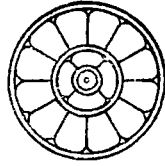


MOTHER INDIA

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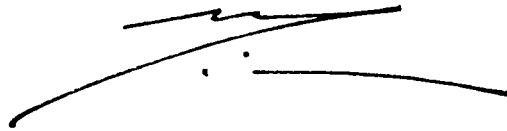


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

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Vol. XII

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"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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THE MESSAGE OF AUGUST 15

THE MOTHER OF GOD

A conscious and eternal Power is here
Behind unhappiness and mortal birth
And the error of Thought and blundering trudge of Time.
The Mother of God, his sister and his spouse,
Daughter of his wisdom, of his might* the mate,
She has leapt from the Transcendent's secret breast
To build her rainbow worlds of mind and life.
Between the superconscient absolute Light
And the Inconscient's vast unthinking toil
In the rolling and routine of Matter's sleep
And the somnambulist motion of the stars
She forces on the cold unwilling Void
Her adventure of life, the passionate dreams of her lust
Amid the work of darker Powers she is here
To heal the evils and mistakes of Space
And change the tragedy of the ignorant world
Into a Divine Comedy of joy
And the laughter and the rapture of God's bliss.
The Mother of God is master of our souls ;
We are the partners of his birth in Time,
Inheritors we share his eternity.

SRI AUROBINDO

* strength

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

(This talk is the second of a series from the Note-books of Dr. Nirodbaran who used to record most of the conversations which Sri Aurobindo had with his attendants after the accident to his leg in November 1938. Besides the recorder, the usual speakers were : Dr. Mamlal, Dr. Becherlal, Purani, Champaklal and Dr. Satyendra. As the Notes were not seen by Sri Aurobindo himself, the responsibility for the Master's words rests entirely with Nirodbaran. He does not vouch for absolute accuracy, but he has tried his best to reproduce them faithfully. He has made the same attempt for the speeches of the others.)

MARCH 5, 1940

N : "Did I understand you to say that X has not used his withdrawal in the right way, for, otherwise he wouldn't have these mental reactions?"

SRI AUROBINDO : "No, I didn't say that. I simply said that withdrawal is a help, is only a first step. By itself it is not enough. One must destroy the old seeds too. Of course it is not easy—especially in his case."

S : "When one has attained to the higher consciousness and is firmly seated in that consciousness, then one can slowly take up any activity without getting disturbed."

SRI AUROBINDO : "Quite so."

N : "In the transitional stage with till the mind is replaced by the spiritual consciousness, with what attitude should one do work?"

SRI AUROBINDO : "What work?"

N : "Say, philosophical or political."

SRI AUROBINDO : "It is not necessary to do political work. About the philosophical, one has to reject what ought to be rejected from the nature, e.g. habit of disputation, considering one's own idea only as true and not seeing the truth in others' ideas and taking up an idea because one likes it, not because it is true. X has a fighting controversial mind; he requires an opponent; even if he is not there, he makes one. That is the nature of the mind in general."

N : "Has he done everything from the mental consciousness?"

SRI AUROBINDO : "Of course. What did you think?"

N : "I thought it was from the spiritual consciousness."

SRI AUROBINDO : "But through the mind, isn't it?"

S : "He means that he has done it as निष्काम कर्मयोग (desireless action)"

SRI AUROBINDO : "What is कर्मयोग (Karmayoga)?"

P : "No, he means that it was not from the mental consciousness he was writing but from the spiritual."

SRI AUROBINDO : "Wait a minute; even then it was through the mind as the instrument, wasn't it?"

N : "Yes, but with the spiritual consciousness behind supporting it."

SRI AUROBINDO : "That is all right, the Purusha can support all activities of nature but he had not the spiritual insight; the ideas or visions didn't come down from a higher consciousness above. They were mental, reached through reasoning."

(After a pause) "In my own case so long as I was in the mind I couldn't understand philosophy at all. I tried to read Kant but couldn't read more than one page. Plato, of course, I read. But it was when I went above the mind that I could understand philosophy and write philosophy. Ideas and thoughts began to flow in, visions, spiritual experiences, and insight and spiritual perception, a sort of revelation built my philosophy. It was not by any process of mental reasoning or argument that I wrote the *Arya*."

N : "Then you didn't try by the mind to understand?"

SRI AUROBINDO : "As I said, I read only one page of Kant and then gave it up, because it wouldn't go in : that is, it didn't become real to me. I was like Manilal grappling with *The Life Divine*. Plato I could read, as he was not metaphysical. Nietzsche also because of his ideas. In Indian philosophy I read the Upanishads and the Gita, etc. They are, of course, mainly results of spiritual experience. People think I must be immensely learned and must know all about Hegel, Kant and the others. The fact is that I haven't even read them; and people don't know I have written everything from experience and spiritual perception. Modern philosophers wrap their ideas up in extraordinary phraseology and there is too much gymnastic of the mind—even though they don't seem to have gone deeper than the Greeks in their ideas and theories. I read some of the commentaries of Ramanuja and Shankara, etc. They seemed to me mere words and phrases and at the end Ramanuja says that nobody has experienced Pure Consciousness—a most amazing statement, absurd."

N : "In your case it was an opening then like the one to painting."

SRI AUROBINDO : "Yes; but with painting, it was a sudden moment's opening while this one was a result of spiritual experience."

N : "Then I can hope to understand philosophy some day."

S : "You want to understand Kant?"

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N : "Oh, no, no !"

SRI AUROBINDO : "It is a sheer waste of time."

S : "Then Sri Aurobindo's philosophy ?"

N : "Yes, and Indian philosophy. Even there it is too much complication; there are so many Purushas and Prakritis."

SRI AUROBINDO : "There is only one Prakriti."

N : "Para and Aparā Prakriti."

SRI AUROBINDO : "What is difficult there ? Para Prakriti is nature higher than your own."

MARCH 21, 1940

N : "A letter from X. This time X vs. Y. Y has written to X asking some question and X has replied."

Sri Aurobindo took Y's letter and read it himself and so also X's letter, and said, "When you are doing mental work, there is of course no silence in the mind. But things can come to you when the mind is silent and then it won't be mental work. After my meeting with Lele, when I used to give speeches or write articles for the *Bande Mataram*, my mind used to be silent and things came from above and passed through the mind. The mind didn't take any part."

C : "You seem to have written to Y that *Essays on the Gita* was written like that."

SRI AUROBINDO : "Yes."

S : "The whole of the *Arya* also ?"

SRI AUROBINDO : "Yes. X says that the mind can become truly silent by the touch of the Supermind. Why does he bring the Supermind in ? The mind can become silent long before without its touch."

N : "If one had to wait for Supermind to get the mind silent, then we would be over before it came."

SRI AUROBINDO : "Quite so. I had that experience long before I knew anything about Supermind. But when the mind becomes silent, things may come from anywhere. Cosmic Vital, cosmic Mind ; from above—Intuition—or from within. Y thinks that they are coming from the Mother or the Divine. It is a little dangerous to think that whatever comes to one, or passes through one, comes from the Mother."

N : "How should we differentiate the sources ?"

SRI AUROBINDO : "You have to know by experience."

S : "Why does X bring in Supermind for getting silence ? One can get that even by going a little within."

SRI AUROBINDO : "That won't be silence but quietude. One can get silence

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

even by concentration : when one is concentrated on a subject, the rest of the mind falls quiet. And it is only one step more to make the whole mind quiet. Of course, to keep it permanently so is a different matter and is very difficult. When the mind is silent, one can get spiritual experiences."

N : "Is everything that comes to the silent mind correct ?"

SRI AUROBINDO : "No ;" (*then with a little smile*) "people make two common mistakes : whatever they hear or comes to them, they say it is from the Mother. And whatever they receive, they say it comes from above. If things were like that, it would have been all very easy."

SRI AUROBINDO ON INDIA'S DESTINY

(This article which first appeared in the "Karmayogin" of 24th July, 1909, concludes the series we have been publishing from that journal during the last few months on the question of divine guidance in India's struggle for freedom. The "Bengalee" which had joined issue on this point could not obviously find an answer and kept silent.)

V

FACTS AND OPINIONS

THE BENGALEE AND OURSELVES

THE *Bengalee* has answered our facts and opinions with its facts and comments. Unfortunately we find in our contemporary's answer all comment and no fact. For the most part he is busy trying to prove that we were really inconsistent and contradictory, or, if he misunderstood us, it was due to our uninstructed use of language.

In the first place we did not expressly say that we saw God in everything and only specially in special movements. Of course we did not. As we pointed out we could not be always guarding ourselves against gratuitous misconceptions, and the omnipresence of God is such an obvious fact that it has not to be expressly stated. It is curious that our contemporary's powerful intelligence seems still unable to grasp the point about leadership. If the movement were the result of human calculation or guided by human calculation, or even if every constructive step were the result of mature deliberation, there would be no point in insisting that the movement was created and led (we beg pardon, we mean specially created and led,) by God and not by human wisdom. We pointed out that none of these statements could be advanced in the face of the facts, and our contemporary has not been able to meet our arguments ; he has simply restated his previous unsupported assumption.

Secondly, we were unfortunate enough to use in one place the word "His" where our contemporary thinks we should have used the word "that". With all submission we think our language was perfectly clear. We said His purpose and we meant His purpose, the purpose of raising up India. Then again

we were, unfortunate enough to indulge in an ironical repetition of our contemporary's phrase, "mere" faith, within commas inverted and our contemporary with portentous seriousness insists on taking this as our own epithet and seriously meant. We have pointed out that in our idea of faith it includes the logical analysing reason, it includes experience and exceeds it. It exceeds logical reason because it uses the higher intuitive reason ; it exceeds experience because experience often gives the balance of its support to one conclusion where faith using intuition inclines to the opposite conclusion.

Our contemporary does not understand why we wrote of God and the universal force or why we insisted on the special manifestation of the divine force as opposed to its veiled workings through human egoism. We did so because we had to oppose the excess of that very egoism. We have not risen to heights of Monism from which he scoffs benignly at our dualism. It may be the final truth that there is nothing but God, but for the purposes of life we have to recognise that there is a dualism in the underlying unity. It profits nothing to say, for instance, "The Divine Force wrote two columns of Facts and Comments the other day in the *Bengalee*". God reveals Himself not only in the individual where He is veiled by ignorance and egoism, but in Himself. When the *Bengalee* sees no alternative to man's self-conscious action except unconscious action, it is under the influence of the European materialism which sees only conscious creatures in an unconscious inanimate Nature. The Divine Force is not unconscious but conscious and intelligent and to see Him as a conscious power only in men is to deny Him altogether. When again our contemporary uses a misapplication of the truth of Adwaita to justify the deifying of his own reason, he is encouraging practical atheism while taking the divine name in vain. God manifests Himself in everything. He manifests Himself in our reason, therefore let us forget God and rely on our own human calculations. That is the train of argument. What is the use of relying on God ? Let us look to our own safety. What is the use of being brave in the hour of peril ? If our leader goes, the movement stops.

Mām anusmara yuddhya ca, is the motto of the Karmayogin. God manifests himself in the individual partially, but He stands behind the progress of the world wholly. We are bound to use our own intellects, we cannot help it if we would, but we must remember that it is a limited intellect and be prepared for the failure of our schemes and plans, for calamity, for defeat, without making these things an excuse for abandoning His work, laying our principles on the shelf or sending out a cry to discourage steadfastness and self-sacrifice. Our plans may fail, God's purpose cannot. That is why we laid so much stress on the fact that this has been a movement which, as the man in the street would say, has led itself, in which individuals have been instruments and not the real shapers

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and leaders. We have faith and we believe in the great rule of life in the Gita, "Remember me and fight." We believe in the mighty word of assurance to the bhakta, *maccittah sarvadurgāṇi matprasādāt tariṣyasi*, "If thou reposest thy heart and mind in Me, by My grace thou shalt pass safe through all difficulties and dangers."

We believe that the Yoga of the Gita will play a large part in the uplifting of the nation, and this attitude is the first condition of the Yoga of the Gita. When anybody tries to discourage our people in this attitude, we are bound to enter the lists against him. We recognise that to argue with those who have only opinions but no realisation is a hopeless task, since it is only by entering into communion with the Infinite and seeing the Divine Force in all that one can be intellectually sure of its conscious action. But at least we can try to remove the philosophical delusions and confusions which mislead men from the right path and veil European materialism under generalities drawn from Vedanta.

SRI AUROBINDO

GUIDANCE FROM SRI AUROBINDO

The Vital Being

Q. Does not our vital being, when it opens itself to the Mother, grow heroic, enthusiastic, intense, passionate and total in self-giving ?

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

5-1-1935

Q : To get rid of vital demands and desires, is it not better to have the psychic being in the front, fully active and bringing love into the heart, than to attempt the ascent to the higher planes ?

SRI AUROBINDO : How do you expect the psychic in its full activity with these things there and not thoroughly rejected ? Moreover if the love comes forward in full, what is to prevent the selfish vital taking hold of it and making demand on demand on the Mother which she will certainly refuse to satisfy—as so many have done and afterwards revolted because the Mother does not love them, otherwise she would do whatever they want ?

2-3-1935

Q : Is not the vital being's co-operation in the sadhana needed to throw out the inertia in us ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Certainly it is better if the vital is brought to the true movement—renouncing its wrong movements and asking only for growth of the self-realisation, psychic love and psychicisation of the nature. But it is possible to get rid from above of the more active forms of obstruction even with a neutral vital.

5-3-1935

Q : What should one do when the vital refuses to assent to the true movement of the sadhana ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It must be made to assent—and the first thing is to detach yourself from it and refuse to accept its revolts and despairs as your own.

11-3-1935

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Q : Should we not leave it to the Mother to get rid of our vital difficulties—the Mother who knows best how to do it ?

SRI AUROBINDO : You are always expecting the Mother to do it—and here again the laziness and tamas come in—it is the sprout of the tamasic surrender. If the Mother puts you back into a good condition, your vital pulls you down again. How is that to stop, so long as you say Yes to the vital and accept its discouragement and violences and anguish and the rest of it as your own ? Detachment is absolutely necessary. 11-3-1935

Q : I am in charge of a vase in the Reception Room, which I wash every day. I dreamt that it fell from my hands and broke. Was this prophetic ?

SRI AUROBINDO : One sees many things like that which are not necessarily prophetic (rarely they are), but merely suggestions, formations etc. on the vital plane. 21-3-1935

SRI AUROBINDO : It is the lower forces at work; but the Hostiles are there behind pushing and ready to take advantage if they find the sadhak accepting or identifying himself with the suggestions. That is why one must be immediately on guard if there is the least movement towards any such thing. 6-4-1935

SRI AUROBINDO : Loss of balance produces disorder in the consciousness and the adverse forces use that loss of balance for attacking and wholly upsetting the system and doing their work. That is why people become hysterical or mad or filled with the desire to die or go away.

Q : Is loss of balance produced in the women only or also in the men ? And how does it come about ?

SRI AUROBINDO : More easily in the women than in the men but in some of the latter also. What produces the loss of balance is an inability to control the vital movements by the reason and an instability of the vital itself so that it sways from one feeling to another, one impulse to another without harmony or order. 10-7-1935

(From N. D.)

FAITH AND RELIANCE

(Translated by Niranjana from the Bengali letters in "Patravali II")

ONE should always keep this feeling, this faith and conviction; this faith and conviction are the mainstay of the Mother's Force.

You should do sadhana with a strong and quiet mind, having an unshakable faith in the Mother and relying entirely upon her. Depression must not be given any room. If it comes, it has to be rejected and driven away. I am vile, worthless, this cannot be done by me, the Mother has chased me away, I shall go away, I shall die,—when these thoughts come, then it must be known that they are suggestions of the lower nature, opposed to truth and the sadhana. These feelings must never be entertained.

Why are you suffering ? There cannot be any question of suffering if you remain full of equanimity and depend on the Mother. The hope of getting peace, happiness and ananda from any human being is futile. In place of this fear and thought you should nourish the certitude and faith that when once the inner relation with the Mother has been established—then even if a thousand difficulties arise, and however full of faults and shortcomings the outer nature might be, the victory of the Mother in you is inevitable, it cannot be otherwise.

You must have at all times full confidence in the Mother, that you are in her hands; everything will be done by her Force, then there can never be any sorrow or despair on account of any difficulty.

Do not be in a hurry about it. It is not easy to remember at all times with effort alone—when the whole instrument will be replete with the Mother's Presence, then the remembrance will be automatic; it will not be at all possible to forget.

Go forward doing your sadhana quietly—do not give way to sorrow or despair—in the end all darkness will disappear.

This happens to everybody—to remain in a good condition is extremely difficult, it takes a long time—be serene and carry on your sadhana, do not get perturbed. In time everything will be done.

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Sadhana means to feel the Mother near and within, feel that she is doing everything, receive inwardly everything from her. When one is in this condition, then even if the mind is fixed in reading, no harm can result from it.

Yes, weakness comes if one weeps in this way. At all times, in all conditions be tranquil and peaceful, depend on the Mother and call her. Then the good condition soon returns.

Do not forget my words which I have repeated so often. Do your sadhana calmly and peacefully without getting upset, then everything will gradually fall in the right line. To weep aloud is not good—quietly call the Mother, make your surrender to her. The more the vital is peaceful, the more steady is the progress of sadhana along the path.

AUGUST 15 AND ITS CALL TO THE FUTURE

(Continued from the issue of August 15)

IN his second dream Sri Aurobindo saw "the resurgence and liberation of Asia and her return to the great role which she had played in the progress of human civilisation." He saw Asia arising and marching towards freedom through many a storm and stress. And now "only a little has to be done and that", Sri Aurobindo tells us emphatically and in plain terms, "will be done today or tomorrow." All the still lingering remnants of the colonial pockets, wherever they be, in Asia or elsewhere, will be emptied of foreign rule. It is only a question of time.

Here too India has been playing a leading part "with energy and ability" and, as a sovereign state of international standing, has already taken a considerable place in the council of nations. India is heard with great respect and regard; though her word is not wholly carried out yet, still it is partly executed never disregarded, still less rejected.

It was the process of unification of mankind, a world-union, that Sri Aurobindo saw in his third dream. It is under way, in spite of the tremendous difficulties it has to hazard. The initiative, though still imperfect, is there with its momentum. To quicken the process of unification till it increasingly becomes an inevitable success "the experience of history can be taken as a guide". Threatening problems "can only be solved by the united effort of the peoples and can only be truly met by an effort at world-union such as was conceived at San Francisco but has not till now been very successful in the practice; still the effort has to be continued and devices found which will make easier the difficult translation from the perilous divisions of the past and present to a harmonious world-order"; for otherwise, it should be well remembered, "there can be no escape from continuous calamity and collapse."

Here too India is playing a prominent part. Her presence will infuse into this movement of world-unification "a bold and swift development, if she can develop that large statesmanship which is not limited by the present facts and immediate possibilities but looks into the future and brings it nearer." "For she stands already a considerable international figure," Sri Aurobindo declares with an uncommon prophetic vision, "and this will grow as time goes on into vast proportions; she is likely in time to take her place as one of the

preponderant states whose voices will be strongest and their lead and their action determinative of the world's future. For all this she needs men whose training as well as their talent, genius and force of character is of the first order."

It may be added here that the "World-Union" that has been recently initiated at Pondicherry may be regarded as a powerful attempt made in the direction of the process of world-unification. The Mother has blessed this movement and said : "It is good; it is useful; it is necessary; it will grow as a strong movement and will be successful....I will guide you." But also it equally depends on the measure of sincerity and unmixed enthusiasm of all those who have been specifically engaged in this work and those who have joined hands with them to carry it out.

On the way to world-unification calamities may intervene, catastrophes may do a devil-dance, "but even then," declares the Master-Seer with an abounding certainty, "the final result is sure. For in any case the unification is a necessity and its achievement can be safely foretold. Its necessity for the nations also is clear, for without it, freedom of the small peoples can never be safe hereafter and even large and powerful nations cannot really be secure." It is noteworthy, and we see it before our eyes, that most nations of the world are realising this truth more and more widely and intensely.

Here again Sri Aurobindo has a word to say as to why a divided India should unite, not only for her safety but in the interest of a wider perspective of world-unification. "India, if she remains divided, will not herself be sure of her safety. It is therefore to the interest of all that union should take place. Only human imbecility and stupid selfishness could prevent it. Against that, even the gods strive in vain; but it cannot stand for ever against the necessity of Nature and the Divine Will." The union may come in any form since "the exact form may have pragmatic but not fundamental importance."

And in regard to war the Mother said in 1954¹ that she wants to avoid a war over India, if there be any. For she says clearly and definitely that "India must be saved for the good of the world since India alone can lead to peace and a new world order." And the possibilities of war could be averted only by goodwill and understanding between different statesmen and peoples of the world.

¹ Q. "How do you think we should prepare India to withstand the coming crisis?"

A. "You believe in the divine power,—divine power alone can help India. If you can build faith and cohesion in the country it is much more powerful than any man-made power."

Q. "How to bring about the much needed cohesion and faith in the country?"

A. "By following Sri Aurobindo's teachings. His Independence Day Message issued on August 15th, 1947, needs to be read and re-read and its significance explained to millions of his compatriots. India needs the conviction and faith of Sri Aurobindo."

When human hearts constantly bathe in the sunshine of good-will and understanding then the righteous forces of peace, unity and order will gradually come to govern. And thus they will ultimately triumph and prevail over the forces of falsehood, suspicion, fear and all sorts of ugly will-to-dominate, which are the root cause of all chaos, disorder and warfare.

And when nationalism of each and every nation, even of the smallest nations, gets truly fulfilled, "an international spirit and outlook must grow up and international forms and institutions." Gradually thus the spirit of nationalism loses its militancy. It then sees no incompatibility between the integrity of its own outlook and that of the international. Even a dual or multi-lateral citizenship and a voluntary fusion of cultures may become an easy possibility. Sri Aurobindo gives us the splendid hope that "a new spirit of oneness will take hold of the human race."

To work out this oneness more swiftly and effectively "Indian spirituality is entering Europe and America in an ever increasing measure." This is the fourth dream of Sri Aurobindo, the spiritual gift of India to the world. This gift of "her spiritual knowledge and her means for spiritualisation of life to the whole race" has already begun. Amid the hopelessly tense circumstances of the world and its suffocatingly depressing events, the peoples' hearts are being churned as it were and the dark and thick veil of ignorance lying long over the human soul is slowly being lifted up. More and more eyes are turning towards India the Mother, the living embodiment of the Spiritual Flame, the Guru of the world. Sri Aurobindo further says that "there is even an increasing resort not only to her teachings, but to her psychic and spiritual practice." This is a very encouraging and notable sign of the nearing kinship, and a lasting one too, between the once far-apart spheres of the East and West. Indeed a day shall dawn, which even the darkest night cannot approach, much less devour, when both East and West will journey hand in hand on the Path Eternal like One-in-Two, crowning Unity as the living and governing principle of their thought and life, keeping the beauty and rhythm of diversity intact, while God gazes on them with a starry twinkle in his eye and a radiant smile on his lips. For who can dare stand against the vast and many-sided, the mighty invincible divine Purpose of Nature whose sole aim is to establish ultimately an orchestral Harmony and integral Unity wherever there is a painful discord and chaotic disorder.

POORNA

(To be continued)

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY AS ENVISAGED BY SRI AUROBINDO

A SPEECH BY A.B. PATEL AT MADRAS ON AUGUST 28, 1960

(Continued from the issue of August 15)

THE present situation in the world is fraught with many dangers to the Ideal of Human Unity. There are nations in the world with tendencies to expand and dominate and to use their power to bring other nations under their subordination and to impose their way of life on them. Even the simple idea of peaceful coexistence is not sincerely acceptable to them. In this connection it is interesting to note what Sri Aurobindo wrote, in his postscript to his *Ideal of Human Unity*, concerning China in 1949 when India had amicable relations with it. He said : "In Asia a more perilous situation has arisen, standing sharply across the way to any possibility of a continental unity of the peoples of this part of the world in the emergence of a Communist China. This creates a gigantic block which could easily englobe the whole of Northern Asia in a combination between enormous communist powers, Russia and China and would overshadow with a threat of absorption South-Western Asia and Tibet and might be pushed to overrun all up to the whole frontier of India menacing her security and that of Western Asia with the possibility of an invasion and an overrunning and subjection by penetration or even by overwhelming military force to an unwanted ideology, political and social institutions and dominance of this militant mass of Communism whose push might easily prove irresistible."

It seems that any aggressive nation or the leader of a totalitarian regime may plunge the whole world into a catastrophe and destroy in an idiot hour what has taken centuries to build. Humanity is not past the danger arising from ambition, selfishness, greed and national and individual egos and it is imperative that the advanced thinkers and wise men of the world should be active in their vigilance to preserve peace and stimulate public opinion in favour of world union.

At the same time it seems that the Higher Forces at the back of the universe and their active agent, Nature, work in mysterious ways and compel humanity by force of circumstances to progress and evolve towards the inevitable

goal even through situations which appear contrary to the general need to reach the goal of unity. The rivalry between powerful groups, namely, America and the Western powers on the one hand and Russia and its communist allies on the other, often appears to threaten the peace of the world but there is another side revealed on closer examination. This rivalry has been contributing to the progress and development of certain constructive forces in human affairs. For thousands of years the principle has become accepted that a powerful or strong individual should render assistance and help to a weaker fellow-being. But until very recently a weak nation has been generally the object of aggression, conquest or exploitation. For the first time in the known human history a principle manifests on the earth that a powerful and rich nation should assist an undeveloped country by loans, machinery and technicians for economic development. A cynic may allege that this attitude of powerful nations is for the purpose of serving their selfish interests to attract more satellites to their camps or to increase their supporters. But does a strong and powerful individual render service to others completely free from the desire for fame, position or influence ? Because the motives for service are not unmixed owing to the present state of human nature, the importance of service to others cannot be minimised or ignored. Similarly even if the motives of powerful nations in helping the weak or the underdeveloped nations are not unmixed, this new ideal of service by strong nations is decidedly an important step. Another result of the rivalry of these powerful nations has been to hasten the freedom of colonial nations. Such trends and tendencies are silver lines in the otherwise dark shadows of cold war between powerful nations. They hold a promise for the development of an international attitude for facing and meeting the problems affecting humanity. We also notice in the world today that several international organisations, official and semi-official, are working for the welfare of humanity as a whole without regard to racial or national boundaries and a world public opinion is slowly but steadily emerging in support of preservation of world peace, assistance to backward nations and creation of an international order by the institution of various international agencies for preservation of peace, order and justice. The recent tendency among world statesmen and politicians to visit each other and to meet and discuss world problems is also an encouraging and helpful sign.

Perhaps the most glaring example of how even through contrary situations Nature accelerates the process of achieving its aim of human unity is the result of the obstinate and unreasonable attitude of the South African Government in enforcing the *apartheid* policy in the teeth of world public opinion in its desire to preserve white domination in that unhappy country. This attitude of the South African government appears to influence the newly emerging independent

African states to work with greater vigour for the solidarity of Africa and for the formation of an African personality and for the prevention of Balkanisation of Africa which some of the European settlers and trouble-makers would very much wish to see. Within a decade or so the present policy of South Africa will be ready to collapse after serving Nature's purpose of creating a solid African unity.

Thus we see that while the world situation is disturbing in certain aspects, there are events and circumstances in international relations which disclose hopeful signs and encouraging developments. The need is for the best minds of humanity to remain careful and vigilant and to mobilise the world forces which are in favour of world unity and world order. The awakening and mobilisation of the spiritual force, mostly dormant at present, is urgently needed to quicken the process of reaching the goal of human unity. Sri Aurobindo says : "A spiritual religion of humanity is the hope of the future. By this is not meant what is ordinarily called a universal religion, a system, a thing of creed and intellectual belief and dogma and outward rite. Mankind has tried unity by that means ; it has failed and deserved to fail, because there can be no universal religious system, one in mental creed and vital form. The inner spirit is indeed one, but more than any other the spiritual life insists on freedom and variation in its self-expression and means of development. A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one....Could such a realisation develop rapidly in mankind, we might then solve the problem of unification in a deeper and truer way from the inner truth to the outer forms. Until then, the attempt to bring it about by mechanical means must proceed. But the higher hope of humanity lies in the growing number of men who will realise this truth and seek to develop it in themselves, so that when the mind of man is ready to escape from its mechanical bent, perhaps when it finds that its mechanical solutions are all temporary and disappointing,—the truth of the spirit may step in and lead humanity to the path of its highest possible happiness and perfection."

From this point of view the spiritual heritage of India and its renaissance become of world-wide significance. It is necessary for the harmonious growth and fulfilment of India's destiny. But it is also necessary to help the growth and maintenance of a human unity world-wide.

The pursuit of material comforts and the constant raising of standards of living, disregarding the need for the present man to exceed his state of mental being and to evolve into a spiritual being will not be helpful in mobilising the spiritual force which can successfully establish world peace and lead us to world unity. Present man is not the last summit of evolution, and in course of his evolutionary process he is destined to grow into a higher level of consciousness

and to become a higher being than he is today. That will happen, not by economic, political, social, or religious process and arrangements or scientific discoveries however great and useful, though all these are essential for individual and collective life, but by awakening within oneself by conscious effort one's latent or unborn higher powers. This will lead to a change and ultimately to a transformation of Man's present state of being and consciousness, and therefore necessarily to higher motives of action, higher attitudes and approach to individual and collective problems and to harmonious human relations. This awakening of unborn higher powers within, or spiritual awakening, will be a state higher than that provided by religion or morality or by mere social service which often hides beneath it individual or collective egoism and lust for power, position, influence etc. These higher powers within man, if and when awakened, can meet the challenge and requirements of the present atomic age. World peace can be secure and world unity effectively and justly realised on such a spiritual foundation.

Inspired by this need to achieve World Unity and world peace a movement known as World Union has been organised with headquarters at Pondicherry, with an aim to make humanity conscious of the inherent oneness of Creation and the essential unity of all mankind and to educate and otherwise encourage an ever increasing number of people in all parts of the world to live up to this oneness and unity in all their individual and collective relations and to promote world peace on a spiritual foundation. This World Union calls us to awaken to the fact that oneness, unity and wholeness are the basic truths of human life and all existence, and that life can be fully lived and enjoyed as a whole, in the nation, in the social group, and in the individual, through an increasing awareness of this truth and through our action in accordance with it. The urge for wholeness is the strongest need and passion of the human soul, and an imperative call to every life. The world we live in is obviously one, man and his nature are essentially the same the world over, and humanity has a common destiny.

The Mother who is the head of Sri Aurobindo Ashram and has been the collaborator of Sri Aurobindo in his great and unprecedented spiritual task gave the following unique message to the organisers of the World Union on 25th March 1960 :

"The world is a unity, it has always been and it is always so ; even now it is so—it is not that it has not got the unity and the unity has to be brought from outside and imposed upon it.

"Only the World is not conscious of its unity. It has to be made conscious.

"We consider now is the time most propitious for the endeavour.

"For, a new Force or Consciousness or Light—whatever you call the new

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element—has manifested into the world and the world now has the capacity to become conscious of its own unity.”

If the vanguard of humanity, particularly the thinkers and idealists, endeavour to realise this unity and oneness within themselves and endeavour to make others conscious of this, the task of the achievement of human unity will proceed more rapidly than it ever did and the clouds threatening destruction of humanity and a crash of civilisation will begin to disperse. Let me close this speech by quoting Sri Aurobindo’s great faith in the future of humanity and its unity. He said : “The ideal of human unity would be no longer an unfulfilled ideal but an accomplished fact and its preservation given into the charge of the united human peoples. Its future destiny would lie on the knees of the gods and, if the gods have a use for the continued existence of the race, may be left to lie there safe.”

NEW ROADS

BOOK X

III

IMAGES OF IMMORTALITY

SIT down
 within the Garden
 which has many pathways,
 but only one Door.

Sit on the floor
 and contemplate
 before
 the stone-carved gate.

There are
 many vistas
 far beyond the trees
 towards the lifted sky.

The birds are lonely—
 those who feel the sun
 only upon their breast—

They are teased
 with a freedom
 only hinted at;
 release from paradise !

The squirrel perhaps :
 enticed from tree to tree,
freer than the rising sap within,
 but not—as the swallow is free !

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There is a pool
 where the lotuses grow—
Do they know,
 in their striving,
 that they are the thoughts of a star ?

How many stars
 can you catch in the pool
 when the Night is still ?

When the sun has set;
 when the green sap
 runs quiet through the branches;
When the birds are asleep
 and there is no fear
 of the creatures of the dark;

No fear,
 because you have lived
 through the heat
 of the Day;

No fear,
 because you have seen
 the Great Door open.

But still—
 You were not ready
 the first time :

The Door opened,
 a massive structure
 carved from 'the living stone';

It opened,
 but a little way—
(you were afraid to die)
 then it shut—
 the moment had passed,
 you were left alone.

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Now, you breathe
in a Garden of Sorrows
as do the trees,
the squirrels
and the swallows.

Unknowing, you 'live'
in a 'death' of waiting
unconsciously hating
the burden of Time.

But Time
will not hold the stars
in the lotus pond;

Nor Space
contain their number
through the Night—

The beautiful Night,
for man,
is heavy with sadness
from which he will not part;

In love
with his own image—
Narcissus
in a pool of darkness
longs for light.

Sunlight—
within and without,
there is no sadness
in sunlight !

Sunlight,
urging the grasses
that grow between stones
old bones have fed.

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Sunlight,
feeding the fish
and the fowl of the air
and the beasts that have fled.

Sunlight,
penetrating the Deep Waters
awakening the Seed
that was thought to be dead.

NORMAN DOWSETT

THE GOLDEN DAWN

HAIL to Thee, O Mother-Dawn !
Thou art the Ancient
And yet the Ever-New, Ever-Young, Ever-Fresh !
Thou art the Youth Eternal—age cannot approach Thee;
Thou art the Master of Death—death cannot devour Thee.
Salutations, O Sovereign of all existence !

Mother-Dawn ! Thou comest Self-gathered, enveloped in Peace,
Flaming with the moods of divine Delight,
Beaming with brilliance of Eternal Wisdom :
Destroyer of the blinding gloom,
Announcer of the deathless liberating Light,
O Thou ever-rising Gold on the tranquil Heart-Sea !

Mother-Dawn ! Thou art the immortal Fire
Ever blazing the spirit in man into its original heights !
Thou art a splendour at once Strength and Love,
The Culmination of all that is supremely human and
the deepest and highest Divine.
Thou art the Eternal Sun, the supernal Creatrix of all that is—
O Golden Bridge, O Immaculate Joining of the finite and the
Infinite !

POORNA

THUS SANG MY SOUL

(29)

VII. MOTHERING THE BOND OF LOVE : PRAYERS AND PRAISES

(Continued)

55. FLAMING PRAYER

O MAKE my life aflame in praise of Thee.
Thoughts gathered, mastered will, surrendered heart,
Light-bearing cells one-voiced repeat, "Thou art !"
This one instant and everlastingly.
In spite of everything, in spite of me
Thy will, life-raking world-transfiguring, dart
On swift way through my being's every part
To flower all in Thy rose-ecstasy!

56. ETERNAL SERVANTHOOD

Mother, give refuge to my maddened soul.
Through all the world it wanders aimlessly,
Through woods, winds, houses, hearts in search of Thee;
O gather it under Thy love's control.
To be Thy vessel make its cherished role,
"To be Thy Love's", let its one effort be,
"To be Thy Love's", its one love-seeking plea,
Eternal servanthood its single goal.

(To be continued)

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

THOUGHTS

TODAY I have received a telegram from a mystical plane. It reads thus : “Your days of being pleased with happiness and displeased with unhappiness are today over.”

I have read out the telegram to the members of the family. And all are regaling themselves.

Today all have relished the dish of unhappiness served in the feast as much as the dish of happiness, and the dish of happiness as much as the dish of unhappiness. They have learnt only today what taste really means.

All the members of my being came to know only today that till today they had been merely gulping down the food.

*

*

If I eat fruit or flesh, I know that these things are my food. But I have never asked myself whose food I am in my turn. Such behaviour of mine is no way other than what is called ignorance, ego, lower intellect or stupidity.

Man, realise that thou shalt be lifted up from the category of an animal and placed in the category of what the Gita calls “man”, only when thou shalt know how to be eaten as thou knowest at present how to eat.

If thou wantest to eat but not to go into His mouth whose food thou art, then know there is no fulfilment for thee.

GIRDHARLAL

(From the Gujarati of the author's “Uparāma”)

HOW THE MOTHER'S GRACE CAME TO US

REMINISCENCES OF VARIOUS PEOPLE IN CONTACT WITH THE MOTHER

BACK HOME AT HER FEET

WHEN I first came to the Ashram as a visitor, I did not know anything about the Mother. My friend, with whom I had come, arranged for me permission for the Pranam which the Mother used to give in the Meditation Hall after 8 a.m., when aspirants came one by one in a queue and received her blessings on the head and some flowers with a special significance.

As I moved in the queue, my wife behind me, I saw people bowing at the feet of the Mother. My self-conceit revolted at the idea of this. "I have not come here to bow before a European lady. I came here for the darshan of Sri Aurobindo." I thought of turning back, but good manners had the better of such an idea and I decided to follow on.

As soon as I reached the Mother and tried to look into her eyes, lo! there were no eyes there—but a deep vast ocean spread in front. I spontaneously bowed at her feet and took her blessings. Some years later, as I pined for the repetition of this experience, the Mother told me that it had been an experience of the sudden opening of the psychic being which had been very much in the fore at that time.

During this visit, as I stayed a number of days and the Mother came to know about me, I felt from her talk that she was encouraging me to stay on, but I could not catch clearly her idea. When I went to her for the parting Pranam, she asked, "So you are going today?" Continuing, she said, "There is a marked improvement in you. When you come again I shall try to accommodate you in a house nearer the Ashram. But your wife has to get accustomed to the Ashram life. When are you coming back?" I did not understand why she told me all this, but I just said, "Mother, I shall take the earliest opportunity to return." And we left.

My wife wanted to see her mother on the way and we went to her parents' house. Only the first night I had good sleep. On the second day I got ill and my condition started going from bad to worse. Breathing grew difficult. It was a small place, with no qualified doctor. The experienced compounder of the town had no hope about me.

HOW THE MOTHER'S GRACE CAME TO US

I was on my death-bed. As is the custom, I was brought outdoors, for dying indoors is considered inauspicious. Although apparently unconscious, deep in my death-approaching silence I remembered the Mother's words, "So you are going today?" and my reply, "Mother, I shall take the earliest opportunity to return." Now I understood the meaning of her encouragement to me to stay on rather than go back; but yet my attachment had lain with my house and family. Although I had decided to go, her Grace had followed me and as I realised my foolishness, my heart appealed to her, "If I survive, I will for certain come to you."

And it was all a miracle. Suddenly I began to breathe and so I was brought inside the room. Within a couple of days I recovered almost completely. I went home, soon to return to the feet of the Mother, forever.

(Compiled by Har Krishan Singh)

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

ASHRAM FESTIVALS

(5) Celebration of the Birthdays of Ashramites

ANOTHER celebration is always observed in the Ashram, to which people look forward for months at a time. Individually, each inmate is given an opportunity which leaves a golden mark on his memory. It is on the anniversary of his birth. Good wishes are showered upon him on that day from every direction.

The Mother herself receives him with an unforgettable delightful "Bonne fête."

Here is Sri Aurobindo's own assessment of the importance of birthdays:

"There is a rhythm (one among many) in the play of the world-forces which is connected with the sun and planets. That makes the birthday a day of possible renewal when the being is likely to be more plastic. It is for this reason that Mother sees people on their birthdays."

"It is not a question of a physical birthday or of the body—it is taken as an occasion for opening a new year of life with a growing new birth within. That is the meaning in which the Mother takes the birthday."

In 1947 the Mother used to take classes in the afternoon in the Meditation Hall on the first floor, where she now gives the four main darshans. At the end of each class she used to answer questions put to her. Here are her answers relating to birthday and new birth, as jotted down by a sadhaka :

"On birthdays, the anniversaries of one's physical birth, one can have the new consciousness one desires and can start on a higher course to a yet higher plane of consciousness."

"Every time one attains to a new field of consciousness, one has a new birth. Thus, one may have hundreds of new births."

"New creation is like a new birth—not of an individual but of the whole earth. That is what Sri Aurobindo is trying for."

Prior to 1938 every sadhaka had the opportunity to go to the Mother on his birthday and meditate at her feet and seek answers to his life's problems. If one prayed for music, she would play for him. She used to come to the Darshan room specially to give birthday blessings. The Ashram Flower Service would prepare a plate containing various kinds of flowers—"Surrender", "Protection", "Sincerity", "Devotion", "New Birth", "New Creation", "Purity",

“Aspiration”, “Patience”, “Gratitude”, “Faithfulness”, “Harmony”, and so on. Some would go with a plate full of fresh roses; others only with a bunch of “Gratitudes”.

Later on, the Flower Service started making two bouquets—one of which was given to the sadhaka for offering to the Mother, and the other sent to the Mother, who gave it to the person concerned.

In those days, however, she used to select a few flowers from the plate according to individual needs. She would then arrange the selected flowers so as to form a sentence and as she placed them in the Sadhaka’s hands she would smile as only she can. Here are a few of such sentences, as noted down by a sadhaka, who is no more with us.

“Through *Devotion* you will get *Psychic Purity* and *Aspiration* for *Vital Purity* which will open the *Psychic Centre*.” (5 flowers)

“Through *Devotion* you will get *Psychological Perfection* made up of Faith, Aspiration, Devotion, Sincerity and Surrender which will bring *Integral Opening* towards the Divine.” (3 flowers)

“Open your *Vital Being* to *Radha’s Influence*, which will bring *Integral Opening* towards the Mother—This will bring *Help*.” (3 flowers)

Some received from the Mother’s pen a formula or special hint regarding the sadhana, which gave a new turn and powerful impetus to their lives. Some had the privilege of getting new names on their birthdays.

In 1928 a sadhaka prayed to the Mother for a new birth through a new name. He was advised to wait. In those days, after each Darshan Sri Aurobindo used to discuss with the Mother his reactions regarding the condition of each sadhaka. The Darshan following the above prayer fell on the 24th November. On the morning of the 26th the Secretary of the Ashram gave the sadhaka a note in which was written the words: “Dyuman, the Luminous One.” And he had indeed aspired for a Vedic name. This sadhaka has ever since been well known in the Ashram by that name. (His old name was Chunibhai.) Other instances are Vinata (whose previous name was Lalita) and Navajata, “the New-Born” (whose previous name was Keshavdev Poddar).

Some of the Mother’s devotees from the West are known as Padma, Subodha, Medhananda, while some of her Indian devotees are known as Violette, Aster, Rose, Albert. Even visitors, desirous of having special names are so blessed by the Mother.

One of our oldest sadhakas, R, who was the first to surrender all his possessions to the Mother, even his clothes and whatever else he had, prayed to her in 1928 for something on his birthday from the pen of Sri Aurobindo. He had the book called *The Mother* with the following words written in it by Sri Aurobindo:

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"Be always faithful to the Mother, she will, be always with you and protect you."
April 30, 1928.

The following prayer was given to a sadhika by the Master on her birthday:

"I pray to be purified from self-will and self-assertion so that I may become docile and obedient to the Mother and a fit instrument for her work, surrendered and guided by her Grace in all I do."
5-11-1942.

It appealed to a Marwari visitor from Calcutta so much that he got it printed in cards for free distribution to those who asked for it.

After 1938 the system of meditating at the Mother's feet individually on one's birthday in the Meditation Hall on the first floor was discontinued. After a time, however, one could go to the Mother on one's birthday whenever she opened the door at the top of the staircase. In the morning, one received a large bouquet from the Mother's hands; in the afternoon a plate full of various flowers kept ready by the Flower Service; and finally, in the evening after the Mother had returned from the playground, bouquets of flowers. It became almost customary to receive the Mother's blessings and flowers thrice on one's birthday. In addition to this some of us were blessed with an interview. Some sent in a written prayer a day in advance informing the Mother of the difficulties of their lives; and the next day when they went in for their Birthday Blessings, they received their replies in one form or another: some solution would be found or their difficulties would just blow over.

Sometimes people used to send books for their friends so that the Mother might present them to the recipients on their birthdays. In those days it was Sri Aurobindo himself who used to sign books after writing on them the names of the recipient and his blessings.

"Here are two books for you," with these spoken words Sri Aurobindo gave a copy of *The Ideal of Human Unity* and one of *War and Self-Determination* to Jules Rassendren on 19th January 1920. They had been published in Madras. Sri Aurobindo did not put his signature on them. With his consent Rassendren went to read Law in France. The Mother gave him a letter addressed to her brother who was holding a high post in France. These two books are still with him. Wherever he went he carried them with him in his 12-year world tour.

One could then buy books only through Prithwi Singh or the Librarian who, if requested by the buyer, would send the books up through the Secretary or the Manager, and hand them over the next day, duly signed by the Master. One could thus get books with Sri Aurobindo's blessings and signature even on other occasions than birthdays. There were people who

bought scores of books and sent them up, each of which was blessed and signed by the Master. During Darshan Days, heaps of books used to lie before him, each bearing a slip with the buyer's name. Once a new visitor bought a book worth six annas and sent in a slip with the names of his three daughters.

From 1946 Sri Aurobindo discontinued to write the buyers' names and his blessings; one could only get his signature. Later on, even this got stopped, except for the *de luxe* edition of *Collected Poems and Plays*. After 1950 one autographed copy was left with the Mother and she gave it to Dilip.

Prior to 1946, when the Ashram had no printing press of its own, MS. periodicals in French, Bengali, Gujarati and Hindi—called respectively *Dortoir*, *Yatri*, *Anjali* and *Ahana*—used to be written up by young people and presented to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for favour of their signatures on Darshan Days. When Sri Aurobindo stopped signing, the Mother used to write "Sri Aurobindo's blessings" on one side and "Mes bénédictions" on the other.¹ On the occasion of the Mother's 80th birthday, handwritten magazines in about a dozen languages were presented to her at the Playground.

The Mother was the first book written by Sri Aurobindo after the Siddhi of 1926. Copies were distributed to all those who were present at the time of its first appearance on 29th March 1928, fourteen years after the Mother's first arrival in Pondicherry. The next book was *The Riddle of This World* and the third one *Lights on Yoga*. Prithwi Singh, when he was in Calcutta, got *The Bases of Yoga* distributed by the Mother in 1936 on the occasion of his son's marriage. Afterwards there was no distribution of books by the Mother in a general way.

In 1942 on Sri Aurobindo's 70th birthday *Collected Poems and Plays* was published from the Government Central Press, Hyderabad. Out of them 15 copies the Mother presented to some of us.

When the Master stopped giving his autograph, the Mother graciously gave to some of us her books with blessings, name and date, as birthday presents. In the beginning we had her blessings only on her books. When the children were allowed to join the Ashram she began to give books more freely as now we had the advantage of having our own Press. She was pleased to give her blessings on the Master's books as well. In between there was a period when the Mother wrote the name and blessings and the Master added his autograph.

By and by everyone received, on his birthday, books of his choice with the Mother's blessings and signature. One had only to give the Secretary

¹ *Vide the Ahana*, 15. 8. 1949.

a day in advance the names of the books one wanted and one would receive them the next day from the Mother's own hands. Some wrote directly to the Mother. Young and old alike would receive the books chosen by themselves.

Sometimes she used to ask on the previous day what book one needed, and she presented it when one went to offer one's birthday pranams. The following illustration may help to give an idea of the significance and importance of receiving something from the Mother's hands.

A sadhaka used to feel within himself that he had never had a chance to receive a book from the Mother. Once on the eve of his birthday the Mother asked him at the Playground if he would like to have a book.

"As you please," came the reply in a grateful tone.

"What do you aspire for?"

"*Savitri*."

While the Master was still physically with us, the first part of the book had come out, along with the facsimile of the beginning of the first canto. As this was the only book available with a facsimile many Ashramites, including the person referred to, had bought copies of it. Yet the word *Savitri* spontaneously came out of his lips when the Mother enquired what he aspired for. Till then he had never dreamt that he would be able to read *Savitri* in this life. On receiving the book from the Mother, he felt called upon to read it and began to enjoy a few drops of the nectar of its lines here and there. This was the first taste he ever had of the epic. Afterwards, whenever he took up the book, a few lines so fascinated him that he lost himself in ecstasy. It is worth noting that sometimes he used to drown himself in the first part, though he never read the second part, which is much easier.

Even visitors had their books autographed. Once a visitor from Delhi sent the whole set of books for signature. If one wished for a photograph one would receive it. Cases are not rare of individuals asking for two large photographs and thirty or forty books. This practice lasted till the 8th December 1958. Thereafter the books and photographs continued to be given but the Mother signed only one or two of them. Even today (August 1960) this is her practice.

Two young girls came here on the same day, one in the morning and the other in the evening, in February 1928. One was 12 and the other 13. Since then they have been at the feet of the Mother. They have remarkably retained their youthful appearance except that the hair of the latter is showing some signs of growing grey. To the former the Mother gave a book autographed in Bengali characters.

To Shyamaprasad Mukherjee who came to preside over the convention in connection with Sri Aurobindo's Memorial, the Mother presented a set of

books with an inscription in Bengali characters "Shyamaprasad Ke" and her autograph in one of them.

There is an instance of the Mother giving a book autographed in Sanskrit.

So popular were these birthday celebrations that no sadhaka missed his opportunity. Every day a number of us assembled to receive our birthday blessings. By 1954 it was only very rarely that one could offer one's pranams at the Mother's feet in the morning. This was possible only in the evening at the Playground before the March Past. At 6.30 p.m. people used to stand near the Mother's room with their offerings in their hands and went in, one by one. The Mother flung on each "her vast immortal look" for a few seconds, bestowed her blessings on him by her gracious touch, and gave him the books of his own choice and toffees made in the Ashram. Some were lucky enough to have the sweets counted up by the Mother herself according to their age. From September or October 1958 the right number of toffees used to be tied up in a handkerchief and kept ready for the older sadhakas. Often people used to have toffees or other sweets prepared by the department of Cottage Industries on the occasion of their birthdays and enjoy the sight of the same being distributed by the Mother to their fellow-sadhakas, instead of the usual groundnuts. In some cases sweets used to come from such far-off places as Calcutta. The good wishes of all round him would make the person concerned feel overbrimmed with gratitude. Someone from Bombay once remarked : "One should come here to celebrate one's birthday."

For the general distribution of groundnuts or sweets, people used to go to the Mother in the following order : first those who had to attend to the Dining Room and other urgent services, as also those who lived at some distance from the Ashram; next the groups beginning with the youngest; and finally the remaining Ashramites and the visitors. An American sadhaka, who lived far away from the Ashram, used to go in the beginning. One day he was chatting to someone at the gate and did not come up as usual. "Where is X?" enquired the Mother and someone went to fetch him.

This is by no means a solitary case. A family of five used to go each in their proper turn. One day four of them went together, leaving the youngest in the Green Group. The Mother noticed the change and enquired, "Where is the youngest?" This touched the whole family very much.

Even devotees who very rarely can spare themselves to visit the Ashram have a place in her consciousness. One such devotee serves the cause of the Ashram by paying for the flower which the Mother distributes on every first of the month at the "Prosperity".

Though he is more than a thousand miles away from here, yet every month the Mother, without his asking, has a Blessing flower sent to him.

MOTHER INDIA

These instances, though they may appear to be minor to outsiders, are of great significance to us, as they show that each of us has his definite place in her consciousness.

There was a progression from a darshan through a pranam to an interview. The darshan was more of a collective privilege, as when the Mother came to the balcony; the pranam was more restricted and had an individual character; while an interview had a very special significance and was granted only when the occasion demanded it. Yet if one prayed for an interview on one's birthday, the Mother gave a gracious consideration to the prayer. If she agreed to grant an interview, the hour was fixed a few days in advance of the birthday. In the beginning this hour used to be before the March Past. As, however, some people took a much longer time than expected, and as a result the March Past began to be delayed, the interviews became more and more rare and gradually it became customary for people to go to the Mother only for a pranam at the end of the distribution. Thus, on one's birthday, one could have her touch only once, instead of twice or thrice, as was the old practice. It was no longer possible to sit individually at her feet and enjoy a few minutes' talk with her. Yet there was no shadow of discontent on a single face. To be content with the Mother's dispensation and allow themselves to be carried forward by her will is a quality ingrained in the disciples of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Had she not withdrawn this privilege in order to devote her time to a higher purpose? The sadhana was no longer in a preliminary stage. The plants were now well established and they must learn to stand firm and self-reliant in the expectation of the fruit; they must undergo the askesis of the Summer's heat and the storms of the rains.

From the 8th December 1958 to the 13th January 1959 even the Mother's appearance at the balcony stopped—a thing which had never before happened for so many days together. From the 1st February 1959 she started again with her Prosperity Blessings. For some months one could only send one's birthday offerings through the Secretary or the Manager, who brought back her blessings in the form of a rose. By and by the birthday pranams and interviews were resumed, with this difference that even pranams now required her previous permission and were granted on the first floor of the Ashram, usually at 4 p.m. Prior to the 8th December 1958 everyone, young or old, could go to the Mother on their birthday. Occasionally, the Mother herself was gracious enough to visit individuals at their residences on their birthdays or other important functions and thus make the day memorable in their lives.

So great is the attraction of the prospect of seeing the Mother that people prepare themselves for the great event months in advance. Young girls in particular spend hours together every day preparing some piece of embroidery for

the personal use of the Mother; others plan and prepare their offerings months ahead.

All have different ways of making their offerings to the Mother. "One of them is to offer an act at her feet as one might offer a flower." Some place at her feet poems or they play music on their birthdays. Moni, who came to Pondicherry before Sri Aurobindo's arrival to make arrangements for his stay here, read a poem composed by him before Sri Aurobindo on 15th August 1913, which was liked by the Master, who gave a garland to him.

Once a sadhaka took more than a year to render *Essays on the Gita* into Hindi in order to have the pleasure of offering it to the Mother on his birthday. A day before his birthday in 1952 an old sadhaka wrote to the Mother : "I beg to submit this article as a Tulsi leaf on my birthday." And in reply the Mother wrote : "I accept your offering for your birthday and give you my blessings."

Some of the disciples of the Mother who normally live far away from the Ashram come here to celebrate their birthdays regularly every year. Others seek their birthday blessings by telegram.

Some departments of the Ashram, such as the Centre of Education, the Dortoir and the Ayurvedic Dispensary, celebrate their birthdays according to their individual tastes. Since the time the Mother started coming to the playground, she has graced many of these departments by her visits.

The sentiment of the Mother's way of celebrating birthdays has radiated to a distance of 5,000 miles. It is followed by the disciples at Kampala and other places and her blessings are obtained. "There is a psychic brotherhood amongst us," said a member of the above centre to the writer. To give his fellow-workers the joy of hearing the Mother's voice he carried back with him in 1956 some of her tape-recordings. Whenever he would return to his place after paying a visit to Pondicherry, people flocked round him for news of the Ashram. A truly sweet relationship has sprung up among the 25 members of the Kampala centre and many of them have already had valuable experiences. On her birthday the wife of the person referred to was fortunate enough to receive a souvenir from the Mother, which is kept in the centre of a sanctuary as a treasure. According to the version of a visitor from Calcutta, to whom the Mother is all in all, this sense of brotherhood, fellow-feeling and mutual help is as prominent among the Mother's disciples living outside as among those in the Ashram.

NARAYAN PRASAD

(Translated by J. N. Welingkar from the Hindi)

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Ten Upanishads By *Svami Sivananda*. Pub. Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy, Rishikesh. P. 304, Price Rs. 3.00

This is a handy collection of ten of the lesser known, but none-the-less significant, Upanishads which bear upon one of the main aspects of the spiritual tradition of India. The texts comprising this volume, with fluent commentaries by Svami Sivananda, are Yogasara Upanishad, the Vedantasara, the Sivanjanamrita, the Advaitamrita, the Svaroopaboddha, the Brahmarahasya, the Brahmanubhava, the Vicharabindu, the Jyotirbindu and the Anandabindu Upanishads. As the titles would indicate, these Upanishads dwell upon one facet of the Vedantic Knowledge and experience—the Truth of the Advaita, the Reality of the One Brahman and That alone. Brahman is real and all else is unreal, illusory. Man is enjoined to grasp this truth and take steps to realise it in his life-time so that he may once for all come out of this round of birth and death in Maya, Illusion, and attain oneness with the One and Only Truth of Brahman who is the absolute Being, Knowledge and Ananda.¹

Immersed in the reign of Ignorance, Avidya, how is it possible for man to seek a way out ? Confined in a physical body with pressing limitations all round, how is he to reach That which is vaster than the vastest, higher than the highest ? Is there a point of contact anywhere to start with ? Yes, says the Upanishad : seated in the heart of every living being, there is the true Self, *ātmā pratijīvam hṛdayakoṣe mviṣṭaḥ*.² One must get aware of the presence of the Atman within oneself and learn to realise his identity with it, for the Atman within oneself is none other than the Brahman which is the Sole Reality. Normally, man is not aware of It. For his faculties are turned outward; the Self is to be sought by turning the energies inward, *antarmukhyā vṛtṭyā*.³ And in man the mind is the leading faculty whose direction the others follow. In a way the whole world of objects and experience exists for me only in so far as it is perceived by my mind. As the text says : perception arises only when the mind is connected with the object through the doors of the external senses.⁴ As soon as an object

¹ *Prapancoyam muthya, sa kevalam pratibhasikah ; jivah saccidānanda-brahmano'bhinnah.* (Vedantasara Up. 1)

² Brahmarahasya Up. 4.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Jyotirbindu Up. 6.

is so grasped, the *citta*, the basic mental stuff takes the form of that object, *vr̥tti*, and there is the perception. But if the mind is occupied elsewhere, even if the object impinges upon the senses there is no direct perception. In short, it is the activity of the mind that makes one part of the world, *mana eva bandha-mokṣayoḥ hetuḥ*.¹ It is interesting to note the importance attached, in this ancient psychology, to the mind and its movement in the form of Thought. To these seers, Thought has a form, an individuality, *citur mūrtimatī*; it is a dynamic Force, *apratihata śaktiḥ*.² To seize this main faculty of man at its roots and so orientate it as gradually to dissociate his consciousness from the external universe and train that consciousness to feel and discover its innate identity with the Self that is Brahman, is the aim of the discipline, yoga, that is enunciated from different angles in these pages.

The seeker equips himself with the fourfold means of sadhana, the *sādhana catuṣṭāyam*, viz. *viveka*, discrimination between the real and the apparent, *vairāgya*, dispassion, *śad sampat*, the sixfold virtues (*śama*, tranquillity, *dama*, restraint, *uparati*, renunciation, *tīkṣā*, endurance, *śraddhā*, faith, *samādhāna*, single-mindedness) and *mumukṣattva*, intense aspiration for liberation. He must repeatedly practise and learn to withdraw his senses and the mind from their customary objects of preoccupation, *pratyāhāra*, and accustom the mind to dwell on any one object that is conducive to the cultivation of the required spiritual climate and inner purification, *dhāraṇā*. After the mind is sufficiently trained in the process of *dhāraṇā*, it is kept confined to the object of contemplation for a continuous length of time during which the object with its content flows as it were into the mind like the flow of oil, *tailādhāra-vat*³, until the mind becomes identified with it and enters into what is called the *samprajñāta* samadhi in which nothing exists except the knower, the knowledge and the known. This is the penultimate stage which eventually leads the practitioner to the *asamprajñāta samādhi*, in which there is neither the knower nor the known : the consciousness of the knower is lost in the essential Truth underlying the object of contemplation, i.e., Brahman which alone remains.⁴

The path, however, is not easy. The Brahmarahasya Upanishad speaks of the obstructions in the way of Meditation as follows : want of right enquiry, impatience, lethargy, seeking for comfort, indulgence in sensual, impure and allied thoughts.⁵ Also spoken of are *laya*, sleep, *vikṣepa*, restlessness of mind

¹ Yogasara Up. 8.

² *Ibid.*, 6.

³ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴ *Sādhana-catustaya-sampannasya viśuddha-hṛdayasya samādhau tat pratyaksam bhavati.* (Anandabindu Up. 4)

⁵ Brahmarahasya Up. 18

and *kāṣāya*, latent impressions.¹ These are to be got over by various means, such as corrective thoughts, exercise of will, Japa etc. For Japa the Sivajnana Upanishad holds up the Pranava, OM, as the mantra *par excellence*. For OM is the immediate symbol of the Brahman who is the Goal of all sadhana. Its repetition is charged with power.² It is to be repeated, the text adds, with a felt and full awareness of its meaning, *sānubhavam sārthānusandhānam*. Its action in the dissolution of the obstacles and the gradual convergence of the mental vrittis is lauded in high terms.

The stages of Ignorance to be crossed are described as seven : Bindu-jagrat, the causal pre-waking condition, Jagrat, waking state in which there is the first rise of the "I" and "This" feeling, Maha-jagrat, the state in which the egoity of "I" takes a definite formulation, Jagrat-svapna, the state of waking in which the consciousness passes into dreaming (day-dream), Svapna, state of actual dream, Svapna-jagrat, the waking condition in which past things are recalled and pass before the mind as a sort of dream, and finally Sushupti, the condition of dense sleep.

Of Knowledge, Jnana, too there are seven stages that are spoken of : *śubhecchā*, happy aspiration, *vicāranā*, enquiry, *tanumānasī*, subtilised state of the mind, *sattvāpatti*, attainment of purity, *asamasakti*, non-attachment, *padarthābhāvanā*, realisation of the ultimate nullity of things, and *turiya*, superconsciousness, the state in which there is a natural realisation of one's identity with the Source of All.³

For such a one who has realised the truth of the Self there is no need of meditation or samadhi.⁴ He is the liberated while yet living, the jivanmukta, who feels his fullness everywhere,⁵ who is one with the Supreme and declares :

"I am equal in All. I am the Supreme Person. I am the Lord. I am the Excellent. I am the Felicity. Language of the tongue is not for me. Not of me is the No. I have nowhere to go. I am the inmost of the inmost."⁶

M. P. PANDIT

¹ Vedantasara Up. 7. The Advaitamrita Up. (12) refers to five minor obstacles to meditation : forgetfulness of one's own true nature, postponement of practice to a later hour, envelopment by darkness, perspiration and gathering of saliva in the mouth, discontent on the failure of effort to bring in quick results, distraction by varied lights during meditation.

² *Om ityesa praṇavo brahmanoḥ pratikaḥ, vryavaccatasya uccāranam* (6)

³ We come across the same gradations in the philosophy of the Yoga Vasishtha.

⁴ *Saksatkratmano dhyāna-samādhi na bhavataḥ* (Advaitamrita Up. 10)

⁵ *Pūrnam ātamānam veti*. (Brahmarahasya Up. 10)

⁶ *Samoham. Puruṣottamoham. Isoham. Sresthoham. Sivoham. Bhāsārahutoham. na-ityartharhutoham agamyāntarahutoham. Abhyantarasya api abhyantaragatoham.* (Brahmanubhava Up. 20)

Students' Section

TALKS OF THE MOTHER

Q. Souvenir et mémoire sont-ils synonymes?

Q. Are remembrance and memory synonyms?

R. Pas nécessairement. La mémoire est un phénomène mental, purement mental. Le souvenir peut être un phénomène de conscience. On peut se souvenir dans tous les domaines de son être, on peut se souvenir vitalement, on peut se souvenir physiquement, on peut se souvenir psychiquement, on peut se souvenir mentalement aussi. Tandis que la mémoire est un phénomène purement mental. La mémoire peut d'abord se déformer, et elle peut aussi s'oblitérer, on peut oublier. Quant au phénomène de conscience, si vous savez ou si vous pouvez ramener la conscience à l'état où elle se trouvait à un moment donné, les choses reviennent exactement comme elles étaient. C'est comme si vous reviviez le même moment. Vous pouvez le revivre une fois, deux fois, dix fois, cent fois, mais vous revivez le phénomène de conscience. C'est quelque chose de très différent de la mémoire d'un fait que vous inscrivez quelque part dans votre cerveau. Et si les associations cérébrales se dérangent le moins du monde, parce qu'il y a beaucoup de choses dans votre cerveau, et c'est un instrument très délicat, s'il y a le moindre petit dérangement, votre mémoire se fausse, alors il y a des trous qui se forment et vous oubliez. Tandis que si vous savez ramener un certain état de conscience en vous, il revient identique à ce qu'il était. Maintenant, il se peut aussi qu'un souvenir soit purement mental et que ce soient des activités cérébrales qui continuent, mais c'est un souvenir mental, dans la tête. Et on a des souvenirs dans le sentiment, des souvenirs dans la sensation.

A. Not necessarily. Memory is a mental phenomenon, purely mental. Remembrance can be a phenomenon of consciousness. One can remember in all the domains of one's being; one can remember vitally, one can remember

physically, one can remember psychically, one can remember mentally also. Whereas memory is a purely mental phenomenon. Memory may, in the first place, be distorted, and it may also be obliterated : one may forget. As to the phenomenon of consciousness, if you know how or are able to put the consciousness back to the state where it was at a given moment, the things return exactly as they were. It is as if you revived the same moment. You can revive it once, twice, ten times, a hundred times, but you are reviving the phenomenon of consciousness. It is something very different from the memory of a fact which you inscribe somewhere in your brain. And if the cerebral associations get disturbed the least bit in the world, because there are plenty of things in your brain, and it is a very delicate instrument, if there is the slightest disturbance, your memory grows false ; then there are holes that get formed and you forget. On the other hand, if you know how to bring back a certain state of consciousness in you, it comes back the same as it was. Now, it can happen that a remembrance is purely mental and that cerebral activities are going on, but it is a mental remembrance, in the head. And one has remembrances in the feelings, remembrances in the sensations.

Q. L'autre jour tu as dit : "Pour augmenter ta mémoire, il faut augmenter la conscience." Est-ce la même chose pour le souvenir ?

Q. The other day you said : "To increase one's memory, one must increase one's consciousness." Does the same thing hold for remembrance ?

R. Je voulais dire qu'il faut remplacer le phénomène de mémoire pure par un phénomène de conscience. Je ne sais pas dans quel sens on employait le mot mémoire l'autre jour. Peut-être n'était-ce pas dans ce sens-là.

A. I meant that we must replace the phenomenon of pure memory by a phenomenon of consciousness. I don't know in what sense the word "memory" was employed the other day. Perhaps it was not in the same sense as here.

Q. Il s'agissait de la mémoire dans les études.

Q. The question was about memory in studies.

R. Eh bien, c'est exactement ce que je voulais dire, il faut remplacer la mémoire purement mentale par des états de conscience. Parce que, si vous essayez d'apprendre par cœur une chose, au bout d'un certain temps vous êtes sûr de l'oublier. Ou bien il y a des trous. Vous vous souvenez d'une chose

TALKS OF THE MOTHER

et pas d'une autre. Mais si vous savez associer un phénomène de conscience à une certaine connaissance, vous pouvez toujours le ramener, et la connaissance reviendra telle quelle.

A. Oh well, it is exactly what I meant : it is necessary to replace the purely mental memory by states of consciousness. Because, if you try to learn a thing by heart, after some time you are sure to forget it. Or else there are holes. You remember one thing and not another. But if you know how to associate a phenomenon of consciousness with a certain knowledge, you can always bring it back, and the knowledge will return intact.

30-9-1953

INTELLIGENCE AND READING

A LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO

INTELLIGENCE does not depend on the amount one has read, it is a quality of the mind. Study only gives it material for its work as life also does. There are people who do not know how to read and write well who are more intelligent than many highly educated people and understand life and things better. On the other hand a good intelligence can improve itself by reading because it gets more material to work on and grows by exercise and by having a wider range to move in. But book-knowledge by itself is not the real thing ; it has to be used as a help to the intelligence but it is often used only as a help to a loquacious stupidity or ignorance—ignorance because knowledge of facts is a poor thing if one cannot see their true significance.

29-10-1936

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 TWENTY

WE have regarded Sri Aurobindo's *Rose of God* as a symphonic masterpiece of the highest melopoeia—the acme of Intonation or Incantation. I want now to speak a little of what Sri Aurobindo has termed undertones and overtones—"speak a little" because I do not know much about the matter and Sri Aurobindo himself has provided us with only a few hints. He has not even defined "undertone" or "overtone". He has just given a few examples of lines with undertones, lines with overtones, lines with both together and lines with neither. The last-named can be good poetry but in them the rhythm of the outer being is insistent and what impresses us is the admirable metrical music more than the play of an inner music moulding the metre. Of course the inner music is always there : what we are considering is its marked presence.

I should like to point out that undertones and overtones due to this marked presence may not coincide with Intonation or Incantation. In the latter, some spiritual cadence comes to the ear. This cadence can never be without undertones or overtones, yet all undertones and overtones are not spiritual. The spiritual cadence can be reached as the result of some strong intensity of the sensuous, the emotional or the intellectual tone manipulating the metrical rhythm : this is what mostly happens in poetry not drawn direct from mystical sources. Poetry direct from these sources carries the spiritual cadence clearly in itself and breathes it into the metrical rhythm. But undertones and overtones are in themselves simply the inner rhythm becoming prominent. Perhaps all melopoeia may be said to have undertones and overtones as its basis.

MOTHER INDIA

Let me put before you Sri Aurobindo's examples. There is excellent metrical rhythm without any undertone or overtone in Shakespeare's

Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

(By the way, why the wise man's son and not the wise man himself? Perhaps only the son would be interested in lovers' meeting?) Now hear Shakespeare beginning to have undertones:

Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Again, Shakespeare's

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him,

has admirable metrical rhythm, but Sri Aurobindo can catch no undertones or overtones in it. Undertones run exquisitely all through the same poet's

In maiden meditation, fancy-free,

while his

In the dark backward and abysm of Time

is all overtones. Both undertones and overtones are present in those lines we have quoted from *Hamlet* more than once:

Absent thee from felicity a while
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain.

If I may pick a longer passage to illustrate an intermixture of lines with neither undertones nor overtones and lines with either, consider the famous soliloquy of Romeo by the body of Juliet whom he takes as dead. You know the story? Juliet had consulted her family's medico to give her a sleeping draught which might fool others into believing that she had passed away. Unfortunately she could not take Romeo into her confidence: so the poor lover is beside himself with grief and resolves to follow her into the unknown:

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Why art thou yet so fair ? Shall I believe
That unsubstantial death is amorous;
And that the lean abhorrèd monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour ?
For fear of that, I will still stay with thee;
And never from this palace of dim night
Depart again; here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chambermaids; O, here
Will I set up my everlasting rest;
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh.

I think the first two lines have practically no undertones or overtones. The third and fourth seem to me to have undertones quite audible. The fifth appears just to keep them going, but the next two are full of them. The phrase about the worms being Juliet's chambermaids strikes me as losing them somewhat. The remaining part of the passage comes to my ear surcharged with both undertones and overtones, the latter predominating at the very end.

How shall we distinguish undertones from overtones ? We may say in general that the former reach us with a music of intensity more than wideness, delicacy rather than power : where wideness and power are there the overtones rule the rhythm. But it is not always easy to draw a line. Is intensity or delicacy lacking in the following from Shakespeare ?

Take, O, take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn;
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again;
Seals of love, but sealed in vain,
Sealed in vain.

Sri Aurobindo has declared that this whole lyric is all overtones !

Now some concluding remarks on melopoeia. In all melopoeia, language does what music is supposed to do : possess us directly with sound and enchant or elevate us. But I must emphasise that it is music transferred into terms of language. The two are different in their processes. Word-melopoeia need not always lend itself to being set to a tune. And it is a curious fact that some of the greatest melopoeics in verse have had very little ear for music—they were

practically tone-deaf. Shelley, Tennyson, Swinburne, Hugo, Yeats, though they have written about music itself, were all tone-deafs in more or less degree. Swinburne was so much so that if he had heard "God Save the Queen" and "Bandemataram" played in turn to an audience of mixed Englishmen and Indians, he would have been able to distinguish the difference of tune only by watching whether Englishmen had stood up or Indians had done so !

If I may be permitted to be a little personal, I myself, though fairly capable of a bit of melopoeia in verse and acutely conscious of it when others create it, can scarcely be described as having in any technical sense an ear for music. Not that I run away from music—oh no, I do not share the opinion of the student who paraphrased most originally Keats's

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter...

Keats, as you must be aware, is referring to the engravings on a Grecian Urn, engravings of a procession in which musicians are playing on pipes. Their music is of course inaudible but therefore all the more enchanting to our spirit : it is filled with a sweetness to which we are constrained to put no limit or end such as sense-experience has to put to tunes actually heard. The student boldly produced the howler : "It's nice to listen to music, but much nicer not to." Well, I have in my time listened to most of the great compositions of Europe and several classics of Indian music and on a number of occasions let myself go in ecstatic "Wah-wah"'s. But never ask me to remember a tune and repeat it to you. If I try to reproduce it, I invariably create something else—a new composition which most people consider a decomposition. My own poems, however, are saved to a great extent from being decompositions by my not having enough of a melopoeic mania. Poets who are enamoured of sound run often the risk of trusting to the sound-effect to carry off a sense either trivial or thin or else prosaic. A chronic case of thinness of sense is Swinburne who in later life lost himself in complex eddies of sound with hardly perceptible meaning. Milton, on the other hand, had always substantial significance, but at times he permitted it to be prose set to organ music—grand resonance sweeping merely intellectual matter along. Tennyson suffered from triviality. He once declared to his friend Carlyle: "I think I am the greatest master, after Shakespeare, of the rhythmic phrase in poetry, but I have really nothing to say." I may add that Carlyle rated Tennyson highly and saw him as a mighty bard constantly "cosmicising the chaos within him". Perhaps what impressed Carlyle was not Tennyson's poetic speech so much as his frequent capacity for silence. Tennyson used often to visit Carlyle and they would sit at either end

TALKS ON POETRY

of the fireplace, smoking away. Two or three hours of an evening they would thus spend, each hidden in his own cloud of smoke and uttering not a word. At the close of the evening they would shake hands and say, "What a grand time we have had together !" Carlyle, as is well known, spent almost a lifetime of writing and lecturing on the virtues of silence. To him, Tennyson, no matter what he wrote, could not but be a sage because of those dumb evenings.

Here I may warn you against confusing Tennysonian triviality or Swinburnian thinness with what is musically elusive in verse. There are snatches of song in Shakespeare whose meaning cannot be caught in any sensible paraphrase but which produce no impression of being trivial or thin. On the contrary we are aware of an intensely significant emotion, but the emotion defies reason, so that to sober thought Shakespeare seems talking nonsense while actually there is a subtlety of mood seizable only by a sensitive intuition. An instance is the song from *Measure for Measure* which Sri Aurobindo has cited for overtones all through : "Take, O, take those lips away..." The poet Housman, in a critical lecture, asks how eyes could mislead the morn and how kisses could be brought again. He finds the notions nonsensical. But he is not foolish enough to condemn the song. Far from it. He considers it wonderful poetry. Only, he concludes that the function of poetry is to appeal to our solar plexus and that its essential work is not to say anything intelligible but to transfuse emotion. This is a mistake. If Housman had said apropos of this lyric, "to transfuse emotionally a vision-mood beyond the mere mind", he would have hit the nail on the head : he would have made the head feel all intellectual sense knocked out by the hitting but he would have pierced through it to the thrilled dreaming heart of the matter and touched there something received from poetry's ultimate source which is overhead.

AMAL KIRAN
(K. D. SETHNA)

THE BREATH OF THE SPIRIT

Never are we so poor as men want to make us.
Always we have the wealth we are, the beauty which we live.

ERNST TOLLER

Suppose a man in hiding and he stirs, he shows his whereabouts thereby;
and God does the same.

No one could ever have found God; he gave himself away.

MEISTER ECKHART

The truth is best as it is.
No one can alter it;
Neither can anyone improve it.
Have faith in the truth and live it.

BUDDHA

The lion, when stricken to the heart, gives out his mightiest roar.
When smitten on the head, the cobra lifts its hood.
And the majesty of the soul comes forth
Only when man is wounded to his depths.

VIVEKANANDA

He who seeth Me in All and All in Me,—
him will I never forsake, nor will I suffer him to forsake Me.

ĠITA

Look within. Within is the fountain of God,
ready always to well forth if thou wilt always delve.

MARCUS AURELINS

LAST ADVENTURE

WHEN the call to adventure beats quick in your blood,
And your days seem so timid and tame,
When the bloom of life seems to be nipped in the bud
And you yearn for a livelier game,

When the people you know are but books you have read
And you're bound in a burrow of habit,
When you solemnly ask if you're living or dead
Or if you're a man or a rabbit,

When you find nothing new you can liven up to,
And cricket and soccer are boring,
If you've seen all the sights from here to Burcoo
And there's nothing left worth the exploring,

If interesting faces and far distant places
Don't stir you to travel abroad,
Why not stay where you are, hitch your heart to a star
And begin the adventure of God ?

GODFREY

THE MOTHER

(ON SEEING A PICTURE OF THE MOTHER)

SOUL-STIRRING Eyes of gold-délight,
All-where reigning supreme—
Our blind secrecy's dream
She seizes with Her all-forgiving Sight.

Torn now assunder our ego's screen.
Under her smile of Grace
Blooms quick our surrender's face.
She paves the way to a Life evergreen.

CHINMOY

RECOGNITION

THY eyes were fiery red as blood,
Thy lips let loose a poisonous flood
Of words that seemed my heart to break,
Thyself to bite me like a snake !
I looked and thought now where to seek
The strength to fill this self so weak.
At last I sent a call above
To Him whom sages call "All-Love".
And lo ! He stood revealed in thee :
Thy anger hid His laughter free,
Thy ill words were from Him a call
Of love, from Him who dwells in all.
Comforted, shy and quiet I stood,
Speechless, griefless and in a mood
To thank thee, Hidden One ! who awoke
In me the eye to pierce the cloak.

DEVAKINANDAN

LAMENTATION*

FROM THE BUREAU DE CORRECTEURS.

We decipher the manuscripts ;
We correct all the proofs.
'Midst crashes and ceaseless chatter,
From numerous thoughtless goofs.

We essay with great concentration,
Ignoring all bangs from a hammer,
Then suddenly upon the breeze
Comes a most unmusical yammer.

We pay really great attention,
And scan every word in the writing,
Yet any mistake we correct,
Is ignored, with a frown—most biting !

In spite of an urgent notice¹
Regarding all manuscripts,
We still get some priceless samples,—
With blots,—and ghastly scripts.

So dear poets and writers that would be,
Send in your efforts *typed* as they should be,
Then no more will we be blamed²
By those whom we leave un-named.

LEENA

¹ A notice was issued stating that all manuscripts should be typed, double spaced, and any alterations to be made clearly.

² Any mistake which appears in the finished publication is blamed on to the proof readers.

THE PURPOSE OF A PORPOISE

RESEARCH men of the United States Navy have discovered that the bottle-nosed dolphin, or porpoise, is the mental equal, and perhaps superior, of man. Some details about this revelation were given in 'Radio Newsreel' by Douglas Stuart, B.B.C. Washington Correspondent.

'The facts established by the American Navy are these,' he said : 'the porpoise has a brain two-fifths larger than a man and its functional units are just as complex. Porpoises can communicate with each other; they talk by grunts and whistles. At the first attempt porpoises solved problems that monkeys need 300 tries to solve; and furthermore (and this is why the United States is so interested in porpoises) they have a system of determining distances under water that is far superior to the one man has developed for detecting enemy submarines. It is this secret of the porpoise that American Navy scientists are trying to fathom.

'The *Wall Street Journal*, a staid and practical newspaper, suggests that the United States cast a few billion dollars into the ocean for the porpoises to use as they see fit. The leader-writer of *The Baltimore Sun* is concerned about the problem of man communicating with the porpoise : "Would the porpoise be interested in the dialogue ?" And he adds : "Some millions of years ago, he left the land and returned to the sea. His decision has been more than justified by events." *The Washington Post* reminds its readers of the conversation between the Mock Turtle and Alice : "No wise fish would go anywhere without a porpoise", said the Mock Turtle. "Why—if a fish came to me and told me he was going on a journey, I would say 'with what porpoise ?' " "Don't you mean purpose ?" said Alice. "I mean what I say," the Mock Turtle replied in an offended tone.'

(*The Listener*, July 7, 1960)

CHAPMAN'S *BUSSY D'AMBOIS* : A 'METAPHYSICAL' DRAMA

"THEY 're only truly great wh' are truly good," says Tarifa in Chapman's *Revenge for Honour*. This is also the intellectual concept that underlies his *Bussy D'Ambois*. Chapman in presenting this play seems to be faced with a difficulty. What is the nature of that difficulty? The play deals with a man of flawed greatness. It has been the tradition of criticism in the past to speak of the "Senecal man"¹ in Chapman's plays. Bussy, however, has more affinities with the man of Renaissance completeness than with the man of Senecal perfection. He reveals himself as "primarily a figure of the school of Marlowe".² But then "there is an element of coarseness in speech and action which robs him of the sympathy that goes out to Marlowe's protagonists, whatever their extravagances".³ When Chapman presented his dramatic idea of flawed greatness in a concrete character, he found that the product exceeded the limits set for him both in stature and dignity. In other words, Bussy like Shakespeare's Falstaff outgrew the intention of his creator. In the opening scene of the play Chapman presents Bussy as a poor, virtuous, strong but cynical man. Then the dramatist places him in the flux of fortunes. Bussy shows himself capable of resisting any amount of lures in the world of politics, and "grace and gold" do not "make him surfeit" of his essential cynicism and his hatred for the way of the world. If political passion fails to move Bussy, romantic passion does not.

Chapman by this time has endowed his hero with a full life, an abundance of richness and vitality so that he himself falls in love with the theme of vital love and romantic passion in his play. So somewhere in the middle of the play, the dramatist hovers between two attitudes—one part in him sitting in judgment and condemning a great man who seeks his own fall by yielding to vicious passion and another part sympathising with the hero's flaw because

¹ See W. Macneile Dixon—"Chapman, Marston, Dekker", *Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vol. VI. Also Michael Higgins—"Chapman's 'Senecal Man': A study in Jacobean Psychology", *Review of English Studies*, Vol. XXI (1945) Also his article "The Development of the 'Senecal Man' . Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois and some precursors", *Review of English Studies*, Vol. XXIII (1947).

Also Cf T.S. Eliot—"Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca" (in *Selected Essays*).

² T.M. Parrott (Ed.)—*The Plays of George Chapman*, p. 545.

³ Professor F.S. Boas quoted by Ennis Rees in his book *The Tragedies of George Chapman*, p. 40.

it is the flaw of a great soul. Moreover the dramatist sees his hero in relation to other characters in the play. Bussy "draws a good deal of dramatic sympathy when seen in contrast with such thoroughly degenerate courtiers as Monsieur and the perfectly trifling characters who mock the newcomer upon his arrival at the French court".¹ Elias Schwartz speaks of Bussy's "self-consistency".² But we find that Bussy's "self-consistency" is one of greatness which is devoid of goodness. In other words Bussy is not a character who is "a law to himself". But then Chapman seems to have sympathy for the flaw of his hero partly because it proceeds from a virtuous man and partly on account of its Universal nature. So we find the dramatist compensating in the latter part of the play what he has undone in the earlier part by making the protagonist's well-wishers sympathise with him and by making even the antagonists, in spite of all their scorn, refer to him only with admiration. Thus the Umbra of the Friar says in the end :

Farewell, brave relics of a complete man,
Look up and see thy spirit made a star.

The Duke of Guise declares him "a perfect man" and Monsieur calls him "young, learned, valiant, virtuous, and full mann'd". In this way, the dramatist in presenting the drama partly observes and watches and partly participates in the action.

2

If the dramatist starts the play from an intellectual concept about the limitations of a man of flawed greatness and finally realizes that it is also a story of human love, a spectator finds the beginning of the play only in its middle part where it becomes a human drama. "The story of the love of Bussy and Tamyra," writes Legouis, "forms the best part of this unequal tragedy."³ The playgoers of Chapman's time must have appreciated the Bussy-Tamyra scenes in the play. Certainly they should have applauded while witnessing scenes like the one where Monsieur, after getting to know the love-affair of Bussy and Tamyra from Pero, Tamyra's maid, asks Bussy :

Thou dream'st awake, object in the empty air ?

¹ Ennis Rees—*The Tragedies of George Chapman*, p. 33.

² See his article "Seneca, Homer, and Chapman's 'Bussy D'Ambois'", *Journal of English and German Philology*, Vol. LVI (April, 1957).

³ *A History of English Literature*, p. 442.

To this Bussy replies,

Worthy the brows of Titan, worth his chair.

They must have felt anxious in the last scenes of the play when the supernatural powers prove to be powerless in forewarning this man, who has been worthy of the love of a countess. And in the last scene where Bussy is decoyed, wounded and done to death, they must have wept. Thus the spectators start from the romantic plot and realise in the end the theme of flawed greatness embodied in the drama.

3

The point at which the dramatist and the spectators meet is also the point from which an ideal reader looks at the play. This is also the point at which the idea plot and the action plot of the play meet and mingle and the one becomes the other. To this reader, Tamyra is not a new type of character. Women of her type he has met, for example, in Anne Frankeford in Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. That does not mean that there is nothing new to speak of in Tamyra. There is a kind of tension in Tamyra between her sin and her sense of guilt which we do not find in Anne Frankeford. "Tamyra," says Michael Higgins, "is but a part of the external march of events, of stirring incidents whereby Chapman imparts an air of activity and movement to what is essentially a drama of intellect and reflection¹". Mr. Higgins seems to think that the political theme with 'a Senecal man' at its centre is central to the play. But it is not so. *Bussy d'Ambois* is not a mere intellectual drama with a political issue as its theme and with a modicum of sensuous incidents. No, the play is as much a human drama as it is a political drama with an intellectual implication. The ideal reader thus looks at the play as great and vital at once. He sees in the love-affair between Bussy and Tamyra an "objective correlative" to the intellectual concept of the play. He perceives in the play the confronting of the heroine of the domestic drama with a certain amount of tension and a Marlovian hero with a certain amount of Senecal virtue which is marred by the qualities that the hero shares with the lover of the domestic tragedy. It is this complex union of the hero of a Senecal-Marlovian type and the heroine of the domestic drama with a certain amount of tension that has transformed Chapman's play into a 'metaphysical' drama.

(To be continued)

S. KANDASWAMY

¹ See his article "Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois and some precursors", *Review of English studies*, Vol. XXIII (1947).

THE CONCEPT OF REBIRTH: SANKHYA AND OTHER THEORIES*

ACCORDING to Sāṅkhya the goal of existence is liberation from the bondage of Prakṛiti. The natural man, in whom there is no awakening of the need of liberation, lives as a slave to the activities of Prakṛiti. Sāṅkhya philosophy prescribes the path of knowledge based upon right discrimination between Puruṣa and Prakṛiti, between Soul and Nature, Self and Not-Self for attaining liberation either in this present life or after departing from this life. Now the question naturally arises as to what happens to those who have not been able to acquire completely this liberating Knowledge. The question of future life is therefore bound up with the aim of liberation. According to Sāṅkhya the failure to discriminate Puruṣa from Prakṛiti so as to effectuate complete dissociation between them is the cause of Saṁsāra, the cycle of movement of the soul in a series of birth and rebirths. In all the main branches of Indian philosophy the problem of rebirth has played a very important part and is indeed inseparable from other cognate problems and their right solutions. The Vedantist and the Buddhist as also other branches of philosophy have declared in no uncertain terms the need of positing before-life and after-life for a thorough explanation of the philosophical questions that confront us in this life.

There are four pertinent questions relating to rebirth, namely :

- (1) *What* is it that passes from one life to another life ?
- (2) *How* is this journey carried on ?
- (3) *Why* is it necessary ?—what is the object of rebirth, the final goal that is aimed at by the soul thus undergoing apparent dissolution through death and reappearance through fresh life ?
- (4) *Where* does the soul dwell in the internatal state ?

According to ancient Vedānta there are four constituents in the make-up of our being, namely :

- (1) The immutable Self which, though beyond Space, Time and Causality, presides over and supports all mutable movements of Prakṛiti;
- (2) Then there is the Soul, the Lord of all movements, the Real Man under

* From lecture-notes given to the philosophy students of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.

whose directions all changes are taking place, who shapes, controls and guides the ever changing personality of man;

(3) Then there is the ever changing personality constituted of the stuff of nature and identified with the ego;

(4) And lastly the ever changing body, which undergoes constant mutation during life-time ending in a drastic pass-over at the time of death.

(a) WHAT IS IT THAT PASSES FROM ONE LIFE TO ANOTHER ?

Of these four, the ever changing body does not obviously come back in the old form at the time of the next birth for it is dissolved into the different constitutive elements of physical nature which are absorbed into their universal forms through a process of decomposition or disintegration. The ever changing personality constituted of mental states and processes, moods, temperaments, vital impulses and acquisitions, all that composite stuff identified with the 'I', the ego of the being, also does not survive in its old form. This question regarding what actually takes a fresh birth has been thoroughly explored both by the ancient Vedantist and Buddhistic thinkers. They did not attach any importance to the survival of personality in the Western sense of the term. "...they did not give to that survival the high name of immortality; they saw that personality, being what it is, a constantly changing composite, the survival of an identical personality was a nonsense, a contradiction in terms. They perceived indeed that there is a continuity and they sought to discover what determines this continuity and whether the sense of identity which enters into it is an illusion or a representation of a fact, a real truth, and, if the latter, what that truth may be. The Buddhist denied any real identity. There is, he said, no self, no person; there is simply a continuous stream of energy in action, like the continuous flowing of a river or the continuous burning of a flame. It is this continuity which creates in the mind the false sense of identity. I am not now the same person that I was a year ago, not even the same person that I was a moment ago, any more than the water flowing past yonder ghaut is the same water that flowed past it a few seconds ago; it is the persistence of the flow that preserves the false appearance of identity. Obviously then there is no soul that reincarnates, but only Karma that persists in flowing continuously down the same apparently uninterrupted channel. It is Karma that incarnates; Karma creates the form of a constantly changing mentality and the physical bodies that are, we may presume, the result of that changing composite of ideas and sensations which I call myself. The identical 'I' is not, never was, never will be. Practically so long as the error of personality persists, this does not make much difference and I can say in the language of ignorance that I am reborn in a new body; practically

I have to proceed on the basis of that error. But there is this important point gained that it is all an error and an error which can cease; the composite can be broken up for good without any fresh formation, the flame can be extinguished, the channel which called itself a river destroyed. And then there is non-being, there is cessation, there is the release of the error from itself.”¹

The Vedantist conclusion differs from the Buddhist. It admits an identical, a self, a persistent immutable reality. To the Vedantist the Self, the Real Man, who is the Lord of all these changing appearances, is real and immortal. The sense of continuity and identity is the outward reflection of this eternal presence, of this hidden Self, the Purusha, the Man, the Real person. The ego in man wrongly asserts itself and arrogates the sense of identity to itself.

It is this Soul then that reincarnates in a new body for completion of the evolutionary course, the object of which is the all-round integration of the parts of the being in the light of the soul and thereby the establishment of full freedom, perfection, bliss and immortality in our material existence. In the Isha Upanishad the attainment of immortality through a succession of lives by the individual is clearly indicated. It is the immortal life principle which connects the successive births of man. This life principle is the active instrument of the Divine Will embodied in the individual. The soul, then, which is a portion of the Transcendent Divine, passes from one condition of existence to another through the doors of birth and death for fulfilling the true goal of existence. Rebirth is therefore to be taken as a mechanism set up by the soul for carrying out its programme of changing mental knowledge and vital will into true knowledge and divine will by calling down the Grace of Surya and invoking the power of Agni. This double path of knowledge and action is conceived as competent to bring about the high consummation of divine life here in this body, if not in the present existence then at least through a succession of lives, by utilising the mechanism of rebirth.

Later Vedanta and the schools of philosophies in the subsequent periods tended more and more to lay exclusive and one-sided emphasis upon the realisation of the Transcendent Static Self and, as a consequence, freedom from rebirth was put in front as the highest aim of existence. The ancient idea was that the soul intended to bring about divine birth through gradual purification and progressive perfection of the faculties of the individual, specially the confused knowledge of mind and the restless activity of life energies, through a succession of births. The later thought tended to take rebirth as a means of ending all possibility of rebirth in a physical body either like the Buddhists by altogether destroying the individual formations miscalled the soul or self or

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Problem of Rebirth*, p. 17.

like the later Vedantists and Sāṃkhyas by extracting the soul out of the earthly embodiment and lifting it into the high region of the Transcendent Self, with no wish to return again to the scenes of activities, the sinful earth. Sāṃkhya then belongs to this later school of thought. How to extract the soul or the Self from its embodiment and merge it with the Transcendent Purusha is thus the sole preoccupation of the discipline of Sāṃkhya.

(b) HOW IS THE JOURNEY CARRIED ON FROM ONE LIFE TO ANOTHER ?

According to the Vedas and the Upanishads there are innumerable worlds and planes of existence between the Pure Existence of the One and the Terrestrial Existence of the Many. We find in the Isha Upanishad clear indications of intermediate worlds, the mental heaven and vital worlds, the sunless worlds, or hells enveloped in blind gloom, to which the departed soul may have to go according to the merit of the work performed during its life-time. The individual soul issuing out of the body generally tends to persist in an organisation of consciousness very much similar to the one reached by it during its life-time. "According to the state of consciousness which we reach here in the body, will be our state of consciousness and the surroundings organised by it when the mental being passes out of the body." The question relating to how the soul passes out of the body or takes up again a new body at the time of rebirth is something supernatural and thus falls outside the domain of positive facts of experience obtainable in terms of our usual processes of perception and conception and therefore it is not possible to prove or disprove statements and theories regarding it by any ordinary logical method used by the critical mind as shaped by the scientific culture of the modern age. The course open to us in dealing with facts of after-life and before-life must evidently be reliance upon the sayings and utterances of the illumined souls gifted with occult power of seeing and knowing. Yet, as these powers may naturally vary in degree and extent of illumination, the question of critical examination of various doctrines and statements relating to occult spheres cannot be altogether discarded as useless. Thus out of the main positions of ancient Vedanta, Sāṃkhya, Buddhism and later Vedanta, the first, the oldest, appears to be the best and most comprehensive and sound. In fact Sri Aurobindo has taken up the skeleton of the Vedantic position and breathed a new life into it, to which we shall refer in connection with our study of Vedanta. Here then the Sāṃkhya position may be stated in brief.

The Sāṃkhyas, like the Vedantists, admit the necessity of a subtle body in order to make the process of transmigration of soul after death intelligible. This subtle body is called *liṅgadeha* by them, for it serves as a *liṅga*, (sign) between

two successive lives of an individual. According to the Vedantists, the *sūkṣma-deha* is a thin transparent vehicle of the soul within and around the gross body which is capable of separating itself from the coarse material body without being injured by any physical cause. Death or decomposition of the material body cannot affect the subtle body. The soul uses this subtle body as a vehicle, an *āśraya* for the journey from one life to another. The Sāṃkhya also take the *lingadeha* as the vehicle of journey of the fettered Purusha from one existence to another. According to them the subtle body, *līṅgaśarīra*, which is also called *ātīvāhikaśarīra* is composed of 18 elements; (1) buddhi (2) ahaṁkāra, (3) manas, (4-8) five tanmātras or suksma-bhutas, (9-18) ten senses, made up of five karmendriyas and five jñānendriyas. This body is transparent and invisible to the gross vision. Some Sāṃkhyas, for instance Vijñānubhikṣu, suggest the necessity of a third kind of *śarīra* called the *adhiṣṭhānaśarīra* composed of the finer particles of gross elements of the physical body, which serves as an *adhiṣṭhāna* of the subtle body. It is in and through this body that the relation between the *līṅgaśarīra* and the *sthūlaśarīra* of the newly conceived embryo is maintained.

There are different and divergent speculations regarding the nature and function of the different kinds of subtle bodies and their interrelations. There can be no satisfying proof regarding these varying views of the invisible forms and their interactions and creations. But all Sāṃkhyas agree as to the nature of the passage in and out of physical existence of the individual Purusha still under the fetters of Prakṛiti. The *līṅgadeha* formed by Prakṛiti out of the stuff of actions of previous lives which may be regarded as the personality of the individual, holds the Purusha in its coils and compels him to take another birth in the womb of a mother. It is the *līṅga* which constitutes the character and executive nature of the individual. It contains and preserves the saṁskāras of past lives and the newly formed predisposition of the present existence. As long as the true insight, vivekabuddhi, the right discrimination, is not realised, the *līṅgaśarīra* continues to play this role of exit and entrance into suitable human bodies. The gross body made from father and mother is disintegrated at the time of death, but the *līṅgadeha* continues to exist for many successive lives till the awakening of the Purusha takes place and liberation from the bondage of Prakṛiti is attained. When complete dissociation through right illuminative discrimination takes place the *līṅgadeha* along with the *sthūla-deha* is also dissolved and the mechanism of rebirth is thus completely destroyed. Prior to the completion of the journey of the soul, it is bound by the law of Karma and enters into different kinds of organisms according to its merits. Each soul selects the organism fit to express the line of development and may even pass through all the grades of existence, fourteen in number, including

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animal and plant life as well. Successive lives help the development of the being and carries on some kind of invisible spiritual evolution till the day of complete disillusionment takes place and the Purusha can stand completely isolated from the entanglements of Prakriti.

(To be continued)

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