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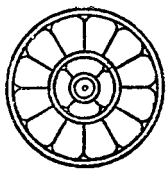

Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.

MOTHER INDIA

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"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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WORDS OF THE MOTHER

On est plus heureux
du bonheur que l'on donne
que de celui qu'on reçoit.

4-7-65

The happiness you give makes you
more happy than the happiness you receive.

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO

BROJEN

The experiences you describe are coherent with each other and very clearly explicable. The first shows that some part of your mind was open and this aided by an opening in the psychic enabled you to ascend into the regions above, the ranges of the liberated spiritual mind with the infinite path of the spirit leading to the highest realisation. But the rest of the nature was not ready. The straining to recover the experience was not the right thing to do then; what should have been done was the aspiration for the purification and preparation of the nature, the permanent psychic opening and the increase of the higher spiritual opening above till there could be a total release of the being. The vehemence of the action of the forces was due to the resistance and the breaking of the knots in the head and different parts of the nature was their working for the release. The "electricity" passing through the spinal column was the passage of the Force making its way down through the centres. Obviously, it is the dark resisting force of the vital, the desire nature, that rises up and clouds all up to the heart. On the other hand the flow from above and the silence it creates is a sign of the opening above being still there; for the silence, the quietude of the nature is a touch from above and very necessary for purification and release. What is lacking is the full opening of the psychic being behind the heart—for that could liberate the heart from the dark force and make possible a clearing of the rest by a quiet and steady rather than a vehement working attended by chaotic action and struggle. When there is an opening in the spiritual mind but not a sufficient psychic change, there is or can be this kind of vehement force-action and resistance; when the psychic opens, when it acts on the whole nature, mind, vital, physical, governing them from within, to transform themselves and become ready for the complete spiritual opening and spiritual consciousness. Devotion and a more and more complete inner consecration are the best way to open the psychic.

22-2-1937 SRI AUROBINDO

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 right 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.)*

JANUARY 19, 1940

S (*looking at N*): I see a roguish smile on his face.

SRI AUROBINDO : He wants to ask a question or say something?

N : S was telling me yesterday that he wasn't quite clear about the definition of creative force as applied to bhakti poems. Why shouldn't they be considered creative if one feels bhakti by them ?

S: He is putting his own question into my mouth.

SRI AUROBINDO : These poems cannot be considered creative, because you identify yourself only with the feeling and not with a man or character as in the case of *Hamlet*. They do not create a world for you. A poem must come out as a part of the poet's personality and you can't help identifying yourself with the world or personality the poet has created or with the experience of the poet himself : otherwise the poem is not creative. Of course, everything is creative in a general way.

P : Abercrombie says a great poet transmits his experience to the reader.

S : But one can transmit without having oneself the experience as some poets here, according to their own account, have done.

N : So also poets can transmit or transcribe creative force without being conscious of it, and I suppose all fine poems are transcriptions.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, poets can do it, but people who have the creative force usually make it a part of themselves, they experience the thing first and then transmit it.

N : How is one to get this force?

SRI AUROBINDO: You have it or you don't. Some poets are born with it.

N : But can't one acquire it ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, you can develop it. Most people have it within but it may or may not come out. In Yoga, of course, it is different. There it depends on the power of opening oneself.

N : Talking of J and Nishikanta, I find that the latter hasn't the former's subtlety and delicacy of expression.

SRI AUROBINDO : A poet need not have these things in order to be great.

N : No, Nishikanta always gives the impression of power.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. Power is his main element.

N : X says Nishikanta also lack substance: he means intellectual substance such as he finds in AE or Tagore.

P : I thought Tagore's poetry hadn't much substance of this kind; most of it is fine and decorative.

N : It is rather strange that X doesn't like Yeats.

SRI AUROBINDO : He doesn't ?

N : He says he can't find substance in him or whatever substance there is can't be understood by him. He is referring here to the symbolic poems.

S : Yeats has expressed Irish mysticism.

SRI AUROBINDO : Those are his early poems. He has expressed other things too.

N : To a man like X who appreciates and understands *chanda* (rhythm) so much, Yeats has no appeal ! It is strange. He likes Arjava's poems and yet Arjava told him that he was greatly indebted to Yeats; and so also is Amal.

SRI AUROBINDO : Perhaps X doesn't understand English poetry sufficiently.

N : But he said that Chesterton has variety in metre and he appreciates it.

SRI AUROBINDO : Chesterton ?

N : Yes. I think that if he doesn't undertsand a poem, he just doesn't bother any more about the rest of its qualities : the poem has no appeal for him.

S : Perhaps Tagore, after reading Nishikanta's book, will change his opinion and write to him.

SRI AUROBINDO : He has evaded the problem by writing before he has scanned the book.

N : You think that Nishikanta has intellectual substance ?

SRI AUROBINDO : I believe he has.

N : P says your "Bird of Fire" has creative force. It is a creative symbolic poem.

SRI AUROBINDO (*smiling*) : I don't know. (*Looking at P*) It is for P to pronounce.

N : He also thinks your "Shiva" has it.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why not leave my poetry out ? If you want examples, there is "The Hound of Heaven", as I have said, and there is Chesterton's "Lepanto". They have the creative force.

N : What about Arjava (J. Chadwick) ?

SRI AUROBINDO : He has none.

EVENING

SRI AUROBINDO : I think Tagore's "Parash Pathar" ("Philosopher's Stone") and "Urvasie" have the creative force, though to have it is not usual with him. Tagore has created something here, not a character but a world, not an outer world but an inner one, a reality of the inner life of man. It is not simply a description. And in Nishikanta's poem, "Gorurgadi" ("Bullock Cart"), the cart is real and the man in it is real and yet the cart is both a personal one and a world-cart.

Take Shelley's "Skylark" and Keats' "Nightingale". The bird in either poem is nothing. It is the thoughts and feelings of the poets that have found expression and they transmit those thoughts and feelings while the birds are only occasions for expressing the thoughts and feelings.

By the way, I don't understand why X says that Nishikanta has no ideas.

N : What he says is that Nishikanta lacks intellectual substance.

SRI AUROBINDO : What do you mean by that? You mean philosophical thought?

N : I think he means ideas such as AE has, for instance.

SRI AUROBINDO : But he has poetical ideas and he develops them in his poems. A poet need not have intellectual ideas to be great. Homer has no intellectual ideas. It is only one or two lines that contain a great thought in the first five or six Books. Otherwise the *Iliad* is all war and action and movement. And you can't say that Homer is not a great poet. If you do, you'll have to ignore many poets of the past. When Nishikanta started writing, I said his poems were "vital", but he made a great progress afterwards.

N : Some of his poems are even psychic.

SRI AUROBINDO : His "Bullock Cart" is certainly psychic

N : X doesn't say that he is not a great poet, only that he lacks one element—that's all, and he would like him to have it.

S : If you want intellectual substance, I would ask you to read one Gujarati poet named Akho. He is all Vedanta.

N : X has no fancy for such poetry. This morning I had an argument with P over your poem "Shiva"; P says it has creative force, just as your "Bird of Fire" has.

P : Didn't you agree with me ?

N : Yes, about "Bird of Fire". About the other I said that I didn't find creative force in it and asked : "Do you become Shiva when you read it ?"

SRI AUROBINDO : It is not necessary to become Shiva. The point is whether you find the picture painted there to be living and feel that Shiva is alive in the poem.

P : I find it creative in that sense. It is not an idea of what Shiva is or stands for that has been depicted. Here what I find is a personality, a being.

SRI AUROBINDO : When you feel thus, it means that the thing depicted is a piece of creation. Tagore also seems to have liked this poem very much.

N : Yes. That is the only poem he liked. According to you, then, to be creative means that what is depicted is vivid, alive, appearing real.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes.

N : It seems to me that your "Rose of God" has the creative force too.

S : He is trying to make you commit yourself ! (*Laughter*)

P : If Sri Aurobindo doesn't want to commit himself, nobody can succeed in that game.

N : I didn't have any sly intention. We only want to grasp the point clearly.

P : N says that if there is poetic force, it will be felt. I say that everybody won't feel it. "The Hound of Heaven" won't be appreciated by all.

N : By "everybody" if you mean the masses, of course not. But I meant that a poet or a literary man who has a taste for poetry will feel the force there.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, unless they have a prejudice.

P : There are persons like A.C. who may not find creative force there. He is a literary man, a Ph.D. of Oxford.

SRI AUROBINDO : In philosophy ?

P : No, in literature : he did research in ancient English poetry.

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh, that is the skeleton of English poetry.

N : Sahana says some of Tagore's dramas have creative force.

SRI AUROBINDO : Which ?

N : She doesn't remember which. But don't you think "Sacrifice" has it ?

SRI AUROBINDO : When people talk of Tagore's dramas, they mean particularly "Sacrifice". Of course, that is the best of the lot, but there too the characters are not living. They have all come out of his mind. He has his idea that things should be like this or like that and he makes them according to his own idea.

N : I remember another poem of Tagore, "I will not let you go", which seems to be creative.

P : It is the same as the other one, "God's Retribution"—fine description.

SRI AUROBINDO : The girl there is also fashioned from his mind. A girl doesn't behave in that way.

N : What about Madhusudan's Bengali work, "The Slaying of Meghnad" ? That surely has a lot of creativeness.

SRI AUROBINDO : Poor creation. What sort of Ravana has he created ? It is an outline of an idealised non-Rakshasic Rakshasa. He makes Ravana weep profusely. That is highly amusing.

Bengalis at one time were very fond of weeping. I think it was Romesh Dutt who translated the story of Savitri from the *Mahabharata* and portrayed her as weeping whereas in the original epic there is no trace of tears. Even when her heart was being sawn in two, not a single tear came to her eyes. By making her weep, he took away the very strength on which Savitri was built.

P : He wanted to make the story realistic, perhaps.

SRI AUROBINDO : He thought Vyasa had made a mess of it. Even present-day Bengalis are fond of weeping. They expect everybody to weep. When Barin was condemned, they reported that Sarojini was weeping and that when I met Sarojini

I too began lamenting and crying ! Barin had to contradict the report.

P : Also when Manmohan died, some people thought you were mourning him.

SRI AUROBINDO : We brothers, I am afraid, were not so passionately fond of each other. (*Laughter*)

Yes, I was talking of Madhusudan. I don't say that his poem is not fine or that it has no force in it or no thought. It is an epic—but it is not creative. It has no vital substance.

P : People say he tried to imitate Milton.

SRI AUROBINDO : Milton, Homer and everybody else.

(*To be continued*)

NIRODBARAN

ANNOUNCEMENT

In view of the educational thinking stimulated by the Educational Commission of the Government of India to evolve a proper National System of Education for the country, there will shortly be a special issue of *Mother India* devoted to the subject as well as to the problem of education in general in the world-context.

As the special issue will have articles of interest to educationists and libraries, we intend printing more copies. So those who are interested are requested to book their copies now.

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TWO POEMS, WITH SRI AUROBINDO'S MARKINGS AND COMMENT

(The following exchange of letters is perhaps the last literary correspondence in which Sri Aurobindo participated before he left his body. His reply is particularly interesting and helpful for its threefold classification of poetic quality illustrated by concrete examples.)

LETTER TO SRI AUROBINDO

Here are two poems for your consideration. I think one of them you saw last year, but I didn't get the usual illuminating comment. Please evaluate them critically. They seem to be somewhat antithetical in theme. Are there any lines in them you particularly like ?

Amal
27-10-1950

GOD'S WORLD

| How shall the witness mind's tranquillity
+Catch the extravagant happiness of God's world ?
| To reach one goal He flings a million paths
+Laughing with sheer love of the limitless,
Wandering for centuries in secret glory,
| Then striking home a single light of lights !
| Marvellous the pattern of His prodigal power,
But vainly the philosopher will brood
+This sable serpent flecked with sudden stars.
+Coil after coil of unpredictable dream
Will set his logic whirling till it drops.
Only the poet with wide eyes that feel
+Each form a shining gate to depths beyond
Knows through the magic measures of his tune
+Our world is the overflow of an infinite wine
+Self-tasted in the mystery-drunken heart.

WORLD-POET

With song on radiant song I clasp the world,
+Weaving its wonder and wideness into my heart—
| But ever the music misses some huge star
| Or else some flower too small for the minstrel hand.
No skill can turn all life my harmony.
| Perchance a tablet of magic mood will make
| The truth of the whole universe write itself—
But only when with mortal thoughts in-drawn
I learn the secret time-transcending art :
+Silence that, losing all, grows infinite Self...

SRI AUROBINDO'S REPLY

The + marking indicates lines which are of the first poetic order. The ordinary mark indicates those which are excellent. The other lines not marked are all of them good but not of a special quality. Both the poems are very successful, especially the first.

7-11-1950

THE MOTHER AND THE EARTH

THE Mother is concerned for the whole earth and all the beings. She prays :

> Give peace and light to them all, O Lord, open their blinded eyes and their obscured understanding, calm their useless torments and futile cares. Turn their regard away from themselves and give them the joy of consecration to Thy work without calculation or mental reserve. Let Thy beauty blossom in everything, awaken Thy love in all hearts, so that Thy eternally progressive order may be realised upon earth and Thy harmony spread till the day when all will be Thyself in perfect purity and peace. *January* 7, 1914.

> ...I implore Thee for more light, more purity, more true sincerity and love, and that for all, for the multitude which constitutes what I call my being, and for the multitude which constitutes the universal being;...I implore Thee that the peace of Thy reign may spread upon the earth. *January* 10, 1914.

The Mother identifies herself with the earth:

> ...The "I" which speaks to Thee is the whole earth, aspiring to be this pure diamond, perfect reflector of Thy supreme light. The hearts of all men beat in my heart, all their thoughts vibrate in my thoughts, the least aspiration of the docile animal or of the modest plant joins in my formidable aspiration, and all this lifts itself towards Thee, to the conquest of Thy love and light, scaling the peaks of the being to attain to Thee, to ravish Thee from Thy immobile beatitude and make Thee penetrate into the shadow of suffering so as to transform it into divine Joy, into sovereign Peace. *May* 25, 1914.

Now the earth too implores :

> When the sun had set in the indrawn quietude of the calm twilight, all my being prostrated itself before Thee, O Lord, in a mute adoration and complete surrender. Then I was the whole earth and the whole earth prostrated herself before Thee, imploring the benediction of Thy illumination and the beatitude of Thy love. O that kneeling of the earth in supplication towards Thee, then collected in itself in the silence of the night, awaiting, at once with patience and anxiety, the so longed for illumination... *May* 31, 1914.

And the Lord assures :

> An immense wave of love descends upon everything and penetrates all.
>
> Peace, peace on all the earth, victory, plenitude, marvel.
>
> O beloved children, sorrowful and ignorant, and thou, O rebellious and violent Nature, open your hearts, tranquillize your force, it is the omnipotence of Love that is coming to you, it is the pure radiance of the light that is penetrating you. This human, this earthly hour is the most beautiful among all the hours.
>
> Let each, let all know it and enjoy the plenitude that is accorded.
>
> O saddened hearts and anxious foreheads, foolish obscurity and igorant ill-will, let your anguish be calmed and effaced.
>
> This is the splendour of the new word that comes :
>
> "I am here." *June* 9, 1914.

The Mother is the executrix.

> It is a veritable work of creation we have to do: to create new activities and new modes of being, so that this Force, unknown to the earth till now, may manifest in its plenitude. It is to this work of a bringing to birth that I have consecrated myself, O Lord, because it is this that Thou demandest from me. But since it is for this work that Thou hast chosen me, Thou must give me the means, that is to say, the knowledge necessary for its realisation. *June* 14, 1914.

Once having taken up the earth-consciousness into her own consciousness the Mother is working constantly and incessantly. Time and Space are no barriers. In 1963 she writes in a letter :

> You ask at what time I pray, in order to join in the prayer. But you see, I have not a time for prayer or meditation. —This body lives constantly, night and day, even when apparently it is busy with something else, in an invocation to the Supreme Lord, asking Him to manifest His supreme Truth in this world of falsehood, and His supreme Love in this world of disharmony. So at any time when you feel like praying, you can do so and your prayer is sure to join mine.

S. S. JHUNJHUNWALA

LEAVES FROM MY ENGLISH DIARY

(*Continued from the August 15 issue*)

THE OXFORD COLLOQUIUM : SEPTEMBER 15-25 (*Contd.*)

THERE was talk during the first discussion about the "conceptual apparatus of man". The whole argument proceeded on the basis that the conceptual apparatus of man is a fixed one. Perhaps the expounder thought that during the course of human history this conceptual apparatus of man—at least of the ordinary man—is, or seems, constant. But the question does remain whether this apparatus of knowledge now used by man is capable of change or not. The range of our senses is capable of being increased by devices like the microscope, the telescope and others. Is there a possibility of a similar increase in man's psychological instrumentation? If the present apparatus of knowledge is capable of expansion and development then all the results of man's present range would be certainly limited in comparison with his developed psychological apparatus.

Throughout the discussions the stress seemed to be on the mode of thought and there was very little stress on the way of life according to the mode of thought. It may be claimed that this analytical philosophy is also preparing or making for a way of life. In that case all that one can say is : better to wait and see.

During all these efforts at clarification one thought that there was too much attention paid to the technique and not to the problems. Clarification, yes, but of what ? Almost all the time it was past philosophers and their thought that was being clarified but one may ask whether the Oxford experts have something of their own clarified and simple. And as to analysis, one would legitimately ask whether analysis is the only or chief faculty of the human mind. Is the function of philosophy only analytic ?

An important point that emerged from the discussion seemed to me to be that these Oxford philosophers worked under the assumption that whatever is physical is alone real. They seemed to want physical proof of every philosophical statement, which can never happen unless we confine ourselves to the maxim that only the physical is real. In that case what becomes of those dynamic realities of right, the conception of freedom, democracy, justice and the like ? One may argue that they are actual in the physical, but can we sense freedom or reduce justice to sense-perception ? I doubt very much. The objection to the old metaphysics is that instead of trying to understand what exists they try to bring into being what does not exist. But that is the whole question. What exists ? To say that what our senses perceive is what exists would be to limit human experience to a very narrow

field and to deprive the human being of its highest and richest cultural achievements and fields of experience.

I think I have pointed out before that analysis could hardly be considered the highest and the main work of the philosopher, nor could we accept the analytical faculty as man's highest faculty. Analysis may help us in understanding things and their constitution by taking things apart from the whole and thus give us an insight and understanding of things but it is synthesis which is the more important faculty which leads to a new creation or a new and organic view of the whole. These philosophers are insisting that we must first know what things are but that is exactly the crux: how do we know what things are ? Besides, philosophy up till now has been very often a way of life or at least has suggested a way of life. Does analysis stand for a particular way of life except, of course, the scientific and materialistic one which stresses the outward and external as the only real?

Throughout it was very difficult to find out what all these philosophers wanted to clarify. It was all along somebody's statement or proposition or paradox, as they called it, which they wanted to clarify. Of course that process seems to give them a position of advantage with regard to all formulative philosophy. They want us to believe that the real function of philosophy is not to hold any views at all about reality or about man or life or anything but to go on examining every statement, proposition and paradox. And, secondly, they seem to insist on common sense which generally amounts to the acceptance of the world of physical reality as the only one. Besides, who is to decide what are "ordinary concepts" and what is to be understood by "common sense"? They took as an example the word "moral". Now what is the ordinary use of the word "moral"? one may ask. But why should not a possibility of new creation or a new thing or truth being brought into existence be accepted in life and by the human spirit ? I think we have to face the question whether the removal of paradoxes and perplexities is the one and most important work of philosophy.

British philosophy tries to trace its course from the critical tradition of Locke and Hume and explains its present antimetaphysical form by suggesting that it is a reaction—a conscious reaction—against the idealist philosophy. Bradley asserted that time is not real, and this statement was contradicted by common sense. I believe what Bradley wanted to say probably was that it is necessary to realise that time is not real or that the unreality of time could become an experience even though it may not be a subject of common experience or common sense. Does this not happen in the case of poets and artists ?

The course of idealism has been stressed since 1870 from T.H. Green to F.H. Bradley. It may be asserted here that the passionate conviction of Bradley came from his studies in mysticism. Russell contradicted Bradley by trying to introduce mathematical or symbolic logic. It is quite certain that the work of this logic was exaggerated at the time. The criticism against Bradley and others of the Continental school was that all their statements were "pseudo-statements", "nonsense or untestable". The new school even asked for verification of metaphysical statements.

These philosophers are trying to emphasise "obvious truth or facts" or, in other words, "interpretation of facts". That really seems to be the problem of metaphysical reasoning. The statements of facts which these philosophers give are in terms of mathematical symbols and from the point of view of the ordinary man and common sense one may say that they are meaningless or nonsense. We cannot say, for instance, when a poet says something really poetical that he is talking nonsense. The business of metaphysics is to give us a concept or a system of thought of the world as a whole so that one may know the world as one—something having no contradiction within itself. Of course the British philosopher would say perhaps that all such propositions are based on logical misunderstanding. But one may expect from the metaphysician not merely "a way of looking at things" but also "his proving the way of looking at things". And while we criticise the past metaphysicians for trying to do these things, which according to the modern Oxford school amounts to recommending a way of looking at the world, we may ask the modern school whether they are, even by their analysis and reconstruction, not themselves recommending a way of looking at the world. When so much has been talked about reality and fact and what exists, it may be pertinent to point out that the whole range of human experience could be much better explained by granting various orders of the one reality. That is to say, there is a hierarchy in experience available to man which can be arranged in a sort of ladder or ascent beginning with the body or the physical, rising to life, then to the emotions and ultimately to the intellect, but intellect is not the last available term of the order. Potentialities lie beyond the intellect and evolution may be said to be the process by which these potential orders of reality available to man are made active and real.

Sometimes during the discussions one felt a question as to whether it was necessary to knock out all metaphysics and reduce everything to science in order to make a place for the contemporary British philosophy. Moore argues that philosophical paradoxes are to be rejected because they go against common sense, but in that case are we not begging the question ?

Discussion on the problem of perception almost asserted that knowledge is sensorial. Therefore knowledge of sense perception was necessary for the philosopher. He was not to study perception in itself but for the sake of the knowledge it gave. The objection of the British philosophers to the past theories of perception is that they brought in things which existed in their own minds and did not study perception by itself. The three British philosophers, Locke, Berkeley and Hume show us the growth or development of the idea of perception.

The discussion on the 17th was more like word-chess play or mere dry logic-chopping by a young philosopher who tried to play this game for a period of more than one hour.

Mr. B.A.O. Williams on the 18th discussed personal identity. He was more clever than profound for he had not much to do with the human person and its identity. He dealt more with houses and shadows, and tried to show the part of memory in

the experience of personal identity. In the sense of sameness or personality, continuation of the memory or other circumstantial evidence is not a criterion. There were apparent brilliant examples. If the shadows of two objects could coincide, have we the same shadow or can there be a difference ? Is there one shadow or two ? When we assert this is the same house of an Englishman that the American bought, what does it mean ? What is meant by the same house ? Is it the same because its parts are individual or as when one says that a religious man and a drunkard can be the same person?

(To be continued)

A. B. PURANI

THE DILEMMA OF INDIA'S SECURITY

Alastair Buchan, author of this BBC Third Programme talk, is Director of the Institute for Strategic Studies, and the author of Arms and Stability in Europe, *with Philip Windsor, etc.*

THERE are good reasons for the feeling we all share that, after a brief interlude, the stability of international relation is once again becoming dangerously precarious. There is Vietnam, there is the confrontation with Indonesia, there is a new heightening of tension in the Middle East, there is the increasing irredentism of the United Nations. Moreover, there is little or no agreement among the big powers about how these problems are to be solved. But there is one source of malaise which is now viewed in much the same way by Moscow, Washington, London, and even Paris : the fear that we may be on the threshold of an increase in the number of nuclear powers, with all the complications in terms of miscalculation and diminished international confidence that this would cause. And the country on which these fears are centred is Inda, for the reason that India has acquired the ability to produce a nuclear weapon at the very time when external developments have provided her with a serious incentive to do so.

Shastri's India is a troubled country, for to the endemic problem of poverty have been added new doubts and questions. Many responsible Indians feel that this giant of a country is stalled; that the Indian voice in world affairs is steadily losing its authority; and that the long-term security and independence of the country may be in danger. In this situation it is not surprising that Indians should be debating

whether they should exercise the option, which Nehru bequeathed to them, of becoming a nuclear power, a path which several other countries have insisted leads to national unity, national security, or international prestige.

India's internal problems are well known and understood here, but people in Britain may not, perhaps, realize how bleak the international scene looks from Delhi. This is not due to an unreasonable fear that China may sweep down through the Himalayas again in some more vigorous repetition of the 1962 attack. This is, in fact, considered rather unlikely, though the fact that there are over 120,000 Chinese soldiers in Tibet with steadily improving communications means that the possibility of some new *coup de main* in the defile between Bhutan and Sikkim or in the eastern north-east frontier area cannot be ruled out. Hence the need to raise and equip an 800,000-man regular army which mostly has to be deployed in positions of depressing isolation in the lunar landscape of the Himalayas and supplied at the greatest expense and difficulty.

But it is the broader politico-strategic problem of living with China that presents India with her greatest problem. For if China cannot defeat India by territorial conquest, she can work to surround her with hostile states, impede her development by enforcing a high level of defence expenditure, and exacerbate her internal tensions by subversive means. To the west, Indians see an increase in Chinese influence in Africa, and no comparable increase of Indian influence : to the north-west, an actively Sinophil Pakistan : to the north, increased Chinese activity in Nepal and Bhutan : to the north-east, the beginning of serious Chinese activity in north Burma : to the south-east the emergence of an avowedly hostile and irredentist Indonesia with the power to humiliate India still further by threatening Indian territory, the Andaman or Nicobar islands, which are only twenty miles from the Indonesian coast.

There is not much comfort in this picture. Moreover, India has not succeeded in establishing a close relationship with Japan or other conservative Asian countries like the Phillipines or Thailand. Indians are necessarily rather ambivalent about the American operations in Vietnam, for though they react instinctively against the bombing of North Vietnam, the outcome in the south will be a sign of how determined the Americans prove themselves as an opponent of China. Certainly Indians know that India herself can do nothing to affect the outcome there, and the contrast between her situation today and the important role she played as interlocutor between East and West during the Korean War is a depressing one.

Finally, last October China explored a nuclear device of a more advanced kind than has been generally expected. The Indian government has rightly pointed out that it creates no immediate threat to India. But few people would suggest that China has made an investment of this magnitude if she does not intend to become an operational nuclear power. And it is reasonable to assume that within, say, eight or ten years, China will possess a missile with a range of 2,500 miles. Consequently it does not take much imagination to envisage a situation of diplomatic tension between India and China in the early nineteen-seventies, when a Chinese threat to destroy

half-a-dozen crowded Indian cities might force some diplomatic humiliation on India that would be even more galling than the reverse of 1962. More than that, India's hopes of posing as the liberal alternative to China in Asia are jeopardized if she cannot prove that she is not only as technologically advanced but also as determined a nation.

It can be argued that this picture is overdrawn. China is not only India's adversary but also the potential adversary of the two most powerful states the world has ever seen. Though India's standing in Asia may be low today, her integrity and prosperity are a basic interest not only of the Soviet Union and the United States but also of Europe and all the countries in the world who do not want to see a Chinese dominated Asia.

But the degree of external interest in India's security does not settle the internal debate about whether India should become a nuclear power. It is true that most Indians who have thought about the subject are fully aware that their ultimate security depends on the fact that neither the Soviet Union nor the United States can afford to let China attack India in depth, and—whether they act jointly or singly —they will always possess a marked strategic advantage over China. Yet there is considerable scepticism about the question whether the great powers could in any sense 'guarantee' the integrity of India. Indians find it hard to believe on the one hand that their country could be regarded as a vital American interest. On the other hand, they doubt if there will be a complete rupture between the Soviet Union and China of a kind that would enable Russia to undertake precise commitments to India. There has been talk of a British nuclear shield for India, but I found that Mr. Wilson's hints of last December on this subject had been greeted with some scepticism, since there is a considerable doubt about how long Britain can afford to maintain a serious military presence east of Suez.

Moreover, when the question of guarantees is discussed, one comes up against a more fundamental problem. Even if water-tight guarantees from the nuclear powers could be negotiated, India does not want to be singled out for special treatment, to be a sort of nursling of the great powers while China stands on her own feet. "India must not be dependent on borrowed strength" was a phrase I heard reiterated in government offices and universities. Logically or illogically, the word 'guarantee' resurrects the ghost of the British Raj, and arouses a host of ancient fears among a Hindu population that has been free of foreign rule for only seventeen years out of the past 440. Even viewed as a measure of arms control, undertaken jointly perhaps by the existing nuclear powers to all the non-nuclear powers as part of a non-dissemination agreement, the idea of a guarantee still leaves India—the second largest country in the world—on the wrong side of the line.

It is against this background of gloom about developments in Asia, combined with doubts about the extent to which the great powers can help her, that one should consider the Indian debate on becoming a nuclear power : for, as in France, it is a debate about India's place in the world as much as about her security. There is

no doubt about her technical capacity. For about fifteen years India has been devoting a high percentage of her limited scientific resources to nuclear research, under the direction of the dynamic Dr H. J. Bhabha. Since about 1958 the programme has been shaped in such a way as to make it possible to produce weapons' grade plutonium, and the last stone in the arch was completed when a chemical separation plant went into operation at Trombay near Bombay, in August 1964. There is no reason to doubt Dr. Bhabha's claim that India could explode her first nuclear device within twelve months of deciding to do so. Figures have been canvassed in India suggesting that India could build up a stock of fifty 20-KT bombs for as little as £18,000,000 and this may be far from the mark, for much of the capital cost is now behind her.

But such a figure takes no account of the cost of a more effective and longer range means of delivering bombs than India's present force of aging Canberra bombers. Nor does it take account of the experience of the other nuclear powers, especially France, that if a country embarks on the risks of becoming a nuclear power, it has eventually to go the whole hog of producing thermonuclear weapons, for which an expensive uranium separation process is necessary, as well as long range missiles in hardened sites. The Indians do have the beginning of a missile programme in high-altitude meteorological rockets which were obtained from France, and these could be gradually developed into a series of medium and long-range ground-to-ground rockets. But my own estimate, based on current French figures, is that a serious strategic force, that is to say an ability to threaten reprisal against the chief Chinese cities with thermonuclear weapons, would cost India something in the order of £ 1,800,000,000, or 100 times the figure that is given for a small stock of plutonium bombs. If India tried to achieve such a capability over a six-year period it would mean a 45 per cent increase in her current level of defence expenditure.

This is the background against which one must assess the Indian debate on nuclear weapons. At the moment it is rather muted, since there are many other things to worry about in India. Mr. Shastri has made it clear that he will not be stampeded into a decision even though he has modified a position of total opposition to developing nuclear weapons to one of suspended judgement. Nor is there any great popular pressure for an Indian bomb, for only the extreme nationalists have as yet come out in favour of it.

But beneath the surface of public statements one can now identify the slow coagulation of two opposed schools of thought. On the one hand, there is the conservative school which is still influential in the Congress hierarchy, in the higher civil service, among the military leaders and the business-men. They do not argue that India should forgo for ever the right to produce nuclear weapons, simply that to do so now would be to alienate the big powers and ensure a permanent rift with Pakistan. India faces a definable threat to her security which may grow in complexity when China becomes an operational nuclear power, but she also faces a grave and permanent threat to her economy. India therefore should use all her influence to persuade the United States,

the Soviet Union, and the European powers to develop a co-ordinate strategy for the containment of China, including formal or informal assurances to any south-Asian power faced with a nuclear threat. India in return should develop a more active Asian policy of her own based on a close understanding with Japan and Australia, and stronger Indian assurances to the border states and small countries of south-east Asia.

Some people who argue in this way, especially those in business or in South India, would go further. They suggest that if a joint Soviet-American policy is unattainable, then what is called 'bi-alignment' with the Soviet Union and the West should be relinquished for a closer understanding with the Western powers, even if this means contingency planning with the British and Americans and relinquishing the full doctrine of neutrality. But this is still clearly a minority view in the country as a whole, and President Johnson's foolish snub to Mr. Shastri will not have strengthened it.

On the other hand, there are the radicals who so far are a less united and influential group than the conservatives. It includes many of the young members of the civil service who are depressed by the decline in India's influence abroad : some of the military planners who feel that there is a requirement for Indian nuclear weapons in a tactical role to supplement or—if you like—trigger off the strategic forces of the great powers; many of the scientists who are excited by the challenge of a nuclear weapons programme; and a high proportion of the younger intellectuals who are in many ways more nationalist than their predecessors.

Broadly, their arguments for an Indian bomb are based on one or more of the following premises. Even if the great powers were prepared to give assurances of support for India in the face of nuclear threats, how could India be sure that they would act in her interests in a crisis unless she had some nuclear weapons of her own ? India is a great power by any standard, and if there is to be any permanent identification between nuclear weapons and great-power status, then she must buy herself a seat at the top table, especially if the super-powers show no sign of disarming. India must prove that she is technologically the equal of China if she is not to lose all her influence as Asia gradually moves into the technological age : she could if necessary demonstrate her remarkable progress in nucleonics by an explosion for some peaceful purpose like building a dam in the Himalayas. Finally, a nuclear weapons programme would be an assertion of the national will which would help unite the country and once more give it a purpose. It may be noticed how similar some of these arguments are to those of President de Gaulle or even Sir Alec Douglas-Home.

Whether the conservatives or the radicals in India have the best of the argument depends partly on external circumstances : what diplomatic use China makes of her nuclear capability; whether France, and perhaps Britain too, continue to wave nuclear weapons as a status symbol; whether the United States and the Soviet Union can in the next few years succeed in reaching further agreements on arms control or reductions. But it should be recognized that the Indian debate on the bomb arises partly from internal stresses, the search for a new national identity after Nehru. If these generate

a radical nationalism under a more militant rightwing leadership than that of today —and this is, I think, a strong possibility—then technical, economic, and diplomatic arguments may be brushed aside. It would then take an unprecedented amount of cooperation and pressure from the rest of the international community as a whole, East as well as West, to dissuade India from developing nuclear weapons.

(*The Listener*, MAY 13, 1965)

THE DESTINY OF THE BODY

THE SEER-VISION OF SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

(*Continued from the July issue*)

Part Three : The Conquest of Food-Need

It is obvious...that so long as we depend, in order to live, upon *material food*, upon absorption of matter in such a gross form, we shall be an animal inferior enough and we shall *not be able to divinise our life.*

We must then conceive that this animality in the human being will be replaced by some other source of life-power. It is not only a conceivable, but already a partially realisable thing; and that is evidently the *goal* which we must set before us if we want to transform matter and make it capable of expressing divine qualities. (Italics ours) (The Mother, *Bulletin*, Vol. IX No. 3, p. 123)

I. THE PROBLEM

All that is Breath has its life in food.
(*Aitareya Upanishad*, I-3.10)

Life is established upon food.
(*Maitri Upanishad*, VI.11)

ONE of the most intractable difficulties that the transformation of the body has to face is "its dependence for its *very existence* upon food."[1] As a matter of fact, for the sheer maintenance and renewal of the physical substance and for the efficient and dynamic

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Supramental Manifestation Upon Earth*, p. 50.

working of the bodily system, all forms of life, whether plant or animal, from the simple unicellular organism to the most complex multicellular one, require the incorporation of outside matter in the shape of food materials. Thus, in the words of Charles Elton, the primary driving force of all creatures is the necessity of finding the right kind of food and enough of it[1].

Indeed, the proper type of material alimentation is so very imperative for the viability of physical life that in organisms other than man, that have not yet become 'reflectively' aware of the indispensability of food intake, Nature has contrived to employ biochemical determinism to provoke the sensations of hunger and thirst; and these sensations arising from the coupling of very complex physiological mechanisms culminate in the monitoring of an over-all drinking and devouring behaviour that prove to be highly effective in prompting these creatures lower in the evolutionary scale "to eat for the support of life at the time and to the degree that the body requires, and not leaving the 'when' and the 'how much' to be settled by rational calculation."[2]

What is all the more striking is that, not only quantitatively but also qualitatively, the normal appetite of subhuman animals acts for them as an efficient governor of food intake, conferring upon them a subconscious ability to select the proper diet responding to their exact physiological needs. Thus the experimental studies of Kurt P. Richter have shown that "rats given a free choice of chemically pure food elements tend to make for themselves a diet that is physiologically optimal."[3] Not only that; animals suffering from deprivation of some body constituent display an uncanny ability to make good the deficiency, when offered an opportunity to select its diet from a large choice of substances. Thus, "the removal of the adrenal gland causes a fatal loss of sodium from the body, and it was found that the adrenal-ectomised rats chose sodium salts out of a number of alternative substances available and by this process outlived a control group of adrenal-ectomised rats to which sodium was not given. In another set of experiments, rats from which the parathyroid glands had been removed increased their intake of calcium lactate, and thereby prevented the fall in blood calcium which, accompanied by tetany, usually supervenes in parathyroid-ectomised animals."[4]

But this normal appetite that plays such a regulatory role in the lives of subhuman species has been unfortunately vitiated and perverted in the case of man. And the reason for this is not far to seek. It is the 'felicific' or pleasure-giving property associated with appetite and its satisfaction that tends to make voluptuaries of

[1] cf. *sarvāni ha vā imāni bhūtānyaharahah prapatantyannamabhijighṛksamānāni* (*Maitri Upanishad*, VI.12).

"All creatures are ever on the move in search of food."

[2] W.L. Davidson, "Appetite" in *Encyclopaedia of Religion & Ethics*, Vol. I, p. 643.

[3] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 7, p. 112B.

[4] F.R. Winton & L.E. Bayliss, *Human Physiology* (1955), p. 225.

men and coarsens the body's need for food so easily into gluttony of the belly and the cravings of the palate.

But for a sadhak this sort of perversion can have no permissive sanction at all. For "a sadhak must eat because of his body's need of hunger and not because of the demands of his greed."[1] The intake of food should be regarded as only a physical necessity, a means for the maintenance of bodily life, *prāṇasaṁdhāraṇārtham*,[2] and for the upkeep of the physical instrument, *bahiḥ svārthe*.[3]

But at the same time the sadhak should guard against going to the other extreme and falling into the error of calculated negligence of the welfare of the body : we are referring to the exercises in fasting, prolonged or of short duration, undertaken for spiritual purposes. Indeed, faced with the discovery that "the mental or vital vigour does not or need not depend on the food,[4] and that "the inner being...does not need any food,"[5] the spiritual aspirant suffers from a sense of exasperation when he contemplates the absolute dependence of the body upon material aliments; and this relentless necessity of food intake is so very repugnant to the free spirit in man that the sadhak very often succumbs to the suggestion of not eating[6] and "seeks refuge in long and frequent fasts which lift him temporarily at least out of the clutch of the body's demands and help him to feel in himself a pure vacancy of the wide rooms of the spirit."[7]

It is no doubt a fact that occasional periods of partial starvation prove to be beneficial to the organism both physiologically and spiritually. Thus experimental studies on various lower animals have indicated that partial starvation materially increases the maximum potential longevity. On the other side, "it is a fact that by fasting, if the mind and the nerves are solid or the will-force dynamic, one can get for a time into a state of inner energy and receptivity which is alluring to the mind and the usual reactions of hunger, weakness, intestinal disturbance, etc., can be wholly avoided."[8]

But if the suggestion of fasting is given an inordinate stress these advantages prove to be short-lived and illusive; for the benefits accruing on the mental or vital fronts are more than neutralised by the deleterious effects produced on the physical system. As a matter of fact, in the prevailing state of the material organisation of our body, its supporting energies have to be maintained by food, sleep and such other *physical* means; and if the body is left insufficiently nourished there can develop in the being an overstrained condition of disbalance or even a total breakdown of the

[1] *Words of the Mother* (4th edition), p. 238.

[2,3] *Bhikshukopanishad.*

[4,5] Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, Tome Two, p. 567.

[6] Compare the following standing injunctions for a roving monk·

ekakālaṁ cared bhaiksyam: "The monk should seek alms not more than once." (*Manu Samhita*, 55.6.)

ekavāraṁ dvivāraṁ vā bhuñjita parahaṁsaka : "The Paramhamsa should take a single meal or at the most a double." (*Smriti Shastra*)

[7] Sri Aurobindo: *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*, p. 50.

[8] Sri Aurobindo: *On Yoga II*, Tome two, p. 566.

'stem. Hence is the warning of Sri Aurobindo : "The first thing I tell people when ıey want not to eat or sleep is that no yoga can be done without sufficient food and eep.... Fastıng or sleeplessness make the nerves morbid and excited and weaken ıe brain and lead to delusions and fantasies. The Gita says, yoga is not for one who ıts too much or sleeps too much, neither is it for one who does not eat or does not eep, but if one eats and sleeps suitably—*yuktāhārī yuktanidrāḥ*—then one can do best."[1]

Of course, in the case of a sadhak, food should be taken in the right spirit and ith the rıght consciousness,[2] and it is this inner attitude of total liberation from all ıtal attachment to food and from the desire of the palate, that is what is called for ıd not any undue diminution of the modicum taken or any process of self-starvation. One must take sufficient food for the maintenance of the body and its strength and ealth but without attachment or desire."[3]

But even then the problem remains. For in the present essay we are concerned ith the divine destıny of the body, and even if the operation of food intake is absoıtely freed from all accompanying reactions of greed or attachment, that cannot be proper substitute for the achievement of a total victory over our need for material ımentatıon. So, "the question may be raised," as Srı Aurobindo has so trenchantly ut it, "whether, not only at first but always, the divine life also must submit to this ecessıty."[4]

For as yet there has been no instance of any organism whatsoever which can live ıdefinitely without the help of any material sustenance gathered from outside : a ɔtal starvation is invariably followed, sooner or later, by the body's death. Of course ıe survıval period varies wıdely with the species concerned. Thus, in general, the oikılothermic or so-called "cold-blooded" animals can manage to live without food ɔr a few months or in some exceptional circumstances for more than two years. ɔut the homothermic or "warm-blooded" animals can offer much less resistance to he dısruptive effects of food privation. Thus a mouse succumbs to death at the end f three days of total starvatıon, a guinea-pig at the end of sıx days and a dog at the nd of a month. In the case of man, the subject kept at basic metabolıc repose may ttain a maximum possible survival period of two to three months, ıf ın the meanwhıle ıo other secondary complıcations appear to cut short the life.

But the question ıs not of relatively long or short periods of starvation during vhich the organısm can successfully battle against the onset of death. The basic

[1] Sri Aurobindo· *On Yoga II*, Tome two, p. 565.

[2] "When we eat, we should be conscıous that we are giving our food to that Presence in us, it ıust be a sacred offering ın a temple and the sense of a mere physical need or self-gratıfıcatıon must ass away from us." (Sri Aurobindo: *The Synthesıs of Yoga*, p. 126).

Cf "Brahman ıs the gıvıng, Brahman ıs the food-offerıng, by Brahman ıt is offered ınto the Brahman-fire". (*Gıta*, 4.24)

[3] *Words of the Mother*, p. 238.

[4] *The Supramental Manifestatıon upon Earth*, pp. 50-1.

problem that all embodied life has to face is its apparently ineluctable destiny of dis ruption and cessation whenever the body is deprived of all food intake. This fac has been noted by the thinker in man even in the earliest dawn of his contemplativ career and he has recognised in full the primordial importance of material aliments Thus one of the ancient Upanishads declares that "life dries up without food;"[1] anothe one affirms that "if one should not eat for ten days, even though he might live, ye verily he becomes a non-seer, a non-hearer, a non-thinker, a non-perceiver, a non doer, a non-understander; but on the entrance of food he becomes a seer, he become a hearer, he becomes a thinker, he becomes a perceiver, he become a doer, he become an understander.[2]" Therefore the injunction is to "reverence food", *annamupāssva* for "verily, this food represents the world-sustaining figure of the great godhead Vishnu."[4]

But it is really intriguing to ponder over this capital importance of materia alimentation. One cannot but wonder why embodied life should be so inexorably dependent for its very existence upon food intake, especially when yogic knowledg reveals that contrary to the common view of things the manifestation of life is no just a by-product of a particularly complex material organisation : the truth is rathe the other way round. It is the universal Prana or Life-principle that is the sustaine of the bodily matrix, for, as the Taittiriya Upanishad affirms, "verily, Prana... is food and the body is the eater; the body is established upon Prana."[5]

Indeed, the material aspect of bodily life, of which alone we are normally aware is no more than its outermost movement. In reality, the universal and immorta Life-Principle, *anilam amṛtam*, is superior to the principle of birth and death. Life does not come into play only with the formation of a viable body nor does it dis appear with the latter's death and dissolution. As a matter of fact Prana or Life energy represents in the phenomenal flux of things the active dynamis of the Maste of the world and is thus present and operative in every atom and particle of the uni verse, in every formation apparently inanimate or not, and "active in every stirring and current of the constant flux and interchange which constitute the world."[6] Life and death as we know them are but two amongst many more modalities of the grea Life that is all-pervading and "one in divided things" (*avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu*) "imperishable in things perishable" (*martyeṣu amṛtaḥ*) and in which is establishec this universal Manifestation.[7] Life, in essence, being the universal operation of th

[1] *Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad*, 5.12.

[2], [3] *Chhandogya Upanishad*, 7.9.1.

[4] *Maitri Upanishad*, VI. 13.

[5] *Taittiriya Upanishad*, III. 7.

[6] Sri Aurobindo: *Kena Upanishad*, p. 87.

[7] *Cf.*, "As the spokes meet in the nave of a wheel, so are all things in Life established" (*Prashn Upanishad*, II.6)

"All this universe... is subject to Life." (*Ibid.*, II.13)

Consciousness-Force or Chit-Shakti of the Divine,[1] is nothing but "the Force that builds and maintains and destroys forms in the world" and would thus "even if if the whole figure of the universe were quite abolished,...itself still go on existing and be capable of producing a new universe in its place."[2]

Thus do we see that all forms and formations in the universe are supported and occupied by the Life-Force and, what is more, "without it no physical form could have come into being or could remain in being...no material force could exist or act without it, for from it they derive their energy and movement and they are its vehicles."[3]

Now, if this be a fact, as Sri Aurobindo has so forcefully put it, that it is "Life [that] forms body, it is not formed by it,"[4] its apparent dependence upon physical energy gathered in the shape of material aliments can at best be a provisional arrangement and by no means the inescapable condition for embodied existence. If so, the solution to the specific problem we are now dealing with must somehow and somewhere exist, although it is an undeniable fact that embodied life without food intake has not *yet* become feasible. What are then the impediments and how can they be possibly removed?

(To be continued)

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJEE

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[1] *Cf.* "Of the Spirit is the breath of Life born." (*Prashna Upanishad*, III, 3) "Life derives from he Spirit" (*Chhandogya Upanishad*, IV.10.5)

[2] Sri Aurobindo: *The Life Divine* (Am. ed), p. 164.

[3] Sri Aurobindo: *Kena Upanishad*, p. 84.

[4] Sri Aurobindo; *Isha Upanishad*, p. 145

ESSAYS ON *SAVITRI* AND *PARADISE LOST*

(*Continued from the July Issue*)

VI The Method and Style

Milton marks an august and robust departure from the past in poeticcal form, expression and diction. He marks a new era in poetical style, method, the use of the language with a new synthetical approach. All this is due to his genius, his masterful personality and his extraordinary control over the languages both English and continental. Whatever did not agree with his views, his method, he rejected. Whatever advanced his concepts, ran along his egoistic lines, expressed his vital personality he accepted freely. Thus his style is closely linked with his character, his way of looking at things and his singular approach to problems. The reason why he did not copy the past poetical examples is twofold. First, his individualism stood against any servile following of the past, which would have meant the obliteration of his original style; and secondly, his incapacity to bend, submit and learn as a pupil where he thought he was a master. In both cases his intellectual growth and stout egoism came in the way.

But the style he produced was not faulty. It reflects his intellectual maturity. It also shows a great preparation, for he could not, in a matter of a few months, create this epoch-making style. And he did not venture to write until his style stood apart as a striking factor.

Sri Aurobindo's method and style reflect the inner perfection. But his was not so much a studied attempt at perfection as a spontaneous outflowering of his genius and this in its wake created the needed style. *Savitri* is separated from his *Love and Death* and *Baji Prabhou* by an enormous gulf. While the earlier work shows a poet who has already found his footing in English and is not influenced by the late Victorian age of poetry, the latter shows a poetical genius turning into a seer, whose utterances were symbolic and prophetic. The style in consequence changes and makes room for the inwardly growing prophet. Milton had, by his intellectual vigour, to get rid of the contemporary influence. But in Sri Aurobindo this evasion is easy and spontaneous, because the Victorian tradition was too ornate, shallow and being studied to become the vehicle of his expression, too artificial to house his genius and unnaturalness ran against his very being. Yet the maturity of both Milton and Sri Aurobindo derived from a classical training, which gives the necessary self control, restraint and mastery. But in Milton the ego reveals itself most clearly while in Sri Aurobindo there is an aloofness and largeness from the very outset which allows the style to remain unmutilated.

Style in poetry is the expression, the manifestation of the thing within. It is the vehicle of the inner inspiration, vision, thought, mood. It could easily be compared to style in painting. If we could conceive Milton to be analogous to an Ingres or a Delacroix, Sri Aurobindo would be seen as similar to a Chinese master: one is bold, grand, having large ideas, heroic concepts, with a method full of vigour; while the other is subtle, mystic, wonderfully soft, having hidden depths of music. One needs the punctilious artistry of a craftsman to achieve an effect which the other attains by a single significant stroke. There is, in Milton, colour, light and shade, the poignancy of sudden and surprising effects, but the whole process is a studied one. In Sri Aurobindo the colour, light or shade come as a natural phenomenon.

Austerity is the first characteristic of Milton. He exercises masterly self-restraint where he could easily have been flamboyantly effusive in details.

> Heaven opened wide
> Her ever-during gates, harmonious sounds
> On golden hinges moving, to let forth
> The King of glory, in his powerful Word.
> And Spirit coming to create new worlds. (Book V)

Whatever detail is here is inevitable. A lesser poet would have used a more voluminous expression. But Milton is content with 'King of Glory' without any amplifying adjectives. With a few and suggestive words, he describes the process of creation.

Or describing hell, he writes :

> Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire,
> Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain. (Book VI)

Here too we get a vivid, but compact description. It at once evokes the image of the pang, the loneliness, the ceaseless thirst, the vastness of Hell with its unending despair. Listen to this majestic roll :

> One spirit in them ruled, and every eye
> Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
> Among the accursed, that withered all their strength,
> And of their wonted vigour left them drained,
> Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen. (Book VI)

Here Milton reveals the wrath of God. The energetic yet controlled expression speaks more than a volume of emotional verbiage. Each word has a place and a significance; each image is unornate; each adjective is inevitable. It is due to this packed austerity that he achieves a great eminence in tone and poetical structure. Also it limits repetitions to the minimum and adds to the grandeur and dignity and does

not allow the fullness of poetical intensity to be vitiated by futile effervescence. This is one of the reasons for which Milton stands among the supreme in spite of his semi-failure as a whole.

The second characteristic is his nobility. He never becomes vulgar, nor does he allow himself to be drawn down to a lesser pitch. Even when the inspirational surge has become weakened, he does not cease to be chaste. He had ample occasion to be of low taste or sensuous or even vulgar in the description of the primal couple, in the account of the outbreak of lust in Adam, in the picture of the Hellish hosts. But nowhere does he weaken the verse by striking a base chord or suggesting some low sentiment. Here is the description of Adam and Eve : they,

> God-like erect, with natural honour clad,
> In naked majesty, seem lords of all... (Book IV)

Or,

> For contemplation he and valour formed,
> For softness she and sweet attractive grace. (Book IV)

Nor does Milton become vulgar to describe things of which he has no direct knowledge, like God or the angels. He gives a general description, but never rises to speak in detail. By this he exercises both rectitude and chastity. Take :

> ...the almighty Father from above,
> From the pure Empyrean where he sits
> High throned above all heights.... (Book III)

This shows his fidelity to the Christian faith where God is never described except as a distant, unapproachable presence. Milton does not transgress this tradition. We can compare this with Kalidasa's description of Siva in *Kumārasambhavam*, where he makes of this godhead almost an earthly being. Also it stands against the Homeric tradition of anthropomorphism. Or read :

> Meanwhile at table Eve
> Ministered naked and their flowing cups
> With pleasant liquours crowned. (Book V)

Things of sense Milton speaks of with aloofness, but he does not disdain them as futile:

> Of elements:
> The grosser feeds the purer: Earth the sea;
> Earth and the sea feed air; the air those fires
> Ethereal, and, as lowest, first the moon. (Book V)

A few lines later he speaks of the healthy appetite of the Angel and this account or the description Eve's nudity or the dissertation on food does not become vulgar or sound a contrary note and is in keeping with the total Miltonic concept of perfection. On the contrary, to the whole he gives a philosophical turn, and sees all with a nobility of vision, that excludes vulgarity. We shall examine one example:

> flowers were the couch,
> Pansies and violets and asphodel
> And hyacinth,—Earth's freshest softest lap.
> There they their fill of love and love's disport
> Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
> The solace of their sin, till dewy sleep
> Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play. (Book IX)

Adam and Eve, after their fall, lapse into animal ways. But Milton is chaste in his description : he does not amplify, but with reserve and aloofness depicts the scene. Of animal enjoyment he makes a poetical use. He does not vitiate the animality by going down to its vulgar abyss, rather uplifts it by his poetical reticence and nobleness to a domain of pure poetry. Thus he converts the base metal of low sexuality to the pure gold of poetical beauty, but he is aware of the baseness. He does this consciously, also not to lower his poetry he makes this phase a phase of first fall —not a violent break from the original note of harmony, but a slow and gradual decline starting with the love-play.

The third characteristic that he gives us is that of boldness. He never stoops to effeminate lyricism, romanticism or vagueness. His tender moments have their strength. His finenesses have their vitality. His lyrical moods are replete with energy. Power is the mainstay of his existence. And each line of his epic reflects this singular aspect. But boldness devoid of austerity or nobility would be stark and ugly, it could jar on the ear of the finer sentiments. This does not happen with Milton.

His boldness does not deafen one's ear, the deeper musical hearing, nor does it clash and sweep away all before its vigorous impetuosity. Rather his strength is like a God 'indifferent in might'. He does not impose it, but it comes as a natural expression of his character. He needs no external effort to make it apparent. It is there with all he writes, as the very breath, the very soul of his existence.

His boldness never slackens. He never gives way to sentimental emotions betraying weakness of character. He considers Reason to be the highest status : this he amply reveals in his poetry. In fact, because he has this singular characteristic, he is in a position to look down on emotionalism and make Reason the supreme Godhead. Standing behind this, is his will, the strength that builds and creates, that forms and stands out as the sole reality amid the chaos of a pell-mell human existence.

Books I and II are packed with power Listen :

All is not lost—the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield :
And what is else not to be overcome ?
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. (Book I)

There is expressed here an indomitable courage like Milton's own, and it reflects the dire opposition he had to face in his own life. Or read :

For the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallowed up in endless misery. (Book I)

There we hear the heart of his being speak out against the tyranny of fate, the wrong of all the gods. Again hear this description :

but his face
Deep scars of thunder had entrenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage and considerate pride
Waiting revenge. (Book I)

The note of strength is unmistakable. Behind, as an undertone, we hear the notes of an unfallen passion. This heightens Milton's character of strength and greatens his side of unfallen reason. Splendid too are these lines :

Sad cure ! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through Eternity,
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated Night... (Book II)

Here boldness stands up, revolts and permits no influence to curb it. It defies all; its power is a living presence, an organic reality. It has deeper roots than a common rational mind. It is vibrant, intense; it strikes and awakes. There is grandeur, a sweep, a rich uncurbed energy.

But his boldness never overshoots its mark or becomes ugly or discordant. Study the satanic council in Book II and you will find no ugliness in his power; no distorting clumsiness that mars by its impudent and disharmonic puissance the

texture and drama of the epic. Rather there is a control in all his passionate utterances. There is nobility in all his power. Further, Milton is conscious of his strength and uses it with skill and subtlety. Instead of becoming a boorish manipulation in an arrogant and self-conceited poet, it becomes an instrument of great variety. In this sphere he does not allow his ego or his dominant mentality to rule him. He is conscious that a note of single unchanging boldness results in monotony. He therefore introduces lesser vibrant notes, with a louder diapason, with a soft monolinear melody. As here :

Long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light. (Book II)

Such effects are only possible when the poet has a ear for music and is conscious of the musical tonal values. In fact Milton's music is almost unsurpassed in English and this imbues even his dull and awkward lines with a grace which makes them felicitous reading. This leads us to forget his defects in theme and ideology, his views, beliefs and theological dogmas. But this music is bold, a heroic chant; it has the grace of a well-built muscular man. It is vital, strong, aware of the strength yet not displaying all its power and using it at rare moments to give a special tonal effect, a special value in rhythm and cadence. There are large paragraphs overflowing with energy while there are short well-defined rythmic lines. Grace, strength, energy and word-pattern are the mainstay of his music. Here is energy :

I fled, and cried out 'Death'.
Hell trembled at the hideous name and sighed
From all her caves, and back resounded 'Death',

Note the repetition of 'Death' coming like a recurrent theme of musical phrase to balance and harmonise another phrase. The alternate use of liquid and hard consonants, the alternate and skilful use of long and short vowels turn the music to dramatic effect of a strange and sweeping energy. Here is grace :

And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost isles,

or

Scout far and wide into the realm of Night;

again

Covers his throne, from where deep thunder roars;

also

And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

The first line's beauty of music lies in its superb varied vowellation plus contrasted consonants—all producing together a magical grace and softness. The second example is unusual, beginning with a hard consonant followed by a long vowel and ending with a clipping consonant. The beginning and ending consonants balance each other with internal vowels following up like a recurring beat in a musical composition. The whole pattern is not so much graceful as bold. In the third there is break after 'throne', like a pause in a musical composition within a pattern where a new tonal movement starts ending with the two hammer-beats of 'thunder' and 'roars'. Here we have the notes of power, but of a latent and not an exuberant puissance. The last example's beauty lies in its recurring *n*'s and *d*'s with a sonant a balanced by a short and well-defined word 'lost'. If we examine these examples closely, we shall discover a unity of pattern of word-movement, tonal harmony and the total effect caused by these. There is a conscious artistry, a living idea of musical design displayed in verse. This design and music become apparent when we read him aloud; Milton's beauty and rhythm and word-magic are then alone fully revealed.

(To be continued)

ROMEN

BEHIND SHADOWS AND SOUNDS

As I'm in bed
And bid good-bye to light
And leave the brain
Quite wondering—
What episodes, asides and interludes,
What motley limbs of my past nights and days,
And visitings from the spheres,
Are set for my nocturnal stage tonight
When I return to watch....
I find all's over already !
The lights are on, the exit doors ajar.
The lids open upon
The news-real flash prefacing morning show,
The haze—issue Daily scroll
And the mocking likes, dislikes, preferences, shrugs
Dream-born, still loth to die !—
Symbol of all our days' unheard night-cry.

*
**

Sky duties change—the scene now shifts
To the open air theatre of our waking parts.
While I'm still in bed
Sipping the after-hush of cosy dream,
Watching the paper-boat of my silence glide
Upon mind's even sheet,
Like shimmer of footfall echoes, glistening thoughts
Appear—to be bodied forth into cadences
Of words
That after a spell of poem-plash
Begin to ache
To exceed themselves and pass into the hush
From which they rose.
For in the depths, there is an Ear of a pool—
One central listening—where
All loud vibrations of our surface self
Recover their ether-poise;
And there's a witness Eye

Across whose vision-sky
Life's whole panorama with its froth and frills
Flits as sheer echo-points,
Turned nectar-drops and essence-seeds at once—
For there's a Tongue that truly relishes
What is,
And there's a glory of Wings that broods upon
What is to be.
In the breathless silence of that pool and sky—
Unknown to the stir of these familiar dreams—
All Eye, all Ear, all Tongue, all Wings—there glows
The aureoled image of a nameless Bird—
That marvel bird of a soul.

NARESH

WHOM GOD PROTECTS

THE LIFE-STORY OF A SPIRITUAL ADEPT

(*Continued from the August 15 Issue*)

II

AFTER this terrible incident a feeling of an utter incertitude of the ordinary mundane existence became very strong in Kuda. He understood that the world could in no way be considered a happy place. The roots of his attachment to a worldly life were greatly loosened. First, by the death of the Kapalik and then by this terrible mishap. From even then he was firmly resolved to embrace the life of a tyagi, a world-renouncer. He was certain that to lead a life of peace there was no other way than to renounce the life of a householder.

Brindavan Saha died at Navadwip when Kuda was sixteen years old. Although all arrangements were made for Kuda to live a life of comfort with Brindavan's family, still he could no longer stay there. As soon as the Sradha ceremony, the Hindu ceremony for the safe passage of the soul after it leaves the body, was over, he left for Kashi (Banaras) on the pretext of studying the Shastras the rest of his living days.

As soon as he reached Kashi he tried to pursue his studies as a novice in the ashram of the famous teacher, Swami Vishuddhananda, who, however, took only

brahmin boys as disciples. The Swami was at first strongly attracted by his deportment and pure appearance and had asked him with much affection to sit near him; but, when the question of his physical birth was put, all the difficulties cropped up. In reply Kuda said what he had heard, "I know nothing about my birth, but I was brought up as a fosterchild by a Vaishya (merchant class). He knew nothing of my parents but picked me up on the bank of the Ganges to save my life and gave me a place in his house. This is all that I have heard."

Brindavan himself never told anything to Kuda of the circumstances of his birth, but when he grew older he had heard everything in detail from Buda—even that his umbilical cord was cut only after Brindavan had brought him to his house at Navadwip from the bank of the river.

However, when he was not accepted in the ashram of Swami Vishuddhananda, he was accepted by another Bengali Sadhu, Swami Yogananda Saraswati. Here Kuda went deep into the study of all Sanskrit Shastras. After five years of intense and concentrated study of Sankhya, Patanjali, Vedanta and Darshana and practising them with great perseverance Kuda left Kashi. At this time he travelled widely to many pilgrim centres all over northern India and at last met a realised Avadhuta, a spiritual adept, at Brindavan. Kuda felt his life was fulfilled. The Avadhuta, when he heard the frank and simple life-story from Kuda, was greatly attracted to him. He said, "My son, you are a man of a very high order. The Divine's Grace will surely be ever on you. You were that famous Jabali, the great truth-seeker, you are he reborn, and have come to me to satisfy and fulfil me."

For six years he did his sadhana (spiritual practices) at Brindavan, then he left after his Guru's demise. At this time a remarkable chapter in his spiritual life was enacted, that I heard of from his very mouth, but this is not the proper place to recount it.

He followed three special rules. First, never to stay more than three nights at any place; second, never to accept any disciple or someone to serve him; third, never to enter the ashram of a householder or of a sannyasin. He used to live under a tree or in a temple, never accepted anything else than food, led the simplest of lives, travelled everywhere on foot. He was a true sannyasin with a totally detached existence. In him I saw revealed what can be called a buddhi (highest discerning intelligence) illumined by a full realisation of the Atman. His Guru gave him a name, Arkavadhuta, but no one knew him by that name; in the North and West of India, he was known simply as Avadhuta. From now on we shall mention him as Arka or the Avadhuta.

12

Of the twelve years of Arka's life of sadhana, six were spent at Kashi in studies of the Shastras and in spiritual practices. When he met his Guru at Brindaavan, new chapter of his life commenced in close contact with that great Yogi.

At the preliminary stages the Guru observed a large flowering of spiritual powers,

vast extensions of the field of prana (life-energy) and very exalted experiences. All these of course were the result of the touch of the Guru. It is extremely rare to find such a disciple and in consequence one day the Guru, greatly moved by his achievements, said, "My son, to get you as a disciple is the great good fortune of my life."

Arka in great humility said, "If at your words my ego found fuel and raised its head it would be a real catastrophe," and placed his head on the Guru's feet.

The Guru replied, "Son, you know quite well, even from your childhood, what the ego really is. If today you had that distorted element in you, all these experiences and realisations that are yours would never have come. In the very depths of my heart I have preserved your true identity."

As Arka's sadhana deepened, many spiritual Yogic powers began to manifest themselves. The first external indication of these came one morning when he was seen to come out of the ashram totally naked and going round and round a tree. Close to the ashram lived a group of woodcutters, who used to go out early every morning to distant forests and return after their day's work, quite late at night. These woodcutters loved and respected Arka very much and called him Arkababa. One of them when he saw Arka that morning came forward to investigate. What he saw in Arka's face astounded him. He saw that Arka's eyes were red and wide open, the eyelids never closed even once; moreover, the oval of his face seemed to have grown much larger and a radiant light was shining forth from it. They had never seen such a light on a man's face and were frightened. While they were pondering as to what they should do, another of the group with a loud cry fell down senseless.

Arka, on the other hand, seemed to be totally unaware of all that was happening around him, at least the expression on his face did not change one bit.

At the cry of the woodcutter who fell, people from nearabouts gathered there by ones and twos; Arka's Guru, too, was one of them. He was surprised to see Arka in that state. Everyone present seemed to forget all, even the senseless man who was lying there; their entire attention was rivetted on the illumined appearance of Arka, going slowly round and round the tree quite unaware of all externalities. Arka's Guru, without a word, sat down just where he was.

Then the woodcutter who had fainted slowly opened his eyes. When asked what had happened to him, he said, "I saw Arkaji transformed into the image of Shiva, as if Mahadeva himself had appeared before me. I lost my senses as I looked into his eyes." While saying this he began to cry in so plaintive a manner that few could restrain their tears.

However, from that day all began to look upon Arka as an extraordinary being. Gradually, he began to lose all idea of food, so much so that if he were not fed by someone he forgot to eat altogether. Soon he stopped talking as well. One day he left the ashram without telling anyone where he was going. When he did not return for a long time, people went out in search of him and he was found lying in a shrub on the banks of the Jamuna in a senseless condition. From that day on there was always someone with him.

During this period one day the Guru Avadhuta had a slight fever; on the second day of the fever he took to his bed. On the third day he called Arka near him and talked to him alone for a long time. That very night, at the very moment of the first point of dawn, called the moment of the Brahman, he left his body. Arka had by then regained his normal state of consciouness. Under a tamal tree he entombed the body of his Guru. For three days and nights he remained seated under the tree, on the fourth day he left Brindavan, plunging into great grief the other inmates of the ashram.

It was the month of Magha (January). Arka came to Prayag (Allahabad) traversing the distance on foot, and lived there for some time. As here too people were becoming attracted towards him, he left Prayag, once again on foot. Next, he came to Kashi (Banaras) where he remained three nights in the ashram of his previous Guru. He began his journey on foot again. After walking along the bank of the Ganges for a month he reached Bhagalpur. He had not forgotten his childhood days and came to where the house of Bidhu was. Now he saw there a large two-storied building. The garden that adjoined the house was now enclosed by a high wall. Beside the garden was the hut of Parvati's people, he noticed now that their hut was more dilapidated than ever, an indication of greater poverty. With slow steps Arka came to the courtyard of the hut and saw there two women, one old, the other youthful, busy with their household duties. While he was standing observing, the young woman raised her head once and looked at him. He recognised her at once and came forward saying, "Parvati ! Parvati !" Parvati, startled, recoiled a step or two and kept looking at him for some time, then recognition came to her; she said, "Panchoo." It was the name by which he was known here previously.

Parvati, then, brought out an asana and washing his feet with water wiped them. Parvati's old mother, now half deaf and very short of sight, asked "Who is it, Parvati ?"

Parvati replied, "A sadhu," and said nothing more.

Though they met after such a long time, they put no questions to each other. It was already ten years that Parvati had become a widow, a child-widow who had never had even the chance of leading a conjugal life with her husband. Her father, too, had died several years previously leaving her a legacy of two cows and a sugar-cane field not more than two bighas (an acre equals three bighas) in area. This was all that these two women had to eke out their existence from; and, to crown it all, that year the zemindar for arrears had cut and taken away all the sugar-cane from the field. They hardly knew now how to procure enough to sustain their bodies.

(To be continued)

PRAMODE KUMAR CHATTERJEE

(Translated by Kalyan K. Chaudhuri from the Bengali)

IMPARTIAL HISTORY

Struggle for the World, by Desmond Donnelly. Collins. 42s.

HAD Mr. Donnelly's history of the Cold War appeared a little sooner, some of his Labour Party parliamentary colleagues might have spent their Easter more usefully in reading it than in parading the roads in company with C.N.D. teenagers. For although the book is cast in the form of a narrative—and Mr. Donnelly's skill at narrative is so remarkable that he can hold one's attention even when recounting events that are fully familiar—it is a book with a moral; and, as an occasional aside shows, it is a moral addressed to a particular audience—the gullible Left.

The gullible Left consists of those people who fail and have always failed—to take seriously the two great revolutions of our century, the Russian and the Chinese, by assuming that the difference between the Soviet and Chinese governments and the West are the products of major misunderstandings, so that all that is needed to settle them is to make friendly gestures, even if these involve insulting one's allies or bartering away the liberties of one's friends. Mr. Donnelly on the other hand is well aware from long study and firsthand observation that both the Russian and Chinese mean what they say—and that they are out to change the shape of the world by whatever means they can safely use, and that 'appeasement', So far from mollifying them, is interpreted as a sign of weakness and used as the basis of new demands.

In telling the history of the relations between the world communist movement and the major western powers since 1917, Mr. Donnelly changes the direction of his enquiry and the area of emphasis to suit the changing world-scene; but over and over again he is able to show that it was precisely when the will to resist was made clearest that the communist pressure was relaxed, and the chances of preserving the peace increased. One had only to compare what came of the efforts of Roosevelt and Eisenhower to conciliate Stalin in the final stages of the war with the success of the Marshall Plan and Nato in stemming the apparently irresistible tide of communist advance in a war-shattered Europe to have this lesson driven home.

Such a view does not make Mr. Donnelly a pessimist. It may well be that things are on the move again; the successful confrontation of the Soviet Union by President Kennedy over Cuba, combined with the development of the split between Russia and China, may bring about changes in the constellation of world politics that cannot now be foreseen. But the path to peace will not be assisted by those who clamour for the recognition of what does not yet exist—a genuine communist acceptance of the logic of peaceful co-existence.

On the other hand, there are, as Mr. Donnelly shows, and as Vietnam is now demonstrating, situations where mere firmness on the part of the West is not enough,

where the conditions for stability simply do not exist and cannot be created externally. But once again the attitude that sees a panacea for such situations in the Afro-Asian majority in the United Nations finds little sympathy from Mr. Donnelly. Many of these governments have shown themselves to be 'the avaricious and parochial proponents of self-interest and not the upholders of the principle of law'.

Such a challenge to another sacred cow of the Labour Party may get Mr. Donnelly into even more trouble than his challenge to the old fellow-travelling gang. If this book is read as a political tract it must make one feel that nationalization of steel is the most trivial of the issues separating Mr. Donnelly from much of his party.

But the book deserves to be read not only as a tract but as a piece of contemporary history—superbly constructed and brilliantly told...

MAX BELOFF

(*The Listener*, May 6 1965, p. 675, cols. 2-3)

THE PROBLEM OF A COMMON LANGUAGE

IV

ANGLICIST-ORIENTALIST CONTROVERSY

BY the time the British East India Company had brought the more populous parts of India under complete subjection—the future of British dominion was practically assured with the collapse of the Maratha Confederacy in 1818—it became a settled fact that English and no other language would remain the official language of British India. No time was lost in making this clear to all concerned. Persian was substituted by English in official correspondence and English was adopted as the language of the courts. Nobody seems to have raised as much as an eyebrow at this momentous change. It was taken as a matter of course.

The controversy that raged during two decades and more and is popularly known as the Anglicist-Orientalist controversy had nothing whatever to do with the question of official language. It concerned the broader question of the education of India. It was no doubt tinged by political opinions, and there was not a little of ignorant fanaticism shown in the course of the controversy. But the main point at issue was: what was to be the medium of instruction in the schools and colleges of India ?

Arising incidentally out of this question was the further consideration as to the relative importance of western knowledge and oriental learning. It is in the discussion of the latter question that much of the fanaticism was shown on either side. But it was the question of medium of instruction and the decision given ultimately in favour of English that really shaped the future of India for a century and a half.

A Triangular Contest

It was actually a triangular contest. On one side were the supporters of the English language and all the science and literature that would be available through this medium. Pitted against these "anglicists" were the "orientalists", who belonged to two distinct schools of thought. One relied on the past glories of the classical Persian and Sanskrit and pressed for the adoption and continued use of these two languages, primarily as the only media for the dissemination of knowledge, western and oriental, but by implication as the sole means of acquiring all knowledge really worthwhile. From the beginning, their case was doomed and it received an answer from the pen of Macaulay which decided this issue. This particular brand of orientalism had found most support in Bengal, and its chief spokesmen were scholars and officials of the type of Prinsep and Wilson, who never seemed to realise that they were allowing their admiration for the old texts to override their discretion.

The other school of orientalists belonged mainly to Maharashtra. They too found some champions among the newly arrived administrators; but their chief spokesmen were Indians—Maharashtri, Gujarati and Parsi gentlemen, very well versed in English as the language they employed in the course of the controversy amply corroborates, and at the same time deeply impressed by the sense of the practical. They pleaded for the retention and continued use and enrichment of the local vernaculars, which had been serving in some sort as the vehicle of popular instruction before the British came. It is their opinions that possess a more lasting value than those of the Bengal school of orientalists who were at best Indologists imbued with a zeal for the past.

For our present purpose it would be convenient to call only the first group as Orientalists, and use the term Vernacularists for the other.

The Early Official Bias

Let us take up the Orientalist viewpoint first, using the term "orientalist" in the narrower sense of "protagonist of the Indian classical tradition."

The orientalists who really mattered were high-placed officials in the service of the East India Company. They included such important names as Warren Hastings and Lord Minto, the early Governors General, and Jonathan Duncan, the Resident of Benares, in addition to the more flamboyant Wilson and Prinsep who were noteworthy for their scholarship rather than for political sagacity. It is no wonder that political considerations should have entered largely into the discussion; and it was

characteristic of British rule that the views held or rather supported by the authorities at home, the Court of Directors of the East India Company, should correspond exactly to the needs of the political situation.

The first move, however, came from some local notables of Calcutta, Muhammedan gentlemen who presented Warren Hastings with a petition in 1780. They pleaded that "It had been the pride of every polished court and the wisdom of every well-organised Government both in India and in Persia to promote...the growth and extension of liberal knowledge, that in India, only the traces of them now remain, the decline of learning having accompanied that of the Mughal Empire".[1] One Mujid-ud-din who had just come to the city with an enormous reputation for his knowledge of Muslim jurisprudence was, they suggested, the fittest person to be put in charge of a new seat of Muslim learning that the Government should open in Calcutta. The Governor General welcomed the proposal; for it would conciliate the Muslims, and the students of the institution could be employed in the higher rungs of the Indian judiciary, thereby throwing an additional sop to both Hindu and Muslim citizens of note. He at once sent for the reputed scholar, offered him the post of Principal at the Madrassah which he opened in Calcutta (in 1781) out of his private revenue.

This was the beginning of state-sponsored education in modern India, which retained a distinct bias in favour of the Orientalist view, until the tide changed in the second decade of the 19th century. The Court of Directors entirely agreed with Hastings' view of the situation and they sanctioned a grant of Rs. 30,000 out of the public revenues for maintaining this institution.

The Next Step

The Benaras Sanskrit College was the next step. It was founded in 1791 by Jonathan Duncan, the Resident, whose observations in this connection are worth quoting. "Two important advantages seemed derivable from such an establishment, the first to the British name and nation in its tendency towards endearing our Government to the native Hindoos, by our exceeding in our attention towards them and their systems ...The second principal advantage that may be derived from this institution will be felt in its effect upon the natives...by preserving and disseminating a knowledge of the Hindoo law, and proving a nursery of future doctors and expounders thereof, to assist European judges in the due, regular and uniform administration of its genuine letter and spirit to the body of the people." This venture too received the blessings of the Home authorities and a sum of Rs. 20,000 was annually allocated to this institution.

Many of the Company's officials in India felt at the time that these two colleges

[1] The quotations in this article are from Nurullah and Naik, *A History of Education in India During the British Period*. This is a standard text.

were hardly sufficient to keep alive the old learning, and they clamoured for more funds to publish books and impart teaching. Lord Minto who was Governor General from 1806 to 1813 wrote a famous Minute on the subject where he pleaded vigorously for a more positive approach. "It is a common remark," he wrote, "that science and literature are in a progressive state of decay among the natives of India... The abstract sciences are abandoned, polite literature neglected, and no branch of learning cultivated but what is connected with the peculiar religious doctrines of the people. The immediate consequence of this state of things is the disuse, and even the actual loss, of many valuable books... It is seriously to be lamented that a nation particularly distinguished for its love and successful cultivation of letters in other parts of the empire should have failed to extend its fostering care to the literature of the Hindoos, and to aid in opening to the learned in Europe the repositories of that literature."

The concluding words of Minto's Minute, and indeed the general tenor of his writing, introduce a new and refreshing note into the controversy. Unfortunately, as we shall see, it was this insistence on the cultural value of the classical Indian tradition that formed the main target of attack on the part of the Anglicists, and Sanskrit along with Persian lost favour in official circles because of their supposed inadequacy as media of culture.

(To be continued)

SANAT K. BANERJI

A LEAF FROM OUR DESK

Government of West Bengal
Education Directorate
Writers' Buildings
Calcutta-1.

[o. 2709(7)Sc/P Dated, the 12th August, 1965.

'rom :-The Director of Public Instruction, West Bengal,
'o :-The District Social Education Officer,

Sub : **Works of Sri Aurobindo**

With reference to this office No. 3166Sc/P(II) dated the 27th August 1964 this to draw your attention to an omission which resulted from inadvertence. It was not ıentioned in the communication under reference that the works of Sri Aurobindo 'ould be available with Sri Aurobindo Society, Bharat Sabha Bhaban, 62, Bepin ehari Ganguli Street, Calcutta-12 or Sri Aurobindo Books Distribution Agency rivate Limited, 15, Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta-12.

It is presumed that instruction regarding acquisition of Sri Aurobindo's works 'as duly issued. The addresses given above may now be communicated to the autho- ties of the libraries.

In this connection his attention is drawn also to an English monthly entitled MOTHER INDIA" brought out by Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry and a engali monthly "BARTIKA" brought out by Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, 15, ankim Chatterji Street, Calcutta. The editors will send to him specimen copies. 'rom a perusal of these he will be convinced that both these are useful, interesting nd thought provoking journals of considerable literary and cultural value. These)o may be recommended to the authorities of sponsored libraries.

sd/M. N. Roy.
for Director of Public Instruction,
West Bengal

Io : 2709/1(1)Sc/P Calcutta, the 12th August 1965

Copy forwarded to Sri S. K. Chakrabarti, M.A.,B.L., Judge, Sri Aurobindo ıshram, Pondicherry-2, for information and necessary action in regard to despatch f specimen copies.

sd/M. N. Roy
for Director of Public Instruction,
West Bengal.

Students' Section

THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

FOURTH SEMINAR

25 April 1965

HOW TO MAKE ONE'S STUDIES A MEANS OF ONE'S SADHANA

(*Continued from the August issue*)

VI

My dear friends,

This time I will not speak in an objective and philosophic manner but approac the subject in the rather dim light of my own experiences and feelings.

I propose to take as the starting-point of my talk a question we have surely aske ourselves one time or another : Why do we study or what are our motives in studying When I analysed myself in the light of the motives which led me to study, I made a interesting rediscovery of some parts of my personality which I knew very little c which I had ignored completely. I felt as though I were listening for the first time t my own voice on a tape recorder and recognising it only with difficulty.

So let us review the development of this student who resembles many other: First we see a lazy schoolboy, who considers school as an inevitable nuisance and wh works just enough not to annoy his teachers and parents too much. Fortunately he finds at school some amusing chums who help sweeten the bitter pill a little.

However, some years of combined effort of teachers, parents and the worl suffice to make this schoolboy understand that life is a grave and severe business, battlefield where one has to fight to become rich and to gain a good social positior The grown up and so necessarily "wise" people convince him that a reasonable stu dent must arm himself with a lot of good marks, diplomas and degrees. But one da he has had enough of it and starts to earn his bread as a clerk.

Nevertheless, a thirst for knowledge rises in him although the usual form of stu dies no longer satisfies him. He realises that studies are undoubtedly useful for pro fessional and social success, but for him studies have as primary function the widenin of his horizons and the development of his personality. This desire for knowledg makes him travel in Europe and Asia in search of a better education, not only of h intellect but of his body and of his soul too. Finally, he discovers in a very curious an mysterious fashion the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.

There he realises slowly the joy of a disinterested mental culture summed up in the words "Knowledge for Knowledge's sake". He becomes aware of the fact that true knowledge cannot be acquired by the reasoning intellect, which in its very nature is analytical and can never grasp the whole truth. Our student begins thus the quest for true and integral knowledge through the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

When contemplating the Mother's subject for the seminar I realised how little sadhana I had done while studying and that daily meditation and concentration alone were very insufficient. Our sadhana should be integral and include the works of life, of love and, last but not least, of knowledge of which studies are a means.

Scared by such a formidable task we could recoil and ask : Why should we do sadhana at all, can't we leave that to those exceptional few, called Yogis, who have a spiritual destiny ?To such a question the Mother replied: "All human beings have a spiritual destiny that is more or less near according to the resolution of each one. One must *want* it in full sincerity." ("Tous les êtres humains ont un destin spirituel plus ou moins proche suivant la résolution de chacun. Il faut *vouloir* en toute sincérité.[1])

Then how exactly can we make our academic studies a means of our sadhana ? I must disappoint all those who think that one can solve this question by a magic formula or a rigid method. I do believe that this is an essentially personal question which each one has to solve for himself. However, there are some general, useful signposts on the way, some of which I try to indicate through my proper experiences.

First we must focus on an aim. "An aimless life is always a miserable life," says the Mother. ("Une vie sans but est une vie sans joie.")[2] Our aim should be as broad, integral, noble and high as possible and we must make it the pole-star of our existence. The following passage of the Mother gives us a glimpse of how such a goal could look : "To learn in order to know, to study in order to have the knowledge of the secrets of Nature and of life, to educate oneself in order to increase one's consciousness, to discipline oneself in order to be master of oneself, to overcome one's weaknesses, one's incapacity and ignorance, to prepare oneself in order to progress in life towards a goal that is nobler and vaster, more generous and more true.... We want to have here only those who aspire for a higher and better life, who are eager for knowledge, and perfection, who look ardently towards a more wholly true future."[3] ("Apprendre pour savoir, étudier pour connaître les secrets de la nature et de la vie, s'éduquer pour faire croître sa conscience, se discipliner pour devenir maître de soi, pour surmonter ses faiblesses, ses incapacités et ses ignorances, se préparer à avancer dans la vie vers un but plus noble, plus vaste, plus généreux et plus vrai.... Nous voulons ici seulement ceux qui aspirent à une vie plus haute et meilleure, ceux

[1] From a personal letter.
[2] La Mère, *Education*, p. 1.
[3] *Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education Handbook*, (1963) pp. 7-8.

qui ont soif de connaissance et de perfection, ceux qui regardent ardemment vers ur avenir plus totalement vrai.")

If we want to progress in our sadhana, sincerity is of primary importance. This means that we have to act constantly in conformity with our highest ideal or, in more yogic language, according to our highest level of consciousness. This is more easily said than done. How often are our highest aims and ideals corrupted by the egoistic parts of our personality which seek the satisfaction of their own petty ambitions By introspecting myself I see that I am still a mixture of many conflicting interests and that in daily life I am far from sincerity. Looking at my companions I see with some relief that they are in a similar or worse position. When I asked the Mother about the merit of my studies which included such so-called worldly and "perilous" subjects as international relations, political science and economics, besides history languages, literature, philosophy of science and psychology, she replied : "This programme is good and you can follow it. The important point is to be more and more sincere, always more sincere so as never to go astray in the integrality of one's aspiration. This sincerity brings certainly the aid of the Divine Grace." ("Ce programme est bon et tu peux le suivre. Le point important est d'être de plus en plus sincère, toujours plus sincère afin de ne jamais se tromper soi-même dans l'intégralité de son aspiration. Cette sincérité amène l'aide certaine de la Grâce divine."[1]

As a student of international relations I wondered in what way I should approach this subject. Hasn't the Mother said many times that she does "not believe in the usefulness of words, spoken or written, when the world's problems are concerned" and "that an inner effort to acquire oneself the consciousness of Unity and the consequent transformation of one's action is infinitely more effective than speeches and articles"? On the question of how to study international relations the Mother gave the following message : "These classes are a part of studies and for them as for the rest, everything depends on the spirit in which they are done." ("Ces classes font partie des études et pour cela, comme pour le reste, tout dépend de l'esprit dans lequel elles sont faites."[2])

I think most of us have realised that indiscriminate reading can do great harm to our character, personality and, last but not least, to our sadhana. Our subconscious is a very faithful recorder of everything we read and ugly, debasing or erotic impressions received from literature into the subconscious can be very obstinate adverse entities when we start the purifying process. Thus we do well to select our reading very carefully. However, sometimes we have to face and read about the harc realities of life which can be all but uplifting and purifying. In such a case let us no identify and plunge headlong into the first best trash but let us always keep a part of our being detached and in contact with our highest aspiration. If this is done sincerely we have an excellent guide in this detached part, telling us what to read protecting and warning us. It is quite evident that the above applies to the study o

[1] & [2] From personal letters.

literature as well. Let us keep in mind that the Mother "does not approve of those literature classes where under the pretext of knowledge one wallows in the mud of a level of consciousness which is not proper here [at the Centre of Education] and cannot in any way help to build up the knowledge of tomorrow. If one could discover here and there the expression of a sincere and luminous aspiration one could make it the occasion of an interesting study and development." ("Je n'approuve pas de ces classes de littérature où sous prétexte de connaissance on patuage dans la boue d'un état d'esprit qui n'est pas de mise ici, et ne peut, en aucune manière, aider à construire la connaissance de demain.... Si on pouvait decouvrir de ci-de là, l'expression d'une aspiration sincère et lumineuse, on pourrait en faire l'occasion d'une étude et d'un développement intéressant."[1]) I asked myself whether the Mother's verdict was against literature in general or against only a certain light fiction appealing to our lower mental and vital emotions. I came to the conclusion that I can make literature a means of sadhana by studying primarily such writings as are the expression of a sincere and luminous aspiration, and by looking for the *rasa* e.g., the true delight one finds in the intellectual luminosity, the beauty of style and the expression and depth of literary masterpieces. The study of literature gives us also an interesting glimpse of the evolution of human consciousness. The Mother wrote to me about reading and literature: "This is a purely personal question. Each one should choose his books according to his need and aspiration. With some practice one becomes quickly aware of a book's influence, and if it is a degrading influence one must stop reading that book." ("C'est une affaire purement personnelle. Chacun doit choisir ses livres suivant son besoin et son aspiration. Au bout d'un certain temps on s'aperçoit vite de l'influence du livre que l'on lit et si c'est une influence dégradante, il faut arrêter la lecture du livre."[2])

A strong will power as the foundation of an ardent aspiration for the high and luminous is another *sine qua non* of this sadhana. As long as our soul or psychic being is not the supreme governor of our being a rigorous self-imposed discipline is indispensable if we want to progress spiritually at all. If we revolt against the "shackles" of our daily discipline under the pretext of becoming again a so-called "free man", a fall into our lower nature seems nearly inevitable as long as the psychic being is not our master. "Without discipline nothing of value can be achieved in life." ("Sans discipline on ne peut rien faire de bon dans la vie."[3])

A constant opening, as integral as possible, to the Mother, to Sri Aurobindo, to the divine Force, or Light, or whatever one might call it, is another important point in this sadhana. Concentration and meditation are an excellent preparation. We have to be aware that mental silence is absolutely necessary if we want to receive the divine guidance, illumination, force, etc. to any significant extent. During our studies we can concentrate on the depths of our being in order to consult our inner helper and

[1] From a personal letter.
[2] & [3] From personal letters.

guide. I found it also very helpful to try to stop thinking so as to open myself to the surrounding layers of mind-consciousness which, according to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, contain the universal thought as well as all solutions to our mental problems—ready-made as it were. What an adventure to plunge into the world where all possible thoughts of past, present and future are at our disposal! "It is out of the silent mind that I write whatever comes ready-shaped from above," says Sri Aurobindo. To think outside of our body implies that it is not our brain which thinks but that the thoughts come from "outside". The true process, according to Sri Aurobindo, is to arrive at the point where effort is no more needed, to efface oneself as completely as possible so as to let the current pass. "There are two ways of arriving at the Grand Trunk Road. One is to climb and struggle and effortise (like the pilgrim who traverses India prostrating and measuring the way with his body : that is the way of effort). One day you suddenly find yourself on the G.T.R. when you least expect it. The other is to quiet the mind to such a point that a greater Mind of mind can speak through it."[1]

It is to the advantage of the student-sadhak to offer his studies to the Divine, and to liberate himself of all physical, vital or mental preferences and prejudices. Only if we no longer hanker after the fruit and offer the result of our actions to the Divine, will we gain that indispensable equality of the soul, where failure and success will not trouble us any more.

This sadhana will not always be easy or pleasant. It seems to me that a step upwards into the light is followed by a step downwards into the darkness which has to be transformed and purified.

However, trusting in the Divine's and the soul's aid, we can face all trials. "Be on your guard, hold fast to the psychic, do not let it recede into the background, allow nothing in your consciousness to slip in between it and yourself, close your ear and your hearing to all other suggestions, put your trust in that alone", the Mother advises newcomers. ("Soyez sur vos gardes, cramponnez-vous au psychique, ne laissez rien dans votre conscience s'infiltrer entre lui et vous, bouchez vos oreilles et votre entendement à toutes les autres suggestions et ne vous fiez qu'à lui seul."[2]) It is now up to us to follow the Mother's advice so that our way towards the New World may be straight and luminous.

OSCAR

VII

Study constitutes an important, perhaps the most important factor in man's life. Vast and varied in its magnitude, life itself offers an enormous scope and opportunity for our study and progress. Our study helps to build our future career in life by

[1] Nirodbaran, *Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo*, Second Series p. 154.
[2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, Nov. 1952, p. 68.

gradually training and enriching our mind from our very childhood. All-comprehensive in its importance, it encompasses the whole of life and existence. In fact, study is essential in our terrestrial existence.

Now, we have to understand what our sadhana is, and in what way and to what extent we may be benefited in our sadhana through studies.

Our sadhana or yoga is to outgrow our present narrow and limited consciousness and attain to the divine consciousness with all its sublime profundities, magnificent vastnesses, and supernal heights, and unveil the secret godhead in all its splendour resulting in the total transformation of our being and nature, our life and existence on earth.

There are, of course, various ways and means which can be employed to sucessfully trudge along this path of yoga. For example, we can take recourse to meditation and concentration, disinterested work for the Divine, fine arts in the shape of music, painting, sculpture, etc., the way of love and devotion to the Divine, physical culture, as well as studies or the intellectual way, and so on. Each one is to follow the way most suitable to his or her need and aptitude. With some a particular line may be suitable while with others a combination of all or some of the lines may be helpful for the sadhana.

In fact, every occasion or event in life can be made a means for our inner growth and development. The only thing that matters is the attitude or spirit in which we receive them, the value or importance we attach to them.

Here we shall confine ourselves to the deliberation as to how our studies can be made a useful means for our progress in the sadhana. "Study is of importance only if you study in the right way and with the right turn for knowledge and mental discipline,"[1] says Sri Aurobindo.

Just as physical exercise helps to bring about a harmonious development, agility and plasticity in the different parts of our body, just as fine arts and culture help to take us to the hidden depths of our being by aesthetic means and by the heart's devotion, so also our studies help us to explore the higher and spiritual ranges of our being by developing our intellectual faculties.

There are various subjects for study as well as various ways of dealing with the same subject. One factor which we must bear in mind is that the stuff and substance of any book or writing has a very great influence over our mind. Of course, a sadhak may be expected to read any book with equal detachment of spirit, without being involved or affected in the least by such study. But it depends perhaps on our inner preparedness, sincerity and strength of will.

In fact, our study of books can, to a considerable degree, make or mar our sadhana. So it is necessary, at the very outset, to be careful as to what kind of books and subjects will be beneficial for and what will be detrimental to our sadhana. Sri Aurobindo advises us: "To read what will help the yoga or what will be useful

[1] *On Yoga II* Tome Two, page 377.

for the work or what will develop the capacities for the divine purpose. Not to read worthless sutff or for mere entertainment or for a dilettante intellectual curiosity which is of the nature of a mental dream-drinking."[1] Studies can be a help or a hindrance to our inner development. Studies conducted for their own sake, i.e., only with the idea of mental development have no spiritual value for our sadhana. As Sri Aurobindo says, "if the mind is too intellectually developed in certain rationalistic lines, it may hinder."[2] Study of ordinary books and novels can wash away whatever gain may otherwise be achieved by long and laborious effort. As the Mother affirms, "Each time you read a book in which the consciousness is very low, it strengthens your subconscience and inconscience, it prevents your consciousness from rising upward. It is as if you poured buckets of dirty water on the efforts you have made to purify your subconscient."[3] Similarly the study of higher and deeper subjects, of books on yoga has a salutary effect on our mind which helps to uplift our consciousness.

Study taken as mental gymnastics helps us to attain a very great clarity and precision and plasticity of mind. Studies, pursued intelligently, can certainly help to organise and enrich our mind, sharpen our intellect and enhance our thinking capacities. So, they have their value and necessity in life. But their real worth for our sadhana lies not so much in their ability to enlighten our surface being and consciousness as in their capacity to influence and illumine our inner self and nature. Our study of a certain subject helps us to concentrate and sink deep within, and that exercises a very effective control over our mind which normally is an aimless wanderer. As the Mother says, "...the mental being like the psychic is hardly within you....There are very few people who have organised their mind sufficiently to keep it within them, compact, preventing it from gallivanting."[4]

Study is more a helper than an actual performer. Real knowledge cannot be imparted to anybody, nor can it be acquired by reading a number of books, or writing a few essays. "Ramakrishna was an uneducated, non-intellectual man, yet his expression of knowledge was so perfect that the biggest intellects bowed down before it,"[5] observes Sri Aurobindo. In the language of the Upanishads,

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन।

(*Katha Upanishad*)

"The Self is not to be won by eloquent teaching, nor by brain power, nor by much learning."[6] True knowledge is a thing innate in the self and reveals itself by gradual

[1] *Ibid.*, page 379.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 372
[3] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, Feb. 1965, p. 19.
[4] *Bulletin*, Nov. 1964, p. 41.
[5] *On Yoga, II*, Tome Two, p. 386.
[6] Sri Aurobindo's translation, see *Eight Upanishads*, p. 63.

self-unfoldment. Study can at best help to unveil the concealed knowledge by deepening our consciousness. To quote the Mother, "What strikes you in a book is what you have already experienced deep within you.... The knowledge that seems to come to you from outside is only an occasion for bringing out the knowledge that is within you."[1]

Our studies have their value for our sadhana only insofar as they are carried on for the sake of the Divine, to bring out the divine possibilities latent in us, that is to say, if they can awaken in us a feeling or an urge to know more and more of our true selves in a bid to exceed ourselves; if they can help us to express some deeper truth of our being and consciousness, or be able to convey to us the deeper meaning and purpose of creation and manifestation, the significance of terrestrial evolution and so on. Our studies—reading of books or writing or dwelling upon them—must be marked with a definite inner progress. Then they are certainly valuable and beneficial for our sadhana. Sri Aurobindo says, "If the intellect is surrendered, open, quiet, receptive, there is no reason why it should not be a means of reception of the Light or an aid to the experience of spiritual states and to the fullness of an inner change."[2]

As for us here, study of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's books can be made a very cogent means, a powerful leverage for our inner progress. We must try to go very deep into their writings in a meditative mood and in a spirit of calm concentration and inner openness, and with a deep feeling of the soul's joy in such studies It then becomes truly effective for our sadhana marked by an abiding peace and progress with a feeling of the depth in our inner self and consciousness. And we can derive from it as much benefit as or even more than we get through routine meditation. In fact, just like work, study also, if pursued in the true spirit, is meditation.

By studying the Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's writings we come in direct contact and communion, as it were, with them; and we imbibe, consciously or unconsciously, the Divine Light and Force, Love and Bliss which can unerringly guide us to the ultimate aim and goal of our sadhana. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "In reading these books you get into touch with the Force behind them and it is this that pushes you into meditation and a corresponding experience."[3]

Let us conclude with these words of the Upanishads—

(*Taittiriya Upanishad*)

तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु !

"May our study be full of light and power !"[4]

ROSE
(Manjula Sen)

[1] *Words of the Mother*, 4th Ed., p. 79.
[2] *On Yoga II* Tome Two P. 346.
[3] *Ibid.*, P. 372.
[4] Sri Aurobindo's translation, see *Eight Upanishads*, P. 225.

VIII

The question that the Mother raises before us today indeed demands a deep speculation. It is a question that we should have asked ourselves much earlier, for, in fact, all our acts should be a means of our Sadhana. As studies occupy such a prominent place in our life it is of great importance that we seek to make them a means of our Sadhana rather than a mere fulfilment of our mental curiosity.

The first thing to do is to take a completely new attitude towards our studies. We must tear open the shackles which make of studies a mental fancy, an occasion to expose our brilliancy and make a show of our intelligence. If at all we are to make them a means of Sadhana, we must look for something deeper and more purposive in them. Therefore it is our primal task to discover what the spiritual contributions of our studies are. It is clear that we cannot hope to attain to our goal by cramming the brain with knowledge of facts but by realising that the essence of studies is of a higher order than an intellectual glamour.

Let us then give the due value to the disciplines that our studies demand, the power of concentration and the aesthetic sense that they cultivate in us. The mental wideness that we thence imbibe can greatly help us to overcome our petty difficulties and establish an equal attitude towards all circumstances. It matters not whether we reap success or not; what matters is the joy we derive in the effort to perfect our mind. It is the quest for perfection that should be our aim and not an attempt to shine out and gain name and fame. But here let us not deceive ourselves by making this disinterestedness an excuse for laxity or slackness. To be sincere to ourself is a pre-requisite for any progress whatsoever. In studies is a unique posibility to develop this most valuable quality and we must not miss this chance.

Let us regard our studies as the best opportunity to lay the foundations of our Sadhana. For discipline, concentration, equality and sincerity—are these not the very qualities a Sadhak must possess if he is to reach his goal ? Now is our best moment; let us pray that we may effectively make our studies a means of our Sadhana and thus assign it its just place in our life. But yet let us not for once forget that studies in themselves cannot give us what we seek here. We must see through the veil of literature, science and philosophy and perceive that the true knowledge transcends all our mental gropings. Studies are only a preparation to perfect the mental instrument, to receive and express the higher knowledge. What we can most do now is to let our studies mould us into perfect divine instruments so that when the hour comes we can serve as channels for the Knowledge to descend and flow through us... It is only when we thirst to fulfil this mission that we can aspire

> "...to grow up into straightforward, frank, upright and honourable human beings ready to develop into divine nature."[1]

SWADESH

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[1] Sri Aurobindo

After all the speeches were over, Kishor Gandhi read out the following seven letters of Sri Aurobindo, pertaining to the subject of the Seminar, about which, as he had mentioned in his introductory speech, the Mother had remarked : "These quotations are excellent. Surely you must read them at the end of the seminar."

(1)

The intellect can be as great an obstacle as the vital when it chooses to prefer its own constructions to the Truth.

(*On Yoga* II; Tome Two, p.346)

(2)

What you have said is perfectly right. To see the Truth does not depend on a big intellect or a small intellect. It depends on being in contact with the Truth and the mind silent and quiet to receive it. The biggest intellects can make errors of the worst kind and confuse Truth and Falsehood, if they have not the contact with the Truth or the direct experience.

(*Ibid.*, Pp. 346-47)

(3)

Its [the intellect's] function is to reason from the perceptions of the mind and senses, to form conclusions and to put things in logical relation with each other. A well-trained intellect is a good preparation of the mind for greater knowledge but it cannot itself give the yogic knowledge or know the Divine—it can only have ideas about the Divine, but having ideas is not knowledge. In the course of the sadhana intellect has to be transformed into the higher mind which is itself a passage towards the true knowledge.

(*Ibid.*, p. 347)

(4)

For one who wants to practise sadhana, sadhana must come first—reading and mental development can only be subordinate things.

(*Ibid.*, p. 371)

(5)

I see no objection to his going on with his studies,—whether they will be of any use to him for a life of sadhana will depend on the spirit in which he does them. The really important thing is to develop a stage of consciousness in which one can live in

the Divine and act from it on the physical world. A mental training and discipline, knowledge of men and things, culture, capacities of a useful kind are a preparation that the sadhak would be all the better for having—even though they are not the one thing indispensable. Education in India gives little of these things, but if one knows how to study without caring much for the form or for mere academic success, the life of the student can be used for the purpose.

(*Ibid.*, p. 376)

(6)

Reading and study are only useful to acquire information and widen one's field of data. But that comes to nothing if one does not know how to discern and discriminate, judge, see what is within and behind things.

(*Ibid.*, p. 377)

(7)

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

(*Ibid.*, p. 378)

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Finally, on behalf of the New Age Association, Kishor Gandhi thanked all those who had come to attend the Seminar and also those who had participated in it.

After that the Seminar ended.

Compiled by KISHOR GANDHI

SOME REMINISCENCES OF THE MOTHER BY THE YOUNG AND OLD

BUILDING A SAND-CASTLE

IT was some time in 1949. I was very young, about ten years old.

Before the Playground activities were well organised in the Ashram, we had our sandpit behind the Captains' Room and the Mother's Class Room, where now there is the Gymnasium courtyard—just near the roadside door. We did not have the Guest House sandpit at that time.

We were then about 80 children in all. The younger ones like us would play in the sandpit, build sand-castles, the Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's symbols and other interesting things. The entire evening we would play there. Then the Mother would come and distribute us sweets.

One day we tried to make a castle in the sand, a big castle, but could not complete it. So we left it half-complete and went to the main Playground for physical exercises.

Later, when the Mother came towards our sandpit, she saw that we had been trying something. As she enquired we told her what we were aiming at.

"You make it in my presence," she said, "I will show you how to do it."

So she started giving us suggestions here and there, and would correct us wherever necessary. She stood there all the time, till we completed the castle under her guidance and direction.

It was quite a big castle in a rather difficult style, and we had never before tried it in that manner.

"But something is missing," the Mother spoke suddenly. We looked at her, waiting for some surprising declaration.

"You should have a flag," she continued, "a castle has always a flag flying over it. What flag should we put over it?"

We suggested that there should be the Mother's flag over it, for that was the nearest thing our mind could immediately imagine. But we had nothing of the sort at hand at that time.

The Mother asked for a stick. We brought a small piece of tree-branch. Then she took her handkershief, which she usually winds on her wrist while playing tennis. She tied it to one side of the stick and gave me the improvised flag to plant it on the central turret of the castle.

As the handkerchief was white, we had a flag symbolising light and peace and harmony on our castle.

A Child's Vision

Once a boy of 9 or 10 came to the Ashram with his parents. As he followed the queue, in front of his parents, to have Darshan of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother he caught hold of his mamma's garment and asked, "Mummy, why is there another Mother inside the Mother ?"

The Mother came to him far more spontaneously than to his parents who were yet to see a vision.

A Young Boy Paints Shiva

I was a young boy of seventeen when I came to the Ashram along with my brothers and sisters. Without much effort I developed a special fascination for painting, and without any regular help of an instructor I could draw and paint fairly well, whether flowers and trees or scenes or landscapes or personages.

It was at some time in 1955 that I took a few of my paintings to the Mother. Among these was a painting of Shiva which I had done from ideas caught up from the usual pictures of Shiva with his trident and a spout of water going up from his tresses and snakes round the neck, etc.

"Did you see Shiva in a vision in this form that you have drawn him so ?" she asked me. I had really had no special inclination towards the spiritual life before coming over to Pondicherry, had not known what exactly Yoga is and never seen a vision.

"No, I have not seen him in a vision. I have only worked with impressions gathered from various common pictures here and there," I replied frankly.

"If you see a vision," the Mother pointed out to me, "you can draw the true picture of Shiva. But you have drawn him with a trident, snakes and a spout of water coming out of his locks. This is just a traditional way of picturing him. If you have not seen a vision, I have. When I saw him, he was not like this. I saw him as a huge golden being, a figure all of fire, with a radiantly smiling face. He had no trident or snakes or spout of water, as in your drawing."

The Mother's Blessings

The Mother had given me residence and work a few miles from the Ashram. It was not always possible for me to go to her every day for her blessings which she used to give regularly at that time. If I went, the work would suffer. But a friend of mine opined that it was better to start the day's work with the Mother's blessings. I was in a fix.

So I approached the Mother and put the matter before her. She replied, "The Divine has given you a certain work to do. If you do that sincerely, my blessings will always be with you. Don't worry but get to your work."

So I attended her blessing distribution only when I could do so without disturbing my regular duties.

MOTHER-CARE

(a)

In 1932, there stood four different houses on the site where now the main building of the Ashram stands.

Construction work was proceeding near the staircase which leads to the Mother's rooms, facing the Samadhi. I was as usual supervising the work.

During those days, the Mother used to go out for a ride in her car. As she came out for the ride, she pointed to my "chapals" and said with a seeming seriousness, "These can well be repaired." I was not prepared for such a remark. My eyes immediately turned to my "chapals", a strap of which was gone from one side though still remaining in position so that one would not easily notice it. I became self-conscious and, with a shy half-uttered "Yes", felt at once the great difference between my negligent semi-awareness and the Mother's full consciousness and care of sadhaks to the minutest details of their most outward life.

(b)

The year was 1949. At that time sadhaks used to go to the Mother on their birthdays at least four times a day. The last time to see the Mother was at about 10 or 11 p.m., when she used to return to her apartments from the Playground. And sometimes sadhaks did not go to the Mother at that hour if the Mother was very late.

When on my birthday I went with my bouquet of flowers, it was almost 11 o'clock and, as I offered my flowers to her, she asked me: "In the rain also you have come ? Have you brought your umbrella?" Her question was so full of not only a divine caressing compassion but the very affection of an intimate physical mother that tears came into my eyes. I had never before experienced such a spontaneous flow of unrestrained love as I experienced that night when she patted me with her soft gracious hands.

Compiled by HAR KRISHAN SINGH

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DEAD— GUESS WITH WHOM?

(We publish here a few dialogues written by the English teachers of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education for the cultural programmes held on Saturday afternoons. They are imaginary conversations between inquiring minds of today and great personalities of the past. Most of them were acted by the students in a Quiz programme.

A batch of young students harassed by the idea of studying pages of history for a Test express the desire of seeing those they read about, and as if in answer to their wish these figures appear one by one.

The dress suggested the place and time to which the character concerned belonged.

The names of the various X's are given inverted at the end of the whole group of conversations. The student-reader is invited to exercise his mind and then check with the correct answer.)

I

X : My name is among those that echo in the minds of all the cultured men today. I rank with Shakespeare and Milton, although my work is not half as prolific as theirs, my masterpieces numbering but seven.

EVERYMAN : When did you live on the earth ?

X : I lived in the heyday of my country's aristocratic civilisation. I grew up surrounded by material luxury, moved about among men of high society, with exquisite aesthetic taste, passionately attached to the arts.

EVERYMAN : What in this world drew your attention most ?

X : What I loved most was perhaps nature and its beauty : in the grandeur of a mountain peak I saw the solitary splendour of a God in meditation. But he did not stay alone for long. The daughter of the mountains, the fair one, forced him to break his trance. The result ? The birth of the War God.

EVERYMAN : A little mysterious, all this. What could be your name ?—

X : Haven't you guessed it ? I am the servant of my Muse, my Goddess. I am a poet and have depicted nothing but the ideal and the beautiful in nature and in man.

EVERYMAN : Could you tell us of some things that specially caught your fancy ?

X : The seasons haunted me, and the cloud was to me an ever loving messenger. Delight of the eye, delight of the ear, smell, palate, touch, the satisfaction of the imagination form the texture of my work where I have tried to weave the most

beautiful flowers of emotion and intellectual or aesthetic idealism. I am the lover, the poet of Beauty and therefore of Truth.

2

X : "Sonnez, sonnez toujours clairons de la pensée"...

EVERYMAN : By your speech it seems you come from France.

X : Yes I *am* French. You do not know me ?

EVERYMAN : Well, not quite.

EVERYMAN : You seem to be proud of having been French.

X : All Frenchmen are proud of their nationality and, for that matter, who is not of his ?

EVERYMAN : You are a poet and must have been a great one.

X : I am a poet. And I believe I have been a great one in my time : I have led a whole movement, introduced new trends in Literature, new words, new themes. I revived the French drama which had declined after Molière and Racine.

EVERYMAN : Oh, you are also a dramatist !

X : Yes, but success there was more difficult. We had to organise a real campaign the first night. The poems I wrote after my exile...

EVERYMAN : Oh, I know who you are. (*To audience*) Don't you ?

3

X : Well, I think you will be a little surprised to meet me here. Of course, I had nothing in common with most of these great men. I loved nature from my childhood—but I did not become a poet.

EVERYMAN : A botanist ? Is that what you are ?

X : No, not quite. Not at all in fact. I never had too sharp an intellect. The qualities that carried me honourably through life are : steadfastness and will, resolution and patience. And love of adventure of course, love of the new and of my fellowmen.

EVERYMAN : An adventurer then ?

X : Every human being worthy of the name is an adventurer of a kind.

EVERYMAN : Please tell us a little more about yourself !

X : Wanting to go to China I became a doctor so as to serve the missionaries out there; but just as I was getting ready the Opium War broke out and prevented my journey. Disappointed, I rejected the Government's idea of sending me to the West Indies. It was then that Dr Moffat (whose daughter I later married) encouraged me to go to the land which was to immortalise me.

EVERYMAN : What did you do there that was so extraordinary ?

X : I had gone there to work as a doctor, a missionary and later to fight bad practices—but I am more remembered in Geography books for all the places I saw there, many of them for the first time in man's known history.

EVERYMAN : Did you die there accidentally ?

X : No, I died of disease in that country, on my third visit to the land. Of

course, I had several times been attacked by wild animals, once almost fatally wounded by a lion. My left arm had been paralysed since then.

EVERYMAN : You have no doubt been one of the great discoverers of unknown lands. Did you not write anything ?

X : Well, yes, my diary, recording all that I saw. Once I almost thought all I had done would be lost with me. But a correspondent of the New York Herald saved the situation. You will perhaps think me vainglorious but I think you will agree with me : I know it was beyond my capacity to do something impossible and yet I have achieved (or at least tried to achieve) something very near to it.

4

X : We were a wretched lot, my comrades and I. They were all liars, murderers and thieves, and I, I was little better than a braying ass. I cried aloud my thoughts but none heeded me. I knocked, I begged at many a princely gate but none gave me so much as a hearing. I persisted. At last, one day, 'Saint Mary' heard me and took compassion on my neglected self. For a long while she stood by my side beckoning me on to adventure. I asked the bold, the chivalrous, if they would come along but they swiftly turned their backs and fled. Then I looked at my merciful comrades, the thieves and murderers, imploringly. And they cried in one voice: "Better the unknown than death." So off we went to the land of my dreams, to the land of the Holy Saviour !

EVERYMAN : Well, let us see. This trip to the Holy Saviour, is it a voyage of the the soul or is it rather a real, a physical voyage? Did you have to cross many lands ?

X : No, we crossed no land. We cut through oceans and oceans of blissful solitude. I must admit however that my companions, human as they were, soon tired of it and began to find it thoroughly hateful .

EVERYMAN : Then your voyage could not have been a spiritual one.

EVERYMAN : Did you reach the land of the Holy Saviour ?

X : Yes, we did.

EVERYMAN : Was it rich and luminous ?

X : It was poor and dismal.

EVERYMAN : You must have then certainly returned to the land of your fathers.

X : Yes, to be honoured for a season and then to be cast away in chains !

EVERYMAN : Did you die in chains ?

X : No. I had them buried with me as a symbol of human ingratitude.

EVERYMAN : When humiliated, did you never try to hit back ?

X : Once. With the help of an egg.

(To be continued)

Compiled by AMITA

ANSWERS

1. Kalidasa 2. Victor Hugo 3. Livingstone. 4. Columbus

A SMILE

A Storyette

The night was dark and the sky was clear. A plane from the heavenly height came down...down...down near to the very mortal earth. And from it softly alighted a light human figure and touched the green velvet of the ground with a pair of flowery feet.

The figure advanced with silent steps. It had a mysterious smile on its lips and its eyes radiated the glory of the evening stars. In front of my house was burning then the incense of worship and on the house-top the golden light of love. While I myself was lying within, my head was on the lap of eternity and the body covered with a black blanket of torpor.

The figure came and stood motionless on the threshold of my house. It did not speak, nor did it call me by my name. Simply and gracefully it raised its rosy hand and tapped boldly on my door with the tiny and shapely fingers.

It tapped on the rusted iron gates closed through centuries; and lo, the gates burst into a cracking cry throwing all around the deposited dirt and dust of old. The vibration ran through each nook and corner of the silent night. It pierced the inconscient resistance and entered into the dark cavern of the sleeping earth.

My slumber broke, I opened my eyes and saw that the air of my house was a mess of filth and smoke and the floor covered with the fallen splinters from the broken walls. And then my sense of hearing grew alert and I heard a strange hissing sound coming from inside the earth. The united fury of a thousand black snakes was trying to break down the edifice of the beautiful world. My sight was moving to and fro seeking a solitude and abruptly it was arrested at the roof of my house.

Light, pure and celestial light, rays of radiant white light were showering within through my broken roof. As though a flood of light had come down from the solar source of night. O, what a brilliant light! It was simply unbearable to my sleepy eyes.

I closed my eyes and rubbed them with my palms. After a while I opened them and saw with a clearer sight that the light had vanished. But instead there appeared a face, a wonderful face of delight it. On a sudden I recognised it. It was You, Your face, You were smiling.

From then on has started my journey, a journey following the track of Your smile to meet You at Your source, to get You in Your own kingdom.

CHUNILAL CHOWDHURY

TENSION

SOME years back, during World War II, when I was working as a Military Doctor in Aden, I had an appointment with my Colonel. "Come any time after lunch," he had said. I reached his office at 4 o'clock. The outer reception room was empty. After waiting a few moments, I knocked on a door to attract attention. An office boy appeared with a cup of tea in one hand and a slice of bread in the other. He seemed quite indifferent to my presence.

"I had an appointment with the Colonel," I said.

"You can't see him just now—it's tea time."

"How long will I have to wait ?" I asked.

"About half an hour—he has just started."

While I sat impatiently waiting for the Colonel to have his tea, I compared this leisurely way of doing things with the speedy American way. I could not picture an American office where everyone from Head Executive to office boy took time off in the middle of a busy afternoon to have tea.

Later, in the inner office, when I mentioned my observations to the Colonel, he said in reply : "Stopping for afternoon tea is a good habit—better than the American way of hurry, hurry, hurry all day long. Apart from the stimulation of the tea itself, a little pause in the day's activities rests the nerves and refreshes the spirit. One reason why Americans are so tense and nervous is that they do not appreciate the value of a rest period."

I have often thought that perhaps he is right. All should check the tendency to rush as though they were catching a train. We simply fail to recognise the need for short periods of rest and quiet. "The beginning of any kind of spiritual growth is in stillness because it is in stillness that we commune with the Divine and feel His presence," say Sri Aurobindo and the Divine Mother. Serenity is the primary requisite for meditation and prayer in order to hear the "still small voice"; we have to shut out the tumult of the senses and the pressure of external affairs. To feel the peace of Spirit, we have to relax and let go the peace-disturbing thoughts and emotions. Yet many of us continue to behave like squirrels whirling round and round in a cage without purpose or direction. We hurry and scurry, working against time as though we had not a moment to lose. The result is a continuous tension.

A friend of mine who is deeply religious said to me recently : "Sir, I don't know what's the matter with me. I have got the jitters so bad that I can't make contact with God or keep poised and serene as I used to. I have tried and tried to figure out how I have erred, but the more I think about myself the worse my problem seems to get."

As he went on talking, I realised that without his being aware of it he was being affected by the fears that prevail in the outer world. Because of the state of the nerves, which in reality was the state of his mind, he had lost that tranquillity of spirit which is

essential for spiritual realisation. Instead of letting go and trusting the Divine Mother for serenity, he was struggling desperately to find an explanation for his state of mind, and the more he struggled the more tense he became.

"You have been straining too hard," I said. "Try to let go and stop thinking about yourself altogether. You believe in God and His power. Why not give Him a chance to act ? If you can just let go and realise that the battle is not yours but God's, you will soon be at peace again." I quoted the familiar words of Sri Aurobindo: "The universe was created in silence."

After my friend left, I began to think of that state of nervousness often called the "Jitters" and I came to the conclusion that these sporadic attacks affect even those who try conscientiously to live a spiritual life. Just now, in this stormy period of history, we have a greater need than ever to develop the habit of calm thinking and calm behaviour.

The nervous system of the body has been compared to the telephone system. The mind, like a telephone operator, receives a stream of messages from a network of sensory nerves, analogous to telephone wires. Another network of motor nerves carries out commands from the mind to regulate the body mechanism in appropriate ways. The whole nervous system is communication equipment that holds the body together for unified action, with the mind as controlling centre.

Therefore, when there is a lack of control or any form of nervous unrest, the impulse sent along the nerve fibres produces bodily conditions such as fluttery stomach, unsteady hands, accelerated pulse. If we wish to develop calmness and poise so that they become a habit, we must keep control of the mind.

Let us see in what ways we have let ourselves get out of control. First, there is a habit of hurry. Rushing round for any purpose is a waste of energy and a transgression of the law of harmony. That the rhythm of Nature is even and regular is exemplified by the ebb and flow of tides, the change of seasons, the movement of stars in their courses, the beat of the human heart. Nature can never be forced or rushed and Nature is of God. Thus when we are in hurry we are not in tune with the Divine Mother and out of step with the orderly rhythmic movements of Her Universe.

If we desire poise and spiritual contentment, we must stop our futile rushing around. We can replace driving ourselves furiously with the habit of constantly thinking, speaking and acting in a quiet orderly way. We can organize and systematize our activities so that we need never feel pressed for time but know that "for everything there is a season, and time for every purpose under Heaven." As the Divine Mother has said : "We must be masters, not slaves, of time."

Hurrying is always a bad habit. But whenever the temptation to rush comes upon me I try to stop myself, thinking: "What's your rush ? The Divine Mother does not hurry. Be still." I deliberately moderate my tempo by saying to myself that there is no sense of hurry in me, no feeling of rush or confusion. I take a few deep even breaths and declare that I am quiet and calm and relaxed, that I am poised in the perfect Peace of the Divine Mother.

Through prayer we can attain the calm and poise that overcomes the tendency to rush. After giving a short command to ourselves : "Peace, be still", we shall be able to reduce our speed immediately. I read somewhere in *Prayers and Meditations* by the Divine Mother : "your real strength lies in quietness and confidence." A task assumed calmly and unhurriedly can be accomplished with greater ease and efficiency than when it is attacked nervously and in haste.

Another common habit that is a cause of nervousness is a tendency to allow our attention to flit from one thing to another instead of centring it on a single objective. At meals, for example, instead of eating quietly and contentedly, we are apt to be thinking all the things we have to do. Unconsciously we rush through the meal—and then we wonder why we have indigestion.

Another bad habit that results in lack of tranquillity is talking too much. We fritter away an enormous amount of time and energy on aimless chatter and vain repetitions. Yet wise men of all times have recognised the value of silence and the danger of too much speech.

The philosophy of Sri Aurobindo teaches the wisdom and the power of silence—of learning to control the tongue. I have read somewhere in the Divine Mother's writings (the exact words I do not remember) to the effect : "One who keeps Mouth and Tongue under control keeps his Soul away from troubles."

Death and Life are in the power of the Tongue.

If we wish to develop spirituality, we must learn to control our minds so that we may speak or be silent as we wish. We must break the habit of wasting energy and living on fruitless conversation.

The Mother has said that words are directive powers in themselves and should be chosen with care, not uttered at random. Jesus said that "any idle word that man shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment". Words of uprightness are always forcible.

Since idle chatter is provocative and nothing but confusion and noise, we should never indulge in it. If we are in a social group where the Tongue is incessant and fruitless, where everyone tries to outdo the others in expressing insignificant opinions, we can, without seeming rude, retreat within ourselves and keep spiritually poised by maintaining silence.

Faithful, determined practice of calmness will bring a surprising and gratifying change in your whole manner of living. You will find that your digestion is better, that you no longer have a butterfly stomach and that your entire physical condition is vastly improved. Your thinking will be clearer and more direct, your conversation more accurate and interesting. You will be able to accomplish better and more work in less time. And from a more comprehensive point of view you will realize that your own tranquillity is contributing to the Peace of the world around you.

Dr. C. J. VYAS