MOTHER INDIA

FEBRUARY 21, 1955: THE MOTHER’S BIRTHDAY

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

Vol. VII No. 1

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE DIVINE MOTHER AND HER ULTIMATE VICTORY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Savitri, Book XI, Canto I)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWO WAYS OF &quot;PRANAM&quot; TO THE MOTHER</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MOTHER'S TALK ON THE EVE OF THE NEW YEAR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A NEW POWER AND PERSONALITY OF THE MOTHER:</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASSAGES FROM ONE OF THE MOTHER'S TALKS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MOTHER'S WORK</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILION: BOOK VII-THE BOOK OF THE WOMAN</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SECRET OF THE VEDA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter VIII-Varuna-Mitra and the Truth</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE POETRY OF SRI AUROBINDO</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOLDEN HAVE TURNED MY NIGHTS (POEM)</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORRESPONDENCE WITH SRI AUROBINDO</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDICAL SECTION: III—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE DOCTOR AS PATIENT: &quot;TWO PERSONALITIES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SUCCESSFUL DOCTOR: RAJASIC-SATTWIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOVE HUMAN AND DIVINE (POEM)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADHANA WITH THE MOTHER</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASCENT OF THE HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS: CONTACT OF THE HIGHER WITH THE LOWER FORCES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW ROADS, BOOK III:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MIGHTY MOTHER OF THE WORLDS</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' Section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE INNER BEING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURusha and Prakriti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOWARDS THE VICTORY (POEM)</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRIBING THE DIVINE</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students' Section

| MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO:                                         | 57   |
| THE INNER BEING                                                         |      |
| PURusha and Prakriti                                                    |      |
| TOWARDS THE VICTORY (POEM)                                              | 61   |
| BRIBING THE DIVINE                                                      | 62   |
THE DIVINE MOTHER AND HER ULTIMATE VICTORY

The Mighty Mother shall take birth in Time
And God be born into the human clay...
All then shall change, a magic order come
Overtopping this mechanical universe.
A mightier race shall inhabit the mortal's world...
A power released from circumscribing bounds,
Its height pushed up beyond death's hungry reach,
Life's tops shall flame with the Immortal's thoughts,
Light shall invade the darkness of its base.
Then in the process of evolving Time
All shall be drawn into a single plan,
A divine harmony shall be earth's law,
Beauty and Joy remould her way to live:
Even the body shall remember God...
The supermind shall claim the world for Light...
This universe shall unseal its occult sense,
Creation's process change its antique front,
An ignorant evolution's hierarchy
Release the Wisdom chained below its base....
The Spirit shall be the master of his world
Lurking no more in form's obscurity
And Nature shall reverse her action's rule,
The outward world disclose the Truth it veils;
All things shall manifest the covert God,
All shall reveal the Spirit's light and might
And move to its destiny of felicity.
Even should a hostile force cling to its reign
And claim its right's perpetual sovereignty
And man refuse his high spiritual fate,
Yet shall the secret Truth in things prevail.
For in the march of all-fulfilling Time
The hour must come of the Transcendent's will:
All turns and winds towards his predestined ends
In Nature's fixed inevitable course
Decreed since the beginning of the worlds
In the deep essence of created things:
Even there shall come as a high crown of all
The end of Death, the death of Ignorance.

SRI AUROBINDO—Savitri, Book XI, Canto I.
TWO WAYS OF "PRANAM" TO THE MOTHER

THERE are two ways of bowing
To you, O Splendour sweet!
One craves the boon of blessedness,
One gives the soul to your feet.

Pulling your touch to ourselves we feel
Holy and happy—we think huge heaven
Comes close with you that we may pluck
A redder dawn, a purpler even.

This is but rapturous robbery
Deaf to infinity's call
That we should leap and plunge in you
Our aching empty all

And, in the surge of being your own,
Grow blind and quite forget
Whether our day be a richer rose,
A wealthier violet.

Precious each moment laid in your hands,
Whatever the hue it bear—
A flame and fragrance just because
Your fingers hold it, dear.

Make me your nothing, my whole life
I would drown in your vastnesses—
A cry to be ruled by your flawless touch,
Your will alone my peace.

K. D. Sethna
Q: How is one's will to be changed into the Divine Will?
A: First of all, you must will the change. Then there must be a great aspiration. And you must continue to will the change and to have the aspiration and not flinch at the moment of difficulty but go on until you succeed. Also, a certain number of necessary things have to be done. For instance, not to be egoistic, not to have a small narrow mind, not to live in your preferences, not to have desires, not to have fixed mental opinions—a lot of things are needed. It is a sufficiently long process because your ordinary nature has to be changed. The changing of it is the first condition.

Break all limits of the mind, break all desires of the vital, break all preferences of the physical. After that, you can hope to be in contact with the Divine Will, and then again you must not only be in contact with it but integrally live it. That is to say, you must get united in your whole being, not have one bit running this way and another bit running that way, but be of one piece and fixed in a single-pointed will.

Q: When we face a difficulty, does it mean that the Divine is trying to make us conscious of the defects of our nature?
A: When you face it—yes. In other words, as soon as you are in the presence of a difficulty, if instead of giving in like a coward you set yourself to conquer it, then you may be sure that the Divine is behind you. But if you are cowardly, the Divine will not be there. Your cowardice cuts you off from the Divine. But if you resist and try to conquer, the Divine is certain to be at your side, helping you. There can be no shadow of a doubt about this.

Q: I would like to know whether the difficulty comes because the Divine is trying to make us conscious of our defects.
A: You want to know whether the Divine expressly throws the difficulty in your path? No. That is not the Divine's way.

Q: But does not the Divine give us difficulties to show us our defects?
A: No. But reflect on what you are saying. If by the very fact of the difficulty you become conscious, it does not mean that the Divine has created the difficulty just to make you conscious. Your question seems to imply that he does so. But that is not the truth. From a completely impersonal point of view,
you can say that the hostile forces which naturally are responsible for all difficulties are tolerated in the world in so far as they serve to make it altogether conscious. But this strikes me as a very human way of putting the matter. For, you can say too that so long as the world is not perfectly conscious the hostile forces are automatically enabled to exist. These are two opposite or else complementary modes of saying the same thing, and neither of them is quite true by itself. Both of them, however, contain something which is true but which is yet on the whole rather different, and ultimately if you wish to state the case exactly you can only say:

Things are like that because they are like that.

This is the only way of not being mistaken. If you say: ‘The world is like that because it is like that’, you are sure of saying something nearly correct—nearly, I say. But if you try to explain, then you will see only one atom of the world and catch hold of this atom as an explanation. It would be necessary to give a lot of explanations—a lot and still more—in order to get near to the reality.

It is precisely this I mean when I say that man’s mind is linear in its action. It sees ideas one after another. Naturally, when you start talking, it is ten times more so...you are obliged to utter word after word and that becomes terrible. But the majority, almost all human beings think in a line. They cannot think many things simultaneously. There are very few individuals who are capable of thinking a score of things at the same time. You may try, you will see how next to impossible it is. You will think your thoughts one after another. The succession may be rapid but it remains a succession. An entirely different kind of vision, an entirely different functioning, not of the mind but using the intellectual powers, is that which can see things in their totality and all at once. Still, even when you see like this, if you try to describe what you see, whether in writing or by speech, you cannot bring out everything at once, you are forced to employ word after word and then, necessarily, you detract from the truth of the thing, you put everything in a line. That is to say, the truest things cannot be said. All that can be said is always a diminution of the truth.

Q: If we succeed in these 14 months, will everything be easy afterwards or will it be as at present? Won’t the difficulties prove easier to overcome?

A: That depends on yourself. If during these 14 months you have made plenty of progress, then afterwards things will be far easier. But if you pass your time in simply passing the time, without making any progress, you will find yourself in the very situation in which you are now—no better.

Here is precisely a chance given to each to make progress. If it is not used for that purpose, then so much the worse for you: you will remain where you
are. And instead of being a conscious part of the world you will be like a cork floating upon water, tossed about by circumstances. No matter what comes, you will be carried away without having the least control over events. For, the first thing required in order to have control over events is to be a being who is absolutely conscious and master of himself; and I am afraid you are pretty far from that realisation.

It is just this that makes it necessary to put forth a great effort during the coming time in order to grow a little more conscious and a little more master of yourself. You must not fondle the belief that at a stroke there will be a blissful paradise, where all your faults will disappear as if by enchantment. Things do not happen that way.

Your faults will disappear if you do the needful for them to vanish, not otherwise.

Otherwise, you will go through even the most easy years with the same faults and stay the same old unchanging self.
A NEW POWER AND PERSONALITY OF THE MOTHER

SOME PASSAGES FROM ONE OF THE MOTHER’S TALKS

Q: Sri Aurobindo, in his book The Mother, after describing the four leading Powers and Personalities of the Divine Mother—Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi, Mahasaraswati—writes that she has other great Personalities but that they were difficult to bring down and put in front in the evolution of the earth-spirit. Among these Presences whom he considers indispensable for the supramental realisation, he mentions in particular one who is her Personality of the supreme Ananda that alone can heal the gulf between the highest heights of the supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter.

Will you tell us something about this wonderful unmanifest Personality and when she will manifest herself?

A: She has come, bringing with her a splendour of Power and of Love, an intensity of divine Joy that have been unknown to earth up to now. The physical atmosphere has completely changed with her advent and become impregnated with new and marvellous possibilities. But if she is to abide here and carry on her action, she must meet with a certain minimum of receptivity, she must find at least one human being who has the required qualities in the vital and the physical, a kind of super-Parsifal gifted with a spontaneous and integral purity but at the same time possessing a body solid and balanced enough to sustain unbendingly the intensity of the Ananda which she brings. Up to the present she has not obtained what was needed. Men have obstinately remained men. They neither want nor have the ability to become supermen. They can receive and express only a love cut to their own measure—a human love! And the wonderful joy of the divine Ananda escapes their perception. Then sometimes she thinks of withdrawing herself, finding the world unprepared to receive her, and that would be a cruel loss. It is true that at the moment her Presence is more nominal than active since she has not the occasion to manifest herself. But even so she is a mighty help to the Work. For, of all the aspects of the Mother, it is she who has the most power of bodily transformation. Indeed the cells which can vibrate to the touch of the divine Joy and receive it and keep it are the regenerated cells on the way to becoming immortal. But the vibrations of the divine Joy and those of human pleasure cannot live together in the same vital and physical system. One must wholly
A NEW POWER AND PERSONALITY OF THE MOTHER

give up the pursuit of all pleasure if one would be in a condition to receive
the Ananda. But how few are those who can renounce pleasure without ceasing
also to take part in active life and without plunging into rigorous asceticism!
And, among those who know that only in the midst of active life transformation
should take place, some try to make out pleasure to be a form of Ananda more
or less gone astray and thus legitimise the quest for personal satisfaction,
thereby creating in themselves an almost insurmountable obstacle to their
own transformation.

Q. Mother, if we have not succeeded before, we can still try, can’t we?
And then this great Personality will not take leave of us.

A: Oh yes, you can always try. The whole world is created anew each
minute. You can re-create your own world in that same minute, if you know
how to do it: that is to say, if you have the capacity to change your nature!
I have not said that the Ananda-Personality has gone away. I only said that
now and again she thinks of departing.

Q: But she must have descended because she saw some possibility here.

A: She has descended because there was a possibility, because things had
reached a certain point and the moment had come when she could descend.
In fact she descended because I thought that the descent was possible and that
she could succeed!... Possibilities are always there: only, they must get material­
ised....With her arrival, in two or three weeks the atmosphere not merely of
the Ashram but of the entire earth was surcharged with such power—to be
precise, with a divine Joy creating a power so marvellous—that all that had
hitherto been difficult to accomplish could then be done almost in an instant!

There were repercussions of the event throughout the whole world. I
don’t believe there was even one amongst you who had the smallest glimmer­
ing of her. You will perhaps not be able even to tell me when she came. But I
may tell you that she came before Sri Aurobindo left his body and that he
foresaw her coming and recognised the actual arrival. It was in the midst
of a formidable conflict with the Inconscient. The earth’s receptivity was not
what it should have been and I had put the responsibility for this lack upon the
Inconscient; so it was there that I sought to give battle. I don’t say that there
has been no result. But, between the result obtained and the result hoped for,
there is a lot of difference. You were all so close to the descent, you could bathe
in its very atmosphere. And yet you have continued your petty living.

Q: Was it not in 1946 that the descent of this new Power and Personality
took place—1946 about which you have often spoken a great deal?
A: Correct.

Q: And now that she is here what should we do?

A: Don’t you know what you have to do? Endeavour to change your consciousness....Are there many amongst you who feel an intense need to discover the soul within, to know what truly you are or what you have to do or why you are here? People just go on living—they even start complaining when things are not too easy! And if sometimes an aspiration arises and they encounter a difficulty in themselves, they simply tell themselves: “Oh never mind, Mother is there after all, she will manage everything for me.” Then they start thinking of something else....If I may speak about myself, I would like to repeat to you what I said just this morning to a young one who had reached her eighteenth year. I said: “Between my own eighteenth and twentieth years I achieved a conscious and constant union with the Divine Presence, and this I did all by myself, without knowing anybody who could help me, even without any books.” When, a little later, I held in my hands Vivekananda’s book on Raja Yoga, it appeared to me such a marvel that somebody could explain something to me. And I was enabled to gain in a few months what would otherwise have taken me years. I also met a man, an Indian, who spoke to me about the Gita. There was a translation of it in French, it was a pretty poor one, but those in English were equally bad: Sri Aurobindo had not made his rendering yet. The Indian advised me to read the Gita and gave me his own clue to that scripture: he said, “Read the Gita and take Krishna to be the symbol of the immanent Divine, the God within you.” This is all he said. But in one month the whole work was finished. As for you who are here, some from your very childhood, so much has been explained to you, all the tough­nesses have already been chewed for you, help has been given you not only with words but with direct psychic support in all kinds of ways possible, and you have been set going on the path of inner discovery—yet you let yourselves live as you do. You just think—if even that much thought you really spare—“Whatever will happen will happen”....I am surprised that you do not feel on fire with the question: “How is one to get knowledge?” You are aware, you have often been told, that you have a divine consciousness hidden within you. Still you go on sleeping night after night and spending day after day without burning with enthusiasm and with acute longing to enter into contact with your own self, yes, your own self there within you. Oh this passes my understanding!

The first time I knew—not by anybody’s telling me but by an experience—that there was a discovery to be made within my own depths, it was something of the utmost importance. And when, as I have said, I came across a book,
A NEW POWER AND PERSONALITY OF THE MOTHER

a man, that could give me just a small hint and tell me “There, you have to act thus and thus and the way will open up before you”, I did nothing short of hurling myself into the search—like a cyclone. Nothing could have stopped me.

But for how many years you have gone on and on in this place, half asleep! From time to time you begin thinking, especially when I talk to you or when you read Sri Aurobindo’s books. But where is the ardour, the will that is victorious over all obstacles, the concentration that conquers everything?
THE MOTHER'S WORK

WHEN Sri Aurobindo left his body more than four years ago, most of his disciples and devotees, living in the world outside, made anxious enquiries as to what would now be the fate of the Ashram and the great work of the supramental transformation which he had laboured for during the forty long years of his strenuous seclusion at Pondicherry. Sri Aurobindo had asserted time and again that the descent of the Supermind and its establishment in the earth-consciousness as a principle and power of the infinite Knowledge-Will, superseding and completing the mind of man, was inevitable, and that a divine life on earth was the crowning glory of human destiny. How was that great work going to be accomplished? Who would now be the leader of the supramental evolution? Was it not merely a lofty dream of a spiritual visionary—one of those dreams and ideals that flash for a moment across our mental skies and fade away into the light of the common day, leaving but a memory of a splendour and a sublimity never to be achieved on this petty planet of our brief habitation?

What reply did the inmates of the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo give to these eager queries? What proof, what certitude did they advance against the turbid surge of facile doubts and misgivings? Stunned by the first shock of separation from One they had so profoundly loved and adored, so faithfully followed and served, they did not know what reply to give, how to convince the doubting, unbelieving minds. Their sole proof, their whole certitude, their absolute faith stood personified before them—the Mother, she who had been to them at once the path, the guide and the goal; and the solemn words of Sri Aurobindo rang in their hearts:

“A day may come when she must stand unhelped
On a dangerous brink of the world’s doom and hers,
Carrying the world’s future on her lonely breast,
Carrying the human hope in a heart left sole
To conquer or fail on a last desperate verge;
Alone with death and close to extinction’s edge,
Her single greatness in that last dire scene,
She must cross alone a perilous bridge in Time

* Mother has taken the body because a work of a physical nature (i.e. including a change in the physical world) has to be done....”—Sri Aurobindo.
THE MOTHER'S WORK

And reach an apex of world-destiny
Where all is won or all is lost for man.
In that tremendous silence lone and lost
Of a deciding hour in the world’s fate,
In her soul’s climbing beyond mortal time
When she stands sole with Death or sole with God
Apart upon a silent desperate brink
Alone with her self and death and destiny
As on some verge between Time and Timelessness
When being must end or life rebuild its base,
Alone she must conquer or alone must fall.
No human aid can reach her in that hour,
No armoured God stand shining at her side.
Cry not to heaven, for she alone can save.
For this the silent Force came missioned down;
In her the conscious Will took human shape:
She alone can save herself and save the world.”

With the flaming fervour of a renewed loyalty and the spontaneous self­abandon of an overflowing love, they clung to the Mother in that grim hour of their life. She was there, to whom they had already surrendered all of themselves and on whose guidance they had learned to depend exclusively in all the details of their lives. She was there, who had been leading their spiritual unfoldment from stage to stage, across many a path and bye-path, over many a gulf and chasm, many a quagmire and precipice, towards the perfection that had attracted them to the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. Their contact with Sri Aurobindo had always been through her, and they had come to realise the truth of Sri Ramakrishna’s dictum that the key to the abode of Brahman is with the Mother, and that none can enter there unless she, in her Grace, opens the door. Wearied out by the inner struggle, they had reposed and revived on her lap; battered by the blasts of life, they had taken refuge at her feet; menaced by the forces of darkness, they had clung to her bosom of boundless love and compassion. Her love had been their mainstay, their never-failing friend and protector, their healer and comforter, and the solitary leader of their spiritual journey. Her love had been, indeed, the very sustenance of their lives. If they stumbled on the rugged path of Yoga, she was there to lift them up; if they were confused and clouded in their vision, her light was always there to brighten up their consciousness and show them the right way. If the path appeared long and

1 Savitri—Book VI, Canto II.
steep and laborious, and their heart's fire seemed to sink, her beaming eyes pointed to the distant horizon, golden with the glory of the eternal Sun. With her, they knew they were invincible; without her, they could hardly conceive of existence except as a painful exile. To be united with her, to be her plant and docile instruments, to fulfil her work in the world, have been the only aspiration of their hearts. So, when Sri Aurobindo left his body, they naturally looked up to her, yearning to find him in her. She assured them that he had cast off his material vesture only for a definite purpose, and not compelled by any ineluctable law of Nature; and that he was here still, in the earth atmosphere, toiling, as ever, for the fulfilment of the great work of his life—the descent of the Truth-Consciousness and the supramental transformation of man. She assured them that he was present in their midst, not in a figurative sense or as a universal, impersonal consciousness, but as the very divine being he had been in his physical body, as the very dynamic Master they had loved and adored. Sri Aurobindo had often told them that his consciousness and the Mother's were one; and now they realised that truth more and more, in a sense more living, quickening and intimate.

A meditative silence reigned in the Ashram for twelve days after the passing of the beloved Master. Then the normal activities began, but with a striking difference. One felt a pervading Presence in the Ashram atmosphere and the Mother's Force as more sovereignly in command of the life blossoming there. There was an imperative call, a kindling inspiration, almost an irresistible pull to transcend the normal levels of human consciousness and ascend to the radiant heights of the Spirit. Concentration came easier and the need for total self-consecration became more imperious than ever. Many felt an urge, never felt in the same way before, to ferret out all that was unholy and unlovely in them, all that opposed their self-transcendence, and fling them out for ever, so that the influence of the Mother alone could enter into them and mould them in the image of their innate divinity. Besides, each successive day brought a greater contact with the world outside, resulting in a rapid expansion of the Ashram and, which is remarkable, a greater and more enthusiastic acceptance by the world of the ideal for which the Ashram stood. The expansion appeared, indeed, to exceed all expectation. The departments of the Ashram work multiplied and the energies of the sadhakas found new channels of self-expression. It is a singular, though usual, feature of the Ashram activities that they develop of themselves, as if impelled by some invisible force, without any previous plan or blue-print. A person comes and starts a new line in which he appears to be an expert, or one of the sadhakas suddenly develops a capacity of which he never suspected any trace in himself before, and it becomes the occasion for a new department. Those who live in the Ashram and have observed how the
departments come into being and thrive, know well enough that their single
source of inspiration is the Mother, whose supramental will manifests itself in
its inscrutable way in the various life of her children. The working of that will
now made itself felt more powerfully than ever and sought manifold ways of
self-fulfilment. Streams of visitors poured in, day after day, month after month,
to pay their homage to the Samadhi of Sri Aurobindo, catch a glimpse of the
ideal of the Life Divine and imbibe something of the Light and Force emanating
from the Mother. It seemed as if the flood-gates of a dynamic spirituality
had been flung wide to the whole world without any distinction of creed and
colour. She, who had always kept herself in the background and shunned the
lime-light, became now the cynosure of countless eyes and the hope and refuge
of many wandering souls. Many who came to see the Ashram came again and
again, to see more and more; for they felt that here there were more things below
than on the surface; and some even came, decided to stay and enroll themselves
as warriors in the great spiritual battle. Parents left their children, husbands
left their wives, brothers left their sisters, whole families came and settled—all
drawn by some mysterious magnetism. Even little children, once they came and
felt a touch of the Mother’s love, refused to go back with their parents and were
happy to live and grow under the Mother’s outspread wings. The Mother
dislikes advertisement and propaganda, particularly in the cause of spiritual
institutions. She says that, if her work is the work of the Divine, workers will
flock to her from all parts of the globe. And so, indeed, they have been flocking
—from America and England and France, from Germany and Holland and
Spain, from Sweden and Australia and China, and from almost every part of
India. The stream expands as it pours in and rushes forward to bathe the
Mother’s feet. Fired with the new spirit, the standard-bearers of the new
Light gather round her to help fulfil her mission. Each day brings, as if by
miracle, a more admiring appreciation of the Ashram and its expanding activi­
ties. Is it any wonder that men feel spontaneously drawn to one who can awak­
en their souls, unveil their innate harmony and happiness and lead them from
falsehood to Truth, from darkness to Light and from death to Immortality?

In 1951 the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre came into
existence. On the occasion of its convention the Mother said: “Sri Aurobindo is
present in our midst, and with all the power of his creative genius he presides
over the formation of the university centre which for years he considered as
one of the best means of preparing the future humanity to receive the suprapa­
mental light that will transform the elite of today into a new race manifesting
upon earth the new light and force and life. In his name I open today this
Convention meeting here with the purpose of realising one of his most cherished
ideals.” It is a centre where irrespective of race and clime, men can receive a
harmonious education designed to develop and enlighten not only their mind but their whole being—soul, mind, life and body—and give them a definite lead towards a dynamic spiritual life lived in God and devoted to the fulfilment of the divine Will in the world. It is a centre where men can learn how to achieve their perfection and fulfilment, not only on one but on all planes of their existence, and express their inherent divinity which is now masked by their half-animal humanity. It is a centre where they can learn to rise beyond all artificial divisions of race and country, sex and age, caste and creed, and find themselves one with all, in peace and harmony with all—in God. It is a place where they can serve humanity best by learning to serve the Divine in humanity.

The University is growing, slowly but steadily, in the silent way things grow and flower under the benignant eye of God, when the bustling mind of man, in its arrogant incompetence, ceases to interfere. The number of children has been increasing by leaps and bounds and, but for the extreme difficulty of accommodation, would have swollen to unmanageable proportions. It is in the flower-like faces of these children, more than anywhere else, that one can perceive the gleam of the heavenly Light the Mother has been striving to establish in the earth-consciousness, the Light about which she wrote decades ago in her Prayers and Meditations:

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

Addressing the children of the University, she said in 1951:

“There is an ascending evolution in nature which goes from the stone to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man. Because man is, for the moment, the last rung at the summit of the ascending evolution, he considers himself as the final stage in this ascension and believes there can be nothing on earth superior to him. In that he is mistaken. In his physical nature he is yet almost wholly an animal, a thinking and speaking animal, but still an animal in his material habits and instincts. Undoubtedly, nature cannot be satisfied with such an imperfect result; she endeavours to bring out a being who will be to man what man is to the animal, a being who will remain a man in its external form, and yet whose consciousness will rise far above the mental and its slavery to ignorance.

“Sri Aurobindo came upon earth to teach this truth to men. He told them that man is only a transitional being living in a mental consciousness, but with the possibility of acquiring a new consciousness, the Truth-Consciousness, and capable of living a life perfectly harmonious, good and beautiful, happy and fully conscious. During the whole of his life upon earth, Sri Aurobindo gave all
his time to establish in himself this consciousness he called supramental, and to help those gathered around him to realise it.

"You have the immense privilege of having come quite young to the Ashram, that is to say, still plastic and capable of being moulded according to this new ideal and thus becoming the representatives of the new race. Here, in the Ashram, you are in the most favourable conditions with regard to the environment, the influence, the teaching and the example, to awaken in you this supramental consciousness and to grow according to its law.

"Now, all depends on your will and your sincerity. If you have the will no more to belong to ordinary humanity, no more to be merely evolved animals; if your will is to become men of the new race realising Sri Aurobindo's supramental ideal living a new and higher life upon a new earth, you will find here all the necessary help to achieve your purpose; you will profit fully by your stay in the Ashram and eventually become living examples for the world."

This, then, is the Mother's work—to awaken in man the supramental Truth-Consciousness and help him grow according to its law. Evidently it is a signal departure from the aims and objects of traditional spirituality, which points to the Beyond as the only kingdom of perfection and fulfilment. The Mother's Force is directed to the radical transformation of the whole active nature of man, so that the gulf between his outer consciousness and the divine Consciousness may be bridged and he may manifest the Divine in every movement of his individual and collective life on earth.

The Ashram is the Mother's creation, and she has built it up, stone by stone, so that one day it may become a temple and a radiating centre of the new Light, a prism of the splendour of the Supermind. With her will united with the Will of the Divine, her unbarred vision contemplating the future more clearly than we can contemplate the immediate present, and her supramental Force creating the principles and conditions of the Truth-life upon earth, the Mother has been silently proceeding with her work, unmindful of the praise or blame of the world. What has been achieved is little by the side of what she has to achieve for God and humanity—a refounding of human life on the peace and bliss and creative harmony of the Spirit, a perfect revelation of God in Matter.¹

RISHABHCHAND

¹ "All here shall be one day her sweetness's home,
All contraries prepare her harmony...."—Savitri, Book III, Conlo II.
So to the voice of their best they were bowed and obeyed undebating; Men whose hearts were burning yet with implacable passion Felt Odysseus' strength and rose up clay to his counsels. King Agamemnon rose at his word, the wide-ruling monarch, Rose at his word the Cretan and Locrian, Thebes and Epirus, Nestor rose, the time-tired hoary chief of the Pylians. Round Agamemnon the Atreid Europe surged in her chieftains Forth from their tent on the shores of the Troad, splendid in armour, Into the golden blaze of the sun and the race of the sea-winds. Fierce and clear like a flame to the death-gods bright on its altar Shone in their eyes the lust of blood and of earth and of pillage; For in their hearts those fires replaced the passions of discord Forging a brittle peace by a common hatred and yearning. Joyous they were of mood; for their hopes were already in Troya Sating with massacre, plunder and rape and the groans of their foemen Death and Hell in our mortal bosoms seated and shrouded; There they have altars and seats in mankind in this fair-built temple, Made for purer gods; but we turn from tender luminous temptings, Vainly the divine whispers seek us; the heights are rejected.¹ Man to his earth drawn always prefers the murmurs of her promptings, Man, devouring, devoured who is slayer and slain through the ages Since by the beast he soars held and exceeds not that pedestal's measure. They now followed close on the steps of the mighty Atrides Glued like the forest pack to the war-scarred coat of its leader, Glued as the pack when wolves follow their prey like Doom that can turn not. Perfect forms and beautiful faces crowded the tent-door, Brilliant eyes and fierce of souls that remembered the forest, Wild beasts touched by thought and savages lusting for beauty,

¹ Alternative: “man rejects them”. 
Dire and fierce and formidable chieftains followed Atrides, 
Merciless kings of merciless men and the founders of Europe, 
Sackers of Troy and sires of the Parthenon, Athens and Caesar.
Here they had come to destroy the ancient perishing cultures;
For, it is said, from the savage we rose and were born to a wild-beast.
So when the Eye supreme perceives that we rose up too swiftly,
Drawn towards height but fullness contemning, called by the azure,
Life when we fail in, poor in our base and forgetting our mother,
Back we are hurled to our roots; we recover our sap from the savage.
So were these sent by Zeus to destroy the old that was grandiose,
Such were those frames of old as the sons of Heaven might have chosen
Who in the dawn of eternity wedded the daughters of Nature,
Cultures touched by the morning star, vast, bold and poetic,
Titans' works and joys, but thrust down from their puissance and pleasure
Fainting now fell from the paces of Time or were left by his ages.
So were these born from Zeus to found the new that should flower
Lucid and slender and perfectly little as fit for this mortal
Ever who sinks back fatigued from immortality's stature;
Man, repelled by the gulfs within him and shrinking from vastness,
Form of the earth accepts and is glad of the lap of his mother.
Safe through the infinite seas could his soul self-piloted voyage
Chasing the dawns and the wondrous horizons, eternity's secrets
Drawn from her luminous gulfs! But he journeys rudderless, helmless,
Driven and led by the breath of God who meets him with tempest,
Hurls at him Night. The earth is safer, warmer its sunbeams;
Death and limits are known; so he clings to them hating the summons.
So might one dwell who has come to take joy in a fair-lighted prison;
Amorous grown of its marble walls and its noble adornments,
Lost to mightier cares and the spaces boundlessly calling,
Lust of the infinite skies he forgets and the kiss of the storm-winds,
So might one live who inured to his days of the field and the farm-yard
Shrinks from the grandiose mountain-tops; shut up in lanes in hedges
Only his furrows he leads and only orders his gardens,
Only his fleeces weaves and drinks of the yield of his vine-rows:
Lost to his ear is the song of the waterfall, wind in the forests.
Now to our earth we are bent and we study the skies for its image.
That was Greece and its shining, that now is France and its keenness,
That still is Europe though by the Christ-touch troubled and tortured,
Seized by the East but clasping her chains and resisting our freedom.
Then was all founded, on Phrygia's coasts, round Ilion's ramparts,
Then by the spear of Achilles, then in the Trojan death-cry;  
Bearers mute of a future world were those armoured Achaians.  
So they arrived from Zeus, an army led by the death-god.  
So one can see them still who has sight from the gods in the trance-sleep  
Out from the tent emerging on Phrygia’s coasts in their armour;  
Those of the early seed Pelasgian slighter in stature,  
Dark-haired, hyacinth-curled from the isles of the sea and the southron  
Soft-eyed men with pitiless hearts; bright-haired the Achaians  
Hordes of the Arctic Dawn who had fled from the ice and the death-blasts;  
Children of conquerors lured to the coasts and the breezes and olives,  
Noons of Mediterranean suns and the kiss of the south-wind  
Mingled their brilliant force with the plastic warmth of the Hamite.  
There they shall rule and their children long till Fate and the Dorian  
Break down Hellene doors and trample stern through the passes.  
Mixed in a glittering rout on the Ocean beaches one sees them,  
Perfect and beautiful figures and fronts, not as now are we mortals  
Marred and crushed by our burden long of thought and of labour;  
Perfect were these as our race bright-imaged was first by the Thinker  
Seen who in golden lustres shapes all the glories we tarnish,  
Rich from the moulds of Gods and unmarred in their splendour and swiftness  
Many and mighty they came o’er the beaches loud of the Aegean,  
Roots of an infant world and the morning stars of this Europe,  
Great Agamemnon’s kingly port and the bright Menelaus,  
Tall Idomeneus, Nestor, Odysseus Atlas-shouldered,  
Helmeted Ajax, his chin of the beast and his eyes of the dreamer.  
Over the sands they dispersed to their armies ranked by the Ocean.  
But from the Argive front Acirrous loosed by Tydides  
Parted as hastens a shaft from the string and he sped on intently  
Swift where the beaches were bare or threading the gaps of the nations;  
Crossing Thebes and Epirus he passed through the Lemnian archers,  
Ancient Gnoossus’ hosts and Meriones’ leaderless legions.  
Heedless of cry and of laughter and calling over the sea-sands  
Swiftly he laboured, wind in his hair and the sea to him crying,  
Straight he ran to the Myrmidon hosts and the tents of Achilles.  
There he beheld at his tent-door the Pthian gleaming in armour,  
Glittering-helmed with the sun that climbed now the cusp of Cronion,  
Nobly tall, excelling humanity, planned like Apollo.  
Proud at his side like a pillar upreared of snow or of marble  
Golden-haired, hard and white was the boy Neoptolemus, fire-eyed.  
New were his feet to the Trojan sands from the ships and from Scyros:
Led to this latest of all his father's fights in the Troad
He for his earliest battle waited, the son of Achilles.
So in her mood had Fate brought them together, the son and the father,
Even as our souls travelling different paths have met in the ages
Each for its work and they cling for an hour to the names of affection,
Then Time's long waves bear them apart for new forms we shall know not,
So these two long severed had met in the shadow of parting.
Often he smote his hand on the thigh-piece for sound of the armour,
Bent his ear to the plains or restless moved like a war-horse
Curbed by his master's will, when he stands new-saddled for battle
Hearing the voice of the trumpets afar and pawing the meadows.
Over the sands Acirrous came to them running and toiling,
Known from far off for he ran unhelmeted. High on the hero
Sunlike smiled the golden Achilles and into the tent-space
Seized by the hand and brought him and seated. "War-shaft of Troezen,
Whence was thy speed, Acirrous? Com'st thou, O friend, to my tent-side
Spurred by the eager will or the trusted stern Diomedes?
Or from the Greeks like the voice still loud from a heart that is hollow?
What say the banded princes of Greece to the single Achilles?
Bringst thou flattery pale or an empty and futureless menace?"
But to the strength of Pelides the hero Acirrous answered;
"Response none send the Greeks to thy high-voiced message and challenge;
Only their shout at thy side will reply when thou leapst into Troya.
So have their chieftains willed and the wisdom calm of Odysseus."
But with a haughty scorn made answer the high-crested Hellene;
"Wise is Odysseus, wise are the hearts of Achaia's chieftains.
Ilion's chiefs are enough for their strength and life is too brittle
Hurrying Fate to advance on the spear of the Pthian Achilles."
"Not from the Greeks have I sped to thy tents, their friendship or quarrel
Urged not my feet; but Tiryn's chieftain strong Diomedes
Sent me claiming a word long old that first by his war-car
Young Neoptolemus come from island Scyros should enter
Far-crashing into the fight that has lacked this shoot of Achilles,
Pressing in front with his father's strength in the play-ground of Ares,
Shouting his father's cry as he clashed to his earliest battle.
So let Achilles' son twin-carred fight close by Tydides,
Seal of the ancient friendship new-sworn twixt your sires in their boyhood
Then when they learned the spear to guide and strove in the wrestle."

1 Alternatives: "give", "make".
So he spoke recalling other times and regretted
And to the Argive’s word consented the strength of Pelides.
He on the shoulder white of his son with a gesture of parting
Laid his fateful hand and spoke from his prescient spirit:

“Pyrrhus, go. No mightier guide couldst thou hope into battle
Opening the foemen’s ranks than the hero stern Diomedes.
Noble that rugged heart, thy father’s friend and his father’s.
Journey through all wide Greece, seek her prytanies, schools and palaestras,
Traverse Ocean’s rocks and the cities that dream on his margin,
Phocian dales, Aetolia’s cliffs and Arcady’s pastures,
Never a second man wilt thou find, but alone Diomedes.
Pyrrhus, follow his counsels always losing thy father,
If in this battle I fall and Fate has denied to me Troya.
Pyrrhus, be like thy father in virtue, thou canst not excel him;
Noble be in peace, invincible, brave in the battle,
Stern and calm to thy foe, to the suppliant merciful. Mortal
Favour and wrath as thou walkst heed never, son of Achilles.
Always thy will and the right impose on thy friend and thy foeman.
Count not life nor death, defeat nor triumph, Pyrrhus.
Only thy soul regard and the gods in thy joy or thy labour.”
Pyrrhus heard and erect with a stride that was rigid and stately
Forth with Acirrous went from his sire to the joy of the battle.
Little he heeded the word of death that the god in our bosom
Spoke from the lips of Achilles, but deemed at sunset returning,
Slaying Halamus, Paris or dangerous mighty Aeneas,
Proudly to lay at his father’s feet the spoils of the foeman.

But in his lair alone the godlike doomed Pelides
Turned to the door of his tent and was striding forth to the battle,
When from her inner chamber Briseis parting the curtain,—
Long had she stood there spying and waiting her lonely occasion,—
Came and caught and held his hand like a creeper detaining
Vainly a moment the deathward stride of the kings of the forest.
“Tarry awhile, Achilles; not yet have the war-horns clamoured.
Nor have the scouts streamed yet from Xanthus fiercely running.
Lose a moment for her who has only thee under heaven.
Nay, had war sounded, thou yet wouldst squander that moment, Achilles,
Hearkening a woman’s fears and the voice of a dream in the midnight.
Art thou not gentle, even as terrible, lion of Hellas?
Others have whispered the deeds of thy wrath; we have heard, but not seen it;
Marvelling much at their pallor and awe we have listened and wondered.
Never with thrall or slave-girl or captive saw I thee angered,
Hero, nor any humble heart ever trembled to near thee.
Pardoning rather our many faults and our failures in service
Lightly thou layest thy yoke on us, kind as the clasp of a lover
Sparing the weak as thou breakest the mighty, O godlike Achilles.
Only thy equals have felt all the dread of the death-god within thee;
We have presumed and played with the strength at which nations have trembled:
Lo, thou hast leaned thy mane to the clutch of the boys and the maidens.”
But to Briseis white-armed made answer smiling Achilles;
“Something surely thou needst, for thou flatterest long, O Briseis.
Tell me, O woman, thy fear or thy dream that my touch may dispel it,
White-armed net of bliss slipped down from the gold Aphrodite.”
And to Achilles answered the captive white Briseis:
“Long have they vexed my soul in the tents of the Greeks, O Achilles,
Telling of Thetis thy mother who bore thee in caves of the Ocean
Clasped by a mortal and of her fear from the threats of the Ancients,
Weavers of doom who play with our hopes and smile at our passions
Painting Time with the red of our hearts on the web they have woven,
How on the Ocean’s bosom she hid thee in vine-tangled Scyros
Clothed like a girl among girls with the daughters of King Lycomedes,—
Art thou not fairer than woman’s beauty, yet great as Apollo?—
Fearing Paris’ shafts and the anger of Delian Phoebus.
Now in the night has a vision three times besieged me from heaven.
Over the sea in my dream an argent bow was extended;
Nearing I saw a terror august over moonlit waters,
Cloud and a fear and a face that was young and lovely and hostile.
Then three times I heard arise in the grandiose silence,—
Still was the sky and still was the land and still were the waters,—
Echoing a mighty voice, ‘Take back, O King, what thou gavest;
Strength, take thy strong man, sea, take thy wave, till the warfare eternal
Need him again to thunder through Asia’s plains to the Ganges.’
That fell silent, but nearer the beautiful Terror approached me,
Clang I heard of the argent bow and I gazed on Apollo.
Shrilly I cried, for ’twas\(^1\) thee that the shaft of the heavens had yearned for,
Thee that it sought like a wild thing in anger straight at its quarry,
Quivering into thy heel. I awoke and found myself trembling,
Held thee safe in my arms, yet hardly believed that thou livest.
Lo, in the night came this dream; on the morn thou arisest for battle.”

\(^1\) Alternative to “for ’twas”: “it was”.

21
But to Briseis white-armed made answer the golden Achilles;
"This was a dream indeed, O princess, daughter of Brises!
Will it restrain Achilles from fight, the lion from preying?
Come, thou hast heard of my prowess and knowest what man is Achilles.
Deemst thou so near my end? or does Polyxena vex thee,
Jealousy shaping thy dreams to frighten me back from her capture?"
Passionate, vexed Briseis, smiting his arm with her fingers,
Yet with a smile half-pleased made answer to mighty Achilles:
"Thinkst thou I fear thee at all? I am brave and will chide thee and threaten.
See that thou recklessly throw not, Achilles, thy life into battle
Hurting this body, my world, nor venture sole midst thy foemen,
Leaving thy shielders behind as oft thou art wont in thy war-rage
Lured by thy tempting gods who seek their advantage to slay thee,
Fighting divinely, careless of all but thy spear and thy foeman.
Cover thy limbs with thy shield, speed slowly restraining thy coursers.
Dost thou not know all the terrible void and cold desolation
Once again my life must become if I lose thee, Achilles?
Twice then thus wilt thou smite me, O hero, a desolate woman?
I will not stay behind on an earth that is empty and kingless.
Into the grave I will leap, through the fire I will burn, I will follow
Down into Hades' depths or wherever thy footsteps go clanging,
Hunting thee always,—didst thou not seize me here for thy pleasure?—
Stronger there by my love as thou than I here, O Achilles.
Thou shalt not dally alone with Polyxena safe in the shadows."
But to Briseis answered the hero, mighty Pelides
Holding her delicate hands like gathered flowers in his bosom,
Pressing her passionate mouth like a rose that trembles with beauty.
"There then follow me even as I would have drawn thee, O woman,
Voice that chimes with my soul and hands that are eager for service,
Beautiful spoil beloved of my foemen, perfect Briseis.
But for the dreams that come to us mortals sleeping or waking,
Shadows are these from our souls and who shall discern what they figure?
Fears from the heart speak voiced like Zeus, take shape as Apollo.
But were they truer than Delphi's cavern voice or Dodona's
Moan that seems wind in his oaks immemorable, how should they alter
Fate that the stern gods have planned from the first when the earth was
unfashioned,
Shapeless the gyre of the sun? For dream or for oracle adverse
Why should man swerve from the path of his feet? The gods have invented
Only one way for a man through the world, O my slave-girl Briseis,
Valiant to be and noble and truthful and just to the humble.
Only one way for a woman, to love and serve and be faithful.
This observe, thy task in thy destiny noble or fallen;
Time and result are the gods'; with these things be not thou troubled.”
So he spoke and kissed her lips and released her and parted.
Out from the tent he strode and into his chariot leaping
Seized the reins and shouted his cry and drove with a far-borne
Sound of wheels mid the clamour of hooves and the neigh of the war-steeds
Swift through the line of the tents and forth from the heart of the leaguer.
Over the causeway Troyward thundered the wheels of Achilles.
After him crashing loud with a fierce and resonant rumour
Chieftains impetuous prone to the mellay and swift at the war-cry
Came, who long held from the lust of the spear and the joy of the war-din
Rushed over earth like hawks released through the air; a shouting
Limitless rolled behind, for nations followed each war-cry.
Lords renowned of the northern hills and the plains and the coast-lands,
Many a Dorian, many a Phthian, many a Hellene,
Names now lost to the ear though then reputed immortal!
Night has swallowed them, Zeus has devoured the light of his children;
Drawn are they back to his bosom vast whence they came in their fierceness.
Thinking to conquer the earth and dominate Time and his ages
Nor on their left less thick came numerous even as the sea-sands
Forth from the line of the leaguer that skirted the far-sounding waters,
Ranked behind Tydeus’ son and the Spartan, bright Menelaus,
Ithaca’s chief and Epeus, Idomeneus lord of the Cretans,
Acamos, Nestor, Neleus’ son, and the brave Ephialtus,
Prothous, Meges, Leitus the bold and the king Prothoënor,
Wise Alceste’s son and the Lemnian, stern Philoctetes,
These and unnumbered warlike captains marching the Argives.
Last in his spacious car drove shaping the tread of his armies,
Even as a shepherd who follows his flock to the green of the pastures,
Atreus’ far-famed son, the monarch great Agamemnon.
They on the plain moved out and gazing far over the pastures
Saw behind Xanthus rolling with dust like a cloud full of thunder,
Ominous, steadily nearing, shouting their war-cry the Trojans.

(To be continued)
If the idea of the Truth that we have found in the very opening hymn of the Veda really carries in itself the contents we have supposed and amounts to the conception of a supramental consciousness which is the condition of the state of immortality or beatitude and if this be the leading conception of the Vedic Rishis, we are bound to find it recurring throughout the hymns as a centre for other and dependent psychological realisations. In the very next Sukta, the second hymn of Madhuchchhandas addressed to Indra and Vayu, we find another passage full of clear and this time quite invincible psychological suggestions in which the idea of the Ritam is insisted upon with an even greater force than in the hymn to Agni. The passage comprises the last three Riks of the Sukta.

Mitram huve pūtadakṣasam, varuṇam ca riśādasam
dhiyam ghrtačīṃ sādhantā.
Ṛtena mitrāvaṁtuṛtāvṛtāvṛtaspṛśa
kratum bṛhatam āśāthe.
Kavi no mitrāvaṁtuviṣijātā urukṣayā,
dakṣam dadhāte apasam.

In the first Rik of this passage we have the word dakṣa usually explained by Sayana as strength, but capable of a psychological significance, the important word ghrta in the adjectival form ghrtāci and the remarkable phrase dhiyam ghrtachīṃ. The verse may be translated literally “I invoke Mitra of purified strength (or, purified discernment) and Varuna destroyer of our foes perfecting (or accomplishing) a bright understanding.”

In the second Rik we have Ritam thrice repeated and the words bṛhata and kruṭa, to both of which we have attached a considerable importance in the psychological interpretation of the Veda. Kruṭa here may mean either work of sacrifice or effective power. In favour of the former sense we have a similar
passage in the Veda in which Varuna and Mitra are said to attain to or enjoy by the Truth a mighty sacrifice, yajnam bh’hantam āśāthe. But this parallel is not conclusive; for while in one expression it is the sacrifice itself that is spoken of, in the other it may be the power or strength which effects the sacrifice. The verse may be translated, literally, “By Truth Mitra and Varuna, truth-increasing, truth-touching, enjoy (or, attain) a mighty work” or “a vast (effective) power.”

Finally in the third Rik we have again dakṣa; we have the word kavi, seer, already associated by Madhuchchhandas with Kratu, work or will; we have the idea of the Truth, and we have the expression urukṣaya, where uru, wide or vast, may be an equivalent for brhat, the vast, which is used to describe the world or plane of the truth-consciousness, the “own home” of Agni. I translate the verse, literally, “For us Mitra and Varuna, seers, multiply-born, wide-housed, uphold the strength (or, discernment) that does the work.”

It will at once be evident that we have in this passage of the second hymn precisely the same order of ideas and many of the same expressions as those on which we founded ourselves in the first Sukta. But the application is different and the conceptions of the purified discernment, the richly-bright understanding, dhiyam ghṛṭācim, and the action of the Truth in the work of the sacrifice, apas, introduce certain fresh precisions which throw further light on the central ideas of the Rishis.

The word dakṣa, which alone in this passage admits of some real doubt as to its sense, is usually rendered by Sayana strength. It comes from a root which, like most of its congeners, e.g. diś, diś, dah, suggested originally as one of its characteristic significances an aggressive pressure and hence any form of injury, but especially dividing, cutting, crushing or sometimes burning. Many of the words for strength and originally this idea of a force for injury, the aggressive strength of the fighter and slayer, the kind of force most highly prized by primitive man making a place for himself by violence on the earth he had come to inherit. We see this connection in the ordinary Sanskrit word strength, balam, which is of the family as the Greek ballo, I strike, and belos, a weapon. The sense, strength, for dakṣa has the same origin.

But this idea of division led up also in the psychology of language-development to quite another order of ideas, for when man wished to have words for mental conceptions, his readiest method was to apply the figures of physical action to the mental movement. The idea of physical division or separation was thus used and converted into that of distinction. It seems to have been first applied to distinguishing by the ocular sense and then to the act of mental separation,—discernment, judgment. Thus the root vid, which means in
Sanskrit to find or know, signifies in Greek and Latin to see. Drś, to see, meant originally to rend, tear apart, separate; paś, to see, has a similar origin. We have three almost identical roots which are very instructive in this respect—pis, to hurt, injure, be strong; pis, to hurt, injure, be strong, crush, pound; and piś, to form, shape, organise, be reduced to the constituent parts—all these senses betraying the original idea of separation, division, cutting apart,—with derivatives, piśāca, a devil, and pisuna, which means on one side harsh, cruel, wicked, treacherous, slanderous, all from the idea of injury, and at the same time “indicatory, manifesting, displaying, marking clear” from the other sense of distinction. So kri, to injure, divide, scatter appears in Greek krino, I shift, choose, judge, determine. Dakṣa has a similar history. It is kin to the root daś which in Latin gives us doceo, I teach and in Greek dokeo, I think, judge, reckon, and dakazo, I observe, am of opinion. So also we have the kindred root diś meaning to point out or teach, Greek deiknumi. Almost identical with dakṣā itself is the Greek doxa, opinion, judgment, and dexios, clever, dexterous, right-hand. In Sanskrit the root dakṣa means to hurt, kill and also to be competent, able, the adjective dakṣa means clever, skilful, competent, fit, careful, attentive; dakṣina means clever, skilful, right-hand, like dexios, and the noun dakṣa means, besides strength and also wickedness from the sense of hurting, mental ability of fitness like other words of the family. We may compare also the word daśa in the sense of mind, understanding. All this evidence taken together seems to indicate clearly enough that dakṣa must have meant at one time discernment, judgment, discriminative thought-power and that its sense of mental capacity is derived from this sense of mental division and not by transference of the idea of physical strength to power of mind.

We have therefore the possible senses for dakṣa in the Veda, strength generally, mental power or especially the power of judgment, discernment. Dakṣa is continually associated with kratu; the Rishis aspire to them together, dakṣaya krātve, which may mean simply, “capacity and effective power” or “will and discernment.” Continually we find the word occurring in passages where the whole context relates to mental activities. Finally, we have the goddess Dakṣīna who may well be a female form of Dakṣa, himself a god and afterwards in the Purana one of the Prajapatis, the original progenitors,—we have Dakṣīna associated with the manifestation of knowledge and sometimes almost identified with Usha, the divine Dawn, who is the bringer of illumination. I shall suggest the Dakṣinā like the more famous Ilā, Saraswati and Sārāma, is one of four goddesses representing the four faculties of the Ritam or Truth-consciousness,—Ilā representing truth-vision or revelation, Saraswati truth-audition, inspiration, the divine word, Sārāma intuition, Dakṣinā the separative intuitional discrimination. Dakṣa then will mean this discri-
mination whether as mental judgment on the mind-plane or as intuitional discernment on the plane of the Ritam.

The three Riks with which we are dealing occur as the closing passage of a hymn of which the first three verses are addressed to Vayu alone and the next three to Indra and Vayu. Indra in the psychological interpretation of the hymns represents, as we shall see, Mind-Power. The word for the sense-faculties, indrya, is derived from his name. His special realm is Swar, a word which means sun or luminous, being akin to sūr and sūrya, the sun, and is used to indicate the third of the Vedic vyāhrtis and the third of the Vedic worlds corresponding to the principle of the pure or unobscured Mind. Surya represents the illumination of the Ritam rising upon the mind; Swar is that plane of mental consciousness which directly receives the illumination. Vayu on the other hand is always associated with the Prana or Life-Energy which contributes to the system all the ensemble of those nervous activities that in man are the support of the mental energies governed by Indra. Their combination constitutes the normal mentality of man. These two gods are invited in the hymn to come and partake together of the Soma-wine. This wine of Soma represents, as we have abundant proof in the Veda and especially in the ninth book, a collection of more than a hundred hymns addressed to the deity Soma, the intoxication of the Ananda, the divine delight of being, inflowing upon the mind from the supra-mental consciousness through the Ritam or Truth. If we accept these interpretations, we can easily translate the hymn into its psychological significance.

Indra and Vayu awaken in consciousness (chetathah) to the flowings of the Soma-wine; that is to say, the mind-power and life-power working together in human mentality are to awaken to the inflowings of this Ananda, this Amrita, this delight and immortality from above. They receive them into the full plenitude of the mental and nervous energies, chetathah sutānāṁ vājiniyāsū.¹ The Ananda thus received constitutes a new aśton preparing immortal consciousness in the mortal and Indra and Vayu are bidden to come and swiftly perfect these new workings by the participation of the thought, āyatam upa niśkṛtam māksū dhiyā.² For dhi is the thought power, intellect or understanding. It is intermediate between the normal mentality represented by the combination of Indra and Vayu and the Ritam or truth-consciousness.

It is at this point that Varuna and Mitra intervene and our passage begins. Without the psychological clue the connection between the first part of the hymn and the close is not very clear, nor the relation between the couple Varuna-Mitra and the couple Indra-Vayu. With that clue both connections become

¹ 5.
² 6.
obvious; indeed they depend upon each other. For the earlier part of the hymn has for its subject the preparation first of the vital forces represented by Vayu who is alone invoked in the three opening Riks, then of the mentality represented by the couple Indra-Vayu for the activities of the Truth-consciousness in the human being; the close has for its subject the working of the Truth on the mentality so as to perfect the intellect and to enlarge the action. Varuna and Mitra are two of the four gods who represent this working of the Truth in the human mind and temperament.

In the style of the Veda when there is a transition of this kind from one movement of thought to another developing out of it, the link of connection is often indicated by the repetition in the new movement of an important word which has already occurred in the close of the movement that precedes. This principle of suggestion by echo, as one may term it, pervades the hymns and is a mannerism common to all the Rishis. The connecting word here is dhi, thought or intellect. Dhi differs from the more general word, mati, which means mentality or mental action generally and which indicates sometimes thought, sometimes feeling, sometimes the whole mental state. Dhi is the thought-mind or intellect; as understanding it holds all that comes to it, defines everything and puts it into the right place, or often dhi indicates the activity of the intellect, particular thought or thoughts. It is by the thought that Indra and Vayu have been called upon to perfect the nervous mentality, niskrtam dhiyā. But this instrument, thought, has itself to be perfected, enriched, clarified before the mind can become capable of free communication with the Truth-consciousness. Therefore Varuna and Mitra, Powers of the Truth, are invoked “accomplishing a richly luminous thought”, dhiyam ghṛtācīṁ sādhantā.

This is the first occurrence in the Veda of the word ghṛta, in a modified adjectival form, and it is significant that it should occur as an epithet of the Vedic word for the intellect, dhi. In other passages also we find it continually in connection with the words manas, manīsa or in a context where some activity of thought is indicated. The root ghṛ conveys the idea of a strong brightness or heat such as that of fire or the summer sun. It means also to sprinkle or anoint, Greek, chrīo; it is capable of being used to signify any liquid, but especially a bright, thick liquid. It is the ambiguity of these two possible senses of which the Vedic Rishis took advantage to indicate by the word outwardly the clarified butter in the sacrifice, inwardly a rich and bright state or activity of the brain-power, medhā, as basis and substance of illuminated thought. By dhiyam ghṛtācīṁ is meant, therefore, the intellect full of a rich and bright mental activity.

1 Root dhi means to hold or to place.
Varuna and Mitra who accomplish or perfect this state of the intellect, are distinguished by two several epithets. Mitra is putadakṣa, possessed of a purified judgment; Varuna is riśādasa, he destroys all hurters or enemies. In the Veda there are no merely ornamental epithets. Every word is meant to tell, to add something to the sense and bear a strict relation to the thought of the sentence in which it occurs. There are two obstacles which prevent the intellect from being a perfect and luminous mirror of the truth-consciousness; first, impurity of the discernment or discriminative faculty which leads to confusion of the Truth, secondly, the many causes or influences which interfere with the growth of the Truth by limiting its full application by breaking up the connections and harmony of the thoughts that express it and which thus bring about poverty and falsification of its contents. Just as Gods in the Veda represent universal powers descended from the Truth-consciousness which build up the harmony of the worlds and in man his progressive perfection, so the influences that work against these objects are represented by hostile agencies, Dasyus and Vritras, who seek to break up, to limit, to withhold and deny. Varuna in the Veda is always characterised as a power of wideness and purity; when, therefore, he is present in man as a conscious force of the Truth, all that limits and hurts the nature by introducing into it fault, sin and evil is destroyed by contact with him. He is riśādasa, destroyer of the enemy, of all that seek to injure the growth. Mitra, a power like Varuna of Light and Truth, especially represents Love, Joy and Harmony, the foundations of Mayas, the Vedic beatitude. Working with the purity of Varuna and imparting that purity to the discernment, he enables it to get rid of all discords and confusions and establish the right working of the strong and luminous intellect.

This progress enables the Truth-consciousness, the Ritam, to work in the human mentality. With the Ritam as the agency, rtena, increasing the action of the Truth in man, rtāvrdhā, touching or reaching the Truth, enabling, that is to say, the mental consciousness to come into successful contact with and possession of the Truth-consciousness, rtaspriśā, Mitra and Varuna are able to enjoy the use of a vast effective will-power, kratum bhantam āśāthe. For it is the Will that is the chief effective agent of the inner sacrifice, but a will that is in harmony with the Truth, guided therefore by a purified discernment. The Will as it enters more and more into the wideness of the Truth-consciousness becomes itself wide and vast, free from limitation in its view and hampering impediments in its effectivity. It works urāy anibādéhe, in the wideness where there is no obstacle or wall of limitation.

Thus the two requisites on which the Vedic Rishis always insist are secured, Light and Power, the Light of the Truth working in the knowledge, dhiyam ghr- 

tācit, the Power of the Truth working in the effective and enlightened Will,
kratum bhchantam. As result Varuna and Mitra are shown to us in the closing verse of the hymn working in the full sense of their Truth, kavi tuviyatā urukṣaya. Kavi, we have seen means possessed of the Truth-consciousness and using its faculties of vision, inspiration, intuition, discrimination, Tuviyatā is “multiply born”, for tuvi, meaning originally strength or force, is used like the French word “force” in the sense of many. But by the birth of the gods is meant always in the Veda their manifestation; thus tuviyatā signifies “manifested multiply”, in many forms and activities. Urukṣaya means dwelling in the wideness, an idea which occurs frequently in the hymns; uru is equivalent to brihat, the Vast, and indicates the infinite freedom of the Truth-consciousness. Thus we have as the result of the increasing activities of the Ritam the manifestation in the human being of the Powers of wideness and purity, of joy and harmony, a manifestation rich in forms, seated in the wideness of the Ritam and using the faculties of supramental consciousness.

This manifestation of the Powers of the Truth upholds or confirms the discernment while it does the work, daksam dadhate apasam. The discernment, now purified and supported, works in the sense of the Truth, as a power of the Truth and accomplishes the perfection of the activities of Indra and Vayu by freeing the thought and the will from all defect and confusion in their working and results.

To confirm the interpretation we have put on the terms of this passage we may quote a Rik from the tenth Sukta of the fourth Mandala.

Adhā hyagne krator bhadrasya daksasya sādhoh,
Rathir rtasya bhrato babhūthah.

“Then indeed, O Agni, thou becomest the charioteer of the happy will, the perfecting discernment, the Truth that is the Vast.” We have here the same idea as in the first hymn of the first Mandala, the effective will that is the nature of the Truth-consciousness, kavikratuh, and works out therefore in a state of beatitude the good, bhadram. We have in the phrase daksasya sadhon at once a variant and explanation of the last phrase of the second hymn, daksam apasam, the discernment perfecting and accomplishing the inner work in man. We have the vast truth as consummation of these two activities of power and knowledge, Will and Discernment, kratu and daks. Always the hymns of the Veda confirm each other by this reproduction of the same terms and ideas and the same relation of ideas. This would not be possible unless they were based on a coherent doctrine with a precise significance for standing terms such as kavi, kratu, daks, bhadram, rtam, etc. The internal evidence of the Riks themselves establishes that this significance is psychological, as otherwise the-
terms lose their fixed value, their precise sense, their necessary connection, and their constant recurrence in relation to each other has to be regarded as fortuitous and void of reason or purpose.

We see then that in the second hymn we find again the same governing ideas as in the first. All is based on the central Vedic conception of the supra-mental or Truth-consciousness towards which the progressively perfected mentality of the human being labours as towards a consummation and a goal. In the first hymn this is merely stated as the aim of the sacrifice and the characteristic work of Agni. The second hymn indicates the preliminary work of preparation, by Indra and Vayu, by Mitra and Varuna, of the ordinary mentality of man through the force of the Ananda and the increasing growth of the Truth.

We shall find that the whole of the Rig-Veda is practically a constant variation on this double theme the preparation of the human being in mind and body and the fulfilment of the godhead or immortality in him by his attainment and development of the Truth and the Beatitude.
THE POETRY OF SRI AUROBINDO

(Continued from the previous issue)

SRI AUROBINDO’s latest work is the most unique he has done, but its deepest characteristic is not its new metre. This characteristic is equally patent in his recent poetry within general bounds of traditional technique. To evaluate it effectively we have to speak in terms of planes of consciousness. And it will not suffice just to dub it mystical. No doubt, mystical poetry has a psychology distinct from that of poetry that is secular, but in literature mysticism itself functions on various planes. Whatever its sources, the expression it finds may very well be on the same planes as those of secular inspiration—the planes of imaginative passion and thought. When Donne acts the vehement devotee—

Batter my heart, three-person’d God; for you
As yet but knocke, breathe, shine and seek to mend,

or Crashaw cries de profundis to St. Teresa, echoing her exaltation—

By the full kingdom of that final kiss
That seized thy parting soul and sealed thee His,
By all the heavens thou hast in Him
(Fair sister of the Seraphim!),
By all of Him we have in thee,
Leave nothing of myself in me,

or Gerard Manley Hopkins quiveringly flashlights the life within a religious discipline, “closed by a cassock and dedicate to God”—

I did say yes
O at lightning and lashed rod,
Thou hearest me truer than tongue confess
Thy terror, O Christ, O God;
Thou knowest the walls, altar and hour and night:
The swoon of a heart that the sweep and the hurl of Thee trod
Hard down with a horror of height:
And the midriff astrain with leaning of, laced with fire of stress,
or Eliot subtly symbolises the supreme religious consummation of love in which all intensities come together and are uplifted and opposites get reconciled—

When the tongues of fire are in-folded
Into the crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one,

spiritual realities are clothed in a language and rhythm whose turns and tones might serve equally well the realities of life’s habitual experience. The mental eye is ranging over the Unknown and shaping it to significances and figures and values that are bathed in an element familiar to us. Indeed all poetry has to establish some sort of contact with familiar things, but a world of difference lies between the Unknown being gripped by our customary consciousness and our customary consciousness being gripped by the Unknown. In the latter phenomenon, not only the meaning but the very words and their combined vibrations seem to leap from entranced God-inhabited heights: the Divine and the Eternal find their own speech, large, luminous, fathomless—the meaning becomes visioned and felt as though man were no longer mental merely but poised on a level beyond mind. This type of poetry Sri Aurobindo calls “overhead”, because it comes as if by a wide sweeping descent from an ether of superhuman being, high above our mind’s centre in the brain.

It has not been absent from English literature: Vaughan, Wordsworth, Shelley, Francis Thompson and AE have it perhaps more frequently, but no English poet has proved continually a channel of its peculiar intensity. For that matter it is no more than sporadic in all languages except Sanskrit. And, even in Sanskrit, parts of the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita stand alone as its embodiment en masse. To be holy scripture is not necessarily to be overhead with the revelatory rhythm with which the Indian Rishis often uttered their realisations. As a rule, the world’s bibles ring the note of Donne or Crashaw or Herbert, Hopkins or Eliot or other fine English poets turned mystics. Most of the existing religious and spiritual literature is wanting in the accent which leads up to what the Rishis considered the culminating speech of mysticism, the Mantra—the accent we repeatedly find, for instance, in a poem like Sri Aurobindo’s Descent where in seven Sapphic quatrains built on his own principles of quantity there is conveyed the Yogic process in which the Spirit’s substance comes from remote altitudes into the human mould and of which a part is the overhead inspiration for those who are poetically receptive. Even lines which, taken separately, would not be overhead are caught up beyond themselves by the ensemble and the suffused overhead tone getting dense every now and then forms a climax of spiritual creativity in stanzas four and five—
Swiftly, swiftly crossing the golden spaces
Knowledge leaps, a torrent of rapid lightnings;
Thoughts that left the Ineffable’s flaming mansions
Blaze in my spirit.

Slow the heartbeats’ rhythm like a giant hammer’s;
Missioned voices drive to me from God’s doorway
Words that live not save upon Nature’s summits,
Ecstasy’s chariots.

These eight lines make a most magnificent composite picture, Vedic and Upa­nishadic in its symbols, and the sound-strokes of the words leave reverberations that are mantric: the impulsion of the supreme Spirit is poetised in language and rhythm with an immediate direct play of superhuman immensities at their utmost instead of an indirect one through their adaptation to the mind’s climate.

It is not always easy to distinguish the overhead style or to get perfectly the drift of its suggestion. There must be as much as possible a stilling of ourselves, an in-drawn hush ready to listen to the uncommon speech; and we must help the hush to absorb successfully that speech by repeatedly reading the verse aloud, since it is primarily through the rhythm that the psychological state with which an overhead poem is a-thrill echoes within us, stirring the eye to open wider and wider on spiritual mysteries and the brain to acquire a more and more true reflex of the transcendent that is the truth of things, waiting for manifestation.

The rhythm more than anything else is also what makes a gradation in overhead poetry. In Sri Aurobindo’s work of this species it is difficult to de­marcate the stages, for a general breath of the Mantra seems to blow almost everywhere; but we may attempt a rough classification. According to him, above the mind-level four stages of mystical experience can be distinguished, which have found occasional embodiment, either distinct or interpenetrated, in human languages: a rare fifth, called by him Supermind and considered the ultimate goal of the Yoga taught by him, still awaits its hour of manifesta­tion. Immediately higher than the reflective intelligence is a plane of thought, termed Higher Mind, which is not concepitive from outside its object but is projected from a Spirit-stuff which secretly pervades everything. Rising from that pervasion it comes charged with a broad and strong clarity of conception from the inside, resembling certain lofty outbursts of the ideative mind proper but differing by a vibration-frequency, so to speak, no less than by a directness of spiritual sense. When Sri Aurobindo writes—
My consciousness climbed like a topless hill,
or
I have drunk the Infinite like a giant’s wine,
or
My thoughts shall be hounds of light for Thy power to loose,

we may say he captures the accent of the first level. To appreciate the capture we may listen to a fine à peu près in Valéry's symbolisation of the pure intellect, contemplative, aloof, absolute to itself:

Midi là-haut, Midi sans mouvement...
Tête complète et parfait diadème.
(Midday on high, Midday all motionless...
Head without flaw and perfect diadem.)

In the next grade, designated as Illumined Mind, there is a keenness of lustre accompanying the amplitude, revealing not only the shape of the Spirit under all guises but also its colour and texture, its tense or tingling subtleties. A typical example in Sri Aurobindo of this level seems:

Calm faces of the Gods on backgrounds vast,
or
My soul unhorizoned widens to measureless sight,
or
Black fire and gold fire strove towards one bliss.

The typicality may be seen better by comparing the examples with a brilliant approximation to their level in Yeats's

O martyrs standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall.

The stage after this is named Intuition, a specific power which must not be confused with its own inferior forms in the swift graspings or discriminations possible to our intelligence at times. It brings a sharp and packed intimacy, a seeing as if with eyes closed in absorbed “empathy”, a deep listening as if to the world’s heart through one's own. Lustrousness is not the usual attribute of such utterance, a straightforward speech is sufficient though touches of fire may come here and there in the intense self-revealing breadths. As instances from Sri Aurobindo, take
MOTHER INDIA

A Calm that cradles Fate upon its knees,
or
Crossing power-swept silences rapture-stunned,
or
I am alone with my own self for space.

The full Intuition may strike out at us clearer if set beside an admirable near-hit in Rilke's

Durch alle Wesen reicht der eine Raum:
Weltinnenraum.
(A single space spreads through all things that are,
World's inner space.)

Beyond spiritual speech of the intuitional order we have the word of Overmind, the plane which in Sri Aurobindo's system of Yogic philosophy is the immediate delegate of the hitherto unmanifested Supermind, that utter Divinity which holds the key to man's integral perfection, even the perfection of his physical being. The Overmind word is the Mantra. Here any of the characteristics of the preceding levels may be transfigured by a rhythm that is sui generis or else new characteristics may emerge that defy analysis. The rhythm is as of the supreme Spirit realised by more than profound intimacy—realised by veritable identity. In the following quatrain, cast in quantitative trimeters and chanting forth the integral ideal which Sri Aurobindo's Yoga is bent upon in his Ashram at Pondicherry, we have in the first line an extremely moved soaring of overhead "empathy", in the second a most vivid uplifting of overhead sight, in the third a superb sublimation of overhead thought and in the fourth a mingling of all the three overhead modes below Overmind and their being rapt away beyond themselves to some indefinable nth degree:

Arms taking to a voiceless supreme delight,
Life that meets the Eternal with close breast,
An unwalled mind dissolved in the Infinite,
Force one with unimaginable rest.

The quatrain is Mantra by an expansion of the meaning to a sovereign massive-ness of immeasurable suggestion, an endlessness of undertone and overtone as though each line which appears to terminate went really sounding on from

1 Adapted from C. M. Bowra's translation.
everlasting to everlasting because what it embodies is—with some sort of absoluteness proper to Supermind’s immediate delegate—the Divine and the Deathless, the Light that has neither flaw nor bound.

These four lines are a good illustration too of the fact that the overhead speech is not concerned only with superhuman magnitudes but is capable of conveying an intense emotion: the throb of the human is never cast away by Sri Aurobindo, he gathers up again and again the cry of things that perish and breathes into it the truth of all our travail, which is the Divine’s desire that He should be embodied in our earthly members and not merely that we should ascend to His summits. When Sri Aurobindo invokes, in Musa Spiritus, the “Word concealed in the upper fire”, he calls on it to leap into “the gulfs of our nature”:

In the uncertain glow of human mind,
   In its waste of unharmonied thronging thoughts,
Carve thy epic mountain-lined
   Crowded with deep prophetic grots.

And in his most incantatory poem, Rose of God, an experiment in pure stress metre, where a symbol famous in mystical verse and steeped in exquisite associations by Yeats in our own day—

...Your image that blossoms a rose in the deeps of my heart...
   Red Rose, proud Rose, sad Rose of all my days...
Surely thine hour has come, thy great wind blows,
   Far-off, most secret, and inviolate Rose—

is suffused with the sight and sound of the overhead and even the Mantric, every stanza connects by a half esoteric half intimate imagery Supernature’s heights and Nature’s depths:

Rose of God, vermilion stain on the sapphires of heaven,
   Rose of Bliss, fire-sweet, seven-tinged with the ecstasies seven!
Leap up in our heart of humanhood, O miracle, O flame,
   Passion-flower of the Nameless, bud of the mystical Name.

Rose of God, great wisdom-bloom on the summits of being,
   Rose of Light, immaculate core of the ultimate seeing!
Live in the mind of our earthhood: O golden Mystery, flower,
   Sun on the head of the Timeless, guest of the marvellous Hour.
MOTHER INDIA

Rose of God, damask force of Infinity, red icon of might,
Rose of Power with thy diamond halo piercing the night!
Ablaze in the will of the mortal, design the wonder of thy plan,

Rose of God, smitten purple with the incarnate divine Desire,
Rose of Life, crowded with petals, colour’s lyre!
Transform the body of the mortal like a sweet and magical rhyme;
Bridge our earthhood and heavenhood, make deathless the children of Time.

Rose of God, like a blush of rapture on Eternity’s face,
Rose of Love, ruby depth of all being, fire-passion of Grace!
Arise from the heart of the yearning that sobs in Nature’s abyss:
Make earth the home of the Wonderful and life Beatitude’s kiss.

Yes, Sri Aurobindo never contemns earth, since he deems it the ordained scene of an evolution in which its own terms will not just be transcended but purified and fulfilled, discovering a solution rather than a dissolution for—in those piercing words of Bloc—

All this life’s pitiable trembling,
All this uncomprehended fire. ¹

Within the imperfect parts of our terrestrial existence Sri Aurobindo sees a spark of the Divine—the psychic being, as he terms it—which is all perfection in embryo and which acts at present indirectly through a general influence on mind, life-force and body but has to be brought forward into their midst and made to grow an open link between the Divine and the human and a focal starting-point for the latter’s ultimate irradiation by the former. This secret psyche is a most poignant intensity and its pure emotion such as enters strongly into several lines of Rose of God infuses often into Sri Aurobindo’s overhead grandeurs, either openly or from the background, its strange sweetness or its wistfulness that is yet never weak or escapist. When it comes to the fore, effects of a ravishing magic are produced, as in its mixing with the Illumined Mind in the second verse of that couplet from the rhymed hexameters of Ahana—

Open the barriers of Time, the world with thy beauty enamour.
Trailing behind thee the purple of thy soul and the dawn-moment’s glamour..., ¹

¹ Translated by C. M. Bowrás.
or with the Intuition in the first verse of another couplet from the same poem—

Ever we hear in the heart of the peril a flute go before us,
Luminous beckoning hands in the distance invite and implore us.

What is perhaps Sri Aurobindo’s most moving mystical poem, *A God’s Labour*, has throughout its thirty-one stanzas the stamp of the psyche all over its sublime overhead vision, cast into a directly personal mould, of the mission of one who would build a bridge “marrying the soil to the sky”:

He who would bring the heavens here
   Must descend himself into clay
And the burden of earthly nature bear
   And tread the dolorous way...

I have been digging deep and long
   Mid a horror of filth and mire
A bed for the golden river’s song,
   A home for the deathless fire...

I saw that a falsehood was planted deep
   At the very root of things
Where the grey Sphinx guards God’s riddle sleep
   On the Dragon’s outspread wings...

I have delved through the dumb Earth’s dreadful heart
   And heard her black mass’ bell.
I have seen the source whence her agonies part
   And the inner reason of hell...

He who I am was with me still;
   All veils are breaking now.
I have heard His voice and borne His will
   On my vast untroubled brow...

A little more and the new life’s doors
   Shall be carved in silver light
With its aureate roof and mosaic floors
   In a great world bare and bright...

Something of this tone also streams now and again into the sequence of more than fifty sonnets in which Sri Aurobindo has voiced a few of his spiritual
realisations in a language either exquisitely simple or passionately rich but always with a straightforwardness in keeping with the autobiographical motif which here more than in most other self-revealing poems of his is felt by the reader. A feature often to be noted in these sonnets is the extremely close approximation the overhead speech makes to the language we have defined to be of the customary consciousness gripping the Unknown as differentiated from that of the Unknown gripping the customary consciousness. Now we have to recognise a third category which seems to be this consciousness’s speech not merely touched by the overhead, as happens at times in Sri Aurobindo’s earlier philosophic or other verse, but unified with it and yet not so much assimilated into the specific tones of Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition or Overmind as itself assimilating them. Its own mode remains, but within the possibilities of that mode the overhead is fully exploited instead of new possibilities being created by the overhead’s transfiguration of it. It frequently-passes over into sheer Spiritual Light, yet again and again a note is heard which can be distinguished both from the overhead which we have already illustrated and from the several shades of the customary—for instance, the forceful reflective in a mystical mood as in that close to a sonnet of 1899 on the poet’s grandfather whose “strong and sentient spirit” he conceives as having been drawn back at death into the “omnipresent Thought” of which it was “a part and earthly hour”:

...Into that splendour caught
   Thou hast not lost thy special brightness. Power
   Remains with thee and the old genial force
   Unseen for blinding light, not darkly lurks:
   As when a sacred river in its course
   Dives into ocean, there its strength abides
   Not less because with vastness wed and works
   Unnoticed in the grandeur of the tides.

A fine example of the note in question, at play amidst the pure overhead accent, is the sonnet The Godhead which faithfully records a very early experience when Sri Aurobindo was in danger of a carriage accident in Baroda in the first year of his stay there, a vision of the Godhead surging up from within him and mastering and controlling with its gaze all events and surroundings:

   I sat behind the dance of Danger’s hooves
   In the shouting street that seemed a futurist’s whim,
And suddenly felt, exceeding Nature’s grooves,
   In me, enveloping me the body of Him.
Above my head a mighty head was seen,
   A face with the calm of immortality
And an omnipotent gaze that held the scene
   In the vast circle of its sovereignty.
His hair was mingled with the sun and breeze;
   The world was in His heart and He was I:
I housed in me the Everlasting’s peace,
   The strength of One whose substance cannot die.
The moment passed and all was as before;
Only that deathless memory I bore.

Another striking example is *The Pilgrim of the Night* which links up in experience with *A God’s Labour*. In passing to it, we may note two complementary aspects of Sri Aurobindo's God-realisation: one is in the line from the sonnet already cited,

   The world was in His heart and He was I—

the other is in that cryptic startling phrase in *A God’s Labour*,

   He who I am was with me still.

Both the aspects are hinted in *The Pilgrim of the Night* where “He who I am” remains, though the transcendent and universal Divinity has had to be left in the background when Sri Aurobindo addressed himself to the work of not merely attaining what he has called Supermind but also of diving into what he has termed the Inconsciente, the nether pole to the Absolute’s upper pole of total Light, the utter darkness of stonelike insensibility which marks the Divine’s complete apparent self-loss for the sake of a novel laborious and dangerous self-discovery, the brute blindness in which everything lies “involved” and from which power after power is evolved under the pressure of and invasion by the higher planes where the same powers stand freely expressed:

I made an assignation with the Night;
   In the abyss was fixed our rendezvous:
MOTHER INDIA

In my breast carrying God’s deathless light
I came her dark and dangerous heart to woo.
I left the glory of the illumined Mind
And the calm rapture of the divinised soul
And travelled through a vastness dim and blind
To the grey shore where her ignorant waters roll.
I walk by the chill wave through the dull slime
And still that weary journeying knows no end;
Lost is the lustrous godhead beyond Time,
There comes no voice of the celestial Friend,
And yet I know my footprints’ track shall be
A pathway towards Immortality.

In many respects, these fifty sonnets or so are the best brief approach for us to Savitri, the gigantic epic which Sri Aurobindo subtitled “a Legend and a Symbol” and which may in addition be described as “a Philosophy” and in which all the varieties of spiritual speech we have tried to disentangle attain their royal manifestation. For here we have not only the element of spiritual autobiography that is found worked in a non-personal narrative shape into that poem in detailed abundant vividness. We have also the element of spiritual philosophy found there in the form of general ideas set shining through the Yogi’s silent mind by what arrives from overhead—a thought-structure expressing a mystical vision and contact and knowledge which have come by processes of consciousness other than intellectual. Again, the sustained pentameter anticipates the five-foot mould of Savitri and the sparse enjambment renders the anticipation more a fore-glimpse. Of course, Savitri is blank verse, but when the Shakesperean rather than the Miltonic sonnet-scheme is here followed—and it is followed frequently—the last two lines of a quatrain seem to create with the first two of its successor an effect somewhat as of a snatch of concealed blank verse: for instance,

Failure is cradled on Thy deathless arm,
Victory is Thy passage mirrored in Fortune’s glass.
In the rude combat with the fate of man
Thy smile within my heart is all my strength.

Also, there is a fair amount of significant modulation—spondaic, anapaestic, dactylic, trochaic or pyrrhic—on the iambic base to recall to a degree the blank-verse technique:
I walk by the chill wave through the dull slime...

Victory is Thy passage mirrored in Fortune's glass...

And bright suddenness of wings in a golden air...

Man on whom the World-Unity shall seize...

No doubt, the lyric tone is much in evidence in the Sonnets, but in Savitri too it is not absent. Besides, the architectural sequence and progression proper to the sonnet-form, with the finality as of a semi-logical demonstration at the end in a swift couplet or in a deliberate resolving movement of three lines, tend by themselves to introduce something of the graver, more strongly cut and more marshalled power of epic construction, even when the poised element of spiritual philosophy and the dynamic element of spiritual autobiography are not together directly in front to contribute an epic tone affined to that of Savitri.¹

K. D. Sethna

¹ Introductory remarks on Savitri, which would complete the present survey, appeared in the review-article published in Mother India of August 15, 1954.
GOLDEN HAVE TURNED MY NIGHTS

Golden have turned my nights,
Sapphire-white all my days;
The God-diamond lights
My stunted moods amaze.

From my body’s gloom-stone
Thou hast awaked a fire
Rising to Thy sun unknown—
Incarnate peak-desire.

Thou hast filled my dense earth-cup
With burning dew from Thy rose
Which consumes my earthliness up
In its aureate force.

My spirit now sleeps in Thy breast,
My soul is immune in Thee,
And vast with timeless rest
My life’s mortality.

Thou hast brought the heavens here
Infinite in time-mould,
Made temple the moment’s bier,
The gloom-grey one ravishing Gold.

Golden has turned my clod,
Golden with Thy God-sun-rays—
O lean to my clay untrod,
Unveil Thy apocalypse-face!

ROMEN
CORRESPONDENCE WITH SRI AUROBINDO

MEDICAL SECTION: III

THE DOCTOR AS PATIENT : TWO PERSONALITIES

MYSELF: You have said to X that my natural bent is pessimistic. But why then is there such an ambition, such an aspiration to be pure and perfect in life as well as in literature, in my role as doctor no less than in other roles? Psychologically the doctor himself is rather a patient!

SRI AUROBINDO: It is two different portions of your being. One wants to climb mountains, the other which stands at the foot or is climbing or rather being hauled up the first steps of the ascent, pulls back, groans, grunts, growls, wails and cries “That? all that height? Tchah! pooh! I’ll never be able to negotiate one ten thousandth part of that! Let me sit down and lament”.

21-4-1936.

MYSELF: I am doctoring on others, but there is nobody to doctor on me. The eternal conflict is going on between something that wants to work and work and something else that likes to be inert. Any prescription from the supreme Doctor? What is his diagnosis?

SRI AUROBINDO: Two different personalities standing in the way of each other. No remedy except “harmonisation” and that is usually done by the working of a higher Force which compels the two beggars not to interfere with each other. The business of the patient is to take plenty of doses of the Force. The usual formula (prescription, whatever you like to call it) is “proceed with as much zeal as if all had to be done in a fraction of a lifetime and as much patience as if you had all eternity before you” Your two parts ought to arrange that between them—one seems to plump for the first course, the other for the all-eternity. A splendid chance for harmonisation.

2-3-1935.
MYSELF: On what does the success of a doctor depend, so far as he himself is concerned?

SRI AURbindo: Immense energy, enthusiasm; vital force, 100 miles an hour determination to succeed and a 2000 horse power confidence, “I will do it”, vital absolutely convinced of the force, and constantly finding reasons for belief in it (not as you and others do equally or more, admitting reasons against); rapid intuitions getting there in spite of many errors of speculation, decision of mind and will accompanied by a mobile and plastic observing mind adapting itself to the circumstances and then overcoming them—that’s the secret of a powerful instrumentalism at least in a rajasic man. A sattwic fellow would do it also but on other lines. You—ahem!

MYSELF: It seems to me that intuition is not enough, one must know one’s business too.

SRI AURbindo: Naturally one must know the business. But there is an enormous difference between a man who knows his business and has confidence and intuition and one who knows his business and has not. I have known doctors with an excellent knowledge of medicine who succeeded much less than others who had far less but had dash, decision and drive.

Even if you had knowledge and experience, you would still hesitate: there would be always an “after all, is it this or that”, “I may be off the track” “Is it this, is it that?” etc.

The self-confident doctor decides as best he can and acts—if he finds he is making fausse route he retraces his steps and corrects. He develops in himself the coup d’oeil which does not depend only on reasoning and finally manages to be right in the majority of cases. You may say that he may kill his patients when he is wrong. But so does the hesitant doctor by his hesitation e.g. by not taking a step which is urgently required.

All this is of course general. I am not asking you to imitate the quick step people—because without their confidence and savoir faire you would only bungle it. 

MYSELF: I hoped that the Force would drop in one day and dynamise the being. That illusion has gone. Now I find that I shall have to work for it, till one day, one year, one decade my labour culminates in what I hope for.

---

1 Swadharma nidhanam shrya paraadharma bhayavahaḥ: “Death in one’s own law of being is better, perilous is it to follow an alien law” (The Gita).
SRI AUROBINDO: One century, one millennium—be complete, please, in your enumeration.

That is just it. It is the "slowly slowly" mind and "let us consider all the facts and reason the whole thing and its possibilities and impossibilities" mind that stands in your way.

MYSELF: You have said, "A sattwic fellow would do it also, but on other lines." Will you tell us how?

SRI AUROBINDO: I would prefer to wait till I have the said sattwic man in my hand. The sattwic man would have less vital rush, more balance, harmony, even working out of the Force. He might do less surprising things or rather give them a less surprising appearance, but possibly he would be more quietly sure.

NIRODBARAN
LOVE HUMAN AND DIVINE

Human love is a wicker lamp,
A tiny flame that flickers in the heart’s niche.
You feed it with your own blood for oil
And do all you can to shelter it for a while
From storms within and without.
Divine love is the naked majesty of midnight stars,
An infinite and luminous downpour
That fills all your being,
Even the living cells of the body.

Human love is a little laughter heard amid tears,
The brief dream-sleep of an insomniac.
It wells out of the body
And loses itself in earth.
Divine love woos you with its myriad waves of delight
And upholds your sail on its ocean of being.
It is the charter of uncharted seas.

Human love is the fire of the body
That creates man in the image of man.
It is the sallying out from self to self.
Divine love is the light of heaven
That recreates man in the image of God.
It is the descent of the Godhead in man
And the rallying of his self to the Divine.

Open yourself, my friend,
And awaken your soul to the Divine!
Let your earthly sojourn
Prepare you for the divine pilgrimage.
Let human love,
Which is but a track in the forest of being,
Lead you to divine love
And make you a willing worker
For the paradise of Tomorrow
In the forest of Today.

V. K. GOKAK
SADHANA WITH THE MOTHER

ASCENT OF THE HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS

SELF: I had just closed the eyes. A small bird in swiftest flight came down suddenly and knocked on my forehead just above the inner mind centre. Afterwards I could not make out if it went in or not.

SRI AUROBINDO: It must have gone in. I suppose the bird indicates a power of ascension. (7-9-1934)

SELF: During a deep meditation, sometimes I feel a “sweet and star-cool-intense” Force just above my head. At the same time I see my vital rising there from the navel centre and drawing that Force down.

SRI AUROBINDO: Such an ascent and drawing down from above is often the preliminary to the spontaneous descent of that which is above. (3-1-1935)

SELF: It appears however that to bring down Force some sort of effort is necessary. Should it be allowed?

SRI AUROBINDO: There is no harm at all in allowing it.

SELF: My human consciousness is now able to rise to the higher plane when it likes; and thus remain aloof from and above all that is below.

SRI AUROBINDO: That is good. The power of rising above at will is of great value. (7-1-1935)

SELF: Formerly, my blankness was dependent on the shifting of myself to the consciousness of the Self. But now without doing it I find quietness in the region of the lower mentality. Such a great change could not have come about without the Mother’s having accomplished in me something positive during the last evening meditation.

SRI AUROBINDO: It is evident that something fundamental has been realised.

SELF: How is it that the vital does not come up to the mark? I thought that when our vital opens to the Mother, the opening brings into it heroism, enthusiasm, intensity, the total and passionate self-giving of all the nature, and
it will no longer remain as a mere witness to the workings of the exterior nature.

SRI AUROBINDO: The higher vital can be like that but only when the true vital manifests itself—always calm, strong, ready for any action of the higher Force. (5-1-1935)

SELF: That means, I should think, that the true vital still remains unmanifest for me. I fail to understand what prevents it from coming out.

SRI AUROBINDO: The things that you are realising more and more fundamentally are liberation, purification, peace and silence, self etc. the static side of the higher consciousness. The dynamic things are only beginning or preparing—the manifestation of the true vital is part of this dynamic realisation. There is no hurry—all will come in its time. (7-1-1935)

SELF: Today's experience was quite different from everything before. A spontaneous and luminous soaring from the higher to yet higher planes with joy and love.

SRI AUROBINDO: That is good. It means the way open to higher and higher planes of consciousness. (10-1-1935)

CONTACT OF THE HIGHER WITH THE LOWER FORCES

SELF: First I experienced as if my head was ten times heavier than it is. Then a movement started. Something huge began to come down slowly into my head filling each cell and pore with its light. Meeting a slight obstruction at the throat it reached the chest. From here started immediately an ascent which rose up to the seventh centre.

SRI AUROBINDO: It is the descent and responding ascent in the higher part of the being. (11-1-1935)

SELF: Most of my ordinary human consciousness was taken up and a strong working of the higher began there. What sort of process is here?

SRI AUROBINDO: Usually when these things happen, it is something that rises up and has to be worked on for its change. After it has risen up the working for change comes.

SELF: There have been continued surges of inertia for the last few days. I will not be depressed about it provided I am assured that it is not due to anything wrong done by me.
'SRI AUROBINDO: Yes. What is happening is simply due to the working out of the forces in the nature. (23-1-1935)

SELF: What is meant by “working out of the forces in the nature”?  
SRI AUROBINDO: There are higher forces and the lower—the latter have to be worked out by contact with the higher and in the working out sometimes they rise, sometimes disappear till they are done with. It is not necessarily due to some mistake or fault that they rise. (24-1-1935)

SELF: Is it not rather your kindness that ignores the fault or mistake committed by me?  
SRI AUROBINDO: I have seen many such cases, it is not my kindness that speaks but my knowledge. (25-1-1935)

SELF: Cannot vigilence and consciousness prevent these forces from rising up and be worked out in their own field? I thought X’s case was an example.  
SRI AUROBINDO: I am not aware of any case in which the lower forces did not rise up. If such a case occurred I fancy it would be the first in human history. (25-1-1935)

SELF: From the general I come down to the individual question. My faith says that it is possible to allow the Mother’s Force to keep those forces always below till either they accept the change or fly away for good.  
SRI AUROBINDO: It is possible—when one has learned how to do it. But till then they rise.

SELF: I do feel that it is due to our carelessness that the lower forces come up. For I have seen that so long as the Mother was on my lips (i.e. concentration on her name) nothing stirred up in or around me.  
SRI AUROBINDO: And what does the carelessness come from? It is because the habit of the lower nature makes you forget. That is an action of the lower force. It is only by the higher force meeting the lower forces and their pressure on it (this is the contact) that the habit of forgetfulness disappears. (25-1-1935)

SELF: This morning my inner being seemed to have been taken above the head. There it found itself in a plane filled only with Force. Even its
vibrations were so full of intensity and power. The plane appeared to be surrounded by a burning Fire.

SRI AUROBINDO: It is the higher Force above which is always there waiting its time of descent. As one feels the silence and wideness of the Self there, so one feels the presence of a great Force—the higher or Divine Force.

(SELF) I wonder what I should understand by your prolonged silence about the present extreme inertia. There seems little likelihood of its diminishing. I thought it was no less than a serious matter.

SRI AUROBINDO: Of course it is, but what do you want me to say that is new? You have to reject it, keep the inner quietude and bring down the power into the quietude.

(SELF) Is it possible that this inertia may be more a sattwic than a tamasic one?

SRI AUROBINDO: It can't be sattwic if it brings lower vital movements as you say later on that it was trying to do.

(SELF) It is noticed that whenever the higher Force prepares to descend the lower forces do not fail to come out in revolt against it.

SRI AUROBINDO: That is always the case. The lower forces always do that just when the thing is going to be done—or, if it is done, they try immediately to undo it.

(SELF) Can we not stop them before they have covered up my condition totally?

SRI AUROBINDO: It can be done, but that needs a quick and constant vigilance; it is very often when one thinks a particular resistance is finished and is no longer in the vital that it surges up again.
NEW ROADS

Book III

(Continued)

THE MIGHTY MOTHER OF THE WORLDS

O Silent Sun-Dreams, Sleep in the Lap of the Hours
Safe in Her Bosom of Eternity.

These sun-bright images of ancient days—
Do they arise to mock the dark around?
Are they the ghosts that seek a mortal wine.
And steal imagination for a world
Of sense, and fill the mind with doubting dreams?
Or does some new vibration stir the soul
To memories that quicken life anew,
Recall some Golden Age Time has forgot?
A blaze of Light and Song rose in his heart
And there man stood on Intuition’s Height
And looked into the changing face of Time
And saw laid bare his possibilities,
That held no hint of loss or tragic end.
Along this march through corridors of Night
It seemed that Evil had no space to move,
There held in bond by some tremendous Trance
Culled from Our Mother’s mighty consciousness.
But though life felt this calm new-sanctioned Peace
There still remained a strange expectancy,
A vague suspicion of a troubling truth
That lingered in the memory of the soul.
The pyrotechnics of our yogic birth
Were left in vital regions gone before;
One only longed for some new hoped-for day
Yet only darkness dawnd from skies of sleep.
No vision hovered on the hem of night
No moon or star looked o'er the horizon's verge
And all eternity slept in this human hour.
Time was no longer measured by a thought
Nor was thought only the pabulum of mind;
Mind was no longer bound to earth alone,
Left groping for an unobtainable Light.
Behind each act a new Significance
Built up the Hope of what was yet to be,
Behind each word a secret beauty shone
To snare the heart for higher worlds above.
Man found delight in details once he scorned;
New peaks of wonder in immediate things
Began to rise from mystic fields within
Which stirred new-found dimensions in the world.
Man found at last he need not be alone;
His every thought and act was not his own
But part of forces cosmic and remote.
And yet they move in him—and are a part
Of this vast structure, man and universe.
New worlds of Light were waiting to be born
Here in a few—these chosen ones of earth—
This was 'The Moment' of high destiny;
The Night of vigil lived from hour to hour
When every act and thought was a demand
From God and Nature to transcend itself.
One had to choose to rise, or sink again
Into the dim lethargic sleep of earth,
Into this age of important Nothingness
Which men call life—but which is living death.
With every breath the choice had to be made,
With every heart beat rose a brighter star
Which gave to possibility its dawn.
Old forms had to be left without the pangs
Of losing, or the sentiments of regret.
Ideas—that never could have been our own—
Were now eschewed and seen with other eyes;
And our own preconceived ideas were found
To be not all that we had hoped or dreamed.
And every movement steered by human hands
NEW ROADS

Was seen as nought else but the ego's face.

So on through the vigilant Night we laboured and toiled
To clear the soil around and make a field
Where Light could enter in, and we could see
What in our nature had to be destroyed,
What roots of ignorance there yet remained,
What depths of evil held indigent life.
All was a journey planned, the Roads led on
Through forest and valley, jungle and swamp and mire.
We only must have the courage and the faith
To follow Her who is the Battle's head,
She who bestrides the Lion of the worlds
And wields the Trident of the Powers of Truth.
She leads and She alone knows now the route;
She fights, and She alone knows to what end;
She conquers, She alone is Victory.
She is the Mighty Mother of the worlds
To whom all souls will come at last to know.
To know Her is to vision the Unveiled:
Broad vistas bright beyond the dawns of death,
Beyond mind's habit of mortality,
Beyond the settled creeds of a finite world.
She is the ancient Power beyond the Suns,
All strength and Wisdom is Her native Right,
All tenderness and Joy Her goddess gleam.
She only can foresee the Purpose clear,
She has proclaimed that Victory is sure.
Here man walked on the difficult roads to God
Through aisles of darkness flecked with sudden gleam,
With mystic wonders of a forgotten age.
Vast epics of an ancient past were there
That held the key to future dawns to come;
And man began to open to life's song
And hear the hidden symphonies within;
The huge polyphony of rhythmic sounds
That echoed through the courtyards of his soul
And sent their ringing tones through all his blood
Bewildered the mind—until the impetuous flow
Slowed to the heart-beats of mortality.
The cry of an unknown ecstasy was heard
In blood and body, flesh and vibrant nerve;
Yet over all, and welling from the depths
A mighty Calm pervaded life that sang.
Slowly the world began to know itself.
Slowly the Power, insistent on Its aim,
Begun to house new channels of delight.
In beings grown to natural purity
It filled the heart with psychic flame and fire
And lifted high the Rose of consciousness
And laid it on His virgin Altar, bright.
And those who lived sincerely for the Truth
Became the law and truth of their own being,
Emperors and kings of their mortality.
And those who yearned to be God-men within
Became the servants of an inner Light,
And Reason hampered not their God-spent days.
The Power they became, It lived in them.
All speculations on its form were vain,
All mental probings for its essence failed;
Man only felt the Presence or the Force
Invade the higher peaks of consciousness.
There meanwhile could abide and manifest
A golden gleam of Supramental Bliss.
In some a calm serenity was born
Which sensed the new dimension in the world;
Life grew to be a Paraclete of Love
Behind a veil of unknown mysteries.
An Advocate of Truth upheld the heart
Which yearned to manifest the blossoming soul.
An Arbiter of action took His seat
Above the human range of consciousness,
From there directed, like a Charioteer,
The Epic March across the Roads of Night.

NORMAN DOWSETT

(To be Continued)
MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO

THE INNER BEING

SELF: What is the outer consciousness? Is it connected with the inner being?

SRI AUROBINDO: The outer consciousness is that which usually expresses itself in ordinary life. It is the external mental, vital, physical. It is not connected very much with the inner being except in a few—until one connects them together in the course of the sadhana. (26-5-1933)

SELF: Is it not true that our vital lays bare all our hidden desires and impulses?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is not the vital that does that. It is either the psychic or something from the inner mind or the higher consciousness. (21-6-1933)

SELF: I had done some offering, but something was kept back. Someone from within me was constantly beating me for keeping that back. So there was depression.

SRI AUROBINDO: What was important in either case was not the outward action but the movement behind it. The exterior action is important only because of the inner state or motive it expresses. Your inner being was calling your attention to a defect in the inner movement—to the attachments that were there.

SELF: You once said, “Because you did it (action) from the outer mind and vital instead of from within.” How am I to receive the necessary guidance from within?

SRI AUROBINDO: You have to be conscious of your inner being. (1-8-1933)

SELF: I would very much like to bring out my inner being and live in it.
SRI AUROBINDO: If you call down the higher consciousness, its descent of itself will show you your inner being as separate from the outer. Until then you can only go on observing yourself and the movements of your nature till you see the difference. (2-8-1933)

SELF: What has the inner being got to do with the yogic or spiritual life?
SRI AUROBINDO: It is the outer being that has nothing to do with the Yoga or spiritual life unless the inner awakens it. (3-8-1933)

SELF: Does the inner being lie hidden? Will it never express itself through the outer before the outer is transformed?
SRI AUROBINDO: If the inner being does not manifest or act, the outer will never get transformed. (4-8-1933)

SELF: How does the outer and the inner being become one?
SRI AUROBINDO: By your becoming conscious in the inner being and living in it, the outer is then only an instrument and as soon as this instrument is filled with what is in the inner consciousness it becomes a mere prolongation of the inner. (5-8-1933)

SELF: When in the state of passivity should I go on observing the movements?
SRI AUROBINDO: You can go on observing and at the same time call for the inner will to guide. (5-9-1933)

SELF: What is this part which feels like opening to the Mother through writing, even when it is the same thing that goes on being repeated?
SRI AUROBINDO: It may be the inner mental, it may be the psychic. (28-11-1933)

SELF: Does the inner being open to the Mother by itself?
SRI AUROBINDO: The inner being does not open except by sadhana, or by some psychic touch in the life. (30-11-1933)

SELF: What goes on so long as it is shut up?
SRI AUROBINDO: It is the outer being that acts with as much of the inner influence as can filter through the closed centres. (2-12-1933)

SELF: When the inner being is shut up, isn’t there a psychic sadness and, as a result, depression?
SRI AUROBINDO: The psychic sadness is of a purifying and not a depressing kind.  

(10-8-1933)

PURUSHA AND PRAKRITI

SELF: It is said that the mental control has to be replaced by a divine control. Between these two there is a period of transition when there is no control at all. How is one then to deal with the activities of life?

SRI AUROBINDO: You have to call down the higher control in such a case. But the withdrawal of mental control need not be sudden and complete—it can be replaced as it goes by the action of the Purusha—his consent or refusal.

(27-8-1933)

SELF: What is this “Purusha”?

SRI AUROBINDO: You ought to read about these things.¹ I can’t tell you in one sentence what the Purusha is.

(28-8-1933)

SELF: Can a beginner get a distinct answer from the Purusha?

SRI AUROBINDO: The Purusha does not talk. It is a movement of consciousness—a movement of consent or refusal.

SELF: Has not each of our beings—mental, vital and physical—its own Purusha, which observes all the movements without identifying itself with them and is quite indifferent and impersonal?

SRI AUROBINDO: By itself the Purusha is impersonal, but by mixing itself with the movements of Prakriti it makes for itself a surface of ego and personality. When it appears in its own separate nature then it is seen to be detached and observing.

(29-8-1933)

SELF: Is the Purusha above us?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is behind, not above—you have to be aware of it.

Self: When I asked you about the part in me which had begun to observe the movements and to warn me sometimes, whether it was the Purusha or not, you replied, “Yes”, Could I then conclude that my Purusha is coming out from its identification with the Prakriti?

SRI AUROBINDO: It has begun to separate itself.  

(5-9-1933)

¹ I should inform my readers that for a long time I had no leisure to read anything about the Purusha. And when I did get it the Master had already written to me so much about it—during this and the following years—that I saw no urgency to frighten my little boyish mind with the two volumes of Essays on the Gita. (NAGIN DOSHI)
SELF: You said, “Everything which belongs to Prakriti can be rejected by the Purusha.” But when the Purusha itself has become one with the Prakriti, what is one to do?

SRI AUROBINDO: There is no need of rejection when the Purusha is one with the Prakriti—but that happens only on a higher plane. Here the Purusha is not one, it is only subjected to Prakriti as long as it remains inert. (22-10-1933)

SELF: Today the leaning towards the ordinary nature seems to be reducing to a great extent. Is it a sign of my Purusha separating itself from the Prakriti?

SRI AUROBINDO: If it does one knows it. When it separates there is an imperturbable calm inside and a feeling of all the movements as not being oneself or one’s own. (14-11-1933)

SELF: How fine would it be if we remembered that everything in us comes from Nature! There will be little difficulty then in pushing out the undesirable things.

SRI AUROBINDO: It does not follow. It depends on whether the Purusha part in you is passive or active with the light and Will in it. (17-11-1933)

SELF: Is not the Purusha in us always active with the light and will in it?

SRI AUROBINDO: The Purusha in men is normally passive not active. It is the Prakriti that is active.

SELF: How is the Purusha to be made active?

SRI AUROBINDO: By development of the inner will it can become active. (18-11-1933)

SELF: The Purusha in me remains so passive that all my efforts to make it active burst like vain bubbles. It does not even allow me to aspire or to offer inwardly my work to the Mother or to be in touch with her as I so intensely want. Can nothing be done about it?

SRI AUROBINDO: What Purusha is this? If it does not allow you to do things, it is not passive, for that is an active interference and resistance. So it can’t be the Purusha—it must be part of the tamasic element in Prakriti. (3-12-1933)

NAGIN DOSHI
TOWARDS THE VICTORY

The argent path is yet too far,
Still we must look to the distant star;
The Roads that yet have to be trod
Have been prepared and rendered broad

Battles to be won, each hour to be fought,
Each minute the right way has to be sought,
But a Mighty Guidance pushes us on,
A tremendous Force reveals the Dawn.

Dark is the world and night takes birth
To threaten the human stay on earth.
But Heaven's realm holds the Victory sure;
Therefore the One wills us to endure

Until the doleful labour is done,
Until appears the Rapture-Sun!

RAMRAJ
BRIBING THE DIVINE

'He who would win high spiritual degrees, must pass endless tests and examinations. But most are anxious only to bribe the examiner.' (Sri Aurobindo)

Man, by his nature, is outward-going. All the life-impulses prod him to rush out and engage himself in some external activity or pursuit. He dreads inactivity unless it means a lapse into sleep, of the ever-whirling mind. Few are those who stand back and question the authority of the force that is goading them to these feverish activities. Mostly men identify themselves with this 'grisly elf' and stake everything to carry out its behests. Rest means a sinking into oblivion as at night.

In this mad race the prizes are always fewer than the number of competitors and so clashes and collisions are inevitable. Sometimes we elbow out others but quite often we, too, are shoved aside and chagrin and frustration then weigh us down. Repeated failures awaken us to our impotence in face of the appalling difficulties and also make us aware of some greater power which holds the fruit in its hand and, try as we may, we cannot wrench it from its clenched fist. 'All right,' man says, 'let me try a more intelligent method. It will not yield to my force but it may relent to my cajolings, fawnings, as men in power often are exploited by sycophants and flatterers.' He sings its praises effusively and thus hopes to wheedle its indulgence. He finds this method more fruitful and easier than others and apportions a share of his income to the propitiation of his deity. It is a sort of revenue or an income tax paid to the king for the security of one's possessions. But his prudent folly oversteps the limits and he pushes the analogy of the human king too far. He imagines God to be almighty but lacking in that wisdom which can see through human craftiness, hollow prayers and soulless ceremonial.

But God is too sharp for him and plays a very subtle trick on him. He grants him the object of his prayer, thus giving him a semblance of success and a moment's exhilaration but then keeps hidden underneath it such a nest of hornets that whenever he reaches out his hands to seize hold of it he is so sharply stung that the object instead of making him happy makes him all the more miserable. He could not dupe God but rather duped himself.

The spiritual path happens to be the most arduous because it constantly demands a look inwards and who can abide the sight of the dungeons and the benighted creatures that flit about there gnawing into his entrails? Besides, man
fears casting a look inwards because there he has to peer down into an abyss, a sort of void, while on the contrary the outer world is teeming with infinite variety constantly inviting him with its appeal to the senses.

Going within demands the greatest courage and a dogged perseverance. It is like digging a well; you have to go on hollowing out the earth breaking many a granite block with no certainty of reaching the well-spring. Within us are also imbedded layers of mud fouled with our passions and lusts, rocks of rigid habits and mental steel-frames of inherited ideas and predispositions. All these we are called upon to see dispassionately and reject unrelentingly before we can hope to drink the waters of Immortality. Man blenches from this interminably protracted struggle and labour, and seeks for an easier escape from it all. He wants to wangle his object by some tortuous method.

I remember a tit-bit I read long ago. The captain of a team was given some money to buy a new ball for a match to be played the following day. Next day he came to the ground without the new ball and when questioned what he had done with the money he simply replied, “Well, I shoved it into the referee’s hands.” The same sort of trick men try on the Divine. Even advanced aspirants are in their unconscious moments deceived by such lures, and thus are lost in byways. They begin to look around for some outer activity, some humanitarian or philanthropic occupation and even undergo severe outer disciplines and austerities in the false hope that these may spare them the rigours of the inner battle.

This inner battle rages on many fronts simultaneously. It is literally Death by inches of the old self, its complete starvation. All for the Divine and nothing for the self. If the body is given food or rest it is not because they are pleasant but because they enable us to serve the Divine. No desire or passion is to be satisfied. When any desire or passion rises it has to be viewed as a hostile intruder and rejected and slain with the shining sword of knowledge.

A moment’s slackness can let in all the enemies that had been driven out after a strenuous effort. How many have the courage to see themselves as they really are without covering up the nasty parts? Then above all is the arch-enemy, the human ego—the subtlest and the most powerful. All one’s tapasya may in the end turn out to be an offering on the altar of one’s ego. Antisthenes wore a ragged cloak in order to excel his master Socrates in simplicity. Socrates with his merciless irony twitched at him: “I can see thy vanity, Antisthenes, peeping through the holes of thy cloak.”

Therefore it is very necessary that one should face the problem squarely. It is first and last the problem of a change of consciousness, and it is quite obvious that consciousness cannot be changed by any mechanical means however much they may dazzle ordinary humanity. The seeker must consciously
and sincerely aspire for a widening and heightening of his being and constantly scrutinize the waves that surge up from time to time and not allow himself to be swept off his feet. The goal of yoga is life in the Divine. That means the divine love which is pure and wide without any mixture of lust, and such a love can be enshrined only in that being which is purged of all hatred and narrowness. In the same way the divine Ananda is a bliss self-existent, universal and eternal without any mixture of sense-pleasure or pain and suffering; the divine knowledge and will are free from all ignorance and weakness and obscurity. In short the Divine is the absolute of Love, Knowledge, Power, Beauty and Delight. He is omnipresent and all selfishness is a sign of blindness created by our ego—the parent of the sense of separativity. In the Divine Consciousness everything turns out to be a manifestation of the Supreme and a habitation of the Lord. How to realize this status? Evidently not by maceration of the body or by any other physical discipline for the sake of the discipline. I am inclined to believe that only that much physical austerity is necessary as promotes the health of the body and does not enslave the mind to the pleasures of the senses. Overeating or any other indulgence is a sign of slavery to the flesh. We should keep on aspiring for the Divine, never shifting our gaze from that Pole star, and then rejecting all that pulls us away from our goal and delays our forward march. One has to act like a sheep dog constantly heading off the vital’s impulses to stray from the path. Sincerity means seeing clearly what has to be changed in us and wherein lies our true good and organising all our parts in conformity with the Godward soul in us and then expecting the Divine Grace to act for the good only, for the soul’s progress, however painful it may be. To expect it to feed our ego and by satisfying our desires to strengthen the cords that bind us and yet at the same time to toss us up into the divine consciousness is to live in a world of contradictions and confusions. One cannot succeed if one holds with the hare and runs with the hounds.

R. N. KHANNA