infinity was drawn,
Measured the distant arc of the unseen heights. (41)

Leaving mathematics we now come to the most prossic of things, from where one would least expect images could be drawn. They are business, commerce, economics, banking, etc.

For all we have acquired soon loses worth,
An old disvalued credit in Time’s bank,
Imperfection’s cheque drawn on the Incoherent. (42)

A similar idea but expressed in an entirely different form and in an entirely different context is to be found in:

. . . in Thought’s broad impalpable Exchange
A speculator in tenous vast ideas,
Abstractions in the void her currency
We know not with what firm values for its base.
Only religion in this bankruptcy
Presents its dubious riches to our hearts
Or signs unprovisioned cheques on the Beyond. (43)

This is a full-fledged image showing us the futility of Thought and anore or religion in our ordinary life. That life is pictured as a speculator in Thought’s Exchange—a very forcefully significant image. A similar image is presented to us in the following lines:

She accepted not to close the luminous page,
Cancel her commerce with eternity,
Or set a signature of weak ascent
To the brute balance of the world’s exchange. (44)

Here it is Savitri who is referred to. The luminous page is of “the unfinished story of her soul graven in Nature’s book.” Here she refuses to set her signature to the brute balance, but in another place she is shown to be exhausting an old account:

Altered must be Nature’s harsh economy,
Acquaintance she must snip from her past’s bound,
An old account of suffering exhaust,
Strike out from Time the soul’s long compounded debt. (45)

The idea of Time’s bank is repeated once again in:

A doubt corroded even the means to think,
Distrust was thrown upon Mind’s instruments;
All that it takes for reality’s shining coin,
Proved fact, fixed inference, deduction clear,
Firm theory, assured significance,
 Appeared as frasdas upon Time’s credit bank
Or assets valueless in Truth’s treasury. (46)

Here we can see that even when a figure is repeated, it is so very different and so uniquely lovely, that we hardly feel or even become aware of its repetition. The frustration that the human being feels in this world is brought out in the following lines:

Cheated by counterfeit sold to us in life’s merit,
Our hearts clench at a forfeited heavenly bliss. (47)

A somewhat similar image appears in:

A city of the traffic of bound souls,
A market of creation and her scars
Was offered to the labouring mind and heart. (48)

This image of life-city comes in different form in:

Surround the beautiful temple of the soul. (49)

(Continued on page 10)

SRI AUROBINDO CAME TO ME—Continued from page 8

Almora who took me once seriously to task for it. “You write that you have sometimes ‘gone for Sri Aurobindo.’ You must not. Of course he will not mind. He sees the jewel in the lotus and can smile at your criticisms but you mustn’t do it. Even in thought you mustn’t criticise him. It all springs from desire to have things one’s own way.” He is your Guru, and in the first place, it is sheer ingratitude to criticise one who has shown you the light and in the second, he is the Guru who has shown you the light and your whole life can be no repayment for such a gift. Even if you were to spend the rest of your life with no further ‘experience’ at all, you will have been utterly wrong if you refused to give yourself to him. As far as I know he does not ask for blind obedience from his disciples (at least so I gather from your letter) but one must never criticise even when one can’t follow. If one could understand everything one’s Guru said then there would hardly be any need for a Guru at all.

I cannot honestly deny that Krishnaprem was right. But can I with equal honesty say that I was really sorry for having again and again committed the delinquency he so strongly reprimanded? I will go further and presume to ask my own heart whether I have not had a deeper vision of Gurudeva’s greatness through having been led on by him to fence with him as one would with an equal. And then could it have been at all possible for such as we to have dared him thus to duels had he not himself, in his infinite indulgence, consented to the thrust and parry with such ineptry?

I have often wondered why he did it—not only sanctioned it but even invited it—it especially when his antagonists were what they were. Apprope, I am reminded of a letter a colleague of mine wrote to him in a light vein: “What disciples are we of what a Master! I wish you had called and chosen some with a better native stuff, like Krishnaprem.”

His rejoinder was characteristic:

“As to the disciples I agree. But would the better stuff, supposing it to exist, be typical of humanity? To deal with a few exceptional types would hardly solve the problem. And would they consent to follow my path—that is another question. But the very contrast of the difficulty, as he himself saw it, was expressed rather trenchantly in the very next, the third, query: ‘And if they (these might-have-been disciples with a better stuff) were put to the test, would not the common humanity suddenly reveal itself—that is still another question.’

I know to my cost—and I speak here as spokesman for the rest—how disconcertingly and obstinately common, even banal, this stuff turns out to be when probed deep enough by the revealing ray which comes down in answer to the agonised prayer, in each of us, of “the bleeding piece of earth,” to quote a Shakespearean phrase.

But this cannot be dealt with before a picture of the Ashram life, as it evolved before me, day by day, from 1928 till today, is achieved. It will not be an easy task; nevertheless it must be attempted at this stage.

To be continued
Next we take up images drawn from grammar, language, logic, etc. We must fill the immense lacuna we have made. Re-used the closest lonely consonant With the open vowels of infinity. A hyphen must connect Matter and Mind, The narrow isthmus of the ascending soul. (50) Here there is a fusion of three images. The first is that of a consonant and vowel. The second is a very daring and fascinating image taken from geography, viz. that of an isthmus. The hyphen that connects Matter and Mind becomes in its turn the isthmus; this also there is another image upon an image. The three images coming to a conclusion, one after another, raise the idea of linking, which is the common quality of all the three, to a climax in the last.

From this image of a hyphen we go to an image of punctuation: His little pleasures punctuate frequent griefs; Hardship and toil ere the heavy price he pays For the right to live and his last socles death. (51) Even in the common lines there is a mixed image; Love's adoration like a mystic seen Through vision looks at the invisible, In earth's alphabet finds a polestar sense. (52) And here is another image suggested by the double meaning of a word: Untied vorty Time's creative mood and tense To a style and syntax of Identity. (53) It is the word "mood" and its association with grammar that has given rise to the whole image. Even a schoolboy is not spared from becoming an image: our circumscribed little being becomes in it A backward scholar on logic's rickety bench, (54) There is a bunch of images pertaining to writing and printing, coming one after another within a short passage. The skillful Penman's unseen finger wrote His swift intuitive calligraphy; Earth's forms were made his divine documents, (55) His imposed upon dark atom and dumb mass The diamond script of the Imperishable, Inscribed on the dim heart of fallen things A poem song of the free Infinite And the Name, foundation of eternity, And traced on the awaking exultant In the ideographs of the Imperfect The Lyric of the love that seeks through Time And the mystic volume of the Book of Bliss And the message of the superconquering Fire. (56) But before these things are written, In Illusion's occult factory And in the Inconsequent's magic printing house Torn were the formats of the primal Night And shattered the stereotypes of Ignorance. (57) This is an image of bold and daring metaphor and is expressed in a perfectly deft manner. This brings us to another image of the Book of Being, equally marvellous and apt; although long drawn out, it does not become cumbrous or unwieldy or dull. There is a hidden chamber closed and mute Are kept the record graphs of the cosmic aribe, And there the tables of the sacred Law; There is the Book of Being's index page, The text and glossary of the Vedic truth Are there; the rhyma and metres of the stars Sufficient of the movements of Book I, Canto 7. The symbol powers of number and of form, And the secret code of the history of the world And Nature's correspondence with the soul Are written in the mystic heart of life, In the glose of the Spirit's room of memories He could recover the luminous marginal notes Dotting with light the crude ambiguous scroll, Remember the premises and the saving clause Of the dark Agreement by which all is ruled That rings from material Nature's sleep, (58) And a little later we find, The dumb great Mother in her cosmic trance Works out through the appearance of a soul By a miraculous birth in plasma and gas And the mystery of God's convenant with the Night, (59) And still further, He read the original whole kept back In the locked archives of the spirit's crypt, And the signature and fiery seal Of wisdom on the dim Power's hooded work Who builds in Ignorance the steps of Light. (60) And lastly, An earthly dialect to God-language change, (61) The idea of "the dark Agreement" in the last two lines of (58) and that of "God's convenant with the Night" in the last line of (69) are similar to another one appearing in Book I, Canto 1: Abolished were conception's covenants And striking off subjection's rigorous clause, Annull'd the soul's treaty with Nature's recreation. (62) As we have taken up this group of images based on writings and treaties and agreements, the following two images will be found to be in their proper place here. The first one is in connection with "A hospitable and perveting Mind at work" in the dark world of Night. It captured the oracles of the occult gods, Effaced the sigmata of Life's pilgrimage, Cancelled the firm rock-edicts graved by Time, And on the foundations of the cosmic Law Erected its pyramids of miraculous. (63) And the second image is of a very similar one: An iron decree in crooked uscials written Imposed a law of sin and adverse fate. (64) In another place there is still one more image that resembles the foregoing two. This is only one image in a series of dozens of superb images applied to human Reason: On the huge bare walls of human recience Written round Nature's deep dumb hieroglyphs She pens in clear demoniac characters The vast encyclopaedia of her thoughts. (65) This brings us to two images drawn from the legal profession. Both are found applied to Reason. The first is a mixed image and the second one is so it were a continuation of the first from where the legal portion in the first is left unfinished: The eternal Advocate seated as judge, Armoirs in logic's treasure box marvel fact A thousand combatants for truth's veiled throne And sets on a high horseback of argument To tilt for ever with a worldly lance In a mock tournament where none can win, (66) Assaying thought's valiant with her rigid test Balanced she sits on wide and empty air, Aloof and pure in her impartial pize. Absolute her judgments seem but none is sure; Time cancels all her verdicts in appeal. (67) The next one is in reference to the destiny of the Earth: An immortal godhead's imperishable part She must reconstitute from fragments lost, Re-word from a document complete elsewhere Her doubtful title to her divine Name, (68) This also is an image clothed in legal phrasology and is a very suggestive one, pointing out to us the relation of the Earth with the Divine. Most unexpected and surprising in the context is the use of the following image, which too in is semi-legal terminology. It is applied to the Earth-Goddess: Heaven's privilege she claims as her own right. Just is her claim the all-witnessing Gods approve, Clear in a greater light than reason owns; Our intuitions are its title-deeds. (69) Even when we have read the first three lines we are not in the least able to anticipate the most amazing metaphor that comes crashing upon us in the fourth line; for, the words are not paltry enough to be "incidental metaphors" and "clamor" are much ordinary terms as they are legal technical terms and the phrase "all-witnessing," although followed by the verb "approve," is not sufficient to bring to our mind the technical legal sense attached to it, as we usually take the phrase to mean "all-seeing." That is why the image of title-deeds as applied to intimations comes as a complete surprise, and it is only after re-reading the first three lines in the light of the surprise given to us by the fourth line that we awake to the legal sense of the various terms used in them. Here is another image taken from the Cario dealing with the Descent of Aswapati into the kingdom of Night: Injustice justified by firm decrees The sovereign weights of Ergonia's liquified trade, But all the weights were false and none the same; Even she watched with her balance and a sword Lest any precarious word expose The sanctified formulas of her old misrule. (70) The Socratic description of Aswapati's sojourn through that nocturnal kingdom is simply marvellous, showing us how even the best things in life become perverted and are put to use by the dark forces to achieve their fiendish ends. This last image of trade leads us to mention another image used in another setting. This time it is a grotesque figure that is applied to Reason to show what hampered and puny a place she occupies in this world. A bullock yoked in the cart of the propitious night. She drags huge knowledge-bales through Matter's dust To reach utility's immense bazaar, (71) This is another of the dozens of images applied to Reason, that we referred to just a little back. (To be continued)
In thinking of Beauty, and Good, we 'must not forget that they are above our normal and usual being—they are something into whch our ordinary consciousness is striving to grow, to become, is man's imperative task in life? Is it to make room for himself and his kind in this world, and then to possess and enjoy and dominate. It is this vitalistic impulse that keeps man going; without it he is bound to decay.

The modern problem is no longer the divine. Christianity has been dissolved, the ancient46 and modern103 epoch, and association, competition and co-operation—have built up human society.

Modern Europe has been dominated largely by a violent vitalism ever since the establishment of Teutonic preponderance in the West. The European of today is a dynamic practical man to the core. His strong vital impulse has come on top and has overcome completely the older traditions of the East. He is no longer a poet and a mystic, but a man of action. His interests are in political and economic organisation. He is for the organisation of these aspects of life. Learning and culture, science and philosophy, morality and religion, these are aids and embellishments of life, and form no part of its substance. "Life itself is the only object of

The ancients had a totally different outlook. It is not that they did not realise the importance of organised group life, but they thought that the development of the intellectual, the ethical, the aesthetic, the spiritual being was of far greater importance. Greece and Rome laid stress on the first three, while Asia considered them as stepping stones to the fourth. The Greeks and the Romans were proud of these achievements in art, poetry and science and, while the people of Asia valued much more highly their spiritual heroes. The modern man has, moreover, the aid of physical science mastered the natural world and forced the material forces to work for his comfort, pleasure and prosperity, and made his main interest in political and economic organisation. We see thus the clear difference between the two points of view—that of the ancients and the Asiatics on the one hand, and of the modern European on the other. The vital urge is individualistic; it creates the family, the social group, and the nation for its greater satisfaction. In the family life, the individual seeks to satisfy his craving for companionship, power and authority, and for prolongation of life. He possesses a family, exercises authority over it, cares for it, andTracey’s in his progeny. Social life is an expansion of this domestic life and affords scope to the individual for enjoyment, mastery and companionship on a larger scale; a still wider field of power and possession. In this

Admittedly, the object of our search is the Divine and to attain divine consciousness is our goal. In this quest neither reason nor culture can be our highest guide. Where, then, are we to find the directing light? "To make all life religious and to guard all activities by the religious ideas, would seem to be the right way. . . . for the lifting of the whole life of man into the Divine.” Generally speaking, religion has occupied the principal place as man’s guide in life. But every now and then, there comes a time when this guide is found wanting, and there is a new one in its place. We are passing through such a period just now, though a change of outlook seems imminent. Religion is connected with some hidden Truth of our being, so it cannot leave us for very long. On the other hand, ever since the two movements, the Renaissance and the Reformation, freed the European mind from the thralldom of ignorant convention, civilisation based on reason, in spite of many mistakes, has done a great deal for man. The period has been, says Sri Aurobindo, "a time of great activity, of high aspirations, of deep sowing, of rich fruit-bearing. “All this has been achieved not by religion, but by man’s newly awakened reason, by high ideals and by a spirit of philanthropy. This is the reason why man has any satisfaction in this age. But the philosopher now begins to question morality. In his eyes religion is important superstition, so he keeps his sci-

Sri Aurobindo says that there never was behind these heinous acts any impulses of true religion, they were always the result of narrow sectarianism. Never was he possessed, after all, for an idealism that is so attractive, that is so near to life as the creed of God-seeking. Sri Aurobindo’s faith in this God-seeking is a thing eternal. It can certainly be a force in human life in all its preoccupations. Religion, with its scriptures and rites and ceremonies, comes and goes. Yet even these have their uses in human evolution.
LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

Q. 1: Since the aim of Art is to reveal beauty and yield delight, it is maintained that it can be of no use in the training and development of our intellectual faculty which is concerned with the seeking of rational truth. In what way?

A: Our intellectual activity has a double character: it is "divided between the imaginative, creative and sympathetic or comprehensive intellectual centres on the one side and the critical, analytic and penetrative on the other. The latter are best trained by science, criticism and observation, the former by art, poetry, music, literature and the sympathetic study of man and his creations. These make the mind quick to grasp at a glance, subtle to distinguish shades, deep to reject shallow self-sufficiency, mobile, delicate, swift, intuitive. Art assists in this training by raising images in the mind which it has to understand not by analysis, but by self-identification with other minds; it is a proper stimulant of sympathetic insight. Art is subtle and delicate, and it makes the mind also in its movements subtle and delicate. It is suggestive, and the intellect habituated to the appreciation of art is quick to catch suggestions, mastering not only, as the scientific mind does, that which is positive and on the surface, but that which leads to ever fresh widening and subtilizing of knowledge and opens a door into the deeper secrets of inner nature where the positive instrument of science cannot penetrate the depth or meaning of life. This supreme intellectual value of Art has never been sufficiently recognized. Men have made language, poetry, history, philosophy agents for the training of their minds, intellectually necessary parts of liberal education, but the immense educative force of music, painting and sculpture has not been duly recognized. They have been thought to be by-paths of the human mind, beautiful and interesting, but not necessary, therefore intended for the few. Yet the universal impulse to enjoy the beauty and attractiveness of sound, to look at and live among pictures, colours, forms ought to have warned mankind of the superficiality and ignorance of such a view of these eternal and important occupations of human mind. The impulsion, delayed proper training and self-purification, has spent itself on the trivial, gaudy, sensuous, cheap or vulgar instead of helping man upward by its powerful aid in the evolution of what is best and highest in intellect as well as in character, emotion and the aesthetic enjoyment and regulation of life and manners. It is difficult to appreciate the waste and detriment involved in the low and debased level of enjoyment to which the artistic impulses are condemned in the majority of mankind."

Q. 2: Beyond the intellect is the spirit; can Art be of any help in the discovery and expression of the spirit in life which is the highest of all human experiences?

A: "Beyond and above this intellectual utility of Art, there is a higher use, the noblest of all, the service to the growth of spirituality in the race. Europeans have dwelt on the highest developments of art with religion, and it is undoubtedly true that in Greece, in Italy, in India, the greatest efflorescence of a national Art has been associated with the employment of the artistic genius to illustrate or adorn the thoughts or the temples and instruments of the national religion. This was not because Art is necessarily associated with the outward forms of religion, but because it was in the religion that men's spiritual aspirations centered themselves. Spirituality is a wider thing than formal religion and it is in the service of spirituality that Art reaches its highest self-expression. Spirituality is a single word expressive of three lines of human experience: towards divine knowledge and divine love and joy, divine strength and that will be the highest and most perfect Art which, while satisfying the physical requirements of the aesthetic sense, the laws of formal beauty, the emotional demand of humanity, the portrayal of life and outward reality, as the best European Art satisfies these requirements, speaks beyond them and expresses inner spiritual truth, the deeper not obvious requirements of the joy of God in the world and its beauty and desirable and the manifestation of divine force and energy in phenomenal creation. This is what Indian Art alone attempted to do and in the effort it often dispensed, either deliberately or from impatience, with the higher, yet not negligible perfections which the more material European demanded. Therefore Art has flowed in two separate streams in Europe and Asia, so diverse that it is only now that the European aesthetic sense has so far trained itself as to begin to appreciate the artistic conventions, aims and traditions of Asia. Asia's future development will unite these two streams in one deep and grandiose flood of artistic self-expression perfecting the aesthetic evolution of humanity."

Q. 3: But can Art, which even at its highest is an activity of the limited human mind, possibly express the eternal and infinite Truth, Love and Joy and Power of the Spirit?

A: "Art can express eternal truth, it is not limited to the expression of form and appearance. So wonderfully has God made the world that a man using his co-ordinating faculties, an unperceived harmony of colours, can raise this apparently insignificant medium to suggest absolute and profound truths with a perfection which language labours with difficulty to reach. What Nature is, what God is, what man is can be triumphantly revealed in stone or on canvas."

Behind a few figures, a few trees and rocks the supreme Intelligence, the supreme Energy lurks, acts, feels, is, and, if the artist has the spiritual vision, he can see and suggest perfectly the great mysterious Life in its manifestations brooding in action, active in thought, energetic in stillness, creative in repose, full of a masterly intuition in that which appears blind and unconscious. The great truths of religion, science, metaphysics, life, development, become concrete, emotional, universally intelligible and convincing in the hands of the master of plastic Art, and the soul of man, in the stage when it is rising from emotions to intellect, looks, receives the suggestion and is uplifted towards a higher development, a divine knowledge.

So it is in the divine love and joy which pulses throughout existence and is far superior to alloyed earthly pleasure. Catholic, perfect, unmixed with repulsion, radiating through all things, the common no less than the high, the mean and shabby no less than the lofty and splendid, the terrible and the repulsive no less than the charming and attractive, it uplifts all, purifies all, turns all to love and delight and beauty. A little of this immortal nectar poured into a man's heart will change the man for life. The whole flood of it pouring in will lift mankind to God. This is the task of Art to seize on and suggest to the human soul, aiding it in itsorny and toilsome pilgrimage. In that pilgrimage it is the divine strength that supports. Shakti, Force, pouring through the universe supports its boundless activities, the frail and tremulous life of the rose no less than the flaming motions of sun and star. To suggest the strength and virile unconquerable force of the divine Nature in man and in the outside world, its energy, its value, its powerful inspiration, its august enthusiasm, its wildness, greatness, attractiveness, to breathe that into man's soul and gradually mould it the finite into the image of the Infinite totality of Art. This is the loftiest function, its fullest consummation, its most perfect privilege."

SRU AURIBINDO AND MAN'S SOCIO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT—Continued from page 11

Only we must know them to be transient and labour slowly to divinise them. If the Spirit is the principal thing in religion, then a question arises: Is the Spirit unconnected with life, is immortality the only function of the Spirit, then, must we repress, eliminate Mind, Life and Body? SrU Auribindo's reply is clear. Every principle in our make-up is seeking full fulfillment according to its own laws, its own nature. If religion wants us to abandon earthly life, we can get no aid from it in preserving us in it even for a moment. If, moreover, religion takes its stand on pain and sorrow, then all hope of realising Ananda in this life is over. The soberer we quit this world of Maya and enter the status of Brahman, the better. That would not be the brink of the Instant. If we fear the God of Mankind, the God of Good. On the other hand, the materialist's view of life is equally disquieting. He has awoken up with zeal the world of power and possession and enjoyment, but denies the divinity within it and beyond. For the perfection of our life, then, both individual and communal, our ultimate hope lies in spirituality—a true spirituality that does not shun the world, but accepts and fulfils its tasks. The world is waiting for a deeper and wider subjectivity that will spiritualise society and bring about individual harmony and communal happiness. In place of the half-spiritualised priest or the priestly caste, there must arrive the developed spiritual man to guide us to our destination—"the government of mankind by the Divine in the hearts and minds of men." This new theology will not come by a sudden charge and magical transformation. It will arrive by an evolution of several possibilities which have been undergoing a long course of preparation.