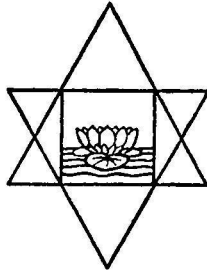


MOTHER INDIA

FEBRUARY, 1954

Price : Re. 1.



The Supramental is a truth and its advent is in the very nature of things inevitable...

I believe the descent of this Truth opening the way to a development of divine consciousness here to be the final sense of the earth evolution.

SRI AUROBINDO

* * *

*A new Light shall break upon the earth,
a new world shall be born: the things that
were promised shall be fulfilled.*

Sri Aurobindo

TRANSLATED FROM THE MOTHER'S
"Prayers and Meditations."

MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

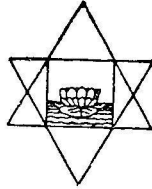
"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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The supramental change is a thing decreed and inevitable in the evolution of the earth-consciousness; for its upward ascent is not ended and mind is not its last summit. But that the change may arrive, take form and endure, there is needed the call from below with a will to recognise and not deny the Light when it comes, and there is needed the sanction of the Supreme from above. The power that mediates between the sanction and the call is the presence and power of the Divine Mother.

Sri Anandobh

FEBRUARY 21

FEBRUARY 21 is the birthday of the Mother, in whose spiritually creative hands Sri Aurobindo placed his Ashram of disciples aspiring for a new birth into the Light that it was his life-work to bring down amidst us. February 21 is also the birthday of our journal which started its career in 1949, drew its inspiration from the Mother and sought to express in various ways the Aurobindonian Light and to evoke in the mind of the world and particularly of free India the sense of the Divine that is our country's true genius.

So, *Mother India* cannot begin its sixth year better than by pondering the Message given by the Mother on the New Year's day. For, in that Message is the secret key-note of the spiritual rhythm to be unfolded in the immediate future, and by putting ourselves in tune with it and bringing forth in some detail its power of life-harmony we can best serve with our words the Mother's will.

The Mother's will is also the will of Sri Aurobindo, as the Message which is hers makes it quite clear to us. For, it runs—"My Lord, here is Thy advice to all, for this year: 'Never boast about anything, let your acts speak for you.' "

Before we commence our interpretation we may remove the doubt whether our own phrase about serving with our words the Mother's will does not contradict the emphasis the Message lays on action. One may ask: "What is the use of words when we are commanded to speak through acts?" But such a question forgets that just as we may speak through acts we may act through speech. Words that are not idle and sterile, not a splash of mere colour or else a jugglery of bare abstractions—words that carry the soul of substantial truth in a body of living beauty and strike from the depths of reality into reality's surfaces—such words are speech that is action. There is no boast in them: they are dynamic and hold a power of realisation.

The Mother's own words are always and pre-eminently a power of this kind and set us an example. Of course, the example is of the essence of the dynamism and does not dictate any particular style. But we may remark in regard to the Message before us that the simple and direct style of it bears to

MOTHER INDIA

its significance a relation symbolic of the relation between the Mother's human personality which we see from day to day and the divine dynamism at work through it. This personality is not just a medium transmitting as best it can that dynamism. It is something integrated with the Eternal behind, an expressive form of the very Spirit, because the outer being in her is not cut off in any way from the inner and the higher but is a luminous projection from the mysteries beyond the human level. It is a crystal of the Yogic consciousness, a shape of the soul itself, a body of the Divine. Similarly, the style of these words of hers is more than a medium for their spiritual significance: it is as if that very significance figured forth and there is unmistakably suggested in the mode of the utterance the character of what is uttered. In short, the simple and direct style of the Mother's Message is, as it were, her meaning's own verbal posture and sufficient to tell us that we may practically interpret the Message to mean: "Be simple and direct."

Simplicity is the exact opposite of show and brag: to be simple is to boast about nothing. And directness is the precise contrary of the obscure, the fumbling, the ineffectual: to be direct is to make your acts speak for you. But, of course, here the act that speaks is more than mere efficiency: it is the efficiency that reveals in world-movement the light of the falsehood-free and truth-chiselled soul which has no vanity, no pretence and has laid its entire self stark open to the Divinity who is its Mother.

This luminous efficiency is what we are called upon by the Mother to practise. And its accompaniment is a lack of loud claims. We who are soldiers of the Spirit should refrain from shouting out our strength. If we have striven to put ourselves at the disposal of the Divine Might

Tirelessly bearing the worlds and ages,

we must share as much as possible in the fathomless Silence from whose truth-visionary depths this Might emerges. Avoiding ostentation, the clamour of conceit, the sound in excess of the sense, we must proceed to the real job on our hands, the job of manifesting the Light of Sri Aurobindo, making it shine through each part of our being, setting it at work in the world, rendering it active everywhere. To be divinely dynamic is the whole heart of the Integral Yoga taught by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. And the New Year Message that is both his and hers wants us never to forget that only by being divinely dynamic and translating our vision of the Supreme into concrete gesture and movement and creation we can prove the Truth for which they took birth amongst us. The

slightest pride, the least egotism on our part is enough to impede the full and fair operation of their transformative force. Straight to the task of spiritual realisation and manifestation must we go, concentrate humbly yet intensely our consciousness upon it and through actual achievement carry to a sceptical and obscured world the burning conviction that the human life can become the Life Divine.

In this task the Mother's aid is today greater than ever. The Supermind which holds the realised perfection of all our mental, vital and physical existence is now no longer a distant power functioning through intermediary levels. It is here in our midst—a Wonder that is yet simple and direct. It may not be at work in its full effectivity, but its spearhead has penetrated the earth-being and with a confident calm its acts are speaking for it. Now that it is with us, all the more have we the capacity to stand as living examples of what we have termed luminous efficiency. Indeed, at a most appropriate time has the Mother enjoined us, on Sri Aurobindo's advice, to be utterly modest in our demeanour and make actual achievement our proof of the Aurobindonian truth. For, increasingly the power to make the impossible come true is streaming to us from those creative hands of hers whose blessing on our bowed heads is the fulfilling crown to all human aspiration.

K. D. SETHNA

Lay all before the Mother, call for her help, open your body consciousness to her Force. Do this persistently and you will find that you are able to go through and conquer.

13-5-1936

SRI AUROBINDO

THE MOTHER AND HER LIGHT AND FORCE

(Sri Aurobindo's Letters to a Beginner)

SELF: Last evening when the Mother was walking on the terrace I saw a light on Her body. What was it? (26-7-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: Many see light around the Mother. The light is there always.

SELF: In the evening when I am late and miss the Mother, do I receive Her Light as I would if I were present? (1-9-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: You can receive the Light at all times,—even if less concretely than in the physical presence.

Self: This morning I perceived a great beauty in the Mother. It was as if Her whole body was glowing with a supernatural light. In fact I felt as if a Supreme Goddess had come down from the heavens above. Kindly explain that. (20-7-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: It was only that you felt the Divinity with her which is always there.

SELF: I would like to know whether it is good or harmful to talk while waiting for the Mother to come out. I too sometimes cannot help talking or joking with my friends. (24-7-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: If you attach any value to the darshan, it is better to be recueilli. If her coming is only one incident of the day's routine like taking dinner, then of course it does not matter.

Recueilli means drawn back, quiet and collected in oneself.

SELF: Before reading Your answers to my letters I feel as if I would be unable to read or understand them. What is this activity in me? (9-6-33)

THE MOTHER AND HER LIGHT AND FORCE

SRI AUROBINDO: A useless activity of the vital mind. You should keep it quiet and receive with a silent mind waiting for light. In the silent mind one can receive an answer even if I write nothing.

SELF: On reading my yesterday's letter to the Mother I feel today, as if She was not much pleased with my laying before Her the wrong thoughts I had about X and Z. (9-6-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: Your writing these things does not give any displeasure to Mother. It is better to write if you have them, than to be silent about it.

SELF: Today a thought has come to me: "Why are you forcing yourself so much with regard to the control of the vital being? Better not bother about opening your thoughts and desires to the Mother; rather leave Her to work on you." (3-9-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: If you want the Mother to work through you, you must lay before her your thoughts and desires and reject them.

SELF: What is "discipline"? (12-6-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: To act according to a standard of Truth or a rule or law of action (dharma) or in obedience to a superior authority or to the highest principles discovered by the reason and intelligent will and not according to one's own fancy, vital impulses and desires. In Yoga obedience to the Guru or to the Divine and the law of the Truth as declared by the Guru is the foundation of discipline.

SELF: Is there really any difference between the Guru, the Divine and the Truth in our Yoga? I have been considering that the Mother and yourself are not only the Gurus but also the Divine, and that whatever either of you say is the law of the Truth. Why then are you using (in reply to my question on discipline) these three different words? (13-6-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: I wrote the general law of spiritual life and obedience. You have to know that as well as its special application here. Moreover many here are satisfied with saying, "The Mother is divine," but they do not follow her commands—others do not really regard her as Divine—they treat her as if she were an ordinary Guru.

MOTHER INDIA

SELF: From your yesterday's answer I still fail to catch the exact difference between the Guru and the Divine. You see, I am so ignorant that I have to ask you to explain to me even your simple answers! (14-6-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: The Guru is the Guide in the Yoga. When the Divine is accepted as the Guide, He is accepted as the Guru.

SELF: Yesterday you spoke also about the Mother's commands. What are they? I want to try to follow them. (14-6-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: They are supposed to be known. You have to do the right thing and follow the Yoga sincerely.

SELF: I must increase my knowledge about the Mother so that I may be able to understand Her more and more. What is the meaning of "Radha"?

SRI AUROBINDO: Radha is Divine Love and Ananda (the word means adoration and also delight). (16-6-1933)

SELF: How can one identify oneself with the Mother? (17-6-1933)

SRI AUROBINDO: You must become more conscious first before that can be done.

SELF: What is the meaning of "opening to the Mother"? How is one to open to Her? (18-6-1933)

SRI AUROBINDO: Opening is a thing that happens by itself by sincerity of will and aspiration. It means to be able to receive the higher forces that come from the Mother.

SELF: May I know what is meant by sincerity of will and by aspiration for the opening? (19-6-1933)

SRI AUROBINDO: Sincere is simply an adjective meaning that the will must be a true will. If you simply think "I aspire" and do things inconsistent with the aspiration, or follow your desires or open yourself to contrary influences, then it is not a sincere will.

THE MOTHER AND HER LIGHT AND FORCE

SELF: You often speak of the "Mother's Force". What is it? (18-6-1933)

SRI AUROBINDO: It is the Divine Force which works to remove the ignorance and change the nature into the divine nature.

SELF: With reference to the Mother you once said, "Ask for the consciousness of her force". Does it mean that I should aspire to know about Her Force? (18-6-1933)

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, not know with the mind only, but to feel it and see it with the inner experience.

SELF: Suppose I am in a fix and call down the Mother's Force which is above me. Now, how am I to know whether or not it has descended? (26-6-33)

SRI AUROBINDO: By the feeling of it or the result.

SELF: Grant that it has descended, and I have started doing my lessons; could I then order it to guard me from outer influences and simultaneously keep me in complete touch with the Mother even when my mind is occupied in some other work? (26-6-1933)

SRI AUROBINDO: You can't order anything to the Mother's force, the Mother's force is the manifestation of the Mother herself.

SELF: I am unable to understand how this force can deal with action. (26-6-1933)

Sri Aurobindo. You think the Mother's force has nothing to do with the action or that it is too feeble to act? Or what? What is a force meant for but to act?

SELF: Once you wrote to me, "Before you read offer it to Mother, call down her force." Is not Her Force already within us and working? (4-8-1933)

SRI AUROBINDO: If it is there you will have no difficulty.

THE MOTHER AND HER EMANATIONS

(Compiled from the Unpublished Letters of Sri Aurobindo)

NIRODBARAN (regarding a certain incident that had recently occurred): I was under the impression that Mother could at once know of such things. Some even say that she knows everything—all that is material or spiritual. Others maintain that she knows when the question of consciousness is involved, e.g. sex movements, etc., but not so much about material things.

SRI AUROBINDO: Good Lord! You don't expect her mind to be a factual encyclopaedia of all that is happening on all planes and in all universes? Or even on this earth, e.g. what Lloyd George had for dinner yesterday?

Questions of consciousness, of course, she always knows even with her outermost physical mind. Material facts she can know but is not bound to do it.—What would be true to say is that she can know if she concentrates or if her attention is called to it and she decides to know. I often know from her what has happened before it is reported by anyone. But she does not care to do that on a general scale.

MYSELF: What is then the exact significance of your statement: "Behave as if the Mother was looking at you, for indeed, She is always present"?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is the emanation of the Mother that is with each sadhak all the time. In former days when she was spending the night in a trance and not working in the Ashram, she brought back with her the knowledge of all that was happening to everybody. Nowadays she has no time for that.

NIRODBARAN: All this is very interesting; and I suppose you have an equal number of emanations yourself. Their object must be to give us protection.

SRI AUROBINDO: I am not aware of any emanations of mine. As for the Mother's, they are not there for protection, but to support the personal relation or contact with the sadhak, and to act so far as he will allow them to act....

THE MOTHER AND HER EMANATIONS

NIRODBARAN: Kindly enlighten us a little more regarding the emanations. How do they support the personal relation? I thought that all personal relations were with the Mother direct, not through a deputy! When X says that he feels the Mother's physical touch, who does he contact—the Mother or the emanation? Then again, the different forms of the Mother that one sees in dreams—are they also her emanations?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is terribly difficult to write of these things, for you are all as ignorant as babes about these things and misunderstand at every step. The Emanation is not a deputy, but the Mother herself. She is not bound to her body, but can put herself out (emanate) in any way she likes. What emanates, suits itself to the nature of the personal relation she has with the sadhaka which is different with each, but that does not prevent it from being herself. Its presence with the sadhaka is not dependent on his consciousness of it. If everything depended on the surface consciousness of the sadhaka, there would be no possibility of the divine action anywhere....

16-7-1935

BE cheerful and confident. Doubt and desire and Co. are there, no doubt, but the Divine is there also inside you. Open your eyes and look and look till the veil is rent and you see Him or Her.

30-12-1933

Sri Aurobindo

THE MÔTHER GIVES FLOWERS

(From Sri Aurobindo's Unpublished Letters)

I can transmit a state of consciousness more easily to a flower than to a manIf you are receptive, you will easily be able to absorb the message I put in the flowers I give you. When I give them, I give you states of consciousness: the flowers are the mediums.

THE MOTHER

NIRODBARAN: This morning Mother gave the flower signifying "Discipline". I began to wonder why this particular flower had been given; suddenly I remembered that I had not observed the right discipline in the matter of taking food with X and Y yesterday.

SRI AUROBINDO: In this respect the Mother is guided by her intuitions which tell her which flower is needed at the moment or helpful. Sometimes it is accompanied by a perception of a particular state of consciousness, sometimes by that of a material fact; but only the bare fact, usually, e.g.—it would not specify that it was "that particular thing" that was done or how X or Y came in. Not that that is impossible, but it is unnecessary and does not happen unless needed. (June 1935)

NIRODBARAN: When we receive flowers from Mother, are we to aspire for the things they symbolise, or are these things given with the flowers?

SRI AUROBINDO: There is no fixed rule. Sometimes it is the one, sometimes the other. But even when the thing is given, it is given in power—it has to be realised by the sadhak in consciousness, and for that aspiration is necessary. (Nov. 1933)

NAGIN DOSHI: What is the meaning behind the Mother giving us flowers—I mean, what does She try to do to us?

THE MOTHER GIVES FLOWERS

SRI AUROBINDO: Simply to put the power indicated upon you if you are willing to receive it. It is a progress suggested and offered.

1-9-1933

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TULSIBHAI: Last time at Mother's Terrace Darshan I received the flower which signifies "Sincerity". As the flowers are thrown according to our needs, I wonder which part of my being is insincere; please tell me something, so that I can correct the defect.

SRI AUROBINDO: When Mother gives a flower, she gives the force of the thing indicated—it does not necessarily indicate that that thing is absent in the sadhak.

2-9-1935

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SADHAK: During the morning "Pranam", Mother gave me the flower which signifies "psychological perfection". It is a flower with five petals, but the one I received had six. The five petals stand for love, bhakti, surrender sincerity and faith, I think; what does the sixth signify?

SRI AUROBINDO: The five are purity (not love), devotion, etc. The sixth is steadfastness (stability, etc.)

April, 1935

"NEW BIRTH" LEAVES

These leaves are the symbol of a new birth—not material, of body and flesh, but spiritual, of a higher and truer consciousness. This will be given to all and according to each one's receptivity, it will be realised.

THE MOTHER

THE ROLE OF FLOWERS

AMONGST all the offerings made to the Divine, the flower is the most subtle, and also the most mysterious; for, in its simplicity, it carries the vibrations of the *akasha*, the ethereal element itself,—that is, all that is most abstract, pure, and perfect. It is, above everything else, the *form* behind which is the *sound*, the all-powerful creative *mantra*.

Moreover, the flower represents all the other elements of nature, of which it is a perfect synthesis: air, water, fire, earth; it also corresponds to the different senses of man, for it can be seen by its colour, smelt by its perfume, tasted by its honey, touched by the fingers which pluck it, and even heard by those who have enough patience and an ear subtle enough to perceive the unfolding of its petals. There are some flowers—the evening primrose, for instance—which open in a few minutes, and which one can see trembling on their stalk, so strong is the life vibration which seizes them at the time of their opening.

The flower is the psychic consciousness of nature, expressing the highest and the lowest, the most precious and the most diminutive. It is a big non-revealed power.

If the flower is the Name itself—each vibration of the *sound* having inscribed itself in the heart of the flower inside a triangle where it has taken shape—, it is also the Number expressed by its petals, by its stamens, by the sepals of its calyx. All its components have a precise significance: the familiar lotus with five petals is the “Supreme descended on earth”, whereas the gods created by man have a thousand-petalled lotus as a seat in his temples. The flower discloses to us psychic qualities much before we are able to see them for ourselves. Quite at hand, for instance, chrysanthemums symbolize energy; petunias stand for enthusiasm, phlox for skill in works, zinnias for endurance, etc. Other flowers speak more of soul qualities: the thoroughness of vervains, the wider and wider opening of barleries, the receptivity on all planes of gladioli, the surrender of hollyhocks, up to the ultimate goal of mystical life where the rose plays the crucial role of the meeting between the Divine and the worshipper, at the central point of the cross, where the unthinkable takes a form and is projected in the innumerable manifestation. The Rose always gives itself,

THE ROLE OF FLOWERS

It is at the same time the call of love for the Divine, and the abandon of the Divine who always gives himself unreservedly. All the mystics pluck roses in the secret garden of spiritual experience, and give them to us, a symbol of the quaternity, the necessary link without which there would be no intimacy between God and the worshipper.

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The Mother has often been asked how she had given each flower its deeper significance. She *sees* it, whereas we don't, in that point of unity where, from the captured lights, the flowers have taken birth with their exact significance. She *knows* what can be tangibly transferred of the extreme values, which are indeterminate on the positive as well as on the negative side. She has also often been asked "Why" and "How" she gives such and such flowers to certain disciples and not to others. The questions even go so far as to aim at piercing the mystery of what is transmitted by the given flower, or of what is hidden in the heart's cave of the sadhak and ignored by himself.

Here one enters into a symbolism where all explanations are good in order to say the following very simple thing: there is the impulse of the one who asks something or expects something; and there is the answer or the gift, the granting. Between the two, the Mother is the instrument; she is "what acts", remaining at the same time beyond all thinkable opposites, beyond all emotions that can be felt. The one who receives a flower from her hands knows that it is a living *mantra*, which will act profoundly, at its time; all depends on the opening, on the sincerity, on the surrender of the one who delivers himself to the divine influence. There is here a process of transmutation, of stimulation, which is evident. The flower is the active agent which accomplishes the aim, because

"the divine grace is acting,
the hand which gives is love."

The flower thus establishes a direct connection between the Mother who gives and the disciple who receives, or, inversely, between the disciple who offers and the Mother who accepts—in a language whose effectiveness comes from its expressing itself in silence. The mute message of the flower is neat, precise, often as sharp as a razor's edge; but it can touch what must be touched without any words provoking revolts or absurd oppositions of the rebellious nature. All the flowers are beautiful, those symbolising qualities to be acquired as well as those signifying obscurities to be overcome; for such aspects exist only

MOTHER INDIA

in the objectivised relativity of the disciple who sees the road still to be covered and the point from which he started. At the very moment he receives the flowers they become for him literally the steps of the stairs of light he has to climb. The adjustment comes progressively, in the love of the Divine Mother, the creatrix of manifold forms, outside time's measure because to the guru who helps in the transformation a day or a month are not so different in value. The only thing that counts is the hour of the awakening, the moment of the opening, when the flower, however beautiful, disappears and only its sweet perfume remains.

On the heights where the Mother gives power to the flowers, these mantric conceptions are indisputable; from there the importance of the flowers exchanged between the Mother and the disciples, as well as the understanding in which the flowers have their absolute value.

Little children in the Ashram bring flowers to the Mother because they like them for their beauty; but very often they even play with the significances; and they know quite well, in case of need, where to find the force or quality which they require. They come to Mother with the pure offerings in their hands, without their flowers getting suddenly charged with the secret desires of the soul, the heart or the body, with the subtle and often unconscious lies, as happens frequently with grown-ups. And the latter know it quite well! In the great family of disciples, the moving humility with which everyone prepares their bouquet before bringing it to the Mother is perhaps the most spontaneous expression of self-surrender, of aspiration materialised. A minute analysis, expressed by a flower, loses its harshness without losing its acuteness, for "what must be done will be done", sooner or later, in one way or another. The flower is only a "bridge over the abyss" between inexpressible values.

Early in the morning, each of the gardener-disciples brings to the flower-room a full basket of flowers plucked in the Ashram gardens. These are sorted with care. The stalks are cut, the leaves removed. The corollas are disposed according to their colour and size. The smallest details assume great importance at this "flower-fair" where the dealers give everything for nothing, with an affectionate patience, where the buyers have no money and bring a refined fastidiousness, for their psychic being must be satisfied above all. The children are in a hurry and anxious because the school bell is about to ring; the teachers, the workers, have a set time for beginning the daily task. Everybody, however, has enough time to scrutinise the flowers offered to them, to examine each in detail, because one can never be too exact in expressing clearly...what is still

THE ROLE OF FLOWERS

imprecise in the mounting aspiration! The more so does it fall on the flower to crystallise this aspiration which seeks to shape itself, to be the rigorously exact figure of the *chakra* consciously or unconsciously evoked, of the Name itself in its form as rarefied as can be...

"This petal is shrunk," a disciple says to the gardener; "this flower is pale, give me another. This morning I simply must have: *joy in the vital* and *spiritual healing*, it is very important...". And indeed it is very important. The offering of a flower sums up all that is implied in the traditional sacrifices which are now obsolete—be it a pair of doves or a white buffalo, the Vedic horse or the produce of the earth: cakes, honey, fruits and perfumes, water, salt, or incense. There is "what is offered to the Divine", and "what the Divine gives" in his turn to the beloved disciple as a token of alliance. Here, in the Ashram, the flowers are the "Sign of the manifested Spirit", the rainbow which fills the open hands, the promise of realisation in the supreme compassion. "The grass thrills with joy, the air quivers with light, the trees raise to the sky their ardent prayer, the singing of the birds becomes a canticle ...The flowers bring with them the smile of the Divine..."¹

The offerings have their altar—the Samadhi of Sri Aurobindo in the Ashram court-yard, a place of peace and Presence, of ardent communion between the Spirit and the form. Twice a day the variegated carpet of fresh flowers is laid anew, with a slightly raised centre where a design of scarlet pomegranate flowers makes the emblem of two intercrossing triangles which is the seal of the Master. Also, every morning the Mother receives a number of disciples who, day after day, are in need of her and of being at the heart of the direct teaching given by her, during the long period of inner work, difficult progress, deep transformation of the being.

But this transformation can cover a much larger field; the flowers can become the sacrifice of an expanse covering the earth and growing universal. During the whole of the last world war and the two years which followed it, the Mother had all the flowers growing in the Ashram counted with minute accuracy, corolla by corolla, button by button and a meticulously drawn list was made. The disciples, in groups, counted the flowers, thousands of each kind, with blind patience and perfect calm. Visitors used to join them at certain times of the year. In full baskets the flowers were brought to the Mother—a huge offering mute and secret, an ardent sacrifice of beauty to counterbalance the brutal deli-

¹ *The Prayers and Meditations of the Mother.*

MOTHER INDIA

very of Nature in one of her crisis of destruction. The neutralising Force was acting through the eternal smile of compassion; love was enveloping the dark night, love was answering the calls, calming down the pangs of what was being born and what was dying—huge sacrifice in the accomplishment of the Word. “All that comes from the Divine must return to the Divine.” Tears had become the perfume of offered flowers.

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In the Ashram, three times a week, all the disciples, the children of the school and the visitors, pass in a file, before the Mother. This movement is called “the Blessings”. Some disciples bring to the Mother a tray covered with a mosaic of flowers, being sure that one of them will be handed back to them. Others hold a few flowers, enclosed in their joined hands as if in a cup. Others bring nothing at all. These latter are the wave of the river, the witnesses of the experience in its flow, the faithful and patient sadhaks who do not exteriorise their wishes because they know a deep inner quietude. They are the believers who know that the hour shall come. There are also in the file people who are passers-by of a day, who are urged by curiosity, and suddenly get stirred because they feel that something is happening which cannot be explained to them, which cannot be given to them. But they are seized by the beauty of the scene, and by the tangible serenity which emanates from it.

Usually, at “the Blessings”, the Mother gives the same flower to all, unless she has a special message to convey to someone. It is often a red hibiscus, a button which never opens, symbolising *divine solicitude* in its promise of blossoming; or the white flower of the jasmine tree signifying the *psychological perfection* which will be reached when all the parts of the being consent equally and are harmonised.

Some disciples touch their foreheads with the flowers they receive, also their eyes, their lips and their heart. Others get away in a hurry, suddenly shy because *her* hand has touched them, *her* eyes have seen them. Mother has given, and she has received—she has created.

*
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The flowers have no other function in the Ashram but to convey a rigorous teaching of which none speaks because each one lives it according to his own measure, his own capacity. The language of the flowers, like that of the hiero-

THE ROLE OF FLOWERS

glyphs, requires a key. This key is that of the most absolute sincerity which sooner or later draws the line between the things that belong to the imagination and the emotions, and those that belong to the spontaneous movement of the being itself when it cries out: "Lord, enlighten us, guide our steps, show us the way towards the realisation of Thy law." There are many things to clear until the moment of the creative life kindles up. The first steps only can be escorted until the walking becomes more assured; afterwards it is a question of direct experience alone. There was a time—some twenty years ago—when Mother was writing mantric phrases with flowers for a very small number of disciples. These phrases are still meaningful, living, with the same intensity of aspiration; they can be landmarks on the path of integral yoga.

But this teaching, essentially subjective and individual, must remain a harmony and an equilibrium in all its degrees. May the words which convey the effort of the whole being in travail, in full transformation, remain impregnated with the perfume of the flowers, with their beauty, and above all with the smile of the Mother who gives them, for that is as it should be.

LIZELLE

(Translated from the French by REPITON PRÉNEUF)

THE HEART AND THE ROSE

O ROSE-RED wonder from thy sacred hands,
Speak to my heart! say what my soul should know!
Lift now the mist from these untraversed lands
And let thy 'sunlight' deep within me grow!
So blue is the sky above, earth breathes a sigh,
And innocent wonder fills the heart of things;
And this red rose—this kiss that cannot die
Shines with a radiance and within me sings
Of ancient dawns imprisoned in the soul.
Do I now understand,—is it through love,
And love alone that I must seek the goal,
Hold there within thy Flame from worlds above,
Know there the truth of thy Reality—
The heart and the Rose the Supreme Discovery?

NORMAN DOWSETT

REALISATIONS IN THE ASHRAM

(Nirodbaran : Seeing some of the failures in this Yoga, I sometimes wonder if anyone here is attaining anything at all; has anybody realised the Divine? Please don't ask me what I mean by the Divine; it is difficult to explain these things.)

Why shouldn't I ask? If you mean the Vedantic realisation, several have had it. Bhakti realisation also. If I were to publish the letters on sadhana experiences that come to me, people would marvel and think that the Ashram was packed full of great Yogis! Those who know something about Yoga would not mind about the dark periods, eclipses, hostile attacks, despairings, falls, for they know that these things happen to Yogis. Even the failures would have become Gurus, if I had allowed it, with circles of Shishyas! X did become one. Y of course. But all that does not count here, because what is a full realisation outside, is here only a beginning of Siddhi. Here the test is transformation of the nature, psychic, spiritual, finally supramental. That and nothing else is what makes it so difficult.

19-5-1936

SRI AUROBINDO

THOUGHTS AND GLIMPSES

*New Series**

Who is the superman? He who can rise above this matter-regarding broken mental human unit and possess himself universalised and deified in a divine force, a divine love and joy and a divine knowledge.

*
**

If thou keepest this limited human ego and thinkest thyself the superman, thou art but the fool of thy own pride, the plaything of thy own force and the instrument of thy own illusions.

*
**

Nietzsche saw the superman as the lion-soul passing out of camelhood, but the true heraldic device and token of the superman is the lion seated upon the camel which stands upon the cow of plenty. If thou canst not be the slave of all mankind, thou art not fit to be its master, and if thou canst not make thy nature as Vasishtha's cow of plenty with all mankind to draw its wish from her udders, what avails thy leonine supermanhood?

*
**

Be to the world as the lion in fearlessness and lordship, as the camel in patience and service, as the cow in quiet, forbearing and maternal beneficence. Raven on all the joys of God as a lion over its prey, but bring also all humanity into that infinite field of luxurious ecstasy to wallow there and to pasture.

SRI AUROBINDO.

* From Early writings

CHITRANGADA

(This fragment, found among Sri Aurobindo's old papers, is part of another version of the lost poem whose opening passages were published in the fifth number of the Sri Aurobindo Circle Annual. It was not revised.)

...Then into heaven dim-featured twilight came
And in her city mid the eastern hills
Chitrangada awoke and saw the dawn
Presaged in bleakness. From Urjoona's arms
Unclasping her rose-white smooth limbs, she looked
Into the opening world; but all was grey
And formless. Then into her mood there passed
The spirit of the gloomy northern hills
Burdening her breasts with terror and her heart
Was bared to insight, and now it heard the moan
Of waters and remembered pain. The sad
Prophecies of the pale astrologers
Haunted her with affliction, and she found
Pale hints of absence from the twilight drawn.
But now the hero felt his clasp a void
And on one arm half-rising searched the grey
Unlidded darkness for the face; then spoke
Slowly her name, "How has the unborn day
Called thee, beloved, that thou standest dumb
In the grey light like one whose joy is far?
Come hither." Silently she came and knelt
And laid her quiet cheek upon his breast.
He felt her tears, wondering; and she replied,
"Ah, dost thou love me and a moment brief
Of absence troubles even in sleep thy heart
Waking to emptiness? And yet, ah God,
How easily that void will soon be filled!
For thou wilt like a glorious burning move
Through cities and through regions like a star,
Careless in thy heroic strength o'er all

MOTHER INDIA

The beautiful country Aryavertha. Women
Will see thy face and strangely, swiftly drawn
Thy masculine attraction feel and bow
Over thy feet. For thou wilt come to them
A careless glory taking women's hearts
As one breaks from a tree the wayside flowers,
And smile sunnily kind even as a god
Might draw a mortal maiden to his arms
And marry his immortal mouth to hers.
Then will thy destiny seize thee, thou wilt pass
Like some great light in heaven, leaving behind
A splendid memory of force and fire.
And thou wilt fill thy soul with battle, august
Misfortunes and tremendous harms embrace,
Experience mighty raptures and at last
Upon some world-renowned far-rumoured field
Empire for ever win or lose, nor all
The while think once of my forgotten face.”
She ceased and wept; he said, touching her hair,
“What wast thou musing, O Chitrangada,
Lonely beside the window and thine eyes
Looked out on the half-formed aspect of things
Twixt light and darkness? Do not so again.
For bleak and dreadful is the hour ere dawn
And one who gazes out then from his sweet
Warm, happy, bounded human room, is touched
With awful memories that he cannot grasp
And mighty sorrows without form, the sense
Of an original vastness desolate,
Bleak labour and a sad unfinished world.
Dwell not with these again, but when thou wakest
And seest the unholy hour pallid gaze
Into thy room, draw closer to my bosom
Waking with kisses and with joy surround
Thy soul until God rises with the sun.
Friendly to mortals is the living sun's
Great brilliant light; but this pale hour was made
For slowly-dying men whose lone chilled souls
Grow near to that greyness and dumb mourners
Unfriended”. But Chitrangada replied,

CHITRANGADA

“I looked into the dawn and had a dream
Thou wast gone far from me; too well I knew
That sound of trampling horse-hooves in the north
And victor rumours of thy chariot shook
The hearts of distant things. I sat alone
At this pale window and about me saw
My city and our low familiar hills.
Yet these were but as objects painted in
Upon the eye, and round me I beheld
The gloomy northern mountains with their mists
And sorrowful embracing rains and heard
With melancholy voices rolling down
The waters of a dull, ill-omened stream
Sinuous and eddies alien to the sun.
That thou wilt pass from me I know, nor would
I stay thee, had I power; for if today
I held thy feet, yet as the seasons passed,
The impulse of thy mighty life would come
Upon thee like a wind and drive thee forth
To love and battle and disastrous deeds
And all the giant anguish that preserves
This world. Thou art resistlessly wast born
To these things as the leopard sleek to strength
And beauty and fierceness, as resistlessly
As women are to love; though well they know
Pain for the end, yet knowing still must love.
Ah swiftly pass. Why shouldst thou linger here
Vainly? How will it serve God’s purpose in thee
To tarry soothing for such brief while longer
Merely a woman’s heart; meanwhile perhaps
Lose some great moment of thy life which once
Neglected never can return.” She ceased
And strove to conquer overmastering tears.
He was silent a little, then his eyes
Strained towards the dim-seen fairness of her face,
Saying, “O little loving child, who once
Wast simply glad to love and feel my kiss!
But now thou mournest, art in one night changed.
Thou wast not wont to leave my arms ere dawn
And dream of sorrow. Rather wast thou fain

MOTHER INDIA

Of all my bosom and the gazing light
Hardly could force away thy obstinate clasp.
Yet now thou speakst of absence easily.
Is my love faded? Dost thou feel my arms
Looser about thee, my beloved? Nay,
Thou knowest that not less but more I love thee
Than when to eastern Monipura far
I came, a wandering prince companioned only
By courage and my sword and found thee here,
O sweet young sovereign, ruling with pure eyes
And little maiden hand, fragile and mild,
A strong and savage nation. At my call
Unquestioning thou camest, oh, meekly down
Leaving tremendous seat and austere powers,
Contented at my feet to dwell and feel
My kisses on thy hair, and couldst renounce
Thy glorious girdle for my simple arms.
O fair young soul, candid and meek and frank
Thy love was, opening to me fragrantly
Like flowers to the sun, wide-orbed, and yielded
Thy whole self up. Yet now thou speakest sadly
Too like a mind matured by thought and pain."

He ceased, covering her bosom with his hands,
And she trembled, and broke out faltering:
"O endlessness of moments and the long
Pain-haunted nights when thou art far! O me
And the pale dreadful dawn when I shall wake
In the grey hour and feel myself alone
For ever! Yet O my rapture and pride! O prince,
O hero, O strong protagonist of earth!
World-conqueror! and in heaven immortal lips
Burning have kissed thy feet, but I possessed.
God knows that I have loved thee, not with grudging
Piecemeal reluctant cessions of the soul
As ordinary women love, but greatly
With one glad falling at my conqueror's feet
All suddenly and warmly like the spring.
Ah God, thy beauty when it dawned on me
And I obeyed thy bright attraction! felt

CHITRANGADA

Thy face like the great moon that draws the tides!
Facing our armed senate, bow in hand
Leaned on a pillar with a banner's pomp
Seeming to mingle in thy hair thou stoodst
Expectant, careless, and thy strong gracious face
Was brilliant like a sudden god's. And half
I rose up as one called. But even then
Through all the hushed assembly ran a murmur,
An impulse and a movement and with cries
Round thee my strong barbarian nobles pressed
Offering fierce homage. But I sat alone,
Abandoned, with a wounded sad delight,
Loving thy glory, like a young warrior conquered
In battle by the hero he admires.
Thou tookst me by the hand and ledst me down
From the high dais and the ancient throne:
Faltering I went with meek submissive eyes".
Then strong Urjoona: "Beloved, and was this not
Dearer, a woman's bliss in her one lord
Than ruling all those Kings? Dost thou not chose
Rather thy body by my kisses wakened
Than those free virgin and unconscious limbs?
Ah wherefore shouldst thou dream of love cut short
And joy without its sequel? Rather think
That thy young passion shall to matron bloom
Live warmly enriched and beautifully changed
When thou with the hushed wonder of motherhood
Touching thy sweet young eyes holdst up to me
Returning from high battle to thine arms
A creature of our own." And she answered
With a low sob, "Would God that it might be!
But though I loved thee I have known I was
No real part of thy great days; only
A bosom on which thou hast lain ere riding
To battle, a face which thou hast loved and passed.
Hero, take up thy bow! Warrior, arise!
Proceed with thy majestic mission. Thou
From many mighty spirits wast selected
And mayst not for a transient joy renounce
The anguish and the crown. I shall witness

MOTHER INDIA

Thy far-off pomps, not utterly alone;
As herdsmen pausing under quiet leaves
Watch the stupendous passage of a host,
Shrill neigh of horses, chariots swift and men
Marching, and hear great conchshells blown, and look
Into the burning eyes of kings. Some wave
Of thy vast fate perhaps shall roll thee here
Or all is over; in the long round of things
We shall touch hands in the old way, yet changed,
Shall wonder in each other's eyes to find
Strange kindlings and the buried deeps of love."

She ended, and Urjoona for a moment
Beheld vast Aryavertha as if mapped
Before him, rivers, and heaven-invading hills
And cities ancient as their skies; then turned
And drawing to his bosom Chitrangada
With his calm strength surrounding her replied:
"This may be; yet, O woman, O delight,
Remember to rejoice! Flowers die, beloved,
To live again; therefore hold fast to love,
Hold fast the blooming of thy life in love.
The soul's majestic progress moulding doom
Is with the frailest flower helped that blows
In frankness. Therefore is the woman's part
Nearest divine, who to one motion keeps
And like the fixed immortal planets' round
Is constant to herself in him she loves.
Nor though fate call me hence, have I in vain
Loved thee, young virgin of the hills, and snared
Thy feet with kisses; though my soul from thee
Adventure journeying like a star the void,—
As 'tis our spirit's fate ever to roam
Seeking bright portions of ourself, which found,
The strong heart cherishes until his close.
Relinquish nothing grasped, who yields to fate,
To fate or weakness, misses the great goal;—
So have I planted thee within my heart,
O tender beauty, and shall not lightly lose.
Though years divide us and the slow upgrowth

CHITRANGADA

Of overlaying thoughts submerge the peace,
The sweet and mutual self, yet the old joy
Lives like Valmekie in his mound, the sage
Buried, forgot, yet murmuring the name.
Let us not loose then, O Chitrangada,
One moment's possibility of love
Which being squandered, we shall then regret.
Fate that united once, may when she will
Divorce, but cannot the sweet meaning spoil
Of these warm kisses." He embraced her wholly
Confounding her with bliss; so for that time
The shadow fled and joy forgot his close.

But one pale morn Chitrangada rose wan
And to the stable through the grey hushed place
Descending, with her little deft hands yoked
Urjoona's coursers to the car,—persuading
Thrust in their whinnying mouths the bit, fastened
The traces, harmonised the reins, then led
Into the sad dim court, trampling, his steeds;
And with a strange deep look of love and hate
Caressing said, faint with her unshed tears:
"You brought him here who now shall bear away,
O horses yoked to fate. How often yet
Will you deceive us shaking wide your manes
And trampling over women's hearts with hooves
Thunderous towards battle? Yet your breed perhaps
Shall bring him to my wrinkled age." And now
Urjoona came: his mailed and resonant tread
Rang in her very heart, his corslet blazed
Towards the chill skies and his heroic form
Seemed to consent with the surrounding hills.
But in the marble face and eyes august
The light of his tremendous fate had dawned
Like a great sunrise. Calm her shuddering body
He took into his bosom and with no word,
Under the witnessing, unmoved heavens
Kissed her pale lips; then to his car he rose,
And now she did not weep, but silently
Took and returned his kiss. So he went forth.

MOTHER INDIA

Thundering the great wheels jarred upon the stones
Of the wide court and echoes filled the air
With triumph of warlike sound. Outside,
The city's nobles, waiting, saw the car
Emerge, and bowed down to their king. They spoke
No word, but stood austere watching still,
A mist over their stern and savage eyes,
His going, as men in darkness watch a light
Carried away that cheered them for an hour,
Then turned back homeward. But Chitrangada
Waited till the last thunders died away
And far off on a hill the warlike flag
Waved in the breeze and dipped below the edge;
Then to her chamber slowly went alone.

SRI AUROBINDO

THE SECRET OF THE VEDA

SRI AUROBINDO

CHAPTER IV

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY

A HYPOTHESIS of the sense of Veda must always proceed, to be sure and sound, from a basis that clearly emerges in the language of the Veda itself. Even if the bulk of its substance be an arrangement of symbols and figures, the sense of which has to be discovered, yet there should be clear indications in the explicit language of the hymns which will guide us to that sense. Otherwise, the symbols being themselves ambiguous, we shall be in danger of manufacturing a system out of our own imaginations and preferences instead of discovering the real purport of the figures chosen by the Rishis. In that case, however ingenious and complete our theory, it is likely to be a building in the air, brilliant, but without reality or solidity.

Our first duty, therefore, is to determine whether there is, apart from figure and symbol, in the clear language of the hymns a sufficient kernel of psychological notions to justify us in supposing at all a higher than the barbarous and primitive sense of the Veda. And afterwards we have to find, as far as possible from the internal evidence of the Sutras themselves, the interpretation of each symbol and image and the right psychological function of each of the gods. A firm and not a fluctuating sense, founded on good philological justification and fitting naturally into the context wherever it occurs, must be found for each of the fixed terms of the Veda. For, as has already been said, the language of the hymns is a language fixed and invariable ; it is the carefully preserved and scrupulously respected diction consistently expressing either a formal creed and ritual or a traditional doctrine and constant experience. If the language of the Vedic Rishis were free and variable, if their ideas were evidently in a state of flux, shifting and uncertain, a convenient license and incoherence in the sense we attach to their terminology and the relation we find between their ideas, might be justified or tolerated. But the hymns themselves on the very face of them bear exactly the contrary testimony. We have the right therefore to demand the same fidelity and scrupulousness in the interpreter as in the original he interprets. There is obviously a constant

relation between the different notions and cherished terms of the Vedic religion; incoherence and uncertainty in the interpretation will prove, not that the face evidence of the Veda is misleading, but simply that the interpreter has failed to discover the right relations.

If, after this initial labour has been scrupulously and carefully done, it can be shown by a translation of the hymns that the interpretations we had fixed fit in naturally and easily in whatever context, if they are found to illuminate what seemed obscure and to create intelligible and clear coherence where there seemed to be only confusion; if the hymns in their entirety give thus a clear and connected sense and the successive verses show a logical succession of related thoughts, and if the result as a whole be a profound, consistent and antique body of doctrines, then our hypothesis will have a right to stand besides others, to challenge them where they contradict it or to complete them where they are consistent with its findings. Nor will the probability of our hypothesis be lessened, but rather its validity confirmed if it be found that the body of ideas and doctrines thus revealed in the Veda are a more antique form of subsequent Indian thought and religious experience, the natural parent of Vedanta and Purana.

So considerable and minute a labour is beyond the scope of these brief and summary chapters. Their object is only to indicate for those who care to follow the clue I have myself received, the path and its principal turnings,—the results I have arrived at and the main indications by which the Veda itself helps us to arrive at them. And, first, it seems to me advisable to explain the genesis of the theory in my own mind so that the reader may the better understand the line I have taken or, if he chooses, check any prepossessions or personal preferences which may have influenced or limited the right application of reasoning to this difficult problem.

Like the majority of educated Indians I had passively accepted without examination, before myself reading the Veda, the conclusions of European Scholarship both as to the religious and as to the historical and ethnical sense of the ancient hymns. In consequence, following again the ordinary line taken by modernised Hindu opinion, I regarded the Upanishads as the most ancient source of Indian thought and religion, the true Veda, the first Book of Knowledge. The Rig Veda in the modern translations which were all I knew of this profound Scripture, represented for me an important document of our national history, but seemed of small value or importance for the history of thought or for a living spiritual experience.

My first contact with Vedic thought came indirectly while pursuing certain lines of self-development in the way of Indian Yoga, which, without my knowing it, were spontaneously converging towards the ancient and now unfrequented paths followed by our forefathers. At this time there began to arise in my mind an arrangement of symbolic names attached to certain psychological experiences which had begun to regularise themselves; and among them there came the figures of three female energies, Ila, Saraswati, Sarama, representing severally three out of the four faculties of the intuitive reason,—revelation, inspiration and intuition. Two of these names were not well known to me as names of Vedic goddesses, but were connected rather with the current Hindu religion or with old Puranic legend, Saraswati, goddess of learning and Ila, mother of the Lunar dynasty. But Sarama was familiar enough. I was unable, however, to establish any connection between the figure that rose in my mind and the Vedic hound of heaven, who was associated in my memory with the Argive Helen and represented only an image of the physical Dawn entering in its pursuit of the vanished herds of Light into the cave of the Powers of darkness. When once the clue is found, the clue of the physical Light imaging the subjective, it is easy to see that the hound of heaven may be the intuition entering into the dark caverns of the subconscious mind to prepare the delivery and outflashing of the bright illuminations of knowledge which have there been imprisoned. But the clue was wanting and I was obliged to suppose an identity of name without any identity of the symbol.

It was my stay in Southern India which first seriously turned my thoughts to the Veda. Two observations that were forced on my mind, gave a serious shock to my second-hand belief in the racial division between Northern Aryans and Southern Dravidians. The distinction had always rested for me on a supposed difference between the physical types of Aryan and Dravidian and a more definite incompatibility between the northern Sanscritic and the southern non-Sanscritic tongues. I knew indeed of the later theories which suppose that a single homogeneous race, Dravidian or Indo-Afghan, inhabits the Indian peninsula; but hitherto I had not attached much importance to these speculations. I could not, however, be long in Southern India without being impressed by the general recurrence of northern or "Aryan" types in the Tamil race. Wherever I turned, I seemed to recognise with a startling distinctness, not only among the Brahmins but in all castes and classes, the old familiar faces, features, figures of my friends of Maharashtra, Gujerat, Hindustan, even, though this similarity was less widely spread, of my own province Bengal. The impression I received was as if an army of all the tribes of the North had descended on the South and submerged any previous populations that may have

occupied it. A general impression of a Southern type survived, but it was impossible to fix it rigidly while studying the physiognomy of individuals. And in the end I could not but perceive that whatever admixtures might have taken place, whatever regional differences might have been evolved, there remains behind all variations, a unity of physical as well as of cultural type¹ throughout India. For the rest, this is a conclusion to which ethnological speculation² itself has an increasing tendency.

But what then of the sharp distinction between Aryan and Dravidian races created by the philologists? It disappears. If at all an Aryan invasion is admitted, we have either to suppose that it flooded India and determined the physical type of the people, with whatever modifications, or that it was the inclusion of small bands of a less civilised race who melted away into the original population. We have then to suppose that entering a vast peninsula occupied by a civilised people, builders of great cities, extensive traders, not without mental and spiritual culture, they were yet able to impose on them their own language, religion, ideas and manners. Such a miracle would be just possible if the invaders possessed a very highly organised language, a greater force of creative mind and a more dynamic religious form and spirit.

And there was always the difference of language to support the theory of a meeting of races. But here also my preconceived ideas were disturbed and confounded. For on examining the vocables of the Tamil language, in appearance so foreign to the Sanscritic form and character, I yet found myself continually guided by words or by families of words supposed to be pure Tamil in establishing new relations between Sanscrit and its distant sister, Latin, and occasionally, between the Greek and the Sanscrit. Sometimes the Tamil vocable not only suggested the connection, but proved the missing link in a family of connected words. And it was through this Dravidian language that I came first to perceive what seems to me now the true law, origins and, as it were, the embryology of the Aryan tongues. I was unable to pursue my examination far enough to establish any definite conclusion, but it certainly seems to me that the original connection between the Dravidian and Aryan tongues was far closer and more extensive than is usually supposed and the possibility suggests itself that they may even have been two divergent families derived from one lost

¹ I prefer not to use the term race, for race is a thing much more obscure and difficult to determine than is usually imagined. In dealing with it the trenchant distinctions current in the popular mind are wholly out of place.

² Always supposing that ethnological speculations have at all any validity. The only firm basis of ethnology is the theory of the hereditary invariability of the human skull which is now being challenged. If it disappears, the whole science disappears with it.

primitive tongue. If so, the sole remaining evidence of an Aryan invasion of Dravidian India would be the indications to be found in the Vedic hymns.

It was, therefore, with a double interest that for the first time I took up the Veda in the original, though without any immediate intention of a close or serious study. It did not take long to see that the Vedic indications of a racial division between Aryans and Dasyus and the identification of the latter with the indigenous Indians were of a far flimsier character than I had supposed. But far more interesting to me was the discovery of a considerable body of profound psychological thought and experience lying neglected in these ancient hymns. And the importance of this element increased in my eyes when I found, first, that the mantras of the Veda illuminated with a clear and exact light psychological experiences of my own for which I had found no sufficient explanation either in European psychology or in the teachings of Yoga or of Vedānta, so far as I was acquainted with them, and, secondly, that they shed light on obscure passages and ideas of the Upanishads to which, previously, I could attach no exact meaning and gave at the same time a new sense to much in the Puranas.

I was helped in arriving at this result by my fortunate ignorance of the commentary of Sayana. For I was left free to attribute their natural psychological significance to many ordinary and current words of the Veda, such as *dhi*, thought or understanding, *manas*, mind, *mati*, thought, feeling or mental state, *manisha*, intellect, *ritam*, truth; to give their exact shades of sense to *kavi*, seer, *manishi*, thinker, *vipra*, *vipaschit*, enlightened in mind, and a number of similar words; and to hazard a psychological sense, justified by more extensive study, for words like *daksha* which for Sayana means strength and *sravas* which he renders as wealth, food or fame. The psychological theory of the Veda rests upon our right to concede their natural significance to these vocables.

Sayana gives to the words *dhi*, *ritam*, etc., very variable significances. *Ritam*, which is almost the key-word of any psychological or spiritual interpretation, is rendered by him sometimes as "truth", more often "sacrifice," occasionally in the sense of water. The psychological interpretation gives it invariably the sense of Truth. *Dhi* is rendered by Sayana variously "thought," "prayer," "action," "food," etc. The psychological interpretation gives it consistently the sense of thought or understanding. And so with the other fixed terms of Veda. Moreover, Sayana's tendency, is to obliterate all fine shades and distinctions between words and to give them their vaguest

general significance. All epithets conveying ideas of mental activity mean for him simply "intelligent," all words suggesting various ideas of force, and the Veda overflows with them, are reduced to the broad idea of strength. I found myself on the contrary impressed by the great importance of fixing and preserving the right shade of meaning and precise association to be given to different words, however close they may be to each other in their general sense. I do not see indeed why we should suppose that the Vedic Rishis, unlike all other masters of poetic style, used words pell-mell and indiscriminately without feeling their just associations and giving them their right and exact force in the verbal combination.

By following this principle I found that without departing from the simple natural and straightforward sense of words and clauses an extraordinarily large body not only of separate verses but of entire passages came at once into evidence which entirely altered the whole character of the Veda. For this Scripture then appeared to have a constant vein of the richest gold of thought and spiritual experience running all through it and appearing sometimes in small streaks, sometimes in larger bands, in the majority of its hymns. Moreover, besides the words that in their plain and ordinary sense give at once a wealth of psychological significance to their context, the Veda is full of others to which it is possible to give either an external and material or an internal and psychological value according to our conception of the general purport of Veda. For instance such words as *raye*, *rayi*, *radhas*, *ratna*, may mean either merely material prosperity and riches or internal felicity and plenitude applying itself equally to the subjective and the objective world; *dhana*, *vaja*, *posha* may mean either objective wealth, plenty and increase or all possessions internal or external, their plenitude and their growth in the life of the individual. *Raye*, is used in the Upanishads, in a quotation from the Rîg-Veda, to mean spiritual felicity; why should it be incapable of bearing that sense in the original text? *Vaja* occurs frequently in a context in which every other word has a psychological significance and the mention of physical plenty comes in with a violent jar of incoherency into the homogeneous totality of the thought. Common sense, therefore, demands that the use of these words with a psychological import should be admitted in the Veda.

But if this is done consistently, not only whole verses and passages, but whole hymns assume at once the psychological complexion. On one condition this transformation is frequently complete, leaving no word or phrase unaffected, —the condition that we should admit the symbolic character of the Vedic sacrifice. We find in the Gîta the word *yajna*, sacrifice, used in a symbolic sense

for all action, whether internal or external, that is consecrated to the gods or to the Supreme. Was such symbolic use of the word born of a later philosophical intellectuality, or was it inherent in the Vedic idea of sacrifice? I found that in the Veda itself there were hymns in which the idea of the *yajna* or of the victim is openly symbolical, others in which the veil is quite transparent. The question then arose whether these were later compositions developing an incipient symbolism out of old superstitious practices or rather the occasional plainer statement of a sense which is in most hymns more or less carefully veiled by the figure. If there were no constant recurrence of psychological passages in the Veda, the former explanation would, no doubt, have to be accepted. But on the contrary whole hymns took naturally a psychological sense proceeding with a perfect and luminous coherency from verse to verse, where the only points of obscurity were the mention of the sacrifice or of the offering or sometimes of the officiating priest, who might be either a man or a god. If these words could be interpreted symbolically, I found always that the progression of thought became more perfect, more luminous, more coherent and the sense of the hymn in its entirety was victoriously completed. I felt therefore justified by every canon of sound criticism in pursuing my hypothesis farther and including in it the symbolic sense of the Vedic ritual.

Nevertheless here intervenes the first real difficulty of the psychological interpretation. Hitherto I had been proceeding by a perfectly straightforward and natural method of interpretation based on the surface meaning of the words and sentences. Now I came to an element in which the surface meaning had, in a sense, to be overridden, and this is a process in which every critical and conscientious mind must find itself beset by continual scruples. Nor can one always be sure, even with the utmost care, of having hit on the right clue and the just interpretation.

The Vedic sacrifice consists of three features,—omitting for the moment the god and the mantra,—the persons who offer, the offering and the fruits of the offering. If the *yajna* is the action consecrated to the gods, I could not but take the *yajamana*, the giver of the sacrifice, as the doer of the action. *Yajna* is works, internal or external, the *Yajamana* must be the soul or the personality as the doer. But there were also the officiating priests, *hota*, *ritwij*, *purohit*, *brahma*, *adhvaryu* etc. What was their part in the symbolism? For if we once suppose a symbolic sense for the sacrifice; we must suppose also a symbolic value for each feature of the ceremony. I found that the gods were continually spoken of as priests of the offering and in many passages it was undisguisedly a non-human power or energy which presided over the sacrifice. I perceived

also that throughout Veda the elements of our personality are themselves continually personified. I had only to apply this rule inversely and to suppose that the person of the priest in the external figure represented in the internal activities figured a non-human power or energy or an element of our personality. It remained to fix the psychological sense of the different priestly offices. Here I found that the Veda itself presented a clue by its philological indications and insistences, such as the use of the word *purohita* in its separated form with the sense of the representative "put in front" and a frequent reference to the god Agni who symbolises the divine Will or Force in humanity that takes up the action in all consecration of works.

The offerings were more difficult to understand. Even if the Soma-wine by the context in which it occurred, its use and effect and the philological indication of its synonyms, suggested its own interpretation, what could possibly be indicated by the "ghritam," the clarified butter in the sacrifice? And yet the word as used in the Veda was constantly insisting on its own symbolical significance. What for instance could be made of clarified butter dropping from heaven or dripping from the horses of Indra or dripping from the mind? Obviously, this was grotesque nonsense, if the sense of *ghrita* as clarified butter was anything more than a symbol used with great looseness, so that often the external sense was wholly or partly put aside in the mind of the thinker. It was possible of course to vary conveniently the sense of the words, to take *ghrita* sometimes as butter and sometimes as water and *manas* sometimes as the mind, sometimes as food or a cake. But I found that *ghrita* was constantly used in connection with the thought or the mind, that heaven in Veda was a symbol of the mind, that Indra represented the illuminated mentality and his two horses double energies of that mentality and even that the Veda sometimes speaks plainly of offering the intellect (*manisha*) as purified *ghrita*, to the gods, *ghritam na putam manisham*. The word *ghrita* counts also among its philological significances the sense of a rich or warm brightness. It was by this concurrence of indications that I felt justified in fixing a certain psychological significance for the figure of the clarified butter. And I found the same rule and the same method applicable to other features of the sacrifice.

The fruits of the offering were in appearance purely material—cows, horses, gold, offspring, men, physical strength, victory in battle. Here the difficulty thickened. But I had already found that the Vedic cow was an exceedingly enigmatical animal and came from no earthly herd. The word *go* means both cow and light and in a number of passages evidently meant light even while putting forward the image of the cow. This is clear enough when

we have to do with the cows of the sun—the Homeric kine of Helios—and the cows of the Dawn. Psychologically, the physical Light might well be used as a symbol of knowledge and especially of the divine knowledge. But how could this mere possibility be tested and established? I found that passages occurred in which all the surrounding context was psychological and only the image of the cow interfered with its obtrusive material suggestion. Indra is invoked as the maker of perfect forms to drink the wine of Soma; drinking he becomes full of ecstasy and a “giver of cows”; then we can attain to his most intimate or his most ultimate right thinkings, then we question him and his clear discernment brings us our highest good. It is obvious that in such a passage these cows cannot be material herds nor would the giving of physical Light carry any sense in the context. In one instance at least the psychological symbolism of the Vedic cow was established with certainty to my mind. I then applied it to other passages in which the word occurred and always I saw that it resulted in the best sense and the greatest possible coherency in the context.

The cow and horse, *go* and *asva*, are constantly associated. Usha, the Dawn, is described as *gomati asvavati*; Dawn gives to the sacrificer horses and cows. As applied to the physical dawn *gomati* means accompanied by or bringing the rays of light and is an image of the dawn of illumination in the human mind. Therefore *asvavati* also cannot refer merely to the physical steed; it must have a psychological significance as well. A study of the Vedic horse led me to the conclusion that *go* and *asva* represent the two companion ideas of Light and Energy, Consciousness and Force, which to the Vedic and Vedantic mind were the double or twin aspect of all the activities of existence.

It was apparent, therefore, that the two chief fruits of the Vedic sacrifice, wealth of cows and wealth of horses, were symbolic of richness of mental illumination and abundance of vital energy. It followed that the other fruits continually associated with these two chief results of the Vedic karma must also be capable of a psychological significance. It remained only to fix their exact purport.

Another all-important feature of Vedic symbolism is the system of the worlds and the functions of the gods. I found the clue to the symbolism of the worlds in the Vedic conception of the *vyahritis*, the three symbolic words of the mantra, “OM Bhur Bhavah Swah,” and in the connection of the fourth Vyahrti, Mahas, with the psychological term “Ritam.” The Rishis speak of three cosmic divisions, Earth, the Antariksha or middle region and Heaven

(Dyaus); but there is also a greater Heaven (Brihad Dyau) called also the Wide World, the Vast (Brihat), and typified sometimes as the Great Water, Maho Arnas. This "Brihat" is again described as "Ritam Brihat" or in a triple term "Satyam Ritam Brihat." And as the three worlds correspond to the Vyahritis, so this fourth world of the Vastness and the Truth seems to correspond to the fourth Vyahriti mentioned in the Upanishads, Mahas. In the Puranic formula the four are completed by three others, Jana, Tapas and Satya, the three supreme worlds of the Hindu cosmology. In the Veda also we have three supreme worlds whose names are not given. But in the Vedantic and Puranic system the seven worlds correspond to seven psychological principles or forms of existence, Sat, Chit, Ananda, Vijnana, Prana, Manas and Anna. Now Vijnana, the central principle, the principle of Mahas, the great world, is the Truth of things, identical with the Vedic Ritam which is the principle of Brihat, the Vast, and while in the Puranic system Mahas is followed in the ascending order by Jana, the world of Ananda, of the divine Bliss, in the Veda also Ritam, the Truth, leads upward to Mayas, Bliss. We may, therefore, be fairly sure that the two systems are identical and that both depend on the same idea of seven principles of subjective consciousness formulating themselves in seven objective worlds. On this principle I was able to identify the Vedic worlds with the corresponding psychological planes of consciousness and the whole Vedic system became clear to my mind.

With so much established the rest followed naturally and inevitably. I had already seen that the central idea of the Vedic Rishis was the transition of the human soul from a state of death to a state of immortality by the exchange of the Falsehood for the Truth, of divided and limited being for integrality and infinity. Death is the mortal state of Matter with Mind and Life involved in it; Immortality is a state of infinite being, consciousness and bliss. Man rises beyond the two firmaments, Rodasi, Heaven and Earth, mind and body, to the infinity of the Truth, Mahas, and so to the divine Bliss. This is the "great passage" discovered by the Ancestors, the ancient Rishis.

The gods I found to be described as children of Light, sons of Aditi, of Infinity; and without exception they are described as increasing man, bringing him light, pouring on him the fullness of the waters, the abundance of the heavens, increasing the truth in him, building up the divine worlds, leading him against all attacks to the great goal, the integral felicity, the perfect bliss. Their separate functions emerged by means of their activities, their epithets, the psychological sense of the legends connected with them, the indications of the Upanishads and Puranas, the occasional side-lights from Greek myth.

On the other hand the demons who opposed them, are all powers of division and limitation, Coverers, Tearers, Devourers, Confiners, Dualisers, Obstructers, as their names indicate, powers that work against the free and unified integrality of the being. These Vritras, Panis, Atris, Rakshasas, Sambara, Vala, Namuchi, are not Dravidian kings and gods, as the modern mind with its exaggerated historic sense would like them to be; they represent a more antique idea better suited to the religious and ethical preoccupations of our forefathers. They represent the struggle between the powers of the higher Good and the lower desire, and this conception of the Rîg Veda and the same opposition of good and evil otherwise expressed, with less psychological subtlety, with more ethical directness in the scriptures of the Zoroastrians, our ancient neighbours and kindred, proceeded probably from a common original discipline of the Aryan culture.

Finally, I found that the systematic symbolism of the Veda was extended to the legends related of the gods and of their dealings with the ancient seers. Some of these myths, if not all, may have had, in all probability had, a natural-tuaralistic and astronomical origin; but, if so, their original sense had been supplemented by a psychological symbolism. Once the sense of the Vedic symbols is known, the spiritual intention of these legends becomes apparent and inevitable. Every element of the Veda is inextricably bound up with every other and the very nature of these compositions compels us, once we have adopted a principle of interpretation, to carry it to its farthest rational limits. Their materials have been skilfully welded together by firm hands and any inconsistency in our handling of them shatters the whole fabric of their sense and their coherent thinking.

Thus there emerged in my mind, revealing itself as it were out of the ancient verses, a Veda which was throughout the Scripture of a great and antique religion already equipped with a profound psychological discipline, —a Scripture not confused in thought or primitive in its substance, not a medley of heterogeneous or barbarous elements, but one, complete and self-conscious in its purpose and in its purport, veiled indeed by the cover, sometimes thick, sometimes transparent, of another and material sense, but never losing sight even for a single moment of its high spiritual aim and tendency.

THE TRIPLE BIRTH OF AGNI

AGNI takes birth in the body. He is the principle of purification, the Divine Child of Eternal Progress and Immortality, the indomitable traveller in Man and the symbol of quest for the luminous life—a life that is prepared here but whose high tongues of passionate bliss rise to kiss the golden feet of heaven. When Agni is born the house of the body is set on fire and the layers of darkness that were hiding deep under and far away from the mortal gaze are brought out in the open; the inertia that chained this earthly angel to the perpetual slavery of pain, diminution and death is now burnt to ashes and a wide freedom like a music from elsewhere touches him; the knot of countless dead habits of a blurred long past that coerced him silently to stagnate, working without joy or moving aimlessly in the same inescapable groove drawn by the stiff hand of Inconscience, is at last cut down by this fiery deliverer who would brook no delay in his return with the flock to the Master of all houses.

Agni is born in life and the latter wakes up from slumber and impotent day-dreamings to make mighty efforts and taste the power of immortality. When the divine priest has taken hold of life, he will purify and broaden its waters; henceforth he will not allow on the highway of our body's instrumentation any mean trafficking with hatred and discord, smallnesses and anger, jealousy and Death's other innumerable dismal agents. Following the steps of Agni, life's river will mount upward and achieve an ever-increasing fulfilment in God's vastness and delight. A supreme harmony will find its home here in our surging and clamorous ocean.

Born once in the cosmic principle as the leader of our journey Agni is reborn in the mind of man. He chases away, fast riding on his horses, whatever shadows there are, and calls in from above luminous ideas and far-winged thoughts of Truth. He shows to the mind the way of the sacrifice, teaches how to offer all that was acquired and stored with human labour so that the emptied chamber may be filled again with the richness and splendour of the Deity. With his help mind knows the way through the cobwebs of falsehood and unites with the universal will and knowledge. Initiated and converted by Agni, mind moves to a higher dharma, sees with certitude and becomes a radiant instrument for expressing the divine Truth and Beauty.

SAMIR KANTA GUPTA

SRI AUROBINDO'S PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION

THE SUPERMIND AND ITS ANNEXE, THE MIND OF LIGHT

It is significant that when Sri Aurobindo wrote his major philosophical work, *The Life Divine*, he said nothing about the Mind of Light; not even when he later revised it in 1939. In fact, this term does not occur at all in any of his writings till 1950, when he suddenly introduced it in the articles he was then writing for the Mother's *Bulletin of Physical Education*. To us it was a new concept, to him a solution for the work he was engaged in for forty years. One wonders what circumstances could have necessitated a change, or rather a modification, in the process he was following—such an implication is definitely there in his statements about the Mind of Light, especially in its being “a transitional passage” through which humanity can pass into a supramental mode of life. The introduction of this term also makes one ask what its relation could possibly be to the intractable Inconscient, the lowest region of human consciousness lying even below the subconscious level; and finally, what could be its spiritual and yogic significance for the disciples actually practising the Integral Yoga under the Mother, the joint harbinger of this new light and now its sole radiating centre.

Mr. K.D. Sethna has worked out in his masterly exposition many of the important implications of the Supermind's descent into the earth-consciousness, and the relation of the Mind of Light to the Supermind as well as to the existing planes of the Mind. The present writer intends to dwell on another aspect of the subject—on the circumstances that led to the manifestation of this new light, and its pragmatic implications as a means for solving the dilemma Sri Aurobindo was confronted with, a dilemma which concerned existence itself. Therefore a few suggestive ideas are here put forward with the hope that they may prove useful in understanding the true import of the Mind of Light for evolving humanity. As this article is primarily written for the followers of Sri Aurobindo, it presupposes a certain amount of familiarity with his teaching; consequently, many of the statements are not worked out in detail, nor any attempt made to give a metaphysical justification for all the experience-concepts brought forward, except where it has been found strictly

necessary. The reader may refer to the writings of Sri Aurobindo for a more detailed philosophical account.

What then is this new pragmatosis? That is the question to be answered. According to Sri Aurobindo's spiritual experience, there is a fourfold principle of Divine Being creative of the Universe—Existence, Consciousness-Force, Bliss, Supermind. "The Divine descends from pure Existence through the play of Consciousness-Force and Bliss and the creative medium of Supermind into cosmic being; we ascend from Matter through a developing life, soul and mind and the illuminating medium of supermind towards the divine being. The knot of the two, the higher and the lower hemisphere,¹ is where mind and supermind meet with a veil between them. The rending of the veil is the condition of the divine life in humanity.. " The "rending of the veil"—this was one of the crucial points of Sri Aurobindo's work, for it is by this rending that the descent of the higher light and power into the being as well as the ascent of the being into the higher hemisphere can become possible.

Through spiritual union with the Divine Power at its very source, Sri Aurobindo has been able to perceive the central movement of the creative process; he expresses it this way: "In a sense, the whole of creation may be said to be a movement between two involutions, Spirit in which all is involved and out of which all evolves downward to the other pole of Matter, Matter in which also all is involved and out of which all evolves upwards to the other pole of Spirit."—"Spirit is the soul and reality of that which we sense as Matter; Matter is a form and body of that which we realise as Spirit. Certainly, there is a vast practical difference and on that difference the whole indivisible series and ever-ascending degrees of the world-existence are founded." In the descending movement from Spirit to Matter different planes of existence are manifested in a graded series, each with its characteristic laws and practical necessities. The real creative Dynamis that manifests them from above is the Supermind; however, it does not act directly, but through a delegatory power, the Overmind. Below the Overmind are the other planes of the Mind series, the spiritual Mind planes; after them those of Mind, Life, and subtle Matter are ranged one after the other, and below them, we have the vast inchoate and obscure region of the Inconscient where all the principles of Being lie in an involved and dormant state. Out of this region dense or gross Matter first evolves, and from Matter the involved Life principle; similarly, the dormant Mind emerges out of Life held in Matter. Now the Supermind has to mani-

¹ *Parārdha and Aparārdha.*

fest itself out of Mind housed in a vital-physical human body. This evolution follows a certain process by which the involved principles emerge one after the other in an ascending series. All the principles have an urge in themselves to evolve, but this urge by itself is insufficient to effect an emergence; the help or intervention of a descending power is needed to release the latent principle, and that help comes from the particular principle's own plane created by the descending movement of the Spirit. For example, Life evolved out of Matter when subjected to a pressure from its own plane; on emerging, it vitalised Matter and created a new level of organised existence, with plants and animals. In a like manner, Mind emerged when a nexus was formed between itself, lying in an involved state, and the impulsion that came from its own plane; it created on earth a race of mental-vital-physical beings. Sri Aurobindo's reading of the universal process and the working of the Divine Will behind it is, that evolution now need not be an automatic process, because man, unlike the plants and animals before him, is a being sufficiently developed in consciousness to cooperate actively with this process and hasten his own evolution. That is why it is now possible for the next evolving principle, Supermind, to be manifested in man. But the descent from above has to be brought down to contact the Mind housed here in a vital and physical body; and that can only be done if someone attained union with the Divine Being at the spiritual summits by ascending in consciousness all the planes to reach the original creative Power, the Supermind, and then made it operative in himself right down to the very cells of his body; such a contact would forge the link necessary for the manifestation of this new principle in terrestrial life. It is this work Sri Aurobindo was occupied with for forty years. He very clearly saw that prophets and saints come and go but human life remains the same, humanity does not change; if it has to be changed, then something very radical must first be done to its very roots, which are buried in the obscure Inconscient. With an unerring insight into the riddle of this world, he understood that only the Power that has originally manifested the universe can now effectuate this great change. So, through a sadhana, whose intensity and concentrated power one can very well imagine, he rose to the Supermind, and then gradually started bringing it down into himself and the earth-consciousness, with which he was naturally connected by a network of forces. The Mother once remarked, "Even in 1938 I used to see the Supermind descending into Sri Aurobindo. What he could not do at that time was to fix it here." He could not do it because the subconscious and inconscient regions repelled this great new light and power which they found utterly foreign to their own obscure and turbid nature. Then came the problem of clearing the lower regions. This was a definite change in the method he was following; previously he had been

trying to bring down the Supermind straightaway into the earth-consciousness and grip it, but he now found that it would not stay in man's higher parts without a sufficient basis in his lower nature. So he started delving into the abysses of Being as he had formerly ascended to its summits, and began to do the clearing work. His action upon the world and men through his spiritual force remained the same, for suitable conditions in the whole earth field had to be established before the Supermind could be brought down.

Now comes a sudden change in his working and the adoption of a method so revolutionary in its nature that it could only have been undertaken with the help of the Supermind itself. It is this new action and its accompanying manifestation, the Mind of Light, that remain to be seen, that is, as far as our limited human intelligence can see them. In the early days of his Yoga, Sri Aurobindo's aspiration seems to have been to change the face of the globe by bringing down a powerful wide-sweeping and all-conquering descent of the Supermind in earth life; but he soon realised that one could not change the whole of humanity unless humanity itself wanted the change, and that the lower plane had to be first prepared, before the higher could be organised there. So he restricted the scope of his work, but the field of his activity remained what it was—it still covered all the planes of existence. This was necessary because no new principle can be manifested in the individual without a simultaneous action in the earth field and in the universal planes with which he is connected by a conflux of forces,—mental, vital, subtle-material energies. But this does not necessarily imply the taking in of the whole of humanity within the actual orbit of immediate supramentalisation. He writes about this in a letter: "What we propose just now is not to make the earth a Supramental world but to bring down the Supramental as a Power and established consciousness in the midst of the rest, to let it work there and fulfil itself as Mind descended into life and matter has worked as a Power there to fulfil itself in the midst of the rest. This will be enough to change the world and to change Nature by breaking down her present limits."

So we now see Sri Aurobindo working within this formula, daily delving into the subconscious with the light of the Overmind, or rather a partly supramentalised Overmind, drawing into himself the poisonous elements that rose from the lower regions, making tracks there to blaze the trail of the Supermind. On 15th August, 1950, an old sadhak with a capacity for vision saw Sri Aurobindo drawing into himself dark fumes that were rising from the subconscious parts of the people as they were coming to him for "darshan" in a procession. He was gathering up the lower elements of earth-nature within this area of

representative humanity and then drawing them into himself. This, of course, was the climax of the clearing process. We have again to switch back to the 1947-49 period to understand the problem.

The work of clearance was proceeding very slowly, perhaps too slowly for his liking; there was a tremendous resistance from the earth-consciousness, even a denial of the Divine Light he was offering it; and the Inconscient was swallowing the higher powers and energies he was bringing down and trying to stabilise on the earth. He must have perceived that the clearing of the Inconscient and anchoring the Supermind there would take years at the rate things were progressing; if he were to wait till suitable conditions were created for bringing the descent, he would have to wait for a very long time. One can judge his frame of mind some time before he left his body, from a remark he made regarding an astrological prediction; he was told that a swami had predicted that his work would reach a successful culmination when he reached the age of 93. Sri Aurobindo listened very gravely and said, "So long as that!" He found another fourteen years too long to wait.

Supposing he were to draw down the Supermind and fix it without worrying much about the existing conditions! This obvious possibility he was fully aware of, but he was equally aware of the consequences that would follow—consequences which are not very difficult to imagine. From the condition of the world and the prevalent forces and circumstances, the resistance the descending Divine light would have met with can very well be visualised; it would surely have broken this resistance, but the awakened dark forces, fighting for their very survival, would have played havoc before getting annihilated—chaotic conditions would have prevailed, and even our civilisation might have been destroyed before a new harmony could have been created. The 1949 New Year Message given by the Mother reads: "Lord, on the eve of the new year I asked Thee what I must say. Thou hast made me see two extreme and opposite possibilities and given me the command to keep silent." The solution of precipitating the Supermind into the earth-consciousness and taking the consequences was, it seems now, the first possibility.

In spite of all these difficulties, the Supermind had to be brought down somehow, without considerably disturbing the existing balance of forces. To manifest it on earth was Sri Aurobindo's life-mission—one might say, the very reason of his birth. But the new order must arise out of the old without demolishing it—and for that a price must be paid. If the world was to be saved from

paying the price for the new Light it was going to receive, then somebody else would have to. Sri Aurobindo chose the second possibility, and himself paid the price.

To use his own words from *Savitri*, the Game of games was now being fought to its breaking point; a new strategy was called for. Even if the Inconscient could not be entirely cleared here and now, and the opposing forces vanquished totally, could something really effective be still done? That was the problem. Here came the great mind of Sri Aurobindo, rather his supermind; he found the solution. The forces could be held at bay permanently, driven out from a larger and larger area and then finally conquered. This is how he must have worked it out within himself: "Not possible to wait till the right conditions are established—better to conquer with the Supermind a restricted area and work from there as a base. Yes, create a base of the Supermind itself. Bring down the light and power and substance from above, and make a stable formation here; work from this new base, and then gradually increase its radius, driving out the opposing forces from a larger and larger area; it will be easier to fight them once the Supermind is brought down and organised. The light and power will radiate and cover everything eventually. But the base must not be swallowed up by the Inconscient....Yes. The whole formation can be sustained and held from above; the true origin of things is there, not below—the Supermind is the original creative Power. A new creation from above—that's the solution; no need now to anchor the Supermind below. This will be a creation having its roots not in Ignorance, but in Light and Knowledge and Bliss above. Once the Supermind is down, it will do what has to be done. The important thing is to make a base in the material creation. But a material point of support must be there; if the supramental substance brought down from above is held here in a matrix of purely subtle Matter, it will be only a gain in the inner field. Some concrete Matter that can hold this substance must be there....Use your own body. It is connected with universal Matter, and it can hold the supramental light—at least till you go out of it and make the necessary connections between the earth and the Supermind. Yes, get the Supermind down into the body; ram it well in—the very cells must hold it; let it go deep down into the being, into its lowest regions. Build the base around the body. The existing creation will be gripped from above. This projected formation of the Supermind will be like a field of light in material nature, penetrating Matter, but not embedded in the Inconscient. Keep the body there, and make the necessary tracks by joining the two ends for a regular transit between Spirit and Matter in outer life. The Mother will consolidate the Light and manifest it as usual. Without the encumbrance of the body, it will be easier to work too; it can be used for

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draining all the poisonous stuff from the inconscient regions before the withdrawal is effected..."

This is a very bare reconstruction of Sri Aurobindo's problem, and the solution he found, according to our human way of seeing things—our mental way of understanding a problem which is cosmic in its nature and implications, but still a problem affecting the very roots of our existence, for we are part of this cosmos and the inhabitants of the area in which it is being worked out.

In this way the earth-consciousness was infiltrated by the descending light, a light one with force and divine substance. The formation was built round Sri Aurobindo himself. It cannot be pulled down by the Inconscient—it is held from above, and Sri Aurobindo's body in the air space between the concrete slabs inside the Samadhi is the guarantee—the material symbol of the beginning of the new Creation. Sri Aurobindo's own emblem expresses himself very well; there are two triangles, one with its base upon the earth pointing heavenwards, the other with its base above in the higher divine hemisphere (*Parardha*) and is projected downwards, the two triangles enclosing a square where they meet—the sign of the Supermind. Inside the square is the lotus of New Creation. The Mind of Light, a formation of the Supermind, joined the two hemispheres in 1950, and became a "transitional passage" leading from the lower to the higher, from Mind housed in Matter to the Supermind.

When Sri Aurobindo accomplished this, he rescued human life from the absolute grip of its Inconscient basis. The new Light leans down from above and takes within itself our existence and loosens this grip. That is why many of the older disciples very concretely felt soon after December 1950, that the pull of the Inconscient was considerably reduced, for the difficulties of their lower nature, which they had been grappling with for years, began to give way swiftly. This implies that the more one opens oneself to the descending Power, the more one enters into the new creation. Man is now literally the denizen of two hemispheres; he can choose the life in Ignorance or enter into the life divine, or even in Ignorance begin to lead an illumined mode of life under the aegis of the descending Supermind.

The next important thing is to examine the Mother's statement about the Mind of Light. If, as we have seen, Mind has to receive the Supermind, it must hold it in all its three layers or levels; the mind proper, that is, the thinking intelligence; the mental-vital—the vital part of the mind; and lastly, the mental-physical—the physical part of the mind. And if Matter has to contain the Supermind, as it has to, it must do so in its three layers also—the material body

of cells, tissues, etc., the physical-vital, and the physical-mental or the physical mind.¹ In a general classification, the mental-physical and the physical-mental can be taken together and designated as the physical mind. The Mother's statement is now seen to supplement Sri Aurobindo's exposition, as far as the pragmatic necessity of the Mind of Light is concerned: "As soon as Sri Aurobindo withdrew from his body, what he had called the Mind of Light got realised here.—The Supermind had descended long ago—very long ago—in the mind and even in the vital: it was working in the physical also but indirectly through those intermediaries. The question now was about the direct action of the Supermind in the physical. Sri Aurobindo said it could be possible only if the physical mind received the supramental light: the physical mind was the instrument of direct action upon the most material. This physical mind receiving the supramental light Sri Aurobindo called the Mind of Light."

Sri Aurobindo's withdrawal from the body was indeed a severe trial for the physical mind, which takes its stand on material things and the data given by the senses, and is unable to go beyond it. Its natural conclusion would be that Sri Aurobindo had succumbed to a malady; it would be at the end of its tether if it were told that the physical ailment was the outer symptom of the result of his taking into himself the poisonous elements of the subconscious and inconscient parts of earth nature—and that the withdrawal itself was part of a spiritual action he was carrying on.

The very first statement the Mother made about his withdrawal gave a clue, and faith and intuition received an intellectual support: "His body is charged with such a concentration of supramental light that there is no sign of decomposition...." As a matter of fact, it would have been highly surprising if the cells of his body had not been charged with this divine light he had rammed in them before leaving the body.

As far as the result goes, Sri Aurobindo did exactly what he said he would do; as far as the process goes, he again did what he said he would, but by a master strategy carried it to an unforeseen *dénouement*. He seems to have outmanoeuvred the forces who were opposing him and not giving up their closely guarded citadels for the base of Light he wanted to make below. He created a new base of operation right over their heads before their bewildered eyes. But a price had to be paid; he had to give up a body which was well on its way towards supramentalisation, and consequently towards immortalisation and instead had to use it to gain the Supermind for the earth. His words come home to

¹ The same is true for the three layers of the vital.

us most poignantly now: "It is only divine Love which can bear the burden that I have to bear, that all have to bear who have sacrificed everything else to the one aim of uplifting earth out of its darkness towards the Divine." And only divine Love could have given such a sacrifice.

This last move of Sri Aurobindo was no doubt a new development, but the intention to concentrate his work within a certain orbit for the time being and leave the question of eradicating the adverse forces for a later time was there even as early as 1936. He wrote in a letter : "About the contact with the world and the hostile forces, that is of course always one of the sadhak's chief difficulties, but to transform the world and the hostile powers is too big a task and the personal transformation cannot wait for it. What has to be done is to come to live in the Power that these things, these disturbing elements cannot penetrate, or, if they penetrate, cannot disturb, and to be so purified and strengthened by it that there is in oneself no response to anything hostile. If there is a protecting envelopment, an inner purifying descent and, as a result, a settling of the higher consciousness in the inner being and finally, its substitution even in the most external outwardly active parts in place of the old ignorant consciousness, then the world and the hostile forces will no longer matter—for one's own soul at least; for there is a larger work not personal in which of course they will have to be dealt with; but that need not be a main preoccupation at the present stage."¹

Now one thing more remains to be clarified. It may appear at first sight that the Mind of Light is here made to signify a little more than is actually warranted by what we know about it. But if it is once admitted that it is a formation of the Supermind itself, of the Divine Truth-Consciousness, and the necessity for its manifestation examined from various angles, it is not very difficult to see that the Mind of Light considered as a developing cognitive principle of Truth is not really different from the field of Light formed in material creation. We speak of a formation of the Supermind from above, and call it the Mind of Light, because we are most of the time referring to it in the context of Mind and Supermind, we are considering it in the Mind series. The Supermind descending into the Mind, right down to the physical mind and assimilating it, is designated by us as the Mind of Light. But this descending Supermind does not stand only for Truth-Knowledge; it also contains within it Truth-Force and Truth-Substance. Therefore, it would be incorrect to understand it in terms of cognition only. In view of this, when describing the action of the descending Light upon the vital, the Life-principle, it is possible to speak of it as the *Life-*

¹ From Sri Aurobindo's correspondence with Nirodbaran.

force of Light; similarly, in the context of Matter and its forms, we may very well speak of a *Substance of Light*. This must be borne in mind, otherwise a too rigid intellectual formulation with its analytical categories may narrow down the Truth that is expressing itself here, and one may lose sight of the many-sidedness and integrality of the supramental action. Mind, Life-force, Matter interpenetrate one another in man—there is a constant interaction between them; secondly, the working of the Supermind upon the being is not piecemeal, but detailed and integral at the same time. Being a projection of the Supermind, the Mind of Light holds Knowledge, Consciousness, Force, Ananda, and essential substance¹ all together as modes of a single integral reality. In the supramental consciousness proper, these are distinguishable, but not seen as separate integers. In the terrestrial creation, as Mind represents the Supermind, so Life represents the Consciousness-Force aspect of the Divine, and Matter stands for *Sat*, the Existence aspect. Therefore, when we speak of a base of light-substance charged with supramental energies created from above, we are referring to the same reality, the same formation that is seen as the developing Mind of Light in the Mind series. The two are distinguishable in the pragmatics of the process that is being used, but they are one and the same reality functioning differently on different planes of the being. The descending Supermind takes up these planes and organises them to express its own Truth-forms. The one important thing to note is that a track of divine light has been made from the Supermind right down to our mental-vital-material creation, and that it envelops all layers of being. One has to understand its workings according to the context in which one examines it.

This in brief is the climax Sri Aurobindo's work reached in 1950. The work is carried on by the Mother, who has always been as it were his outer self, the manifesting side of his being. For all practical purposes the spiritual relation between the two remains the same—Sri Aurobindo's Presence and Power is always with her. She draws down the Supermind more and more in earth-existence, in man, in his mind, his life-being, his body, and creates a new world. Through her the arms of the Divine are stretching out to humanity—the Divine Grace leaning down to men. It is this truth that Sri Aurobindo expresses in *Savitri*:

Love in her was wider than the universe,
The whole world could take refuge in her single heart.

¹ This does not refer to subtle Matter of the subtle-physical plane, nor to what are known in traditional philosophy as subtle elements, but to spirit-substance—causal, not occult; to *Essential* substance residing unmanifest in the principle of *Sat* (Existence), but brought forth for manifestation by the Supermind.

SRI AUROBINDO'S PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION

He writes at another place: "The Mother comes in order to bring down the Supramental and it is the descent which makes her full manifestation here possible."

The work goes on—the field of golden light spreads itself gradually in the lower regions. Each big descent is fuller than the last as well as more penetrative and drives deeper into the roots of Ignorance and Inconscience. Perhaps the entire conquest of the Inconscient will be undertaken when the Supermind is sufficiently consolidated on the earth. Meanwhile, the Mother gathers together aspiring souls around her, and helps them towards realisation; and behind all moves unseen the bodiless Presence of one whom the world could not recognise, the Presence that fulfils mankind's deepest urge and stands as the Sanction at the gates through which humanity will pass on into the life divine.

SOLI ALBLESS

Students' Section

TO THE CHILDREN OF THE ASHRAM*

IN the beginning, naturally, there were no children in the Ashram. They were not accepted, they were refused admittance. It is only after the last great war that they began to come in, that is to say, when their families sought for a safe shelter. Since then they are being accepted and I do not regret. I believe that for the future there is much more stuff among children who know nothing than among grown up men who think they know everything. Have you any idea of the art of sculpture ? how they make images out of clay? you take a quantity of clay and then moisten it with water. The earth must be very fine powder and with water you make a good paste of it. Then you begin to work upon it, to give it a form gradually. But so long as you work the clay must be kept soft, moist; then on'y you can change it, refashion it as you like. And when it is done the figure is baked and it becomes hard and fixed. If you have to make a change now, you can only break it and begin anew; for it is now solid and unchangeable. In life too something like that happens. As you grow you lose your softness, suppleness, malleability, you become more and more crystallised, fossilised, immobilised. Unless you break the form into a thousand bits, there is no chance of its being remoulded, reshaped according to a new pattern. A child is an unformed paste and one can do something with it. The great advantage of the child is that it has not grown, it wishes to grow, the one idea that possesses children is how to become grown up men. They do not know, however, that once they are grown up, that is to say, developed and formed, they lose three-fourths of their value which lies precisely in this element in them which is unformed and yearns for a form, which seeks always to go forward, to progress and need not be broken in order to be corrected or reshaped.

A grown-up man is somewhat like a traveller who has taken a whole lifetime to come up on the peak, he has been going round and round the hill-side,

* Based on a talk with the Mother—30-9-53

not knowing the straight road or the easy ascent. Once on the top such men are already old and exhausted and have now neither the energy nor the time to scale a further height. There are some, however, who know the way or who have been shown the way, they follow the short cut and are soon on the top. They are still full of youthful energy, look out on the horizon and see what other ranges are to be negotiated. The others have not only no inclination to see beyond, but they are full of the feeling that they have done considerable work—in wandering about, that is to say—and now yearn for a well-earned rest. You, my children, are, on the other hand, being carried up from the very bottom by a funicular railway, as it were, straight to the summit. There you will stand before the whole world, before yourselves and see and make your choice for a further adventure. All this on one condition, you remain young, childlike, glad, happy, happy to be a child, plastic matter in the hand of the Divine.

Why were children not accepted before?

It is because where there are children, you have to do nothing else but to be busy with them. The children are an all-absorbing subject. Everything must be organised for and about them, everything must turn round them; all must be planned in view of their welfare. So the outlook changes totally. Things were different before. First of all, there was a kind of austerity and bareness which suited the grown-ups, but which could not be imposed upon children. To the grown-up you can say, "Take it or leave it". If you are not pleased with the conditions, if you find it hard to bear, you are not obliged to be here, you may see your own way. You cannot say the same thing to a child. You have no right to ask of a child what is not suitable to his normal growth and development. Children must reach a certain state of maturity before they can make a choice. You cannot compel them to choose before they have the capacity to choose. So first of all you have to give them all things they are normally in need of. Well, that brings about a revolution in the organisation. I have lived a solitary life, I know the life of solitary men living in a group. That is quite a different thing. Children demand other conditions, other arrangements.

We no longer tell the young newcomers, you are going to do yoga. We tell them, you will find here conditions in which you can grow freely and grow better. Here you will learn under what conditions the world and society can be made better. Then it will be time for you to choose your line of destiny.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO

ASPIRATION—WILL—SINCERITY—SURRENDER

SELF: What is the meaning of “aspiration”?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is the call of the being for higher things—for the Divine, for all that belongs to the higher or Divine Consciousness.

(4-6-1933)

SELF: I think many aspire only on the mental plane in the beginning. How could I bring down this aspiration into the heart, so that it might have effect more easily and quickly?

SRI AUROBINDO: By concentrating on the heart while aspiring.

(20-6-1933)

SELF: You see, there are so many things to aspire for. How is a man to choose one from the others? How can he know his own true need with his intellectual mind?

SRI AUROBINDO: He can't—It is either by the will or the heart that the aspiration has to be decided.

SELF: One aspires for a thing for five minutes and afterwards for something else. Will this have the same effect as aspiring for one thing for a long time?

SRI AUROBINDO: The order or time is of no importance. It is the force and sincerity of the aspiration itself that matters.

(25-6-1933)

SELF: How do you differentiate the aspiration from the will?

SRI AUROBINDO: The aspiration is a call to the Divine Force to act—the will is itself a force put forth to act or accomplish or bring about a result.

(6-9-1933)

MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO

SELF: What is the definition of will in the yogic sense?

SRI AUROBINDO: A conscious force that acts with a perception and a purpose.

(26-7-1933)

SELF: How can we increase the power of our will?

SRI AUROBINDO: By exercising it and by calling down more consciousness and force from above.

(7-9-1933)

SELF: Why is it that sometimes the will power does not produce the required result?

SRI AUROBINDO: How can it always unless it is the true and perfect will?

(7-9-1933)

SELF: What do you exactly mean by "the true and perfect will"?

SRI AUROBINDO: Surely you know what true and perfect mean. Does your will now always will the right thing? If not, it is not the true will. Does it always act with a full power? If not, it is not perfect.

(7-9-1933)

SELF: Once you wrote to me: "You must have a sincere will for opening". Is it not true to say that the will is sincere, true and effective in itself?

SRI AUROBINDO: What will? The vital will is often insincere, mixed with ambition, vanity or vital desire. The mental will often prefers its own ideas to the Truth. The will for opening may itself be affected by these things.

(29-7-1933)

SELF: You have said, "But it is not so easy for it to be free." Anyhow one has to make an effort for a free will. How can one succeed?

SRI AUROBINDO: By persistent aspiration, rejection of all that is in the way.

(31-7-1933)

MOTHER INDIA

SELF: When can the will work straight on the object from the Sahasradala?

SRI AUROBINDO: When one is conscious there and can take one's inner seat there and direct thought and will the action from that centre.

(9-9-1933)

SELF: You have said, "You can go on observing and at the same time call for the inner will to guide." What is this inner will?

SRI AUROBINDO: Not the outer ignorant one but the inner psychic or the higher will from above.

(18-9-1933)

SELF: It is said, "You can hasten the realisation by lending your will to the Divine." What does it mean and how to put this precept into practice?

SRI AUROBINDO: It means "By allowing your will to be used by the Divine." You have first to become conscious of the Divine Force—then you can make your will one of its instruments.

(26-7-1933)

SELF: When I asked for the permission to go to see the festival the Mother said, "*Comme vous voulez*" (as you like). What should I understand by that answer? I thought, as long as we are subject to the lower Nature we cannot expect any freedom (of action): Mother's order is our supreme law. Since She did not give me any definite reply I gave up my desire to see the festival.

SRI AUROBINDO: She meant that it was of no importance one way or the other. It is when you are free from the lower Nature that her will is the Law. When subject to lower Nature, the lower Nature is constantly disobeying the Divine Will.

(10-11-1933)

SELF: What I meant to ask you on the 10th was this: so long as we are bound to the lower nature what does the Mother actually mean by leaving the responsibility to us by saying, "*Comme vous voulez*"? If one is a little advanced one can make the best use of such a freedom.

MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO

SRI AUROBINDO: When one is advanced one does not ask for freedom, but to obey the Divine Will.

(12-11-1933)

SELF: In order to reach the higher Nature, are we not to prevent the lower Nature from disobeying the Divine will?

(12-11-1933)

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, but it is a free uncompelled assent to the Divine Will—in the higher Nature there is a spontaneous oneness of the Divine and the individual will.

SELF: What is exactly the meaning of “Will one with the Divine Will”?

SRI AUROBINDO: Agrees and is the same as the Divine Will—does not follow after separate personal preferences and desires.

(28-6-1933)

SELF: Is it advisable to exceed sometimes our normal quantity of food and digest it by the will force? P says he takes at times three or four times more food and sets everything right by his will.

SRI AUROBINDO: It is better not to try unless you are sure of the effectivity of your will on the body.

(15-10-1933)

SELF: The Mother has said, “If you surrender you have to give up effort, but that does not mean that you have to abandon also all willed action”. Would you kindly explain it?

SRI AUROBINDO: Effort means straining endeavour. There can be an action with a will in it in which there is no strain of effort.

(25-7-1933)

SELF: Should one not use a straining effort in order to become free from a clouded plight?

SRI AUROBINDO: If one cannot do without straining. But it is not so effective as the true spiritual will in which there is no straining.

(28-7-1933)

MOTHER INDIA

SELF: When I sit down to meditation many thoughts seem to attack me. If I go about and work or simply walk, I feel a little more conscious than in the meditation.

SRI AUROBINDO: Then it is better not to meditate; probably you become too passive and let anything come.

(12-2-33)

SELF: It is said that the significances of the flowers given by the Mother are often quite different from what is ordinarily understood. For in stance, "sincerity" means "honesty" but in our Yoga it has a much wider implication.

SRI AUROBINDO: Sincerity means more than mere honesty. It means that you mean what you say, feel what you profess, are earnest in your will. As the sadhak aspires to be an instrument of the Divine and one with the Divine, sincerity in him means that he is really in earnest in his aspiration and refuses all other will or impulse except the Divine's.

(28-7-1933)

SELF: Please sum up the meaning of "Sincerity" in our Yoga?

SRI AUROBINDO: To allow no part of the being to contradict the highest aspiration towards the Divine.

(7-4-1933)

SELF: How can a sadhaka receive more of Mother's powers which She is manifesting constantly? But why should one want to get anything? It is for the Divine to see and give what the sadhaka needs.

SRI AUROBINDO: One can aspire for more perfection so as to become a more perfect instrument of the Divine.

(10-4-1933)

SELF: The condition of my mind was so much confused that I could not make out in which way "psychological perfection" was inferior to "pure mind" or "faith". Yet in significance is it not superior to "pure mind" and "faith"?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, it contains all that is needed including pure mind and faith.

(9-4-1933)

MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO

SELF: What is the significance of "pure mind"?

SRI AUROBINDO: Pure—under no other influence than the Divine.

(19-5-1933)

SELF: If the equality is established in the vital, would it never be disturbed by any influence, good or bad, from outside?

SRI AUROBINDO: If the equality is entire, there can be no disturbance. Disturbance shows that the equality is not entire.

(26-5-1933)

Self: What is meant by "Vital Consecration"?

SRI AUROBINDO: Consecration means offering and making sacred to the Mother so that the whole vital nature may belong to her and not to the lower nature.

(18-6-1933)

SELF: Is it not true that when one has offered the vital consecration to the Divine Shakti and She has accepted it, then, the whole vital nature which now belongs to the Mother begins to be transformed slowly into the divine nature?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, if there is the true and full vital consecration, that necessarily follows.

(19-6-1933)

SELF: Of course I do wait eagerly for some more consciousness in order to be identified with the Mother, but, I believe, the first thing to be offered to Her is surrender. Is this not a fact?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, but it is only after you become conscious that the surrender can be complete.

(18-6-1933)

SELF: You said yesterday, "It is only after you become conscious that the surrender can be complete". Which consciousness was spoken of here? How am I to receive it from the Divine Shakti?

SRI AUROBINDO: The right consciousness by which you become aware of all that is going on in you and of the real character of the movements and aware too of the right working. You can get it by aspiration.

(19-6-1933)

MOTHER INDIA

SELF: What is the "true consciousness"?

SRI AUROBINDO. The consciousness that is aware of the Divine and the Truth and does not look at things from the ego—it is wide and calm and strong and aspires to union and surrender—it is many things besides, but this is the essential.

(12-6-1933)

SELF: What is surrender? How is one to offer a total and sincere surrender?

SRI AUROBINDO. By becoming conscious of the Divine, offering everything in you to the Divine Force to transform and obeying its will.

(15-6-1933)

SELF: How am I to offer a complete surrender to the Mother? There is a reason for asking you this question often. There is a strong and even impatient desire within me to identify myself with the Mother. Will you kindly help me fulfil it?

SRI AUROBINDO. Surrender cannot be so easily completed. You have to go on quietly and patiently till the whole being is awake and open.

(20-6-1933)

SELF: About surrender you have said, "It would mean that nothing would want to go its own way" In that state nothing undivine would be expressed in our action. There might enter, however, wrong thoughts or desires but we would dismiss them. Is it not so?

SRI AUROBINDO: If everything in you were surrendered to do the Mother's will only, other things would not come in or would not be received or followed if they came.

(29-7-1933)

SELF: How is one to offer everything back to the Divine that has come from the Divine?

SRI AUROBINDO: Have attachment to nothing—aspire until you get the consciousness of the Divine—call on the Divine to control and take up all you are and have.

(21-8-1933)

NAGIN

POEMS

HIS PLAYMATE

IN Thine eyes burns the fire of golden flames,
On Thy burning brows bewildered roams the sun
Thy joyous voice eternal peace proclaims,
The spirits of night Thy flaming company shun.

Thy heart is calm like abysms of the deepest sea,
Thy might is sublime as mountain peaks that rise
Towards a remote unplumbed infinity
To bridge the dusty earth and cloudless skies.

Thy limbs are mighty instruments of God
That hold the power, this shattered world to rebuild,
Thy body is His splendid living abode
Where passing ages are dead and forever stilled.

Thou art the immortal child of Love and Joy,
Thou art the playmate of the flaming Boy.

RANAJIT

THE QUEST

SOFTLY on the branch of bliss—
Amid a Paradise unseen
Flooded with immortal paeans of hope,
Sweet with the Apsaras' golden muse,—
Who was it, on a verge of quivering gleam,
Spoke suddenly to my ear:
"Awake, O awake, O bird of light!
Spread thy dream-bright spirit-wings
Over heaven and its mountains steep;
Filling all being with the thirst of fire
Spread thy pinions on the ethereal vasts!"
Whose song sublime is this?—
Whence came this blazing call,
Burning my cells with poignant bliss?
I heard the voice speak yet to my heart,
"Thou art born from Shiva's drowse,
Born art thou from the Rapture's nest,
O bird, O bird of light!
Full is the wine-cup of thy soul;
From the vasts of the Lord of the unseen
Overflows the unmixed nectar of silences.
O flame! the ardent hunger thou hast cherished
To attain the mystic core of the golden rose
That blossoms high up in unknown spheres;
Awake, O open thine eyes!
Moist is thy gaze with the compassion blue
Welled from the sky unreached!..."
—I felt my slumber rend.
Then I left my nest of lull and ease,
Charmed with a spaceless ecstasy,
I fly on from star-seas to greater star-seas.
Keeping my yearning ever awake,
Still I seek for my lord of might;
My thirst is not quenched, and still I soar,

POEMS

Tearing the veils of desire and time,
Leaving all creations, to a newer creation;
Still I seek for the vistas of my dreams,
Indifferent my heart before the frown of night.
I know not, know not when
I shall end my upward unending voyage;
Nor when I shall voice the music of plenitude
In my human throat?...
Shall I ever get His promise and release?
Whether the victory of the promised Light
I shall proclaim from world to world—
Still I know not.
In my deep and aspiring mind
When shall descend the fathomless seer-sight,
And the sunlit hush of dustlessness
Be mirrored in my limbs of delight:
In that dawn of deathless gold
I shall bring down the might of the unknowable
On my wings of flame.
Then all shall hear the victor trumpet call
Ringing from dominion to dominion
In argent notes of a creation new;
Then shall roll the echo of rapture chords
As links of love from soul to soul....

PRITHWINDRA

(Rendered into English from his original Bengali poem)

TO SUBSCRIBERS

Those who have not yet paid their subscriptions for
the new year starting this month are requested to do so.