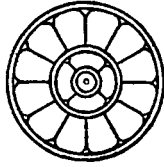


MOTHER INDIA

MARCH, 1960

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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute:
A new light breaks upon the earth,
A new world is born.
The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XII

No. 2

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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29.2.56

Pendant la méditation en commun
du Mercredi

Le soir, la Présence Divine était là,
présente parmi vous, concrète et
matérielle. J'avais une forme
d'or vivant, aussi grande que
l'univers, et je me trouvais devant
une immense porte d'or massive —
la porte qui séparait le monde
du Divin.
Regardant la porte, j'ai eu et
voulu, sans un seul mouvement
de conscience, que le temps est venu
(the time has come); et soulevant une
énorme marteau d'or que je tenais
à deux mains, j'en ai donné un
coup, un seul, sur la porte et la porte
a été mise en pièces.

Alors la lumière, la force et la
conscience supramentales, la
répandaient en flots ininterrompus
sur la terre.

During the common meditation
on Wednesday the 29th February, 1956

This evening the Divine Presence, concrete and material, was there present amongst you. I had a form of living gold, bigger than the universe, and I was facing a huge and massive golden door which separated the world from the Divine.

As I looked at the door, I knew and willed, in a single movement of consciousness, that "the time has come," and lifting with both hands a mighty golden hammer I struck one blow, one single blow on the door and the door was shattered to pieces.

Then the supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow.

29-2-1960

THE MOTHER

SOME REMARKS BY THE MOTHER ON THE SUPRAMENTAL MANIFESTATION

(From the Diaries of Two Sadhakas)

I

You will hardly understand what I have written, but try to keep your mind quiet and receive it.

Of course, there was no need for any verbal formulation as far as I was concerned. In order to put it into words for others I wrote everything down. But always, in writing, a realisation, a state of consciousness, gets limited : the very act of expression narrows the reality to a certain extent.

What happened on February 29, 1956, is not so much a vision or an experience as something done. During the Evening Meditation on the Playground, I went up into the Supermind, and saw that something needed to be done, and did it.

It is interesting to note that the words—"The time has come"—which express what I simultaneously knew and willed when I found myself in front of the massive door on whose other side was the world, were heard by me in English and not in French. It was as if Sri Aurobindo had spoken them.

When I came down from the Supermind after that flood of light had swept all over the universe, I thought that since the outpour was so stupendous everybody who had been sitting before me in the Playground would be lying flat. But on opening my eyes I saw everyone still sitting up quietly : they seemed perfectly unconscious of what had happened !

II

The working of the Supermind in an individual form had been there since December, 1950. In the January of 1956 Sri Aurobindo appeared to me twice or thrice and, as it were, indicated that the general manifestation was coming. But, when it happened, it happened suddenly.

It was absolutely unexpected on that day. But all my greatest experiences have come like this. I am in my usual consciousness and they come all of a sudden, as if to show their reality in the fullest contrast and vividness. One obtains the best value of a realisation when it is first experienced thus. If one

SOME REMARKS BY THE MOTHER

is informed beforehand, the mind begins to play a part. When, in the present instance, the mind came, I was already back on this side of the door. There was just a magnificent Light everywhere. Those who live in the heart have a better chance than those who live in the mind, to have a sense of this manifestation.

The Light kept pouring for twenty minutes. Rather, I watched it for twenty minutes in meditation and then stopped the meditation. I could not carry on the meditation indefinitely. People get restless after a time. I had to make a special effort to return into my external individual self and it was with great difficulty that I could utter a word.

Only two persons in the Ashram and three disciples outside felt what had happened. Not that they knew it was the Supramental Manifestation. But they had some unusual experience because of it.

The pouring of the Light is constant, but at the Balcony there is a special concentration of it. Now, things that were easy get achieved, as it were, without effort; things that looked difficult appear easy; and things impossible appear achievable and likely.

The manifestation in the universal atmosphere is in the subtle physical. In the outer physical there is nothing apparent yet. Nature did not reject the Supermind—it could not reject it; but the Supermind has got engulfed and has to work itself out.

Everything, however, has changed, radically changed. Previously the working was under the pressure of the Mind of Light. Sri Aurobindo had secured that victory. Now it is the Supermind that directly guides and governs. Here, too, Sri Aurobindo has been instrumental. And his presence is in me always.

THE GOLDEN DAY : FEBRUARY 29, 1960

(The first recurrence, after four years, of the date on which the Supermind had manifested in the subtle physical atmosphere of the earth, February 29, 1960 was celebrated in the Ashram in a memorable way and expected to mark a deeper and wider victory of the Supramental Light in terrestrial life. Nothing can better express than the following lines what we should now aspire for and what we are now empowered to realise.)

TWO SONNETS BY SRI AUROBINDO

I

Thy golden Light came down into my brain
And the grey rooms of mind sun-touched became
A bright reply to Wisdom's occult plane,
A calm illumination and a flame.

Thy golden Light came down into my throat,
And all my speech is now a tune divine,
A paean-song of Thee my single note;
My words are drunk with the Immortal's wine.

Thy golden Light came down into my heart
Smiting my life with Thy eternity;
Now has it grown a temple where Thou art
And all its passions point towards only Thee.

Thy golden Light came down into my feet;
My earth is now Thy playfield and Thy seat.

II

Light, endless Light ! darkness has room no more.
Life's ignorant gulfs give up their secrecy :
The huge inconscient depths unplumbed before
Lie glimmering in vast expectancy.

“THE GOLDEN DAY”

Light, timeless Light immutable and apart !
The holy sealed mysterious doors uncloze.
Light, burning Light from the Infinite's diamond heart
Quivers in my heart where blooms the deathless rose.

Light in its rapture leaping through the nerves !
Light, brooding Light ! each smitten passionate cell
In a mute blaze of ecstasy preserves
A living sense of the Imperishable.

I live in an ocean of stupendous Light
Joining my depths to His eternal height.

WORDS OF THE MOTHER

Q. I have read that the bodies of some saints, after their death, have disappeared and become flowers or just vanished into the sky. Can such a thing happen ?

Everything is possible, it could have happened, but I do not believe it did. We cannot always believe what is said in books. Nor is there a necessary connection between such phenomena and sainthood. Some “mediums”, as they are called, have an unusual capacity. They are put in a chair, tied to it, guarded by people, and the room is locked securely from outside. Then obscurity is created in the room. After some time—longer or shorter according to the medium’s power—the knots are found untied, the chair is seen empty : the occupant has disappeared. Then, in an adjoining room, the person is found lying down in a deep trance. Through closed doors and thick walls the medium has passed. It is by a power of deconcentration and re-concentration of the physical substance.

Phenomena like these have taken place under the strictest scientific control. So they do genuinely occur in rare instances, but they are no sign of sanctity. There is nothing spiritual about them. What is at work is purely a capacity of the vital being. And often the mediums are people of a very low character, with not a trace of anything saintly.

But to come back to the point. In connection with great or holy men all sorts of stories get started. When Sri Aurobindo had not left his body, there was circulated a story that he used to go out of the roof of his room—yes, physically—and move about in all kinds of places. It is even written down in a book. He told me about it himself.

Q. Some books say that Mirabai disappeared physically into the idol of Krishna and was never seen again.

Don’t other books tell other stories ?

Q. It is also reported that you never write with a pen. The pen just writes for you.

There you are !

January, 1960

FRATERNITY

SRI AUROBINDO

(Translated by Niranjana from the Bengali essay in "Dharma O Jatiyata")

THE three ideals, or ultimate aims of modern civilisation, which were proclaimed at the time of the French revolution, are generally known in our language as the three principles of liberty, equality and amity. But what goes by the name of fraternity in the language of the West is not amity. Amity describes a state of mind. One who is a well-wisher of all beings and harms nobody, that benevolent person, free from violence and engaged in the well-being of all beings, is called 'a friend'; amity is the state of his mind. Such a state of mind is an asset to the individual; it can direct his life and work, but it cannot possibly become the mainstay of a political and social organisation. The three principles of the French revolution are not ethical rules for guiding the life of an individual but three ties or bonds capable of remoulding the structure of society and country, a fundamental truth of Nature yearning to manifest in the external condition of society and country. Fraternity means brotherhood.

The French revolutionaries were very anxious to gain social and political liberty and equality, their eyes were not set so much on fraternity. Absence of fraternity is the cause of incompleteness of the French revolution. This extraordinary rising established political and social liberty in Europe; even political equality to some extent found a place in the political organisation and legislation of a few countries. But without fraternity social equality is impossible. And because of the absence of fraternity Europe was deprived of social equality. The full development of these three basic principles are interdependent; fraternity is the basis of equality; without it equality cannot be established. Only brotherly feeling can bring about brotherhood. There is no brotherly feeling in Europe, equality and liberty are tainted there. That is why in Europe chaos and revolution is the order of the day. Proudly Europe calls this chaos and revolution progress and advancement.

Whatever brotherly feeling exists in Europe rests on the country : "we belong to one country, we have the same advantages and disadvantages, unity, safeguards, national freedom"—this knowledge is the cause of unity in Europe. There is another knowledge which stands against it : "we are all men, all men should be united, division between man and man is born of ignorance and is

harmful; so let us give up nationalism and establish a unity of the human race.” A conflict is going on between these two contradictory truths, especially in France, that emotional country where the great ideal of liberty, equality and fraternity was first proclaimed. However, the fact is that these two truths and feelings are not contradictory. Nationalism is a truth, unity of the human race is also a truth and only the harmony of these two truths can bring the highest good of humanity; if our intelligence is incapable of finding that harmony and becomes attached to the conflict of principles which are not contradictory, then we must consider that intelligence a misguided rajasic intelligence.

Europe, disgusted with political and social liberty without any equality, is now racing towards Socialism. There are two parties, the Anarchists and the Socialists. The Anarchist says, “Political liberty is an illusion; to establish a machine of torture, in the name of government, by influential men, for crushing individual liberty on the pretext of preserving political freedom, is a sign of this illusion; therefore, abolish all kinds of government and establish genuine freedom.” Who will protect liberty and equality in the absence of any government and prevent the powerful from torturing the weak ? In answer to this objection the Anarchist says, “Expand education, spread complete knowledge and brotherly feeling; knowledge and brotherly feeling will protect liberty and equality. If an individual violates the brotherly feeling and brings suffering to others, he can be punished with death by anybody.” The Socialist does not say the same thing. He says, “Let the government remain, the government is useful. Let us establish society and the political structure on complete equality, when all the present defects of society and of the political organisation are rectified, the human race will be completely happy and free and full of brotherly feeling. ” For this reason the Socialist wants to unite society, if there is no personal property but everything belongs to society—as with the property of a joint family belonging not to any individual but to the family which is the body, the individual being only a limb of that body—then division will disappear from society and it will become one.

The Anarchist makes the mistake of attempting to do away with the government before fraternity is established. It will be long before the brotherly feeling can come; meanwhile, abolition of the government will result in the supremacy of animal instincts on account of the extreme chaos and disorder ensuing. The king is the centre of society; formation of a government enables men to avoid animality. When complete fraternity is established then God instead of employing any earthly representative will himself rule the earth and sit on the throne in everyone’s heart. The reign of the Saints of the Christians, our Satyayuga, will be established. Mankind has not progressed so far as to achieve this state soon, only a partial realisation is possible.

FRATERNITY

The Socialist errs in trying to establish fraternity on equality, instead of establishing equality on fraternity. It is possible to have fraternity without having equality; but equality without fraternity cannot last and it will be destroyed by dissension, quarrels, and inordinate greed for power. First we must have complete fraternity and then only complete equality.

The brotherly feeling is an outward condition : if we all remain full of brotherly feeling, have one common property, one common good and one common effort, that is fraternity. The external condition is based on the inner state. Love for the brother infuses life into fraternity and makes it real. There must be a basis even for that brotherly love. We are children of one Mother, compatriots; this feeling can provide the basis for a kind of brotherly love, though this feeling becomes a bond of political unity, social unity cannot be achieved in this way. We have to go still deeper : just as we all have to overpass our own mothers in order to worship the Mother of our compatriots, in the same way we have to transcend and realise the Universal Mother. We have to transcend the partial Shakti in order to reach the Shakti in her completeness. But, just as in our adoration of Mother India, though we overpass our physical mother yet we do not forget her, in the same way in our adoration of the Universal Mother we shall transcend Mother India and not forget her. She too is Kali, she too is the Mother.

Only religion provides a basis for fraternity. All the religions say, "We are one, division is born of ignorance and jealousy." Love is the central teaching of all religions. Our religion also says, "We are all one, the dividing intellect is a sign of ignorance, the sage should look on all with an equal eye and perceive the one soul, one Narayana equally established in everyone." Universal love comes from this equality full of devotion. But this knowledge which is the highest goal of humanity will spread everywhere only at the final stage of our journey, meanwhile we have to realise it partially within, without, in the family, society, country and in every being. Man is always endeavouring to give an enduring form to fraternity by creating family, clan, society, country, and binding them firmly by laws and scriptures. Up till now that effort has failed. The basis exists and so does the form. But what is needed is some inexhaustible force which will preserve the life of fraternity, so that the basis remains unimpaired and the form becomes everlasting or is continually renewed. God has not yet manifested that Force. He has come down as Rama, Krishna, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna and is preparing to transform the selfish heart of man into a fit receptacle of love. How far is that day when He shall descend again and make this earth a paradise by spreading eternal love and bliss and implanting it in the heart of man !

HOW THE MOTHER'S GRACE CAME TO US

(Continued from the January issue)

22

AN OPEN-EYED VISION

I LEFT Pondicherry in very good condition, except for a little pain in the tail-bone. At Madras I started feeling uncomfortable. While getting into the train for Bombay, all of a sudden I felt unbearable pain and could not move my limbs because of it. I took some drugs during the journey, but to no avail. Day and night I suffered. I made up my mind to send the Mother a wire from Bombay. When half a day's journey was left over, in the early morning I was holding the Mother's blessing-packet and Sri Aurobindo's photo and trying to concentrate on the Mother.

Then, with eyes wide open, I saw a strange thing. A thin small black man in red shorts, with nothing else on, entered the compartment from the door behind me. His hair looked dirty and dishevelled. He was going from one door to the other. He turned towards me and laughed. Another man followed him, tall, black, in a long straight dhoti. He just passed by me and went also out of the compartment. Of course, the train was going at full speed.

Then I saw a plate before me, on which was some food. Just a tea-spoonful had already been eaten by somebody. I heard a voice : "Eat this, the Mother has sent it for you after tasting it."

I looked at my watch. It was time for the Mother's Balcony Darshan in Pondicherry. I knew in my heart that the excruciating pain would diminish, and it did. When I got down at Bombay I was as good as normal.

THE MOTHER'S COMMENT :

"One small physico-vital force at mischief and some vital entity, both responsible for the pain. The dish is the symbol of my help which would bring cure if it were received properly."

*

*

An old letter of Sri Aurobindo's may be quoted apropos of the above vision :

"The vision was seen through the physical eyes but by the subtle physical consciousness ; in other words, there was an imposition of one consciousness upon another. After a certain stage of development, this capacity of living in the ordinary physical consciousness and yet having superadded to it another and more subtle sense, vision, experience becomes quite normal. A little concentration is enough to bring it ; or, even, it happens automatically without any concentration." (*On Yoga*, II, Tome Two, p. 66)

INDIA OF THE AGES

III

THE QUEST OF INDIA

INDIA'S quest has been for the Eternal and the Infinite, for *saccidānanda*, which is immortal being (*sat*), unfettered knowledge and power (*cit*), undiluted bliss (*ānanda*). Her constant attempt in the great and living periods of her history has been to help the individual perfect himself in this sense, and to raise the collectivity, the mass, a part of the way towards the level of the highest individual attainment. Wherever she has looked beyond her borders, she threw out some rays of her light, a portion of her gains to those who had commerce with her. Whenever she had intruders in her midst, she lost no time to bring them within the sphere of her influence ; those who chose to stand aloof she did not persecute or hinder. Harmony, mutuality, unity have been the watchwords of her life, an endless diversity the stuff on which she worked.

Her progress has not been in a straight upward march. She has had her curves of ascent and descent, her moments of darkness and of lying fallow. But every lapse has been followed by a shock which has helped her move forward. This shock has either come in the form of a revolution within or an attack from without. It has given her the needed power of propulsion.

*

*

The quest of India begins with the Veda. Veda is the divine Knowledge which leads man to the immortal Felicity. This Felicity was the goal which the Vedic mystics set before them ; their hymns are the records of their aspiration and ascent, an ascent from our normal status of half-animal beings enmeshed in mind and life and body to the highest ethereal regions of the True, the Right, the Vast, which are there described as the "own home" of the gods. "The supermind is the vast Truth-Consciousness of which the ancient seers spoke....They tried to rise individually to the supramental plane, but they did not bring it down and make it a permanent part of the earth-consciousness..."¹ The spiritual achievement was confined to a few, it was not spread in the whole mass of humanity.... The mass of men at the time, it is quite evident, lived entirely on the material plane, worshipped the Godheads of material

¹ Sri Aurobindo : *On Yoga*, II. 1. p. 109.

MOTHER INDIA

Nature, sought from them entirely material objects....”¹ Nevertheless, “this minority has exercised an enormous influence ...and determined the civilisation of the race, giving it a strong stamp of the spiritual....”² The mind of ancient India did not err when it traced back all its philosophy, religion and essential things of its culture to these seer-poets, for all the future spirituality of her people is contained there in seed or in first expression.”³

How did these spiritual leaders help the masses among whom they lived ? “The Vedic Rishis gave a psychic function to the godheads worshipped by the people; they spoke to them of a higher Truth, Right, Law of which the gods were the guardians, of the necessity of a truer knowledge and a larger inner living according to this Truth and Right and of a home of Immortality to which the soul of man could ascend by the power of Truth and of right doing. The people...were trained by them to develop their ethical nature, to turn towards some initial development of their psychic being, to conceive the idea of a knowledge and truth other than that of the physical life and to admit even a first conception of some greater spiritual Reality which was the ultimate object of human worship or aspiration...”⁴

The early Vedic achievement was followed by a period of comparative stagnation when the old enthusiasm gave way to fatigue and inertia. There was a long period of stock-taking when the Vedic hymnal was collected in convenient manuals, and the Samhitas⁵ which have come down to us assumed their present form. A systematic attempt also seems to have been made at this time to fix the meaning of the Vedic verse and ritual, and the six Vedangas⁶ came into being. The Veda continued to be studied in the schools and, together with the Vedangas and the Itihasa-Purana (significant tradition and myth), formed the main staple of the curriculum. But the old Vedic symbolism was losing its force, the deep esoteric meaning of the Vedic verse was gradually forgotten, the inner sense of the sacrifice replaced by the outer ritual. The priest took the place of the seer.

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In the new efflorescence that marks the Brahmana-Upanishadic age, it was the priest as well as the seer who took the leading part. The priests were

¹ *On Yoga* II. 1. p. 5

² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³ Sri Aurobindo : *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, III. Ch. 10.

⁴ *Ibid.*, III Ch. 2.

⁵ This is the name given to the four Books of the Veda.

⁶ These are manuals dealing with the pronunciation, metre, grammar and etymology, ritual and astronomy of the Vedic texts.

no longer satisfied with the mechanical round of the Vedic ritual. They sought in the details of the sacrifice a mystic sense which would justify the use of the sacred mantras. The seers looked beyond the outer forms and attained to a knowledge of the hidden meaning of things. The books that are known as the Brahmanas and Upanishads are a record of this search and attainment.

The abiding work of the Brahmanas was to fill the minds of men with the necessity of sacrifice and to bring the gods into an intimate relation with their everyday life. The Brahmanas created that sense of the importance of Dharma, the rule of ideal living, which has pervaded much of later Indian thought and action. The habit of worship which they inculcated was a permanent result of their work. It may also be said with some truth that but for the detailed work of these ritual texts, the mantras of the Veda might not have retained that sanctity which they continue to enjoy to this day in spite of the loss of their deep esoteric sense.

It was left to the seers of the Upanishads to recover at least in part the mystic sense of Veda and to transmit it to posterity in monumental phrase.

"The Upanishads," says Sri Aurobindo, "are the supreme work of the Indian mind....It is the expression of a mind in which philosophy and religion and poetry are made one, because this religion does not end with a cult nor is limited to a religio-ethical aspiration, but rises to an infinite discovery of God, of Self, of our highest and whole reality of spirit and being and speaks out of an ecstasy of luminous knowledge and an ecstasy of moved and fulfilled experience.... Here the intuitive mind and intimate psychological experience of the Vedic seers passes into a supreme culmination in which the Spirit, as is said in a phrase of the Katha Upanishad, discloses its own very body, reveals the very word of its self-expression and discovers to the mind the vibration of rhythms which repeating themselves within in the spiritual hearing seem to build up the soul and set it satisfied and complete on the heights of self-knowledge."¹

The Upanishads fixed for the Indian mind the conception of *saccidānanda* as the highest goal of human endeavour. They repeated always the mantra, *nālpe sukham asti, bhūmā eva sukham*, "happiness is not in the petty and small, the infinite alone is happiness." They gave that emphasis on the life beyond the senses which has remained a permanent trait of the Indian character. Maitreyi's passionate cry, *kim aham tena kuryām yena nāmṛtā syām*, "what availeth me all this wealth if it does not make me immortal?" has rung through the ages and has remained a dominant motif of India's culture.²

*

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¹ *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, III Ch II.

² Maitreyi was the wife of the great sage Yajnavalkya famed in the *Bṛihadaranyaka* and

MOTHER INDIA

“The Vedas and the Upanishads are not only the sufficient fountain-head of Indian philosophy and religion, but of all Indian art, poetry and literature. It was the soul, the temperament, the ideal mind formed and expressed in them which later carved out the great philosophies, built the structure of the Dharma, recorded its heroic youth in the Mahabharata and Ramayana, intellectualised indefatigably in the classical times of the ripeness of its manhood, threw out so many original intuitions in science, created so rich a glow of aesthetic and vital and sensuous experience, renewed its spiritual and psychic experience in Tantra and Purana, flung itself into grandeur and beauty of line and colour, hewed and cast its thought and vision in stone and bronze, poured itself into new channels of self-expression in the later tongues and now after eclipse re-emerges always the same in difference and ready for a new life and a new creation.”¹

(To be continued)

SANAT K. BANERJI

Chandogya Upanishads. She refused to be content with a share of her departing husband's worldly possessions and pressed him to impart the true knowledge.

¹ *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, III. Ch. II.

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM A SYMBOL OF INDIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

(Continued from the February issue)

THE DARSHAN DAY

THE auspicious day on which we have the Darshan of the Master and the Mother is known in the Ashram as the Darshan day. At the root there are at work various kinds of feelings. And people imbibe at least something of the spirit of Avatars and prophets by celebrating their birthdays amongst us. But there are other days too, in spiritual history, whose celebration can be a fountain of inner joy and light. One such is called in our Ashram the Day of Siddhi or Victory—November 24, 1926. In fact, before this day on which Sri Aurobindo established what he himself considered a solid base for the truly Divine manifestation, there was according to him no question of Darshan. He would deal with all on the same level as himself. In 1919 someone came from Chandernagar and sent him word that he had come with a longing for his Darshan. "What does he mean by Darshan?" came the reply. Before the Siddhi-day, when an aspirant approached him for initiation he is reported to have said that to take the responsibility of somebody's sadhana was a very risky job.¹

After November 24, 1926, three Darshan days were fixed in the Ashram. One was the birthday of the Mother, February 21; another that of Sri Aurobindo himself, August 15; the third, the Siddhi day itself.

Before 1926, very few had access to the Mother—only a few sadhikas, about three or four in number, meditated with her. In the beginning of 1926 the Master began to send a few others to meditate. This was a sufficient hint that he was withdrawing for some higher purpose, leaving the whole charge of the disciples—their inner sadhana and the outer organisation of the Ashram—to the Mother's executive powers.

When someone expressed his earnestness to do his sadhana under the sole guidance of Sri Aurobindo a quick answer came from his pen: "You consider that the Mother can be of no help to you.... If you cannot profit by

¹ *Adm*, 6th year, 4th issue.

her help, you would find still less profit by mine. But, in any case, I have no intention of altering the arrangement I have made for all the disciples without exception that they should receive the light and force from her and not directly from me and be guided by her in their spiritual progress. I have made the arrangement not for any temporary purpose but because it is the one way, provided always the disciple is open and receives, that is true and effective (considering what she is and her power)."

There are several letters in which he has given the reason of his retirement. One of them reads : "I have no intention, I can assure you, of cutting off connection in the future. What restrictions there have been were due to unavoidable causes. My retirement itself was indispensable ; otherwise I would not be now where I am, that is, personally, near the goal. When the goal is reached, it will be different." (14-8-1945)

What this life in seclusion meant for him and what burden he has borne upon his shoulders quietly can be gauged from the following lines written in 1934 :

"It is only divine Love which can bear the burden I have to bear, that all have to bear who have sacrificed everything else to the one aim of uplifting earth out of its darkness towards the Divine."

Before 1926 one had to send one's photo without which no interview was granted. After that those who were known to someone among the Ashramites were admitted to Darshan ; especially to the November Darshan only those who had come before would be allowed to come. To the August and February Darshans newcomers were more freely admitted. Every time for the August Darshan more and more people would come. The garlands which the people offered on the Darshan day used to be distributed by the Mother to all present in the Ashram the next day. Almost everyone would go with two garlands in hand for Darshan. Thus a huge heap would be formed. From the very next day, the newcomers would begin to leave. But in every Darshan a few would be able to obtain permission for permanent stay. It would sometimes happen that for years one would not be able to secure permission for Darshan. But such cases were very rare. Once a man could not get permission even after seven years' attempt though he was not a newcomer. But credit must be given to his patience that he did not leave off the attempt and was one day permitted.

There was a reason why he was not permitted. Whenever he came here the opposing forces became more prominent in him. Once he got so disturbed that he left the place on foot without letting anybody know. After seven years when he returned he fell ill. The Master himself inquired about his illness and saw to it that he was kept in a special ward in the government hospital. But his vitality, already low, ebbed away. These are outer matters ; that the

man could remain within Sri Aurobindo's consciousness at the end of his life was in itself of no mean significance.

What is this significance ? Let us hear a foreign lady.

While delivering a lecture a speaker uttered the name of Sri Aurobindo. That very name brought Miss Wilson, the daughter of President Wilson of America, as if by magnetic attraction to the Master's shelter. She took up the Ashram life and was given the name Nishtha. Sri Aurobindo, while thus renaming her, wrote : "The word means one-pointed, fixed and steady concentration, devotion and faith in the single aim—the Divine and the Divine Realisation" (5th November 1938). She forced on her body the discipline of Ashram food, but could not stand the climate and fell ill. When the question was put to her to go back to America to recover her health she is reported to have said : "There they may take care of my body but who will take care of my soul ?"

Before his death the man referred to above had been instrumental in bringing several people into touch with the Master. He could speak very well on Sri Aurobindo's philosophy and was very much enamoured of his teaching. He was very eager that people should know about Sri Aurobindo and what he stood for. Wherever he remained he would rather go without meals than fail to send at least one rupee as his offering for the Darshan. In 1927 he purposely accepted work in a Calcutta Press as it would afford him an opportunity to spread Sri Aurobindo's thought. He would often pick up some talk with the editor of the paper whom he held in high esteem. As the editor himself had been an admirer of Sri Aurobindo from his political days he once sought permission for Darshan but did not know anything about the Mother.

In those days the Mother used to see a newcomer on his arrival according to her convenience and bless him, putting her hand on his head. At the time of departure also one could go to her for blessings individually. An Ashramite came and informed the editor that he could go for blessings. He felt bewildered; he had come to see Sri Aurobindo, then why was he to go to the Mother ? But he followed the instruction. While on the way, a thought flashed across his mind that if the Mother did not put her hand on his head it would be better. When he went to offer a formal Pranam, the Mother actually did not touch his head but said instead, "You will have Darshan of Sri Aurobindo to-morrow." This gave rise to a feeling of uneasiness in his mind—"Certainly Mother has read my mind"—but he did not think much about it at that time.

Next day when he went for Darshan and when after offering Pranam to the Master he was looking at Sri Aurobindo he felt as if Sri Aurobindo's eyes were telling him : "If you want to know me, you can through the Mother." He felt as if some irresistible force had turned his head towards the Mother whom he

found looking towards him with great compassion. This was sufficient to stir up devotion within him for the Mother. Next day when he went to her, before departure, he prayed in his heart that she might be pleased to favour him with a touch. Thus a fire of aspiration was kindled in a dormant heart in a single moment. Afterwards he became a staunch follower of Sri Aurobindo and began to spread his thought through his paper. His was the first authentic translation of Sri Aurobindo's books in Hindi. Once Sri Aurobindo remarked about a translation of his that he had grasped the true spirit in which the book had been written.

In those days it was often asked: "Why on only three days in a year are people allowed to see the Master and why on even those three days do they not have free access to him ? If all were allowed to have a free approach to him, would not the people at large be immensely benefited, and the souls of thousands feel blessed ?" It is necessary to meet the points.

First of all, did the world want the Divine ? How many were there in the wide spaces of the earth who were eager to own and possess Him ? Could those in whom the soul-fire is asleep gather any wealth of experience by simply coming up to the Master out of curiosity ? What benefit except a spectacular crowd could there be in allowing all to flock round him ? Those who were really earnest had no refusal from him.

There is another side to the question. A scientist makes his experiment in the laboratory only upon a given quantity of material. When his labour is crowned with success, then only he widens his scope of experiment and lets the world know about it and assess the value of his contribution. Sri Aurobindo also wanted first of all to prepare such *adhars* as would be able to bear the descent of the great Light which he wanted to establish in the earth consciousness. This could only be done if that consciousness was established primarily in a few. The following words of the Master on this point can be borne in mind :

"What we are doing, if and when we succeed, will be a beginning, not a completion. It is the foundation of a new consciousness on earth — a consciousness with infinite possibilities of manifestation."¹

One more point may be considered. Once when a friend of mine was preparing to leave I happened to press him to stay on a few days till Darshan. Somebody intervened and said that it was not proper for me to do so. I referred the matter to Sri Aurobindo. The reply I received was :

"Nobody should ever be asked to come for Darshan, or Pranam or Meditation. If somebody spontaneously asks it is another matter. There too as a

¹ *Letters of Sri Aurobindo*, Part I, p. 31.

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM—A SYMBOL OF INDIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

rule, there should be no eagerness that they should come. Encouragement should be given only in those cases where there is a good or special reason for it. The number of people coming, specially in the August Darshan, when the Pondicherry people also come, is already very large and we are kept for seven to eight hours at a stretch receiving them, so it is not advisable to go on increasing the numbers, under the present circumstances. If a man is specially deserving or likely to be a helper or sympathiser of the Ashram or there is any other reason for encouraging him, then of course this general rule does not apply." (27-7-1937)

(To be continued)

NARAYANPRASAD

THE INTERVIEW : PREPARATION

THE inmates of today in our Ashram enjoy many more facilities than those who got admittance a quarter of a century ago. But at least in one respect, and the most precious one, we were much more fortunate than the moderners. We had the privilege of purifying our body thrice annually with the sacred touch of our Master with his benign hand on our head and with our hand on his lotus feet. The occasions were the 21st February, the Mother's birthday, the 15th August, Sri Aurobindo's birth-day, and the 24th November, his Victory (Siddhi) Day. The 24th April Darshan (Mother's final arrival in 1920) was not given before 1939, from which year Darshan from afar, without any physical touch, was introduced.

Other propitious moments dawned on our life when we were permitted to go to our Mother, all alone, for an interview. This was granted to all the sadhakas and sadhikas of the Ashram, even the visitors who sought for it, on their birthdays; and to many, if not all, from time to time, when they would solicit to have that special grace from the Mother. I came to know on enquiry from several older sadhakas, that they would at that time simply sit before the Mother, concentrate their minds on her, meditate for a while and then retire on indication from her. When allowed, I was a fool to lose those treasured opportunities of silencing the mind. A printed English version was not there, still I knew even then, from a typed copy, the Mother's saying: "In Peace and Silence the Eternal manifests." Simpleton as I was, I talked to her. But, of course, I heard from her some invaluable instructions—a sweet recompense.

But before proceeding further, let us retrace a few steps to catch the clew of our narration from the article 'An Initiation' (*Mother India*, 5th December, 1959).

I was granted permission to come over to the Ashram as a visitor; but coming to the Ashram I fell in love at the very first sight. Who cares to go back from this Paradise on earth ? The Secretary was approached with a very piteous prayer. The judgment was delivered with what seemed to me a somewhat sardonic smile. "Impossible ! The Mother is now not accepting anyone permanently."

Much dejected, I consulted an inmate who had joined the Ashram even before our Master's Victory Day in 1926. He counselled me to ask for some

work. I prayed to the Mother in writing, to let me offer my humble services at her feet. I got my letter back from the Secretary the next day with a marginal note from Sri Aurobindo's pen though without any signature: "Nothing can be decided till after Darshan."

Just a day after the November Darshan, the Secretary summoned me in the morning and declared the momentous message of the Mother: "You may stay here as long as you like as an ordinary visitor,"—meaning thereby I had to pay daily 10 annas as boarding charge, and 6 annas for my lodging. That was the rate in those days. I was taken a little aback. Still I retorted: "Sir, I am a petty pedagogue in a village, working in the self-chosen yet ill-paid oriental section. For some reason or other, I may be granted leave, but that will be without pay. Then how am I to meet the demand?" "Then it is better for you to go back", was the slightly sharp reply, and he disappeared into his room. Crestfallen, I went to my room, opened myself to the Mother with pen and ink, and put the long letter on the silver-plated tray, with a woollen paper-weight, kept at the top of the staircase before the door of the Mother's apartments. (The tray, even now at the very place, is meant for any urgent or confidential communications.) It was then nine in the forenoon. At or about four in the afternoon, I heard a knock at my door. Lo, wonder of wonders! The Secretary stood there. Without giving me any opportunity to greet or welcome him, he rushed into my chamber, took the mat from the corner himself, squatted on the floor and broke the silence thus: "You are very fortunate, The Mother has permitted you to stay. She has directed me to accept whatever you pay and not to disturb you in any way."

I had then a little less than Rs. 200 with me, and I surrendered the purse to him. At this, the Secretary in him vanished and a brother emerged instead. He might have easily accepted the money—as a Secretary, such was his duty. "The aim of ordinary life is to carry out one's duty, the aim of spiritual life is to realise the Divine," says our Mother. The Secretary, being a yogi, laid aside his formal office and very affectionately advised: "Why? The Mother did not tell me to take your all. You are supplied with food and lodging free; but what about your pocket expenses? And supposing you go back after a while, you have to maintain yourself for a full month, you won't get your monthly salary then and there. Keep also some money for your journey." My return journey did actually come to pass. Yogis can foresee many things with the occult eye. The Secretary went on further, "Keep at least Rs. 100 with you, and the rest may be given tomorrow morning to the Treasurer." Our present Manager was Treasurer as well at that time. The office is now bifurcated with the development of the Institution. We were then about 120 persons, men and women together, and now the number is increased by no less than ten-fold. The

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Secretary has now got several assistants to help him. But I myself have seen him in those days more than once doing the services of a gatekeeper—opening and closing it at each and every knock. The main gate of the Ashram now remains wide open always from 4-30 a.m. to 11 p.m.—the rush of the entrants is so pressing. But there was a time when even eminent persons were refused admission without previous intimation.

Now to our history. On the next morning the amount was handed over to the Manager who brought me a very fine rose in the evening with the remark : “Your offering was placed at the Mother’s feet; she has sent this flower to you as her blessings.” I was lost in bliss.

(To be continued)

PRABHAKAR MUKHERJI

THE GOLDEN DAY

29.2.1956

BRIGHTNESS fills the vibrant air,
Music penetrates my being.
The courtyard seems all lit with fire;
Lambent flickering tongues aspire
On every face and leaf and life-thing,
And the central tree that's there
Is alive with flame and light,
Enfolding birds and all the crowds
Seated round in silent rite...
This is the song that built the worlds.

The sun in his splendour
Is playing his life-hymn;
We gaze on the wonder
Of a new creation.
Descending music, rarely heard,
Rhythm of the eternal word,
With fiery joy compels the earth
And air and moisture to give birth.
Surya has sent down his rays,
Golden flowers send back their praise.

Symbol of life, of Eden and the cross,
Reminder of Moses and the burning bush,
See how the greenness burns...
How nature is transformed in this,
The old is not destroyed, by joy made new.
All has been altered by a supreme act :
Aditi's dream now wakens into fact.
The cosmic door stands open to the light
Of the divine distances; the herds go home.
'Euoi, euan, oh shepherd of white stars.'

DICK BATSTONE

ON SEEING A NEW PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MOTHER

My heart grew warm and still
to see thy face
look out at me with calm
majestic grace
from a new photograph—
a moment rare
of intimacy and peace
was captured there—
Then deep within my heart
a prayer was born,
and for eternity
a page was torn
out of the Book of Time;
Thy Grace pursued
the memory of the flowers
of Gratitude.

NORMAN DOWSETT

THUS SANG MY SOUL

(24)

VII. MOTHERING THE BOND OF LOVE : PRAYERS AND PRAISES

HERE I AM A SACRIFICE !

MOTHER, if Thy transfiguring Love's sole price
Consists in separation's agony
Until my knot of selfhood I excise
And burn in the melting pot of purity,

Then here I am before Thee a sacrifice;
Mould me and own or spurn, fling far, unmake,
Yet in Thee alone my fate, my future lies;
Save Thee none knows my deep love-longing ache.

If Thou wilt listen not to the fiery cry
That spiralling mounts to Thee incessantly,
Then who in the whole world shall pacify
My thirsty heart that seeks to merge with Thee.

COME INTO MY ALLEYS OF DARK DESIRE

From Thy sky-scraping minarets of force,
From Thy unbending firmaments of fire,
O come into my alleys of dark desire,
Batter and break the flinted falsehood-doors.
Enter into my drowsiness' cave-cores,
So that freed spiralling dark and dust aspire,
In Thy own golden freedom to respire
And be sun-smiling to their very pores.

With Thy arms of light outstretched, O Mother, come,
With Thy ocean-heart of overflowing love
Into my unpenetrable sterileness
And pessimist frustration doughy, dumb;
My mind's depressing mistiness remove,
My Godward zooming aspirations bless !

(To be continued)

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

RABINDRANATH, TRAVELLER OF THE INFINITE

(II)

It is an interesting study how the upward urge of aspiration, the basic note of consciousness runs like a golden thread through all different modes and manners and reveals itself under various names and forms. To begin from the beginning with 'The Awakening of the Fountain' :

I shall rush from peak to peak,
I shall sweep from mount to mount,
With peals of laughter and songs of murmur
I shall clap to tune and rhythm.

Here is the first awakening of aspiration—the poet is still in his early youth, full of fun and frolic, laughter and dance, and looking outward and given to outer things.

Let us next come to the 'Golden Boat'. It presents another mood, another state :

Who comes singing to the shore as he rows ?
It seems to be an old familiar face.
He moves with full sail on ;
Looks neither right nor left,
The helpless waves break on either side.
It seems to be an old familiar face.

Consciousness is turned inward, the first fervour of aspiration, at once sweet, intense, full of pathos, has struck the chords of life. No loud demonstrations, there is a profound and touching cadence, the sharp call of a one-stringed lyre—a condensed realisation, the gait easy and rhythmic in its simple sincerity. Side by side there woke up a curiosity and an enquiry that made the mystery of life more mysterious, more delightful.

Further on we hear in 'The Philosopher's Stone' :

The long way of the past lies lifeless behind.
How far from here the end cannot be measured.
From horizon to horizon
It is all the glistening sands of the desert.
The whole region is dimmed by the oncoming night.

According to the Christian saints this state is the 'dark night of the soul'. They say, the familiar past has been left behind, the new life has not been achieved—the foretaste of it has slipped away, there is no return to the past, the path to the new life is not known—a helpless anxiety surges up. But the night of our poet is by no means as dark as that of the Christian saints. The journey towards the unknown destination has almost the same aspect as a description of the dark night usually gives us, but in the midst of this darkness glitters the noiseless laughter of that 'feminine absconder'; the poet is able to say even when engulfed in that night :

Only the sweet scent of thy body is wafted by the wind,
Thy hair driven by the wind is scattered on my bare body—

Rabindranath's pain did never become extreme or tragic, the note of union is there hidden in his pang of separation : "O Death, thou art an equivalent to my Lord Krishna." Death is not death pure and simple ; immortality lies hidden therein. The poet had always a clue to the One in whose pursuit he was ever vigilant. In his 'Urvashi' this urge has reached its acme. It is there that his insight has fully opened up. The poet has attuned all the strings of his life-energy to the highest note of his inner consciousness. The realisation is as profound as the language is gathered and condensed, the metre and rhythm too are of the finest and richest quality. Here at least once the glory of a real Epic has shown itself in his poetry. The full-throated Epic tune is sounded in the voice of the poet :

O Urvashi swaying soft and sweet,
When thou dancest before the assembly of the gods,
Thrills of delight course through thy limbs,
Waves upon waves swirl rhythmically in the bosom of the ocean,
The undulating tips of the shivering corn
Appear like the fluttering skirt of mother earth.
From the necklace hung upon thy breast
Drop down the stars on the floor of the sky.
And all at once man loses his masculine heart in sheer rapture.

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The blood flows leaping and gurgling,
In the twinkling of an eye thy girdle gives way
At the far horizon, O naked Beauty !

In the next phase, in his middle age when the poet arrived at a mature consciousness, when he wrote his 'Ferry Boat', he seems to have come down to a more normal, ordinary and homely tune in his expression, suited to the movements of every-day life. Superabundance of robes and ornaments has fallen away ; what is normal, common, commonplace—not the pomp of vernal lush but merely the sobriety of autumn—is now enough; the aspiration of these mellow days resembles the sweet, pastoral tune of the religious mendicant's one-stringed lyre.

From the golden beach of the other shore
Imbedded in darkness
What enchantment came with a song upsetting my work ?

This tune has been uppermost in most of the poems of 'Gitanjali' and 'Gitali'. Afterwards we hear once again the resonance of a high emotional, impassioned voice. The tune reaches a lofty pitch, the melody is far-flung, but it is more steady and firm ; no longer something fluid and amorphous but a formulation in solid concepts, an upsurge from a deeper and self-possessed source—I am referring to 'Balaka' :

I hear the wild restless flutterings of wings
In the depth of silence, in the air, on land and sea.
Herbs and shrubs flap their wings over the earthy sky.
Who can say, what is there in the tenebrous womb of the earth ?
Millions of seeds open out their wings
Even like flights of cranes.
I see ranges of those hillocks, those forests
Moving with outspread wings from isle to isle,
From the unknown to the unknown.
With the flutter of starry wings
Darkness glimmers in the weeping light.

Tagore, as it appears to me, never again reached such heights of bold imageries and in such an amplitude of melody. Enchanting moods and manners, figures and symbols, diverse and varied, were there, every one of them with its own specialty, beauty and gracefulness but it is doubtful whether they

possess the sense of vastness and loftiness and epic sweep and grandeur to that extent as here. The urge, the movement that finds expression here is not concerned merely with the aspiration of human beings or individuals—here is expressed in a profound, grandiose voice the aspiration of the inert soil and the mute earth—not merely in conscious beings but also in the subconscious world there vibrates an intense, passionate, vast, upward longing. A sleepless march proceeds towards the light from the bottom of the entire creation—not only it is finely and adequately expressed but that reality has assumed its own form as it were in word and rhythm, as a living embodiment. In ‘The Awakening of the Fountain’ we notice the lisping of this grand message, although the fountain is a mere symbol or an example, a mere support there, and the significance is also to a considerable extent of the nature of an oration or discourse, nevertheless fundamentally the poet’s dream remains the same. So, we can say, what commenced with the ‘Fountain’, the cry of a chord, the invocation of a limb has become a full-fledged orchestral symphony in ‘Balaka’—the wheel has come full circle.

(Concluded)

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

(Translated by Chinmoy from the original Bengali in “Rabindranath”)

A DIVE INTO DR. RUNES' *A BOOK OF CONTEMPLATION*

(Continued from the February issue)

DR. Runes holds that "Knowledge without morals is a beast on the loose". Definitely so. But even mere morality in itself is a limp and therefore a weak thing. To take an instance, man knows the consequence of hating and warfare etc. Yet he lets the beast overpower him. Here Dr. Runes fails to see why humanity "has not learned in a million years to govern itself". History clearly shows that morality in itself has been powerless, or powerful and effective in its own limited meagre way, and failed, if not always, occasionally and even often, individually, socially and internationally, to guide and much less stop man from becoming a slave to the devil : he has remained a shuttlecock among the forces of falsehood, though some privileged souls escaped into the beyond-world of bliss. But moral might, with all its limitations, must guide man's conduct till spirituality comes in and replaces it. Otherwise man behaves worse than the beast. However, ultimately, not morality but spirituality alone can save man. Hence the indispensable need for him to attain the soul-power which shall deliver him and humanity from the immoral and barbaric lapses into the devildom of greed, hatred and warfare. The soul should be allowed to flower and come to the forefront to guide man in his individual, social and international life. For, living in soul alone—the truly eternal essence of Equanimity, universal Love and lasting Brotherhood—man can feel an abiding intimacy with all life in the universe.

In regard to woman Dr. Runes thinks that she "is not an equal but rather a sequel to man". Spiritually, she is an equal, as all are. And true equality is possible only in the spiritual sense of the term. I believe that the right and the balanced evaluation of man and woman is to be found in the remarkably beautiful Indian conception of Ardhanārīśwara, the Lord who embodies in himself and represents both the male and female principles equally and harmoniously. Man and woman are one in soul, though they may differ in their physical contours. Recognising this truth shall we be able to look upon both with an eye of equanimity. This is the ideal to be translated into our living experience.

It is therefore unwise to think like Dr. Runes that woman is uncreative and incapable of the heights man has attained in art, literature, philosophy, science. If she did not hitherto, it is because man has kept her under an

iron hand. Yet there are superb instances like Gargi and Maitreyi, sages at the same time brilliantly versed in hair-splitting philosophical discourse, Sita and Savitri whose godly lives undiminishingly stand even to this day as the eternally inspiring ideal of womanhood, the Christ-intoxicated St. Teresa, a mine of spiritual wisdom, who possessed an uncommon capacity for a spontaneous and detailed expression of self-knowledge, the Krishna-mad Mira, a spirit indomitable, who had in her the rare trinity of saint, poet and singer. And we have again the divinely inspired Joan of Arc and the famous and noble Queen of Jhansi, both very young and yet invincible warriors who struck the death-knell into the hearts of their enemies, the dauntless scientific genius Madame Curie who startled the world by her discovery of radium in collaboration with her husband and the pioneer educationist thinker Maria Montessori who did a monumental work in the field of Child-Education. All these women cannot be brushed aside as mere uncreative "sequels" to man. They prove that woman too can flower in her life and thought in and through and by the help and guidance of the divinity hidden within her.

What it is precisely, I fail to understand, that should obstruct her from becoming an equal to man. Why should she, just because man foolishly wanted her once to be so, ever remain or be a second-rate child of God as if man on his behalf has more honoured Him down the ages than woman? Or did the Lord at the momentous hour of Creation grow partial and command : "Lo, Man, You alone write philosophy ! You alone compose music ! You alone create art and literature and science ! Let woman not step into this sphere but only enjoy what is created by you !" What is this all if not man's own noisome vanity ? And, under its spell, he shouted at her : "Vanity ! Thy name is woman !"

And lastly the fact must be noted and admitted that man and woman, as humans, are of imperfect nature. That is why they should all the more endeavour sincerely to develop and perfect themselves in their relation to, and live in tune with, what is perfect and eternal, the Purushottama, the Divine Supreme, our one true Self.

Coming to the contemplations of Dr. Runes on Education we find them at once illuminating and instructive. His irony rightly hits at a principal weak-point in the modern system of education which exiles God and religious instruction from the class-rooms:

"God has been separated from our schools; that may be all-right, but the Devil was left there and that is not fair. The Devil of prejudice, arrogance, hatred, envy, home-grown superstition, success-greed hovers over the school benches. You cannot exorcise the Devil by looking on the other way."

The fundamental cause of all this sorry affair is that we have chosen to drive

out from our hearts the truth that is God and His righteous forces, and give place to the false Devil and his mean attendants. This in turn may be due to our head outgrowing our heart. When knowledge grows without the consultation of the heart, it becomes not only unmanageable but dangerous. So Dr. Runes rightly affirms: "One need not be learned in the head to do the right thing, but rather learned in the heart." A pity, however, is that "the learning of the heart is the most neglected branch of education to-day". Also while "the heart can learn only from another heart."

Further, Dr. Runes sincerely pleads :

"The poor in memory, the poor in perception, the slow in thinking and the weak in diligence are to be handled with the very same attitude as those enriched in all respects."

A calm heart of equanimity is required for that purpose. For, the weak, who actually need an encouraging word and right, intelligent and sympathetic guidance, are often impatiently thundered upon while on the well-equipped are showered undue favours.

Wisely asserts Dr. Runes : "The beginning of true thinking is silence." Again, he says : "Men think alike; if it were different, they could not co-exist even for a day." For, then, none would understand the other and, consequently, there would be only an incurable eternal chaos. There is indeed some common inherent truth that eternally holds us all together.

At one place in his book Dr. Runes derides historians for giving too much importance to "ugly details" of certain rulers. But, unfortunately, he is plainly contradicting himself when he says at another place that monuments should be erected less to the benefactors than to the evil-doers "to keep them fresh in the public memory." Would this not set a bad example before the people who may imitate and multiply the work of evil-doers ?

It appears that Dr. Runes is contented to state that God exists only in the soul of man and nowhere else. He exclusively and decisively says :

"The soul of God is in the soul of man. There is no God but in the consciousness of innermost man."

A most significant statement and even a most basic truth indeed. For man has to first realise the God residing within himself, though God may come to him by the saving Grace from above, through the uplifting beauties of Nature, or from within the deep cave of his heart, or through all these. But if that alone is true, that is, if God resides only in man's soul then who is it that dwells in other living creatures and in the vast endless immensities of the physical universe ? If we are to be logical and comprehensive, if we are not to discard the statements of the great souls who have realised God fully and, over and above all, if we are to maintain the integral godliness of the Godhead, it must also needs

A DIVE INTO DR. RUNES' "A BOOK OF CONTEMPLATION"

be said that God not only is in all but is all, for there is nought other than He, and He is also above all. He is at once the immanent Individual, the Antaryamin, present in the core of everything and every being, the universal Lord, Iswara, who creates, destroys and preserves, and the transcendent Truth that is Brahman constituting all, embracing all, transcending all. Not accepting this all-inclusive statement of fact about God we shall have to commit ourselves to, and account for, a double reality—God who resides in the soul of man alone, and that which is 'other' than God.

But to speak of God and at the same time give place to something 'other' than God is to posit an opposite eternal force, to destroy the very concept of God, to contradict Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience of God who is the very Ground of all existence. And what will remain of poor God minus these basic principles which are His very life-breath ! God is God with them. Without them He will be nothing more than a magnified human being, who might even be worse than man ! But, happily, all are safe in the sense that He, according to our Doctor, remains invisible for ever somewhere in the innermost recesses of man himself !

(To be continued)

POORNA

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Yoga-Kundalini Upanishad, Published by Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy, Rishikesh. Translated and annotated by *Swami Sivananda*. Pp. 96, Price Rs. 1.50

OF the traditional 108 Upanishads a large number are Vedantic in import. Some can be called physiological, some Mantra, some Dhyana Upanishads. There are a good many which deal with the technique of psycho-physical Yoga ; the Yoga-Kundalini Upanishad comes under this category of Yoga Upanishads. It forms part of the Krishna Yajurveda and consists of three chapters. The subject-matter, as the title indicates, is the Kundalini Yoga.

It begins with an analysis of Chitta, that part of the mind which receives sensations and stores them in memory as *saṁskāras* and *vāsanās*. These vasanas on the one hand and *prāṇa*, the life-force, on the other are responsible, says the Upanishad, for the activity of Chitta. The vasanas and the prana are interconnected and the control of one results in the control of the other. If Prana is regulated and brought under check, the vasanas too are controlled and the Chitta falls silent. The Upanishad prescribes a triple method therefor:

1) *Mitāhāra*, regulated and light food—agreeable and nutritious. The system should not be overloaded with solid food ; there should be a judicious balancing of the solid and liquid diet, leaving part of the stomach empty.

2) *Āsana*, position of the body. The Padmasana¹ and the Vajrasana² are recommended as they promote a healthy circulation of nervous energies and give a happy stability to the body.

3) *Śakti-cālana*, movement of the Kundalini Shakti which is lying latent at the base of the spine. For this purpose it is necessary, says the Upanishad, to set into motion the Sarasvati Nadi which is situated on the west of the navel. By increasing the length of the inhalation of breath to specified limits the Nadi is set into movement. This is followed by a physical manipulation of the abdominal muscles which shakes the Kundalini ; it is stirred from right to left repeatedly till it rises up and enters into the mouth of the Sushumna Nadi.

Pranayama, regulation of the breath, plays an important part in the

¹ Placing the right foot on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh

² One heel below the Muladhara and the other over it and sitting with the trunk, neck and head in one straight line.

awakening of this Kundalini Shakti and the Upanishad devotes considerable part of its exposition to the subject. Briefly the process is this :

The sphincter muscles of the anus are contracted and the downward tendency of the Apana breath is arrested, that *vāyu* is forced upwards. And when this Apana reaches the location of Agni, fire in the region of the navel, the breath of Vayu blows the Agni into a flame. This Agni and the heated Vayu join the *prāṇa* from above which in its turn is forced downward. A terrific state of heat is generated and as a result the Kundalini is pressured into awakening. When so aroused it makes a hissing noise, stands erect and enters the aperture of the Sushumna which is called the Brahma dvara, door to Brahman. The Prana by itself joins the Kundalini when it enters the Sushumna. And when this takes place there is a steadiness of mind—a condition which when confirmed is termed the *Unmani avasthā*. By practice the Shakti so awakened and set into movement is led step by step through the several centres or lotuses along the spinal axis, *merudaṇḍa*, till it joins the highest Lotus at the crown of the head, the Sahasrara, and then there is a downpour of Bliss. When this state of Bliss is induced again and again, there grows a condition of being in which one is utterly lost in the consciousness of sheer Ananda and forgets the physical body; there is a growing disassociation between one's consciousness and one's body—with all that it means—and the yogin attains an inner state of release, *mukti*, which is complete with the shedding of the body at death.

Though the body is subjected to a good deal of pressure during these exercises, it is wrong to attribute its illnesses to Yoga as some are wont to do. The text then gives an interesting list of the causes of the diseases of the body : sleep during day-time, late vigils at night, sexual excesses, mixing in crowds, retention of urine and faeces, unwholesome food and 'laborious mental operation with prana', *prayasa-prāṇa-cintanat*.

Though the broad lines on which the Kundalini Yoga proceeds is always the same there are a number of methods and processes which are used, varying with individual requirements. One of the most important of these is the Khechari Mudra described in the Second Chapter of the Upanishad. It is also called the Lambika Yoga. The Khechari Vidya consists of two operations, *kṛiyās*: *chedana* and *dohana*.

The *frenum linguae*, the lower part of the front of the tongue, is cut, *cheda*, for the space of a hair with a sharp knife once a week and turmeric powder is applied to it. This continues for six months. Thereafter, butter is applied to the tongue and it is stretched in the manner of milking the cow's udder, *dohana*. When the tongue gets sufficiently lengthened, the yogin folds it back to touch and cover the posterior portion of the nostrils : in the throat thereby the breath is stopped completely.

For those who have a natural long tongue the operation of cutting is not necessary. This practice, it is described, gives one many powers, *viz.* walking in air, living underground, etc. The Khechari has its own Mantra, the Melana Mantra.

This mudra is called the Khechari because, says the Dhyana-bindu Upanishad (v.82), in this state the chitta moves in *kha* (akasa) and also because the tongue goes into the *kha* (the opening of the skull in the throat).

After these descriptions of the different processes employed in Shakti chalana, the text goes on to stress on the goal of all yoga—attainment of the Indivisible Reality which is reached through the several states of Its One Consciousness, manifest in the individual as *viśva*, *taṁasa* and *prajñā*, and in the universe as *virāt*, *hiraṇyagarbha* and *īśvara*. It concludes :

“Then that alone remains which is soundless, touchless, formless, and deathless, which is the rasa, eternal, and odourless, which has neither beginning nor end, which is greater than the great and which is permanent, stainless and without decay.”

The Upanishad gives an idea how the Yoga of the Tantras was utilised to reach the goal of the Advaita Vedanta. Swamiji's Introduction and Annotations are very helpful. His warnings against amateurish attempts to practise this yoga without the close guidance and active help of a competent Guru are necessary and welcome.

This edition contains the full Sanskrit text and a free translation, verse by verse. A very useful publication.

M. P. PANDIT

Satya-Ka-Rahasya by *Swami Keshavadeva Acharya*, published by Sri Aurobindo Pustakalaya, Railway Road, Hapur, P.O., Dist. Meerut, U.P. Pages 312—Price Rs. 4.50

MODERN thought, in its deepest explorations, seems to be realising the truth that the present plight of human culture is the final result of man's fall from his essential divinity, his self-separation from God; and that the only way to a cultural redemption, individual and collective, is a return to God and a dynamic union with His regenerative Will. This return does not mean a retreat into the past. God is not immured in the greatness of the past. He guides us even through the gloom of the present, and beams and beckons to us from the dawning glory of the future. The fusing of what is vital in the legacy of the past into the emergent possibilities of the present is the secret of helping the creation of the future.

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Inspired by this belief, Swami Keshavadeva Acharya has been offering to the public the living treasures of the ancient culture of India, re-assessed in the light of Sri Aurobindo's spiritual vision and experience. His books have been acting as messengers of the past, speaking in the idiom and accents of the present. They have become deservedly popular inasmuch as they supply the most pressing need of the hour.

In the present book, the author has explained the nature and power of Truth, and the inner purity, freedom and joy it leads to. With a wealth of anecdotes from various sources, scriptural and historical, he has tried to drive home the bed-rock principles of self-culture. The lucidity of his language, the aptness of the examples given, the wisdom of the quotations, culled from illustrious thinkers, Eastern and Western and the new perspective in which some of the ancient concepts have been reviewed, add to the value of the book, and are sure to appeal to those minds, young and old, that have faith in God and the future of man.

RISHABHCHAND

THE SUKTA 10-95 OF URVASI AND PURURAVAS IN THE “RIGVEDA” AND THEIR LEGEND IN OTHER WRITINGS

(Continued from the February issue)

BELOW is given the text from the Rigveda, with the meanings and, where necessary, the grammar and etymology.

10-95-1 — *Haye, jāye, manasā, tiṣṭha, ghore, vacāmsi, miśra, kṛṇavāvahai na, nau, mantrāḥ, anuditāsaḥ, ete, mayāḥ, karan, pare-tare, cana, ahan.*

Anvaya : *Haye jāye*=Ho, there, my consort; *tiṣṭha manasā*=stay with all your mind; *ghore*=O fierce-souled woman; *nu miśra kṛṇavāvahai*=we will speak together now; *ete, nau mantraḥ anuditāsaḥ*=these our unuttered consultations; *na karan mayāḥ*=will not make us happy; *cana pare-tare ahan*=even in subsequent days.

Grammar:—*Cana* is a particle which means even.

Bhavartha:—Ho there, my consort, stay awhile with all your mind; O fierce-souled woman, these our unuttered consultations will not make us happy even in subsequent days.

Notes — This Mantra reveals that Pururavas whose ideal of life on earth was to live happily on earth with an Apsara thinks that all the troubles that either he or both he and she were undergoing till then are due to their not having consulted each other and understood each other in the light of that ideal and so they must at least now consult each other and understand each other for a happy future life.

10-95-2 : —*Kim, etā, vācā, kṛṇava, tava, aham, pra, akramīsam, uśasām, agriyā-iva;—purūravaḥ, punaḥ, astam, parā, iḥ, duḥ-āpanā, vātaḥ-iva, aham, asmi.*

Anvaya :—*Kim kṛṇavā aham*=what will I do; *tava etā vācā*=with this thy speech ? *pra akramīsam*=I have gone forward; *agriyā-iva uśasām*=as if with the foremost of the Dawns; *purūravas astam parā iḥ*=O Pururavas, go home again; *aham asmi duḥ-āpanā vātaḥ-iva*=I am difficult to be attained like the wind.

Bhāvārtha:— What will I do with thy speech; I have gone forward as if with the foremost of the Dawns. O Pururavas, go home again; I am difficult to be attained like the wind.

Notes : — Urvasi's reply reveals that, more than he, she had a better and higher awakening of the Vedic Goddess, Dawn, who leads her devotees forward to a better and higher life and as such he who has fallen behind her in living a higher life cannot hope to live with her.

10-95-3 : — *Iṣuḥ, na, śrīye, iṣu-dheḥ, asanā, gosāḥ, śata-sāḥ, na, ramhiḥ;—avīre, kratau, vi, davidyutat, na, urā, na, māyum, citayanta, dhunayaḥ;—Anvaya :—Asanā iṣuḥ iṣu-dheḥ*=with a throw like an arrow from its quiver; *na go-sāḥ śata-sāḥ*=like a conqueror of hundred cattle; *śrīye*=for glory; *ramhiḥ*=thou didst speed away; *dhunayaḥ citayanta māyum*=the minstrels caused the bleating to be perceived; *na urā*=like sheep; *vi davidyutat*=making the lightning flashes; *na avīre kratau*=as if in an unheroic action.

Grammar :—*Ramhiḥ* is Ao.Is.2.S. of rt. *ramh*=to speed; *Māya*=sorcery; and *māyu*=bleating; *uras*=heart; and *urā*=bleating; *dhunayaḥ* is Nom. pl. of *dhuni*=minstrel, from the root *dhvan-i*=*dhuni*; *go-sāḥ* and *śata-sāḥ* are in Gen.S.

Bhavartha : Like a conqueror of a hundred cattle and like an arrow from its quiver with a throw thou didst speed away for glory; the minstrels caused to perceive the bleating as of a sheep, making the lightning flashes as if in an unheroic act.

Notes :—Pururavas accuses Urvasi that her action in leaving him was all for self-glory and was planned in cowardice by her along with the Gandharvas. This agrees with the version of the legend in the Puranas.

10-95-4 :—*Sā, vasu, dadhātī, śvaśurāya, vayah, uṣaḥ, yadi, vaṣṭi, anti-grhāt; astam, nanakṣe, yasmin, cākat, divā, naktam, śnathitā, vaitasena.*

Anvaya :—*Uṣaḥ*=O Dawn; *yadi vaṣṭi anti-grhāt*=from the adjacent house when he desired; *sa dadhātī vasu vayah śvaśurāya*=she giving her husband's father riches and food; *nanakṣe astam*=reached the house; *yasmin cākat*=in which she enjoyed; *divā naktam*=by day and night; *śnathitā vaitasena*=with the piercing of the reed.

Grammar :—*Śnathitā* is Inst. S. of *śnathita* which is Pp. of root *śnath*=to pierce.

Bhavartha :—O Dawn, from the adjacent house when he desired her, she giving riches and food to her husband's father, she reached his house in which she enjoyed day and night with his piercing by the reed.

Notes :—In reply to his accusation Urvasi invokes the goddess Dawn to refute his accusation that she acted for self-glory and that she was insincere in her enjoyment with him.

10-95-5 :—*Triḥ, sma, mā, ahnaḥ, śnathayaḥ, vaitasena, uta, sma, me, avyatyai, prṇasi; purūravaḥ, anu, te, ketam, āyam, rājā, me, vīra, tanvaḥ, tat, āsīḥ.*

Anvaya :—*Triḥ ahnā*=thrice in the day; *vaitasena mā śnathayaḥ sma*=didst thou pierce me by the reed; *uta me avyatyai prṇasi sma*=and thou hast filled me with satiation; *purūravaḥ anu te ketam āyam*=O Pururavas following thy intuition I came; *Vīra*=O hero; *āsīt tat rājā*=thou wert that king; *me tanvaḥ*=of my body;

Bhavartha :—Thrice in the day didst thou pierce me with the reed; and thou hast filled me with satiation; O Pururavas ! following thy intuition I came, O hero, thou wert that king of my body.

Notes :—Urvasi, in this Mantra also, refutes his accusation against her that she left him for self-glory and not because of a higher ideal than mere vital enjoyment.

10-95-6 :—*Yā, sujūrṇiḥ, śreṇiḥ, sumne-āpiḥ, hr̥de-cakṣuḥ, na, grandhni caranyuḥ; tāḥ, anjayaḥ, aruṇayaḥ, na, sasruḥ, śriye, gāvaḥ, na, dhenavaḥ, anavanta;*

Anvaya :—*Yā sujūrṇi*=she who is Sujurni; *śreṇiḥ*=Sreni; *sumne-āpiḥ*=*Sumneapi*; *hr̥de-cakṣuḥ*=*Hr̥de-cakṣu*; *caranyuḥ*=moving; *grandhni*=one well-read or with knotted hair; *tāḥ anjayaḥ*=they who were all anointed; *aruṇayaḥ gāvaḥ na*=like red cows; *sasruḥ*=hastened; *śriye*=beauteously; *na dhenavaḥ anavanta*=bellowed like milch-cows, or praised like nourishing ones.

Bhavartha :—*Sujurni, Sreni, Sujne-āpi, Hr̥de-cakṣu*, all moving and wellread, and anointed like red cows, hastened beauteously and bellowed like milchcows.

Notes :—Pururavas expresses the impression which the Apsaras created on his mind when he met them in the company of Urvasi; according to the Puranas he met them at the tank in the land of the Kurus.

10-95-7 :—*Sam, asmin, jāyamāne, āsata, gnāḥ, uta, im, avaradhan, nadyaḥ, svagūrtāḥ; mahe, yat, tvā, purūravaḥ, raṇāya, avardhayan, dasyu-hatyāya, devāḥ.*

Anvaya :—*Asmin jāyamāne*=over his birth; *gnāḥ samāsata*=the gods sate together; *uta nadyaḥ svagūrtāḥ*=and the rivers pleasing in themselves; *avardhan im*=increased him; *purūravaḥ yat devāḥ avardhayaḥ tvā*=O Pururavas, then the gods increased thee; *mahe raṇāya*=for the great battle; *dasyuhatyāya*=for the destruction of the Dasyus.

Grammar :—*Āsata* is Ipf. 3. Pl. of root *ās*=to sit;

Bhavartha :—Over his birth the Divine Powers sate together and the Rivers increased him, pleasing in themselves; O Pururavas, then the gods increased thee for the great battle and the destruction of the Dasyus.

Notes :—Urvasi is referring to the birth of Ayus, or of Purura as in the first line of the Mantra; the Rivers may be Streams of divine inspiration. Rana is battle in this Mantra and not delight, though the root “ran” may have that meaning.

10-95-8 :—*Sacā, yat, āsu, jahatiṣu, atkam, amānuṣiṣu, mānuṣaḥ, ni-seve; -apa, sma, mat, tarasanti, na, bhujyuh, tāḥ, atrasan, ratha-sprśaḥ, na, aśvāḥ.*

Anvaya :—*Yat mānuṣaḥ sacā niseve*=when I as mortal have attended; *āsu amānuṣiṣu*=upon these immortals; *jahatiṣu atkam*=these who abandon their forms; *na tarasanti bhujyuh*=like a sacred snake; *tāḥ mat apa sma*=they go away from me; *tāḥ na aśvāḥ ratha-sprśaḥ*=like horses that are brought into touch with the chariot.

Grammar :—*Tarasanti* and *bhujyuh* are fem. nouns in apposition to each other.

Bhavartha :—When I as mortal attend upon these who are immortals and who abandon their forms, they run away like sacred snakes and like horses that are brought into touch with a chariot.

Notes :—Pururavas draws a distinction between his own nature and the nature of Apsaras and wonders at it.

10-95-9 :—*Yat, āsu, amṛtāsu, martaḥ, ni-sprk, sam, kṣonībhiḥ, kratubhiḥ, na, prṅkte; tāḥ, āpayah, na, tanvaḥ, śumbhata, svāḥ, aśvāsaḥ, na, krīlayah, dandaśānāḥ.*

Anvaya :—*Yat martaḥ ni-sprk āsu amṛtāsu*=when man fondly caresses these immortals; *na sam prṅkte*=and does not come into contact with them; *kṣonībhiḥ kratubhiḥ*=through sacrificial acts of the earth; *tāḥ āpayah*=these swans; *na śumbhata svāḥ tanvaḥ*=do not beautify their own bodies; *krīlayah dandaśānāḥ na aśvāsaḥ*=and play and bite like horses in their play.

Grammar :—*Ni-sprk* is Nom. S. of *ni-sprś*. *Dandaśānāḥ* is Intens. Pt. of *rt. damś*.

Bhavartha :—When man fondly caresses these immortals and does not contact them through sacrificial acts on earth, they do not beautify their own bodies, they that are swans (pure souls) play and bite like horses in their play.

Notes :—Pururavas says that only sacrificial acts done for a higher and better life will enable one to contact them and possess them. Otherwise they play and bite like horses in their play. This is an experience gained by him in his married life with Urvasi.

10-95-10 :—*Vidyut, na, yā, yatanti, davidyot, bharanti, me, apyā, kāmyāni; -janiṣṭo, apaḥ, naryaḥ, su-jātaḥ, pra, urvaśi, tirata, dīrgham, āyuh.*

Anvaya :—*Yā apyā*=she who belongs to water; *yatanti bharanti me kāmyāni*=striving and bringing me desirable things; *na vidyut davidyot*=flashed like lightning; *su-jātaḥ*=one perfect in birth; *naryaḥ*=with hero-powers, *janiṣṭa apaḥ*=is born from waters; *urvaśi pratirata dīrgham āyuh*=may Urvasi extend her long life;

Grammar :—*Apaḥ* is Abl.S. of *ap*=water; *Janṣṭa* is Ao. Is. Inj. of *rt. jan*=generate.

MOTHER INDIA

Bhavartha :—She who belongs to water, striving and bearing desirable things for me flashed like lightning; one perfect in birth with heroic powers is born from waters (of existence); may Urvasi extend her long life.

Notes :—Pururavas expresses gratitude to Urvasi for doing him great good and begetting Ayus and wishes her long life.

(To be continued)

NARAYANA C. REDDI

Students' Section

RÉPONSES—ANSWERS

Q. Douce Mère, que veut dire : une prolongation physique subtile de la forme superficielle de l'enveloppe mentale ? ("La Vie Divine", p. 78)

Q. Sweet Mother, what is meant by : a subtle physical prolongation of the superficial form of the mental envelope ? ("The Life Divine", p. 78)

R. Cela veut dire que le fantôme que l'on voit et que l'on prend à tort pour l'être trépassé lui-même, n'est qu'une *image* de lui, une empreinte (comme une empreinte photographique) que la forme mentale superficielle a laissée dans le physique subtile, image qui peut devenir visible sous certaines conditions. Ces images peuvent être mobiles (comme des images de cinéma) mais elles n'ont pas de réalité substantielle. C'est la peur ou l'émotion de ceux qui voient ces images qui leur donnent parfois l'apparence d'un pouvoir ou d'une action qu'elles ne possèdent pas en elles-mêmes. D'où la nécessité de ne jamais avoir peur et de les reconnaître pour ce qu'elles sont=une apparence trompeuse.

A. It means that the ghost which one sees and wrongly takes for the departed being itself is only an *image* of it, an imprint (like a photographic imprint) which the superficial mental form has left on the subtle physical, image which can become visible under certain conditions. These images can be mobile (like the images of the cinema) but they do not have substantial reality. It is the fear or the emotion of those who see these images that gives them sometimes the appearance of a power or an action which they do not possess in themselves. Hence the necessity of never being afraid and of recognising them for what they are=a deceptive appearance.

14-9-1959

THE MOTHER

Q. Douce Mère, comment taire le mental, rester tranquille, et en même temps avoir une aspiration, une intensité ou un élargissement ? Parce que, dès qu'on aspire, c'est 'le mental qui aspire', n'est-ce pas ?

Q. Sweet Mother, how to silence the mind, remain tranquil, and at the same time have an aspiration, an intensity or a widening ? Because, as soon as one aspires, it is 'the mind that aspires,' isn't it ?

R. Non, l'aspiration, de même que l'élargissement et l'intensité, viennent tous du cœur, du centre émotif, porte du psychique ou, plutôt, menant au psychique.

Le mental est, dans sa nature, curieux, intéressé, il regarde, il observe, il essaye de comprendre et d'expliquer et, avec toute cette activité, il dérange l'expérience et nuit à son intensité et à sa force.

Plus il est tranquille et silencieux, plus, au contraire, l'aspiration peut monter des profondeurs du cœur dans la plénitude de son ardeur.

A. No, aspiration, as well as widening and intensity, all come from the heart, the emotional centre, gateway of the psychic or, rather, passage to the psychic.

The mind is, in its nature, curious, interested, it sees, it observes, it tries to understand and explain and, with all this activity, it disturbs the experience and hinders its intensity and its force.

The more tranquil and silent it is, the more, on the contrary, can aspiration rise from the depths of the heart in the fullness of its ardour.

17-9-1959

THE MOTHER

Q. Douce Mère, comment peut-on éliminer la volonté de l'ego ?

Q. Sweet Mother, how is one to eliminate the will of the ego ?

R. Cela revient à demander comment éliminer l'ego. C'est seulement par le yoga qu'on peut le faire. Il y a eu, à travers l'histoire spirituelle de l'humanité, beaucoup de méthodes de yoga—que Sri Aurobindo nous décrit et nous explique dans *La Synthèse des Yogas*.

Mais avant d'éliminer la volonté de l'ego, ce qui prend fort longtemps, on peut commencer par soumettre la volonté de l'ego à la volonté Divine à chaque occasion et, finalement, de façon constante. Pour cela, le premier pas est de comprendre que le Divin sait mieux que nous ce qui est bon pour nous et ce dont nous avons vraiment besoin, non seulement pour notre progrès spirituel, mais aussi pour notre bien-être matériel, pour la santé de notre corps et le bon fonctionnement de toutes les activités de notre être.

Bien entendu, ce n'est pas l'opinion de l'ego qui croit mieux savoir que quiconque ce qu'il lui faut, et qui réclame son indépendance de jugement et

de décision. Mais il pense et sent comme cela parce qu'il est ignorant, et peu à peu, il faut le convaincre que sa perception et sa connaissance sont trop limitées pour qu'il puisse vraiment savoir et qu'il juge seulement selon ses désirs qui sont aveugles et non selon la vérité.

Car les désirs ne sont pas l'expression des besoins mais des préférences.

A. This amounts to asking how to eliminate the ego. It is only by yoga that one can do it. There have been, through the spiritual history of humanity, many methods of yoga—which Sri Aurobindo has described and explained to us in *The Synthesis of Yoga*.

But before *eliminating* the will of the ego, which takes very long, one may begin to submit the will of the ego to the Divine Will on each occasion and, finally, in a constant manner. For that, the first step is to understand that the Divine knows better than ourselves what is good for us and what we truly need, not only for our spiritual progress, but also for our material welfare, for the health of our body and the right functioning of all the activities of our being.

Of course, this is not the opinion of the ego which believes that it knows better than anyone else what it needs, and which claims its independence of judgment and decision. But it thinks and feels like that because it is ignorant, and little by little one should convince it that its perception and its understanding are too limited for true knowledge and that it judges only according to its blind desires and not according to truth.

For the desires are the expression not of needs but of preferences.

19-9-1959

THE MOTHER

Q. Douce Mère, pourquoi le Divin a-t-il fait son chemin si difficile? Il peut le faire plus facile s'il le veut, n'est ce pas?

Q. Sweet Mother, why has the Divine made His path so difficult? He can make it more easy if He wants, can't He?

R. Tout d'abord il faut savoir que l'intellect, le mental, ne peut rien comprendre du Divin, ni à ce qu'Il fait, ni *comment* Il le fait et encore moins *pourquoi* Il le fait. Pour savoir quelque chose du Divin, il faut s'élever au-dessus de la pensée et entrer dans la conscience psychique, la conscience de l'âme, ou dans la conscience spirituelle.

Ceux qui en ont fait l'expérience, ont toujours dit que les difficultés et les souffrances du chemin ne sont pas réelles, mais une création de l'ignorance

MOTHER INDIA

humaine et que dès qu'on sort de cette ignorance, on sort aussi des difficultés, sans parler de l'état de béatitude inaliénable dans lequel on se trouve dès qu'on est en contact conscient avec le Divin.

Donc, selon eux, la question n'a pas de base réelle et ne peut pas être posée.

A. First of all, one should know that the intellect, the mind, can understand nothing of the Divine, neither what He does nor *how* He does it and still less why He does it. To know something of the Divine, one needs to raise oneself above thought and enter the psychic consciousness, the consciousness of the soul, or rise into the spiritual consciousness.

Those who have the experience of it have always said that the difficulties and the sufferings of the path are not real, but a creation of human ignorance, and that as soon as one gets out of this ignorance one also gets out of the difficulties, not to speak of the state of inalienable bliss in which one finds oneself the moment one is in conscious contact with the Divine.

So, according to them, the question has no real basis and cannot be put.

21-9-1959

THE MOTHER

TALKS ON POETRY

(These Talks were given to a group of students starting their University life. They have been prepared for publication from notes and memory, except in the few places where they have been expanded a little. Here and there the material is slightly rearranged in the interests of unity of theme. As far as possible the actual turns of phrase used in the Class have been recovered and, at the request of the students, even the digressions have been preserved. The Talks make, in this form, somewhat unconventional pieces, but the aim has been to retain not only their touch of literature and serious thought but also their touch of life and laughter.)

TALK FOURTEEN

WE have illustrated piquancy epigrammatic, both in its sober and in its drunken forms—or, more piquantly put, both in its Wordsworthy and in its Swinburning manifestations. We shall now cite a less pointed example where the inversion of function which constitutes the fine paradoxicality of piquancy is illustrated with a more pictorial turn. W. H. Davies, a modern poet, speaks about the sea trying

With savage joy and effort wild
To smash his rocks with a dead child.

We would expect a smashing and killing of a child with the help of rocks. But that would not convey the vehemence of the hurling waves, the blind ferocity of the breakers. They are so blind in their force that although the child is already dead they are still bent on smashing it, and their force is so impetuous that it cannot feel spent or exercised on a small soft thing like a child's body but only on the hardness of huge rocks, and yet the means they employ is such that one almost laughs at the childishness that takes a child as a hammer to hit at stony opponents. The savagery is not only blind and vehement : it is also naive, without preconceived malice. This last aspect comes out in a verse of W. B. Yeats :

The murderous innocence of the sea.

Here too is piquancy, almost an epigram, but it is mixed with a strong felicity, a packed beauty verging on magnificence. We have clear-cut magnificence with a turn of piquancy towards the end in Sri Aurobindo's simile :

As when the storm-haired Titan-striding sea
Throws on a swimmer its tremendous laugh
Remembering all the joy its waves had drowned...

A touch of sardonic wit is in the laugh of the sea rising high all the more because of its memory of submerging very often with its mightiness the small happinesses of human beings.

In a line of Matthew Arnold's, we have three adjectives each of which may be considered as bringing in one of the three qualities, though not in the order given by Patmore. Arnold refers to his separation, real or imaginary, from a French girl named Marguerite, a separation brought about by various unfortunate factors that are symbolised by the world of waters which he calls

The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

"Unplumbed" with its suggestion of depth on sonorous and dreadful depth has magnificence. "Salt" carries piquancy in an unusual manner. To term the sea "salt" is apparently a truism; but, in English, "salt" means a lot of things. For one thing, it means "piquant" itself, as in the phrase : "a salty anecdote." It also means "stinging", "bitter", and it characterises the quality of tears. It suggests, in addition, the "sterile" and "frustrating", as in the line from Sri Aurobindo's early verse :

And salt as the unharvestable sea.

The piquancy, therefore, of Arnold's epithet lies in that epithet's signifying not at all what it obviously, superficially, literally connotes. The poet here saturates the sea with a power of frustrating sorrow which, as the first adjective tells us, is profound, mysterious, unmasterable. The idea is the same as in some other lines of Sri Aurobindo's early poetry :

What a voice of grief intrudes
On these happy solitudes !
To the wind that with him dwells
Ocean, old historian, tells
All the dreadful heart of tears

TALKS ON POETRY

Hidden in the pleasant years.
Summer's children, what do ye
By the stern and cheerless sea ?

Arnold's third adjective—"estranging"—becomes, with the combined meaning of the first two colouring it, extraordinarily felicitous : it has a piercingness beautifully presented. "Estranging" connotes alienating a person in feeling from another—distancing two hearts. The sea, a deeply mournful and embittering mass, has put a gulf between hearts that loved—it has washed away their intimacy and left them on two separate shores like utter strangers. I cannot think of a finer, more expressive culmination to the adjectival inspiration of the line than this intense "estranging", with its sound suggestive of the signified severance by that voice-lengthening consonantal cluster of *str* and that intrinsically long *a*. Neither "dividing", "dissevering" nor "separating" could have done the work with anything of the felicity brought by this word which is a bit of "poetic diction".

We can watch piquancy gathering force and passing into a wonderful felicity in Dryden's characterisation of what we may call the pleasures of the pains of hell :

In liquid burnings or in dry to dwell
Is all the sad variety of hell.

If we go by his name, I suppose the poet himself would prefer a dry den in *Inferno*. Each of us is offered by him a choice. If you are in hell, you can always amuse yourself by getting out of boiling water which makes you howl and by sitting on red-hot coals which make you scream. But wit is raised to a sort of diamond point of world-pathos in that second line, at once subdued and penetrating, tender and torturing.

Milton expresses the substance of the first line with some magnificence in one of his descriptions of the different regions making up Hell : he speaks of Satan moving

O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp.

Sri Aurobindo reaches an extreme of felicity with a piquant thrust in it when he comes to the third line in the following passage about the God of Love who does not hesitate to lend Himself to worlds of suffering :

His steps familiar with the lights of heaven
Tread without pain the sword-paved courts of hell :
There he descends to edge eternal joy.

“To edge eternal joy” is to render more intensely keen the bliss of paradise. Ecstasy is not sufficiently ecstatic until it can take experience of calamities cutting like swords, and such calamities have no power to diminish the Divine’s rapture that dares everything because it carries in itself the assurance of its own eternity as well as the yearning to impart itself to everything painful and terrible—the Divine’s rapture that becomes all the deeper by descending triumphantly into the sharp hazards of undivine darkness. Perhaps we have a moment of magnificence capping a movement of piquancy in the two lines of a poem of Narik Lama already quoted :

White Omnipresence ! where is fear ?
The mouth of hell can be thy kiss !

The very name “Narik Lama”, inverting the actual state of affairs, is an example of poetic piquancy—poetic in the extended sense of referring to a poet ! And inasmuch as it gives the suggestion of a Tibetan priest, we may say the mere piquancy of inversion changes into the felicity of conversion of the quite unpriestly and decidedly non-Tibetan Amal Kiran into what Shakespeare would have called “something rich and strange”. If we start picturing the conversion—yellow robe, shaven head, monastic aloofness, a taller and browner and less serious-looking as well as less handsome edition of our friend Satprem during one phase of his spiritual pilgrimage—we shall even see the professor-poet acquiring some magnificence, what I may term the magnificence of super-human poverty, and fitting into the powerful word-painting we find in a verse of J. C. Squire from his poem *Rivers* :

And that aged Brahmapootra
Who beyond the white Himalaya
Passes many a lamissery
 On rocks forlorn and frore,
A block of gaunt grey stone walls
With rows of little barred windows
Where shrivelled young monks in yellow silk
 Are hidden for evermore.

It is an impressive and vivid stanza, not all of it reaching the perfect intensity but at least one line of it leaving us in no doubt that imaginative magnificence has been achieved :

On rocks forlorn and frore...

TALKS ON POETRY

We have also undoubted piquancy in the phrase :

Where shrivelled young monks in yellow silk...

Note the contrast between “shrivelled” and “young” and the support to the first word by the epithet “yellow” with its implication of age and the support to the second by the noun “silk” designating the rich stuff from which the dress is made and answering to the lovely quality of youth.

We may end our differentiation of the three kinds of poetic phrase pointed out by Patmore, with three brief examples from Sri Aurobindo which may fix each kind clearly in your heads. For piquancy, take :

God shall grow up while wise men talk and sleep.

For felicity, have :

All can be done if the God-touch is there.

For magnificence, accept :

I cherish God the Fire, not God the Dream.

The first line hits off with a profound cleverness the stupidity of so-called wise men where the manifestation of the Divine such as Sri Aurobindo has in mind is concerned. The wise men will chatter away, discussing the pros and cons of the Life Divine. I shall not be surprised if some of them, who may be married and harried men, turn round and say : “Why all this bother and exertion about the Life Divine when our urgent need is really the Wife Divine ?” But even if they are not so foolish they will still be too much lost in intellectual hair-splitting and abstract logic to note the growth of God going on under their very noses. The only growth which they can note under their noses is their own moustaches. And perhaps there too they do not see that the moustaches are often shockingly untrimmed. Then there is the word “sleep”. After their barren discussions they are contented enough to go to sleep—or perhaps each of them is already asleep during the logic-chopping by the others, and certainly all of them, even while jabbering away, are all the time asleep to the fact of God’s increasing manifestation. The word “sleep” picks out with devastating brevity both the complacency and the unconsciousness of those who wag their tongues in a merely mental way about occult and spiritual phenomena.

If we look a little closely at the two parts of the piquant statement we shall observe a number of important implications. When God’s growing up is con-

trasted to wise men's talking and sleeping we should understand that the former activity goes on in a great silence and that this silence differs radically from the quiet into which the wise men fall by slumbering. The difference is precisely that the wise men *fall* into a dark quiet whereas God grows *up* in a peaceful perfection of light : the adverb "up" is significant, showing the progressive direction of the evolving divinity, a direction opposite to the downward movement, the sinking and submergence of awareness, that is the sleep of the mere mind after its bouts of pretentious philosophy about things beyond its ken. I may also mention a touch of the inevitable, a touch of the spontaneously organic in the alliteration of "God" and "grow", as if to grow up were an act of the very nature of God. The presence of the same vowel *o*, though first in a short sound and then in a long one, strengthens the touch. The only other pointed alliteration is of "while" and the opening word "wise" of the second half of the statement. This, together with the assonance the two words make by their long *i*, renders it subtly appropriate that God's growth should take place during the period when talking and sleeping are carried on by wise men.

So much for the piquant line. We have not time enough for the others this morning. We shall deal with them on the next occasion. In the few minutes left, I may set right whatever disparagement of wives was there in the dissatisfaction I hinted the wise men as having with their spouses. Lest you should think they felt the need of the Wife Divine because wives fall short badly, I would like to attest that there are many good partners to men—wives who are devoted companions, wonderful home-managers, worthy respecters of their husbands' rights : they can be so good as never even to open letters addressed to their husbands' names—unless, of course, the letters are marked "Private" ! We must give everybody their due.

Now that the bell has rung, I may say just one thing about the line I have chosen for its felicity. How like the tolling of a golden bell is the opening of it : "All can be done..."

AMAL KIRAN
(K. D. SETHNA)

WHAT THE STUDENTS THINK¹

ON EXAMINATIONS

(1)

USUALLY we find that the examinations are a terror to the students. Students find them a terror for their own individual reasons. There are students outside in the world who fear to fail because of the scoldings they will get at home, others fear to bring shame upon their parents by failing. There are some who have poor and old parents, and they wish to pass examinations in order to get a good job and be able to feed their parents. So there is in them too that fear which says, "If I fail, my parents will die of hunger. Oh, what will happen?" But there are some who are of a nervous type, and forget all in the examination hall and so they too fear. And of course there are many who have been lazy all the year round and so they fear that there is too much to be done in too short a time.

But the true spirit of examinations should be just a means of help for the teachers to know the standard of each student. And so the students should always perform their best and never mind the result.

Examinations too have their good sides and their bad sides. If two parties sat down to a debate, one on the good results of examinations and one on the bad, it would be hard to say which side would win. Examinations can develop a strong character. They can teach a student to face all difficulties. They will take away the nervousness and also force some knowledge into him. But on the contrary they can make one a cheat. For example, in the case of the boy with poor and old parents, it may be that he is a dullard and so in order to pass, for the sake of his old parents, he may adopt some unfair means such as copying. Finding that successful, he may continue doing so every year, till finally it becomes a habit with him and he turns into a thief. Examinations can also spoil the health of children, because they may force them to remain awake late at night without any food, which will not only spoil the eyes but also affect the body.

So we see that it is very difficult to decide whether the method of examinations should or should not be employed. If the organisers of a school could

¹ These are essays written during a recent Quarterly test by students of Standard 9. They are reproduced here with slight changes in idiom.

explain to the students the utility of examinations and see that the terror goes and they do not fear to fail, then the examinations could be a good way of making pupils learn. And the students would then learn for the love of knowledge. Then alone could examinations be employed as a means of promotion in school.

PURNIMA

(2)

Examinations are the darkest clouds a student can conceive of. And yet they have in them a feeling of adventure. The happiest moments of our life are those when we have walked over this terrible period of nervous tension. Nothing could be more delightful than the days after the examinations are over. Because then we get wiser and understand the great value they have for our lives. A well-prepared essay for the examination serves not for that day alone but for our entire life. So anything well done for the examinations remains a part of our consciousness for the rest of our lives. But when they approach they create a very unhappy atmosphere. One has to conquer all the laws of gravity, the laws of Faraday and everything that one would hate to do. One almost feels why on earth was such a thing discovered. But even in these laws, even in these dull things, if one goes to the source, one does not think of examinations as anything bad. So the real defect is that we really get serious only for a short time and as there are so many things to prepare and as we have very little time, we begin to grumble and call these laws and their discoverers all sorts of bad names.

The true attitude in facing examinations should be to take them as a test of what we have acquired. So many things remain hazy in our minds and yet we try to convince our minds that we know them. But when the examinations come, there is no more deception and there is a clear-cut decision between what we know and what we do not know. Then a keen interest develops and we try to find a better explanation for those things which we have not understood. I still remember one of my English papers in which I was asked to explain a line from Wordsworth. As I could not explain it properly, I went home and got it thoroughly explained and the next time when I was asked, that is after three years, I found the meaning so much more deep than what I had understood at the first glance.

Examinations are a necessity as long as one is not very serious about studies. But once one really acquires a taste for a certain subject, there is no need of examinations. Because then the student himself will try all the possible means to understand and to know about the thing he likes. Examinations become to

WHAT THE STUDENTS THINK

him a discussion of what he already knows and then there is no more this dull and black impression about them. To him examinations give a thrill of sitting for three hours over a single subject and writing as though he were discussing a certain point with his friend.

SHANTA

ON CHOICE BETWEEN LITERATURE AND SCIENCE

(1)

The choice between Science and Literature is one of the most difficult choices in our lives. The two paths run almost in opposite directions. One leads away from the other. We, at this stage of man's evolution, cannot make the lines parallel and go together. I think the choice should come a little later. What we do in science and mathematics in the first ten classes is not even a step in Science and Mathematics. They are just the lowest part of the foundations of the edifice of science. Elementary mathematics is done two years later.

What some of us find so difficult in Science and Mathematics has been achieved and done much better by men of three thousand years ago. Should we then stay in the primeval stage to develop our literary faculty ? Why live such a past in Science and be in the present in Literature ? Our back foot will be too far back in Science and our front foot too much stretched in front is liable to make us slip or split into two halves. Let us take both the feet together on the path of knowledge and the ultimate goal of truth.

SUBASH

(2)

All our studies have been classified under the two headings, Science and Literature. Science deals with Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Geography, Economics, etc., and Literature with the broader issues of life, history, and the languages which mean also the study of the peoples speaking the languages.

If we consider these in theory, not the actual use made of Science, we find they are two paths with one origin and leading to one end. Both have begun from man's instinctive thirst for knowledge and they ultimately meet to explain the meaning of life. Science advances step by step, through reason, deducing one by one the laws of nature ; but Literature goes through direct experience. Science is the mind of a man, literature the heart. How can

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we neglect one in order to improve the other ? It is true that we can live without a mind but we cannot do so without a heart. But such a life has no attraction for us, for we want a total development. It is also true that an exclusive study of Science narrows our brains, we lose sympathy with nature and man. But was Galileo less sympathetic towards man or less affectionate to his fellow-beings when he invented the telescope and saw the heavens ?

Any man looking at the question in the round will find the uses of both. Literature has a power, a force to pull us away from griefs. It brings to us hopes that lift us to the heights of our being. The most vivid examples are the great books of our Indian literature. Science is more matter-of-fact. But consider Mathematics which apparently is so dry : what a thrill of joy it brings when we find out a new solution ! And in its heights, when dealing with the infinite, it fills our mind with the sense of awe and admiration. In the depths and the heights both of them have an almost equal amount of power and they seek the one and the same object, the truth.

REBA

ON TOPICS OF CONVERSATION

Conversation renders a man full and complete. To convey his ideas, his thoughts, he should express them through his speech. And thus his topics of conversation should be noble in aim and full of rich thought. For a bad topic often deteriorates the mind of man, corrupts his personality and finally drags him to ruin. Gossip is the most popular and vulgar amongst the topics of conversation. It appeals to people, for there they let loose their tongues to mock their opponents and criticise the faults of their friends, but it often brings misfortunes to innocent people.

We fail to understand the real value of conversation. Let us consider a common incident during revolutions. A child chances to listen to the hot discussions among his father and other revolutionaries. He catches their enthusiasm, and this small being may perhaps one day change the face of his country.

The vulgarity of our society at the present time is due to its topics of conversation. It is the wrong choice of subjects that has rendered it so base. If a country is to change and progress towards its goal, it should take care to eliminate the vulgar topics, for otherwise that may one day bring about its downfall.

PRITI

A TEACHER'S PRAYER

DEAR God, when little Vasudev brings in a book on cricket
To show me bowler Bedser's style and how he cracks the wicket,
 Don't let me say with snarls and frowns
 He's here to learn his abstract nouns
 And how his vowels to pronounce,
And not this wicked cricket.

When Promesse keeps on arguing on what he wants to know,
With accents floating far and wide and to the class below,
 Don't let me get all heated up
 There must be ways to shut him up
 Where feelings don't get ruffled up
And we pleasant onward go.

When Swadesh makes a face at me whene'er my back is turned,
Remind me of the time when I, a boy, a lesson learned,
 My teacher writing on the board,
 I made a face that winked and glowered
 And he a-sudden whirled and roared,
And caned me till it burned.

If Robert, our ventriloquist, makes noises strange and wild,
Please help me to restore the peace or to be reconciled
 To ghastly moans and wheezy cries,
 To awful groans and anguished sighs
 As if a corpse unburied lies
And can't be domiciled.

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When Ashok watches his new watch and never sees the time,
And Swadhun sits a-grinning when I stumble o'er a line
 And Sudha tells Aditi
 Whispered stories long and prettee
 And none has any pitee
On this o'er-worked throat of mine.

When Jibanand and Baba learn a splendid Scottish rhyme,
And talk in gusty gutturals long past the stopping-time,
 And gasp and cough their 'och's and 'ach's
 And roll the 'R's in all the Straths,
 Shout 'Gleuraich's and 'Meall Meadhanach's,
Let me not think it crime.

And help me to remember, God, though grammar fills a place,
It doesn't fill the universe or sanctify the race
 And after all is said and done
 The teacher and the taught are one,
 Are all Your children, everyone
Before Your throne of grace.

GODFREY

THE THREE FORMS OF "ONCE MORE"

"ENCORE!" rings out the theatre hall when a piece of true art is performed on the stage. The performance is repeated but the desire to enjoy its rasa is not satiated. The same is true of all masterpieces of art, poetry, music, sculpture and painting. Then there are the scenes of beauty and grandeur of Nature's own which find receptivity in even a larger number of persons and the insatiable flame of "Once More" keeps on burning.

There is a "Once More" that is a great asset to the man of action. A dejected king, as the story goes, saw a spider falling down twenty times from the roof of the cave it was trying to climb. The spider tried for the twenty-first time and succeeded. So would he try once more, thought the king, and he mustered anew his routed army and regained the throne.

The sages remind us that a traveller in the realms of Spirit too has to cross many a stumbling-block and rise over failures. He has to try again and again before the goal is reached.

But this traveller has to be fully cautious of the clever stratagem of the "Once More" usually practised by the desires and attachments he wishes to master. "Only once more you may indulge, no doubt!" are the persuasive words of temptation. It works. "Yes, only once more I do the forbidden thing and say good-bye to it". The mischief is done, but he has not been able to bid it good-bye. At another opportune moment of weakness or unwatchfulness the lure of "only once more" comes up again and it succeeds many a time. It goes on doing so until it is totally and radically vanquished.

S. S. JHUNJHUNWALA

THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

(Continued from the issue of February 21)

Act I

Scene 5

(The abode of Manomohan Ghosh, a Barrister and close friend of Dr. K.D Ghosh. Behind the screen.)

THE BIRTH OF THE INFINITE

(5 a.m., August 15, 1872)

The golden dawn of the cosmos rapt in trance,
Awaits the Birth of the All.
The seven worlds' delight throngs in her heart
With august and sun-vast call.

Slowly the Peak unmeasured of rapture-fire
Climbs down to our human cry.
His diamond vision's deathless Will leans low
Our mortals frames to dye.

Suddenly life's giant somnolence is stirred.
His all-embracing Wing
Declares, "I come to end your eyeless fear:
To me alone now cling!

No fleeting dreams are traced by your teeming births :
Now own my infinite bloom.
In me the flood of Immortality !
Nowhere shall be your doom."

MANOMOHAN : My joy knows no bound that your son takes birth in my house.
K.D. : No doubt, it will be a matter of great rejoicing if the dream of my wife
comes true.

THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

MANOMOHAN : How does her dream run ?

K.D. : Friend, to me it is just a dream, a chimera's mist, but to her it is a blazing truth.

MANOMOHAN : Krishnadhan, I wish to hear her dream and not your comment on it.

K.D. : When she was in an interesting condition she dreamt that it was Sri Krishna who would take human birth.

MANOMOHAN : I see nothing wrong in her dream. You are a pessimist from the sole to the crown. Come, let us hurry to the child. Who knows we may find the Marvellous One ?

Scene 6

(The child is in the lap of his mother. She is fondling him.)

SWARNA : My child, are you the Lord of my dream ? I have seen you time and again. Today my dream has donned the cloak of reality.

(Enter her father, Rishi Rajnarayan.)

RISHI : Swarna, I have come to see my Beloved, the Lord of the Gods.

SWARNA : There you are, father. *(Swarnalata places the child on her father's lap.)*

RISHI : *(With a broad smile he lifts the child on to his head)* Ah ! it is Aurobindo, it is a lotus, still in the bud.

SWARNA : Father, I see no wonder in his face. In my dream he was the Wonder of Wonders.

RISHI : My daughter, do not look at him with your fleshly eyes. To me he remains the same. Never forget that God is the Thaumaturge of thaumaturges. Therefore his appearance has put a mask on his real nature. Swarna, what a pride now tingles through my blood ! My heart is swayed by a riot of joy. Krishna, Krishna is come. Dark clouds of doubt must not blight your vision. He is our Aurobindo. He is the Divine Lotus. Petal by petal He will bloom to a perfect perfection.

Scene 7

(The parlour of Dr. K.D. Ghosh. Evening sets in.)

K.D. : I have a fine proposal, Swarna. I would like to call in an Englishman.

SWARNA : What for ?

MOTHER INDIA

K.D. : Benoy and Mano will learn English from him.

SWARNA : And then...

K.D. : For Auro an English governess.

SWARNA : If my approval has any value then you have it hundred per cent.

K.D. : Something more...

SWARNA : What other idea have you ?

K.D. : From today, I mean just from today Bengali is not to be spoken in our house. English, only English. How I wish my children could speak in English, write in English, think in English and even dream in English ! They must be Englishmen to the core. I would soon send them to Darjeeling and place them in a convent school. A few years after, I would take them to London. My sons must be the brightest jewels in India's crown.

SWARNA : An exquisite plan, indeed. But before that why not say that you want to send me to the land of Death. How dare you think that I can stay away from my sweet children ? Shall I not go mad ?

K.D. : I knew it well that the mother in your heart is too strong. You are a typical Bengali woman. You want your sons to be helpless, mere babes in the wood. Swarna, your skin must not lose its tone and colour because of worry. Your flagged, pathetic look pierces my heart.

SWARNA : I am so-sorry. It is not in me to cross you.

Scene 8

(Darjeeling. Benoy, Mano and Auro are returning from school. On the way they happen to meet a Sanmyasin. Many people have gathered about him. He smokes profusely.)

A VILLAGER : Sadhuji, please give me some religious knowledge.

SANNYASIN : All I can give you is but a bit of advice. I am afraid, although my advice shall reach your sceptic ears, you will never apply it in the practical field. *(Some of the villagers burst into a peal of laughter.)* My advice, you know? The world is an illusion.

A MERCHANT : Be pleased to read my palm.

SANNYASIN : You, you wallow in the pleasure of wealth. Am I right ?

MERCHANT : Absolutely perfect. But, Sadhuji, I have not seen the face of peace even for a fleeting second.

SANNYASIN : Ah, peace ! peace is not to take birth here in this world. It is the offspring of another world. This world is made of din, dust and dizzying demonstrations.

MANMOHAN : Please run your eyes over my palm, and drop a few hints about my years to come.

THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

SANNYASIN : Ah, a poet, a fine poet. This is what your future says.

MANMOHAN : (*Pointing at Auro*) And how does the fate of my younger brother run ?

SANNYASIN : (*Looking ahead he meets Aurobindo's curious eyes; and in the twinkling of an eye Auro sprints off.*) His future is at his command.

MANMOHAN : Only a few days back Auro composed a beautiful poem on Kanchanjunga. The teachers have appreciated it much.

SANNYASIN : No wonder, he is not a common boy. A great Yogi who has to play a great part on the world scene!

अभी तुम मुझसे भय कर रहे हो पर एक दिन ऐसा आएगा जब तुम एक महान् योगी बन जाओगे।

Brahman ! Brahman ! O Lord of my breath, Thou art verily thy unfathomable mystery.

(*To be continued*)

CHINMOY

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A LETTER FROM THE HIMALAYAS

No 3

Dehra Dun, U.P.

Dear X :

I have read your comments on desire. It is true that the Divine Gate is open to those who are devoid of desire and non-attached. Only those will have the Direct-Divine-Perception who love and yet remain non-attached to the object of their love. The key to the Divine Lock is given to those who can thus love their fellow-beings—nay, the entire universe; the mystery of the universe is disclosed to them who can live in the midst of life, yet detached from it like a Lotus flower from its bed. The key is there within us and yet we do not open the Door. We fear to make the first move. Yet this is done for us when the Divine Grace descends upon us, melting all barriers before it. We must wait for it with great perseverance.

The Divine Grace has descended upon you. You are nearing the Divine Home. Here we feel a faint voice from the Home direction. This voice becomes feebler and feebler and sometimes it is lost in the great noise of the world. The fear, the glamour and the temptations are the great impediments. Somebody, most probably our own Mother—the Divine Mother is calling us with her sweet voice, but we are so much absorbed in playing with toys and dolls that we forget to attend her call. And yet she is so kind; she comes to us in different worldly guises in order to awake us. But the pulls of the ordinary life are so strong that we refuse to awake. What a pity! Innumerable desires, passions and many more weaknesses besides these exist within us. The Light in many of us has not settled too clearly. It is vague and imperfect, obstructed by clouds of many kinds. How long will we take to reach beyond these clouds and live in the Regions where the Light is never obstructed, where the Divine Sun shines all the time? Under the shadow of Ignorance, we scramble on the earth. We do not get the fullest sunshine, for the light is obstructed by the big World-Tree whose roots are upward. How long will it take to cut its branches and get the vision of the Divine everywhere? It depends upon us, does it not?

Let us collect the oil of our desires and pour it into our earthen pot. Let us also know the purpose of this oil: to feed the fire which burns from our little self, rising up, flaming, transcending it forever. We all have to become that light within ourselves, illuminating with it our little self-lamps. Wasn't it the Buddha who said to his disciples, "Be a Light unto yourselves"?

A LETTER FROM THE HIMALAYAS

I am happy to know that you have a strong earthen pot, that there is a spontaneous desire within you to kindle the flame. The moment our lamp is lit, all the oil of our dissatisfactions can be directed towards the wick. Even the smallest drop of oil, consecrated to the holy rite, supports and feeds the flame. The stream of oil then becomes purposive, not something to be despaired of.

Here lies the accomplishment of our lives, to enlighten ourselves and the world. Here lies the fulfilment of our destiny, to attain the Eternal. I shall be waiting for the day when the light will dawn upon you fully, when the flood of joy will rush into you, lifting you to that blissful state of consciousness where there is eternal Peace. Really it is a joy to be in that higher region. There is no groping in the darkness. There the eternal soft cool light ever radiates. The Divine Home is your destiny ; you shall have to attain it in this very life, my dear !

SOORYA PRAKASH

(Concluded)

STUDIES OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

STUDY NO. 6: *AS YOU LIKE IT*—THE FOREST OF ARDEN

ROMANTIC COMEDY

As You Like It is an experiment in Romantic Comedy. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is the Vision of the Fairyland of Oberon and Titania enringed in the dream-fields of Hellenic air ; *The Merchant of Venice* is the crisis of the pomp and play of Law. In *As You Like It* the noise of cities is lifted. The summer air of Arden fills its pages. The sober hues of Tragedy as well as the fantastic colours of Fancy are toned to a silver sweetness. The Melancholy of Jaques is a substitution for tragic tension. Touchstone is the mottled Fool of Comedy ; Silvius, Phebe, and Audrey are the burlesque shepherds of the Pastoral. *As You Like It* is the precursor of the Romantic Comedy of *Twelfth Night* and the Pastoral Melodrama of *The Winter's Tale*

LOVE THEMES

In *As You Like It* there are gathered varied forms of the idealisation of Love. In Rosalind and Orlando is Love at first sight, sparkling in the eyes of youth which sings, mocks or gambols in city or forest. The double role of Rosalind as boy and maid is the play of Love in the woodland. The repentant Oliver exchanging glances with the fleeing Celia is subdued by the spell of Love. The sexless passion of Rosalind and Celia is the symbol of sisterhood. The wooing of Touchstone, Silvius, Phebe and Ganymede are the skit of the countryside. Beside them is the melancholy one—the loveless Jaques crowned with a thousand sighs. The aged Adam is faithfulness unto death. Over all presides the senior Duke, the soul of Arden, who finds tongues in trees and sweetness in adversity.

DRAMATIC MOVEMENT

The dramatic movement of *As You Like It* consists of Comic Tension, Climax, Reversal, Discovery and Harmonisation.

The Tension between Orlando and Oliver over their parent's will mounts into the Climax of the fury of the usurper-Duke and the retreat of Rosalind,

Celia, Jaques, Touchstone, and the others to the Forest of Arden. In Arden is the Reversal of the leading characters. Oliver is united with Orlando and the elder with the younger Duke. The marriages of Orlando with Rosalind, Oliver with Celia, Silvius with Phebe, the relinquishment of the Dukedom by Frederick and the Discovery of Rosalind, close in the Harmony of Romantic Comedy.

THE FOREST OF ARDEN

The Forest of Arden is not the popular valley of Ardennes by the banks of the Meuse and Moselle which slide in sinuous lapses through the vineyards of France, nor the soft-voiced dale of Arcady which resounded in classic ears to the pipes of Pan; it is the merry England of Robin Hood where the deer in antlered pride browses on the grass amid the buttercups and daisies of the pleasantries of Warwickshire. Upon its boughs Orlando suspends his love-songs; beside its brooks Celia sleeps; in its shadows Rosalind plays the boy. Among its leaves Jaques sighs and Touchstone breathes his love. In its coverts Oliver meets the eyes of Celia. In its wind-swept glens beside its blowing banks resides the elder Duke, free of the cares, adulations and slanders of men. Arden is the Forest of Liberation. Into it stream the weak, the weary, the oppressed, the courtiers, princes, lovers and fools. The Court is empty but the Forest is full ! Its swaying branches soothe the sick heart of man. A hidden light brings health, help and healing. The hunger of Orlando is stilled by the voice and viands of the exiled Duke. The ferocity of Oliver bends in the wilderness. The whispers of Arden—the mysterious breath of truth—reaching the Court humanise the younger Duke and guide his steps to Renunciation. The exile returns to Court, the usurper departs for the woods ! The pools of Arden are the resting-house of the nestlings of love. The charm of Cupid pulsates in its air. Marriage is the murmur of its burns and bushes. All lips are sealed in the sacrament of its silences. Arden is the beginning, the middle and the end of this Comedy of hearts.

THE MELANCHOLY OF JAUQUES

The melancholy of Jaques, which broods upon the landscape of Arden, is tinged with the hues of his peculiar disposition. The source of his gloom is frustration; for he has been a libertine in his youth. Consumption has seized his outer frame; convulsions of life have shaken his inner poise. He has become an object of self-pity. Commiseration for the stag struck with the hunter's shaft drooping beside the limpid pool is the tear dropped for himself. His Ego seeks to draw men by the cords of self-pity. His self-centredness prevents a

psychic withdrawal into the solitude where the secret peace abides. He enjoys neither the pleasure of the world of men nor the peace of the world of Hermits. His melancholy is a mask of bitter disillusionment. His self-analysis hides the man :

JAQUES : I have neither the scholar's melancholy which is emulation; nor the musician's which is fantastical; nor the courtier's which is proud; nor the soldier's which is ambitious; nor the lawyer's which is politic; nor the lady's which is nice; nor the lover's which is all these; but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels in which my rumination often wraps me in a most humourous sadness.

This is the secret poise of the Ego. What he has not, he desires. He is envious of the scholar, the musician, the soldier, the lawyer, and the lover. He has not travelled beyond the woods of Arden or the walks of the Court. His gathered wisdom is the accumulated experience of his subjective notions of himself. The senior Duke, whose eyes have been sharpened by the silences of Arden, penetrates through the veils of Jaques :

JAQUES : What, for a counter, would I do but good ?

DUKE : Most mischevious foul sin, in chuding sin :
For thou thyself hast been a libertine,
As sensual as the brutish sting itself,
And all embossed sores and headed evils,
That thou with license of free foot has caught,
Wouldst thou disgorge into the general world ?

Jaques is lovable, sweet and kind. His melancholy does not spring from wickedness. His wound is self-inflicted, it does not hurt other men. His sob is a humour; his rumination a pose; his sullenness a shade as of the leaves of Arden.

THE WORLD OF JAQUES

The world of Jaques is stained with a tear. There is nothing bright or glad in it. Lassitude hangs upon his lips. The world is a stage-rehearsal where the actor from infancy to age plays many parts and, in his exits and his entrances, is dandled in the drolleries of action. The blurred vision of the hypochondriac,

STUDIES OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

forbidding beauty's claim of lip and eye, blind to the dreams, aspirations and urgencies of the soul, losing the murmuring brooks of Eden, is the mockery of Time. For Jaques warmth and colour are gone; the sun dies with the departing hues of day. Jaques alone forsakes the smiles of Arden.

RIVAL WORLDS

In *As You Like It* two rival worlds—the Court and Arden—compete for precedence. In the former is outer action but not inner peace; in the latter inner peace but not outer action. The younger Duke seeks the repose of the Forest; the elder the sceptre of power. In the return of the latter to his kingdom is the harmony of the hand that acts, the heart that loves, the brain that plans, and the soul that rests in tranquillity and bliss. In him the pageantry of Courts and the simplicity of Arden meet.

(To be continued)

SYED MEHDI IMAM