

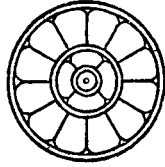
MOTHER INDIA

APRIL 24, 1961

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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.



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No. 3

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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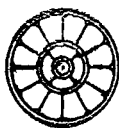
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THE MESSAGE OF MARCH 29, 1961



Our Path

To walk on the path you must have a fearless intrepidity, you must never turn back upon yourself with this mean, petty, weak, ugly movement that fear is.

An indomitable courage, a perfect sincerity, a total self-giving to the extent that you do not calculate or bargain, you do not give with the idea of receiving, you do not offer yourself with the intention of being protected, you do not have a faith that needs proof, — this is indispensable for advancing on the path, — this alone can shelter you against all dangers.

THE MESSAGE OF APRIL 4, 1961



All can be done by the Divine, — the heart and nature purified, the inner consciousness awakened, the veils removed, — if one gives oneself to the Divine with trust and confidence and even if one cannot do so fully at once, yet the more one does so, the more the inner help and guidance comes and the experience of the Divine grows within. If the questioning mind becomes less active and humility and the will to surrender grow, this ought to be perfectly possible. No other strength and tapasya are then needed, but this alone.

Sri Aurobindo

WORDS OF THE MOTHER.

Sri Aurobindo says,

“Disease is needlessly prolonged and ends in death oftener than is inevitable, because the mind of the patient supports and dwells upon the disease of the body”,

and I add,

“An illness of the body is always the outer expression and translation of a disorder, a disharmony in the inner being; unless this inner disorder is healed, the outer cure cannot be total and permanent.”

I-10-1959

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

(These talks are from the Note-books of Dr. Nirodbaran who used to record most of the conversations which Sri Aurobindo had with his attendants and a few others, after the accident to his leg in November 1938. Besides the recorder, the attendants were : Dr. Manilal, Dr. Becherlal, Purani, Champaklal, Dr. Satyendra and Mulshanker. 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.)

This is the fourth talk in the new Series which follows a chronological order and begins at the very beginning. The four earliest talks, after Sri Aurobindo's accident, appeared in Mother India in 1952. We are now picking up where we then stopped and shall continue systematically.)

DECEMBER 20, 1938

AFTER his lunch at about 4.30 p. m. N was reading to Sri Aurobindo the memorial orations on a prominent figure in local politics and business. One person after another, beginning with the Governor, had praised him in superlative terms : "upright", "generous", "great friend of the poor" etc. Hearing this, Sri Aurobindo exclaimed "Good Lord !" and burst into laughter and remarked : "He ought to be canonised—Saint X ! From the way everybody has praised him, one may generalise that all men are liars. Such is public life! When Y died, all his life-long political enemies did the same thing."

At about 7 p.m. the talk started again.

It turned on homeopathy and its difference from allopathy in regard to dosage and other matters.

SRI AUROBINDO : Homeopathy is nearer to Yoga. Allopathy is more mechanical. Homeopathy deals with the physical personality—all the symptoms put together and making up this personality. Allopathy goes by diagnosis which

does not consider the personality. The action of homeopathy is more subtle and dynamic.

S : Some Yogis go into samadhi as a release from bodily pain and suffering. But there are others who don't do that and bear the pain.

N : Ramakrishna was one such.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. Yogis can go into samadhi and put an end to the samskara. But I don't see the utility of going into samadhi to escape from pain. On the other hand, when one decides to bear a disease, it seems to me in a way an acceptance of it.

Ramakrishna once, when he was seriously ill, said to Keshab Sen, that his body was breaking up under the stress of his spiritual development. But spiritual development need not always lead to disease.

N : If Ramakrishna had so willed it, he could have prevented the disease.

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh yes, but he didn't believe in having the will to cure his disease or in praying to the Divine for a cure.

N : It is said that he got his cancer because of the sins of his disciples.

SRI AUROBINDO : He said that himself and, if he did, it must be true. The Guru has to take up many things of the disciples. The Mother does that because she unites herself with the sadhaks and takes them up into herself. Of course, at the time same she also stops many things from happening in herself. A famous Yogi told a disciple when the latter was becoming a Guru : "In addition to your own difficulties, you will now take up those of others." No doubt, if one cuts the connection with the disciples, this can't happen, but that means no work, and the sadhaks are left to themselves without support.

Interchange of forces between persons is very common. Whenever two people meet the interchange goes on. In that way one contracts a disease from another without any infection by germs. A disciple here was very conscious of what he was receiving from others, but he didn't care to think what he was passing on to them !

Even without meeting, there can be mutual effect. Even thought has power for good and evil. Bad thoughts may affect others. That's why Buddha used to emphasise right thinking.

The need of company which people feel is really their need to interchange forces. What after all is the passion of man and woman for each other ? Nothing but a vital interchange, a drawing in of forces from each other. Of course, the interchange or drawing in of forces takes place unconsciously and sometimes in spite of oneself. Thus when a person doesn't like another, he doesn't always know the reason, but it means that the vital beings of the two don't agree ; the interchanges are unpleasant. You know Sheridan's lines :

I do not like thee, Doctor Fell.
The reason why I cannot tell...

But at times, even when there is incompatibility, people come together. You see men and women quarrelling violently and yet unable to do without each other. That is because each has a need of the other's vital force. Woman has almost always such a need and that is what is called "being in love". Surely, the need has been imposed on her by man. But in Indian society, they established the relation between the husband and the wife in such a way that an equation might result.

N : But if one draws more than the other, there is a risk.

SRI AUROBINDO : Certainly. If one receives more than one gives, bad consequences may be there for the one who gives more. Hindu astrology speaks of Rakshasa Yoga : a husband losing many wives one after another means an incompatibility so that instead of supporting them he is eating them up.

N : What are vampires ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Those who constantly draw from other people's vital beings without giving anything in return.

N : Are they so by nature or through possession ?

SRI AUROBINDO : They may be so either way. And there are men vampires as there are women vampires.

There is also another kind of vital nature : an expansive one. And in such a case one has the need to pour out. A still another kind, again expansive, is the Hitlerian vital, catching hold of other people in its grip.

N : Does psychic love ever catch hold like that ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Of course not ! The law of psychic love is to give without making any demand.

DECEMBER 21, 1938

After Dr. Srinivas Rao had gone we gathered round Sri Aurobindo and began talking again about medicine — homeopathy, allopathy, ayurveda etc. Somebody remarked how barbers came to occupy a place in the history of healing in India.

SRI AUROBINDO : In Europe also, during the Middle Ages, most of the surgeons were barbers.

I understand there are Kavirajas who can, by examining the pulse, state the condition and disease of the patient.

Then some of us referred to reports about remarkable pulse-specialists who could even say what one had eaten a few days back.

S : They are not always correct. One can't accept the reports.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why not ? How do you know the reports are not correct ? Many sciences are built up by experience and intuition and handed down by tradition : for example, the Chinese method of treatment by finding nerve centres and puncturing them with pins.

P : It is said of Dhanwantari that whenever he used to stand before a plant, the plant used to reveal its properties to him.

SRI AUROBINDO (*smiling*) : He was the physician of the Gods; so that is nothing unnatural for him.

Ayurveda was the first system of medicine. It was from India that this science went to Greece and then to Arabia. Indian physicians used to go to Arabia. What Hippocrates and Galen speak of as the three humours is an Indian idea. India also discovered the use of the zero with mathematical notations. Astrology too went from India to Arabia.

N : At Calcutta, people are trying to found Ayurvedic schools. That will be better, for it will be a combination of east and west systems, especially in anatomy and surgery.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why ? Anatomy and surgery were known to Indians. There were many surgical instruments in ancient India. Besides, for ancient things like Ayurveda I don't believe in this modern system of schools and colleges. They make the whole thing mental and intellectual, while the ancient systems were more intuitive. In India they used to hand down such things from Guru to disciple. It is the same with Yoga. One can't think of Yogic schools and classes. They are an American idea. The Guru of Von Macpheeters used to hold classes and give lectures and readings in Yoga.

N : Perhaps all this can be done about Hatha Yoga ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Even that would be only the outer part.

DECEMBER 22, 1938

All of us assembled in the hope of hearing something from Sri Aurobindo. But he did not seem to be in a talking mood. So we also were forced to keep quiet, thinking how to draw him into conversation. Suddenly we found Dr. B beaming with a smile and looking at him. Then he took a few steps nearer to Sri Aurobindo and we followed him. When he drew still closer he burst into a question.

DR. B : In attaining the right attitude what principles should we follow in our dealing and behaviour with others ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It seems to me that one should go the other way about. If we have the right attitude other things come by themselves. But the right attitude is itself secondary. What is important is the inner state. Spiritual and ethical principles are quite different, for everything depends on whether it is done for the sake of the Spirit or for ethical reasons. One may observe

mental control in his dealings, but his inner state may be quite different. For example, he may not show anger, but within he may be ruffled. In the true inner control the inner peace is not disturbed and goodwill towards others is retained. It is the psychic control that is required and when that is there the right attitude follows in one's external behaviour. Conduct must flow from within outwards and the more one opens to the psychic influence, the more it gains over the outer nature. Mental control may or may not lead to the psychic control. In people of a sattwic type it may be the first step towards it.

N : How is the psychic control to be got ?

SRI AUROBINDO : By constant remembrance, consecration of oneself to the Divine, rejection of all that stands in the way of the psychic influence. Generally it is the vital being that stands in the way with its desires and demands. But once the psychic opens, it shows at every step what is to be done.

Soon afterwards, the Mother came in and all of us sat in meditation with her. On her departure at about 7 p.m. Sri Aurobindo started the talk again.

SRI AUROBINDO : What's the idea behind your question ? Is it something personal or general ?

DR. B : I meant, for instance: how to see God in everybody, how to love all and have a goodwill for all ?

SRI AUROBINDO : One has to start with the idea of goodwill for all, to consecrate oneself to the Divine, try to see God in others, acquire a psychic control and reject in oneself all vital and mental impulses. On this basis one must proceed towards realisation. The idea must pass into experience. Once the realisation is there, everything becomes easy. But even then, it is easy in the static aspect. When it comes to the dynamic expression it becomes difficult. Thus, when one finds a man behaving like a brute, it is very difficult to see God in him, unless one separates him from his outer nature and sees the Divine behind.

One can also repeat the name of the Divine and come to a divine consciousness.

N : How does repeating the name help one ?

SRI AUROBINDO : The name is a power, like a mantra. Everything in the world is a power. There are some who do pranayama together with repeating the name. After a while, the repetition and pranayama become automatic and one feels the Divine Presence. There are no limits to the ways of God. In the Ashram here, once people began to feel a tremendous force in their work. They could work without fatigue for hours and hours. But they overdid it. One has to be reasonable even in spirituality. That tremendous force was felt when the sadhana was in the vital being. When the sadhana started in the physical,

things were different. The physical is like a stone, full of aprakasha and apravritti, darkness and inertia.

N : Sometimes one feels a sort of love for everybody; though the feeling lasts for a few seconds, it gives a great joy.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is a wave from the psychic. But what is your attitude towards it ? Do you take it as a passing mood or does it stimulate you to further experience of that sort ?

N : It stimulates, but often the vital mixture tries to come in. Fortunately I could drive it out recently.

SRI AUROBINDO : The mixture is the risk. The fact that the mixture tried to come shows that the wave came through the inner vital and thus took something from the vital. In the vital, one has to be careful to avoid sex impurities. There was a sadhak who, in spite of his occasional outburst of violence, was a very nice and affectionate man. But he used to get his psychic experiences mixed up with the sex impulse, and the experiences were spoiled. The spoiling happens because at times one gives a semi-justification to the sex impulse, saying that after all it does not matter very much. But sex is absolutely out of place in Yoga. In the ordinary life it has a certain place for certain purposes.

When I was in jail I knew a man who had a power of concentration by which he tried to make everyone love him, and he succeeded. The warders and all the others were drawn to him. Of course one must know the process of concentrating.

N : That's just what we don't know. (*Laughter*)

SRI AUROBINDO : The mind must be made quiet and the consciousness turned—not mentally alone—towards the aim. It no doubt takes time but that is the way. There are no devices for these things.

S : What is the difference between modification of nature and transformation of it ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Transformation is the casting of the whole nature into the mould of your inner realisation. What you realise you project outwards into your nature.

I speak of three transformations—the psychic, the spiritual and the supramental. Many have had the psychic : there were the Christian saints who spoke of God's presence in their hearts. The spiritual transformation implies the realisation of the Self, the Infinite above with the dynamic no less than the static side of its peace, knowledge, ananda etc. This transformation is difficult. Beyond that is the supramental transformation, the Truth-Consciousness working for the Divine aim and purpose.

N : If one has inner realisation, transformation should follow in the light of it.

SRI AUROBINDO : Not necessarily. There may be some modification in the nature part but entire transformation is not automatic. It is not so easy as all

that. My experience of peace and calm after my first contact with Lele never left me, but in my outer nature there were many agitations and every time I had to make an effort to establish peace and calm there. Ever since that early experience the whole object of my Yoga has been to change the nature into the mould of the inner realisation.

N : Could a man with true realisation have grave defects left in his nature—defects like the sex impulse ?

Sri Aurobindo : Why not ? There can be the movement of anger as well as the sex impulse. Have you not heard of Durvasa's anger or the fall of the Rishis through sex ? But all Yogis may not care about these defects. Yogis pass beyond the stage of good and evil : ordinary questions of morality don't arise then. So some of them may look upon the outer nature as a child behaving as it wants, and not bother to harmonise it with the inner being. There is also the danger of self-deception. A Yogi may go into the Higher Mind, perhaps even touch the Overmind, and yet have a sexual fall. He may think he is guided by an inner divine Voice and attempt to justify his erratic behaviour by saying he is only obeying that Voice. I have heard of a certain Yogi who went abroad and was arrested for making advances to girls in a public place. These things are possible because man's psychology is complex.

Once after the Barisal Conference I went to see Mahendranath Nandi who was called the Tolstoi of Brahmanbaria. His grandfather was a Tantric and could meditate sitting upon the waters of a river. From him perhaps Nandi got his spiritual capacities. Nandi used to be guided by an Inner Voice. When Bepin Pal asked him whether he would do anything prompted by this Voice, he replied that if it was from God he would follow it to any length.

But, of course, merely unconventional conduct by a Yogi is not a fall. Once a disciple got shocked because he saw me eating meat etc. He complained to Raman Maharshi. Maharshi replied that it is a question of habit and, when the man had departed, Maharshi said to his followers : "What an imbecile !"

In spiritual realisations there are any number of passages, crossways and truths. And when I say that something is to be done or not done in Yoga I mean in our Yoga. It does not apply to Yogas with other aims. In our Yoga we insist on the transformation of the outer nature.

There was a lull for some time after this. Then Sri Aurobindo spoke again.

SRI AUROBINDO : Do you know anything about Z ?

S : I am not personally attracted by him.

SRI AUROBINDO : When I saw his photo I had the impression that he is a man with a strong vital power. His sadhana seems to be on the vital plane and it is in such sadhana that one brings about a great influx of Power and

unfortunately people are attracted. In the spiritual, psychic and even mental sadhana, Power can come but it comes automatically, without one's asking for it.

B was another Z, with a powerful vital. At one time I had high hopes of him, but people whose sadhana is on the vital basis pass into what I have called the Intermediate Zone, and they don't want to go beyond. The vital is like a jungle and it is extremely difficult to rescue one with such a vital power. It is comparatively much easier to help those who are weak and lacking in such power. B used to think that he had put himself in the Divine's hands and the Divine was in him. We had to be severe with him to disillusion him of his idea. That's why he could not remain here. He went back and became a Guru with about thirty or forty disciples around him. Gurugiri comes very often to this kind of people. He did everything he wanted in my name—a turn I heartily dislike. Unfortunately his mind was not equally developed in power as his vital. He had the fighter's mind, not the thinker's. We often put a strong Force on him and as a result his mind used to become quite lucid for a while and he could see his wrong movements. But his vital rushed back, took control of his mind and wiped all out. If his mind had been as developed, he would perhaps have been able to retain the clarity. The intellect helps one to separate oneself from the vital and look at it dispassionately. The mind also can deceive, but not much.

NOTE

Nirodbaran acknowledges the help given by A.B.Purani who has added a phrase or a sentence in some places in the record of this talk.

GUIDANCE FROM SRI AUROBINDO

(LETTERS)

KNOWLEDGE

THAT is always the difficulty with the mind. It must learn to be silent and let the knowledge come without trying to catch hold of it for its own play. 5-1-1935

Q : Is it indispensable for us to ask what plane we have reached, how far we are from the goal, what the next step should be ?

All that has its use but it should come as experience and Knowledge from within and above, not as mental questioning and answer. 10-1-1935

There is a discrimination that is not intellectual—a direct perception. 17-1-1935

That is the right thing—a certain effortless intuitive discrimination. 18-3-1935

The proper thing is to see all with an unmoved calm, both the “good” and “bad” as a movement of Nature on the surface. But to do this truly without error or egoism or wrong reactions needs a consciousness and knowledge that is not personal and limited. 3-4-1935

All these suggestions are absolutely absurd. It is the ego rising up again and wanting to be patted on the back and told how clever it is and how much Knowledge it is getting. You yourself wrote that the Knowledge was not yours, but the Mother’s and objected to my writing “You are right”. If it is the Mother’s Knowledge coming down in you why should I have to say “Yes, no” or “Right, wrong” to it ? It is the Knowledge which you need that the Mother is giving you—if there is any mixture of your own, I shall point it out to you. If there is none, why should I put in unnecessary approving comments on it ? It was your own psychic that made you suggest putting the line so as to get rid of the remnant of old ego that was secretly feeding on my comments, and it was to help in that that I kept silence.

You wrote, I suppose, to help your communion with the Mother and lay what comes in you physically before her, not to get her mental approval or praise. If there is anything to say, you can trust to me to say it—if there is no remark called for, you should leave me free to keep silence. That is the rule I keep always with those who have advanced sufficiently—not to need mental

encouragement or explanations at every step. It seems to me that you have advanced far enough for that also. 26-4-1935

Until we know the Truth (not mentally but by experience, by change of consciousness) we need the soul's faith to sustain us and hold on to the Truth—but when we live in the Knowledge the faith is changed into knowledge.

Of course I am speaking of direct spiritual knowledge. Mental knowledge cannot replace faith, so long as there is only mental knowledge, faith is still needed. 4-7-1935

Q : Is there any use in Knowledge if nothing of it becomes practical ?

Knowledge is always better than ignorance. It makes things possible hereafter if not at the moment, while ignorance actively obstructs and misleads. 28-10-1935

THE AWAKENING OF GUJERAT

SRI AUROBINDO

WHEN the word of the Eternal has gone abroad, when the spirit moves over the waters and the waters stir and life begins to form, then it is a law that all energies are forced to direct themselves consciously or unconsciously, willingly or against their will, to the one supreme work of the time, the formation of the new manifest and organised life which is in process of creation. So now when the waters of a people's life are stirred and the formation of a great organic Indian state and nation has begun, the same law holds. All that the adversaries of the movement have done, whether they have tried to repress or tried to conciliate, has helped what they sought to destroy and swelled the volume and strength or purified as by fire the forces of Nationalism. So also the efforts of those among ourselves who are afraid of the new movement or distrustful of it, to check the pace and bring back the nations' energies into the old grooves, have only helped to increase the vehemence of the National desire to move forward. When Sir Pherozshah Mehta juggled the Congress into Surat, he thought he was preparing a death-blow for Nationalism : he was only preparing the way for a Nationalist awakening in Gujerat. Nationalism depends for its success on the awakening and organizing of the whole strength of the nation ; it is therefore vitally important for Nationalism that the politically backward classes should be awakened and brought into the current of political life ; the great mass of orthodox Hinduism which was hardly even touched by the old Congress movement, the great slumbering mass of Islam which has remained politically inert throughout the last century, the shopkeepers, the artisan class, the immense body of illiterate and ignorant peasantry, the submerged classes, even the wild tribes and races still outside the pale of Hindu civilisation, Nationalism can afford to neglect and omit none. It rejoices to see any sign of life where there was no life before even if the first manifestations should seem to be ill-regulated or misguided. It is not afraid of Pan-Islamism or any signs of the growth of a separate Mahomedan self-consciousness but rather welcomes them. It is not startled by the spectacle of a submerged class like the Namasudras demanding things which are, under existing circumstances, impracticable from Hindu Society. When a community sues for separate rights from the bureaucracy that is a sign not of life but of stagnant dependence

* *Bandemataram*, December 22, 1907.

which is death, but when it seeks a larger place in the national existence, and it tries to feel its own existence and its own strength, it is a true sign of life, and what Nationalism asks is for life first and above all things ; life, life and still more life, is its cry. Let us by every means get rid of the pall of death which stifled us, let us dispel first the passivity, quiescence, the unspeakable oppression of inertia which has so long been our curse ; that is the first and imperative need. As with backward communities, so with backward provinces. It is vitally important to Nationalism that these should awake. Behar, Orissa, the Central Provinces, Gujerat, Sindh must take their place in the advancing surge of Indian political life, must prepare themselves for a high rank in the future federated strength of India. We welcome any signs that the awakening has begun. It is for instance a cause for gratification that Orissa is beginning to feel its separate consciousness, and to attempt to grow into an organised life under a capable and high-spirited leader, although we consider his political attitude mistaken and believe that he is laying up for himself bitter disappointment and disillusionment in the future. But when the inevitable disappointment and disillusionment come, then will the new political consciousness, the new organized life of Orissa become an immense addition of strength to the forces of Nationalism. Yet it remains true that the only way these provinces can make up for lost time and bring themselves up swiftly to the level of the more advanced races, is by throwing themselves whole-heartedly into the full tide of Nationalism, and we do not know that we ought not to thank Sir Pheroz-shah for giving us a unique chance to light the fire in Gujerat.

The Gujeratis have only recently been touched by the tide of political life. Largely split up into Native States large and small and partially under the direct rule of the bureaucracy, immersed in commerce and fairly prosperous until the last great famine swept over the once smiling and fertile province, destroying life, human and animal, by the million, they had slumbered politically while the rest of India was accustoming itself to some kind of political activity. It was at the Ahmedabad Congress that Gujerat was for the first time moved to a political enthusiasm, an awakening perhaps helped on by the association of a thoroughly Swadeshi Exhibition with the session of the Congress and the inclusion, however timid and half-hearted, of industrial revival in our political programme. Then came the outburst of the Swadeshi by which Gujerat, unlike some of the other politically backward provinces, was profoundly affected. The ground has been prepared and Nationalist sentiment has already spread among the educated Gujeratis. The Surat Congress provides an opportunity to give a fresh and victorious impulse which will make Gujerat Nationalism a powerful working and organized force. The importance of winning Gujerat to the Nationalist cause is great. The Gujeratis labour, as the Bengalis did until the present awakening, under a reproach of timidity and excessive love of peace and safety. The truth probably is that so far as the reproach has any

foundation either in Bengal or Gujerat, the defect was due not so much to any constitutional cowardice as to indolence born of climate and a too fertile soil and to the prevalence of the peaceful and emotional religion of Chaitanya and Vallabhacharya. Be that as it may, Bengal under the awakening touch of Nationalism has wiped out that reproach for ever and there is no reason why Gujerat stirred by the same influences, awakened to the same energy, should not emulate her example and take like her a foremost place in the battle of Swaraj. We must not forget that she also has great traditions of old, traditions of learning, traditions of religion, traditions of courage and heroism. Gujerat was once part of the Rajput circle and her princes fought on equal terms with Mahmud of Ghazni. Her people form valuable and indispensable material for the building of the Indian nation. The *savoir faire*, the keen-witted ability and political instinct of her Brahmins, the thrift and industry of her merchants, the robust vigour and commonsense of her Patidars, the physique and soldierly qualities of her Kathis and Rajputs, the strong raw human material of her northern and southern hills, are so many elements of strength which Nationalism must seize and weld into a great national force. Even if Sir Pherozshah Mehta overwhelms us with numbers at Surat, even if we cannot carry a single proposition in the Congress Pandal, yet if we can give this great impulse to Gujerat and organize our scattered forces, for a great march forward, all the energy, all the expenditure we can devote to this session at Surat will be amply rewarded. It is not merely or chiefly by victories in the Congress but by victories in the country that we must record the progress of Nationalism.

SRI AUROBINDO AND EDUCATION

(5)

NATIONAL EDUCATION

III

It is the Bushido virtues on which we must insist if India is to regain her strength and keep her self-respect; these virtues should form an integral part of our scheme of national education. What are these virtues? Sri Aurobindo describes them in a beautiful article entitled "The Ideal of the Kshatriya", which he wrote for the *Karmayogin*¹ and which we reproduce here in full.

"As for the past one thousand years the progressive ideal in India has been that of Brahminhood, so in the age upon which we are entering, the progressive ideal will be that of the Kshatriya or knight. Purity will be accepted as implicit and courage will be demanded. The Rajput will be the type of aspiration rather than the saint. The whole preoccupation of society will be with manliness and strength rather than with subtle shades of refinement and social prestige. Criticism will be on the great scale, and the small uneasiness of the village circle will be put on one side as fit only for old wives' gossip.

"This will not mean that Hinduism will have changed its goal, but only that the path marked out for the individual will be different. Infinite are the paths that lead to a single centre. Then as now *mukti*, Freedom, will be held the supreme good. But heroism, fearlessness and blazing energy will be the forms in which that *mukti* shall be worshipped. 'What is manliness', said the Swami Vivekananda in a private talk, 'It is to know instinctively what should be the glory of a man.'

"The manly man knows when to strike. He also knows when to obey. There are times when disobedience is cringing serfdom. No man should be able to count on me to aid him in doing wrong. No man should be able shamelessly to speak of wrong in my presence. Even the Brahmin may have courage to strike. The Kshatriya knows also the moment, when it comes.

"But fearlessness and being feared, though essential to the knightly character, is only its foundation, not its crown. The last is found in the hatred of injustice, in the passion of pity and protection, in readiness instantly to give up life for the sake of the right. Herein lies the freedom of the Kshatriya, that he is free from fear for self. His own life is the pawn that he will cheerfully spend

¹ II. 9. 1909.

for the banner under which he fights. He will die with a shout of triumph. Nothing gloomy or resentful will mar the sun and serenity of his temper.

"He is as generous as he is brave. He is as free from suspicion as from faint-heartedness. He knows nothing of jealousy, nothing of mean exultation. His greatest joy is in the glory of his comrades. His own modesty protects him from a degrading ambition. Honour is his dharma and the protection of the weak his *mukti*. Only in the hearts of the sons of kings can the companion of the avatars arise.

"The true knight is unflinching in his austerity. Great generals sleep hard and eat sparingly. In armies the common soldiers are first served; their officers last. Even for games and sport, the play of knighthood, the body has to be carefully trained. Ease and luxurious living soften the muscles and corrode the will. The Kshatriya keeps his sinews like iron, his armour bright, and his spirit ever tense for the ideal. Even in sleep his hand is on the sword-hilt, and his ear open for the cry that may ring forth at any hour: 'Awake ! Arise ! Fight ye, and cease not till victory is won !' Loyalty to leader and comrade, devotion to banner and cause; the love and expectation of greatness and truth in others; the pride that makes noble; the playfulness of him who can never be selfish and narrow; these are the qualities of the ideal knight.

"The Kshatriya looks for strength, and not weakness, in woman. He seeks in her a comrade, not a toy. He reverences her soul, has regard to her highest aspirations, and never dooms her to feebleness or ineffectiveness because she is not man. Yet he worships at no false shrine, accepts no unreal subterfuge for greatness. Above all, he knows that woman, like man, has the right to self-sacrifice in some great cause. He looks to her for clear vision of the goal, and makes her free to suffer and be strong. He supports her highest will with his thought and knowledge. But he offers no homage to mere vanity or weakness. He meets her with no idle flattery or weak indulgence. Hand in hand, he treads with her the roadway of their common labour and common hope, in her eyes a noble sincerity, in his a tender reverence and unfaltering purpose. Highest of all the women of the past were the *satis* who eagerly died for the sake of the beloved. Highest of those of the future will they be who live and die for the ideal itself, happy if in this they hold communion with their comrade's soul.

"Lifted high above the *māyā* of manhood and womanhood is the life of the ideal. Ideals are not accidents. They are the fruit of long *tapas* and of many lives. Human life is made great in proportion to their intensity. Few indeed are the souls who can live for an idea. In the age that is now dawning, the ideals of the past will not be cast aside. On the contrary, they will now, for the first time, find their true fulfilment. It is because of the great purity and sweetness of the Indian home that men can develop the strength and courage

its defence requires. Only the perfect man is the true Kshatriya, and the perfect man is priest as well as knight.

“Let us think reverently of the task that is before us. Never in history has there been a greater age than now. Nothing in the past is too high for the present. *Sannyāsa* was not greater than the public service. No form of Ishwara could be higher than Bhumi Devi. This Devi we have to realise. Her worship we have to establish. And we may remember that in the form of Gandhari she sings still to the Duryodhanas of this day, as of another long ago, ‘*Yato dharma-stato jayah*’.”¹

SANAT K. BANERJI

¹ ‘On the side of the Right is victory.’

SRI AUROBINDO ON INDIA'S DESTINY¹

(This article touches on the general question : what is it that makes a subject nation long for independence ? is it the desire for material gain or is it something deeper ? A subject nation may long accept its material degradation without revolt. It is only when its self-respect is hurt by a wanton disregard of its cherished ideas that its soul awakens and it starts on the way to freedom and greatness. It is this that was at the root of the Swadeshi Movement in India; it was the renaissance of the East, and it meant the vindication of the spirit against matter.)

WE cannot congratulate the bureaucracy on its commonsense and knowledge of human affairs if it sets much store by the loyalist manifestos that are pouring from some quarters. If some Punjab lawyers and Bengal zemindars demoralised by the present coercive policy make fresh demonstrations of loyalty, it is nothing but self-deception to accept them as a sufficient proof of the alleged artificial character of the present unrest. The present unrest has to be probed to its very root before one can make any accurate pronouncement on its true character. Not a day passes but we read leaders or correspondence in the English and Anglo-Indian Press bearing on the present unrest in India but nowhere do we find a critical and sifting analysis of the situation tracing the discontent to its true origin and bearing opinions and reflections on such a careful study.

The disturbance of the statical condition of a nation is always due to the operation of forces which though inactive for a time are bound to be at work again. Individuals and races have never acquiesced in a stagnant state of existence for a long time. They have all a pre-destined course to run and if adventitious forces happen to interfere for some time with their natural progress these forces must disappear after they have done their duty, and leave their victims to resume their race with an increased speed. Individuals and nations have in themselves their own motive power which checked and obstructed for a time is bound to reassert itself, and this reassertion of the guiding force of a nation is accompanied by symptoms which produce the unrest. A nation with occasional interruptions must preserve a continuity in its life and whatever threatens to mar that continuity must be removed.

The sense of self-respect if it has any meaning means a consciousness of the potentiality of each individual self and ambition and aspiration are ever at

¹ *Bandemataram*, Daily Edition, 27-7-1907.

work to facilitate and complete this work of self-realisation either on the part of an individual or a nation. The present unrest in India only indicates an attempt at self-assertion—it is all the work of the awakened self-respect of the nation. Those who ascribe it to any economic cause, or to the defects of the machinery of administration, or to the unfulfilled ambitions of the so-called educated classes are mere superficial observers. All these may have somehow or other helped the re-awakening of our self-respect but it is this liberated propelling force which has brought about the present disturbance. There had been terrible famines in the land carrying away thousands and thousands and converting portions of the country into whited sepulchres but there was no deep-seated and all-pervading unrest following them. Instances of European oppression and insolence have so long been the principal subject of discussion in our Press but that has not created any unrest. The miserable pay and prospects of the Indians in the State service in comparison with that of the Europeans is taken to be a necessary evil of subjection. Unjust treatment in a matter affecting the living and comfort of this articulate section of the population could not so long produce such an upheaval.

But whenever the voice of the people has been disregarded, the nation stung to the quick has tried to show signs of vitality. Whenever the national honour has been at stake even the apparently dead people have given indications of life. The so-called political agitation in India in all such cases has caused some anxiety to the ruling class. In the days of the Ilbert Bill the self-respect of the nation was appealed to and an unrest ensued. During the Consent Bill agitation also people justly resented the interference of the bureaucracy in their religious affairs and the country was lashed into fury. And lastly on the occasion of the Partition of Bengal, Lord Curzon has proved by his conduct that the will of a subject people does not at all count with the alien despots and this deliberate insult has aroused the self-respect of the nation. It was stimulated into temporary activities on the occasions of the previous affronts but this time it has been awakened not to be coaxed or intimidated into torpor again.

Our revived sense of honour aided by the stimulus of the time-spirit promises henceforth to be the abiding guiding force which enables a people to remove all obstacles and march on the path of progress. It will no longer brook interference or opposition, it will exact its due, it will avenge its former wounds, it will set ourselves on the right track, it will point us to our true source of inspiration, it will develop the growing race-consciousness in us and it will effect our self-realisation. The unrest is due to the working of the spirit within, which is distinctly in evidence, which is determined to give a healthy direction to matter without allowing it to be swayed by any consideration of its own comfort or convenience.

We are indulging in no mere idle rhetoric but drawing the attention of a degraded section of our community to the impulses which really initiate and

control all mighty and comprehensive human activities. The present unrest in India is the tendency of the spirit to vindicate its greatness, to make matter subservient to its need and the upheaval is the inevitable accompaniment of this insurgent spirit. Chaos and disorder always supervene when a mighty nation checked in its individual course of progress tries to assimilate itself to its great past and then launch on its onward rush. The present unrest is not the creation of any animal needs or ignoble ambitions. It will not subside by conciliating those who thirst for honour or emoluments, it will not disappear by nominally associating the clamorous few with the administration or creating some lucrative posts here and there. It is the sudden emergence of a nation's self-respect into its wonted activity, which can no longer be held back. We are the chip of a mighty block, we can no longer stand the humiliation of being described and treated as committed to the charge of a great personage beyond the seas; we have enough strength and energy in us for our preservation and glorification—our antecedents, our instinct, our reawakened sense of greatness militate against our being parasites and undergrowths.

We must be united, free and great. This aspiration of an ancient race is manifesting itself in the present unrest—the desire for greatness of three hundred millions is finding expression—the noise must be loud, the preparations elaborate and commensurate with the object, the resistance equally powerful and the force to meet it proportionally great. The reawakening of so mighty a race cannot be a quiet and tame affair—even its first feeble response to the call of self-respect must cause a tremendous uproar. The unrest is not local or isolated. It is not confined to Bengal or the Punjab, it is not the expression of any petty desire and thus limited in volume or intensity. Its magnitude and dimensions cannot but stagger and overawe because it is the renaissance of the East which the unimaginative will be a little tardy to recognise and even try to belittle to suit their dim vision and materialised senses.

Compiled by SANAT K. BANERJI

THE SUPREME SECRET OF INDIA

“A THING not in India is not anywhere upon earth.” Indeed, India is the epitome of the world, and the world may be considered as an enlarged replica of India. The reputation of the world depends on India's, for India is the symbol of the world. What exists and whatever has been invented or discovered by men have had their promises or early beginnings in India. And anything that does not exist in India, in seed or as a possibility, anything that India did not even dream of is not likely to appear or take a physical form in any corner of the world.

The geographical features of India also bear testimony to this truth. On the North the sky-kissing, the snow-capped Himalaya with its perpetual glaciers stands immobile. On the South there lies the ever restless, vast and tumultuous Indian ocean. On the bosom of India there are wide and extensive forests and hungry, scorching deserts. Her womb contains, intermixed, coal and gold. In some parts there is the intense chill with thick fog and blizzard, while in some other parts there are vast plains with an extreme heat and burning sunshine. The tenebrous teeming clouds in the rainy season come down in torrents of rain to be immediately followed by the clear blue sky of autumn. There are endless varieties of flowers, fruits, animals, birds and insects. India has yielded colour, fragrance, harmony, rhythm and beauty in profusion.

Even the people of India vary considerably in their appearance, and in regard to race, caste, creed, education and culture. There are the white-gold Kashmiris and the Negro-dark Pariahs of the South, and the stalwart broad-chested Punjabis and the lean and lanky Bengalis. The Bengalis have a special talent for poetry and art, the people of Maharashtra excel in statesmanship, politics and diplomacy, the people of Madras are fine logicians and the Punjabis are marked by their martial spirit. The roots of all the languages of the world also can be traced in the Indian language—Sanskrit. Therefore it is said that Bengali is the French of India, Telegu is the Italian, Tamil is the German. Sanskrit incorporates the beauty of Greek and the power or energy of Latin. The language and the blood of the Aryans and Non-Aryans are there in India in a homely co-existence. It is in India that one can observe, stage by stage, all the achievements of human civilisation from the rites and rituals of the uncivilised aboriginals to the excellences of Aryan civilisation.

The social structure of India also is based on the principle of multiplicity. It is said that the caste system is the speciality of India. Leaving

aside Christianity and Islam—though India has embraced these within herself—even in Hindu society there are some sects in which caste distinctions do not exist. The spirit of equality, said to be characteristic of Islam and Christianity, is in no way less manifest in the Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj and among the Vaishnavas. At times even the orthodox Hindus also did not hesitate in the least to throw caste distinctions to the four winds. There is no caste distinction at Sri Kshetra, Puri. Generally the male members of a society become its leaders, but the leadership of the female is also not lacking in India. Both patriarchy and matriarchy are to be found, and the Kerala state is an example of the latter.

Political history will bear testimony to the fact that India has founded not only kingship but also democracy. Autocracy and democracy both prevail in India. India has asserted in one breath as it were that the king is the embodiment of God himself and also that the king is merely the servitor of his subjects. On one side, we see empires as established by the Mauryas and Guptas ; on the other, the republics of the Sakyas, Mallas and Lichchhavis. It seems that India has experimented with all forms of administration.

Look at the cherished ideal and the spiritual aspect of India. Innumerable are the creeds, methods of spiritual practice, notions about the *summum bonum* of life. India could easily accommodate even those who have come from abroad, I mean the immigrants, however foreign they might appear, for such wide diversities were inherent in India. India has reconciled in herself the opposite extremes of complete renunciation of life and out-and-out epicureanism. On the one hand, there is the ideal of renouncing everything, retaining the barest loin cloth ; on the other, the highest form of epicureanism which goes by the rule : "Eat, drink and be merry."¹ It is India that has looked down upon material might and declared : "The Power born of the Supreme Divine is the most powerful of all." India has proclaimed the virtues of compassion, friendship and non-violence, declaring that an enemy can never be conquered with the spirit of animosity. On the other hand it is the Indian politician who has laid down the principle of tit for tat: diplomacy must be met by diplomacy. Again, it is in India that a section of devotees says: "I am a sinner, I am inferior and incapable." While there are others who have no hesitation to say, "I am pure and unsullied. I am the Self, the Triune principle, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss."

India has, as it were, drawn into herself the different virtues and qualities of the world at large. The people of other countries have accepted and assimilated India's special contributions which have helped them to thrive. History bears witness to the extent to which India has influenced the culture and edu-

¹ "Live happily the full term of your life, even if necessary borrow to buy clarified butter to drink."

cation of the world. The culture of the West is considered now to be the highest form of culture. The genius of Greece and Rome lies at the root of it; the Greek genius is indebted to the culture of Crete and Egypt. And India had directly or indirectly influenced Egyptian culture, the culture of Sumer, Akkad, Babylon, Assyria and ancient Persia. In the hoary past India not only stretched out her arms to the West, but also crossed the vast ocean in the East and left her stamp even upon America. In America and Mexico the images of Indian gods and goddesses and of the Buddha have been discovered. It will be no exaggeration to say that in Buddhistic and perhaps pre-Buddhist age Indian culture, Indian tradition, had spread all over the world; Central Asia, China, Japan, Cambodia, Siam, Annam and Java had almost become colonies of India. What debt Christianity owes to the genius of India for the present development of Europe has not been ascertained. It is the original urge and inspiration of Indian culture carried by the Muslims to Europe that underlay the widespread study of science and culture that marked the end of the medieval age of Europe. And what was the motive behind the journeys of Columbus and Vasco da Gama for discovering India? For her wealth? No. By establishing a physical relationship, by coming in benign touch with India's soul Europe had an occult urge to find her own. If not consciously, Europe had rushed towards India with a spiritual seeking along with the temptation to acquire the fabulous wealth of the Indies.

But is it necessary to look upon the remotest past? It is said that the Renaissance in Europe took place as a result of the re-discovery of Greek and Latin culture and learning. But the deepest Renaissance of Western civilisation was brought about the day Europe discovered Sanskrit literature—the Vedas and the Upanishads. And it is but very recently that Vivekananda leaped upon the West like a roaring lion. The effulgent genius of India that Vivekananda put before the West in flaming colours has not exhausted its action.

And what is India? India is not merely a geographical area or just one country among others. From the viewpoint of an inner subtle truth, we would say that India is the 'Causal Being' of the entire humanity of the world. The Tantra speaks of the Causal Centre. The Upanishad calls it the gnostic being. And in terms of the Puranas it is the second Heaven. It is in the causal world that the primary and original form or the seed of each object abides. Whatever will be or may be manifested in the physical world, its common fundamental principle appears first in a seed-form in the gnostic world. And we call this second Heaven because there the truths are the ideal manifestation of an inner urge. Although the forms are different, they are not separate or circumscribed there. And it is there that the nature and urge of the Vast are in play. When the first impulse towards creation rises in the infinite boundless Absolute, there appear, as it were, some whirlpools of light and power, the Truth beyond mind and speech

begins to manifest and incarnate in and through some of its fundamental principles. These fundamental ideas turn into multifarious possibilities and create the subtle world. Subsequently these possibilities become more and more definite and distinct, until at last they become a concrete truth in the visible physical world. We may, however, say that the fundamental principles of the creation and its seed scheme that reside in the heart of God form the causal world, and it is there that the real nature and the ultimate characteristic of each object (compare Plato's Ideas) are to be found.

India is indeed the symbol and matrix of these basic ideas that constitute the divine world. India is, as it were, the workshop of God. It is in India that He experiments on the fundamental ideas and mould them into His creative power. Here are sown the seeds which will one day spread all over the world and be the sole cause of man's creations. It seems India alone is the abode of the Gods. The presiding Gods that guide the creation take birth on India's soil. From their transcendental plane they come down here in India's atmosphere : they manifest and put on their special virtues here and from here they go to rule and guide all the four corners of the world. India is the nerve centre of the globe.

India has not left anything undone or even half done, never built on a small narrow slender scale. Epic is her natural style. She seeks for the Highest and the Vast and the most ultimate perfection in everything. The Greek sought for the golden mean, but the sense of infinity carries India away beyond all limits. "What further ?" (*tatah kim*) so asks India even after attaining to the Boundless and the Measureless. And, because her sense of immensity was so living, she could not accept the tenet of some particular truth as the sole truth leading to the ultimate Goal. Although the Truth is fundamentally one, it is expressed in very many different ways. That is her mantra from the earliest times. Therefore on the heart-strings of India not merely one tune, but many tunes are being played to create a great symphony. We meet here a miraculous synthesis and union between the finite and the Infinite, the form and the Formless. For India knows the causal domain or the second Heaven where the creation is in its seed form. On the physico-material plane, however, with the appearance of a distinct and personal form the sense of infinity diminishes—Infinity is scattered into infinite particles. Therefore the extremity of limitation, such extremes as are perhaps found in no other country than India. Still, it is the negative that proves the positive that is beyond and behind each physical effort that India makes. For there lies an urge of the formless and behind the physical and practical truth there dwells the truth of the supra-physical and the Self.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

(Translated by Chinmoy from the Bengali in "Bharat-Rahasya".)

THE INTEGRAL PHILOSOPHY OF SRI AUROBINDO

AUROBINDO's message has great relevance to the present state of our world....

There comes a time in the development of individual men, societies and civilizations, when a choice between unification and fragmentation must be made. The alternative presents itself : be a whole or ingloriously perish.

This is the choice that faces us today. For the individual it is a religious problem, for society a political problem, and for civilization as a whole it presents itself first of all as a problem of philosophy. Today the world stands in urgent need of a generation of philosophers standing outside party and credal allegiances and capable of taking a global perspective and making a new world-synthesis of thought.

Sri Aurobindo, following in the steps of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, and thus bringing the universal tradition of Hinduism to a splendid zenith, has pioneered this great new venture of thought. He has made a great synthesis of Eastern religion and Western thought and given us the first essential of the renaissance he looked forward to : a new conception of man.

The conception of man implied in modern Western psychology is hopelessly naïve. The psycho-analyst has no more idea than his patient of what the norm is that he is trying to restore him to. The tendency of this psychology is to confirm a man in the state he is in when all his more sensational aberrations have been removed. This fumbling psychology will never emerge from the dark until it learns to take into account what a man *can* become ; yes, even what he *should* become. It must be more like the psychology of Sri Aurobindo, a science of becoming, a method which enables what is possible to determine what is actual.

Such a psychology, clearly, is tending towards religion. And this is what always happens when one studies Aurobindo : psychology leads us into religion, religion into philosophy, philosophy into sociology, sociology back into psychology. It is a truly integral philosophy, a magnificently coherent world-vision. It is the philosophy we must choose to live unless we choose the ignominious living death of the total fragmentation of ourselves and our world.

STUART HOLROYD

(From "*John O' London's Weekly*", 17th November, 1960)

HOW THE MOTHER'S GRACE CAME TO US

WHEN I received the new Ashram Calendar with the beautiful coloured picture of the Mother on it, I at once wanted to hang it up inside my big clothes-cupboard. I took a hammer and a small nail, opened the cupboard and put a stool near it. As I am nearly 75, I am not steady on my feet. And this particular cupboard, standing on somewhat thin legs, is itself a little unsteady. But I forgot everything in the thought of the Mother's picture. So I started climbing upon the stool and, to help myself, took support from one of the shelves and pulled at it to draw myself up.

To my horror the whole cupboard lurched towards me and I realised that it was falling. The next moment I found myself lying flat on my back on the floor of the room ! I don't know whether I fell straight from the stool or did so while trying to get down from it. But there I was on the floor, badly shaken, unable to move away, watching the cupboard coming down upon me. Twice I cried in desperation, "O Mother, save me !"

The cupboard fell over the stool, tilted to one side and touched the floor just clear of me. All the clothes came tumbling over my body and covered me up—but I was saved, narrowly saved, from the crash of the cupboard on my poor old bones.

None of my bones was broken by even my own fall. And the cupboard too remained undamaged. The big mirror which is fixed into its door was quite intact.

When all this happened, I was absolutely alone in the house. My grand-daughter as well as both my servants had gone out. If I had been injured, I would have lain helpless, with nobody able to enter the flat except by breaking the door.

The Mother's Grace saved me most wonderfully from a very great danger indeed.

From B. R. N.

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

SHAPING THE FUTURE IN THE PRESENT

(Continued)

A CAREFUL study will disclose that so many kinds of experiments are afoot here. In February 1960, a doctor of 75 was accepted as a permanent member.¹ Those below five live either with their parents or under the care of someone in the Ashram. A good many instances can be cited of families coming here and going back but their children choosing to stay behind for good: even cut off from their parents, they feel quite at home here. The youngest boy in the Ashram Boarding House, without any of his relatives, was a five-year-old. There are several from the age of seven upwards, settled here for education in the Ashram atmosphere. Since the doors of the Ashram were thrown open to children, the whole picture of the Ashram has changed.

One or two instances may show what call within brings these youngsters and how the Mother receives them.

Two girls of 4 and 6 came with their parents in 1953. During the Pranam time the younger one spoke something to the Mother in her mother-tongue. L who was standing a little away explained to the Mother that she and her elder sister wanted to stay here and the Mother agreed then and there. But who would take charge of them? An elderly sadhika offered to keep them with her. Leaving them to her charge their parents went away. How much they feel at home may be evident from the fact that whenever their parents come for Darshan and urge them to go back even for a short change, their invariable answer is: "Speak about anything you like but never about our going."

One day, at the close of the Mother's distribution in the playground, the girl came forward and clasped the Mother with her little arms.

Generally parents approach the Mother through the Secretary but in this case the parents did not know that their daughters had any intention to

¹ Some interesting precedents about him are that he had been attracted to Sri Aurobindo by reading, at Baroda College, his English rendering of *Bandemataram*. Then he met him in Bombay when the Master was on a tour of the country after the Surat Congress. He and some of his friends arranged an "at home" to Sri Aurobindo and his co-workers. He presented him with an address and a Kashmiri shawl.

One of his letters to Sri Aurobindo was produced before the court in Alipore to which the public prosecutor vainly gave a twisted meaning.

stay away. A four-year girl coming from 1600 miles away did not feel the least hesitation in speaking to the Mother direct and come to a decision which was to change the whole course of her life. The parents came to know this after everything had been settled. Was it a child-like curiosity? If so, how could the girl be so resolute in her resolve?

Another story. In 1957 X and Y, two women who were sisters, met at their father's place. After a time both returned to Calcutta, X to go from there to Delhi, and Y to Pondicherry. A six-year old daughter of X, all of a sudden, came and sat in the car when Y was to start and insisted on being taken to Pondicherry. When all attempts failed to dissuade her, X sought her husband's approval over the phone. Her father thought it was all in fun—how could a girl of six stay away from her mother?

When the Mother was told how the little girl had stubbornly refused to go to Delhi with her mother, and come here, she inquired if she had come here before. When told that she had been here when only a one year-old baby, the Mother replied that that was the reason why she had come to her again. The little one was allowed to stay on.

Three times her mother came over from Delhi to take her back even for a short while but every time the girl set her face grimly against it. She would go to the station to see her mother off but not step into the train lest she should be taken by force. Her teacher P, a Swiss lady, is all admiration for her. The girl is always jolly and vivacious, as good at her studies as at dancing, swimming, sports, etc.

On being asked how she came here she gave a simple reply, "I heard the name of Pondicherry from my mother while at Delhi, and came here." At another time she said, "The Divine dropped me in Delhi only to be taken to Pondicherry. Pondicherry is my home and I am here."

On the occasion of the November Darshan in 1960, there came a family including four children. One of them, a girl of seven or eight, refused to return home with her parents. When she was told that without permission nobody could stay here she said, "Speak to Mother, she will never refuse me."

The Mother looked into her eyes a few seconds at the monthly Prosperity Blessings. Since then she has been staying here but kept out of school and playground activities for want of room. This isolation, however, does not damp her confidence. "Mother will allow me," is her refrain.

M has been here for seven years. Now she is about eleven. Since her arrival she has had free access to the Mother every day. The story that we hear about her leads us to believe that the Mother is her heaven.

These instances give us an idea what stuff they are made of. You will find them always smiling like flowers, flitting about like birds and full of fun. To look at them is to feel that a new life is about to burst out of the Ashram soil.

The place assigned to the women of the Ashram and the freedom, fearlessness and good-will which they evince attract also the visitors' notice at once.

The combination of spirituality and aesthetics is another marked characteristic of the Ashram. The aim of our physical education is to make the body not only a vehicle of strength and suppleness but also of beauty and a conscious openness to the play of higher powers. And beauty is expressing itself more and more in the buildings, the lay-out of gardens, the smithy, foundry, carpentry, even in the minute details of all that is done.

The Mother's acceptance of life is not partial but integral. She sees life in a thousand and one ways and her aim seems to bring all its facets under the influence of the Divine.

The Mother's stand on money is a revolutionary phenomenon in the history of India's traditional *vairāgya*. She does not see any conflict between money and spirituality. Wealth is a power. Restored to its rightful place in the divine ordering of things, it can make for a divine enrichment of life. Rightly used, industrial enterprises also can prove a source of inner development.

Almost everywhere and in all ages there has been a belief—nay, a conviction—that honesty and success, rectitude and prosperity, inner calmness and intense activity, hardly go together. The lives and teachings of saints and sages of all countries show that those who want to follow the path of God have decided to cut off family ties, renounce life and all they have. Must then all benefits of trade, commerce, industry ever remain the monopoly of falsehood? Must the serpent power reign supreme and unchallenged in its domain for eternity?

Where there is no light, darkness cannot but prevail. Once a business man (who has since set up his business at Pondicherry) commented :

"Business is an abode of ego, dishonesty, jealousy, deception and what not. It seems the Mother has descended into the very citadel of falsehood to conquer it in its own domain."

Spiritual life embracing even material things, leaving nothing in the possession of the undivine forces : is it not a new departure breaking new ground for the people at large? Without this venture, how could life be changed on earth?

Take only one example. In November 1960, owing to widespread and continuous heavy rains for about a month at a stretch, the town-market went short of rice. The Government decided to sell rice to the public at a rate lower than the market price. Eight merchants were selected. The Honesty Society of the Ashram was one of them; and from the beginning to the end it stood out as the best of the lot, enjoying the confidence of both the Government and the public. Both had the faith that the Honesty Society would resort to no unfair means—to no exploiting of the situation or black-marketing.

Now it commands the confidence of the rich and the poor alike, so much

so that there is a rush of customers all day long. An impression is there within a radius of 50 miles that if one wants quality goods one should go to the Honesty Society.

As a consequence it is finding it easy to explore new avenues of expansion. Mill and factory owners, unasked, offer their agencies. In Madras also they have built a good credit. Once a sugar merchant left with it a large commodity worth a lakh of rupees to be paid at its convenience.

It is interesting to note how its start was made. The Mother wanted to give good rice and at a cheaper rate to the Ashram labour. Just at that time someone happened to wind up his business. The Mother had an idea of making an experiment in that line as we learn from her talk with the owner of the New Horizon Sugar Mills Ltd. "I want to show yoga also in the material field".¹ Now the Mother sent X to settle terms with the person in question and buy up his concern.

That was in 1954. Since then the Honesty Society has been in existence. In its initial stages there was very hard going against keen competition. It preferred to suffer loss from sudden fall in prices rather than make it up by squeezing the customers.

In fact it has belied the general notion that no business can be done, far less thrive, except through unfair means. It reminds us of the Mother's message, given in her own handwriting when she laid the foundation stone of the above mentioned Mills : "Faithfulness is the sure basis of success."

In this connection, one may note the way in which the New Horizon Sugar Mills Ltd., the biggest industrial unit in Pondicherry with a crushing capacity of 1000 tons of cane per day, came into existence.

The entire process from the conception to its successful completion within the shortest possible time presents a living example of what human effort backed by yogic power can do in the material field.

We shall not tell in detail how a noted Indian industrialist of Africa and his whole family came in touch with the Mother though that may be a matter of absorbing interest.

During his interview with the Mother, when he expressed a desire to have some property in India, the Mother suggested the setting up of a sugar mill. The huge project staggered him for he knew nothing about the Pondicherry State nor of its economic condition.

The Mother just smiled and said, "Go ahead, my child, everything will be all right." This infused in him and his Co-Directors an uncommon strength charged with the feeling that the Grace of the Mother was behind them and that they should not hesitate.

¹ Nirodbaran, *Mother India*, April, 1960.

"All can be done if the God-touch is there." (Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*)

The truth of these words proved itself at every step.

The grant of the Establishing Licence by the Government of India happened to come on the 24th November 1956, which is the Day of Realisation, as if it carried the seal of the Divine sanction.

The circumstances were found to be very favourable for growing the sugarcane as the growers of the cane gave a most encouraging, if not overwhelming, response; and in the record time of five months no less than 6500 acres were planted.

The erection of the mill was started during the third week of November 1959 and in the record time of eight months, that is, by the end of July 1960, it was completed. On all accounts it was one of the quickest concerns in India to go into production. To-day it is considered the best Sugar Mill in Southern India.

If everything goes well, 1,80,000 bags of sugar will be produced during the current season (the first year).

It is hoped that the Government will allow the capacity of the mill to be increased to 1500 tons per day.

The benefit accruing to the people of Pondicherry by the establishment of this sugar factory is that Rs. 70/80 lakhs will go to the growers.

Likewise the Government will collect Rs. 40/50 lakhs a year as Excise and other taxes.

This will give an idea of the huge amount likely to enrich the State and the people and also of the Ashram's indirect contribution to the welfare of the State.

An atmosphere of goodwill is growing in the whole organisation from the staff to the cultivators, resulting in harmony and smooth working. There is no tension anywhere within the mill area.

Let us hope that all concerned will feel the sweetness and force of the Mother's working when She opens a suite of rooms dedicated to her. The love with which an Ashramite is developing the garden which surrounds the Mother's rooms is a source of inspiration to all of us.

Speaking of himself and of his family, the resident Director said: "The way the mill has been erected without the least hitch has given rise to a feeling in the whole family that a hidden power has been at work from the beginning to the end. Now my whole family has turned to the Mother. My children and my brother's children who are in England write direct to the Mother."

He added in moving terms: "If we remain busy gathering pebbles on the shore, how can we get any gems? This industry is a veritable divine experiment. My feeling is that the Mother puts a force which does everything, breaking all obstacles. One must have Faith—Faith in the Divine's way of working, Faith

which draws a spontaneous flow of Grace. One must not make a show of Faith for favours and personal ends. There must grow some sort of affinity with the Mother. Only so can one realise the miracle of the Divine Grace. I say, if you have no Faith, don't come to Pondicherry. The wide world is open to you. This is my Yoga. I do not know any other Yoga."

The following extract from the Mother's writing may give us some idea of the inner meaning of her working :

"First of all, from the financial point of view, the principle on which our action is built is that money is not meant to bring more money—this idea of money making money is a falsehood and a perversion, money is meant to increase the wealth, the prosperity and the productiveness of a group, a country or, preferably, the whole earth. Money is a means, a force, a power, not an end in itself. As all forces and all powers, it is by activity and circulation that it grows and intensifies, not by accumulation and stagnation.

"What we are attempting here, is to prove to the world, through a concrete example, that by some inner psychological realisation and some outer organisation a world can be created where most of the causes of human misery will cease to exist."

To quote the observation of a casual visitor :—

"Everywhere in the Ashram the visitor feels the atmosphere of an all-pervading executive genius. Everything is done in the most perfect way. The combination of economy, efficiency, pleasantness and cleanliness is captivating. Nowhere is there any waste of substance. The blend of nature with engineering and art is exquisite and there is scarcely a building without its little garden of green grass, plants, foliage and enchanting flowers. I was thinking all the while how much could be accomplished if the Ashram spirit of turning inward in doing work without need of advertisement to impress it on others and sustain enthusiasm, could animate our Five Year Plans with all their thousands of crores of expenditure. I caught Mr. Eisenberg, the American expert on management, who was also at the Ashram, saying to himself, evidently lost in admiration, 'Amazing experiment, most amazing experiment!'"

(To be continued)

NARAYAN PRASAD

THE LIFE DIVINE OF SRI AUROBINDO : ITS LEADING PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS

(Classified Excerpts)

SECTION II — THE NATURE OF THE ABSOLUTE

(Continued)

(x) THE TRANSCENDENT

...at the gates of the Transcendent stands that mere and perfect Spirit described in the Upanishads, luminous pure, sustaining the world but, inactive in it, without sinews of energy, without flaw of duality, without scar of division, unique, identical, free from all appearance of relation and of multiplicity,—the pure Self of the Advaitins, the inactive Brahman, the transcendent Silence. And the mind when it passes those gates suddenly, without intermediate transitions, receives a sense of the unreality of the world and the sole reality of the Silence which is one of the most powerful and convincing experiences of which the human mind is capable.¹

The Transcendent, the Supracosmic is absolute and free in Itself beyond Time and Space and beyond the conceptual opposites of finite and infinite. But in cosmos It uses Its liberty of self-formation, Its Maya, to make a scheme of Itself in the complementary terms of unity and multiplicity, and this multiple unity It establishes in the three conditions of the subconscious, the conscient and the superconscient.²

These three aspects (Atman, Purusha, Ishwara) and their powers (Maya, Prakriti, Shakti) base and comprise the whole of existence and all Nature and, taken together as a single whole, they reconcile the apparent disparateness and incompatibility of the supracosmic Transcendence, the cosmic universality and the separateness of our individual existence; the Absolute, cosmic Nature and ourselves are linked in oneness by this triune aspect of the one Reality.³

An eternal infinite self-existence is the supreme reality, but the supreme transcendent eternal Being, Self and Spirit,—an infinite Person, we may say, because his being is the essence and source of all personality,—is the reality and meaning of self-existence: so too the cosmic Self, Spirit, Being, Person in the reality and meaning of cosmic existence; the same Self, Spirit, Being or Person manifesting its multiplicity is the reality and meaning of individual existence.⁴

The will of the individual, even when completely free, could not act in an isolated independence, because the individual being and nature are included in the universal Being and Nature and dependent on the all-overruling Transcendence.⁵

(xi) SELF

If it be true that the Self alone exists, it must be also true that all is the Self. And if this Self, God or Brahman is no helpless state, no bounded power, no limited personality, but the self-conscious All, there must be some good and inherent reason in it for the manifestation, to discover which we must proceed on the hypothesis of some potency, some wisdom, some truth of being in all that is manifested.⁶

It [the divine soul] will be able divinely to conceive, perceive and sense all things as the Self, its own self, one self of all, one Self-being and Self-becoming, but not divided in its becomings which have no existence apart from its own self-consciousness....The Self becoming all existences is the basis of our oneness with all; the Self containing all existences is the basis of our oneness in difference; the Self inhabiting all is the basis of our individuality in the universal.⁷

Because the Self and Spirit in things and beings is one everywhere, therefore Nature can afford this luxury of infinite differentiation : if there were not this secure basis which brings it about that nothing changes yet all changes, all her workings and creations would in this play collapse into disintegration and chaos; there would be nothing to hold her disparate movements and creations together. The immutability of the Identical does not consist in a monotone of changeless sameness incapable of variation; it consists in an unchangeableness of being which is capable of endless formation of being, but which no differentiation can destroy or impair or minimise. The Self becomes insect and bird and beast and man, but it is always the same Self through these mutations because it is the One who manifests himself infinitely in endless diversity.⁸

This first realisation of the Self as something intensely silent and purely static is not the whole truth of it, there can also be a realisation of Self in its power, Self as the condition of world-activity and world-existence. However, the Self is a fundamental aspect of Brahman, but with a certain stress on its impersonality; therefore the Power of the Self has the appearance of a Force that acts automatically with the Self sustaining it, witness and support and originator and enjoyer of its activities but not involved in them for a moment. As soon as we become aware of the Self, we are conscious of it as eternal, unborn, unembodied, uninvolved in its workings : it can be felt within the form of being, but also as enveloping it, as above it, surveying its embodiment from above,

adhyakṣa; it is omnîpresent, the same in everything, infinite and pure and intangible for ever. This Self can be experienced as the Self of the individual, the Self of the thinker, doer, enjoyer, but even so it always has this greater character; its individuality is at the same time a vast universality or very readily passes into that, and the next step to that is a sheer transcendence or a complete and ineffable passing into the Absolute. The Self is that aspect of the Brahman in which it is intimately felt as at once individual, cosmic, transcendent of the universe. The realisation of the Self is the straight and swift way towards individual liberation, a static universality, a Nature-transcendence. At the same time there is a realisation of Self in which it is felt not only sustaining and pervading and enveloping all things, but constituting everything and identified in a free identity with all its becomings in Nature. Even so, freedom and impersonality are always the character of the Self. There is no appearance of subjection to the workings of its own Power in the universe, such as the apparent subjection of the Purusha to Prakriti. To realise the Self is to realise the eternal freedom of the Spirit.⁹

In our view the Spirit, the Self is the fundamental reality of existence; but an exclusive concentration on this fundamental reality to the exclusion of all reality of Mind, Life or Matter except as an imposition on the Self or unsubstantial shadows cast by the Spirit might help to an independent and radical spiritual realisation but not to an integral and valid solution of the truth of cosmic and individual existence.¹⁰

Discovering self and spirit he [man] discovers God; he finds out that there is a Self beyond the temporal : he comes to the vision of that Self in the cosmic consciousness as the divine Reality behind Nature and this world of beings; his mind opens to the thought or the sense of the Absolute of whom self and the individual and the cosmos are so many faces; the cosmic, the egoistic, the original ignorance begin to lose the rigidity of their hold upon him.¹¹

When there is a complete silence in the being, either a stillness of the whole being or a stillness behind unaffected by surface movements, then we can become aware of a Self, a spiritual substance of our being, an existence exceeding even the soul individuality, spreading itself into universality, surpassing all dependence on any natural form or action, extending itself upward into a transcendence of which the limits are not visible. It is these liberations of the spiritual part in us which are the decisive steps of the spiritual evolution in Nature.¹²

If the rift in the lid of mind is made, what happens is an opening of vision to something above us or a rising up towards it or a descent of its powers into our being. What we see by the opening of vision is an Infinity above us, an eternal Presence or an infinite Existence, an infinity of consciousness, an infinity of bliss,—a boundless Self, a boundless Light, a boundless Power, a boundless Ecstasy.¹³

(xii) ATMAN

If then we can extend our faculty of mental self-awareness of the Self beyond and outside us, Atman or Brahman of the Upanishads, we may become possessors in experience of the truths which form the contents of the Atman or Brahman in the universe. It is on this possibility that Indian Vedanta has based itself. It has sought through knowledge of the Self the knowledge of the universe.¹⁴

....there are three fundamental aspects in which we meet this Reality, —Self, Conscious Being or Spirit and God, the Divine Being, or to use the Indian terms, the absolute and omnipresent Reality, Brahman, manifests to us as Atman, Purusha, Ishwara....¹⁵

Brahman the Reality is the self-existent Absolute and Maya is the Consciousness and Force of this self-existence; but with regard to the universe Brahman appears as the Self of all existence, Atman, the Cosmic Self, but also as the Supreme Self transcendent of its own cosmicity and at the same time individual-universal in each being; Maya can then be seen as the self-power, Atma-Shakti, of the Atman. It is true that when we first become aware of this Aspect, it is usually in a silence of the whole being or at the least in a silence within which draws back or stands away from the surface action; this Self is then felt as a status in silence, an immobile immutable being, self-existent, pervading the whole universe, omnipresent in all, but not dynamic or active, aloof from the ever mobile energy of Maya.¹⁶

(*To be continued*)

Compiled by NATHANIEL PEARSON

REFERENCES

1. Vol. I. Ch. III. P. 23 (A); P. 28 (U).
2. Vol. I. Ch. V. P. 39-40 (A); P. 48-49 (U).
3. Vol. II. Ch. II. P. 295 (A); P. 386 (U).
4. Vol. II. Ch. II. P. 319 (A); P. 419 (U).
5. Vol. II. Ch. XXVI. P. 823 (A); P. 1102 (U).
6. Vol. I. Ch. IV. P. 31 (A); P. 38 (U).
7. Vol. I. Ch. XVII. P. 143-4 (A); P. 184-5 (U).
8. Vol. II. Ch. II. P. 308 (A); P. 404 (U).
9. Vol. II. Ch. II. P. 314 (A); P. 412-3 (U).
10. Vol. II. Ch. XV. P. 582-3 (A); P. 779 (U).

- 11. Vol. II. Ch. XVII. P. 621 (A); P. 831 (U).
- 12. Vol. II. Ch. XXIV. P. 761 (A); P. 1918 (U).
- 13. Vol. II. Ch. XXV. P. 810 (A); P. 1085 (U).
- 14. Vol. I. Ch. VIII. P. 62 (A); P. 78 (U).
- 15. Vol. II. Ch. II. P. 295 (A); P. 386 (U).
- 16. Vol. II. Ch. II. P. 313 (A); P. 411 (U).

CORRECTION

In the March 1961 instalment of the above series no reference was given for the last excerpt under the sub-heading "Bliss". ("The liberation of the soul etc.....") The missing reference is as follows :

Vol. II. Ch. XXVII 879 (A); P. 1178 (U).

ENGLISH WORDS

SPEECH that came like leechcraft
Killing us almost, bleeding us white :
You cleansed our souls soiled with impurities.
You dipped our hearts amid tempestuous seas
Of a purer, dearer delight.

O tongues of fire ! You came devouring
Forests of nightshade, creepers that enmesh,
Trees that never remembered to grow,
And shrubs that were but thornmills in our flesh.
You were the dawn, and sunlight filled the spaces
Where owls were hovering.

O winged seeds ! You crossed the furrowed seas
To nestle in the warm and silent earth.
Like a golden swarm of fireflies you came
Pining for a new agony, a new birth.
You blossomed into a nascent loveliness.
You ripened into nectar in fruit-jars
That hung like clustered stars.

O winging words ! Like homing bees you borrow,
Grown murmurous, the honey of delight
Pollened within our hearts the coming morrow,
Sweetened within our souls for aeons bright.
You kindle in the far corners of the earth
The music of an ever-deepening chant :
The burthen of a waneless, winterless spring,
The gospel of an endless blossoming.

Fathomless words ! With Indo-Aryan blood
Tingling in your veins;
The spoils of ages, global merchandise
Mingling in your strains !
You pose the cosmic riddle :
In the beginning was the Word
And the Word was God.
The Word is in the middle
And the Word is Man.
In the end will be the Word
And the Word will be God in Man.

V. K. GOKAK

THE M~~U~~TED VOICE

'Thy feet are torn and thy spirit is bleeding,
Drink deep my perfume and enjoy the coolness of my shade' —
Like a mother to her lost child, thus whispered to me an evening,
A bower of jasmine imploring with a thousand eyes.
'May the Lord's blessings be with thee,' I cried in delight and ere long
In the wake of the footfall of the night came an amorous moon.
Lying on the ground, in vain I seek refuge in an impossible dream;
Ghosts of uncertain tomorrow and vague memories scream and dance :
Twin vampires dark and pitiless suck the lovely moon
Who dies in spasms in the embrace of their sepulchral wings.
The awakened night struggling for breath shudders in terror.
But the Jasmine comforts me with a refrain sweet and understanding :
'Like one listening to the strain of muted violins in a symphony,
Hearken behind the glamour of ideas and the riot of feelings
To the quiet voice of the Friend who dwells within.
Each day shall be a deeper probe into a joy unknown.'

NIRANJAN GUHA ROY

O GUIDE !

THE wood I cross to reach the Home of Bliss
Is slippery, perilous, black and snare-laid
I feel the evil touch. I hear the hiss
Of snakes invisible creeping who invade.
The ghouls and demons whisper, "Halt, no more !
The path is hard and thorny, thou art weak
The road is long that leads to Heaven's door
What makes thee move yet vainly, tell us, speak ?"
Though thus these friends injurious softly talk
As traitors them I know and tread the way
For tellest Thou, "O pilgrim, thou must walk
Till night is passed and seest thou the Day."
Midst all this clamour that comes from every side
None do I trust but Thee alone, O Guide.

DEVAKI NANDAN

NEW ROADS

THE PSYCHIC DAWN

(ii)

ALL is aflame !
Time and the essence of time—
will it remain
This unconquerable fire,
because in faith
faith has denied desire ?
Into the Light
the wrath of Nature
echoes from the soil;
Out of the blue sky
there blazes forth
life's omnipotent eye—
From the rose bud
there springs to light
the essence of the soul !
And the champak tree
is on fire
with the passion of this love.
Will it remain—
the ecstasy,
the flame ?
Will it stand still—
the silence
leaning over the sky ?
There is an unuttered song
yet ringing
in the breast of the hour;
There is a glory
of heart-felt music
yet unborn—
A Power
widening the being
far beyond the stars.
Will I drink
this night
the ecstasy of Dawn ?

NORMAN DOWSETT

SIGNPOSTS AND SYMBOLS

“VINGT-ET-UNS”

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The poems came to the writer some two decades ago; revised recently, they are now being serially published in batches of twos.

The pieces number Twenty-One in all; and each of them comprises of just Twenty One lines : hence the cryptic sub-title “Vingt-et-uns”.

Apart from their recondite value as psychological signposts in the growth of the writer's being, the poems might presumably provide amusing and useful material for aesthetic enquiry — as to the adequacy or otherwise of the novel mould into which spiritual experience is here sought to be cast and the technique-mode governing the multilateral symbolism thereof.

Incidentally, the writer knows only now that ‘Vingt-et-un’ is a gambling card-game; and that knowledge imparts to him the hope that his successful (?) gamble with the new Form may well inspire other lovers of the Muse to try their hand at this new Form-and-Game and come off with better windfalls !

7

NAY, comrades, go ! and give not a thought to me !
My last hard inch I've done—my sands are run—
I can no farther—no, not a footfall more !
But here I'll lie awhile—and breathe—and live—
So, living, I start up the steep ascent anew,
And join you—peradventure—there ! Meanwhile, farewell !

You smile, my Friend ? You wonder to see how one,
A faintheart such as this could join you once
To drop down midway, faint of heart forsooth ?
Ah, well you smile, and fain would I drink for aye
Fresh spirits from that smile ! But it could not be.

Yet grieve not either. Why, what's there to be grieved ?
These bleak ravines and ravenous solitudes
Will eat me up, you fear ? Ah no, my Friends !
They'll only rock me on their giant breasts,
And lull me to a sweetest restfulness,
And ope my heart anon, and work therein
A talisman of Fortitude and Grit !
And drinking deep of their wisdom rich of years,
I'll grow diurnally into their own norm :
And, Comrades, you'll not miss me in the touch of those Grand Peaks !

8

O, why this luxury of love for one
 Who's deep in love with death himself, ingrate ?
 O, why this waste of grave concern o'er one
 Who lives but to breathe a few more tardy breaths ?

Nay, rase him from your memory clear, and chase
 Afar all shade of his presence lingering near !
 We have worked and sung together for many a year,
 And years of exquisite ties they've been, I know :
 But you always gave your best, you've quit yourselves,
 Not I, I failed to give, and now I pay—

Pay all too dearly, and in bitterest irony,
 My breath, my body, my garnered trinket-joys,
 My memory-pearls fond-strung on silken strings :
 Pay all too grossly, with not the least of grace,
 And leave the banquet-hall of Life, bankrupt !

But the lesson will abide, deep-learnt in brine :
 For, to crown this all, when you will coffin me,
 Lock all that's left of me, this clinging Me,
 And dash the thing aboard wild waves of sea,
 Their buffetings will loosen the last lock of ME :
 And...I'll...be...free...at...last—breathing...Infinity !

CHIMANBHAI

THUS SANG MY SOUL

VIII MOTHERING THE BOND OF LOVE : PRAYERS AND PRAISES

(Continued)

65. LEAVE ALL TO HER WHO MAKES, UNMAKES THEE

SEEK refuge sole in Her, O brother,
For in Her lies thy life's fulfilment;
Cast off thy spirit's all concealment,
Move to Her pure, for there's none other.

Care not for ridicule and slight,
If thou wouldst live God-life, discover
Thy link eternal with thy Lover,
Who chases thee on Her wings of light.

Thy friend through laughter and despair,
She's Lover, kin uncleavable,
Thy counsellor, consoler. Dwell
Not one mote-moment save for Her.

Grieve not for life's recurring blows,
Love Her when world loathes and forsakes thee,
Leave all to Her who makes, unmakes thee;
Whither shall move thy fate—SHE KNOWS.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

THOUGHTS

It was a sight that would smite awake the soul by a sweet sting.

What was that sight ?

The inert nature tossing in sleep dimly opened its eyes towards heaven and heaven in its turn cast its compassionate gaze on the drowsy eye of the inert nature for a split second and then turned away.

This was that sight.

*
**

What more will a man want if he gets all that he wishes to get ?

And the nett result of that would be : man will keep his friends and slay his enemies as also he will wallow in his pleasure-palace.

It is good that things do not happen that way.

Yet as the waters of the Ganges and the Yamuna become inseparably one at Prayag, the wills of the soul and of the Supreme Self are one at a confluence within our body. This place is the place which is described as the cave of the heart by the adepts.

Against the will of a man firmly seated in that place even a sage would pass no stricture. That will is without the scar of imperfection.

*
**

O Lord of Sacrifice I offer at Thy feet the rubbish heap of the inconscient.

Is it without meaning ? No !

I offer it to expunge the line of death that furrows my brow.

I offer it with the hope of driving out all fatigue from the body and filling it with deathless vitality.

I offer it so that my humanity be transmuted into an image of Thy Divinity.

The sacrificial offering is not free from turbidities but in order to make me immaculate have you any other way to propose ? If not, then, O Bountiful God, accept what I lay at Thy feet.

GIRDHARLAL

(Translated from the Author's Gujarati book 'Uparāma')

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

The Call Divine (Jayanti Souvenir) January 1961. Ed. *Swami Rajeshwarananda*.

This number of the *Call Divine*, a monthly journal dedicated to the spread of the Message of the Sage of Arunachala, Sri Ramana Maharshi, is a bumper issue containing varied fare. Besides the usual forceful editorial and other exhortations of the Editor Swami Rajeshwarananda, there are many interesting and informative articles dwelling upon contemporary spiritual and religious figures. *Spiritual leaders I have met* by Sri Pattabhiraman and the *Bhagawan as Ganapati knew him* by T.K.S are specially enjoyable for the sidelights they throw on the personal aspects of the Maharshi and other spiritual personages.

There is besides a symposium on 'How can an individual help realisation of universal brotherhood in the family of humanity?' to which more than 70 papers have been contributed (and compiled). These pages have a standing value to students of modern thought in India, representing as they do the views of a large number of persons prominent in different walks of life.

Two charming photographs of the Maharshi add to the attraction of this running into 400-pages-Number.

M. P. P.

Students' Section

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-six

MALLARMÉ was the queerest bird in the sky of poetry. Many poets, almost all, are queer birds of one kind or another. Some of them have even been regarded as off their chump : Blake was to most of his contemporaries a mad man. And two or three were actually inmates or at least temporary residents of Lunatic Asylums : Cowper, Christopher Smart and the Frenchman Gérard de Nerval. But in defence of the Poetic Art I may declare that in the case of these it was not poetry which drove them mad nor is it that they wrote poetry only in a state of madness. Nerval who was twice in and out of an Asylum made a memorably mysterious line for his experience. And if we examine it in the context of its two successors we shall perhaps guess what led to his madness and thus exonerate his art from the suspicion of having pushed him over the brink. The three lines close his famous sonnet *El Desdichado*, meaning in Spanish "The Disinherited", which seems to anticipate something of the crypticism of Mallarmé's symbols. Here they are :

Et j'ai deux fois vainqueur traversé l'Achéron :
Modulant tour à tour sur la lyre d'Orphée
Les soupirs de la sainte et les cris de la fée.

(Twice Acheron I've crossed, victorious,
Modulating by turns on the lyre of Orpheus
The sighs of the saint and the cries of the fay.)

Acheron is a river of the underworld in Greek mythology. Nerval makes it stand for the *crise de folie* through which he passed twice before writing the poem. The legend of Orpheus trying to bring back his beloved Eurydice from the underworld becomes for Nerval significant of his own *affaire du cœur* : he pictures himself as having gone to the underworld in search of his own Eurydice. It seems Nerval was in love with two women—Adrienne who, becoming a nun (*la sainte*), died to the world and Jenny Colon, the actress, (*la fée*), who actually died in 1842. His first spell of madness came in 1841 after 5 years of infatuation with Jenny and the sonnet was written in November 1853 just after emerging from the second lapse. The linking of Acheron with love-affairs is a pointer to the forces that unhinged his mind. His being a poet had nothing directly to do with the unhingement. I think anybody, poet or no, would lose his head if he lost his heart to two women !

The purely poetic madness is a thing apart and must not be confused with the common kind : otherwise I would have a chance only to address a Poetry Class in a Mental Home and not in this University. For I suppose I am thoroughly bitten with poetic lunacy. But my saying so is exactly the great difference between the looney poet and the looney non-poet. The former knows that he is mad, the latter believes that everybody else has a tile loose. I once visited a Lunatic Asylum to see if anybody really looked and acted like me. I was startled to find myself an object of ridicule and almost boycotted except by one chap who condescended to come quite close to me and then gave a tremendous grunt like a super-pig ! Perhaps it expressed more clearly than the behaviour of his friends the general opinion about me in that company.

Poetic madness is a certain state of hypersensitivity of imagination and of what I may call "word-sense". And this hypersensitivity does at times lead to a bit of unusual behavior, like looking intently at things as if waiting for a door of light to open in them or as if they might start talking to one out of the very nucleus of their most central atom. It involves also occasionally humming to oneself, saying the same phrase over and over again to create a kind of magnetic field into which phrases with the same inspirational wave-length might be attracted from God-knows-where. In the matter of humming I think I was already poetically mad at the age of six when, as I have said, I was taken to Europe. Once, in Paris, we visited the famous La Fayette Galerie. What was to be seen there did not interest me much. But the name of the place haunted me for hours. My papa told me that at various times of the night he found me ecstatically repeating to myself, "La Fayette, La Fayette, La Fayette Galerie."

There are some words which either for their visual suggestion or for their sound-evocation keep recurring in the works of particular poets. "Ethereal", "pavilion" and "crystalline" are three of Shelley's favourites and you may note that he stresses "crystalline" rather unusually in the second syllable.

instead of the first as your Dictionary does. For example,

Greece and her foundations are
Built below the tide of war,
Rooted in the crystalline sea
Of thought and its eternity—

or the phrase from the *Ode to the West Wind* about the “blue Mediterranean as he lay”

Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams.

By the way, the word “coil” which is used here is mostly misunderstood not only by Indians but also by Englishmen. They think it connotes here a winding or labyrinthine movement, and they think that in Shakespeare’s line—

When we have shuffled off this mortal coil

there is a reference to our body as being the earthly shell or cover in which our souls are enclosed. But “coil” in both the above quotations means nothing of the sort. It is an archaic and poetic term signifying “disturbance, noise, turmoil”. Shakespeare’s “mortal coil” means “turmoil of life” and Shelley’s “coil of crystalline streams” means the insistent sound of limpid moving waters.

Mallarmé was preoccupied with words more than any other poet and he was not just attached to a few special words, though he had his preferences : he was interested in words in a sense in which even poets in general are not. I shall come to this topic presently. Let me first introduce Mallarmé to you as a man. A contrast may immediately be noted between his works which most of his contemporaries regarded as the complicated mystifications of a mad-cap and his personal appearance and conduct. Let me begin with a rough sketch of him on the blackboard....There he is, as he looked to his friends during those celebrated weekly evenings—Tuesday evenings—on the fourth floor at 89 rue de Rome. He was of middle stature, had greying brown hair, wide-opening brilliant eyes, a large straight nose, ears tipped like a Faun’s, long but orderly moustaches, a short pointed beard, a refined gentle expression that yet had reserves of power, gestures graceful and precise, a voice trailing away at the end of a phrase, the whole face crossed by wisps of cigarette smoke by which, as he said, he put some distance between the world and himself. He used to stand with his back to the mantelpiece of his fireplace and with a chequered shawl thrown over his shoulders. Among those who attended the Tuesday-*soirées* were the most famous or promising writers and painters of his day. Three-fourths of the time Mallarmé talked—nearly three hours of the most wonderful monologue.

There have been very few talkers in literary history who left such a be-spelled memory behind of their way with words and ideas. Socrates was the

one who perhaps talked the most and his talk has also influenced the thought of Europe more than any other man's. It is embalmed for all time in the *Dialogues* of Plato. About the contents of these *Dialogues* it has been remarked that all subsequent philosophy is only a number of footnotes to what Socrates said. About their form, their style, it has been stated : "If Zeus were to speak in the language of mortals, he would do so in the Greek of Plato."

To find another colossal talker we have to jump over nearly two thousand years and come to Dr. Samuel Johnson of eighteenth-century England. He laid down the law in matters of literature and in all other matters brought up by his circle of eminent friends—Reynolds the painter, Burke the politician-orator, Sheridan the playwright, Garrick the actor, Goldsmith the poet, Boswell the future immortal writer of his friend's biography and the biggest fool of the company with the exception of Goldsmith who, Garrick reported,

Wrote like an Angel and talked like poor Poll.

("Poll" is the conventional proper name of the parrot—"Pretty Polly", as you must be knowing.) Johnson was a master of commonsense uncommonly expressed and of argument that was unanswerable. He was a fighter who never let go : it was said of him that if he missed you with the fire of his pistol he would knock you down with the butt-end of it. And much of his argumentation was brought on by the questions of Boswell who at times did not refrain from even asking preposterous things like : "Sir, what would you do if you were locked up in the Tower of London with a baby three-months old ?" Johnson would grow a trifle testy. And occasionally he would lose his temper. He was a somewhat irritable old guy : he once knocked down a bookseller with a big Bible picked up from that chap's own counter. Socrates was just the opposite. He thought irritability the complete negation of the philosophic mood. The philosopher must be master of his nerves : circumstances belonging to the shadowy phenomenal world should never affect the poised intellect contemplating the Eternal Ideas of the world beyond time and space and mutability. Socrates was perhaps the most tested, though the-least testy, of all philosophers. For he was married to a woman who has become as famous for her nagging ways as he for his equanimity. Her name was Xanthippe. I'll tell you of one incident in their eventful married life. Once Xanthippe, for some reason or perhaps no reason, started shouting at her husband. She made such a noise that Socrates went downstairs and out of the house and sat exhausted at his own door-step. Just then Xanthippe emptied a bucket of dirty water over his head from the first-floor window. Socrates took the compulsory shower-bath quietly. A passerby who witnessed the ablution asked him : "Don't you feel annoyed ?" Socrates replied : "Friend, we must accept Nature's phenomena with composure. After a lot of thunder such as I heard upstairs, what can one expect but a rain-storm ?"

I don't know whether Johnson would have borne so patiently with his wife. Perhaps he would have—but only with her and never with anybody else. He chose his wife with great care. She was a somewhat tipsy widow of nearly 50—20 years older than Johnson himself ! She could easily have called him with perfect appropriateness : “John-son.” He very fondly gave her the name “Tetty”. And all his friends were obliged for his sake to admire her non-existent beauty and her pretty dim intelligence. But one thing may be said in her favour : she wasn't much of a talker and left tongue-wagging to Johnson who, as I have told you, wagged it wonderfully well.

To match him we have to go to another Englishman—the inimitable S.T.C. : Samuel Taylor Coleridge who was intoxicated with philosophical ideas and made of philosophical talk a poetic feast which Wordsworth and others enjoyed and which stimulated them in various ways. All the marvels and all the curiosities of knowledge were in his words, for he had read everything written by anybody of note. But occasionally he was difficult to endure because of his interminableness. Especially difficult was he when he insisted on discussing philosophy even when suffering from a roaring cold. He would keep chattering of “omjective” and “sumjective”—which are “objective” and “subjective” spoken when the nose is completely blocked with mucous matter. He would also be somewhat of an embarrassment when you were in a hurry. Charles Lamb was once on his way to his office when Coleridge caught him and drew him to a quiet corner in the street. He started a brilliant discourse. Lamb was charmed for five minutes, tolerant for ten, impatient for fifteen, thoroughly fidgety for twenty and absolutely bewildered and desperate for twenty-five. The biggest trouble was that Coleridge had caught him by one of his coat-buttons and was holding forth on his endless theme. Lamb was a Government servant and couldn't afford to be late. Already he was behind time. And there was no prospect of interrupting Coleridge and getting away. To attempt it was like trying to get a word in with the Niagara Falls in order to persuade them not to fall so much. So Lamb thought of a novel means of effecting his escape. He whisked out a pen-knife and cut off the button chaining him to Coleridge. Quietly he slipped away, leaving S.T.C. lecturing. An hour and a half later he left his office and was going home for lunch. There, at the quiet corner in the street, Coleridge was still standing, his eye rolling at the sky, his hand grasping the button, his lips spouting his poetic philosophy. Lamb went up to him and stood where he had been 90 minutes earlier and gently tapped his friend on the shoulder. Somehow the trick worked. Coleridge came out of his splendid soliloquy, smiled, looked at the button in his hand, apologised for unintentionally pulling it off Lamb's coat and assured him that he would have it restitched by his efficient wife Sarah. Lamb set his mind at ease, turned him round to face the opposite direction and ran off to his lunch.

The next talker in history is Oscar Wilde. It is strange that England should

have supplied three of the greatest conversationalists of modern times. Of course Wilde was by nationality an Irishman, though domiciled in England; but Johnson and Coleridge were pukka English. The English people are rather tongue-tied and do not like to say anything more than "Yes" or "No" and the utmost eloquence they indulge in every day is a remark about the weather — more or less the same remark because English weather is pretty uniform — a uniform dullness just as English cookery is a uniform tastelessness. But you must be aware that though the Englishman is very non-communicative his literature is the finest in modern times in the matter of the most sustainedly sensitive communication, the communication of poetry. Once we dwelt on this peculiar paradox. We shan't repeat ourselves : digressions are strictly forbidden in this Class ! Well, to come straight to Oscar Wilde. He was a friend of Mallarmé's and even attended several of the Tuesday-*soirées*. He must have been pretty young and raw at the time, for otherwise Mallarmé would have got no chance to talk. Wilde would have flooded the company with his own witty and rainbow-tinted fancies. And he was rather a pushing fellow, quite unlike Mallarmé who was timid in his manner, retiring in his disposition and had not the quality of a conversationalist playboy that Wilde had in plenty. Many of Wilde's witticisms have become famous. Some of them must have been mighty disconcerting. When he was introduced in Paris to the Comtesse de Noailles who was a charming mind but a very far from charming face, the Comtesse remarked : "Monsieur Wilde, I have the reputation of being the ugliest woman in Paris." Wilde immediately bowed and with a most chivalrous wave of his hand said : "Oh no, Madame—in the whole world !" Wilde kept his wit even when he himself was in an unfortunate position. He had the ill-luck of being sent to jail for a social offence. A friend visited him there and found him stitching gunny-bags. He hailed Wilde with the words : "Oscar, sowing ?" Wilde at once replied : "No, reaping."

I don't know whether Mallarmé was as much of a wit as Wilde, but his talk was said to exert a deep influence on all hearers. It is likely that the cult of the artistic which flourished in England during Wilde's day had a lot to do with Mallarmé and his doctrines, doctrines mostly inculcated in the Tuesday-talks. But Wilde and Mallarmé were cultists of the artistic in rather different ways. Wilde was flamboyant : he wore strikingly coloured clothes, flaunted a huge sunflower in his button-hole and became a public figure in no time : he also believed in living unconventionally and shocking people. He made of Art a gorgeous public show. Something of his temper was in the pre-Mallarméan semi-Symbolist Nerval who became notorious for parading the boulevards of Paris with a pet lobster led on a crimson string. Mallarmé dressed quite simply, behaved unobtrusively and had no love of the limelight. To him Art was a most serious vocation, he was like a high-priest dedicated to his Art and whoever came into contact with him thought that he incarnated the

doctrine he talked about : he was Symbolism embodied : a mysterious atmosphere was round him without any showiness : his mind was steeped in and, as it were, radiated the incomprehensible, the ineffable, the invisible. These three things are what I arrived at last time as a result of my digressions. I'll take them up as I go along to Mallarmé's poetry. I summed them up as : Non-sense, Silence, Absence. At the moment I'll say a few things more on his life.

He was, like his intensest admirer in present-day India, a professor—but a professor whose work was really a burden to him, as no doubt it is to many professors. Oh, no, I am not meaning myself. I am rather happy, for I avoid giving homework and getting a heap of exercise-books to correct. But I know how such drudgeries make T sigh and N groan and R say “Ooff”. They would have made me shout “Damn” in all the eight different notes of a musically frantic reaction. Mallarmé must have had nearly fifty exercise-books to correct twice a week. He was teaching English—and he did not himself know the language any too well. Also, he was not cut out to be a teacher at school. His students were noisy and unruly and he could neither scold nor beat them and his voice too was not loud enough to rise above the clamour and shout down the shouters. It is a great tragedy that creative spirits like his should be tied to a job for which they have no aptitude and which stand so much in the way of their own true work. He was a most conscientious and slow worker at poetry. He believed also that most of the verse written by the world's great poets was superfluous stuff. Real poetry existed more or less in droplets, according to him. And he himself wrote very little, lest anything should be a mixture of poetry and non-poetry. You will be surprised to hear that his collected works comprise no more than about sixty poems, and only three of them go beyond a page or so. At all times he was a quintessentialist, a distiller of absolute nectar, and if he had not been hampered so much by compulsory schoolmastering he would certainly have given us at least ten or twenty little masterpieces extra. He died at the age of 51, which is just one year less than Shakespeare's age at the time of his death. The whole life-work of Mallarmé is not equal in length to even half of a single play of Shakespeare's out of his thirty-six. But Mallarmé's marvellousness lies precisely in the fact that in spite of so exiguous an output he ranks so high and in the fact that, while everything that poets had said in Europe up to the end of the nineteenth century could be found in some form or other anticipated by Shakespeare, Mallarmé wrote a few things that Shakespeare never dreamt of. Shakespeare was the boldest poet in his handling of images as well as words. But Mallarmé had a way with both images and words which, though not bolder than Shakespeare's, was stranger than the English poet's. When he writes, for instance —

Le chair est triste, hélas ! et j'ai lu tous les livres

(The flesh is sad, alas ! and I've read all books)—

or,

Coure le froid avec ses silences de faulx

(Let the cold course with scything silences) —

or even,

Je suis hanté : l'Azur ! l'Azur ! l'Azur ! l'Azur !

(I am haunted : Azure ! Azure ! Azure ! Azure !) —

he does not shoot beyond the world of Shakespeare's imaginative lordship over language, but some curious turn is felt of matter and manner which takes us to the verge of some new poetic sense. Shakespeare could have thought and felt along such lines if his interests had lain in their direction—the direction and not quite the mode of feeling and visioning seems novel. However, when Mallarmé comes with a verse like

Pour la Rose et le Lys la mystère d'un nom

(For Rose and Lily the mystery of a name),

we are almost putting, for all the apparent simplicity of the statement, Shakespeare on his head, for Shakespeare spoke of the poet's pen giving

to airy nothing

A local habitation and a name,

whereas Mallarmé speaks of converting by means of a name a concrete something into an airiness without local habitation. All the more. unShakespeareanly enigmatic is Mallarmé's.

Le transparent glacier des vols qui n'ont pas fui

(The transparent glacier of flights unflown),

and we are in a dimension utterly unknown to Shakespeare and fusing the mystical and the metaphysical when we hear Mallarmé on the dead Edgar Allan Poe :

Tel qu'en Lui-même enfin l'éternité le change...

(At last to himself he is changed by eternity...)

AMAL KIRAN (K. D. SETHNA)

FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

(Letters with Sri Aurobindo's Comments)

If a sadhak waits a little and sees without giving any room to anxiety and impatience all his troubles will be over within a short time. Even if it takes a long time what does it matter since he has left his boat entirely in the hands of his Mother ?

Those who ask the Mother why the boat is turning down-stream, why it does not sail as freely and swiftly as before, what makes the clouds grow blacker, cannot claim a real faith. For there is hardly any spiritual element here. Even an ordinary man takes great risks in life if he is foretold and promised that after passing through the storms he will be highly rewarded.

A true and divine faith is that which never questions or grumbles no matter if the obscurity, ignorance or falsehood is suffocating him or hell is let loose on him. He does not even murmur before the omniscient Mother, since he knows that She is aware inwardly of all that is happening in him. So it is not necessary to cry before Her outwardly. Not that he does not suffer. But he bears his burden with a silent tongue. He has realised that it is for the sake of the Divine that he is undergoing all such hardships and difficulties. This realisation will rather offer him joy instead of sorrow in enduring whatever is to be endured on the path. He does not allow himself to be deluded by the attacks, failures and griefs. He sees them with a detached eye. He depends on his psychic being and consults it at every turn of the road to make sure that the Mother is not left aside by him. If She is still there, he is worried about nothing else.

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

That is the true faith and its natural attitude.

17-5-1935

A still higher attitude is a very simple one and may be very shortly expressed. The sadhak should not take any attack or difficulty as belonging to his individual self but consider it as moving in the general atmosphere. He should say to himself, "I am progressing as before. The Mother is carrying me on just as ever, whether I am aware or unaware of the fact."

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

"That is the true knowledge and its natural attitude."

17-5-1935

From NAGIN DOSHI

THE MOTHER*

MAHALAKSHMI

THE Mystery unborn—Mahalakshmi,
From her streams forth all stainless harmonies—
The Miracle nonpareil of ceaseless bloom,
The Secret of symphonic world-delight,
The peerless Heart luring the heart of man.

Maheshwari, the poise of light unique,
Perpetual regalness, remote and calm :
Mahakali, a lightning dauntless, dire
Lures not our ignorance by her speed and storm.
But all with ardour turn to Mahalakshmi,
For She is the lone intoxicating Bliss.
Her nearness is our flood of boundless joy.
Our life shall be purpled with the marvel load
Of ecstasy when we shall bear her Breath
Within our core—a sacred luminous song.
From her outflow the bounty of lustre-rays
Like the teeming flames of the Light of day and God.
Her touch is the lodestone whose soft prevalence
Defecates our life, our mind and outer frame.
Her glorious demands and all her laws
Need an unshadowed sky-ward instrument.
Harmony and bloom in our earthly life is her choice.
Even within all altering circumstance
Her Spirit moves where beauty and rapture grow.
A dumb divine dislike compels her Heart
To hide away from our blindness of earth-lust.
Our formless, base, stunted and squalid thoughts
Repel her victor-march within our heart.
Mother of patience, She waits immune behind
Like a sea of boundless, tireless tranquillity.
The imposing hands Mahalakshmi has none.

* A versification of the substance of the section on Mahalakshmi in *The Mother* by Sri Aurobindo.

She founds her influence of unrivalled joys
 Only when the winds of passions pass and calm
 The heart can long for her bounty's thrilled expanse.

The stark ascetic shutting out boons of light—
 The restraint of heart's emotion rich, profound,
 The ruthless pounding of lustre's apocalypse—
 Can never dare to win her bright consent.
 Through unchallenged love alone the Mother lays
 On the human souls the reign of supernal vasts.
 Life, in her peerless creation white, is changed
 To a work unique of the art of the firmament.
 Even the dwarf and paltry are reborn,
 Grandiose by her Intuition's wonder-advent.
 She is for ever the stupendous nectar-surge
 That boons an Infinite sweet beyond surmise.

“MADAL”

A CHILD'S SONG

I AM a simple child of Thine,
 O Mother of golden Light !
 Thy thousand suns for ever shine
 Piercing the darkest night.

My only Friend I have in Thee,
 A shelter safe and sure;
 Thy Grace abides eternally
 And makes me ever pure.

No learning has this child of Thine;
 I love Thee, Mother dear !
 Let me know Thy Will divine—
 I'll do it without fear.

My heart opens to Him, our Lord—
 My prayer rises high,
 And answers come from the mighty God,
 Bringing the victory nigh.

(Suggested to Sailen by a few phrases jotted down by Prahlad)

STUDIES IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

Study No. 7: *Twelfth Night*—THE WINDS OF ILLYRIA

(Continued)

CHARACTERS

THE major characters of the play are Viola, Orsino and Olivia; the minor characters Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, Feste, Maria and Malvolio.

VIOLA

Viola, musician, courtier and nuncio, of Orsino, keen of eye, swift in judgment, diplomatic in manoeuvres, youth and maid, is the dominant character of *Twelfth Night*. In gracious bearing, duteous deportment, masculine performance, feminine finesse, aesthetic concealment and silent affection, she outstrips all the figures of the play.

The shipwreck on the shores of Illyria elicits the hidden potencies of her wit, humour, and love. She is drawn by a psychic impulse not to the sorrows of Olivia but to the porticos of Orsino. Gaiety, not grief, is the gift of her resilient temperament. Melody of lute and lyre, languor of softly-falling cadences, chanting choirs in palaces of pleasure attract but not absorb her spirit. Viola awakes the glamour-bound eyes of Orsino, sunk in the somnolence of the pleasures of the earth, to the still, patient and all-arriving steps of Love. The charm of Viola is the woman that betrays the garments of youth. Damask cheeks and rosy lips do not fail the observation of Orsino. Oblivious of her sex, he is not impervious to a maiden's voice. All is semblative of the woman's part. She woos Olivia for Orsino with the coyness of a girl and the tact of a pleni-potentiary.

In the house of Olivia ushered in by the ever-smiling wheedling Malvolio, she breaks forth with a nosegay of compliments to the "Most radiant, exquisite and unmatchable beauty", the unwon mistress of Orsino. The adoration and fertile tears of her lord are breathed from the warmth of inviting lips. Her youthful perfection with viewless stealth conquers the reluctant lids of Olivia. She knocks in vain with the Olive-leaf of peace at the door of her heart, pleading for Orsino; she retreats in bashful and maidenly shame from the glances of Olivia. Olivia traps Orsino; Viola traps Olivia.

In the return of Olivia's ring through Malvolio, the meaning of which her sharp eyes discern, Viola's disguise in her aside breaks. Her womanly instincts rebel; she forthwith rejects Olivia. Her strategy takes a new turn; the helplessness of Olivia is the opportunity of Viola. She drives Olivia to the

extremity of passion to procure the preferment of Orsino. Her pleading for Orsino is the silent self-sacrifice of true Love.

In her home-coming to the palace of Orsino is the failure of her suit on behalf of her master. In Cesario's duty done is the covert declaration of her love.

VIOLA : My father, had a daughter loved a man,
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,
I should your lordship.

DUKE : ...And what's her history ?

VIOLA : A blank, my lord. She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek; she pined in thought;
And with a green and yellow melancholy
She sat like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed ?

The woman seeks the Duke; the Duke does not discern the woman.

In the last approach of Cesario to Olivia is the play of the Forces of attraction and repulsion. Olivia makes an unreserved confession of her love for Cesario and shows an unconcealed abhorrence for Orsino. This crisis of tender, but unnatural love, is broken by the dropping of Viola's masculine attire. The woman wins the man; the master takes the lips of his mistress.

DUKE : (To Viola) Your master quits you; and for your service done him
So much against the mettle of your sex,
So far beneath your soft and tender breeding,
And since you called me master for so long,
Here is my hand; you shall from this time be
Your master's mistress.

In her comic as well as in her serious role, the maidenhood and morning charm of Viola peer and prepare peals of delight. The violent Sir Toby, seldom sober noon or night, and the green-eyed Sir Andrew, fretful of the lances of her eyes shot at the loveless Olivia, by their challenge, half-hearted and unsure, rouse the reposing womanhood of Viola.

Boy or girl, disguised or free of youthful vesture, loving or a mere messenger of Love, drawing with Olive-leaf or repelling with fugitive eyes Olivia, object of pursuit by Sir Toby and Sir Andrew, comic or grave, courtier or servant, Viola is sweetness and delight of lips, lids and limbs.

ORSINO

Orsino, poet and musician, is a voluptuary. He dwells in a world of beauty detached from the troubles of the dust. The passion for Olivia is the delight

not the dolour of his life. The rejection of his suit is the theme of a song. Love's denial evokes the melodious sigh; love's insistence inspires melancholic numbers. Olivia is the painting of his passion, not the lady of his lips. The Illyrian prince has not kissed nor been kissed. Olivia is his Rosaline, not his Juliet. He is warm to music but cool to love. His tears are addressed to a statuesque presence, not to living lips. His thwarted affection are the effect of his desires. He aspires to music, not Love. Love denied is Love withheld. His eyes are closed to love's presence. He scans the form, face, and features of Viola; he is swift to seize her smiles but slow to receive her glances. His heart is sealed to psychic exchanges. He fails to catch the hints of Viola, counselling a retraction from the frowns of Olivia. His folly results in a rare wreck. He is drowned by the surfeit of song; his appetite sickens with music; his soul sinks into torpor. He fails to intuit the open avowal of Viola's love for him. An oblivion covers his subtler self. He takes Viola to wife as a master and not as a lover. He has no earnestness of seeking arms, stretching hands or beating heart. Love is lost in the aesthete and the authoritarian Prince. Orsino is the soul of Music; Viola the soul of Love. In their marriage the psychic beings of Music and Love meet and merge.

OLIVIA

Olivia is the counterpart of the Duke. Olivia worships grief; Orsino worships passion. In both the eidolons of the Mind are broken. Olivia is swathed in the soft sap of delicious sorrow. Her copious tears for a vanished brother is the need of vital effervescence. Her dolour is the dream of a delirious delight. Her captivity is self-wrought; she has outlawed Love. Her closed windows admit no light or air. She has three would-be wooers—Orsino, Sir Andrew and Malvolio—who stand outside the threshold of her consciousness. Viola is the ray which penetrates through the shutters of her selfhood. A cold form—Vanity or Pride—hides behind the schedules of her beauty. In the inventory of her smiles, lips, eyes, neck, and cheek are shut the fires of her soul. She meets Viola covered by a veil. She reveals her beauty by her picture, not by herself. Her soul is withdrawn from Life and Love. Her household motions are mechanical and imperious. Malvolio is her steward; Maria is her maid; she has no confidante. Isolation is the nature of her being. The apartments of Olivia are strangers to the breath of Love. In them obedience is peremptory, routine obligatory. In her home, a rigid order reigns. Into it Viola forces an entrance—an unwelcome guest and an unwanted carrier of her errand. Viola unlocks the hidden chambers of her heart.

An electric fire resides in the depths of Olivia's being. Her sighs are the veil of a desire; Love is her primal need. Viola dissipates the glamour of her gloom. The breath of spring suspires, seeking an exit from grief. Her

psychic state is confused ; she treads the long dolorous road to Love. 'Love claimed is Love granted. The lips of Sebastian are exchanged for the lips of Viola. Her unperceiving soul perceives the sister in Viola, the lover in Sebastian, and the friend in Orsino. A harmony falls upon the union of linking hands.

In several guises Love approaches Olivia. A brother's love she tastes as grief. Sir Andrew's pose, which seeks property and position and power, she does not suspect ; Malvolio's smiles which aspire to the lordship of her domains she does not comprehend ; Viola's sisterly eyes she misapprehends ; Orsino's suit she repudiates. Predestiny knits her hands with Sebastian in the holy chancel.

Olivia has the austerity of a nun, but the suspirations of a Juliet. She demands and receives the touch of the flesh. Pride and pomp are dissolved in a kiss.

SYED MEHDI IMAM

(To be continued)

THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT

A rolling stone gathers no moss.

A mass of concreted earthy material perennially rotating on its axis will not accumulate an accretion of bryophytic vegetation.

Too many cooks spoil the broth.

A superabundance of talent skilled in the preparation of gastronomic concoctions will impair the quality of a certain potable solution made by immersing a gallinaceous bird in ebullient Adam's ale.

People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

Individuals who perforce are constrained to be domiciled in vitreous structures of patent frangibility should on no account employ petrous formations as projectiles.

The early bird catches the worm.

That prudent avis which matutinally deserts the coziness of its abode will ensnare a vermiculate creature.

All that glitters is not gold.

Everything that coruscates with effulgence is not ipso facto aurous.

Waste not, want not.

He who does not dissipate his competence by hebetudinous prodigality will not subsequently lament an exiguous inadequacy.

A fool and his money are soon parted.

An addle-pated beetlehead and his specie divaricate with startling prematurity.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.

It can be no other than a maleficent horizontally propelled current of gaseous matter whose portentous advent is not the harbinger of a modicum of beneficence.

Look before you leap.

One should hyperesthetically exercise macrography upon that situs which one will eventually tenant, if one propels oneself into the troposphere.

To err is human, to forgive divine.

Aberration is the hallmark of homo sapiens while longanimous placability and condonation are the indicia of supramundane omniscience.

YOGA PHILOSOPHY OF PATANJALI*

(Continued from the last issue)

Comment

THE Samkhya-Yoga Psychology confines the study of conscious states and processes to a very limited scope. The five divisions of *cittavṛtti*, which may also be classified under the three categories of wakeful consciousness, dream consciousness and consciousness in deep sleep, are in the last analysis products of the contact of the external world with the *citta* through the senses. Further the light of Consciousness is not an original quality of the states and processes but is derivative, being a reflection from the Original Consciousness of Purusha. Patanjali's standpoint suffers from various limitations of which the following may be noted :

(a) It is limited to the human range of Consciousness which is only a part of the middle zone of the scale of Consciousness. The upper ranges of Consciousness, namely, that of the higher mind, illumined mind and intuitive mind reaching to the overmental Consciousness which in its top parts merges in the supramental, are not visualised. Again in the Psychology of Patanjali there is no clear idea of vital and physical Consciousness. *Citta* is conceived as occupying a middle position between Self on one hand and physical and vital nature on the other which is nothing but a product of *aciti*, inconscience. Here Self alone possesses original light, the light in the *citta* is not a true light, being only a reflection from the Self-luminous Purusha. Life and body below *citta* are completely merged in inconscience, having no light of Consciousness in them. Moreover, the psychic centre of Consciousness in the depth of the heart is completely ignored. Patanjali fixes his gaze only on the eddies of surface consciousness and a little of the adjoining ranges, the subconscious, the dream-contents and the awareness of the absence of contents in deep sleep. This zone about which Patanjali speaks is a hopeless amalgam, the mental, vital and physical awarenesses all inseparably mixed up. There are, in the subliminal regions, zones of true mental, true vital and subtle physical Consciousness which are connected with the Psychic in the heart of our being and with the ranges above the mental.

In Integral Psychology the range of Consciousness is revealed as infinitely extended in all directions. Following this global view of Consciousness one

* From lecture-notes given to the Philosophy students of the Sri Aurobindo International Center of Education.

can ascend upwards through various gradations and reach the Superconscious, or descend downward with the light of the Superconscious into the womb of the Inconscious. One can also explore his own centres in the embodied being and find out the psychic which controls all the concentric rings of Consciousness, and survey too the circumconscious ranges which extend beyond into the cosmic. The domain of consciousness is as wide as the Universe and more, it is as high as the Transcendent and the Beyond and as low-lying as the bottom of material existence and the unfathomable ranges of inconscience. Here is a description¹ given by Sri Aurobindo of the total range of Consciousness, actual and potential, waiting for full development in man :

- “We might say...that there are three elements in the totality of our being : there is the submental and the subconscious which appears to us as if it were inconscient, comprising the material basis and a good part of our life and body; there is the subliminal, which comprises the inner being, taken in its entirety of inner mind, inner life, inner physical with the soul or psychic entity supporting them; there is this waking consciousness which the subliminal and the subconscious throw up on the surface, a wave of their secret surge. But even this is not an adequate account of what we are; - for there is not only something deep within behind our normal self-awareness, but something also high above it : that too is ourselves, other than our surface mental personality, but not outside our true self; that too is a country of our spirit....We become aware, in a certain experience, of a range of being superconscious to all these three, aware too of something, a supreme highest Reality sustaining and exceeding them all, which humanity speaks of vaguely as Spirit, God, the Oversoul : from these superconscious ranges we have visitations and in our highest being we tend towards them and to that supreme Spirit. There is then in our total range of existence a superconscience as well as a subconscious and inconscience, overarching and perhaps enveloping our subliminal and our waking selves, but unknown to us, seemingly unattainable and incommunicable.

“But with the extension of our knowledge we discover what this spirit or oversoul is : it is ultimately our own highest deepest vastest Self, it is apparent on its summits or by reflection in ourselves as Sachchidananda creating us and the world by the power of His divine Knowledge-Will, spiritual, supramental, truth-conscious, infinite.”

The above lengthy quotation is given just to indicate how narrow the scope of Patanjali's Psychology and how poor his conception of human existence are, as compared with the vast limitless scope of Integral Psychology. It is, however, apparent that ordinarily one is almost entirely oblivious of the vast treasure of spiritual consciousness above, around and within him.

¹ *The Life Divine*, C.E. Edition, pp. 667-68.

He is, like the son of the king in a Samkhya parable, completely ignorant of his royal lineage and believing himself to be a child of the wild tribe (Sabara) where he is bred and brought up. But there is open to him the promise and the possibility of regaining full possession of the lost kingdom in the midst of the terrestrial existence—Ignorance will then yield place to luminous knowledge, darkness will disappear, suffering will be changed into delight and the full blaze of superconscience reign supreme in this triple world of obscurity and confusion.

(b) Besides the limitation of the scope, we also find a hopelessly wrong reading of the character of human consciousness. According to Patanjali, *citta* is an inconscient principle, being a product of blind Prakriti. Here is thus an unwarrantable separation between the conscient Purusha and the inconscient *citta*. According to the view of Sri Aurobindo, the triple world of mind, life and matter is not merely a product of an inconscient material principle or Prakriti in the Samkhya-Yoga sense of the term, but it is the product of Chit-Shakti which leads Prakriti in her workings from behind. Truth-consciousness is the one origin of all the created worlds both of the upper and the lower hemispheres of existence. It is moved by an inscrutable will from within itself and has gone abroad laying the foundation of infinite grades of conscious existence. "Consciousness is a fundamental thing, the fundamental thing in existence—it is the energy, the motion, the movement of consciousness that creates the universe and all that is in it—not only the macrocosm but the microcosm is nothing but consciousness arranging itself. For instance, when consciousness in its movement or rather a certain stress of movement forgets itself in the action it becomes an apparently 'unconscious' energy; when it forgets itself in the form it becomes the electron, the atom, the material object. In reality it is still consciousness that works in the energy and determines the form and the evolution of the form." (*Letters*, 1st Sr., p. 101.)

From the pinnacle of pure Consciousness it has descended by different stresses of concentration into various gradations and reached its rock-bottom in inconscient matter where its self-oblivion is complete, but this involutionary process is only one aspect of its power. It has also the power of gradually evolving out of its swoon in matter into a dim awareness in the living forms of plants and animals and, by a grand stride in its evolutionary urge, it can make human beings, gifted with intelligence of a special order, appear on the scene. It can subjectively formulate itself as a physical, a vital, a mental, a psychic consciousness. These forms of consciousness are apparently hopelessly mixed up in the external consciousness of man. But, if the wall or barrier that separates the inner from the outer consciousness can by a stress of concentration be broken down, then the pure character of these different forms of consciousness would be revealed to us, and we could become aware of the large and rich and inexhaustible kingdom within. Again, in course of the downward

involution of consciousness, it has raised walls of separation between different grades of its self-existence but these walls between the higher and the lower levels can also be demolished by a stress of concentration and the vast ranges above and below will then stand revealed to man. "So also consciousness in us has drawn a lid or covering or whatever one likes to call it between the lower planes of mind, life, body supported by the psychic and the higher planes which contain the spiritual kingdoms where the self is always free and limitless, and it can break or open the lid or covering and ascend there and become the Self free and wide and luminous or else bring down the influence, reflection, finally even the presence and power of the higher consciousness into the lower nature." (*Letters*, 1st Sr. p. 102). Human consciousness then is itself a self-formulation of the one fundamental consciousness under mental limitations and it can grow out of these limitations and live in unity with the One Consciousness.

(3) Again Patanjali's equation, that consciousness as *cittavrtti* is equal to suffering, is also inadmissible. Our formula is: Sat is equal to Chitshakti which again is equal to Ananda. Sachchidananda in its dynamic aspect as Chitshakti is the source of all the varied self-formulation of Consciousness. All conscious existence is supported by Ananda working in front or remaining veiled in the background. Existence is Ananda. Pain or suffering is only a surface manifestation and admitted in the scheme of evolution as a pointer on the path of progress, and also sometimes as an aid in the discovery of the Supreme Ananda which is the goal of all existence. Accepting Patanjali's premise that consciousness is equal to pain, *cittavrttinirodh* would become the logical conclusion if one wants to avoid pain and suffering. But we have to proceed in a different way on the basis of the teachings of the Upanishads and Sri Aurobindo and accept delight of existence as the first premise and source of existence. Secondly, delight of existence is the one mediating power which alone can solve all riddles of existence that may confront us on our path of progression. And thirdly, it is delight of existence which is the ultimate goal of evolution, and human consciousness is the laboratory where this ultimate truth is to be rediscovered in a new setting of physical existence, in the body itself.

(To be continued)

NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA