

# THE ADVENT

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February 1967

*A Quarterly Devoted to the Exposition of  
Sri Aurobindo's Vision of the Future*

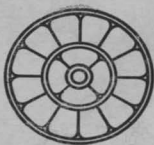


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*The Advent*



If in man the seed  
of aspiration is watered  
with true spirituality  
then he will grow into  
Divinity.

A stylized signature or flourish consisting of several overlapping, sweeping lines that form a shape reminiscent of a stylized 'M' or a similar monogram.

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Inner happiness can only come  
by right living.

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# THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine.

For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

## EDITORIALS

### NOTES

### GO THROUGH

**I**T is said one must be free from human love if one is to enjoy Divine Love. But to be free is usually taken to mean to reject, to reject naturally by force, that is to say, to coerce, to repress and suppress. "But who can coerce a force of Nature?" the Gita asks. Indeed a force of Nature like human passion cannot be dominated or obliterated by force; it is sure to come back with a redoubled vigour. Nor can such an elemental feeling be overlooked, side-tracked or by-passed. This way also the element is sure to come back and catch you from behind.

The best way to tackle the thing is, as the Mother says, to go through it. To go through means to stand and face it and not run away from it. To go through does not mean, however, to satisfy or to indulge the urge—that makes you a slave of it more and more; you get all the more entangled and can never hope to be free.

You stand and face in order to seize the truth, the reality of the thing you have to deal with. You have to purify it and clean it in order to remove the dust that covers the gold. If it is human love, to purify means to free it from selfishness, from egoistic desire, the sense of possession. Instead, you love simply for the joy of loving without any expectation or demand of return. You find in the end that this way of loving brings to you a greater delight, a new thrill and poignancy, proper to a pure feeling.

Indeed not only love but all human impulses and urges are to be dealt with in the same way. The Gita furnishes a beautiful and crucial example. The Gita teaches man to go through the field of activity and not to reject or avoid it. The whole of the Gita is an ideal lesson in the technique of going through. The Gita says, do not renounce work but dedicate it—not *karmatyāga* but *karmanyāsa*. What does this dedication mean? The first step in the process of dedication is desirelessness—to do work without desire. It is usually thought that desire is the source and origin of work. If you have no desire, you have no need or impulse to work. But this is a very superficial view of things. The impulse for work springs from elsewhere, from a deeper and impersonal source. The true spirit in which you should work is, as the Gita enjoins, to do a work because it is a thing to be done, not because you desire it. So naturally you do not hanker for the fruit of your action. First then, no attachment to the action itself, then no attachment to the fruit that it brings. This can be done only when you are unselfish. Not only unselfishness but you have to go a step farther, to selflessness. So then there are these three stages in the process of dedication or purification. First to work without desire, without attachment to the result of the work. Then you will be able to see that you are an instrument only, the work is being done through you. At the beginning you are a desireless, unselfish doer of works, next you see yourself as a detached witness of your action and finally you see that the action happening in you is Nature working in you, Nature the instrument of the Divine. Finally yourself is no longer there, it is the Divine alone that is and acts.

What has been said of works is true of all activities in man, his thoughts, feelings, impulses, physical acts. It is the process

of going through and meeting the reality beyond, which hides, encloses itself with all its envelopes or coverings which you pass through.

In fact it is to the Divine that the dedication has to be made. Dedication means offering. All works, says the Gita, have to be offered to the Supreme, that is the meaning of sacrifice, the sacrifice of works (Karmayajna), all works come from the Divine and they are to go back to Him, that is how they are purified and through them thus purified and elevated, man attains his goal, union with the Supreme. However, not works alone but each and every element of the human being—even love and passion and all the grosser urges—do come from the only one Source, the Divine. They become impure and distorted, muddy and poisonous when man seeks to appropriate, that is to say, misappropriate them as his own personal belongings. To give up the sense of ownership is the core of dedication. You are not the possessor, the Divine is the only possessor. In fact, you also do not belong to yourself, you belong to the Divine. That is the ceremony of sacrifice you have to undertake—install the Divinity in all your parts and functions. That is how you purify and divinise your human elements. That is how you go through ignorance and mortality and arrive at knowledge and immortality.

#### LIFE IN AND THROUGH DEATH

The soul carries the body even like a corpse, says a scripture. It is a dead inert mass of inconscience weighing upon the conscious being that is behind. Such is the burden of life that the soul bears through its earthly existence. The image is beautifully delineated in the Indian legend of Shiva and Sati. Sati is dead, the bereaved Shiva goes about in anguish with the dead body of Sati flung upon his shoulder. Shiva is to be relieved of this burden, otherwise the creation will go to destruction. The prayer went to Vishnu and Vishnu hurled his discus that cut to pieces the corpse of Sati—the pieces were fifty-two in number—and each spot where a piece, a limb of Sati, fell became a great place of pilgrimage. Even so, the world in its inconscience lies heavy on the secret Consciousness that lies behind. It lies almost smothered under the dead weight of the

inconscious and the unconsciousness. But the Divine Grace has entered into the inertial mass and split it up, entered into each particle as a spark of consciousness to turn gradually the dead matter into a rising and evolving tier of consciousness.

Creation started originally with an absolutely inconscient existence. It is the pressure of an indwelling spirit—the Grace descending into matter—that has forced matter to burst into, to flower into forms of light and consciousness. The pressure is ever-present and the flowering continues into higher and higher modes of the Divine Consciousness. The figure '52' of the mythological legend denotes perhaps the integral multiplicity of the manifested universe. We may suggest an interpretation just to satisfy a mental curiosity:  $52 = 50 + 2$ ; and 50 is  $5 \times 10$ . The number 5 is very well-known as representing the five planes of consciousness, and as there is a descending and an ascending movement in each level—that gives the number 10. And 5 times 10 is 50. This makes up the manifested creation. The remaining two are the Supreme Divine and his Shakti, or two unities at each end—the one above, the one below. This however may be considered as a playful calculation meaning to represent as I said, a multiple integrality of existence.

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The injunction is : you must die to the world if you want the life Eternal. Even so you must die to yourself if you want the Divine. The existing life which your ego has built up is a life of ignorance, misery and decadence. Death is indeed the natural and inevitable consequence; but this is a death in ignorance and bondage, it does not lead you to liberation and freedom. The dying that liberates is a conscious, deliberate movement of intelligence and will; dying to the world means withdrawing yourself from the world and turning within. Dying to yourself means withdrawing from your egohood and turning to the self, the being that is beyond. This withdrawal is to be done constantly and consistently in all the parts of the being. The mind is to move away from its thoughts, the vital from its desires and impulses and the body from its hunger and thirst. The first result of this withdrawal is a division of the being, an inner passive part

and an outer active part. The inner part becomes gradually a mere witness and the outer part a mere mechanical functioning. When the withdrawal is so complete that the outer being or the world has no effect upon the inner, does not raise any ripple in it by its touch or contiguity then is accomplished the real death. Then it is said the outer existence, the material life does not continue long, it comes sooner or later to a dead stop. Thus the inner being is liberated completely and is freed into the life beyond, the Divine Existence, the Brahman. It is said that when each and every seed of the various elements that compose the being, that sprouts into the luxuriant tree of material life, when each and every seed is burnt up by the heat of mounting 'tapas', the force of aspiring consciousness, then there is no more chance or possibility of an ignorant earthly life, one is then naturally born into the Life of the Eternal. That is the final, the supreme death which is *laya* or *pralaya*.

To live away from life and consequently away from death is one thing, comparatively easy; but to live in life and consequently in death is another thing, somewhat more difficult. To withdraw oneself from the field of death and retire in the immutability beyond or some form of it is what was attempted in the ancient days. But there has been side by side always a growing tendency in man to stay here in this vale of tears under the shadow of death, to live dangerously and face the Evil and conquer it here itself; for death is not a mere negation an annihilation of the reality, it is only a mask put over the reality or is its obverse. Tear off or remove the disguise, you will see the smiling radiant Godhead behind.

The gold is there, the purest gold, but it is crusted over with dross. The dross is to be eliminated and the noble metal freed. Indeed each element of the being wherever and whatever it is, each corpuscle, mental, vital or physical is ambivalent—it is a polarised entity consisting of two parts or two ends, one pure, the other impure. The ancients thought that the whole creation is impure, the only pure substance is the Divine. The Sankhya posited clearly the demarcation between Purusha, the Conscious Being secreted above and behind and the entire Prakriti which is absolute unconsciousness. But as we have said, a new revelation has been slowly coming up which speaks of a different conclusion and a different destiny

for man and the universe. Each element of the created universe has a double nature, it is both conscious and unconscious, it is both immortal and mortal. And furthermore, the two are not united or soldered together inextricably so that if one is eliminated the other gets eliminated automatically. Life and death appear to be bound together absolutely and eternally; in fact, however, it is not so. Even in life, Life can be established in its single pure reality free from the normal counter-point of Death. Purusha is not the only conscious element in or above creation. Prakriti is not merely the unconscious being. The unconscious Prakriti is only the apparent aspect of the Higher Prakriti, the Para Prakriti, which is supremely conscious, for it is one with the Supreme Purusha.

This Higher Prakriti is the inner reality of each created cell of the universe. And it is always insisting and working for the elimination of its counter-part, the inferior Prakriti; and evolution, human or cosmic is nothing but the gradual corroding of the inferior Prakriti by the pressure of the Light-Energy of the Higher Prakriti. One day when this lower Prakriti is dissolved in this way in each cell, the fullness of the radiant manifestation, an embodiment of the Divine Reality will be realised upon this material earth made spiritual, in this human body made Divine.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

## FROM THE KARMAYOGIN (1910)

### INDIAN NATIONALISM : (v) REPRESSIVE MEASURES

#### MR. MACKARNES' BILL

WE find in *India* to hand by men last week the full text to Mr. Mackarness' speech in introducing the Bill by which he proposes to amend the Regulation of 1818 and safeguard the liberties of the subject in India. We are by no means enamoured of the step which Mr. Mackarness has taken. We could have understood a proposal to abolish the regulation entirely and disclaimed the necessity or permissibility of coercion in India. This would be a sound Liberal position to take, but it would not have the slightest chance of success in England and would be no more than an emphatic form of protest not expected or intended to go further. British Liberalism is and has always been self-regarding, liberal at home, hankering after benevolent despotism and its inevitable consummation in dependencies. To ask Liberal England to give up the use of coercion in emergencies would be to ask it to contradict a deep-rooted instinct. We could have understood, again, a Bill which while leaving the Government powers of an extraordinary nature to deport the subject, under careful safeguards, in unusual and well defined circumstances and for no more than a fixed period, would yet leave the aggrieved subject an opportunity after his release of vindicating his character and, if it appeared that he had been deported unwarrantably and without due inquiry or in spite of complete innocence, of obtaining fitting compensation. Such an act would meet both the considerations of State and the considerations of justice. It would leave the Government ample power in emergencies but would take from it the freedom to deport out of caprice, panic or unscrupulous reactionism. Deportation would then be a rare act of State necessity, not an autocratic *lettre-de-cachet* used to bolster up injustice or crush all opposition to the continuance of autocratic absolutism. Mr. Mackarness'

Bill seems to us to leave the essence of deportation just where it was before. The changes made are purely palliative and palliative not of the unjust, irritating and odious character of the measure but of the apparent monstrosity of deporting a man without even letting him or his friends of the world know what charge lay against him or whether any charge lay against him. It is this which gives an ultra-Russian character to the Regulation and makes the Liberal conscience queasy. The proposed changes are a salve to that conscience, not a benefit to the victim of deportation. It makes his position, if anything, worse. It is bad to be punished without any charge, it is worse to be punished on a charge which you are debarred to all time from disproving.

There are three changes which the Bill contemplates. Instead of being able to confine a man until farther orders the Viceroy has to renew his sanction every three months, a change which may have some deterrent effect on a Viceroy with a Liberal conscience but to others will mean merely a quarterly expenditure of a drop of ink and a few strokes of the pen. Another and more important change is the provision that, to qualify for deportation, "a British subject must be reasonably suspected of having been guilty of treasonable practices or of a crime punishable by law, being an act of violence or intimidation and tending to interfere with or disturb the maintenance of law and order." "That" thinks Mr. Mackarness "insures in the first place that a man must have been guilty of some definite offence. At any rate it is intended to provide for that." Unfortunately the intention is all, there is no real provision for carrying it out, except the clause that the warrant shall contain a definite statement of the character of the crime. How will this clause help the alleged intention of the Bill? It is only the character of the crime that has to be defined and, if the authorities relying on a Mazrue Haque or a Rakhil Laha frame a charge say against Sjt. Surendranath Banerjee of waging war or abetting or conspiring to wage war or financing unlawful assemblies and incontinently deport him, would the Liberal conscience be satisfied? Or would it be possible for the Moderate leader to meet this charge, however definite in character? It is evident that to carry out the "intention" of the Bill it would be necessary to name the specific act or acts which constitute the offence and the time and circumstances of commission, for it is only a precise accusation that

can be met. Even if a charge be precise in its terms, Mr. Mackarness' Bill provides no redress to the deportee. All that he can do is to submit a "representation" to the officials who have deported him. Those who know the ways of the bureaucrat can tell beforehand the inevitable answer to such representations, "The Government have considered your representation and see no cause to alter the conclusions they had arrived at upon sufficient and reliable information." So the deportation will stand, the charge will stand and the last condition of the deportee will be worst than his first. The only advantage the Bill will secure is the greater opportunities for effective heckling in the House of Commons if facts can be secured which throw doubt on the charge; but the Government has always the answer that its evidence is reliable and conclusive but for reasons of State policy it is not advisable to disclose either its nature or its sources, and the relics of the Liberal conscience will be satisfied. As things stand the deportations have made even some Imperialistic consciences uneasy and that advantage will be lost under the new Bill.

Mr. Mackarness has admitted that the regulations are absolutely hateful and he would prefer to propose their entire abolition if such a proposal had any chance of acceptance by a British House of Commons. His amendments will not make them less hateful, they will only make them less calmly absurd. That is a gain to the Government, not to us or to justice. The only provisions that would make deportation a reasonable though still autocratic measure of a State would be to allow the Viceroy to deport a person, stating the charge against him for a period of not more than six months and oblige the Government to provide the deportee on release with full particulars as to the nature of the information on which he was deported, so that he might seek redress against malicious slander by individuals or, if it were considered impolitic to disclose the sources of information, for wanton and arbitrary imprisonment by the authorities. The measure would still be oppressive but it would then give some chance to an agrieved and innocent man, so long as a sense of justice and some tradition of independence still linger in the higher tribunals of the land. Such a measure would have been a moderate measure and would have left the essential absolutism of Government in India unchanged. But even to this

Bill does not rise. It is noticeable that the only Irish Nationalist whose name was on the Bill repudiated it as soon as he heard Mr. Mackarness' speech, on the ground that he had been under the impression that the Bill went much further than was now stated. The other names were those of British Liberals or Conservatives. This is significant of the difference between the sympathy we may expect even from conscientious English Liberals and the real fellow-feeling of a Nationalist who has himself known what it is to live under the conditions of bureaucratic coercion. Mr. Mackarness has fought the cause of the deportees in the spirit of genuine Liberalism, but his Bill is a concession to that watery British substitute for it which is only Imperialism afraid of its convictions.

### THE POLICE BILL

The Police Bill has passed the Committee and next week, it is rumoured, will be made law. It is a provision for giving absolute power to the police Commissioner and his underlings. It is true that the power is limited in time in certain respects, but so long as it lasts it is arbitrary, absolute, without checks and, practically, without appeal. We hear that the present Police Commissioner resents any proposal to put a check on his absolute power as a personal insult. If so, he is in good company, for he only follows the example of that great philosopher and democratic statesman, Lord Morley, who resents democratic criticism of his measures and actions as a crime and sacrilege and a petty amendment of the present provisions for the deportation of inconvenient persons as a vote of censure. The spirit of absolutism fostered by arbitrary Government in India is not only swallowing up the old British virtues in India itself but encroaching on the free spirit of England. The powers of prohibition, regulation and arrest provided for in the Bill will exalt Mr. Halliday into the Czar of Calcutta. It is noticeable that any man may be arrested for the breach of any law by any policeman without a warrant and be sentenced to a fine of a hundred Rupees or, for certain political offences among others, to a month's hard labour. Any meeting can be stopped for a week at the sweet will and discretion of an individual. The provisions for search and

entry of the police into houses and so called public places are so ample as to give a power of inquisition and domiciliary visit second only to the Russian. Even boardings, messes and private lodging houses are liable to entry at any hour and on any pretext. And by an inspired improvement and the stringent Bombay Act no action of the police, however vexatious unwarranted and malicious, can be punished unless the agrieved party can prove bad faith, a condition which in nine cases out of ten of malicious harrassment is impossible of satisfaction. It is a sound principle that where a citizen has been causelessly harassed, the burden of proving good faith rests on the harasser. An opposite proviso means the destruction of the liberty of the person. No man's personal freedom and dignity henceforth will be safe for a moment from the whims of the lowest policeman in the street. The authorities may say that this is not the purposed object of the Bill. We have nothing to do with the intention of the framers, we have to do only with the provisions of the law itself, and it is enough if all these things are rendered possible under the provisions. To make bad laws and plead good intentions is an old evasion of weak and violent rulers.

#### THE POLITICAL MOTIVE

That there is a political motive behind the Bill, any child can see and to conceal it only the most flimsy precautions have been taken. The prohibitions of public meetings can have no reference to any but Swadeshi meetings, the reference to objectionable cries is obviously aimed at the national cry of Bandemataram and the power of harassing under the pretext of regulation public processions and meetings can have no objective but the revived meetings and processions which have shown that the national movement was not dead but only suspended. Other provisions of the Bill may be dictated by the soul object of strengthening the hands, already overstrong, of the Calcutta Police in keeping order, but the nature and wording of these provisions coupled with the amazingly comprehensive definition of "public place" leave us no option but to see the obvious political motive behind. It is possible for the Police Commissioner under these provisions to paralyze every legitimate form of public activity

in the city of Calcutta. It is no use sheltering under the provisions of the Bombay Act. The Bombay Act has been used to paralyze public activity of a kind inconvenient to the Government in that city. What, moreover, was the necessity of suddenly resorting to the stringency of the Bombay Act at this particular juncture. It is not alleged that any of the meetings or processions recently organised were disorderly or led to disturbance or public inconvenience. The only fresh emergency was the political.

#### A HINT FROM DINAJPUR

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* notices a case from Dinajpur which may give a few hints to Sir Edward Baker if he really wants or is wanted to establish police autocracy in Calcutta. Mr. Garlick there justified the caning of witnesses and accused by the police as a necessary "method of examination" without which the administration of justice in this country cannot be carried on. He says "I dare say the police frequently quickened the witness' answers with a cut from their riding canes. Such *methods of examination* are no doubt to be deprecated but without them I do not suppose the police would get any information at all". The case will come up before the High Court and we await with interest the view that authority will take of this novel legal dictum. Meanwhile why should not Sir Edward Baker take time by the forelock and, after a now familiar method, validate such "methods" beforehand by a clause in his Police Bill empowering any policeman to cut with a cane any citizen whom he may fancy guilty of breaking any law so as to persuade him to desist? Of course the said policeman will not be liable to punishment unless it can be proved that he cut in bad faith.

#### POLITICAL PRISONERS

We extract elsewhere some very telling criticisms from the pen of the well-known positivist Mr. Frederic Harrison on the treatment of political prisoners. This is a subject on which a Nationalist writer is naturally somewhat shy of dilating, as any stress on the brutality and callousness of the treatment to which not only convicted but

undertrial prisoners of gentle birth and breeding are sometime subjected in Indian jails, might be misinterpreted by our opponent as an unwillingness to face the penalties which repressive legislation inflicts on those who cherish great aspirations for their race and country. But two instances have occurred recently which compel attention. One is, the death of the convicted prisoner Ashok Nandi of consumption brought on by exposure and neglect during fever in the undertrial period of the Alipore Case. We exonerate from blame the jail authorities who were exceptionally humane men and would have been glad to deal humanly with the prisoners. But their blamelessness only brings out the barbarity of a system which allows of the confinement of a delicate ailing lad in a punishment cell exposed night after night to the dews and cold of an unhealthy season, and that without his having committed any fault or shown anything but the mildest and most docile of characters. The other case is that of Mr. Achyutrao Kohlatkar of Nagpur, editor of the *Deshsevak*, a gentleman of distinguished education, ability and character, who was convicted for the publication in his paper of the reports of S. J. Aurobindo Ghose's speeches delivered at a time when Mr. Kohlatkar was absent from Nagpur. The Sessions Judge of Alipore declared on the police reports of these speeches that so far from being seditious or violent they told in favour of the speaker and not against him. We find it difficult to believe that the newspaper report of speeches from which the police would extract nothing that was not in the speaker's favour, could be at all seditious. Be that as it may, Mr. Kohlatkar was convicted and perhaps, according to the "strong man" code of ethics, forfeited claim for generous treatment by his refusal to apologise. We have heard rumours of treatment being meted out to him which can only be described as studied brutality and the evidence of eye-witnesses which have seen the condition to which he was reduced, do not encourage us to reject these reports as fabrications. Finally, the refusal of the Central Provinces Government to face independent medical inspection and so dispose of the serious allegations publicly preferred put a very ugly aspect on this case. If the allegations are proved, they amount to a treatment which would evoke the roughest indignation and reprobation in England if applied under the same circumstances in

another country. But we cherish little hope of redress. The prison system of the European nations is only a refined and systematised savagery perpetuating the methods of ancient and mediaeval barbarity in forms that do not at once shock the eye. Besides, the account of the recent starvation strike of the Suffragettes has shown what callous and brutal treatment can be inflicted by English Officials in England itself even on women, and women of education, good birth, position and culture, guilty only of political obstruction and disorderliness. Yet this is the civilisation for which we are asked to sacrifice the inheritance of our forefathers !

#### AN OFFICIAL FREAK

We suppose in a bureaucracy it is inevitable that officials should be masters and be able to inflict inconvenience and loss on the citizen without any means of redress. Last Monday the publication of a new weekly named *Dharma*, edited by Aurobindo Ghosh, was due and had been widely announced. The issue was ready and the printer duly attended the Police Court to declare his responsibility for printing and publishing the periodical. Except under very unusual circumstances this is a mere formality and one would have thought no difficulty could intervene, for nothing could persuade the Court Official to refrain from delaying the acceptance till the next day. It was pointed out that this would entail unnecessary inconvenience and perhaps considerable financial loss, but that naturally did not concern him as he was the master of the public and not their servant. The next day a variation of the same vexatious procedure was repeated. It was whispered, we do not know with what truth, that the first delay was for the Criminal Investigation Department to have time to find out whether the printer had been convicted in any sedition case. If so it was futile delay. There is no concealment of the responsibility with regard to this paper. The name of the editor and proprietor was openly given and the printer was there to accept his responsibility. This does not look like intended sedition. If here were any doubt, the required information could easily have been gained from the Manager of the paper who was present and would no doubt have been glad to save delay and loss by stating the printer's

antecedents. It was not likely that he would conceal a conviction as that would be a thing impossible to suppress. But then, if officialdom were to acquire a common sense, the laws of Nature would be sadly contravened and it is better to inflict loss on individuals than to upset a law of Nature.

### THE LAW AND THE NATIONALIST

There are several points connected with the national movement in which the law is in a state of dangerous uncertainty. The exact limit of sedition is one of them, the matter of social boycott is another. We believe that social boycott involving no violence or direct coercion is perfectly legal but it is certain that not only the Anglo-Indian community at large but a portion of the judiciary would be glad to find it illegal. Any doubt on such subjects ought to be removed, for although ignorance is in itself no excuse in law, it ought to be a defence when it is created by the uncertainties of the law itself. We think the Nationalist ought to take every opportunity of testing the extent of the liberties still allowed to us in the ordinary course of the law. We are aware that a section of Nationalist opinion has held that our principle of Swadeshi-Boycott ought to debar us from taking any part in any legal proceedings whatever. While many of us had openly expressed our admiration for the heroic stoicism with which this principle has been adhered to in many cases, we have not held it binding on any except those fine consciences to whom it appealed nor would we allow it to guide our own action. We hold that no Nationalist should resort to the British Courts under the present political conditions as against a brother Nationalist or in any circumstances which give him a real choice. If he is dragged to the criminal or civil courts by others he is entitled to defend himself to the end by all means that the law provides. If arbitration is refused in a case where his interests are attacked, he is absolved from the self-denying obligation, or if the law of the land compels him as a landholder or propertied or business man to protect himself by certain legal forms, it is obvious that he cannot deny himself that protection without imperilling work or wealth necessary to nation. The same overriding rule of necessity which compels us to exclude machinery

and other instruments of education, work and production from the Boycott, limits the application of the arbitration principle and the abstention from British Courts. Formerly we were content to go our way in doubtful cases, such as the limits of the law of sedition, putting our own interpretation and taking the consequences of a too elastic reading of the law. We even held ourselves justified in the case of unjust and arbitrary laws in breaking them not by violence but peacefully and passively, as the Dissenters did in England, so as to get them either tested or altered. This we still hold to be morally and politically justifiable. But the outbreak of Terrorism compels us to restrict our circle of passive resistance lest even by the most peaceful rejection of unjust laws we should seem to be encouraging lawlessness and disorder. Still, if we are to observe the law scrupulously, just or unjust, we must know what the law is and now that there is a man at the head of judicial administration who knows the law and tries to keep to it, we ought to take advantage of this now unusual circumstance, and use every opportunity to fix the legal position of our movement and its methods.

#### AN EXTRAORDINARY PROHIBITION

Pandit Bhoje Dutt of Agra has been in our midst for some time, and none had hitherto imagined that he was a political agitator or his teachings dangerous to the public peace. We all knew him as secretary of the Suddhi Samaj, a religious body having for its object the re-admission of converts from Hinduism into the fold of the religion and also, we believe, the admission of converts to Hinduism from other religions into Hindu society with the full status of Hindus. The society has been working for sometime with signal success and no breach of the law or the peace. Yet the other day Mr. Swinhoe thought fit to prohibit the Pandit from lecturing in Calcutta and the public from attending his lectures for the space of two months. We reproduce the order as it accords singularly clear proof of the contention, always advanced by Nationalists, that under the present system such public liberty as we enjoy, is not an ensured right but an insecure concession, based not on status but on permission, and therefore not, properly speaking, a liberty at all. It runs :—

“Whereas it has been made to appear to me by evidence adduced

before me that Pandit Bhoje Dutt, political agitator and Editor of the vernacular paper "Musafir Arya", Agra, has arrived in Calcutta and intends to lecture in the Albert Hall in Calcutta this evening at 8 p.m. on the subject of "Musulman logonke barkhilaf" i.e. against the interests of Mohamedans :—

And whereas I am satisfied that such lecturing or preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt at any place or in any building in Calcutta may lead to serious disturbance of the public tranquillity and rioting which will be a source of danger to human life and public safety :—

And whereas I am satisfied that the immediate prevention of such lecturing and preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt within the town of Calcutta is necessary in the interests of human life and safety and in order to prevent any riot or affray, I do hereby under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code order and direct the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt to refrain from delivering any lecture or preaching or holding or taking part in any meeting within the town of Calcutta, and I hereby direct the public generally to refrain from attending or taking part in any lecture or preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt and to refrain from attending or taking any part in any meeting or meetings held by or on behalf of the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt in the town of Calcutta and I further direct that this order shall remain in force for a period of two months from the date thereof.

Given under my hand and seal of this Court dated the 25th September 1909".

The value of the evidence which so easily satisfied Mr. Swinhoe may be judged from its inaccuracy and triviality. Pandit Bhoje Dutt is not a political agitator, but a religious preacher and social reformer; the proposed lecture had nothing to do with the Mahomedans and was upon the Hindu Puranas, and there was no breach of peace or any approach to a breach of the peace at Monghyr. So much for the accuracy. Secondly, Mr. Swinhoe ought to have known that, although a lecture may be against the interests of the Mahomedans, "against the interests of the Mahomedans" cannot be the title or subject of a lecture, and we can only suppose that this satisfactory witness was a badly-educated detective or informer who either did not know his own meaning or could not make it clear to Mr. Swinhoe. Nor is it alleged that the preaching in Monghyr resulted in a breach of the

peace, only that it merely so resulted. On such incorrect and flimsy evidence, given *ex parte* and without any opportunity to the lecturer to expose its falsity, a magistrate is able and willing to deprive a citizen of his civic rights for two months and hamper a legitimate movement. If, after proper enquiry, the Magistrate had found that there was likely to be anything inflammatory in the lecture, he could have stopped the speaker from giving that or any similar lecture, but, even so, there would be no ground for a prolonged denial of civic rights. Further, it is not enough that a lecture should be against the interests of any community, for there may be such a thing as legitimate opposition of interests; the conversion of Hindus to Mahomedanism is against the interests of Hindus and the conversion of Mahomedans to Hinduism is against the interest of Mahomedans, but neither religion can, on that ground be denied the right of proselytisation. If it be argued that whatever the exercise of legitimate rights may lead to a breach of the peace, that exercise may be stopped, we say that this is a most dangerous principle, since it would be enough for any section of the community to break or threaten to break the peace to stop others from the exercise of their legitimate rights. On such grounds Mr. Asquith should be barred from holding any meeting because the suffragettes climb walls and throw stones wherever he goes ! Such a principle simply means putting a premium upon lawlessness. In other countries the indiscreet use of powers by Magistrates is restrained by public opinion but in India there is no such safeguard.

(Since the above was in type, the Police have undertaken to prove their statements, and the facts stated above must be taken as Pandit Bhoje Dutt's side of the case. Our general criticisms of the policy of the order remain unaffected. The chance now given to the Police to substantiate their case ought to have been given to the Pandit before the order was passed.—Ed.)

#### THE PATIALA ARRESTS

For sometime past the Native States of Rajputana and Punjab have been vying with each other in promulgations and legislations of a drastic character against sedition and conspiracy. The object of these edicts seems to be to stifle all agitation, all semblance of any

political thought and activity that may be directed against the existing state of things not in the States themselves but in British India. Otherwise, it is impossible to account for the draconian severity of the language and substance of these ukases or the foolish thoroughness of some of the measures adopted, such as the prohibition of entry of even the colourless papers like the *Bengali*. The exponents of Anglo-Indian opinion point triumphantly to these measures both as a proof of aristocratic loyalty to British officialdom and as an index of the civility with which the agitation would be visited if, instead of the misplaced leniency of British bureaucrats, we were exposed to the ruthlessness of an indigenous government. As every Indian knows, these self-gratulations are insincere and meaningless. The majority of Native States are wholly under the thumb of the Resident and, with the exception of one or two independent princes, like the Gae-kwar, neither Maharaja nor Council of Administration can call their souls their own. On all this comes the commotion in Patiala. The Patiala conspiracy has yet to be proved to be more real than the Midnapur specimen. But, if all is true that is being asserted in the Punjab press as to the refusal of the most ordinary privileges of defence to the numerous accused and the amazing and successful defiance of High Court orders by Mr. Warburton, the police are not going the best way to convince the public opinion on this point. The facts stated amount to a guess and shameless denial of justice. We do not blame the young Maharaja for his inability to interfere in favour of the oppressed victims of police rule. We know how helpless the princes are in the face of an Anglo-Indian Resident or employee and we wholly discredit the newspaper assertion that these strange proceedings were initiated or are willingly countenanced by him. It was first asserted that—as usual!—the police had full evidence and information in their hands. The present delay and sufferings entailed prove sufficiently that they had nothing of the kind—again, as usual. The arrested Arya Samajists may be innocent or guilty, but the procedure used against them would be tolerated in no country where law and equity were supreme.

(To be continued)

SRI AUROBINDO

## SRI AUROBINDO AND THE NEW AGE

### CHAPTER IV

## FROM THE RENAISSANCE TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT

### WESTERN LITERATURE

#### FRENCH LITERATURE (*Continued*)

#### JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU (1712-1778)

WE have seen how the French philosophers of the eighteenth century with Voltaire at their head strove to exalt reason to the rank of the supreme guide and judge of human life and do away with religion and all that it meant to them—irrational faith, crude superstitions, outworn conventions, and the blind allegiance of man to dead and senseless dogmas. They laughed to scorn the sacrosanct authority of the Church and dreamed of the social progress and individual freedom and advancement to be achieved by rationalism. They emphasised and inculcated what was already in the air, inspiring all contemporary philosophical and social thinking. They were inheritors of their immediate past, ardent followers of Descartes. But new ideas, new forces were now stirring in human nature, and it was high time their exclusive cult of reason was dislodged from its high throne. For, man is not all reason, all intellect; he has also a heart of feelings and passions; and however much reason may try to snub or suppress it by its arid glare, it throws up its foaming surges and undermines what reason has toiled to build. A natural reaction against the deification of reason set in. The voice of the heart struggled to express itself, and its deeper feelings and beliefs panted to recover the eternal object of their seeking, that without which the triumphant reign of reason seemed barren and vapid. This voice found its mouthpiece in France in Jean-Jacques Rousseau. But Rousseau was a prophet who did not understand the whole import and significance of what heaved in his own breast and boiled in his own blood. He delivered

his message in stinging half-truths, naive paradoxes, and clumsy but eloquent contradictions. Though he took the literary world in France by storm and powerfully struck kindred chords in Germany, Italy and other parts of Europe, his gospel had but a potential success in his time—it bore abundant fruit in the near future, in the French Revolution, in the Romantic movement in literature, in the general recognition of the dignity and rights of the individual, and the enfranchisement of humanity from the fetters of feudalism and luxurious capitalistic aristocracy. As Goethe says, an old world ended with Voltaire, and a new world was born with Rousseau.

Rousseau called man to the simplicity, the naturalness, the unspoilt goodness of the primitive. Return to Nature by breaking out of the meshes of civilisation, he cried. The florid conventions, the gilded artificialities, the sophisticated amenities of civilisation choke the springs of simple sincerity and goodness in man. Civilisation dehumanises and mechanises man and leads him to duplicity, wickedness, and corruption. Shorn of its obvious extravagances, Rousseau's gospel finds an echo in every thinking being, as indeed, it did, later, in Whitman, Emerson, Thoreau, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Tolstoy.

In politics Rousseau fought for the common man and the community. He railed against the unequal possession of property. Property is the source of all social evils, he thundered—it leads to more and more exploitation, injustice, oppression etc. Some of his utterances have become the stock affirmation of socialism and communism. He was also a powerful and eloquent champion of the dignity and rights of the individual, Tyranny must be struck down and the liberty and dignity of man must be restored and safeguarded at all cost. His message contained some of the seminal ideas which govern even modern society and politics. His book, the *Contract Social*, exercised for about two centuries a profounder and more expansive influence than any other book of the eighteenth century. It became the Bible of the French revolutionaries, and a host of thinkers like Schiller and Hegel, Marx and Lenin were impregnated with its political ideas. He preached both individualism and socialism without being able to effect their reconciliation. He dreamed of an absolute State that would administer justice and fairplay and guarantee the freedom of each individual. But such a state has never come into existence.

What has actually come is a monolithic, authoritarian State nourished on the gospel of dialectical materialism in which the individuality of man is ground out of existence.

In education Rousseau's contribution is being more and more recognised as the days pass. The return to the simplicity of Nature, elimination of the treadmill of enormous text-books, training of the senses, development of the faculty of reflection and imagination, appreciation of Nature and a sympathetic response to its changing moods and aspects, and, above all, cultivation of music and the building up of a sound body, are some of the cardinal features of the education to which humanity is slowly awaking.

In religion and ethics his influence had a far-reaching success. He was no believer in institutional Christianity and dogmatic theology, but he was an ardent believer in God and fully realised the elevating power of religion and morals. Kant acknowledged his indebtedness to Rousseau in his conception of the moral life, and the subsequent, though not immediate, literary and philosophical thought of France throbbed and sparkled with something of the mediæval faith. But it was a faith that blossomed in the light of reason and was not tainted by the old theological and superstitious orthodoxies.

To literature Rousseau's gifts were immense and varied. His "La Nouvelle Histoire" and "Confessions" infused the lyrical, romantic spirit, the zest for psychological exploration, and the love of Nature, which creations of the rationalists of his time so woefully lacked.

Herder and Goethe in Germany were influenced by Rousseau's vivid, idealistic, passionate romanticism and his thrilled delight in the beauties of Nature. Introspection, reverie and meditation, and the revelation of the instincts and impulses that prompt human actions gradually came to prevail in poetry, in fiction, and in other literary productions as a result of his impact. Rousseau's multiple contribution to literature, politics and education has not yet been adequately assessed. It is a pity a great prophetic genius was wrecked on the shoals of his own mental confusion and fantasies, and incredible temperamental oddities.

I have devoted a rather disproportionately large space to a survey of French literature, because it seemed to me that French

language and literature, which exerted a great cultural influence practically over the whole of Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, merited it.

I shall now pass in rapid review the contributions of English and German literatures from the Renaissance to the close of the eighteenth century and then take up a survey of the nineteenth.

*(To be continued)*

RISHABHCHAND

## OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

## (Charyapada)

## III

- She is the common ale-wife, she goes into both the rooms : (1)  
 She binds the ale tight with thongs of bark. (2)  
 Oh, fix the Simplicity and bind the ale tight, (3)  
 So mayst thou be ageless and deathless and carry solid shoulders (4)  
 The ten doors are marked : (5)  
 The customer observes it and comes by himself : (6)  
 The wine has been poured into the 65 jars (7)  
 Once the customer enters, there is no more exit for him. (8)  
 There is one jar and there is one thin spout. (9)  
 Birube says : steady your move. (10)

## Notes

(1) The divine soul or consciousness in man embraces both the sphere of consciousness, the higher and the lower.

(2) That central consciousness hoards the delight, keeps it tight bound in the depth of the heart, so that it may not be spilt and spoilt—the material sheath with its teguments and ligaments must be strong and make a resisting armour.

(3) The supreme consciousness is simplicity itself. What can be more simple than Zero (Nirvana)? One who follows, adheres to simplicity is the Simple Man (Sahaja). This simple single consciousness is to be affirmed, firmly established in this material frame, the body—which is to be made fit so that it may hold that delightful consciousness.

(5) The ten sense-instruments (*indriyas*) through which the consciousness passes in and out. They are to be vigilant and stamped with the seal of the supreme consciousness.

(6) The customer is the divine self, the true individual in man.

(7) The complete number of the principles or elements of the human vessel.

(8) Once you have the divine delight and enter into it you can no longer be satisfied with anything else less.

(9) Truth is one and there is only one expression—that of the straight and narrow path.

(10) Drink but do not be drunk—steady and balanced and firm must be the frame that holds and expresses the divine consciousness and delight.

IV

O my mate, press triply and embrace me fast. (1)

The lotus and the thunder shall meet and I shall pass beyond time. (2)

O my mate, without you I cannot live a moment. (3)

I drink from your lips the very sap of the lotus. (4)

What I cast upward, my love, cannot be kept down here below. (5)

Climb towards the jewel centre and enter into the beyond. (6)

The room of the mother-in-law is under lock and key (7)

Cut away the wings, the sun and the moon. (8)

Gundari says I am a heroic reveller (9)

Between the man and the woman the victory banner is uplifted. (10)

(1) Triply—mind, life and body—*bhūr-bhuvar-svar*

(2) Lotus—the Heart Centre—The Divine within;

Thunder—The Crown Centre—The Divine above

(5) The Consciousness—moves upward, it cannot be tied down upon the earth

(6) Jewel Centre—*manipur*, Solar plexus,

(7) Mother-in-law—ordinary consciousness

(8) Sun and Moon—day and night, the cycle of ordinary consciousness

(10) Purusha and Prakriti in right relation means the victory of the Supreme Consciousness.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

## THE LIFE DIVINE

### (BRIEF SUMMARY)

#### CHAPTER XIX

##### LIFE

**M**IND as a final action of Supermind is a creative and not only a perceptive power; in fact, material force itself being only a will in things working darkly as the expression of subconscious Mind, Mind is the immediate creator of the material universe. But the real creator is Supermind; for wherever there is Mind conscious or or subconscious, there must be Supermind regulating from behind the veil its activities and educing from them their truth of inevitable result. Not a mental Intelligence, but Supermind is the creator of the universe.—Mind manifests itself in the form of Force and Life to which we give the name of Life, and Life in Matter is an energy or power in dynamic movement which builds up forms, energies, maintains, disintegrates and recreates; death itself is only a process of life. It is one all-pervading Life or constant movement of dynamic energy which creates all these forms of the material universe and is not destroyed in the destruction of its forms.—The distinction between animal and plant life is unreal and that between the animate and the inanimate unessential. Plant-life has been found to be identical in organisation with animal life and, although the organisation may differ, life is also present in the metal, the earth, the atom. This life-force pervades the universe and is present in every form of it and there is a constant interchange of its energies which creates the symptoms and characteristics of vitality recognised by us; but even where these are suspended, Life is present and only withdraws by a process of dispersion which replaces the process of continual reconstitution of the form. The presence of these symptoms and characteristics is not the essential nor is their absence a sign of the absence of Life-force. Even where we do not detect Life, it exists.—Conscious nervous sensation accompanies life in the animal, but much of the action of

nervous or life energy is subconscious; in the plant, as in many actions of man, the nervous sensation is present but the mentality of the sensation is subconscious. In the very atom there is a subconscious will and desire which must also be present in all atomic aggregates because they are present in the Force which constitutes the atom. That force is Chit-shakti, force of conscious being, variously represented in various forms of life.—Life is an energising of conscious being in substance of Matter, which on one side is constantly supplying the material of physical formation and on the other labouring to release mind and sense from their subconscious sleep in Matter. It is therefore the dynamic link between Mind and Matter. To create form and evolve consciousness out of its imprisonment in form is the sense of the omnipresent Life in the universe.

## CHAPTER XX

### DEATH, DESIRE AND INCAPACITY

Life is the same whatever its workings and its terms need not be limited to those proper to physical existence. Life is a final operation of divine conscious-force for individualising existence; it is the energy-aspect of Mind when that creates and relates itself to form of substance : it has all the universal conscious-force of existence behind it and is not a separate entity or movement. Life in us must become conscious of this divine Force behind it in order to become divine.—Life, at first darkened, ignorant, divided and helplessly subject, seeks as it develops to become master and enjoyer, to grow in Power; but until it escapes from the bonds of individuality it must be subject to its three badges of limitation, Death, Desire and Incapacity.—The nature of physical life imposes death because all life exists by a mutual devouring and struggle and Life itself feeds upon the forms it creates; but the fundamental justification of Death is, the necessity of a constant variation of experience in succession of Time, the soul seeking thus to enlarge itself and move towards the realisation of its own infinity.—The process of Death results inevitably from the division of substance; life's attempt to aggrandise its being thus divided and limited translates itself into the hunger that devours. This hunger is

the crude form of Death, and Desire is the necessary lever for self-affirmation; but eventually Desire is to grow out of the law of Hunger into the law of Love.—Desire itself is the result of the limitation of capacity which is the consequence of divided Life working as the energy of ignorant mind, all-force being only possible to all-knowledge. Therefore growth by struggle is the third Law of Life. This strife again has to divinise itself and become the clasp of Love. Until then Death, Desire and Strife are and must be the triple mask of the divine Life-principle in its cosmic self-affirmation.

### CHAPTER XXI

#### THE ASCENT OF LIFE

The development of Life starts from an original status of division, subconscious will and inert subjection to mechanical forces. This is the type of material existence.—The terms of the second status which we recognise as vitality, are death, hunger and conscious desire, sense of limited capacity and struggle for survival and mastery. This is the basis of the Darwinian conception of Life, the struggle for life and the survival of the fittest. But this struggle involves a third status whose preparation is marked by the emergence of the conscious principle of love.—The third status contradicts the others in appearance, but really fulfils them. Life begins with division and aggregation based on the refusal of the atom, the first principle of ego and individuality to accept death and fusion by dissolution. This gives a firm basis for the creation of aggregate forms to be occupied by vital and mental individualities. In the next stage we have the general principle of death and dissolution by which the individual form fuses itself in its elements into other lives. This principle of constant fusion and interchange is the law of Life and extends into vital and mental existence as well as the physical. The two principles of individual persistence and mutual fusion have to be harmonised and this can only be done by the emergence and full development of mind which alone is subtle enough to persist in individual consciousness beyond all fusion and dissolution of forms. Here the union and the harmony of the persistent individual and the persistent aggregate

life becomes possible.—Love is the power by which the union and harmony are worked out; for love exists by the persistence of the individual and his conscious acceptance of the necessity and desire of interchange and self-giving. Its growth means the emergence of Mind imposing its law on the material existence, for Mind does not need to devour in order to possess and grow; it increases by giving and confirms itself by fusion with others.—Subconscious will in the atom becomes hunger and conscious desire in the vital being. Love is the transfiguration of desire, a desire of possessing others but also of self-giving; at first subject to hunger and the desire of possession it reveals its own true law by an equal or greater joy in self-giving.—The inert subjection of the will in the atom to the not-self becomes in the vital being the sense of limited capacity and the struggle for possession and mastery. In the third status the not-self is recognised as a greater self and subjection to its law and need freely accepted; at the same time the individual by making the aggregate life and all it has to give his own, fulfils his impulse of possession. This is the Mind's reconciliation of the two conflicting principles which we find at the root of all existence.—But the true and perfect reconciliation can only come by passing beyond Mind and founding all the operations of life on the essential freedom and unity of the spirit.

SRI AUROBINDO

(From the *Arya*)

## THE SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

### III. THE WAKING STATE AND THE 'WHY' OF SAMADHI-PLUNGE

Above us dwells a superconscient god  
Hidden in the mystery of his own light :  
Around us is a vast of ignorance  
Lit by the uncertain ray of the human mind,  
Below us sleeps the Inconscient dark and mute.

(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Bk. VII, C. II)

Since mind-consciousness is the sole waking state possessed by mental being,...it cannot ordinarily quite enter into another without leaving behind completely both all our waking existence and all our inward mind. This is the necessity of the Yogic trance.

(Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 452)

To enter into Samadhi is to pass into a state of which no conscious memory remains on awakening.

....When people speak of samadhi, I tell them, "Well, try to develop your inner individuality and you can enter into these very regions in full consciousness, with the delight of communion with the highest regions without losing consciousness for that and returning with a zero instead of an experience."

(The Mother, *Bulletin*, Vol. XIV No. 3, pp. 43-45)

Yes, they (all the states of higher realisation) can be attained even in full activity: Trance is not essential.

(Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, p. 715)

**A** THOROUGHGOING psychological self-investigation far transcending its present artificial bounds, an occult-spiritual exploration of the total field of our being, reveals the truth that what we normally know of ourselves is not all we are : it is no more than

'a bubble on the ocean of our existence.' Indeed, apart from the very insignificant and restricted part of our waking individual consciousness, we are normally perfectly ignorant of the whole of the rest of our being, 'the immense more', that lies hidden in apparently inaccessible "reaches of being which descend into the profoundest depths of the subconscious and rise to highest peaks of superconscience, or which surround our little field of our waking self with a wide circumconscient existence of which our mind and sense catch only a few indications."<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact, following the ancient Wisdom of the Upanishads,<sup>2</sup> we can broadly divide the totality of our existence into four provinces or states: the 'waking state' or *jāgrat*, the subliminal or the 'dream-state' (*svapna*), the superconscient or the 'sleep-state' (*susupti*) and finally the state beyond or the 'ultimate state' (*turīya*). Corresponding to these four states of our existence, we have in us four selves or rather the four-fold status of the one self that is Brahman: the waking self or *Vaiśvānara*, the Waker; the dream-self or *Taijasa*, the Dreamer; the sleep-self or *Prājña*, the Sleeper; and finally the supreme or absolute self of being, the Fourth (*caturtha*), the Incommunicable (*avyavahārya*), the One without second (*advaita*), of which the three before are derivations.

In less abstruse and mystical terms, we may state that the four-fold scale of being delineated above represents, so to say, the 'degrees of the ladder of being' that an embodied soul must successively attain if he would seek to climb back from his phenomenal and ignorant self-view towards the supreme superconscience of the highest state of his self-being. But what are the essential traits of these four statuses?

*The Waking State:* Our waking consciousness, the consciousness that we normally possess and that is dominated by the physical mind, is a limping surface consciousness shut up in the body limitation and within the confines of the little bit of personal mind. We are ordinarily aware only of our surface selves and quite ignorant of all that functions behind the veil. And yet "what is on the surface, what we know or think we know of ourselves and even believe that that is all we are,

<sup>1</sup> *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 592.

<sup>2</sup> Vide, in particular, *Mandukya Upanishad* and *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

is only a small part of our being"<sup>1</sup>, and by far the larger part lies hidden "behind the frontal consciousness, behind the veil, occult and known only by an occult knowledge."<sup>2</sup>

While in this normal waking consciousness, a man becomes externalised and gazes outward and rarely if ever inward (*param paśyati nāntarātman*).<sup>3</sup> Hence the self in this status of external wakefulness has been described as 'wise of the outward' (*jāgaritasthāno bahiḥ-prajñah*).<sup>4</sup> No spiritual life or any higher or deeper realisation becomes possible if one remains fettered to this waking state.

*The Dream-State* : This represents the subliminal condition of our conscious existence, the large luminous realm of interior consciousness, that corresponds to the subtler life-plane, the mind-plane and even a subtle physical plane of our being. Indeed, behind our outer existence, our outer mind and life and body,

Our larger being sits behind cryptic walls :

There are greatnesses hidden in our unseen parts

That wait their hour to step into life's front :

Our inner Mind dwells in a larger light,

Its brightness looks at us through hidden doors;

A mighty life-self with its inner powers

Supports the dwarfish modicum we call life;

Our body's subtle self is throned within

In its viewless palace of veridical dreams.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, the subliminal reach of our being comprises our inner existence, that is to say, our inner mind, inner life and inner physical with the soul or psychic entity supporting them all. It is of the nature of a secret intraconscious and circumconscious awareness in full possession of a brilliant mind power, a limpid life-force and an unclouded subtle-physical sense of things.

<sup>1</sup> & <sup>2</sup> *On Yoga II*, p. 353.

<sup>3</sup> *Katha Upanishad*, II.1.1.

<sup>4</sup> *Mandukya Upanishad*, 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Savitri*, Bk. VII, C. II, p. 128.

It is in this subliminal realm of our interior existence, the realm of subtle subjective supraphysical experiences and of dreams and visions and heavenly intimations, a veritable world of wonderful illuminations, that our mind and vital being retire when they withdraw by inward-drawn concentration from their absorption in surface activities.

It is because of its inward plunge bringing in its train a wealth of inner experiences, dreams and visions, that the self in this status has been termed the 'dream-self that is wise of the inward' (*Svapna-sthāno'ntahprajñah*).<sup>1</sup>

*The Sleep-State* : This corresponds to a still higher super-conscious status, a state of pure consciousness (*prajñānaghana*)<sup>2</sup>, pure bliss (*ānandamaya hyānandabhuk*)<sup>3</sup> and pure mastery (*sarveśvara*)<sup>4</sup>. This exalted state of self-absorbed consciousness is called 'sleep' because all mental or sensory experiences cease when we enter this superconscience. This 'dreamless sleep state' (*yata supto...na kañcana svapnam paśyati*)<sup>5</sup> this status of massed consciousness and omnipotent Intelligence (*sarveśvara sarvajña*)<sup>6</sup>, contains in it "all the powers of being but all compressed within itself and concentrated solely on itself and, when active, then active in a consciousness where all is the self."<sup>7</sup> It is in this superconscious 'sleep-state' that we become "inherently and intrinsically conscious of our self and spirit, not as here below by a reflection in silent mind or by acquisition of the knowledge of a hidden Being within us; it is through it, through that ether of superconscience, that we can pass to a supreme status, knowledge, experience."<sup>8</sup>

*The Turīya State* : This corresponds to the highest status far transcending the first three, being the status of pure self-existence and absolute being, where consciousness and unconsciousness as we actually conceive of both lose their validity. It is the supreme state of Sachchidananda, 'a state of superconscience absorbed in its self-existence, in a self-silence or a self-ecstasy.'

<sup>1</sup> *Mandukya Upanishad*, 4.

<sup>2,3,5</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>4,6</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>7</sup> *The Life Divine*, p. 405 f.n.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 501.

About the self of this fourth or the Turiya state, the Mandukya Upanishad speaks :

“He who is neither inward-wise, nor outward-wise, nor both inward and outward wise, nor wisdom self-gathered, nor possessed of wisdom, nor unpossessed of wisdom, He who is unseen and incommunicable, unscizable, featureless, unthinkable, and unnameable, Whose essentiality is awareness of the Self in its single existence, in Whom all phenomena dissolve, Who is Calm, Who is Good, Who is is One than Whom there is no other, Him they deem the fourth : He is the Self, He is the object of Knowledge.”<sup>1</sup>

Such is then the fourfold divisions of the totality of our existence, and true knowledge, that is to say, spiritual knowledge about our self-being as well as about the world-being becomes available to us only when we succeed in establishing a conscious rapport with the subliminal and the now superconscious realms of our being. But unfortunately our waking state is blissfully ignorant of its connection with or even the very existence of these supernal reaches. So the goal of Yoga which is essentially an attempt at arriving at an integral self-knowledge, an entire consciousness and power of being and a supreme union or unity with Sachchidananda, the Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, can be attained only by a progressive ascension of the mind to higher and still higher planes or degrees of consciousness.

But here a serious and seemingly insuperable hitch presents itself. For mind is the sole waking consciousness actually possessed by man the mental being and this mind in its actuality completely fails to remain awake, beyond a certain line, in the really higher states of realisation where the heightened and intensified spiritual experiences are in the nature of thing sought. This almost absolute incompatibility of our waking mentality with the highest ranges of spiritual consciousness is strikingly brought out in the following very interesting account of Sri Ramakrishna's repeated failures to remain physically awake on the summits of realisation. Swami Saradananda, one of the closest direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and the writer of his authoritative biography, is reporting :

<sup>1</sup> *Mandukya Upanishad*, 7 (Sri Aurobindo's translation).

“In how simple terms the Thakur (i.e. Sri Ramakrishna) used to explain to us these abstruse truths of spiritual life :

“ ‘Well, something rises from my feet and climbs towards the head. So long as it does not reach the head, I retain consciousness; but as soon as it reaches there, an *utter forgetfulness* overtakes me—then there is no more seeing or hearing, far be it to speak of talking.’ Who would speak then ?—The very sense of ‘I’ and ‘Thou’ vanishes altogether ! I often decide to speak everything to you, all about the visions and experiences that accompany this ascension. So long as that has reached so far (pointing to his heart) or even so far (pointing to his throat), reporting is possible and in fact I report; but as soon as that transcends this region (pointing to his throat), it seems *somebody shuts my mouth* and I fail to control my forgetfulness ! (Pointing to his throat) when one ascends still further than this level, no sooner than I contemplate for a moment to speak of the visions and experiences there, the mind immediately shoots upwards and *no reporting becomes any more possible !*”

“Oh, innumerable are the occasions when the Thakur sought to exercise the utmost control over himself so that he could report to us about the types of experiences that one has when the mind transcends the throat-centre but each time he failed !... One day he emphatically stated :

“ ‘Today I must speak to you everything, not a bit would I hide’—and he started to speak. He could very well speak all about the centres upto the heart and the throat, and then pointing to the junction of his eye-brows he said, ‘Whenever the mind ascends here, the embodied soul has a vision of the supreme Self and goes into Samadhi. Then there exists but a thin transparent veil between the individual Self and the Supreme. And there the soul experiences in this way—’ Speaking so far, as soon as he started detailing the realisation of the Supreme, he went into the Samadhi state. After coming out of his trance state, he recommenced reporting again, but again went into Samadhi. After such *repeated attempts and failures* he spoke to us with tears in his eyes :

“ ‘My sons, my intention is to report to you everything without hiding the least bit of it : but the Mother won’t allow me to speak—She completely shut my mouth !’”

“We wondered at this and thought : ‘How strange ! It is apparent that he is trying to report and that he is even suffering because of his failure to do so, but he seems to be altogether helpless in this matter—Surely the Mother must have been very naughty indeed ! He wants to speak about holy things, about the vision of God, and it is surely odd that She should shut his mouth !’

“We did not know at that time that the mind’s range is indeed very much limited and that, unless one proceeds farther than its farthest reach, one cannot expect to have the realisation of the Supreme ! In our innocence we could not understand at that time that out of sheer love for us the Thakur was attempting the impossible !”<sup>1</sup>

Sri Ramakrishna himself, in his inimitable style, emphasised on more than one occasion this fact of the inability of our mind-consciousness to retain its ‘power of conscious discernment and defining experience’ when it rises to the superconscient heights. He said :

“What happens when the mind reaches the seventh plane (and goes into Samadhi) cannot be described. Once a boat enters the ‘black waters’ of the ocean, it does not return. Nobody knows what happens to the boat after that. Therefore the boat (i.e. Mind) cannot give us any information about the ocean.

“Once a salt doll went to measure the depth of the ocean. No sooner did it enter the water than it melted. Now, who would tell how deep the ocean was ?”<sup>2</sup>

So it is seen that in the actual state of our evolved waking existence the ascension and entry into the higher realms of our being becomes at all possible *only by receding farther and farther from the waking mentality*, by withdrawing from and losing touch with the dynamic surface life and taking a plunge into the immobile or ecstatic trance of absorbed superconscience. And herein lies for the spiritual seeker the necessity or even the inevitability of the Yogic trance state, so much so that it is emphatically asserted that Samadhi is “not only a supreme means of arriving at the highest consciousness,

<sup>1</sup> Swami Saradananda, Sri Ramakrishna Lila-Prasanga (Gurubhava, Purvardha), pp. 64-66.

<sup>2</sup> *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 101.

but...the very condition and status of that highest consciousness itself, in which alone it can be completely possessed and enjoyed while we are in the body."<sup>1</sup>

But in that case our goal of dynamic divinisation of life becomes foredoomed to failure. So we must now see whether the trance can be progressively transformed into a waking Samadhi and its spiritual gains made manifest and active even in our waking existence.

### JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

<sup>1</sup> *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 601.

## TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

### CHAPTER XV

## THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY

**I**F there is any religion, any cult or creed which is followed today with unfeigned interest, it is humanism or the religion or cult of humanity. It is believed that there is no better self-fulfilment than in the service of humanity, no more fruitful sacrifice than the sacrifice for the good of one's fellow-men, and no greater test of selflessness than philanthropic or humanitarian pursuit. "I must devote my life and all I possess to doing whatever I can to improve the lot of my fellow beings", says the modern humanist of the noblest type, "and try my best to bring a glint of light into the darkness of ignorant minds, raise a ripple of joyous laughter in despondent faces, and kindle a spark of hope in hearts that are sad and heavy-laden. What better use can there be of my life?" Such is the thought and such the feeling that inspire those who are considered today the salt of the earth. Service of humanity is thus fully justified in the eyes of those who undertake it and glorified and extolled by those who benefit by it. It appears to be the best means of surpassing one's egoistic self and entering into the stream of universal life.

In fact, doing good to man has always been an important tenet of all world religions and an ideal of all ethical culture. From almsgiving and feeding the starving, to healing the sick, helping the needy, protecting the weak, and instructing the ignorant, all manner of philanthropic work has always engaged the mind and energies of religious and ethical people. Today when religion is under a cloud and even ethics scouted as a relic of cramping tradition, humanism is considered in a scientific spirit, as an important component of modern culture, and a practice of it indispensable to the fulness of a sophisticated life. Though the welfare of humanity has come to be equated with its physical well-being, its deeper ingredients have not been altogether forgotten. There is a steadily growing awareness of an integrated perfection of man and a drive towards its

realisation by corporate effort. Perfection, unity, peace are among the principal objects of modern human endeavour at its best, and he must be a cynic who cries it down as a vain or transitory flourish of an unrealistic idealism. Indeed, since the Renaissance in the West, humanism has sought to claim the allegiance of all progressive minds. "The greatest good of the greatest number" has been the watchword of modern civilisation. The meaning the Renaissance attached to the word humanism has undergone such a change that, except in the "humanities" of university education, it retains nothing of its primal connotation. Particularly, since the eighteenth century, there have been propounded various ideals of humanitarian work, and many institutions have been founded to mobilise the philanthropic ideas, energies and material resources of men, so that human life may be better, healthier, saner, and more harmoniously happy and prosperous. The Unesco with its many-branching activities has established itself as a salutary force for human development and well-being.

It may be contended that much of this work is being crossed and perverted by political motives, and that what little is achieved is neutralised by other cognate factors. But even taking all this drawback into account, it would be uncharitable to deny the light and force of the ideal which is spreading into all layers of modern culture. There is no civilised country in the world today in which there is not some institution or some group of men coordinating all individual initiatives in the direction of humanitarian work, and exerting a moral pressure upon the human mind to emerge out of its selfish grooves and bear a hand in improving the general lot of mankind. The idea itself has a powerful appeal, and the thought has become almost inescapable. And, granting the force and appeal of the idea which has undoubtedly possessed itself of the modern mind, its fulfilment can only be a matter of time.

It may be contended again that the warm feeling which inspired the service of man in the past when it sprang from a consciousness of duty is lacking today. One who helped others or ministered to their well-being, in whatever modest way it might be, felt gratified at having had the opportunity and the means to

do it. It was considered a religious obligation, an act of sacrament, a sacred duty, which one could disregard only to the detriment of one's spiritual progress. The sympathy, the sense of sharing which prompted the service of one's fellow men benefited the giver more than the receiver. But modern service is something mechanised, institutionalised, and coldly impersonal. The charge is not altogether unfounded, but it is too sweeping in its generalisation to be wholly true. Even today in what are rather arrogantly called developing countries—as if the prosperous nations had gone beyond all development—one comes across instances of social, national or humanitarian service which glow with genuine feelings of sympathy. But still it must be conceded that much of such service has become more or less mechanical and matter-of-fact, and hardly evokes any immediate deep feeling in the givers. In many cases, it cannot be denied, it has been rendered a powerful means of parading one's power and riches, and a sort of self-advertisement. Sympathy, compassion, kindness and generosity have not yet disappeared from the world, and their utility can never perhaps be over. But what has certainly to be guarded against is the mechanisation of generous impulses and the freezing of human feelings. If men become automations, their humanitarian service cannot but be reduced to a mechanised system, a drab routine work. And modern scientism is driving fast towards it.

However, admitting the great value of service to humanity, one may yet ask: "Is this the height of human endeavour? Does it really contribute to human happiness? Is it a means of effacing the ego, and its selfish motives? Can it be done in a truly selfless spirit? What is human welfare? What is real happiness? Are the persons who engage in such activities really happy? Have they discovered the secret of making themselves and others happy? What are the causes of human misery and how can they be eliminated? What is the hidden motive behind this service, even at its best? These are some of the questions we propose to consider next.

*(To be continued)*

RISHABHCHAND

## LET US RECONSIDER EDUCATION\*

A MASSIVE Report of the Education Commission has recently been submitted to the Government of India. Much had been expected of this Commission, and its Report has been hailed in many quarters as revolutionary. Indeed, the Commission itself has underlined the need for a drastic reform, almost a revolution in education. However, when one reads its recommendations one feels a sense of disappointment in the fact that it has missed the soul of education. It seems as though most of the attention has been paid to the external aspects of the educational system. Undoubtedly, the external aspects are important, and indeed the soul of education does need a fully developed body and organisation for its full effectivity, still, the external by itself cannot be properly and fully organised without the central recognition of the soul of education.

Undoubtedly, again, the Commission has declared explicitly that education is not a mere process of imparting information, that it has something to do with the whole personality of the student, that education has to be purposive, goal-seeking, that there should be a close link between education and life, that educational system must put forth ideals before the entire educational community. Not only that, the Commission has gone farther and underscored the point that the national system of education must be rooted in the basic values and the cherished traditions of the Indian nation and suited to the needs and aspirations of a modern society. It should, in other words, be science based while fully incorporating the highest Indian values. It has devoted a full chapter to the ideals of education system and has strongly recommended that all students should receive, among other things, an education in moral and spiritual values.

And yet we feel that this is not enough, in fact, hardly anything. For, when we try to be precise, we are greeted by some

\* Based on a talk given by the writer on 13-8-1966 at Calcutta on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, Calcutta.

vague phrases, such as those of democracy, tolerance, national unity, study of religious books, stress on moral principles common to all religions. It has been recommended that a period or two per week should be devoted to the study of religion and moral principles, and that those who give these periods need not be specialists, but should be drawn from the general teaching staff, representing, however, different communities. And what books should be read or studied? Well, the recommendation is that the Departments of Comparative Religion in the Universities should be entrusted with the task of preparing the necessary text-books. And, of course, with regard to other national ideals, viz., democracy, national unity and secularism, the remedies are universal education, scientific spirit, learning of various Indian languages, periodical and organised occasions for meetings of students and teachers from different parts of the country, the formation of All-India schools and institutions, and a number of similar things, including those recommended by the Radhakrishnan Commission and by the Commission on the Moral and Spiritual Education.

What are we to think of these recommendations? One feels underlying these recommendations a cobweb of conflicting principles and ideologies, imported notions and even fashionable dogmas. One would have wished a more strenuous effort, if not at the solution of the problems, at least at a clear statement of them. But certain things seem to have been taken for granted. It is assumed, for instance, that reading of moral and religious books makes one moral and religious; or if not, what more can schools and colleges do in this regard? Again, secularism is an axiom implicitly laid down by the Constitution; and what this word means is something quite difficult to define; in any case, it is made out that it does not oppose moral and spiritual training in the educational institutions. But what is moral and spiritual? Indeed, it is difficult to define, we would be told, but surely, if we take important extracts from the great religious and moral writings of the world, we should be able to make out something. But, what if we find conflicting teachings among these? Surely, then, these differences should be pruned off by the expert scissiors of the departments of comparative religion in the Universities. And what is it that will be left after all this censor? Perhaps

nobody knows : for still the work remains to be done, and in the meantime we can hope for all sunshine and glory !

When one reads the recommendations about the goal of national unity, one wonders if the underlying assumption is that the unity is simply political and linguistic. Before all these modern revelations, one used to think that India had a basic unity, generated by the unity of the turn of thought, the direction of seeking, the harmony of inner and spiritual realisations. But now we are told that the unity of India will be maintained if we manoeuvre in the right way with regard to the problem of languages and the teaching of the great history and geography of India. One comes here again to the same sort of externality and superficiality of the handling of the problem; the soul of the problem lies far, far behind.

Secularism has been implicitly or explicitly regarded as a national goal and value. And what a confusing thing it is to so regard it ! Secularism, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary, means the doctrine that morality should be non-religious, or the policy of excluding religious teaching from schools under State control. Now, the fact is that India is a land of numerous religions and it is therefore impossible for the State to patronise any particular religion. And yet, on the other hand, it is thought that there is something so valuable in religion that we cannot dispense with it at all ! The Radhakrishnan Commission Report states that morality derives its value only when it is rooted in religion. Otherwise, morality, it is pointed out, is a neutral thing by itself; courage, for example, is a virtue found both in a good man and in a wicked man. Obviously, we have here a sort of a dilemma, an acute problem; we have a situation that can properly be described as that of a disequilibrium; but how can it be described as a situation covered and solved by secularism ! And one fails to understand when we loosely talk of secularism as a value !

Democracy too, let us say, is not a value; it is a form of political organisation, it is a device; it is true that it recognises the dignity of man and accepts man as an end in himself; and these indeed are values, although, we must say, not the highest values. It is again true that democracy is a result of years of experimentation to preserve individual freedom while reconciling with the social need of stability

and order. But even then it is a means, not an end. Moreover, democracy has still not proved its case; let us not forget that Socrates was condemned in a democracy, and a democracy in a city where education was at a high level. It does not follow, however, that we should abandon democracy. As a form, as a device, it has a certain utility, within certain limits; it has even a spiritual truth behind it, as many other alternative political forms have. But still, can we not clearly state to ourselves that democracy is a form, a device, instead of elevating it to the status of a value? Value is something that is intrinsic, something that we cherish, something that we love and something in which we find our fulfilment. Value is something that transcends limitations.

In all this there is a clear indication of our ill-digested importation of ideas and sentiments from the West. And more than that, there is a deeper defect on our part, viz., the inability to seize properly and fully the entire realm of values and to find a dynamic way of their operation in the educational process. We speak of Science, we speak of modern dynamism, we speak of our Indian values and cherished traditions. The meanings of all these terms are a confused mess, and yet without clarifying ourselves about them we are trying to reconcile them.

The Commission lays down that education should be science-based and in coherence with the moral and spiritual values. It further recommends that education should be closely linked up with life itself. But, as we shall see shortly, when we analyse the chief terms of these recommendations, viz., science, morality, spirituality, and life, we shall find that the meaning of each one of them points to a state of disequilibrium; and it is impossible to reconstruct education on such a state of disequilibrium. When we still force ourselves to do so, we fail to provide to education that which is central to it, viz., its soul. This calls for a reconsideration of education.

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A thousand-rayed sun of solid mass of knowledge illuminating by an incessant downpour of its sheer lustre the universal skies and the hidden and distant secrets of Matter, a most potent drive of energy

and action, and an irresistible bursting forth of love, joy and marvellous forms of beauty—these are the ideals, which, if accepted, would infuse the soul in education.

But as we pronounce these ideals, we hear a clamour and a noise of dogmatic denials and refusals, whispers and warnings of scepticism and agnosticism, arresting promises of Science, tempting words of compromising idealisms, scornful growls of the prisoners of the past, and even, the hostile mockery of the dwellers and enjoyers of the jungle of Ignorance. To the hostile mockery, however, we shall give a short shrift and ignore it. To the prisoners of the past we shall bid good-bye for we know that we must hew new paths for the future, even at the risk of committing mistakes. To the compromising idealisms we shall be grateful for their sympathy, but we shall say that what we have to seek is something radical and that shining words do not deliver the goods. The promises of Science, we shall welcome whole-heartedly, and invite Science as our co-wayfarer. But for the time being, we shall not allow its promises to arrest our movement towards a greater Science and a greater applied Science, the Science of the Spirit, the Shastra of Yoga. For Science today is circumscribed by a great philosophic scepticism and agnosticism, and looks at Yoga with suspicion and with indifference. This suspicion and this indifference we shall try our best to remove, for they are detrimental both to the Modern Science itself and to the great new knowledge that can be ours, if we can embrace whole-heartedly the great gift of India to the world, the knowledge and practice of Yoga.

*(To be continued)*

KIREET JOSHI

## THE YOGIC APPROACH TO ADMINISTRATION\*

THE yogic approach to administration is not really one that you must do a little *prāṇāyām* or stand on your heads for five minutes before starting your official work; though *prāṇāyām* and standing on the head are a part of certain yogic disciplines. However, yoga essentially is much different. Yoga essentially means an attitude, a status of mind and consciousness. There can be, one might say, two attitudes in general to life and life's work. What are these two attitudes? There is the attitude of separative acquisition and possession, of competition, anxiety and strain. This is one attitude. There is another one of relative freedom, of detachment, of relaxation and of self-consecration. Whatever the sphere of life, these two attitudes are always possible. In the one, the basic position is that I regard myself as an individual rather sharply separated from others. I am an ego-personality. Then the attitude which arises in my mind is essentially competitive and the thoughts that arise are, 'my things', 'my position', 'my work', 'my merit' as against those of others. In the other case, the attitude is, this work is my line of consecration. I do my best and, in doing my best, I have an inner assurance that the best will happen to me. Here there is a sort of care-freeness as to what the others think of me and my work. What I really think of is the work I have to do. My consecration is fairly effective and I am trying to make my efficiency rise from level to level and, therefore, I am assured in my mind that it is all fairly nice. Evidently, there would be very little room for anxiety and then the mental powers as a whole would have a better chance of prospering. There would be more concentration, better work and, therefore, on the whole, a better sense of fulfilment in life.

We were considering two attitudes as two possible approaches to life and work as a whole. One may be called the narrow, small-minded egoistic attitude. The other that of wide, large-minded self-consecration. The former is very common and it belongs to the normal human nature. But it is always accompanied by competitiveness,

\* A Talk to the Himachal Secretariat Staff in Simla.

anxiety and tension. The latter has a sense of freedom, self-satisfaction and care-freeness. This latter approach is really the yogic approach to life. It is, more fully stated, the approach of detachment, of freedom, of faith, of consecration, of trust. This attitude has a rich reward to offer in joy, efficiency and success. But there are surely difficulties in taking up this attitude, as the normal constitution of human nature is of a divided personality, divided within itself and divided from others. When we are divided from others, then competitiveness, which naturally comes into play, brings strain and anxiety. In the yogic approach, we are called upon to consider ourselves as we really are, i.e., a part of the larger whole. Obviously I am not something complete by myself, but a part of a larger social structure and ultimately of the universal existence as such. Our larger social structure surely has a common aim and a common goal. In the egoistic way, I say—my position, my reward, my progress, my rise. In the yogic way, it is the larger truth that comes first. And if the larger truth is secured, then is the individual not automatically assured of his security? The full yogic way is to take the view of Truth and Reality in regard to the affairs of life. And the first question of Truth and Reality is: "Is man a part of or is he the whole Reality?" The yogic answer is: "No. All existence is one and each one of us is only a part." When we carry in ourselves the consciousness of being a part, and fit in properly in the scheme of the whole, then everything goes well. This is, in fact, a primary position of truth itself. If, on the other hand, each person who is a part takes himself to be the whole and then seeks to guide his life as such, then a mutual competitiveness comes into being resulting in a danger of existence to everyone. Anxiety, tension, insecurity then become unavoidable. There is another aspect of the matter also. If the right attitude of the whole and the part is taken, the individual begins to acquire a proper feeling for his own life and its inner complexity too. And that tends to reduce and eliminate the inner conflicts and tensions from personal life. This is a point to consider rather carefully.

I recall an interesting reading. There was an American journalist working here with the British and American armies during the last World War. He was a psychologist and his duty was to smooth out the differences arising between the two armies.

He was also interested in observing Indian culture and making a study of it. While living in Delhi, he missed no opportunity to make a personal experience of the essential trends of Indian culture. After the war, he wrote a book entitled "Richer with Asia". In that book, he narrates lots of his experiences which he gathered during the war. He relates one incident. He says that he was once invited or he happened to attend a meeting at a private house in New Delhi which was to be addressed by Shrimati Sarojini Naidu as also by Begum Shah Nawaz. Those were the days when there was a strong political tension between the Congress and the Muslim League. Our American observer says that Sarojini Naidu spoke and presented the case of the Congress and then after her, Begum Shah Nawaz was called upon to present the case of the Muslim League. He adds that he feared there would soon be a riot even though this was a private house. He managed to take a corner in a safe place so that he could escape as soon as some kind of trouble arose, but he couldn't resist the temptation of listening to Begum Shah Nawaz, having listened to Sarojini Naidu. Then he says that he had the shock of his life when after Begum Shah Nawaz ended her speech, Sarojini Naidu and she embraced each other. And he says that he painfully felt that the Indian people did not seem to know what contradiction is. They did not know the distinction between truth and falsehood. How could both of them be right? Either one was right or the other and one must necessarily be wrong. And then he goes on to give other illustrations of the kind. In the end he makes an astounding judgment. He says that the Hindu mind has had the joy of wholeness as perhaps no other mind in the world had done. He further elaborates that in Europe they have developed the philosophy which he calls the philosophy of "nothing-but-isms", by which he means that they say either this position is right or the opposite of it is right and that the two can never be right together. But the Indian thinks in a different manner. To him the two contradictories, of necessity, imply that they must be reconciled somewhere, somehow. The contradiction can never be absolute; the very fact that the two things are opposed means that there must be a way of some reconciliation between them. This is exactly the idea presented in the Gita in the concepts of 'the realm of the dualities' and 'the realm beyond

the dualities'. There is a whole sphere of experience where the principle of contradiction holds good. But this is a lower sphere. There is another sphere, a higher one—the sphere of the spirit, where all contradictions are reconciled. The yogic approach strongly reminds us that the ultimate position is one of harmony, of wholeness. Contradiction is a lower position and where there is a contradiction, harmony is, in fact, more or less indicated by the very fact of contradiction. That certainly gives an attitude very different from the normal and the ordinary. That is to say, the yogic approach does not allow us to be daunted and frightened by a contradiction of any kind because it gives us an innate courage that there is a way of reconciliation for it. Imagine what power this attitude carries within itself ! A person who has an innate faith and belief that wholeness and harmony is the last word of things, then whenever problems and difficulties arise, he says, yes, there must be a solution for them and I must find it out and, surely one shall be found. This fact itself minimises the force of the contradiction and the difficulties wherever and in whatever form they happen to arise.

The yogic approach thus gives us an appreciation for wholeness, for reconciliation. That makes a very fine contribution to our personal lives as individuals too. If one were to ask oneself, what most determines a man's happiness and what is most responsible for his unhappiness, one would sooner or later discover that freedom from inner conflict, tension and contradiction is itself happiness and their presence is unhappiness. The modern psychological investigations which have become associated with the name of Freud have shown clearly that conflict is always the cause of mental derangement and to lose mental sanity is to lose everything. A man may possess all the wealth of the world but if he does not possess sanity of mind, he has no capacity to enjoy even a fraction of that wealth. Now what is it that produces the greatest amount of happiness? That which not only produces but by itself constitutes human happiness is inner harmony and peace. A man is rich if he has inner peace and harmony. It is the wealth of inner peace and harmony which makes the enjoyment of the goods of life possible. If a person has an inner equality, peace, tranquillity, it is like a mirror, steady and firm, in which every object truly reflects itself. If there is no tranquillity of mind,

one might see a fine picture and yet miss all the enjoyment of it. One may be served with excellent food and if he lacks inner equality and tranquillity, he may not enjoy it at all. If at that moment, he is ridden by anxiety, the most delicious things can appear to him as utterly insipid. Are all these truths or not? In fact, they belong to common experience and anybody who would care to observe can verify them for himself.

In administration, there are problems of various kinds. One thing that is almost the key of the effective working of administration is the capacity in the men in position to inspire confidence in others. This is not only true of administration, this is also true of other spheres of life. If one could inspire confidence in the persons with whom one has to deal, one would naturally command their collaboration more easily. Now consider what we said a little while ago. A person who seeks inner wholeness, who appreciates peace within and harmony in the social set-up outside, will surely be a man with some sincerity and honesty of purpose. Virtually, the greatest punishment which dishonesty and insincerity bring in their wake is the loss of inner peace. You might succeed against another person by using a false pretence but you can't succeed against yourself. This is most interesting. When there is a lapse in sincerity and honesty, there is a conflict created in the mind. And what happens if one goes on behaving in a manner which is not straight. He multiplies his inner conflicts. And, in course of time, he can become so gross that he may become less aware of them. But the divisions do not thereby disappear. In fact, such a person becomes so gross in his life that only the grossest pleasures are then able to make an impression upon him; he loses capacity for refinement in life. He falls in his standard of conscious living. On the other hand, a person who remains sensitive about his inner motivations and keeps them in adjustment and harmony, his capacity for joy grows from more to more. How many of us really have the capacity to enjoy beauty in nature? Very few, in fact. Whereas there is a rich harvest of beauty all around us but unless the inner capacity for enjoyment is there, it is all as good as non-existent. Now a person who has an appreciation for inner harmony and peace will automatically have more sincerity and honesty in his

character. If he has, he will enjoy greater clarity of mind. And one most wonderful thing is that in that case our words have more force with others. If my words are just a manipulation of the tongue, they come and pass off and do not touch anybody; but if they proceed from the depths within me, they have a chance of touching a corresponding depth in others.

Now an administrator in the measure that he has built up and nursed carefully from day to day a sincerity and honesty of purpose, while enjoying more of inner peace and health, will also be more effective with others. This is again a lesson of life, a complete experience of life, which can be observed and verified. And if one has more effect with others, will his work not become easier in every way? Certainly, the work will become easier. The yoga says that our short-sighted reactions of the superficial mind are really self-defeating mechanisms of the ego. This is more or less an axiomatic judgment of both yoga and psychology. In fact, there are lots of of actions and reactions in us which are of a self-defeating nature. One such fact is that if you seek pleasure, the chances are that you will miss it. There is another similar truth of life—if you try to make an impression on another, you will usually fail in doing so. Now these are some of the simple truths of life worth putting into practice to find out if they do offer any rewards for life or not.

The yoga calls these superficial ways self-defeating. They deceive one in the end. On the contrary, the honest and the sincere and the straightforward and the frank ways, involving clear dedication to the task are the ways which are solid as a rock and more effective for the results that anything can be. Therefore, the Yoga says—look here, this is in your interest, in your own selfish interest to take this larger out-look. If you approach life in that superficial way, you get failure. If you approach life in a deeper and steadier way, success is sure for you in every way both in personal as well as in professional life. Sri Aurobindo, whose name most of you have surely heard, was very keen on finding out a way by which human life as a whole, in the individual as well as in society, could be raised to a happier level. He said, why man should remain poor and niggardly, petty and unhappy? He said, man is endowed with a blissful soul and has such a wonderful power and capacity.

He insisted that ways and means should be discovered to bring these hidden capacities into overt expression and to improve the life of the individual and of the society. When he withdrew from politics in the year 1910, this was the quest which engrossed him and he decided to explore and find the way by which the avenues of larger living could be opened up to man. And he found that yoga was the way. Yoga is not something for those who have renounced the world and live in a cave on the Himalayas. He says, yoga is like education. Through the yoga, the larger powers and capacities can be developed and a man can become entitled to a rich life. Sri Aurobindo said, man lives like a beggar. Even those who believe themselves to be rich, high and proud, are also beggars. Why? Because they suffer from wants, they complain of this and of that. Where is the sense of richness and plenty in them? A man is rich when he has a sense of plenty in him. How can he have this? Virtually a sense of plenty is altogether a thing of experience and not a thing of external possessions. A man can have all the wealth of the world and yet in his experience can be poor and niggardly and it is also possible that a man may possess nothing on earth and yet may lead a wonderful existence. Now what is really this sense of plenty? In fact, a man who can eliminate hankering from his life becomes rewarded with plenty. To the extent that a man is subject to hankering, to *tr̥ṣṇā*, to craving for things, he is a beggar. And a man who has eliminated, rejected *tr̥ṣṇā* from his own life, he is a king. Perhaps this is not convincing enough. But that is exactly the prospect held out by yoga. In fact, there is a further prospect too. The yōga says that not only you can be a king to yourself, you can be a king over others. The yoga says, *Swarājya* in the true sense means that one becomes a master of one's unruly impulses. One may not be subject to somebody's external control but one may be a slave to one's own desires. Supposing a person is lying sick and the doctor says, you mustn't eat this or that. But then such a hankering takes possession of him that, he says, he can't help it, he must have it. Now does it not mean sustaining an inner defeat which would necessarily give a feeling of depression. He knows he should not do it and yet he does it. Now, when he feels helpless, certainly he sustains a defeat. He doesn't have a sense of power. Supposing, he feels he

ought not to do something and he doesn't do it, he enjoys a sense of power, a confidence and a self-mastery. Now *Swārājya* means mastery over the unruly impulses within us and the yoga says one who becomes a master within himself, acquires mastery over others too. If a person attains *Swārājya*, he also attains *Sāmrajya*. He acquires power over similar impulses in others. From this, in fact, a psychological truth, a very great lesson for administration at the higher level becomes available. We have, say, a person in charge of a district. He has to command quite a large population. He is anxious to have a real insight into the working of human nature. Now, the yoga says your insight in human nature depends upon the measure of insight you have acquired as to the working of human nature within yourself. If you learn to understand human nature here you will be able to understand human nature there too. The yoga says, a ruler who aspires really to rule over others has to learn to rule over himself as a precedent condition. Thus, arises a wonderful concept—the concept of a “self-ruled ruler”. Sri Aurobindo, in fact, sums up the ideal of Indian polity in this brief phrase.

The President of this meeting, Shri B. N. Maheshwari, very rightly referred to the most wonderful institution of Indian political life in the opening remarks when he referred to Vashishta and Ramchandra and the relationship between them. Did Vashishta occupy any official position in the State Organisation of Ramchandra? None whatsoever. And when Vashishta gave advice, did he demand that it must be accepted? No, that was not the way of that relationship. And what was the attitude of Ramchandra? He sought Vashishta's advice. Ramchandra would seek Vashishta's advice and Vashishta would give it and yet leave him entirely free to follow the way that he chose to do. This was a wonderful kind of institution. That is to say, here was accorded an authority and a status which depended entirely on the character, the insights and the realisations of the person. The person had no official position. His advice was sought because his advice was valuable; the king was not haughty and conceited to take the attitude, “Well, I won't seek advice.” No, there was a recognition on the part of the temporal power that the spiritual power had a high status in the experience of life—so the temporal power sought the advice of the spiritual but

the spiritual left the temporal entirely free to respond to the force of truth itself. Thus a wonderful kind of relationship came into being.

This has been a most valuable institution in Indian polity and the advantages of it have been enormous. Let us say, a situation of conflict arises between the temporal power and the people. The spiritual power can intervene and ease the situation because it is so high and above, independent and impartial, and commands the confidence of both the king as well as the people. A Vashishta could come and say, "Well, it is not altogether right what Ramchandra did but the people should be discreet and obedient."

This has been a unique feature of Indian polity and one can only hope and pray that this may become a living force again.

In the end, we might contemplate a difficulty and objection. Many amongst you might say that the yogic attitude of consecration, dedication, of the part fitting in with the whole, is surely right. But is it not too idealistic? Is it really practicable?

The objection and difficulty are entirely understandable. Our ordinary attitude of a divided personality, of a fearful nature, is too deeply ingrained in us. But what we are here contemplating is the possibility of a new approach, the validity of it and the prospect of it for life. Let us dwell on the new possibility and if it attracts us, let us aspire that we might be able to make a beginning. And if we do make a beginning, the joy it may bring will be its own encouragement. And even if a few here are able to launch out on this new prospect of life, they may well create a new direction of aspiration and a new quality of atmosphere. And what a great difference would it make for all, for their life as also for the work.

INDRA SEN



REVIEW

**The Hindu Philosophy of Conduct** By Prof. M. Rangacharya.  
Pub. Educational Pub. Co., Madras 34. pp. 430, Price Rs. 12.

**T**HIS is the third and final volume of the lectures of the author, the late Prof. Rangacharya, on the Bhagavad Gita, now in its second edition. Like the previous two volumes, it contains the text, translation and exposition. The subject-matter of the present book is the last six chapters of the Gita which are treated as one block. Prof. Rangacharya treats the first six chapters as one unit expounding knowledge of the Soul, the next six as relating to knowledge of God and the last six to the application of this self-knowledge and God-knowledge to life in the world.

While explaining the concepts and ideas the author draws upon the commentaries of Shankara and Ramanuja, points out where the commentaries are not satisfying and goes on to give his own rational presentation. He cites from various authentic works; for instance, while developing the argument in the famous Mahavakya of the Gita in which the Lord calls upon the devotee to surrender to Him alone leaving all man-made standards aside, Prof. Rangacharya writes: "We are now in a position to grasp the significance of the six ingredients of *prapatti*, which the *Lakshmi-Tantra* mentions—the practice of that which is good, the avoidance of that which is evil, a strong faith that God alone is the deliverer, earnest prayer to God for protection, the entire entrusting of one's soul to the disposal of God and the realisation of one's own littleness." (P. 360)

The three volumes are a worthy contribution to the Gita literature of the land.

M. P. PANDIT



*The Advent*



In this material  
world, for men, money  
is more sacred than  
the Divine's Will

~~my~~

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# The ADVENT

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# The ADVENT

Man insists continually on making God in his own image instead of seeking to make himself more and more in the image of God.

*Sri Aurobindo*

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# THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

## EDITORIALS

### PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS OF THE MOTHER

(I)

**T**HE 'Prayers and Meditations of the Mother'. It is Life Divine in song, it is Life Divine set to music—made sweet and lovely, near and dear to us—a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

To some the ideal has appeared aloof and afar, cold and forbidding. The ascent is difficult involving immense pains and tire-some efforts. It is meant for the high-souled ascetic, not for the weak earth-bound mortals. But here in the voice of the Mother we hear not the call for a hazardous climb to the bare cold wind-swept peak of the Himalayas but a warm invitation for a happy trek back to our own hearth and home. The voice of the Divine is the loving Mother's voice.

The Prayers and Meditations of the Mother are a music, a music of lyre—I say lyre, because there is a lyric beauty and poignancy in these utterances. And true lyricism means a direct and spontaneous outflowing of the soul's intimate experiences.

This wonder-lyre has three strings, giving out a triple note or strain : there is a strain of philosophy, there is a strain of yoga and there is a strain of poetry. We may also call them values and say there is a philosophical, a yogic and a poetic value in these contemplations. The philosophical strain or value means that the things said are presented, explained to the intellect so that the human mind can seize them, understand them. The principles underlying the ideal, the fundamental ideas are elaborated in terms of reason and logical comprehension, although the subject-matter treated is in the last analysis beyond reason and logic. For example, here is true philosophy expressed in a philosophic manner as neatly as possible.—“A quoi servirait l'homme s'il n'était pas fait pour jeter un pont entre Ce qui est éternellement, mais qui n'est pas manifesté, et ce qui est manifesté, entre toutes les transcendances, toutes les splendeurs de la vie divine et toute l'obscur et douloureuse ignorance du monde matériel ? L'homme est le lien entre ce qui doit être et ce qui est; il est la passerelle jetée sur l'abîme, il est le grand X en croix, le trait d'union quaternaire. Son domicile véritable, le siège effectif de sa conscience doit être dans le monde intermédiaire au point de jonction des quatre bras de la croix, là où tout l'infini de l'impensable vient prendre forme précise pour être projeté dans l'innombrable manifestation...”<sup>1</sup>

Or again

—“Que de degrés différents dans la conscience ! Il faudrait réserver ce mot pour ce qui, dans un être, est illuminé par Ta présence, s'est identifié à Toi et participe à Ta Conscience absolue, ce qui est “parfaitement éveillé”, comme dit le Bouddha.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of what use would be man if he was not made to throw a bridge between That which eternally is, but is not manifested, and that which is manifested ; between all the transcendences, all the splendours of the divine life and all the obscure and sorrowful ignorance of the material world ? Man is the intermediary between that which has to be and that which is ; he is a bridge thrown over the abyss, he is the great X in the cross, the quaternary link. His true abode, the effective seat of his consciousness, should be in the intermediate world at the joining point of the four arms of the cross, where all the infinity of the Unknowable comes to take precise form for being projected into the multitudinous manifestation....

<sup>2</sup> How many and different are the degrees of consciousness ! This word should be reserved for that which, in a being, is illuminated by Thy Presence, identifies itself with Thee and participates in Thy absolute Consciousness, for that which has knowledge, which is “perfectly awakened” as says the Buddha.

“En dehors de cet état, il y a des degrés infinis de conscience descendant jusqu'à l'obscurité complète, la véritable inconscience qui peut être un domaine pas encore touché par la lumière de ton amour (ce qui paraît improbable dans la substance physique), ou bien ce qui est, pour une raison d'ignorance quelconque, hors de notre région individuelle de perception.”<sup>1</sup>

However, we note that the philosophical strain merges into the yogic, rather the yogic strain is already involved in the philosophical. Here is an obvious and clear expression of this strain:—

—“Il faudrait que chaque jour, chaque instant, soit l'occasion d'une consécration nouvelle et plus complète; et non pas une de ces consécration enthousiastes et trépidantes, suractives, pleine de l'illusion de l'œuvre, mais une consécration profonde et silencieuse qui n'est pas forcément apparente, mais qui pénètre et transfigure toute action. Il faudrait que notre esprit paisible et solitaire repose toujours en Toi, et que de ce pur sommet il ait la perception exacte des réalités, de la Réalité unique et éternelle, derrière les instables et fugitives apparences.”<sup>2</sup>

We are given all the disciplines necessary for the growth of the spiritual life : the processes, the procedures that have to be followed—object-lessons are given even for the uninitiated and the very beginner, as well as instructions for those who aim at the highest heights; thus :

—“Il est toujours bon de regarder de temps en temps en soi et de voir qu'on n'est et ne peut rien, mais il faut en suite tourner son regard vers Toi en sachant que Tu es tout et que Tu peux tout,

Tu es la vie de notre vie et  
la lumière de notre être,

<sup>1</sup> Outside this state, there are infinite degrees of consciousness descending down to the complete darkness, the veritable inconscience which may be a domain not yet touched by the light of Thy divine love (but that appears improbable in physical substance), or which is by reason of some ignorance, outside our individual region of perception.

<sup>2</sup> Each day, each moment, must be an occasion for a new and completer consecration ; and not one of those enthusiastic and trepidant consecrations, overactive, full of the illusion of the work, but a profound and silent consecration which need not be apparent, but which penetrates and transfigures every action. Our mind, solitary and at peace, must rest always in Thee, and from this pure summit it must have the exact perception of realities, of the sole and eternal Reality, behind unstable fugitive appearances.

Tu es le maître de nos destinées."<sup>1</sup>  
 Indeed philosophy and yoga go together. Yoga is applied philosophy. What is at first mentally perceived and recognised, what is accepted by the reason is made active and dynamic in life. The character embodies the abstract and general principles, the vital energy executes them, that is yoga. Philosophy brings in the light of consciousness, yoga the energy of consciousness. Here we have an expression of what may be called "yogic philosophy."

—"Il faut à chaque moment secouer le passé comme une poussière qui tombe, afin qu'elle ne salisse pas le chemin vierge qui, à chaque moment aussi, s'ouvre devant nous."<sup>2</sup>

Once again we see emerging the third note, the note of poetry. In fact the Prayers and Meditations abound in the most beautiful poetry, what can be more beautiful, even more poetically beautiful than these cadences? —

—"Ta voix est si modeste, si impartiale, si sublime de patience et de miséricorde qu'elle ne se fait entendre avec aucune autorité, aucune puissance de volonté, mais comme une brise fraîche, douce et pure, comme un murmure cristallin qui donne la note d'harmonie dans le concert discordant. Seulement, pour celui qui sait écouter la note, respirer la brise, elle contient de tels trésors de beauté, un tel parfum de pure sérénité et de noble grandeur, que toutes les folles illusions s'évanouissent ou se transforment dans une joyeuse acceptation de la merveilleuse vérité entrevue."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is always good to look within ourselves from time to time and see that we are nothing and can do nothing, but we must then turn our look towards Thee, knowing that Thou art all and that Thou canst do all.

Thou art the life of our life and  
 the light of our being,

Thou art the master of our destiny.

<sup>2</sup> —We must at each moment shake off the past like falling dust, so that it may not soil the virgin path which, also at each moment, opens before us.

<sup>3</sup> Thy voice is so modest, impartial, sublime in its patience and its mercy that it does not make itself heard with any authority, any potency of will; it is like a cool, soft and pure breeze; it is like a crystalline murmur that imparts a note of harmony to a discordant concert. Only for him who knows how to listen to that note, how to breathe that breeze, it contains such a treasure of beauty and such a perfume of pure serenity and noble grandeur, that all extravagant illusions vanish or are transformed into a joyful acceptance of the marvellous truth that has been glimpsed.

Or more beautiful than the beautiful simplicity of these lines ! :

—“Comme une flamme qui brûle silencieusement, comme un parfum qui monte tout droit, sans vaciller, mon amour va vers Toi...”<sup>1</sup>

If one asks for a classical perfection, here is a line that is on a par with a Racinian verse—

—“Mon cœur s’est endormi jusqu’ au tréfond de l’être...”<sup>2</sup>

And here is a line flowing with all the milk and honey of the Romantic muse :—

—“Et les heures s’évanouissent comme des rêves invécus...”<sup>3</sup> which possesses furthermore the magic of an indefinable mysticism so rare in the French language. The mystic element gives a special grace and flavour, a transcendent significance serving as an enveloping aura to the whole body of these Prayers and Meditations.

One cannot, for example, but be bewitched by the mystic grandeur of this image :—

—“O Conscience immobile et sereine, Tu veilles aux confins du monde comme un sphinx d’éternité. Et pourtant à certains Tu livres Ton secret.”<sup>4</sup>

In fact three notes blend together indissolubly and form what we call ‘mantra’—even like the triple mystic syllable AUM.

Once, in connection with Shakespeare, I said that a poet’s language, which is in truth the poet himself, may be considered as consisting of unit vocables, syllables, that are as it were fundamental particles, even like the nuclear particles, each poet having his own type of particle, with its own charge and spin and vibrations. Shakespeare’s, I said, is a particle of Life-energy, a packet of living blood-vibration, pulsating as it were, with real heart-beat. Likewise in Dante one feels it to be a packet of Tapas—of ascetic energy, a bare clear concentrated flame-wave of consciousness, of thought-force. In the Prayers and Meditations the fundamental unit of

<sup>1</sup> Like a flame that burns in silence, like a perfume that rises straight upward without wavering, my love goes to Thee ;...

<sup>2</sup> My heart has fallen asleep, down to the very depths of my being.

<sup>3</sup> —And the hours pass like dreams un-lived.

<sup>4</sup> —O serene and immobile Consciousness, Thou watchest on the boundaries of the world like a sphinx of eternity. And yet to some Thou givest out Thy secret,

expression seems to be a packet of gracious light—one seems to touch the very hem of Mahalakshmi.

The voice in the Prayers and Meditations is Krishna's flute calling the souls imprisoned in their worldly household to come out into the wide green expanses of infinity, in the midst of the glorious herds of light, to play and enjoy in the company of the Lord of Delight.

## (2)

We have spoken of the three notes or strains in the Prayers and Meditations. Apart from this triple theme which after all means mode or modulation in expression, there is a triplicity in depth. Along with the strains, there are strands. Besides the value or quality of the things, the thing itself is a composite reality containing different levels. It is not a single, unilateral, one-dimensional world, but it is multi-dimensional consisting of many worlds, one within another, all telescoped as it were, to form a single indivisible whole.

Now these prayers—who prays? And to whom? These meditations—who meditates? And who is the object of the meditation? First of all there is the apparent obvious meaning, that is on the very surface. It is the Mother's own prayers offered to her own beloved Lord. It is her own personal aspiration, the preoccupation of the individual human being that she is. It is the secret story, the inner history of all that she desires, asks for, questions, all that she has experienced and realised and the farther more that she is to achieve, the revelations of a terrestrial creature of the particular name and form that she happens to possess. Thus for example, the very opening passage of these prayers:

<sup>1</sup> "Quoique tout mon être Te soit théoriquement consacré, ô Maître Sublime, qui est la vie, la lumière et l'amour de toute chose j'ai peine encore à appliquer cette consécration dans les détails.

<sup>1</sup> Although my whole being is in theory consecrated to Thee, O Sublime Master, who art the life, the light and the love in all things, I still find it hard to carry out this consecration in detail. It has taken me several weeks to learn that the reason for this written meditation, its justification lies in the very fact of addressing it daily to Thee. In this way I shall put into material shape each day a little of the conversation I have so often with Thee; I shall make my confession to Thee as well as it may be... (2.11.1912)

Il m'a fallu plusieurs semaines pour savoir que la raison de cette méditation écrite, sa légitimation, réside dans le fait de Te t'adresser quotidiennement. Ainsi je matérialiserai chaque jour un peu de la conversation que j'ai si fréquemment avec Toi ; je Te ferai de mon mieux ma confession ; ...” (2.II.1912)

But we notice immediately that these are not exclusively personal, absolutely individual assertions. While speaking of herself, spontaneously she seems to be speaking on behalf of all men. The words that she utters come as it were, from the lips of all mankind. She is the representative human being. She gives expression to all that man feels or might feel but is not able or does not know how to express and articulate. Here is how she describes her function as a representative person—so beautifully, so poignantly :

<sup>1</sup>“Alors j'ai pensé à tous ceux qui veillaient sur le bateau pour assurer et protéger notre route, et avec reconnaissance, dans leur cœur, j'ai voulu faire naître et vivre Ta Paix ; puis j'ai pensé à tous ceux qui, confiants et sans souci, dormaient du sommeil de l'inconscience, et avec sollicitude pour leurs misères, pitié pour leur souffrance latente s'éveillant en eux en même temps que leur réveil, j'ai voulu qu'un peu de Ta Paix habite leur cœur, et fasse naître en eux la vie de l'esprit, la lumière dissipant l'ignorance. Puis j'ai pensé à tous les habitants de cette vaste mer, les visibles et les invisibles, et j'ai voulu que sur eux s'étende Ta Paix. Puis j'ai pensé à ceux que nous avions laissé au loin et dont l'affection

<sup>1</sup>“I then thought of all those who were watching over the ship to safeguard and protect our route, and in gratitude, I willed that Thy peace should be born and live in their hearts ; then I thought of all those who, confident and carefree, slept the sleep of inconscience, and, with solicitude for their miseries, pity for their latent suffering which would awake in them in their own waking, I willed that a little of Thy Peace might dwell in their hearts and bring to birth in them the life of the Spirit, the light which dispels ignorance. I then thought of the dwellers of this vast sea, visible and invisible, and I willed that over them might be extended Thy Peace. I thought next of those whom we had left far away and whose affection is with us, and with a great tenderness I willed for them Thy conscious and lasting Peace, the plenitude of Thy Peace proportioned to their capacity to receive it. Then I thought of all those to whom we are going, who are restless with childish preoccupations and fight for mean competitions of interest in ignorance and egoism ; and ardently, in a great aspiration for them I asked for the plenary light of Thy Peace. I next thought of all those whom we know, of all those whom we do not know, of all the life that is working itself out, of all that has changed its form and all that is not yet in form, and for all that, and also for all of which I cannot think, for all that is present to my memory and for all that I forget, in a great ingathering and mute adoration, I implored Thy Peace.

(10.3.1914)

nous accompagne, et avec une grande tendresse, pour eux j'ai voulu Ta Paix consciente et durable, la plénitude de Ta Paix proportionnée à leur capacité de la recevoir. Puis j'ai pensé à tous ceux vers qui nous allons, que des préoccupations enfantines agitent et qui se battent pour de mesquines compétitions d'intérêt dans l'ignorance et l'égoïsme; et avec ardeur, dans une grande aspiration, pour eux, j'ai demandé la pleine lumière de Ta Paix. Puis j'ai pensé à tous ceux que nous connaissons, à tous ceux que nous ignorons, à toute la vie qui s'élabore, à tout ce qui a changé de forme, à tout ce qui n'est pas encore en forme, et pour tout cela, ainsi que pour tout ce à quoi je ne puis penser, pour tout ce qui est présent à ma mémoire et pour tout ce que j'oublie, dans un grand recueillement et une muette adoration, j'ai imploré Ta Paix." (10.3.1914)

Or again :

<sup>1</sup> "Ce que j'ai voulu pour eux, avec Ta volonté, aux moments où j'ai pu être en communion véritable avec Toi, permets qu'ils l'aient reçu en ce jour où, tâchant d'oublier les contingences extérieures, ils se sont tournés vers leur pensée la plus noble, vers leur sentiment le meilleur. Que la suprême sérénité de Ta sublime Présence s'éveille en eux." (22.3.1914)

But the Mother is not merely a representative, she has become all men, the entire humanity itself. She has identified herself with each person in her being and consciousness, she is one with all, all are merged in her. Her voice utters the cry of the human collectivity. Mother's Prayers and Meditations are the prayers and meditations of man. Thus again :

<sup>2</sup> "...il m'a semblé que j'adoptais tous les habitants de ce bateau, que je les enveloppais tous dans un égal amour, et qu'ainsi en chacun d'eux quelque chose de Ta conscience s'éveillerait." (8.3.1914)

She has so clearly unequivocally expressed her oneness with all men. She mentions specially the miserable, the poor and

<sup>1</sup> What I willed for them, with Thy will, at the moments when I could be in a true communion with Thee, grant that they may have received it on the day when, striving to forget external contingencies, they turned towards their noblest thought, towards their best feelings.

May the supreme serenity of Thy sublime Presence awake in them. (22.3.1914)

<sup>2</sup> ...it seemed to me that I adopted all the inhabitants of this ship, and enveloped them in an equal love, and that so in each one of them, something of Thy consciousness would awake.

(8.3.1914)

afflicted mankind :

<sup>1</sup> "Lorsque j'étais enfant—vers l'âge de treize ans et pendant un an environ—tous les soirs dès que j'étais couchée, il me semblait que je sortais de mon corps et que je m'élevais tout droit au-dessus de la maison, puis de la ville, très haut. Je me voyais alors vêtue d'une magnifique robe dorée, plus longue que moi ; et à mesure que je montais, cette robe s'allongeait en s'étendant circulairement autour de moi pour former comme un toit immense au-dessus de la ville. Alors je voyais de tous côtés sortir des hommes, des femmes, des enfants, des vieillards, des malades, des malheureux ; ils s'assemblaient sous la robe étendue, implorant secours, racontant leurs misères, leurs souffrances, leurs peines. En réponse, la robe, souple et vivante, s'allongeait vers eux individuellement, et dès qu'ils l'avaient touchée, ils étaient consolés ou guéris, et rentraient dans leurs corps plus heureux et plus forts qu'avant d'en être sortis." (22.2.1914)

But her being and consciousness are not limited to mankind alone. She has identified herself with even material objects, with all the small insignificant physical things which our earthly existence deals with. This is how she takes leave of the house where she had lived, and the things it had sheltered, on the eve of a long journey :

<sup>2</sup> "Je les remercie avec reconnaissance de tout le charme qu'ils ont su donner extérieurement à notre vie ; je souhaite que, s'il est dans leur destinée de passer pour plus ou moins longtemps en d'autres mains que les nôtres, ces mains leur soient douces et sachant tout le respect que l'on doit à ce que Ton divin Amour, Seigneur,

<sup>1</sup> When I was a child—about the age of thirteen and for about a year—every night as soon as I was in bed, it seemed to me that I came out of my body and rose straight up above the house, then above the town, very high. I saw myself then, clad in a magnificent golden robe, longer than myself ; and as I rose, that robe lengthened, spreading in a circle around me to form, as it were, an immense roof over the town. Then I would see coming out from all sides, men, women, children, the old, the sick, the unhappy ; they gathered under the outspread robe, imploring help, recounting their miseries, their sufferings their pains. In reply, the robe, supple and living, stretched out to them individually, and as soon as they touched it, they were consoled or healed, and entered back into their body happier and stronger than they had ever been before coming out of it. (22.2.1914)

<sup>2</sup> I thank them with gratitude for all the charm they have been able to impart from the outside to our life ; I wish, if they are destined to pass for a long or a brief period into other hands than ours, that these hands may be gentle to them and may feel all the respect that is due to what Thy divine Love, O Lord, has made to emerge from the dark inconscience of chaos. (3.3.1914)

a fait surgir de l'obscur inconscience du chaos." (3.3.1914)

It is to be noted how even a material object is taken up, purified and transformed almost into a living being by the Mother's loving touch.

The same feeling of unity and oneness extends to the dumb plant world also. It is a oneness not partial or vague but total and absolute :

<sup>1</sup> "Une grande concentration s'est emparée de moi et je me suis aperçue que je m'identifiais avec une fleur de cerisier ; puis à travers cette fleur avec toutes les fleurs de cerisier ; puis descendant plus profondément dans la conscience, en suivant un courant de force bleutée, je devins tout à coup le cerisier lui-même, dressant vers le ciel, comme autant de bras, ses innombrables branches chargées de leur offrande fleurie. J'entendis alors distinctement la phrase suivante :

"Ainsi tu t'es unie à l'âme des cerisiers et tu as pu de la sorte constater que c'est le Divin qui fait au ciel l'offrande de cette prière de fleurs." Lorsque je l'eus écrit, tout s'effaça ; mais maintenant le sang du cerisier coule dans mes veines, et avec lui une paix et une force incomparables ; quelle différence y a-t-il entre le corps humain et le corps d'un arbre ? Aucune vraiment, et la conscience qui les anime est bien identiquement la même."

(7.4.1917)

Indeed the Mother's voice is the voice of all men, all creatures, all beings, all things. She stands for the entire earth, not only so, she is the Earth itself ; the total terrestrial being is embodied in her, earth's aspiration, and pain and yearning find utterance in her:

<sup>1</sup> A deep concentration seized on me, and I perceived that I was identifying myself with a single cherry-blossom, then through it with all cherry-blossoms, and as I descended deeper in the consciousness, following a stream of bluish force, I became suddenly the cherry-tree itself, stretching towards the sky like so many arms its innumerable branches laden with their sacrifice of flowers. Then I heard distinctly this sentence :

Thus hast thou made thyself one with the soul of cherry-trees and so thou canst take note that it is the Divine who makes the offering of this flower-prayer to heaven.

When I had written it, all was effaced ; but now the blood of the cherry-tree flows in my veins and with it flows an incomparable peace and force. What difference is there between the human body and body of a tree ? In truth there is none, the consciousness which animates them is identically the same.

(7.4.1917)

<sup>1</sup> "Le monde douloureux s'est agenouillé devant Toi, Seigneur, en muette supplication ; la matière torturée se blottit à Tes pieds, son dernier, son unique refuge ; et en T'implorant ainsi, elle T'adore, Toi qu'elle ne connaît ni ne comprend ! Sa prière s'élève comme le cri d'un agonisant ; ce qui disparaît sent confusément la possibilité de revivre en Toi ; la terre attend Ton arrêt dans une prostration grandiose ;..." (7.11.1915)

This is the second status of the Mother's being, the first is the personal and individual, the second is this collective and universal being. But she is not merely the universe, she is the Mother of the universe. Hers is not merely earth's prayer, but the prayer of the Mother of the earth. It is not merely the prayer of the universe but the prayer of the Universal Mother to the Supreme Lord for the deliverance of the universe, for the re-creation of the earth—indeed, for the deliverance of herself for the re-creation of herself out of the present ignorant manifestation :

<sup>2</sup> "O Mère, douce Mère que je suis, Tu es à la fois ce qui détruit et ce qui érige.

L'univers entier vit dans Ton sein de sa vie innombrable et Tu vis dans le moindre de ses atomes immensément.

Et l'aspiration de Ton infinitude se tourne vers Cela qui n'est point manifesté, afin d'implorer toujours une plus complète et plus parfaite manifestation." (31.8.1914)

Or again :

<sup>3</sup> "Je suis les bras puissants de Ta miséricorde. Je suis la vaste poitrine de Ton amour sans limites. . . . Les bras ont enveloppé la

<sup>1</sup> This sorrowful world kneels before Thee, O Lord, in mute supplication ; this tortured Matter nestles at thy feet, its last, its sole refuge ; and so imploring Thee, it adores Thee, Thee whom it neither knows nor understands ! Its prayer rises like the cry of one in a last agony ; that which is disappearing feels confusedly the possibility of living again in Thee ; the earth awaits Thy decree in a grandiose prostration. (7.11.1915)

<sup>2</sup> Mother, sweet Mother, who I am, Thou art at once the destroyer and the builder.

The whole universe lives in Thy breast with all its life innumerable and Thou livest in Thy immensity in the least of its atoms.

And the aspiration of Thy infinitude turns towards That which is not manifested to cry to it for a manifestation ever more complete and more perfect. (31.8.1914)

<sup>3</sup> I am Thy puissant arms of mercy. I am the vast bosom of Thy limitless love. . . . The arms have enfolded the sorrowful earth and tenderly press it to the generous heart ; slowly a kiss of supreme benediction settles on this atom in conflict : the kiss of the Mother that consoles and heals. (11.8.1914)

terre douloureuse et la pressent tendrement sur le cœur généreux ; et lentement un baiser de suprême bénédiction est posé sur cet atome en conflit : le baiser de la Mère qui console et guérit..."

(11.8.1914)

And once more :

<sup>1</sup> "Toute la terre est dans nos bras comme un enfant malade qu'il faut guérir et pour lequel on a, à cause même de sa faiblesse, une tendresse toute spéciale."

(14.10.1914)

The triple status of the Mother, the individual, the collective and the transcendental (or, in other words, the personal, the universal and the supra-personal) has been condensed and epitomised in the magical note describing her first meeting with the Lord :

<sup>2</sup> "Peu importe qu'il y ait des milliers d'êtres plongés dans la plus épaisse ignorance, Celui que nous avons vu hier est sur terre ; sa présence suffit à prouver qu'un jour viendra où l'ombre sera transformée en lumière, et où effectivement, Ton règne sera instauré sur la terre."

(30.3.1914)

And the reality that Their manifestation upon earth has to establish, the supreme achievement of Their terrestrial existence is chanted, as it were, in these wonderfully mystic-Sibylline-lines :

<sup>3</sup> "La mort a passé vaste et solennelle et tout s'est tu religieusement durant son passage. Une beauté surhumaine a paru sur la terre. Quelque chose de plus merveilleux que la plus merveilleuse félicité fait pressentir sa Présence."

(7.11.1915)

(3)

I have spoken of the triple status, the three levels of her ascending reality, these are in view of her manifestation of world-labour.

<sup>1</sup> All the earth is in our arms like a sick child who must be cured and for whom one has a special affection because of his very weakness. (14.10.1914)

<sup>2</sup> It matters not if there are hundreds of beings plunged in the densest ignorance. He whom we saw yesterday, is here on earth ; His presence is enough to prove that a day shall come when darkness shall be transformed into light, when Thy reign shall be indeed established upon earth. (30.3.1914)

<sup>3</sup> Death has passed, vast and solemn, and all fell into a religious silence during its passage. A superhuman beauty has appeared on the earth.

Something more marvellous than the most marvellous bliss has made felt the impress of its Presence. (7.11.1915)

There is however, yet another status beyond—beyond the beyond—it is the relation between the Supreme Lord and the Divine Mother in itself apart from their work, their purpose in manifestation, it is their own 'Lila' between themselves, exclusively their own. The delight of this exclusively personal play behind and beyond the creation sheds a secret aroma in and through all this existence here and it is also the source of the hidden magic that these utterances of the Prayers and Meditations contain, it is to this status surpassing all wonder that Sri Aurobindo refers so wistfully and so exquisitely sweetly in those famous opening lines, in 'God's Labour' :

I have gathered my dreams in a silver air  
 Between the gold and the blue  
 And wrapped them softly and left them there  
 My jewelled dreams of you.

The delight of delights, the purest delight that exists up there in its self-sufficiency overflows, spills as it were, and a drop of that nectar of immortality is what constitutes these universes here below.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

## SRI AUROBINDO AND THE NEW AGE

### CHAPTER

#### ENGLISH LITERATURE

(From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment)

**T**HE Renaissance spread late to England. The English language had not developed its distinctive character and national genius until about the close of the fifteenth century. English prose was feeling its way towards some kind of expressive form, and poetry towards the lyrical lilt and harmony of sound which could embody its muse. There was a preparation going on in the sub-soil of the national language fostered by the awaking genius of the English people. The spirit of humanism was moving on the waters of England, generating a revolt against the domination of the Church, opening up new horizons of adventure and speculation, and touching its soul with the creative breath of the classics. Because the Renaissance came late to the shores of England, the national mind had the advantage of fertilising itself with the achievements of Italy, France, and Spain. From Chaucer to Shakespeare, it is a story of such expansive enrichment. But whatever England imbibed or imitated, it made its own by the alchemy of its genius.

The English language as well as the English mind gained immensely from the translations that were done of the outstanding works of the classics and the Italian, French and Spanish authors, ancient or contemporary. The Bible was translated, and became easily accessible to those who had no pretensions to Greek and Latin. Though originality was not yet born, an excellent field was prepared for the flowering of the English talent. The language gained in structural proportions, flexibility of form, and precision and lucidity of expression. Many experiments were tried, both in prose and verse, to arrive at the specific pattern aimed at by the sub-conscious mind of the nation. As it often happens, the translations paved the way for originality to arise and flourish.

Italian literature cast a powerful spell and exercised a shaping influence, without which the literature of England would have hardly found its characteristic voice. But the growth of the English language and literature, like the growth of the English mind, was rather paradoxical. It revelled in the exuberance of the Renaissance, gladly suffered paganism to run riot in its imagination and sensibilities, thrilled to the lofty strain of the classics, and yet held on to its native conservatism, its traditional insularity, and puritanic bias. Even while greedily feasting upon the cultural and literary riches of Italy, it shrank in instinctive disgust from the heady intemperance of the Italian character, the looseness of its moral fibre, and the cloying luxuriance of its voluptuous imagination. Though it was indebted to Spain, and to a lesser extent to Portugal, it was Italy that stimulated it most. Italy fascinated and repelled the English mind at the same time. England's destiny advanced in its innate insularity towards the creative splendour of the Elizabethan period.

But with France England always felt a secret affinity. Rabelais, Ronsard and Montaigne struck deep chords in its heart. Even much of what it took from Italy, it took through the medium of French. The rationalist texture of French thought and the artistry of its language have always had a fascination for England. English thought on science, politics, economics and philosophy has been warmly welcomed by France, but in language France has always stuck to its own norm, and not a few of eminent English writers have attempted to model their style on the French pattern. Quite a mass of French writing was translated into English during the Renaissance and helped to influence the English mind.

But the most vital factor that contributed to the flowering of the Renaissance in England was its spirit of patriotism, its national pride. England caught up with the other nations in the adventure of the high seas and in the discovery and colonisation of new lands. This adventure inspired it with a confidence in its courage and resourcefulness, stimulated a desire to enrich itself, and kindled an ambition to lead the other nations in power, position and prestige. Wealth flowed into England, and with wealth came prosperity and power. English imagination was set aglow by

the Renaissance gospel of Humanism, and the nation began to take a keen delight in the arts and graces of life. A zest for life broke all bounds of religion and custom, and expressed itself in various forms of literary creation. But the most fruitful result of this vital upsurge was the unprecedented impetus it gave to poetry. It was as if the very soul of the English muse was touched to its depths by the magic wand of the Renaissance. Well might Reformation try to cast a chill over this ardour for the enjoyment of life and a shadow over the dreams of greatness. England moved lustily forward towards the realisation of its crowning glory.

*(To be continued)*

**RISHABHCHAND**

OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

V

THE world flows fast like a river deep and sombre. (1)  
 On either side muddy banks, in between fathomless depths: (2)  
 For the sake of the Law Chatila has built the bridge (3)  
 So that travellers to the other shore may easily cross over (4)  
 The tree of delusion has been cut down and the planks tied  
 together (5)  
 Strengthen the knot, use the axe of Nirvana; (6)  
 Once on the bridge look not to the right nor to the left. (7)  
 The knowledge is near at hand, do not wander far. (8)  
 O people who want to go to the other shore, (9)  
 Ask of Chatila—the Master has no peer. (10)

NOTES

Life is a dangerous river. You have to cross it to go over to the other shore of safety, the spiritual life. But once in it, you are doomed. You are drowned in its fathomless depths or if you try to clamber up its sides you are bogged down in their sticky mud. The one thing to do is to build a bridge—it can be only out of the materials of life itself, life's experiences form the materials. They are trees, as it were, luxuriant in growth. You have to cut them down, dry them—they must be dead before they can be used as planks for the bridge. The sharp edge of a concentrated consciousness—the sense of the unreality and inanity of this existence—is the axe for cutting the growth of life.

VI

Whom do you accept? Where do you cling? (1)  
 A great call encircles me all around. (2)  
 The deer is an enemy to himself, because of his own flesh. (3)  
 Bhushuk is a hunter, he never relaxes a moment. (4)

But the deer touches not grass, drinks not water. (5)

And he knows not the abode of his mate. (6)

But the mate tells him, "O darling, listen,  
leave the forest and go forth" (7)

The galloping deer now shows not his hooves. (8)

(Bhushuk says : It is a thing that does not enter into the head  
of the deluded ! (9)

#### NOTES

(3) The deer is the individual self, his mate ; the doe, is the secret deity, the conscious being in the heart, the immanent divine consciousness.

(5) He gives up the joys of ordinary life.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

#### NOTES

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#### VI

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## SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM AS AN INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION OF RESEARCH IN EDUCATION AND YOGA

### SOME NOTES

#### I

**WE** would like to stress that the pursuit of Yoga and Research in Yoga are not only education, but education *par excellence*. Yoga means union, that is, union with the Divine in us, the Divine in the universe, and the Divine beyond the universe.

The Yoga pursued at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram is an 'Integral Yoga', which is distinctive and new. Sri Aurobindo explains it as follows :

"It is new as compared to the old yogas..."

1) Because it aims not at a departure out of world and life into Heaven or Nirvana, but a change of life and existence, not as something subordinate or incidental, but as a distinct and central object...

2) Because the object sought after is not an individual achievement of divine realisation for the sake of the individual, but something to be gained for the earth consciousness here, a cosmic, not solely a super-cosmic achievement...

3) Because a method has been preconised for achieving this purpose which is as total and integral as the aim set before it, namely the total and integral change of consciousness and nature, taking up all methods but only as a part action and present aid to others that are distinctive. I have not found this method (as a whole) or anything like it professed or realised in the old Yogas...Our Yoga is not a retreading of old walks, but a spiritual adventure."

There is still a greater significance of this Yoga since it reconciles the modern theory of evolution with the deepest and highest truths of the Spirit, and envisages the possibility of the radical transformation of consciousness, fulfilling itself in the manifestation of the Spirit in Matter. One of the radical aims of the

Ashram is to study the evolutionary process and to experiment upon the evolution of consciousness and power which far exceed those of Man, and by the action of which alone the evolutionary problems of the human race can ultimately be solved. Sri Aurobindo contends that the evolution need not stop at man; man, it is true, is the *present* highest term of evolution, but he is not the *final* term. Man can evolve—is sure to evolve in time—new faculties and powers which will manifest through a new order of society, a new age, the first signs of which are visibly evident behind the new ideals of unity, peace, harmony that are coming to the surface all over the world. If this possibility is fully grasped and organised—and India for Sri Aurobindo is the only country capable of doing this—India has before her a future which is the crowning realisation of her past.

The modern trend in the theories of evolution is to stress the possibility of the emergence of the newer and better term of existence. Samuel Alexander speaks of the emergence of the Deity as the promise of the future; Whitehead speaks of the 'ingression' of the godhead in evolution and of the God in the making. A French anthropologist and paleontologist, Father Teilhard de Chardin, has proposed a theory having a similar conclusion: the possibility for the human species to surpass itself and bring its evolution one step farther.

But, while these theories are mainly speculative and indicate only the general trends in the present civilisation which promise a new mutation, they do not offer any programme of scientific dealing with those trends to effectuate consciously and deliberately an advance in the evolutionary process. Sri Aurobindo, however, not only perceived the inevitability of the mutation of Man, but he made an intensive research into the means by which it can be aided and effectuated. He saw in the ancient Indian Science of Yoga the basic knowledge on which a further advance can be made. In pursuance of this perception he formulated a new aim and method of yoga, which, if pursued, on a collective scale, would prepare the manifestation of a new spiritual energy which can transform the human consciousness and realise a most momentous mutation. Sri Aurobindo Ashram is an institution of research and experiment

in this direction. The highest point of modern thought thus receives here a practical shape and gradual realisation. And in undertaking this task, the Ashram assumes a vast significance and responsibility.

A new Yoga and its practice means an intensive discipline, training and research. India's chief contribution to the world is its knowledge of the spirit and its theory and practice of Yoga. Sri Aurobindo Ashram specialises in the research in Yoga, and we are convinced that it is thus opening to India the gates of her own new future.

The Education Commission in its recent Report has underlined the paramount need to reconcile the Science—based education with the Indian tradition and the moral and spiritual values. If this need is to be fulfilled, it cannot be done either by the current kind of education, nor by any code of morals or even by any religion. What is needed is a rejuvenation of the science of Yoga, and the research in Yoga whereby spiritual (as distinguished from religious) life can be reconciled with the utmost dynamism of life and action. India needs such new types of Institutions, and Sri Aurobindo Ashram is precisely such a new type of Institution of research in education and yoga.

The Research work of the Ashram consists of three main and indivisible aspects :

There is, first, a research in the conditions that should enable the integration of the psychological principles of Truth, Power, Harmony and Realisation culminating ultimately into a divine life on the earth. The conceptions of Transformation, Divine Body and the Gnostic Being are some of the prominent results of this deep and momentous research work. The process by which these conceptions can be realised and embodied has been studied and experimented upon with the scientific rigour, some glimpses of which can be had from the letters that Sri Aurobindo wrote to the members of the Ashram in answer to the multitudinous problems that they referred to him during the course of the pursuit of Yoga. Many of these letters have been compiled and published in two bulky volumes.

Secondly, there is a research in the ways and means by which the synthesis of knowledge and world-cultures can be attained. A good deal of literature has flowed from the Ashram on this subject,

and it has contributed to the advancement of the human civilisation towards a world-culture. More than a dozen periodicals are being published by the Ashram in several Indian and foreign languages which all breathe with the spirit of integrality and synthesis expressing itself in numerous fields of knowledge.

Finally, research is being conducted into the means by which Yoga can be made a dynamic principle of education. This is one of the most important problems of education in India. India is secular; it cannot sponsor religious education; at the same time, spiritual values cannot be exiled from education; again, spirituality which rejects life and action is unsuitable to the modern age. The only answer is to experiment upon the yogic education which reconciles spiritual values with the dynamism of life. Such an experiment would be a most pioneering and bold adventure opening the gates of the future education in the country. It is fortunate for India that the Ashram has on its own initiative taken upon itself the task of realising the consequences of such an experiment. This experiment has brought to the surface the basic questions of physical, mental, vital and spiritual education, questions of scientific and technological education, and the questions of aesthetic and professional education, giving rise to the formulation of a new system of education, called the integral system of education. This system in its turn has been the subject-matter of various research works by the post-graduate colleges of education in India. It may also be noted that a new system of education would imply a new system of teacher-training programmes, and the Ashram has undertaken this work as well. In addition, a new system of education implies a new type of syllabus necessitating new types of text-books and reference books. And in this field too, the Ashram is engaged in formulating new types of syllabi and new types of text books right from the early stages of studies to the graduation level. This has imposed upon the teachers in the Ashram a very heavy load of research work, whose value cannot be over-estimated.

It may also be added that several research scholars, teachers, seekers, and writers, from India and abroad, have visited the Ashram for study, research, illumination or guidance. The members of the Ashram have been giving their time and energy to render help and

service to them which most often has meant an additional educational and research work. Finally, hundreds of seekers who cannot come to the Ashram have been receiving help from the Ashram through educational correspondence.

## II

### SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM—RESEARCH AND TRAINING IN YOGA— THE NECESSITY OF RESEARCH IN YOGA

Man has, in his highest flights of imagination, rational thought and ardent aspiration, striven to realise conditions of unmixed bliss, harmony and perfection. All search for knowledge has behind it this fundamental motive, and the knowledge that is sought through Yoga is not an exception to this general truth. In fact, it is claimed that whereas all other branches of knowledge are fragmentary and partial in the sense that each one of them deals with only one aspect or mode of Nature, Yoga aims at the knowledge that reveals the unity of all modes and details of knowledge. If this claim of Yoga is right, it is reasonable to expect the establishment of the highest vision of perfection on earth, not by any particular branch of knowledge in its exclusive search, but by means of yogic knowledge alone.

This truth has guided the yogic endeavour all over the world, throughout the history, and in India, we find bold and courageous experiments made in the field of yoga. These experiments have shown mainly the following:

- 1) Man, as he is constituted, has an apparent limited capacity and personality, but has within him layers and planes of consciousness and power which can be released through certain yogic techniques ;
- 2) Each specific technique leads to the release of certain specific layers of knowledge and power, but not all of them ;
- 3) Mere development of powers does not lead to the bliss or harmony or perfection ;
- 4) There is a plane of consciousness which is above the world and its operations ;

5) A permanent dwelling on that plane, which is termed as Realisation, brings about a condition of release from the world and an inner condition of peace, love and harmony;

6) *But* according to the technique followed to reach that plane of transcending the world, (or this world), there is a corresponding unique experience which is different from the one achieved through another technique; e.g. the technique of Jnana Yoga leads to the realisation of the acosmic transcendental static Reality or Nirguna Brahman, while the technique of Bhakti Yoga leads to the realisation of the transcendental dynamic Reality, or Saguna Brahman;

7) Also, the capacity to deal with the world and its conditions after reaching that high plane of Realisation, differs in each technique of Yoga; the Saint, the Rishi, and the divine warrior and worker are the different flowers of different techniques of Yoga, respectively, of Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, and Karma Yoga. The Ascetic and Hatha Yogi are the results of still different paths of Yoga. Each one of them has some capacity to deal with the world which is unique, abnormal or supernormal to present humanity, but not all the capacities combined together;

8) Unless these powers are combined together, it would seem that the conditions of the bliss, harmony and perfection cannot be established *on the earth*;

9) This has resulted in a tendency in Yoga to seek a mere release from the world, and either to reject the world altogether or to do the utmost possible in the world, without attempting to create on the earth the highest and best conditions;

10) There has also been a catholic and comprehensive tendency in Yoga which attempts at the combination of various techniques of Yoga; we have thus the Vedic and Upanishadic Yoga, the Yoga of the Gita, and more recently the Yoga of Tantra. But even in these Yogas there has been a limitation which has prevented them from that knowledge and power which alone can establish the highest conditions on the earth.

The problem before the Science of Yoga is :

Is it possible to go beyond all the present and past knowledge acquired through Yoga, and to discover and manifest that synthetic

and all-comprehensive knowledge and power by which alone the highest conditions can be established upon earth ?

This question becomes all the more important when we realise that the hope which Modern Science had raised concerning better world have largely been belied and modern science and epistemology have in fact come to the conclusion that unifying and comprehensive knowledge, world-saving knowledge, is not possible for the present human mental consciousness.

A Research in Yoga then becomes imperative ; Yoga is one hope, it still promises that Knowledge which unifies all modes and details of knowledge, and consequently the all-controlling Power which can establish here on the earth the conditions of Truth, Power, Harmony, and Realisation.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram is a Research Laboratory engaged seriously and one-pointedly in this search, this inquiry; to explore new fields of knowledge, to face new problems, and to discover their solutions, that is its real and only function.

### III

#### A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECTS & PROBLEMS IN YOGA UNDERTAKEN BY SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

##### 1) Is unifying and harmonising Knowledge possible ?

This has been one of the most important problems which has required an exploration of all the modes of knowledge, objective and subjective, rational and suprarational, psychic and spiritual.

But the solution has been found only when the exploration was made into what Sri Aurobindo calls the 'Supermind' ; there, in the Supermind, is the unifying and harmonising knowledge.

##### 2) By what process can one attain to the Supermind ?

Many experiments have been necessary to arrive at an answer to this problem.

Since Supermind is a unifying consciousness, no exclusive method or technique of Yoga can lead to it ; only a combination of various techniques can promise the realisation of the Supermind.

Again, the combination of the various techniques, or the syn-

thesis of Yoga can be conceived in two different ways :

- i) to make an amalgam of all the techniques by putting them all into a juxtaposition, without really integrating them ;
- ii) to follow all the techniques one after the other and thus to combine the realisations of the different Yogas; (this was the experiment made by Sri Ramakrishna).

The first alternative was found to be impossible, and even if it were practicable, it would not lead to an integral knowledge, since the techniques are not really integrated.

The second method commends itself to be a plausible solution ; but in a short span of human life, it would be impossible to go through all the Yogas, except for a spiritual giant like Sri Ramakrishna.

A much more commendable solution had to be found. An inquiry was made into each and every method of Yoga in order to find out its real essence ; and experiments were made to see whether the various details in each technique could be dispensed with.

An answer was found : the most essential method in each Yoga is concentration ; in Hathayoga, it is concentration of the bodily powers ; in Rajayoga, it is of the psychic and mental powers ; in Jnana Yoga, of the intellect ; in Karma Yoga, of the will ; and in Bhakti Yoga, the concentration is of the emotions. In each one, however, the concentration is exclusive only of a part of our total psychical complex. If, therefore, integral knowledge is to be found, it could be done most effectively by an all-receiving concentration. The method of synthesis of Yoga is then that of gradual development of concentration of all the powers of the psychological being, and to develop and enrich them to the utmost.

Supermind can be reached only by a synthesis of yoga, whose method is gradual concentration of all the powers of our being on their respective highest truths and realities, until all knowledge and power is realised as one unity.

3) Some sort of synthesis of yoga was also the method of the Tantra : why should that method not be acceptable?

The Tantra is certainly a kind of a synthetic yoga : but its method is to start from the body and to rise towards the mental powers and turn them to the Higher Power, or Shakti. Thus it gives a great importance to Hatha Yoga in its initial stages, and to

the practices of the Raja Yoga. This method is very time-consuming, and even dangerous. A much more rapid and safe process would be to start, as in the Yoga of the Gita, with the mental powers and by reaching up to the Supreme to descend again to the lower parts of the being to increase and enrich and transform their powers.

4) Yoga is supposed to be a very dangerous path : can these dangers be minimised ?

The answer that has been found to this problem is that the dangers can be minimised by two processes :

1) by an all round purification of the body, life force and the mind.

Impurities are of two kinds :

Impurities of the nature of confusions, arising out of blindness and ignorance ;

Impurities due to the mixture of one principle of being with that of another ; as the desire overpowering the rational discrimination.

The Impurities can be removed by :

a) being conscious of them ;  
 b) bringing true light in the blind spots of our nature ;  
 c) separating one part of the being from the other and by a real harmonising of them.

2) by bringing the 'Psychic consciousness' to the forefront.

One of the important discoveries of the Research in Yoga is that of the power of the Psychic Being and its role in the integral yoga.

The Psychic Being is our true 'person', whose very nature is that of purity and spontaneous surrender to the Divine.

The psychic being is called in Sanskrit 'Chaitya Purusha', and it is that which directs the development of our outer faculties. It does not reveal itself easily but works from the behind, until the outer nature is ready and by aspiration calls its presence on the surface. The emergence of the psychic being more and more on the surface purifies the outer nature. A complete emergence of the psychic being is however a major step in the integral yoga.

The chief dangers in the yoga are due to the vital desire, ego, vanity, ambition, lust, etc. and these can be magnified when in the

yogic process one goes from the surface consciousness to the inner or subliminal consciousness, often called, the occult or intermediate zone. It is, therefore, necessary to purify oneself sufficiently before entering into the subliminal consciousness.

5) What is the main difference between the realisation of the old yogas and the supramental realisation ?

The ideal of the old yogas is termed as 'Mukti' or Liberation. Psychologically, Mukti is attained when the outer nature of the three qualities, Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas, is quietened, and the inner Purusha or transcendental Brahman is realised, as the Real Being above the qualities. The individual is then not affected by the outer nature and its happenings; it is then said to be liberated.

The liberation is the first step in the direction of the supramental realisation. The liberation is usually achieved on the plane of the mind when it falls silent and reflects the Purusha or Brahman on the outer nature. But, it is possible to go beyond the silent Mind itself and to enter into higher planes of the mind.

A most illuminating exploration of the integral yoga is that of the planes between Mind and higher levels leading upto the Supermind. These planes are : Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuitive Mind, Overmind and Supermind.

When the Supreme Reality is realised on the level of the Supermind, when the different aspects of that Reality, such as those of the static and dynamic, personal and impersonal, are fused into one integral Reality, then one is said to have attained the supramental vision of the Reality. But a mere supramental vision of the Reality is not enough.

The Vedas and the Upanishads too indicate that the Rishis of those times had such a supramental vision of the Reality. But such a vision and dwelling on that vision do not enable one to change completely the conditions of the earth-life.

6) Hence, the most important question in the development of the integral yoga was : Is the descent of the Supermind on the earth possible so as to create here the supramental conditions and supramental transformation ?

Sri Aurobindo's answer to this question is : Yes.

And it is to bring about a descent of the Supermind on the earth

that constitutes the Yogic research work of the Ashram.

7) What is the exact process of the descent of the Supermind ?

Here comes the aspect of research where it meets the modern theory of evolution, and sheds light on the as yet unexplained or ill-explained processes of evolution.

The yogic theory of evolution is not identical with the scientific theory of evolution as it is understood today. The scientific theory stresses the development of outer form and its mutation; the yogic theory, on the other hand, considers development of consciousness as the key to the evolution of the outer form. Outer forms, according to this view, develop by an inner pressure of consciousness to emerge on the surface. There are three important stages of the evolution : growing complexity and subtlety of the outer form; emergence and ascent of a new term of consciousness; and, finally, the integration of the new term with the old from which it emerged. Complexity, ascent and integration are the three fundamental operations of the evolutionary process.

In line with this truth of evolution, there is a continuous ascending and descending process in Nature's movements; from the lower term there is a push towards a higher term; the higher term, in answer, descends; as a result the lower and the higher meet and get integrated, preparing once again the push towards a still higher term.

The descent of the Supermind is preceded by a long process of 'ascent-descent' from the mind plane to the supermind. There is, first, the ascent from Mind to the Higher Mind; the Higher Mind descends and occupies or influences the operations of the Mind; it descends even to the lower level of life and the body, though with a diminished efficiency. In the meantime, the Higher Mind pushes towards the Illumined Mind, and brings about its descent, once again on the Mind, life and the body; and before this cycle is completed, there already takes place the ascent and descent of the Intuitive Mind; this is followed by an ascent to the Overmind and the descent of the Overmind on the lower terms.

The descent of the Overmind marks a decisive stage in the process of the integral yoga. It consummates what is termed as the 'spiritual transformation' as distinguished from the 'supramental transformation'. The only two deficiencies that the overmental

descent has are :

- i) its efficacy is diminished more and more as it descends on lower and lower planes;
- ii) it cannot transform the Inconscience, which is the lowest term below the physical.

These two deficiencies can be overcome only by an ascent to the supermind, and the ultimate descent of the supermind. First, the Supermind supramentalises the Overmind; then it transforms the Intuitive Mind in the similar way; and thus right down to the physical through the intermediary planes of the Illumined Mind, Higher Mind, Mind, life and subtle physical.

A complete manifestation of the supermind in Matter is on its way, and all the activities of the Ashram are at present dedicated to this manifestation.

This has been a long and arduous and difficult research work; many more things are in view to be done; it is hoped that the promise of yoga of a perfection and harmony on the earth will no more remain a mere promise, but a living reality.

8) At an early stage of the research work, an important question had arisen : What will be a quicker process : an individual perfection leading upto a collective perfection, or a simultaneous development of the individual and collective perfection ?

The answer to this problem came automatically as the number of individuals offering themselves for training in yoga to serve as Research workers increased gradually. Each individual, by virtue of his temperament, capacities and incapacities, serves as an experimental subject for the work on hand. This participation of the collectivity in the research work of Yoga produces many interesting and absorbing problems, the nature of which can be seen through the several books published by the Ashram under the title 'On Yoga'.

#### TOWARDS THE FUTURE

9) The supramental manifestation is then the yogic work and research programme of Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The future of mankind is closely connected with this work; the farther evolution of man lies through yoga; yoga is then the indispensable stage through

which mankind will have to pass before its dream of harmony and perfection is realised. In the meantime, more concrete dreams of tomorrow are those of the Gnostic Being, Self-perfection and the Intermediate Race. The Ashram is engaged in visualising these newer possibilities, and they inspire farther programmes of yogic research.

The following questions have been of a particular interest :

(i) What will be the nature of the Gnostic Being ?

The Gnostic Being is a completely supramentalised being. He will possess fully the three supreme statuses of the supermind : the status of the comprehending consciousness which knows, views and possesses the whole universe in one total regard; the status of the apprehending consciousness, the consciousness that differentiates and stresses the differentiation, and finally the status of the projecting and identifying consciousness, which pursues each form and inhabits it by an identification with it, and yet without losing the consciousness of the supporting comprehending and apprehending consciousness.

The Gnostic being will have no specific and limited personality. Personality is a sensitive selection of certain qualities which are partly in a flux and partly in a more stable form. The Gnostic being will not be limited to any such selected complex of qualities, but will have a 'four-fold' personality, answering to four fundamental operations of the Soul-Force in its relationship to outer nature, viz., operations of Knowledge, Power, Love and Service. The Gnostic being will have a synthetic power of these operations, and a capacity to put forth any particular operation of a given personality while supporting it by the rest of the personalities. In fact, the limited notion of personality will no more apply to the Gnostic Being; he will be a 'person' in the true sense, capable of any and all supreme powers of Personality.

The Gnostic Being will have no need of any Moral Law, since all his actions will be the automatic and spontaneous Truth-expressions proceeding from a comprehensive Knowledge of the whole, and an apprehending Knowledge of each detail.

(ii) What will be the nature of the body of the Gnostic Being ?

The physical body in many systems of Yoga has been considered to be an obstacle; and its fall has been regarded very often as a

passage to a permanent liberation. The research at the Ashram has, however, shown that body is truly a very docile instrument of the Spirit, and there is no necessity of the rejection of the body. The essential characteristic of the body is its stability; and physical life gives a stable structure to all other aspects of life. Even a spiritual life, in order to be perfectly effective and stable, has to accept the truth of Matter and assume sovereignly the material robe.

But to assume the material principle is not to accept its present limitations. Matter's stability is its truth, but its inertia is its limitation which the spirit must eliminate. One of the important consequences of the supramental manifestation in body would be to turn inertia into Peace. A complete suffusion of peace even in the cells of the body would be a salient characteristic of the body of the Gnostic Being. A new kind of body, the Divine Body, is what is proposed as the physical Siddhi of the supramental yoga.

The divine body would not be subject to decay, for all the causes of decay would have been removed. A physical immortality translating the spiritual immortality of the soul and the spirit would be one of the culminating results of the Yoga, fulfilling thus the entire aim of the old system of Hatha Yoga, but by a different method and as a condition of the complete spiritual manifestation.

It would also seem that the intake of food would no more be necessary, since all intake of food is essentially a crude process of the interchange of the life-process, and in the divine body, such an interchange can take place directly from the universal Life Principle. If the intake of food is eliminated, it is reasonable to suppose that it would radically change the digestive system and, more truly eliminate it, since it would no more be necessary.

Another possibility that is conceived is the elimination of the sex principle from the divine body. The spirit has no sex, and its complete manifestation in the body would eliminate that which is not true to its real nature. In fact, sex-consciousness is incompatible with a high spiritual consciousness. With the development of the real psychic and spiritual consciousness, the sex impulse ceases spontaneously, and in a perfectly divinised body, there would be no gross organs of sex. In fact, if we examine the evolution of lower forms of life, we find that sex is not involved in some of them and even repro-

duction is done without sex act. It would not be irrational to suppose that in the highest form of life there would be the elimination of sex altogether.

It is recognised that sex has a place in the evolutionary process; and sex is not to be rejected on any preconceived moral considerations; there is in sex grossness; but there can be also from the sex impulse the release even of certain higher forms of life-expressions and even a sort of idealism. But for those who aspire to lead a spiritual life, sex is found to be unnecessary; and for two chief reasons, it has to be rejected during the process of yogic discipline; these two reasons are not moral, but purely practical and are derived from actual experimentation. They are : (i) there is always a presence of hostile forces accompanying the sex activity; and in order to overcome the hostile forces, sex has to be rejected; (ii) there is accompanying the sex enjoyment an excitement which clouds the psychic consciousness; and since the complete emergence of the psychic consciousness is an indispensable condition of the Integral Transformation, sex has to be eliminated.

(iii) But what then of the reproduction and continuation of the race ?

It is not suggested that the entire human race will in one block be supramentalised so as to eliminate sex principle from humanity at one stroke. Humanity, it is accepted, will remain as an open stage in the evolutionary process; and the sex principle in humanity will provide for perpetuity of the human race.

But it is also possible that the divine body will have the reproductive capacity, not through the sex principle, but by an act of will, by a sort of a materialisation of the will force, a projection of the body. In fact, the formation of the body and the birth of the body are even now a mystery and a miracle. The secret laws of these processes are still unknown. But they can be uncovered by a yogic knowledge, and the utilisation of that knowledge would enable the reproduction by a direct projection. This, however, is considered to be quite a remote achievement.

(iv) In the meantime, there is a possibility of the intermediate race, consisting of people who will be human in origin, but who, by a yogic endeavour, have transcended the human limitations. This

intermediate race would in its turn influence the present humanity and would by that influence bring about the predominance of the forces of peace and harmony. For all great crises and violence are ultimately the result of a perception of an ideal and an undue postponement of its realisation. A growing intermediate race opening the gates of evolutionary forces to the higher and higher realisation would remedy the cause of crisis and disorder, and thus would prepare for a peaceful growth towards an ideal of human unity.

### THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

(10) This has been one of the most important subjects of study and research. All unity is fundamentally spiritual in character, and human unity, it is affirmed, can be achieved only through a gradual realisation of yogic consciousness in mankind, or at least its recognition as an ideal.

How to establish that general recognition? And what are the forces working today which can help the realisation of the human unity? A historical retrospect is also necessary to see if in the past a necessary preparation for a future human unity was not made.

A research in history from this standpoint has led us to the following conclusions:

(i) The entire drive of the human race throughout the history has been towards an ideal unity; the great empires, mutual impact of civilisations upon one another, travel of ideas, seekers, traders, and adventurers, the ideals of universal religions, ideologies, and organisations, all these have been so many experiments of Man in his search of a true and lasting human unity;

(ii) but, the ideas, ideals and impulses that have inspired these experiments, and the methods that have been employed to achieve their ends, have mainly been marked by the desire to dominate and to subjugate the weaker races and nations;

(iii) the impulse to dominate has become associated with the drive towards a uniformity in all the fields of culture;

(iv) these two tendencies are still powerful in mankind; but the gradual realisation in mankind towards a true internationalism in which each nation is recognised as an equal partner of the other is a

pointer of the future development of the mankind.

In the words of Sri Aurobindo : 'The unity of human race can be achieved neither through uniformity nor through subjection. A synthetic organisation of all nations, each one occupying its own place in accordance with its own genius and the role it has to play in the whole, can alone effect a comprehensive and progressive unification which may have some chance of enduring.'

(v) But a true internationalism can be established only on the basis of synthetic knowledge and consciousness which in turn can be most effectively and completely achieved through Yoga. Hence, the relevance of Yoga for mankind in general. And hence, too, the significance of the yogic work of the Ashram.

The integral yoga leads to integral knowledge in the light of which different systems of knowledge, eastern and western, ancient and modern, theoretical and practical, would fall into their proper place in a wide and comprehensive synthesis. The pursuit of the Integral Yoga has opened up that field of research in this direction. This programme of research can best be stated in the words of Sri Aurobindo :

"We of the coming day stand at the head of a new age of development which must lead to such a new and larger synthesis.... We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future. A mass of new material is flowing into us; we have not only to assimilate the influence of the great theistic religions of India and of the world and a recovered sense of the meaning of Buddhism, but to take full account of the potent though limited revelations of modern knowledge and seeking; and, beyond that, the remote and dateless past which seemed to be dead is returning upon us with an effulgence of many luminous secrets long lost to the consciousness of mankind but now breaking out again from behind the veil. All this points to a new, a very rich, a very vast synthesis, a fresh and widely embracing harmonisation of our gains is both an intellectual and a spiritual necessity of the future."

(1) Just as the past syntheses have taken those which preceded them for their starting-point, so also must that of the future, to be on firm ground, proceed from what the great bodies of realised spiritual

thought and experience in the past have given. Among them, the most important are the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Gita.

(i) A research in the Veda as conducted at the Ashram starts from two basic considerations :

(a) The Veda has been traditionally regarded in India as the Book of Knowledge, and the knowledge contained in it is supposed to be authoritative and unquestionable. This tradition is one of the most powerful cementing forces in India.

And yet, the Veda, as practised today, is merely a series of prescriptions of ritual and ceremonial acts and a book of Mantras to be recited along with the appropriate acts.

The modern man wonders at this which seems to him a senseless routine, and questions secretly or openly if our forefathers were not barbaric to have regarded the Veda as the Book of Knowledge and held it in supreme esteem. He is therefore either critical of the Veda or indifferent to it, or curiously and paradoxically, he obeys the Vedic acts at ceremonies by force of habit or tradition and custom.

This, indeed, is a state of confusion and inertia, concerning a subject which has been one of the basic factors in the integration of the Indian peoples.

A thorough search has got to be made, and we must attain to a clarity as to what the Veda is really about. If the Veda is a record of Nature Worship of the semi-barbaric forefathers of the Indians, as is the view of the western scholars and their Indian disciples, let us examine this view clearly, and thoroughly; and let us accept it, if we find it to be right; but let us reject it, if we find it wrong. The consequences of our rejection or acceptance of the western view of the Vedas are immense, not only for the Vedic scholars, but for the entire reshaping of India's future.

(b) If, however, we find that the Veda contains Knowledge, we must know what kind of Knowledge it is, and in what way that knowledge is relevant to the present day needs ; and finally, we should inquire if this knowledge contributes to the synthesis of knowledge.

(ii) A similar research in the Upanishads and in the Gita is called for. For there has been too much quarrel over the various interpretations that they have been subjected to ; and we must try to have a fresh look into them to see if we can go beyond all the

controversies and can seize upon the central teachings of these records of knowledge which have been so sacred and dear to India.

A deep research has been going on in the Ashram on the above subjects ; the conclusions that have been reached so far are :

(a) The Veda is a book of Knowledge; that this Knowledge is couched in ambiguous words, whose secret key can, however, be found. When this ambiguity is removed, Veda reveals itself as a most precious record of the ancient synthetic Yoga, which reconciled the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Works, and whose highest discoveries pertained to 'the abode of the Truth'.

(b) This knowledge is the perennial Mystic Doctrine which runs also through the Upanishads and the Gita. There is a real harmony among these records of knowledge.

(c) The Veda, the Upanishads and the Gita are synthetic in the methods of their quest and in the results of their quest. The Veda, which is the Book of Knowledge (Jnana Kanda) is also the Book of Works (Karma Kanda); the Upanishad which speaks of the static Brahman, one without the second, also speaks of all that is here as that very Brahman; the Gita, which is considered to be the Gospel of Divine Works, speaks also of superiority of Knowledge to mere works, and credits only that work which proceeds from the true Knowledge as yogic. The great controversy of the exclusive paths of Yoga has no place in the Veda, Upanishads, and the Gita.

(d) The philosophic controversies in India, particularly among the schools of the Vedanta, can be resolved only by a widening and a synthesis of spiritual experience, and the Veda, Upanishad and the Gita indicate the way by which this synthesis can be achieved.

(e) The teaching of these sacred books encourages positive and dynamic life; and in one of their large formulae 'Annam Brahman', 'Matter is Brahman', and in the general drift of their teaching, there is a sufficient basis to work out the reconciliation of spiritual life with the demands of Matter. The modern drive of life can find its true affirmation and illumination in this teaching.

(2) A research is being conducted in Indian History in order to mark out those synthetic drives and epochs, which, if sufficiently stressed, would contribute to the national and international integration. In this research a good work has been done in the

understanding of Indian Religion and spirituality, Indian Art, Indian Literature, and Indian Polity.

(3) A significant note is being taken of the modern trends of Science, Technology and World Affairs, and books and research papers are being published which bear the spirit of synthesis and integration.

(a) We accept Science as one of the most liberating forces of today. The very nerve of Science is the seeking of knowledge; it is an exploration, even if it might prove interminable. The unknown is not the unknowable, that is the underlying impulse of Science. Some of the latest conclusions to which Science has arrived at are of particular significance. There is in modern Science a clear drift towards Monism, a tendency to explain the multiplicity of phenomena in terms of one underlying principle. This drift is bound to create a welcome response in India where the major spiritual and philosophical drift has been towards Monism.

(b) The modern theory of evolution is a valuable gift of Science. We now commonly speak of evolution of Life in Matter, and of Mind in Life, and thus we are brought nearer to a still greater possibility of the Monism of Matter, Life and Mind. We are also brought to a still disturbing question of the why of evolution. And it seems that this question cannot be answered unless we integrate the modern theory with the Vedantic theory and say that Life and Mind evolve in Matter precisely because they are really involved in Matter. And once we come to this conclusion, we may perhaps go even farther and ask: May not a principle higher than Mind be involved in Mind? If animal was a laboratory in which man was prepared, might not man himself be a living and thinking Laboratory in which superman is being worked out? The theory of evolution points to something universal, which concerns deeply Man as such.

(c) The emergence of Psychology as a more exact Science is another sign of the direction in which Knowledge promises to develop in the coming decades. Behaviourism and Rationalistic Materialism, in Psychology and in Epistemology, respectively, have lost much of their force. The new experiments in the phenomena of hypnotism, telepathy, clairvoyance, dreams, and other subconscious and subliminal planes have brought about a fresh outlook in

the scientific field, which, in spite of its hesitations, seems to be rushing towards the opening of the new horizons. This is bound to pave way for a synthesis of Psychology with the Indian Science of Yoga.

(d) It is to be noted also that the scientific temper and attitude, consisting of a freedom from preconceptions and prejudices and of a complete impartiality, are a preliminary to the yogic attitude itself; and in any attempt at the synthesis of knowledge, this attitude is indispensable.

(e) However, the modern science is still circumscribed by the legacy of the Rationalistic Materialism and of the scepticism inaugurated by Hume and perpetuated by the modern empiricism. This circumscription is a serious obstacle to the fulfilment of Science itself; but here again signs are promising, and scientists seem to disregard the doubts concerning the possibility or limitations of human knowledge. Once Science reaffirms its irresistible urge towards knowledge, artificial barriers will break down, opening a way towards the synthetic and universal knowledge.

(4) The rise of Technology has raised a serious challenge to the cherished values of human life. This has brought to the fore the real issue that faces Man today, viz, whether Man is essentially a slave of circumstances and the fabric and the machine that he weaves and makes around himself, or whether he is really free to surmount his circumstances and recreate conditions in which he can enjoy unfettered Freedom. It is essential that this problem be raised and its solution sought. For it seems that a great synthesis of the positive and normative knowledge will most probably come about through this inquiry.

(5) A serious obstacle in this inquiry is the present situation in philosophy. Philosophy, both in India and in the West, is undergoing a serious crisis.

(a) In the West, Philosophy has made a retreat from the speculative and constructive metaphysical thought, and accepting the lead of the Modern empiricism, has declared Metaphysics as meaningless. It sanctions only the positive knowledge and considers value judgements as merely emotive responses without any knowledge-significance. Again, with regard to the positive knowl-

edge, it has ruled out certainty and is busy formulating the standards of 'verifiable' knowledge, in the process of which it faces almost insoluble controversy. A retreat to constructive and speculative metaphysics is on its way; but the serious question that metaphysics faces is: is its knowledge based on experience, and guaranteed by experience? Metaphysics as a conceptual knowledge may have its own limited certainty, but it does not satisfy the total demand of the integral being of Man. As Sri Aurobindo puts it: '...the concepts of metaphysical knowledge do not in themselves fully satisfy the demand of our integral being. They are indeed entirely satisfactory to the pure reason itself, because they are the very stuff of its own existence. But our nature sees things through two eyes always, for it views them doubly as idea and as fact and therefore every concept is incomplete for us and to a part of our nature almost unreal until it becomes an experience.'

The solution then seems to be in the experience of the contents of the metaphysical concepts. These concepts are fundamentally three: the concept of the Absolute or the Transcendental, the concept of the universal, and the concept of the particular or the individual.

The searching eye of humanity then turns to those metaphysical systems which claim to base themselves on the highest experiences. And among them, the most important are the Indian metaphysical systems. This is the underlying reason of the West opening to the East, a most remarkable phenomenon of the modern times. The West looks to the East for wisdom, and the question is: Can the East or India deliver it?

(b) India promises it: but there is a serious obstacle, viz, the crisis in Indian Philosophy. This crisis is closely connected with the controversy among the conflicting schools of the Vedanta. For each one of these schools claims to base itself on the supreme experience of the Ultimate Reality, and yet each one regards the claim of the other as invalid.

This conflict can be overcome only by an integral philosophy which bases itself upon an integration of each one of the experiences on which the conflicting schools of the Vedanta are established. Such an integration of experience was present in the Veda, the

Upanishad and the Gita. And in the modern times, in the spiritual experience of Sri Ramakrishna we have the same drift towards an integration. And a new advance and the full integration we find in Sri Aurobindo's supramental vision of the Reality. It is in this vision, this experience, this integral experience, that an integral philosophy can have unshakable roots. Sri Aurobindo's '*The Life Divine*' is a widest and comprehensive exposition of the integral philosophy, in which the East and the West meet, and which has the force and power to guide the modern Man in his search of integral perfection and harmony.

The relating of this Integral Philosophy to the modern trends of Thought is one of the most important research projects of the scholars at the Ashram.

(6) The Integral Philosophy covers also the synthetic system of social and political philosophies, and a comprehensive philosophy of History. An attempt is made by some of the scholars at the Ashram to study the Eastern and Western theories of society and political institutions in order to uncover the truth underlying each one of them and to effect a synthesis of them. Whether it is Hobbes' Social Contract Theory or Hegel's Idealistic Theory, a comprehensive system has a place for the underlying truth of each; and it is by the same method that a new but comprehensive diagnosis of the present crisis of mankind is obtained.

One of the important conclusions of our research in this field is that the present crisis of mankind is neither economic, nor political, nor sociological, nor even ideological; it is essentially an *evolutionary* crisis, demanding an integral development of mankind in order to answer it. Each system of civilisation, ancient, mediæval or modern, represents the sum of achievements in a particular field governed and realised by certain specific psychological tendencies in man, physical, vital, moral, rational or aesthetic, philosophical, occult or religious. Each system flourished by an exclusive development of one or two or more of these tendencies, but failed too precisely because of the exclusiveness at a time when a widening and synthesis of the various psychological tendencies was called for. Man has evolved through all these ups and downs of civilisations; he has intensified and enriched his faculties through all the experience of various civilisations. Now have opened up the capacities by which the

world tends to be one, and the impact of the civilisations upon each other is unprecedented. It calls for an integration of psychological tendencies and capacities, even of an ordinary man. It is this call for a breakdown of all barriers that causes the crisis. It can be met only by a revolutionary or evolutionary progression, towards a new type of humanity. The ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity can be fulfilled not in the man as he is, but in the man of the Future, the man that has transcended his present psychological limitations.

(7) This research in the Ashram is not merely theoretical, but it is concretely practical. Here in the Ashram, people of the East and of the West have come together, and are deliberately put together to see and work out all the problems that a universal or international civilisation might bring forth.

(8) The result has been a growing research in the various ways of life and their psychological, vital, and physical expressions, and in the various crystallised forms of art and literature. Various attempts are being made to create synthetic forms of Indian and Western Dance, new, creative and synthetic Music, forms of Art which take their inspiration from the East and the West and from the planes of synthetic consciousness which lie high above the ordinary human mind. New forms of Literature shape themselves, and through drama, stories, essays and poetry or through various other literary means, they find their suitable vehicles and grow in an international and synthetic atmosphere of the Ashram.

A special mention must be made of Poetry, since Sri Aurobindo, Himself a poet, has given to the English Literature its longest epic, *Savitri*. Sri Aurobindo made several experiments in what might be termed as *The Future Poetry*. And some of the conclusions in this field are contained in His book, *The Future Poetry*. Several members of the Ashram have attempted to make their own experiments in the light of the idea of the future poetry, and some of these experiments have proved a success.

Even in the field of physical culture, there is the same synthetic character. No aspect of physical culture is left untouched—Indian system of asana, Japanese Judo, and Western system of gymnastics, athletics, combatives and games—all meet together in the same comprehensive embrace.

It is in the vibrating and dynamic atmosphere created by the constant pursuit of the integral yoga and the integral knowledge that a research is being conducted in an integral system of education. An educational atmosphere conditioning, supporting and permeating the very process of education for the young ones, the Promise of a New Future.

KIREET M. JOSHI

CHAPTER XXVII  
THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

IFB being a divided movement of consciousness although really an undivided force becomes a clash of opposing truths each striving to fulfil itself. Mind has to solve the thousand and one problems resulting but in Life itself, not merely in thought. The difficulty lies in its ignorance of itself and the world. Man knows only the surface of his own being and does not know the universality of the Force of which he is a part; therefore he can master neither himself nor the world. He has to know and solve the problem or else give place to some higher evolutionary being.—The point of Life is determined by the relation of the Force to the Consciousness which drives it. Accordingly we have besides the Infinite Existence, first the life of material Nature ruled by the infallible Inconscient; secondly the life of conscious being in material Nature emerging out of the Inconscient, fallible, bewildered, only half-potent, which is our own; and thirdly the life of the real Man to which we are moving where Consciousness and Force are fulfilled and in harmony and the One at unison with the many. That life will be founded on the awareness of one Consciousness in many minds, one Force working in many lives, one Delight of being in many hearts and bodies.—Man's difficulties: first he only knows and governs a part of himself, the greater part of himself is subconscious and it is this greater cosmic part that really governs his surface being. This is what is meant by his being governed by his Nature and by the Lord seated within through the Maya or apparent denial of Sachchidananda by Himself. It is only by becoming one with the Lord that man can be master of himself, but this union must be in the Divine Maya, in the super-conscious and not only or chiefly in the lower Maya of the mental existence.—Secondly, he is separated by his individuality from the

## THE LIFE DIVINE

### (BRIEF SUMMARY)

#### CHAPTER XXII

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universal and does not know his fellow-beings. He must be not only in sympathy with them, but arrive at a conscious unity with all and this conscious unity exists only in what is now superconscious to us.—Thirdly, Life is at war with body; Mind at war with the life and the body, each trying to subject the others to his own law. Only the supramental can find the law of immortal harmony which shall reconcile this discord of our mortality. Each of these principles has besides a soul in it which seeks a self-fulfilment beyond what the present force of life, mind or body can give. There is a conflict between opposing instincts of the body, opposing desires and impulses of the life, opposing ideas of the mind. The principle of unity is above in the supermind.—Man as he develops becomes acutely aware of all these discords and seeks a reconciliation with himself and with his fellow-beings. This can only come by the perfection of his own existence through the principle in himself to which he has not yet attained and by embracing consciously the life of others in his own through an universal consciousness which must also be gained by the superconscious becoming conscient in us through an upward evolution.

### CHAPTER XXIII

#### THE DOUBLE SOUL IN MAN

The ascent of Life is in its nature the ascent of the divine Delight in things from its dumb concentration in Matter to its luminous consummation in Spirit. Like the other original divine principles, this Delight also must be represented in us by a cosmic principle corresponding to it in the apparent existence. It is the soul or psychic being.—As there is a subliminal luminous mind behind our surface mind, a subliminal life behind our mental life, a subliminal wider corporeality behind our gross body, so we have a double soul, the superficial desire-soul and the true psychic entity.—The superficial in us is the small and egoistic, the subliminal is in touch with the universal. So our subliminal or true psychic being is open to the universal delight of things, the superficial desire-soul is shut off from it. It feels the outward touches of things, not their essence

and therefore not their Rasa or true touch ; and because it cannot reach the universal world-soul, it cannot find its own true soul which is one with the world-soul.—The desire-soul returns the triple responses of pleasure, pain and indifference, but the psychic being behind it has the equal delight of all its experiences; it compels the desire-soul to more and more experience and to a change of its values. By bringing this soul to the surface we can overcome the duality of pleasure and pain, as is actually done in certain directions of experience by the artist, Nature-lover, God-lover, etc. each in his own fashion. But the difficulty is to do it in the desire-soul at its centre where it comes into contact with practical living ; for here the human mind shrinks from the application of the principle of equality.—To bring this subliminal soul to the surface is not enough ; for it is open passively to the world-soul but cannot possess the world. Those who thus arrive, become close to the universal delight, but not masters of life. For there are two principles of order and mastery, one false, the ego-sense, the other true, the Lord who is one in the many. By merely suppressing the ego-sense in the impersonal delight we gain the centreless Impersonal and are fulfilled in our static being but not in our active being. We must therefore gain the other centre in the Supermind by which we shall consciously possess and not merely undergo the delight of the One in His universal existence.

SRI AUROBINDO

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## THE SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

(Continuation)

### IV. WHAT IS SAMADHI OR YOGIC TRANCE?

In her own depths she heard the unuttered thought

That made unreal the world and all life meant.

“Who art thou who claim'st thy crown or separate birth,

The illusion of thy soul's reality

And personal godhead on an ignorant globe

In the animal body of imperfect man ?

...Only the blank Eternal can be true.

All else is shadow and flash in Mind's bright glass,

O soul, inventor of man's thoughts and hopes,

Thyself the invention of the moments' stream,

Illusion's centre or subtle apex point,

At last know thyself, from vain existence cease.”

(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, BK. VII C. VI, pp.607-608)

**B**YOND the realm of thought, transcending the domain of duality, leaving Maya with all her changes and modifications far behind,...shines the glory of the Eternal Brahman in the Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Knowledge, knower and known dissolve in the menstruum of One Eternal Consciousness ; birth, growth and death vanish in that infinite Existence ; and love, lover and beloved merge in that unbounded ocean of Supreme Felicity....Breaking down the ridge-poles of that tabernacle in which the soul has made its abode for untold ages—stilling the body, calming the mind and drowning the ego, comes the sweet joy of Brahman in that superconscious state. Space disappears in nothingness, time is swallowed up in Eternity...[and] it is all stillness indefinable....The Nirvikalpa Samadhi is the highest flight of Advaita Philosophy.

(*Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, Advaita Ashram, Almora, p.181)

The acquisition of the highest spiritual consciousness, at least statically if not dynamically, is the goal of all spiritual endeavour. But, as we have noted before, the spiritual reaches of consciousness lie far behind and above our normal waking mentality. Now the question is : is it possible to possess the spiritual consciousness while still remaining embedded in the ordinary mental functionings? In other words, can the normal unregenerate surface consciousness and the spiritual one be concomitant and simultaneously operative? Seekers in all ages and climes, who have the necessary credentials to pronounce on this point, are universally agreed to deny this possibility.

So, broadly speaking, four alternatives may open out before those who aspire after spirituality :

(a) To create a division, a separation, a dissociation of consciousness and to be spiritual within or above while the outer consciousness and its ignorant movements are indifferently watched and felt to be something intrinsically foreign and disparate. This is the solution of the 'Witness Consciousness'.

(b) To be satisfied with the *indirect* glories of the spiritual consciousness as *reflected* and refracted in the bosom of our normal mentality. This is what has been termed 'spiritual mental realisation'.

(c) To still and withdraw from the mental consciousness and retire to the *supra-mental* reaches. This is what can be called the 'trance-solution.'

(d) To transform the nature of the normal waking consciousness, to divinise it as we would say, by bringing down there the fullest wealth and splendour of the spiritual heights, so that its present opacity and refractoriness may be altogether rectified. This is the solution of 'divine transfiguration' as envisaged by our Yoga.

Evidently the 'Witness Consciousness' and 'spiritual-mental realisation' fall far short of our goal; for, be it once again stated, this goal is no less than the establishment of the Life Divine upon earth, a dynamic waking existence embodying Sachchidananda in his fully manifested glories.

But since the yogic trance or Samadhi is so often held up not only as a supreme means of access to the higher possible spiritual

consciousness but "as the very condition and status of that highest consciousness itself, in which alone it can be completely possessed and enjoyed while we are in the body,"<sup>1</sup> We must digress here for a while to examine the nature of Samadhi and find out its utility or otherwise in the pursuit of the Integral Yoga.

*Sâmadhi or Yogic Trance* : Since mind-consciousness is normally found to be incompatible with the highest state of spiritual realisation, a veritable yoga or union must almost by definition connote the cessation of all mental functions (*Yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ*<sup>2</sup>) or even of the mind itself (*manonāśo mahodaya*<sup>3</sup>).

Now, to follow the terminology as used by Vyasa, the great commentator on the 'Yoga Aphorisms' of Patanjali, our mind-stuff may function in five different levels or conditions (*cittabhūmayāḥ*). These, from down upwards or from out inward, are (i) *Kṣipta* or restless, the dissipated condition in which the mind is active and externalised and runs after objects of various sorts ; (ii) *mūḍha* or torpid, the stupefied condition in which the mind under the influence of an excessive *tamas* gravitates downwards and wallows in the obscure depths of ignorance ; (iii) *vikṣipta* or distracted, a condition in which the mind becomes relatively pacified and at times somewhat concentrated but thrown out again outwards because of the distracting movements ; (iv) *ekāgra* or concentrated, a condition dominated by *sattva* in which the mind is able to concentrate for a prolonged stretch of time to the exclusion of all other thoughts, upon some particular chosen object or subject of concentration ; and lastly (v) *niruddha* or stilled, a condition in which even the act or function of contemplation ceases and, all modifications of the mind being stopped, nothing whatsoever is known or conceived by the latter.

It goes without saying that the first three conditions of the mind enumerated above are not at all conducive to the practice of spirituality (*Yogapakṣe na vartate*) ; it is only the last two that make possible any spiritual illumination. As a matter of fact, in the parlance of the Patanjali System, "*ekāgra* or the state of concentration,

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 601.

<sup>2</sup> *Patanjala Sutra*, 1.2.

<sup>3</sup> *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, IV.35.18.

when permanently established is called *samprajñāta Yoga* or the *trance of meditation*, in which there is a clear and distinct consciousness of the object of contemplation. It is known also as *samāpatti* or *samprajñāta samādhi* in as much as *citta* or the mind is, in this state, entirely put into the object and assumes the form of the object itself. So also the state of *niruddha* is called *asamprajñāta yoga* or *asamprajñāta samādhi*, . . . because this is the *trance of absorption* in which all psychoses and appearances of objects are stopped. . . .<sup>1</sup>

In more general terms we may say that samadhi or yogic trance is that state of superconsciousness in which the aspirant, diving deep or soaring high in the search of the soul or the self, enters, when his consciousness, through an inward concentration, withdraws from the surface world as perceived by the senses and retires to progressively deeper interior realms of supersensuous experiences. In this process of inward withdrawal or upward ascension, the consciousness first enters the 'dream-state' and then proceeds to the 'sleep-state'. While in the dream-state, the outer mind of the sadhaka becomes quiescent and his inner mind, separated from the outer and no longer covered up by it, ranges through a wonderful world of rich and variegated inner experiences.

To obviate any possible misunderstanding that the nomenclature 'dream-state' or 'sleep-state' may engender in an unwary spirit, we may forthwith state here that the yogic dream- or sleep-states have nothing to do with the physical states of dream and sleep. "In the Yogic dream-state . . . the mind is in clear possession of itself, though not of the physical world, works coherently, . . . [Is perfectly] awake . . . not with the out-going, but with an ingathered wakefulness in which, though immersed in itself, it exercises all its powers."<sup>2</sup>

In the dream-state itself there is an infinite series of depths, starting with that for which the world of physical senses is almost at the doors though momentarily shut out, and reaching to depths not likely to be broken in upon by the impact or call of the sensuous physical world. As a matter of fact, "beyond a certain point the trance becomes complete and it is then almost quite impossible to

<sup>1</sup> Chatterjee and Dutta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, p.305.

<sup>2</sup> *The Synthesis of Yoga*, pp.594-95.

awaken or call back the soul that has receded into them ; it can only come back by its own will or at most by a violent shock of physical appeal dangerous to the system owing to the abrupt upheaval of return."<sup>1</sup>

With the increasing depths or heights of the degrees of consciousness attained by the soul, the experiences obtained become progressively remote and less and less communicable to the waking mind, until the trance becomes complete in an utter self-gathering of the being when the central consciousness separates from the last vestige of mentality. Then it becomes an absolute impossibility for any records or transcripts of the experiences therein to reach the portals of the normal waking consciousness. This is the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi claimed to be the highest status of spiritual attainment and assiduously sought after by every seeker after trance.

In this ultimate trance-state of pure superconscient existence, in this *supra*-mental immersion in the infinite being and the unconditioned bliss, time and space and hence the world of names and forms vanish into nothing, all action of mental awareness whether of outward or of inward things is altogether abolished and everything is drawn up into the supercosmic Beyond.

Once attaining this supreme state of Nirvikalpa trance, the soul finds it difficult, well-nigh impossible, to return again to the active life-consciousness, for "it loses the hold on the cord which binds it to the consciousness of life, and the body is left, maintained indeed in its set position, not dead by dissolution, but incapable of recovering the ensouled life which had inhabited it."<sup>2</sup>

We have so far analysed in abstract terms the physiognomy of the Yogic trance. To complete the account we would now like to reproduce in brief the concrete cases of the sage Uddalaka and Ramakrishna to show how in fact the consciousness withdrawing inward passes through progressively deepening states of being to repose finally in the absolute state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

First the scriptural account of the trance of Uddalaka as depicted

<sup>1</sup> *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 593.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 593.

in the great work *Yoga-Vasishtha Maharamayana* :<sup>1</sup>

*The trance of Uddalaka* : "One day the sage deliberated : 'When will you attain to eternal peace by reaching the status of mindlessness, for such is indeed the condition for getting freed from the bondage of repeated births ?'... Then the Brahmin Uddalaka sat down to concentrate and withdraw his mind. But he could not succeed at once in attaining the samadhi state, for his mind, in the fashion of a restless baboon, began to fleet from object to object.... At a later stage, the mind-monkey would at times leave outside contacts and felt eager for the enjoyment of the inner sattvic bliss; but this was indeed an intermittent mood, for most often the mind would rush towards outward objects again, as if it was stung by a venomous snake. At times, his inner state was being cleared of the obscurity of ignorance and Uddalaka visioned the glory of a sun; but in no time his Chitta became restless again and flew outward in the manner of a startled bird. Again, he withdrew inward and experienced at times a vacant space or the Zero of an impenetrable darkness.... As a warrior in battle kills his enemies with a sword, Uddalaka started destroying one by one all the *vikalpas* that were appearing in his consciousness. The *vikalpas* gone, he saw in the inner space a green-black Sun but proceeded immediately to eradicate this inky darkness. Then the softness of a massed lustre greeted the sage Uddalaka. But that too he eliminated in no time following the way of an elephant calf that gets into a lotus-pond and tears away and devastates the lotuses all around. Once this massed splendour was gone, Uddalaka's mind succumbed to a spell of deep sleep just as a man highly intoxicated loses his sobriety and then gets into torpor; but the sage was prompt enough to annul this state of sleep. Then his mind was filled with the consciousness of *Vyoma*; but just as the wind sweeps away the dew-drops, he too swept away from his mind this clear and stainless consciousness of *vyoma*. But, following that, some sort of dazed dullness overtook him as if he was a heavily drunk man who had just come out of his torpid state. Even this too he vanquished. "Then, at long last, the sage Uddalaka reached the status of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, where there was neither any obscurity nor any

<sup>1</sup> Vide *Yoga-Vasishtha*, *Upashama Prakarana*), sargas 51-54.

ephemeral lustre.”<sup>1</sup>

That, in the state of Nirvikalpa trance, the body becomes immobile like a painted image (*citrārpita ivācalah*<sup>2</sup>) and even a violent sense-appeal fails to bring back the soul to the waking consciousness has been equally forcefully brought out by the Yoga-Vasishtha in the following account of the Samadhi of Shikhidhvaja :

“The queen Chudala went to the forest and found there the king Shikhidhvaja seated, like a sculptured tree, in the state of Nirvikalpa trance. She deliberated : ‘I must now seek to re-awaken the king, otherwise he will leave his body very soon.’ Then the queen Chudala approached the king’s body and shouted at the top of her voice. This loud sound and then the sound of the trumpet frightened and startled the sylvan creatures, but the queen’s repeated attempts failed to evoke any response from the king whose body remained tranced and immobile like a granite mass.<sup>3</sup> Chudala then laid her hands on the body of Shikhidhvaja and started violently agitating it. Thus shaken, the king’s body fell down and rolled on the ground, but even then did not recover his waking consciousness. Then the queen wondered and thought, ‘It does not seem to be an easy proposition to awaken my King ! Only if he still possesses the grain of a desire somewhere hidden in seed-form, that will help him to come back again to the waking state, in no other wise can he be aroused.’”<sup>4</sup>

*The Trance-Experience of Sri Ramakrishna* : Now we come to the very authentic historical case of the Sage of Dakshinesvara whose trance-experiences as depicted in his authoritative biography published by the Ramakrishna Order itself we reproduce below :

“Sri Ramakrishna’s Samadhi covered a wide range of experiences from his perception of various visions to the annihilation of his mind in the infinite consciousness of Brahman. It had also many forms.... Thus he entered into a ‘world of power’, or ‘a world of beauty’, or

<sup>1</sup> *Yoga-Vasishtha*, IV. 51-54.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. 37.2.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Bk. VII C. II, p. 538 :

“...her body became a stark  
And rigid golden statue of motionless trance,  
A stone of God lit by an amethyst soul.  
Around her body’s stillness all grew still.”

<sup>4</sup> *Yoga-Vasishtha (Nirvana Prakarana)*, 103.

'a world of spiritual grandeur'.... He would commune with invisible beings—forms of the Divinity or Divine Incarnations of the past.

"Such visions however belong to the domain of Personality, which is not the last word in spiritual experiences. So long as a sadhaka is satisfied with this kind of samadhi, his attainments cannot be said to be complete. He has not reached unfathomable depths of the ocean, though undoubtedly he has gone far behind the surface, encountering the forms of life abounding there, but he has not yet ransacked the priceless treasures of the deep, which reveal themselves only to those who have the courage to dive on and on till they have touched bottom.

"So we find Sri Ramakrishna taking up another course of sadhana altogether different from his previous ones."<sup>1</sup>

Then, a few pages further on, the biographer gives a vivid description of the first Nirvikalpa Samadhi-state of Sri Ramakrishna :

"Sri Ramakrishna passed into the ineffable glory of the Nirvikalpa Samadhi. In that rapturous ecstasy the senses and mind stopped their functions. The body became motionless as a corpse. The universe rolled away from his vision—even space itself melted away. Everything was reduced to ideas which floated like shadows in the dim background of the mind. Only the faint consciousness of 'I' repeated itself in dull monotony. Presently that too stopped, and what remained was Existence alone. The soul lost itself in the Self, and all idea of duality, of subject and object, was effaced. Limitations were gone, and finite space was one with infinite space. Beyond speech, beyond experience and beyond thought, Sri Ramakrishna had realised the Brahman—had become the Brahman.

"Totapuri (Sri Ramakrishna's Guru or the spiritual preceptor) sat for a long time, silently watching his disciple. Finding him perfectly motionless, he stole out of the room and locked the door lest anybody should intrude without his knowledge. Then he awaited the call from Sri Ramakrishna to open the door. The day passed on, the night came. Another day and still another—*three days passed and there was no call*. Totapuri was astonished and went to see what was wrong.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Sri Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashram, Almora), p. 183.

"He opened the door and entered the room. There sat Sri Ramakrishna *in the very same position in which he had left him*. There was no manifestation of life in the body, but the countenance was calm, serene and radiant. He saw that the disciple was still *dead to the objective world*, his mind absorbed in the Self, without a flicker—absolutely steady !...

"With the utmost care he (Totapuri) determined if the heart was beating, or if there was the slightest trace of respiration. Again and again he touched the disciple's corpse-like body. There was no sign either of life or of consciousness.... It was undoubtedly a case of the Nirvikalpa Samadhi—the culmination of Advaita practice!

"Totapuri immediately took steps to bring the mind of Sri Ramakrishna down to the world of phenomena."<sup>1</sup>

After Totapuri left Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna decided to withdraw from the world of 'I' and 'Mine' and live constantly in unity with the Supreme. What followed then is very much revealing from our point of view and worth reproducing in the saint's own inimitable words :

"I stayed in that ineffable state for six months at a stretch, a state from which an ordinary soul knows no return, his body dropping off like a withered leaf from a tree ! There was no sense of the passage of time, of how the days and the nights went by ! Flies and insects used to get into the mouth and nostrils of my body as if in those of a corpse, but they evoked no response from me. Oftentimes I would ease nature involuntarily without being in the least aware of it ! My body would not have remained viable for long, it would have surely dropped down dead, but for the circumstance of the arrival at this time of a sannyasin with a heavy stick in his hand. He realised my state at the very first glance and felt that if this body could somehow be preserved, much good would be done to the world through its agency. It thus so happened that during meal-times he used to beat my body with the stick and no sooner did he find that a faint glimmer of awareness had come, he would push some morcels of food into the mouth. In this way, on some days, a little bit of food could reach my stomach while on other days even that much failed.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 190-192.

“Six months rolled by in this wise. Then I heard the Mother’s Voice : ‘Come down a bit and stay in *Bhāva-Samādhi*, do stay in in *Bhāva-Samādhi* for the welfare of the world !’ Then a serious disease assailed my bodily frame—blood-dysentery it was ! I then had frequent bouts of griping pains and unbearable cramps and wrenches in the stomach ! After I had suffered from such intense agony for long six months, my consciousness could come down little by little into my body and finally I regained the waking state of ordinary men.”<sup>1</sup>

So we have seen what samadhi means and how the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi is eulogised as *the* spiritual status *par excellence*. Now we proceed to show that trance-experiences however lofty or however deep fail to meet the demands of our Yoga, and at the same time indicate how our goal of dynamic divinisation of the waking physical existence can be realised.

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

<sup>1</sup> Swami Saradananda, *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Lila-Prasanga (Guru-Bhava Purvardha)*,

## TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

### THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY (*contd.*)

**WE** have posed ourselves certain questions in regard to the service of humanity. The first is : Is it the height of human endeavour ? It is evident that the question does not relate to those who do not care for the height of human endeavour. They had better be left to do what they conceive as worth doing or what pleases their thoughts and fancies. They will spin round their own axis with the complacent belief that what they are doing is really the best for the world. And they are quite welcome to their benevolent belief. It is only those who are fired with a lofty idealism and aspire to dare and achieve the highest in life, to stake their all for the supreme perfection, and scale the summits of human possibilities that take care to ponder what should be their greatest endeavour and what it will lead to. It is they who decide what should be their goal and how each ounce of their energy should be directed to its attainment.

Such persons naturally seek to know whether there is any Reality behind the fleeting appearances of the world. Is there not something infinite, they wonder, sustaining the flicker-dance of the finite forms one sees here, something that abides and endures behind this incessant flux, and is untouched by the breath of time ? Is it all a chance, or a brute, mechanical necessity that has woven this marvellous fabric of life out of dead Matter ? Or, is there a fore-seeing and fore-ordaining Intelligence that has spangled the skies with the suns and stars and the earth with endless varieties of genuses and species, and brings) order out of chaos and light out of darkness ? Is not in man and beyond him an Eye of Wisdom and an all-creative purposeful Will guiding his stumbling steps through a tangle of his own and the world's conflicting forces towards a progressive transcendence of his consciousness and power ? If there is such a Reality, such a living, all-mighty Intelligence, he asks himself, should he not endeavour as best he can to realise It and its Will ? Will not life itself be vain and empty without its discovery ? What other endeavour can

be higher than this ? Is it not this the adventure of all adventures, the sole and supreme discovery beside which all other discoveries pale into insignificance ? It must be admitted that no materialist, no sceptic can have any rational grounds to impugn the perception, the faith, and the will and determination that inspire this great adventure. It is a superscientific adventure, undertaken with all the honest curiosity and true empirical zeal of the scientist. It is the quest of Reality and the endeavour to attune life to its creative rhythms.

Our second question is : Granting that the service of humanity is done in the best spirit, does it always contribute to happiness ? This question hinges upon another of a fundamental character : What is happiness ? We do not propose to go into an elaborate consideration of this question here, but will only touch upon what is sufficient to test the validity of the humanist standpoint. Modern man has hardly left any avenue unexplored to find happiness in the world. He has sought it in economic prosperity and the comforts and amenities it provides. He has tried all sense pleasures, but found them all wanting. What pleases him today palls upon him tomorrow. The question of health is a perpetual care, and illness is not a rare visitation, in spite of the phenomenal advance of the medical science. He has sought it in the arts and literature, in science and philosophy, in games and sports, in diverse recreations and amusements, but in none has he found serene and abiding happiness. He has sought it in the relations of life, in love and affection, in sympathy and kindness, in pity and compassion, in friendship and fellow-feeling, but he has discovered to his chagrin that he has no hold over his feelings—they bubble up and melt away, and the mutual give and take upon which they depend is uncertain and ephemeral. His feelings betray their fickleness, and even when he develops a detached and large-hearted attitude towards the world and learns to expect no requital from it, the happiness he derives from it is a mere ghost of what his being yearns for. Scientific or philosophic pursuit may, it is true, give him a somewhat steady satisfaction, but it is only a mental satisfaction he derives from it—his life parts are left starving in cold indifference or coerced into resentful submission. The legitimate demands of his vital are neglected in the absorption of his mental preoccupation.

Bertrand Russell, a thoroughbred scientist, if there was one, gives the following recipe for happiness. "To find the right road out of this despair, civilised man must enlarge his heart as he has enlarged his mind. He must learn to transcend himself, and in so doing to acquire the freedom of the universe."<sup>1</sup> An admirable recipe, indeed. But how to put it into practice ? He admits that "the immense majority of even the noblest persons' actions have self-regarding motives, nor is this to be regretted, since, if it were otherwise, the human race could not survive."<sup>2</sup> How, then, one wonders, is man going to transcend himself, if "zest (in action) is difficult without some self-regarding motive" ?<sup>3</sup> And if there are self-regarding motives, service of humanity is cankered at its very roots and becomes service of oneself. It can be neither unselfish nor disinterested. Can selfish service minister to the happiness of others ?

Russell thinks that "a man should be able to achieve happiness, provided that his passions and interests are directed outward, not inward." Multiplication of external interests is prescribed by him as a sure means of being happy, and to this end, one must give up all introversion, and "forget his own soul." "The man...whose attention is turned within finds nothing worthy of his notice...." An oracular pronouncement seeking to demolish with a confident panache the highest teachings of the wisest men of the world ! And who are the fortunate persons worthy of happiness ? The scientists, of course, for "all the conditions of happiness are realised in the life of the man of science".<sup>4</sup> Was Newton a scientist ? Let us see how happy he was. Newton "at the hour of his triumph—the completion of a cosmic theory that was to become the basis of all future science—was a dreadfully unhappy man."<sup>5</sup> In spite of all his engrossment in scientific work, which generated eccentricities in him, he could not quite inhibit his ambitions and the desires of his vital nature nor the caprices and distempers of his inharmonious mental make-up. "I must withdraw from your acquaintance" he wrote to a friend, "and see neither you nor the rest of my acquaintances any more".<sup>6</sup> The great German scientist E. H. Haeckel's life affords an instance in which

<sup>1</sup>, <sup>2</sup> & <sup>3</sup> *The Conquest of Happiness* by Bertrand Russell

<sup>4</sup> *The Conquest of Happiness* by Bertrand Russell

<sup>5</sup> & <sup>6</sup> *Great Scientists* by Thomas & Thomas

an unscientific passion of his heart was suffered to cloud his scientific happiness. The passion assailed him so suddenly and violently when he was sixty-five years old that, torn between two loyalties—loyalty to his ailing wife and that to his new love—he contemplated suicide. The catastrophic end was, however, mercifully averted. Bertrand Russell forgets that the scientist has also a heart, an all too human heart of feelings and emotions, and that his life, like all human life, is a theatre where both tragedies and comedies are played by the complex elements of human nature and the inscrutable conspiracy of circumstances. Sustained and serene happiness eludes the scientist as much as any other man. It is not unoften that the family and social life of the scientist or the philosopher looks so wan and inharmonious. His angularities or eccentricities are the signs of a being divided against itself. And where there is no harmony in the being, there can be no happiness.

If wealth is no guarantee of happiness, as we all know, poverty is no bar to it. The poor are, on an average, perhaps happier than the rich, unless it is grinding penury that afflicts them. They are happier, because they have fewer desires and are content with what they have and get. The simplicity of their lives safeguards their happiness. But even their happiness is not impervious to grief and suffering. Disasters and calamities spare no mortal.

When modern materialist philosophers and scientists find that unalloyed and unebbing happiness is impossible in human life, they advise the prudence of accepting a modicum of qualified happiness as the utmost one can expect to achieve. But, whether they know it or not, man is so made that he cannot rest permanently content with a qualified or limited happiness. He is ever stung by what is known as divine discontent. But why should a finite, mortal being yearn for an infinite and immortal happiness? Because—and here is a truth of supreme importance which the scientist wilfully ignores—there is in him something or someone that is not finite but infinite, not mortal but immortal, not prone to suffering but eternally blissful. His ceaseless chase after the finite objects of the world is but a hidden chase after the Infinite, hidden from him, because he is ignorant and egoistic, self-severed from the unity of universal existence. He seeks the Infinite, but ignorantly seeks

it in the finite, and flits about like the bee from object to object in the vain hope of finding in them the ocean of divine honey his soul is athirst for. His yearning for unmixed and uninterrupted happiness is not, therefore, an illusion of which he has to cure himself by the remedy prescribed by the scientist, but a signature and prophecy of his destiny. The secret discontent, which dogs him even in the midst of what passing happiness he can snatch from the changing conditions of his life, is the ransom he has to pay for the endless bliss of his immortal existence. The blissful life of the mystics is a perpetual beacon to him. "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee."<sup>1</sup>

(To be continued)

RISHABHCHAND

<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine.

## LET US RECONSIDER EDUCATION

(Continued)

**W**HAT is the philosophic scepticism that limits the drive of Science? It can be summed up in the following propositions: (i) that all knowledge proceeds from experience, (ii) that our mind is a blank slate on which ideas are inscribed solely by experience, (iii) that experience gives us no justification for prediction, necessary connections, generalisations, scientific induction. There is not even a justification for our belief that the sun will rise tomorrow. There is no justification in our seeking of order, regularity, uniformity, system in Nature, for these can never be discovered by experience, and indeed, let us repeat, it is asserted categorically, experience is the sole means of knowledge.

This is empiricism and its scepticism; it professes a natural love for Science, since Science professes to be experimental and to base its conclusions on the evidence of experience. As a consequence empiricism offers to Science its gift of scepticism and asks Science to give up all its claim to the knowledge of certainty, of causality, of universal order and universal laws. Science has not fully accepted this gift, but at the border-line where philosophy and science meet, Science appears to yield to the temptation of the gift, and to return to her field of inquiry with the limiting and disabling influence of the philosophic empiricism. The effect of this influence has been reinforced by some of the startling discoveries of Science itself. For instance, Science has come to perceive that the behaviour of Matter at its sub-atomic level baffles our attempt at determinate knowledge and at prediction. This is the famous theory in Quantum Mechanics called the Theory of Indeterminancy. This theory has triggered off a great controversy over the question of Causality in Science and Philosophy and the question of Determinism vs. Freewill in Ethics and Theology. In any case, in the present climate, Science seems to be influenced by philosophic empiricism and in turn to supply evidence and support to it.

But while this controversy continues, we perceive that the world is wonderful, and it is the sense of wonder that is the soul of Science; this sense of wonder expresses itself, not in a bundle of statements, but in the meanings that these statements convey, the meanings that the experiences convey, the experiences which are at the root of those statements. Before the invasion of the philosophic empiricism, it was widely admitted that experience by itself is "blind"; but there is in us a cognitive drill which penetrates into our experience and unites the object of experience with our mind and the resultant is the excitement of the self-discovery in the object-discovery, and in the equation of the subject and the object is found the notation of the meaning of experience. This cognitive drill is nothing else than the Reason, the faculty of Ideas and Concepts, the *nisus*, that finds its satisfaction in Understanding. This Reason, it was maintained, is not a blank slate, but an active embryo, which receiving experience of the particular germinates the knowledge of the universal; it is the pregnant bed of the concepts of "all", "unity", "order", "harmony", "system". The joy of Science is not merely in experience, but it is chiefly in the rational interpretation of experience, in fitting a stray flower in the scheme of universal flora, in perceiving connections and necessary connections, in fact, in making a leap from the known to the unknown, in knowing that which is still not experienced. Science, it was understood, was not merely experimental, it was a rational adventure for a rational assurance.

Among many powers of the Reason, the one which has been most instrumental in the progress of Science is its power of induction, which is a process of inferring the universal from the particular. This principle is a stumbling block to the possible triumph of empiricism. Some honest empiricists have admitted their failure to account for the inductive reasoning on the empirical grounds, but dogmatically enough they ignore the problem or postpone the solution of the problem. This creates a hesitation in the entire mood of scientific thinking and acts as a brake in the field of Pure Science. But why don't the empiricists admit their failure? The answer is that empiricism is a dogma. It assumes that all knowledge is derived from experience, and it refuses to budge

from its position, even when faced with the contrary evidence. Besides, is its own dogmatic statement derived from experience? Certainly not. It cannot be, for it is a universal statement, and since according to its own admission there can be no experience of universality, no universal statement can be derived from experience. Empiricism is indeed self-refuting.

However, modern empiricism is a revolt against Reason and there is a deeper reason for this revolt. For Reason is glorious but it has serious limitations. For the chief perception of Reason is that of the universals or of unity. And yet, Reason itself admits that it does not understand unity; on the one hand, it postulates unity to explain the particulars, and yet, on the other hand, unity seems by its nature to consume away within itself all the particulars leaving behind no reality of the particulars. The idea of unity baffles the intellect. The present moment is grasped by its connection with the preceding and the succeeding moments, leading thus the unity of past, present and future, and the only accurate description of such a unity of Time is an all-containing ever-new moment, a description which intellect confesses it does not comprehend. Hence follows the philosophic agnosticism.

What a disappointment! To understand the particular we go to the universal or to the unity, and this unity simply escapes us! And, in the bargain, it seems to give an assurance that the particular from the unitarian point of view cannot remain a particular! We neither know the particular nor the universal!

Empiricists come back on the stage. The particular is frozen by the unknowable universal? they ask. Is not then the unknowable universal a fiction of the intellect corresponding to no reality? Particular at least, they argue, is before us; we know what it is; true, we cannot know it fully; but we know at least something of it! Whereas, with the so-called rational ideas we are led to lose even this bit of knowledge. Let us admit then the limits of our knowledge, but let us be sure and precise of whatever we can legitimately know. Science is already experimental. Let us ask it to renounce its rational aspect, and we shall then declare that the authentic knowledge belongs to Science alone. True, we shall not know the future; true, we shall not have the certainties; true also, we

shall not be in a position to answer many questions that are so central to man's enquiry, particularly about the values that he is seeking. But that is inevitable. In the words of Russell: "Science tells us what we can know, but what we can know is little, and if we forget how much we cannot know we become insensitive to many things of very great importance. . . . Uncertainty, in the presence of vivid hopes and fears, is painful, but must be endured if wish to live without the support of comforting fairy tales...To teach how to live without certainty, and yet without being paralysed by hesitation, is perhaps the chief thing that philosophy in our age can still do for those who study it."

We thus seem to be swinging back to empiricism and to its uncertainties, its scepticism. From Scylla to Charybdis ! And back to Scylla with a constant prospect to go again to Charybdis ! In this state of disequilibrium and sandwiched between the conflicting affinities with empiricism and rationalism, Science cannot hope to soar very high and to fulfil its dreams or promises. But the state of disequilibrium suggests that there are truths on both the sides of the thesis and the antithesis, and that our search cannot rest until it has found a synthesis at a higher level.

A few remarks would clarify the situation and lead to the solution. Whatever may be higher knowledge, attainable to us or no, it cannot correct or sublimate the facts of our experience ; what we are perceiving is a fact, and this can never be frozen or evaporated into a nullity. If reason nullifies the reality of the particulars, surely, there is something wrong with the Reason. Experience is certainly a way to knowledge. But empiricism does not fully appreciate the fact that so long as experience needs to find its meaning in a larger context, there is some hiatus in experience. It is wrong to say that our sense-experience or ordinary empirical experience is in need of no interpretation and illumination. Our ordinary experiences are, as Rationalism rightly suggests, 'blind', needing to be illuminated by the rational concepts of unity, order, system, etc. The central difficulty is that these concepts baffle our understanding and are themselves in need of illumination. And that illumination must be neither of the nature of ordinary experience nor of the Pure Reason. Everything would fall in its proper place, everything would find its

justification if there is a transcendental experience whose meaning is within itself which embraces particulars and the truth of unity and does not need any external light to illumine it. A self-luminous integral experience would reconcile the claims of empiricism and rationalism. Anything less than the integral would involve a disequilibrium and would disqualify as a sound basis for Science.

In the West, such a basis is hardly perceptible, even though far deep in its most ancient Mysteries, there is a perception which goes beyond empiricism and rationalism. In the East, this basis is there, or was there and can be more easily recovered; but for the moment we do not seem to be in a mood of deep reflection and research, and are likely to receive Science as it comes to us from West, sandwiched and clipped between conflicting theories of Knowledge, in a state of disequilibrium. Let us hope that this mood shall not last long, for if it does, Science will not find its moorings in our Indian set-up and will simply cause the erosion of the values. Science, I think, comes to India to seek its own fulfilment whose promise India secretly holds within herself. It is wrong to suppose that Science is something peculiar to the West; what is peculiar to the West is the modern Science of Matter, but not Science as such. India had developed science to its most sublime heights and intricate details in numerous branches, and its science of the Spirit is the most solid contribution to the world-culture.

It is in this Science of Spirit that we find the affirmation of the Cosmic Consciousness and of the Integral Consciousness, an affirmation, if recognised, would give the most solid foundation for the scientific pursuits and their reconciliation with the highest human and spiritual values. Cosmic Consciousness, Integral Consciousness are not merely abstract ideas; they are experiences, but experiences which transcend the limits of the particular and give a true comprehension of what Reason conceives of unity and fails in its attempt to understand. Unity here is a living fact, a self-luminous fact; the particular too, be it noted, is not frozen, but reveals itself as a demarcation in the totality of the whole. In this experience we have not only the conception of causality, but the actual experience of causality, the working out of the necessary connections by an inherent imperative; the ideas of the Reason thus find in this experience a

total and fulfilling justification. Not only that, but we gain a farther revelation that the method of analysis which is the present method of Science is not the only method of knowing the universe. A far more powerful knowledge can be ours if we approach the universe synthetically and intuitively. And the knowledge thus gained is likely to be much more powerful and much more fruitful. The Rajayogic claim that by the Samyama, the method of Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi, by concentration on the object, the knowledge of the object is revealed, is not a phantasy, but a very natural and simple truth of the yogic field.

The method of Intuition is essentially the method of experience; whereas in science, experience and the field of experience are circumscribed by a mental approach of the mental analysis, in the yogic field, the method is that of experience of identity. And if we reflect on the knowledge-situation, we find that the knowledge of an object can never be adequate unless knowledge transcends its seeking activity and identifies itself with the object and returns from it as a revelation of the object. That and that only would be the indubitable knowledge.

But yogic knowledge has been criticised on the ground that it is subjective, it is supraphysical, and that there is no physical proof of this knowledge and of the object of this knowledge. But it may be replied that it is not true that the physical proof of the yogic knowledge is impossible; but at the same time, it would be irrational to demand a physical proof of supraphysical things. And essentially, we have to admit that all knowledge is at bottom subjective or transcendently subjective. It has again been argued that the yogic knowledge is subject to error and apt to turn into superstition. But, it may be replied that error is not the prerogative of the yogic knowledge alone; the objection would be unsurmountable only if there were no way of eliminating error; but surely, Yoga has in its body the method of inner verification and direct comparison of experiences as the methods of the elimination of error. That experience which embraces all other experiences and is itself self-luminous is the deliverer of true knowledge and Yoga is precisely the Science of this experience, and of the experiences leading to it. But still, it may be argued, there are conflicts among the yogic experiences and among the claims

to truth arising from these experiences. In answer, however, we must point out that in all fields of yogic experiences there are regions with regard to which there are no conflicting claims. At the same time, we must not simplify the conflicting claims by saying that the conflict is only verbal and not real. For, at a certain penultimate region of the spiritual field, there are experiences which seem to be final, and when they come upon our silenced mind, they come with an overwhelmingness of finality. But very often these experiences are followed by some other ones and thus the partiality of the experience is corrected, not by critical or rational reflection, nor by a sublation, by the cancellation of the previous experience, but by the enrichment of the experiences.

But still, the very fact, that there are at a certain stage conflicting experiences by the method of Intuition, shows that Intuition cannot be regarded as the highest method of knowledge. And this indeed we must grant in its fundamental substance. We might say, there must be, if there is to be indubitable knowledge, not only a knowledge by identity, but the knowledge by comprehensive identity; intuition is a torch light, but not the plenary sunlight. The supreme method of knowledge has to be not only intuitive, but comprehensively intuitive, a method by which the whole is grasped, known, realised.

That there is such a means of knowledge is an affirmation of the Veda and the Upanishad, although during the Age of Reason this method was eclipsed. But in modern India, this method of knowledge was eminently revived by Sri Ramakrishna and we find in Sri Aurobindo a consummation of this method and the knowledge by this method.

This consummating knowledge is the all-reconciling knowledge; it is the knowledge that transcends all mental and spiritual agnosticism. It confirms the scientific assumption of the reality of the world and the conceptual certainty of the Infinite and the One, it reconciles the deliverances of experience and those of reflective reason; it unravels from religions their spiritual content and confirms their truths setting them all in a harmony; it is a knowledge that gives the clasp of the Highest and the penetration to the lowest category of Matter; it perceives all the universe as one unity, and all movements as the varied breath of the One Spirit; in its vast consciousness, there is no

distinction between religious and secular, no distinction between sacred and profane; all is spirit and all is sacred; all branches of knowledge are so many angles looking at the one Spirit; Science, Art, Philosophy are the three varying vibrations of one essential movement of knowledge, and there is no conflict between them. Here is the vastness which consummates all aspiration towards perfection and spontaneously harmonises each with all the rest.

*(To be continued)*

KIREET M. JOSHI

## REVIEWS

**Die Kunst Indiens** (The Art of India) *By Ervin Baktay*. Translated from Hungarian by Edith Roth. German adaptation by Heinz Kucharski. Pub. Academie Verlag, Berlin.

This magnificent volume on the Art of India illustrated with 444 pictures and 6 colour plates is a worthy tribute to the labours of the eminent Hungarian orientalist Ervin Baktay (1896-1963). The learned doctor visited India in the course of his trip to Tibet, which place he looked upon as the original native place of the Hungarians, and wrote a number of books of which the present one is the main.

The subjects covered in the course of the 29 chapters of this volume are astonishingly varied : history, geography, religion, philosophy, arts, architecture, sculpture and so on. The exposition begins with the background of the country and its inhabitants, followed by a chapter on 'Oldest Art (Stone Age)—Culture of the Indus-valley' and ends with a considered evaluation of the 'Effects of the Western Influence on the Art of India'. The writer rightly includes the Islamic contribution in the total appraisal. And while he generally follows the line taken by western scholars in the interpretation of the Indian values, he does make certain striking observations in some places which are refreshing. He points out that caste and class are not the same in Indian society. He discusses how the Ashoka Pillars testify to the elimination of the Persian and Hellenic influences from Indian Art in the Age of the Mauryas. His remarks on the 'superabundance in Indian Art' remind us of Sri Aurobindo's comments on the subject. Interesting too is his observation that Indian Art is 'Indian, not Buddhistic, Hindu, or Jaina etc.; only their frames speak of the particular religion. The artist had no living models but created from memory and thought-picture shaped and consciously fixed within'.

Dr. Kucharski has done a great service to Indian Art by his discriminative presentation of the illustrations and the commentary.

PETER STEIGER

**Kindle the Light** By *T. L. Vaswani*. Pub. Gita Pub. House, Sadhu Vaswani Path, Poona 1. Pp. 157, Price Rs. 2.

Miletus, one of the seven Sages of Greece, was asked :

Q : Who is the most ancient ?

A : God.

Q : What is the most beautiful ?

A : The Cosmos.

Q : What is the greatest of all ?

A : Space.

Q : What is the most constant ?

A : Hope.

Q : What is the best of all ?

A : Virtue.

Q : What is the quickest of all ?

A : Thought.

Q : What is the strongest of all ?

A : Necessity.

Q : What is the easiest of all ?

A : To give advice.

Q : And what is the most difficult ?

A : To know thyself. (P. 48)

And to know *thyself* is the theme of this anthology of writings of Sadhu Vaswani. The topics are varied but the approach is everywhere the same, to seek the Light in every form in creation, awake to the Light in oneself and in the vision of Light to find the key of Love. "Love lifeth the Veil" (Jela-ud-Din Rumi) over the mystery of existence and makes life meaningful.

The pages of this book are full of this aroma of love.

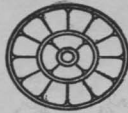
M. P. PANDIT



SADHANA ANUSANDHANA—DACC



*The Advent*



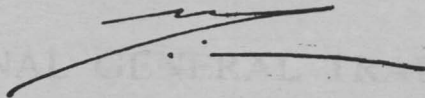
*How to stop discussions in the mind?*

The first condition is to talk as little as possible.

The second is to think just of what you are doing at the moment and not of what you have to do or of what you have done before.

Never regret what is past or imagine what will be.

Check pessimism in your thoughts as much as you can and become a voluntary optimist.



# The ADVENT

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# The ADVENT

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God works through the brain, but  
the brain is only one of His  
instruments.

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# THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

## EDITORIALS

### "SAVITRI"

#### *(An Introduction)*

**S**AVITRI, the poem, the word of Sri Aurobindo is the cosmic Answer to the cosmic Question. And Savitri, the person, the Godhead, the Divine Woman is the Divine's response to the human aspiration.

The world is a great question mark. It is a riddle, eternal and ever-recurring. Man has faced the riddle and sought to arrive at a solution since he has been given a mind to seek and interrogate.

What is this universe? From where has it come? Whither is it going? What is the purpose of it all? Why is man here? What is the object of his existence?

Such is the mode of human aspiration. And Ashwapati in his quest begins to explore the world and see what it is, the way it is built up. He observes it rising tier upon tier, level upon level of consciousness. He mounts these stairs, takes cognisance of the modes and functions of each and passes on enriched by the experi-

ences that each contributes to his developing consciousness. The ascent he finds is from ignorance to knowledge. The human being starts from the darkest bed of ignorance, the solid basis of rock as it were, the body, the material existence. Ignorance here is absolute inconstancy. Out of the total absence of consciousness, the being begins to awake and rise to a gradually developing—widening, deepening and heightening—consciousness. That is how Ashwapati advances, ascends from a purely bodily life and consciousness, to the next rung of the ladder, the first appearance and expression of life-force, the vital consciousness—energies and forms of the small lower vital. He moves on, moves upward, there is a growing light in and mixed with the obscurity; ignorance begins to shed its hard and dark coating one by one and gives place to directed and motivated energies. He meets beings and creatures appropriate to those levels crawling and stirring and climbing, moved by the laws governing the respective regions. In this way Ashwapati passes on into the higher vital, into the border of the mental.

Ashwapati now observes with a clear vividness that all these worlds and the beings and forces that inhabit them are stricken as it were with a bar sinister branded upon their bodies. In spite of an inherent urge of ascension the way is not a straight road but devious and crooked breaking into by-lanes and blind alleys. There is a great corruption and perversion of natural movements towards Truth: falsehoods and pretensions, arrogance of blindness reign here in various degrees. Ashwapati sought to know the wherefore of it all. So he goes behind, dives down and comes into a region that seems to be the source and basis of all ignorance and obscurity and falsehood. He comes into the very heart of the Night, the abyss of consciousness. He meets there the Mother of Evil and the sons of darkness. He stands before

“...the gate of the false Infinite,  
An eternity of disastrous absolutes.”<sup>1</sup>

Here are the forces that pull down and lure away to perdition all

<sup>1</sup> Book II : Canto 8 : p.250.

that man's aspirations and the world's urge seek to express and build of Divine things. It is the world in which the forces of the original inconscience find their primitive play. They are dark and dangerous : they prey upon earth's creatures who are not content with being vassals of darkness but try to move to the Light.

Dangerous is this passage for the celestial aspirant :

“Where the red Wolf waits by the fordless stream,  
And Death's black eagles scream to the precipice...”<sup>1</sup>

He must be absolutely vigilant, absolutely on his guard, absolutely sincere.

“Here must the traveller of the upward way—  
For daring Hell's kingdoms winds the heavenly route—  
Pause or pass slowly through that perilous space,  
A prayer upon his lips and the great Name.”<sup>2</sup>

But there is no escape. The divine traveller has to pass through this region. For it lies athwart his path to the goal. Not only so, it is necessary to go through this Night. For Ashwapati

“Knew death for a cellar of the house of life,  
In destruction felt creation's hasty pace,  
Knew loss as the price of a celestial gain  
And hell as a short cut to heaven's gates.”<sup>3</sup>

Ashwapati now passes into the higher luminous regions. He enters regions of larger breath and wider movement—the higher vital and then into the yet more luminous region of the higher mind. He reaches the heavens where immortal sages and the divinities and the gods themselves dwell. Even these Ashwapati finds to be only partial truths, various aspects, true but limited, of the One Reality beyond. Thus he leaves all behind and reaches into the single

<sup>1</sup> Bk. II : Canto 8 : p.260.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. II : Canto 7 : p. 238.

<sup>3</sup> Bk. II : Canto 8 : p. 262.

sole Reality, the transcendental Truth of things, the status vast and infinite and eternal, immutable existence and consciousness and bliss.

“A Vastness brooded free from sense of Space,  
An Everlastingness cut off from Time...  
A stillness absolute, incommunicable.”<sup>1</sup>

Here seems to be the end of the quest, and one would fain stay there ever and ever in that status

“...occult, impenetrable,—  
Infinite, eternal, unthinkable, alone.”<sup>2</sup>

Ashwapati was perhaps about to be lured into that Bliss but suddenly a doubt enters into him—there is a hesitation, a questioning; he hears a voice :

“The ego is dead; we are free from being and care,  
We have done with birth and death and work and fate.  
O Soul, it is too early to rejoice !  
Thou hast reached the boundless silence of the Self,  
Thou hast leaped into a glad divine abyss;  
But where hast thou thrown self’s mission and self’s power ?  
On what dead bank on the Eternal’s road ?”<sup>3</sup>

Ashwapati veers round. A new perception, a new consciousness begins to open within him. A new urge moves him. He has to start on a new journey, a new quest and achievement. The world exists neither as a Truth nor as an illusion in itself. It exists in and through the Mother of the worlds. There is a motive in its existence and it is her will that is being worked out in that existence. The world moves for the fulfilment of a purpose that is being evolved through earth-life and human life. The ignorant incomplete human life upon earth is not the be-all and end-all of the life here. That life has to

<sup>1</sup> Bk. III : Cantos 1-2 : pp. 349 ; 351.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. III : Canto 1 : p. 350.

<sup>3</sup> Bk. III : Canto 2 : p. 351.

evolve into a life of light and love and joy perfect here below. Nature as it is now will be transmuted into a new pure and radiant substance. Ashwapati is filled with this new urge and inspired by this new vision. He sees and understands now the truth of his life, the goal that has to be achieved, the great dream that has to be realised here upon earth in and through matter. He sees how nature has been labouring ceaselessly and tirelessly through aeons through eternity onward. He is now almost impatient to see the consummation here and now. The divine Voice however shows him the wisdom of working patiently, hasten slowly. The Voice admonishes him :

“I ask thee not to merge thy heart of flame  
 In the Immobile’s wide uncaring bliss...  
 Thy soul was born to share the laden Force...  
 Obey thy nature and fulfil thy fate :  
 Accept the difficulty and godlike toil,  
 For the slow-paced omniscient purpose live...  
 All things shall change in God’s transfiguring hour.”<sup>1</sup>

But the human flame once kindled is hard to put down. It seeks an immediate result. It does not understand the fulness of time. So Ashwapati cries out :

“Heavy and long are the years our labour counts  
 And still the seals are firm upon man’s soul  
 And weary is the ancient Mother’s heart...  
 Linger not long with thy transmuting hand,  
 Pressed vainly on one golden bar of Time...  
 Let a great word be spoken from the heights  
 And one great act unlock the doors of Fate.”<sup>2</sup>

This great cry of the human soul moved the Divine Mother and she granted at last its prayer. She answered bestowing of her motherly comfort to the yearning thirsty soul :

<sup>1</sup> Bk. III : Canto 4 : pp. 380 ; 386.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. III : Canto 4 : pp. 390-391.

“O strong forerunner, I have heard thy cry.

One shall descend and break the iron Law...

A seed shall be sown in Death's tremendous hour,

A branch of heaven transplant to human soil;

Nature shall overleap her mortal step;

Fate shall be changed by an unchanging will.”<sup>1</sup>

And She herself came down upon earth as Ashwapati's own daughter to undertake the human labour and accomplish the Divine work.

## II

The Divine Mother is upon earth as a human creature. She is to change the mortal earth into an immortal paradise. Earth at present is a bundle of material inconscience. The Supreme Consciousness has manifested itself as supreme unconsciousness. The Divine has lost itself in pulverising itself, scattering itself abroad. Immortality is thus entombed here below in death. The task of the incarnate Supreme Consciousness is to revive the death-bound divinity, to free the human consciousness in its earthly life from the obscurity of the material unconsciousness, re-install it in its original radiant status of the Divine Consciousness.

Such is Savitri's mission. This mission has two sessions or periods. The first, that of preparation; the second, that of fulfilment. Savitri, the human embodiment was given only twelve months out of her earthly life and in that space of time she had to do all the preparation. She knew her work from her very birth, she was conscious of her nature and the mission she was entrusted with. Now she is facing the crisis. Death is there standing in front. What is to be done, how is she to proceed? She was told she is to conquer Death, she is to establish immortal life upon mortal earth. The Divine Voice rings out :

“Arise, O soul, and vanquish Time and Death.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bk. III : Canto 4 : pp. 391-392.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. VII : Canto 2 : p. 539.

Yes, she is ready to do it, but not for herself, but for her Love, the being who was the life of her life. Savitri is the Divine Consciousness but here in the mortal body she is clothed in the human consciousness; it is the human consciousness that she is to lead upward and beyond and it is in and through the human consciousness that the Divine Realisation has to be expressed and established. The human Savitri declares : If Death is conquered, it is for the sake of Satyavan living eternally with her. She seems to say : What I wish to see is the living Satyavan and I united with him for ever. I do not need an earthly life without him; with him I prefer to be in another world if necessary away from the obscurity and turmoil of this earth here.

“My strength is taken from me and given to Death,  
 Why should I lift my hands to the shut heavens...  
 Why should I strive with earth’s unyielding laws  
 Or stave off death’s inevitable hour ?  
 This surely is best to pactise with my fate  
 And follow close behind my lover’s step  
 And pass through night from twilight to the sun...”<sup>1</sup>

But a thunderous voice descends from above shaking Savitri to the very basis of her existence.

“And what shall thy soul say when it wakes and knows  
 The work was left undone for which it came ?”<sup>2</sup>

Thus a crisis very similar to that which Ashwapati had to face now confronts Savitri also. Both of them were at the crossroads away from the earth in the pure delights of the heavens or in the world labouring on earth’s soil. Savitri’s soul was now revealed to her in its fullness. She viewed the mighty destiny for which she had come down and the great work she had to achieve here upon earth, not any personal or individual human satisfaction or achievement but

<sup>1</sup> Bk. VII : Canto 2 : p. 539.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. VII : Canto 2 : p. 540.

a cosmic fulfilment, a global human realisation. The godhead in Savitri is now fully awake, established in its plenitude—the Divinity incarnate in the human frame. All the godheads, all the goddess-emanations now entered into her and moulded the totality of her mighty stature.

Here begins then the second stage of her mission,—her work and achievement, the conquest of Death. Only the Divine human being can conquer Death. Savitri follows Death step by step revealing gradually the mystery of Death, his personality and his true mission, although the dark God thinks that it is he who is taking away Satyavan and Savitri along with him, to his own home, his black annihilation. For Death is that in its first appearance, it is utter destruction, nothingness, non-existence. So the mighty Godhead declares in an imperious tone to the mortal woman Savitri :

“This is my silent dark immensity,  
 This is the home of everlasting Night,  
 This is the secrecy of Nothingness.  
 Entombing the vanity of life’s desires...  
 Hopes thou still always to last and love ?”<sup>1</sup>

Indeed Death is not merely a destruction of the body, it is in reality nothingness, non-being. The moment being, existence, reality manifested itself, established itself as a material fact, simultaneously there came out and stood against it, its opposite non-being, non-existence, non-reality; against an everlasting ‘yes’ there was posited an everlasting ‘no’. And in fact, this everlasting No proves to be a greater effective reality, it has wound itself around every constituent atom of the universe. That is what has expressed itself in the material domain as the irreversible degradation of energy and in the mortal world it is denial and doubt and falsehood—it is that which brings about failure in life, and frustration, misery and grief. But then Savitri’s vision penetrated beyond and she saw, Death is a way of achieving the end more swiftly and more completely. The negation is an apparent obstacle in order to increase, to purify and intensify the speed of the

<sup>1</sup> Bk. IX : Canto 2 : p. 661.

process by which the world and humanity is being remodelled and re-created. This terrible Godhead pursues the human endeavour till the end; until he finds that nothing more is to be done; then his mission too is fulfilled.<sup>1</sup> So a last cry, the cry of a desperate dying Death, pierces the universe and throws the final challenge to Savitri:

“O human claimant to immortality,  
Reveal thy power, lay bare thy spirit’s force,  
Then will I give back to thee Satyavan,  
Or if the Mighty Mother is with thee,  
Show me her face that I may worship her;  
Let deathless eyes look into the eyes of Death...”<sup>2</sup>

Death’s desire, his prayer too is fulfilled. He faces Savitri but this is not the Savitri against whom he fought. Whose is this voice?

“I hail thee almighty and victorious Death,  
Thou grandiose Darkness of the Infinite...  
I have given thee thy awful shape of dread  
And thy sharp sword of terror and grief and pain  
To force the soul of man to struggle for light...”<sup>3</sup>

What happens thereafter is something strange and tremendous and miraculous. Light flashed all around, a leaping tongue of fire spread out and the dark form of Death was burnt—not to ashes but to blazing sparks of light:

“His body was eaten by light, his spirit devoured.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We are reminded here of a parallelism in Goethe’s conception of the role of Satan (the Negative Principle) in human affairs. Satan is not merely a destroying devil, he is a constructive angel. For it is he

*Who must goad and tease  
And toil to serve creation.*

whenever

*Man’s efforts sink below his proper level.*

<sup>2</sup> Bk. X : Canto 4 : p. 745.

<sup>3</sup> Bk. X : Canto 4 : p. 747.

<sup>4</sup> Bk. X : Canto 4 : p. 749.

Thus Death came to his death—not to death in reality but to a new incarnation. Death returned to his original divine Reality, an emanation of the Divine Mother.

“A secret splendour rose revealed to sight  
Where once the vast embodied Void had stood  
Night the dim mask had grown a wonderful face.”<sup>1</sup>

In that domain of pure transcendent light stood face to face the human Savitri and the transformed Satyavan.

### III

Savitri has entered into the deathless luminous world where there is only faultless beauty, stainless delight and an unmeasured self-gathered strength. Savitri heard the melodious voice of the Divine :

You have now left earth's miseries and its impossible conditions, you have reached the domain of un-alloyed felicity and you need not go back to the old turbulent life : dwell here both of you and enjoy eternal bliss.

But Savitri answered firm and moveless :

“I climb not to thy everlasting Day,  
Even as I have shunned thy eternal Night...  
Earth is the chosen place of mightiest souls;  
Earth is the heroic spirit's battlefield...  
Thy servitudes on earth are greater, king,  
Than all the glorious liberties of heaven.”<sup>2</sup>

Once more Savitri, even like Ashwapati, has to make a choice between two destinies, two soul-movements—although the choice is already made even before it is offered to her. Ashwapati had to

<sup>1</sup> Bk. XI : Canto 1 : p. 762.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. XI : Canto 1 : p. 770.

abandon, we know, the silent immutable transcendent status of pure light in order to bathe in this lower earthly light. Savitri too as the proto-type of human consciousness chose and turned to this light of the earth.

The Rishi of the Upanishad declared : they who worship only Ignorance enter into darkness, but they who worship knowledge alone enter into a still darker darkness. This world of absolute light which Savitri names 'everlasting day' is what the Upanishdic Rishi sees and describes as the golden lid upon the face of the Sun. The Sun is the complete integral light of the Truth in its fulness. The golden covering has to be removed if one is to see the Sun itself—to live the integral life, one has to possess the integral truth.

So it is that Savitri comes down upon earth and standing upon its welcoming soil speaks to Satyavan as though consoling him for having abandoned their own abode in heaven to dwell among mortal men :

"Heaven's touch fulfils but cancels not our earth...  
Still am I she who came to thee mid the murmur  
Of sunlit leaves upon this forest verge...  
All that I was before, I am to thee still..."<sup>1</sup>

Voicing Satyavan's thought and feeling, all humanity, the whole world in joy and gratefulness, utters this *mantra* of thanksgiving:

"If this is she of whom the world has heard,  
Wonder no more at any happy change."<sup>2</sup>

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

<sup>1</sup> Bk. XII : p. 808.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. XII : p. 812.

## AN OLD LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO

Pondicherry  
30th August 1920

Dear Dr. Munje,

As I have already wired to you, I find myself unable to accept your offer of the Presidentship of the Nagpur Congress. There are reasons seen within the political field itself which in any case would have stood in my way. In the first place I have never signed and would never care to sign as a personal declaration of faith in the Congress creed, as my own is of a different character. In the next place since my retirement from British India I have developed an outlook and views which have diverged a great deal from those I held at the time and, as they are remote from present actualities and do not follow the present stream of political action, I should find myself very much embarrassed what to say to the Congress. I am entirely in sympathy with all that is being done so far as its object is to secure liberty for India, but I should be unable to identify myself with the programme of any of the parties. The President of the Congress is really a mouth-piece of the Congress and to make from the presidential chair a purely personal pronouncement miles away from what the Congress is thinking and doing would be grotesquely out of place. Not only so, but nowadays the President has a responsibility in connection with the All India Congress Committee and the policy of the Congress during the year and other emergencies that may arise which, apart from my constitutional objection and, probably, incapacity to discharge official duties of any kind or to put on any kind of harness, I should be unable to fulfil, since it is impossible for me to throw over suddenly my fixed programme and settle at once in British India. These reasons would in any case have come in the way of my accepting your offer.

The central reason, however, is thus that I am no longer first and foremost a politician, but have definitely commenced another kind of work with a spiritual basis, a work of spiritual, social, cultural and economic reconstruction of an almost revolu-

tionary kind, and am ever making or at least supervising a sort of practical or laboratory experiment in that sense which needs all the attention and energy that I can have to spare. It is impossible for me to combine political work of the current kind and this at the beginning. I should practically have to leave it aside, and this I cannot do, as I have taken it up as my mission for the rest of my life. This is the true reason of my inability to respond to your call.

I may say that in any case I think you would be making a wrong choice in asking me to take Tilak's place at your head. No one now alive in India, or at least no one yet known, is capable of taking that place, but myself least of all. I am an idealist to the marrow, and could only be useful when there is something drastic to be done, a radical or revolutionary turn to be taken, (I do not mean revolutionary by violence,) a movement with an ideal aim and direct method to be inspired and organized. Tilak's policy of "responsive co-operation," contained agitation and obstruction whenever needed—and that would be oftener than not in the present circumstances—is, no doubt, the only alternative to some form of non-co-operation of passive resistance. But it would need at its head a man of his combined suppleness, skill and determination to make it effective. I have not the suppleness and skill—at least of the kind needed—and could only bring the determination, supposing I accepted the policy, which I could not do practically, as, for reasons of my own, nothing could induce me to set my foot in the new Councils. On the other hand a gigantic movement of non-co-operation merely to get some Punjab officials punished or to set up again the Turkish Empire which is dead and gone, shocks my ideas both of proportion and of common sense. I could only understand it as a means of "embarrassing the Government" and seizing hold of immediate grievances in order to launch an acute struggle for autonomy after the manner of Egypt and Ireland, though no doubt without the element of violence. All the same, it could be only on a programme involving an entire change of the creed, function and organisation and policy of the Congress, making it a centre of national reconstruction and not merely of political agitation that I could—if I had not the other reason I have spoken of—enter the political field but unfortunately the poli-

tical mind and habits created by the past methods of the Congress do not make practicable at the moment. I think you will see that, holding these ideas, it is not possible for me to intervene and least of all be in the chair of the President.

Might I suggest that the success of the Congress hardly depends on the presence of a single person and one who has long been in obscurity. The friends who call on me are surely wrong in thinking that the Nagpur Congress will be uninspiring without me. The national movement is surely strong enough now to be inspired with its own idea especially at a time of stress like the present. I am sorry to disappoint; but I have given the reasons that compel me and I cannot see how it is avoidable.

Yours Sincerely,  
AUROBINDO GHOSE

## FROM THE *KARMAYOGIN* (1910)

### INDIAN NATIONALISM: (V) REPRESSIVE MEASURES

#### HOUSE SEARCHES

ONE wonders what would happen in any European country if the police as a recompense for their utter inefficiency and detective incapacity were armed with the power and allowed to use it freely for raiding the houses of respectful citizens, ransack the property of absent occupants and leaving it unsafe and unprotected, carrying off the business books of Presses, newspapers and other commercial concerns, the private letters of individuals, books publicly sold and procurable in every book shop, violating the sanctity of correspondence between wife and husband, searching the persons of ladies of the house even though it be by female hands and the trampling on the sanctity of the home, the dignity of the person and the self respect which every race worthy of existence holds to be dearer than life itself. And all this in spite of the fact exemplified hundred times over that these inquisitions are wholly infructuous and can serve no purpose but harassment and exasperation. Usually the searches are undertaken, if we do not err, on the vague information of these disreputable hirelings used as spies and informers, the statements of lying approvers eager to save their skins by jeopardising innocent men and confessions to the police of arrested prisoners made either for the same purpose or dictated by a morbid vanity and light-headed braggadocio which invents facts and details in order to give dignity to petty crime and magnitude to small and foolish undertakings. The ludicrously irrelevant and useless nature of the articles which are the sole reward of this odious activity are, its sufficient condemnation. Even if the widespread conspiracy dreamed of by authorities were a fact is it conceivable that respectable men, knowing the police to be on the alert, would risk liberty and property by storing bombs, looted ornaments or treasonous correspondence in their houses? We are aware that the right of house search is a necessary weapon in the hands of authority for the suppression of crime, but it was never meant that this should be misused as in order to supply the place of detective ability in the

the Police. House searches are unwarrantable unless the information on which they proceed is precise, reliable and highly probable. Judging from results not one of these epithets can be applied to the numerous searches which are now becoming a standing feature of life in Bengal. And if the search of the persons of ladies is to become another common feature of these domiciliary visits, we fear that the patience of people jealously sensitive on these matters will not long endure the strain. Surely, the higher authorities ought to have sufficient good sense to draw inevitable conclusion from experience, perceive the limitations of this weapon and, if not for the possible evil consequence of creating still greater disaffection, yet for its barren inutility, renounce its excessive use.

#### POLICE UNREST IN THE PUNJAB

The action of some of the statesmen of this country seems to be guided by the principle that the best way to bring about a particular object is to try and promote its opposite. They certainly desire the political unrest to cease, but their action seems to be carefully calculated to prolong it. No more irritating action could have been taken in the present state of the public mind than the persistence in sedition-hunting which is being practised on a large scale in the Punjab. There is not the least sign of trouble or violence or even widespread agitation of any kind in that province. The causes which excited agitation and violence formerly were purely local and, with the removal of the cause, the effect, as it was bound to do, disappeared. Since then, the Punjab has been profoundly quiet, and the opposition to the Convention Congress and the convocation of the Hindu Sabha, presided over by so inoffensive a personage as Sri Pratul Chandra Chatterjee, were the only signs of life it gave. We wonder, is it the first-mentioned activity which has led to the raids, searches and arrests? The almost universal opposition to a body which has faithfully excluded the Nationalists and enjoys the support and patronage of Mr. Gokhale, may seem to the authorities a certain sign of widespread seditious feeling in the land. Is it by stirring up sedition with a police pole that the Punjab bureaucrats think they can get rid of unrest?

## THE PATIALA CASE

The Patiala case has developed its real objective, which is the destruction of the Arya Samaj, the men arrested being merely pawns in the game. The speech of the counsel for the prosecution, Mr. Grey, in no way sets out an ordinary case against individuals, nor is there any passage in it which gives any light as to particular evidence against the persons on their trial, but from beginning to end it is an arrangement of the Arya Samaj as a body whose whole object, semi-open rather than secret, is the subversion of British rule. Mr. Norton, taking advantage of the presence of S. J. Aurobindo Ghosh in the dock, attempted to build up in the Alipore case an elaborate indictment of the whole national movement as a gigantic conspiracy, but he did not neglect the individual cases and made some attempt to conceal the extra judicial object of his oratory by a continual reference to actual evidence, relevant or irrelevant, in the case. Mr. Grey has not given himself that trouble. The political character of his advocacy is open and avowed. But he follows his Calcutta precursor in the ludicrous jumps of his logic from trivial premises to gigantically incongruous conclusions, in his heroic attempt to make bricks out of straw. His chief arguments are that the Arya Samajists read the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Punjubee*,—to say nothing of the long defunct *Bandemataram*,—and that some of the prominent members of the Arya Samaj are politicians and yet remain members of the Arya Samaj. The perfectly general interpretations by Swamy Dayananda of the Vedic view of politics, are the basis of his attack, and even the vehement character of the great reformer's polemics against other religions, the orthodox Hindu included, are pressed into the service of this unique argument. And all this is used to prejudice men under trial on a serious charge. Mr. Norton trifled with the traditions of the British bar by his pressing of trivial and doubtful evidence against the accused in the Alipore case, but it seems to us that Mr. Grey has departed still further from those lofty traditions. And what if the Patiala court decides that the Arya Samaj is a seditious body, seditious in origin, seditious in intention, seditious in action? Will the Government prescribe as an illegal association this wealthy, powerful

and highly organised community containing more than half the brains and activity of the Punjab ? Already the charge has been made that by giving special, privileges to the Mahomedans the Government abandoned definitely the principle of religious neutrality on which their rule has hitherto been founded. The present Governor of the Punjab is possibly capable of such a step,—after the whitewashing of the police in the Gulab Bano case and his speech to the Loyalist deputation, we can believe him capable of any rash headstrong step. Fortunately, there is little likelihood that Mr. Grey's oratory will be any more effective than Mr. Norton's.

### THE ARYA SAMAJ AND POLITICS

We have received a communication from a member of the Samaj in which he puts to us certain pointed questions relating to the aims, character and works of the Samaj and of its founder's teachings. We have not that direct and first-hand knowledge which would enable us to answer these questions with any authority. But on the general question our views are known. Aryaism is not an independent religion. It is avowedly an attempt to revive the Vedic religion in its pristine purity. The Vedic religion is a national religion, and it embraces in its scope all the various activities of the national life. Swami Dayananda as a restorer of Vedicism included the theory of politics in his scope and revealed the intensely national character of the Hindu religion and morality. His work was avowedly a work of national regeneration. In dealing with the theory of politics as based on the Vedic religion he had naturally to include the truth that independence is the true and normal condition of a nation and all lapse into subjection must be a sin and degeneration, temporary in its nature. No man can deny this great truth. Freedom is the goal of humanity and Aryanism was in its nature a gospel of freedom, individual freedom, social freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom in all things, and the accomplishment of such an all-pervading liberation cannot come about without bringing national freedom in its train. If to perceive these truths of Vedism and of nature is to be political and seditious, then Swami Dayananda's teaching was political and seditious and the religion he preached may be stigmatised as political and

sedition. But if sedition be limited to its proper meaning, an attempt by illegal and violent means to bring about the fall of the established authority or prepare by word or action lawless opposition and revolution, then there is no sedition in the Swami's preaching or in the belief and actions of the Arya Samaj. They used the perfectly legitimate means of strengthening the national life at all points and their objective is national regeneration through an active and free religion, not political revolution. Individual members may be Loyalists, Moderates, Nationalists, even Terrorists, but a religious body is not responsible for the political opinions of its individual members. The religious teaching of Swami Dayananda was inspired by national motives, not political; and the aims of the Arya Samaj are national not political.

#### THE ARYA DISCLAIMER

The leaders of the Arya Samaj have issued a manifesto disclaiming the political motives attributed to them by the Counsel for the Prosecution in his extraordinary opening address at Patiala. But is there any use in these repeated disclaimers? To a certain type of official mind, not in the minority in this country, every movement, body, organ of opinion or centre of activity that makes for national strength, efficiency or manhood is by that very fact suspect and indeed self-convicted as seditious and its very existence a crime to be punished by the law. The Governor of the Punjab is either himself an official of this class or swayed by advisers of that temper. Under such circumstances it is enough to issue once for all a strong and dignified repudiation of the charge and then proceed calmly with the great work the Samaj has undertaken, serenely strong and unperturbed in good fortune or evil fortune, good report or evil report, confident in God's grace and the spiritual force communicated by the founder. This is the only course worthy of a manly community professing a robust and virile religion. Anxious repetition of unheaded disclaimers seems to us undignified and futile.

## WHAT IS SEDITION ?

The question, what is sedition, one of those Chinese puzzles which it seems impossible to solve, nevertheless, presses for solution. In Nagpur it has been established that to laugh at the holder of a Government title is sedition. In the Swaraj case Justice Chandavarkar has declared it to be the law that to condemn terrorism in strong language and trace it to its source is sedition. At Patiala it is contended that to read the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Punjabee* is sedition. We are not quite sure that at Patiala the prosecuting counsel did not hint that to bring Christianity or Mahomedanism into contempt or hatred is sedition. And we have these remarkable cases in the Punjab, where to translate Seeley's *Expansion of England* or Mr. Bryan's opinion of British rule in Indian seems to have a fair chance of being established as sedition. Mr. Stead's *Review of Review* is now known to be a seditious publication. We are not sure, either, that the *Indian Daily News* is not even worse, for it is continually trying to bring the police, who are an indispensable part of the Government established by law, into contempt and hatred, and the incorrigible persistence of its efforts is sufficient proof of motive, if not of conspiracy. Now one of the charges against a Punjab accused is that he wrote impugning the character of the subordinate police service—just like the *Indian Daily News* of Sir Andrew Fraser. We would suggest that Sir Andrew Fraser should be arrested in England and brought here to answer to the outraged police for the remarks passed by the Police Commission. The reasoning is perfectly fair. Any strong criticism, especially if it is persistent, lowers the reputation of the Government and creates in people a tendency to belittle, that is to say, have a contempt for authority established by law. It is still worse if the Government is accused of injustice, say, in the matter of deportations or the Gulab Bano case; for that inevitably creates hatred. Therefore strong criticism of the Government is sedition. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and *Punjabee* strongly criticise the Government. Therefore they are seditious papers and their readers seditious conspirators. Every official is a member of the Government established by law; therefore to criticise strongly an official or a policeman, still more, officials or policemen as a class, is sedition. Christia-

nity is the religion of the Government established by law; to criticise Christianity is to bring Christians into contempt; the Government are Christians; therefore to criticise Christianity is to bring the Government established by law into contempt. That is sedition. Therefore to criticise Christianity is sedition. To say that repression fosters Terrorism may be true, but it is seditious. To suggest a Press censorship, seriously or ironically, is to bring the administration of the law of sedition into contempt, that is, to bring the administrators into contempt; and the administrators are the Government established by law. Therefore Mr. Stead's Open Letter to Lord Morley is seditious. We are almost afraid to go on, lest, finally, we should end by proving that *The Englishman* itself is an intolerably seditious rag,—for does it not try to bring Sir Edward Baker and the Government generally into contempt by intimating genially that they are liars, idiots and good for nothing weaklings,—in connection with the Reforms and their unwillingness to put the whole population of India into prison? Would it not save trouble to prohibit speech or writing in India altogether?

#### LAJPATRAI'S LETTERS

The case of Parmanand, the Arya Samaj teacher, whom with a singular pusillanimity the D.A.V. College authorities have dismissed before anything was proved against him, has been of more than usual interest because of the parade with which Lajpatrai's letters to him were brought forward. The letters were innocent enough on the face of them, but prejudice and suspicion were deliberately manufactured out of the connection with Krishna Varma, the expression "revolutionary" the use of the word "boys," and an anticipation of the agrarian outbreak in connection with the Punjab Government's ill-advised land legislation. The bubble had been speedily pricked by the simple statement of facts in the *Punjabee* and by Lajpatrai's own evidence. That Lajpatrai was acquainted with Shyamji Krishna Varma when he was in England, was known already; so were many men who worked with him, Sir Henry Cotton among others, when he was only an enthusiastic Home Ruler and violently opposed to violence. The project of a Nationalist Servants of India Society well-

equipped with a library and other appointments for political education was well advertised and known to the whole country previous to the first deportations. The anticipation of the agrarian outbreak in the letter expresses an apprehension, not a desire, and merely shows that Lajpatrai was uneasy at the rate at which the discontent was swelling and feared that it might lead to an outbreak prematurely forestalling the use of a peaceful pressure on the Government. It is remarkable how throughout his career the honesty and consistency of Lala Lajpatrai's adherence to a peaceful but strenuous Nationalism has been vindicated at every step, and this last revelation of his private and even secret letters is an ordeal of fire out of which he has triumphantly emerged with his consistency and his innocence wholly established.

### A NERVOUS SAMAJ

It is with great regret that we find ourselves compelled to enlarge on the hint we gave in our last issue and comment adversely on the methods by which the Arya Samaj is attempting to save itself from the displeasure of the Government. It is well that it should have disclaimed sedition and repudiated the charge of being not a religious but a political body. But to run nervously to all and sundry for a testimonial of respectability, to sue for a certificate of loyalty to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and express gratitude for an ungracious, ambiguous and minatory letter of reply, to prejudge by dismissal a man whose guilt has yet to be proved, are actions which show that Swami Dayananda's religion may have emancipated the intellects of the leading Arya Samajists but has done little to elevate their character. We must also express our amazement at the action of the Samaj in accepting the resignation by Lala Lajpatrai of his offices on the various governing bodies of the Samaj. There are two men who are the glory of the Samaj and by whose adherence and prominence it commands the respect and admiration of all India, Lala Lajpatrai and Lala Munshiram. By its action with regard to the former, the Samaj will lose heavily, it has already lost heavily, in public estimation. In his generous anxiety for the body to which he has devoted the greater part of his life-work, Lala Lajpatrai offered to it the chance of freeing itself from the attacks its enemies

founded upon his connection with it. It was an offer which he was bound to make, but the Samaj ought to have refused. Lajpatrai's only offence is that he has worked and suffered for his country. By its action the Samaj has announced to the whole world that no man must dare to feel and act, however blamelessly, for his country if he wishes to be recognised by the Samaj. If so, Aryaism will perish from the face of India and leave no trace behind. The world has no use any longer for religious bodies which exclude courage, manliness, generosity, justice and patriotism from their moral practice.

### THE NEW POLICY

A policy of conciliation, a policy of trust in the people, a policy liberal, progressive, sure if slow,—that was the forecast made by the Moderate astrologers when the Reform comet sailed into our startled heavens. The prophets and augurs of the Anglo-Indian Press friendly to Moderate India—friendly on condition of our giving up all aspirations that go beyond the Reforms—prophesied high, loud and often to the same purpose, and if, like the Roman augurs, they winked and smiled mysteriously at each other when they met, the outside world was not supposed to know anything of their private opinions. Even the disillusionment caused by the publication of the Councils Rules has not prevented this party of wise and able politicians from supporting by participation the Reforms which they condemned, and belauding the intention of the Anglo-Indian reformers while swearing dismally and violently at their practice. Bad as it is, we must co-operate so as to make the best of the new measure. To make the best of a bad measure is to make it a success and so prevent or delay the coming of a better. This at least is our idea of the matter, but we belong to a party not of wise and able politicians to take the full profit of that which they condemn as disastrous and injurious, but of men who have the misfortune still to believe in logic, principle and experience. To be logical is to be a mere theorist, to cling to principle is to be a doctrinaire and to be guided by experience, the world's and our own, is to be unpractical. Only those whose theory is confused and practice self-contradictory and haphazard, can be wise politicians and capable of guiding the country aright. From this standpoint a procla-

mation of all India as seditious is, doubtless, the first step in the new policy, the policy of conciliation and liberalism. It is the sign-manual of the great reformer, Lord Morley, upon his work, the loud-tongued harbinger of the golden age.

No particular motive can be alleged for this sudden proclamation, nor is any alleged. The people are left to speculate in the dark as to the mystic motives of Lords Minto and Morley in this remarkable step forward, or to get what light and comfort they can from the speculations of our Anglo-Indian friends and advisers, who seem to be as much in the dark as ourselves and can only profess their blind religious head in the necessity and beneficence of the measure and appeal to all patriotic Indians to cooperate in coercing the national movement into silence. If India had been full of meetings of a seditious and doubtful nature, the necessity of the measure could have been established. Even if the national life were pulsating swiftly though blamelessly, its "actiology"—if we may use a word which may possibly be condemned by Mr. Petman or Mr. Grey as seditious,—could have been understood, though not its necessity. But at present, with the exception of an occasional scantily attended meeting in the Calcutta squares, the only political meetings held are those in which abhorrence of Terrorism is expressed or Vigilance Committees of leading citizens organised to patrol the E.B.S.R. at night even in this chilly weather, and those in which the Deccan Sabha drinks deep of the political sermons and homilies of Lord Morley's personal friend, Mr. Gokhale. Was it to stop these that the proclamation of all India became necessary?

It has been freely alleged that the prevalence of bombs and Terrorism in Bombay, Punjab and Bengal is the justification of the measure on the ground that open sedition leads to secret assassination, Nationalism to Terrorism. It is obvious that to attempt to meet secret conspiracy by prohibiting public agitation is a remedy open to the charge of absurdity. The secret conspirator rejoices in silence, the Terrorist find his opportunity in darkness. Is not the liberty of free speech and free writing denied to the Russian people by more rigorous penalties, a more effective espionage, a far more absolute police rule than any that can be attempted in India? Yet where do the bomb and the revolver, the Terrorist and the secret conspirator flourish more

than in Russia ? The conspirator has his its own means of propaganda which the law finds it difficult to touch. The argument, however, is that it is only in an atmosphere of dissatisfaction, disaffection and sedition that the propaganda of the conspirator can be effective, and Nationalism creates that atmosphere. Criticism of the Government leads to dissatisfaction with the Government, dissatisfaction leads to the aspiration for a better form of Government, aspiration of this kind when baulked leads to disaffection, disaffection leads to secret conspiracy and assassination. Therefore stop all means of criticising the Government and the first cause being removed, the final effect will disappear. That this is the actual train of reasoning, conscious or unconscious, in the minds of those who advise, initiate or approve a policy of repression is beyond doubt. It is evident in all they say or write.

Unfortunately the statement of the premises in this chain is incomplete and the conclusion is therefore vitiated. The first premise may be granted at once. In a country well satisfied with its lot, a nation at ease and aware of prosperity and progress, the propaganda of the secret conspirator must necessarily fail. In India itself, if we are to believe the *Times*, secret societies have existed for upwards of forty or fifty years. How is that they had no success and no one was aware of their existence until the reaction after Lord Ripon's regime culminated in the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon ? Dissatisfaction is not created by public criticism, it is created by the adverse facts on which public criticism fastens, and it crystallises either in public criticism or in secret discontent. The public criticism creates public agitation, the secret discontent creates secret conspiracy. Both are born of the same circumstances, but the lines of development are entirely different, nor is there much sympathy between them. The public agitator dreads the secret conspirator, the secret conspirator despises the public agitator, even when they are moving towards the same end. The man most detested and denounced by the Indian revolutionary organisations now active at Paris, Geneva and Berlin, is S. B. Chandra Pal, the prophet and first preacher of passive resistance. Yet the object of both is almost identical, the Nationalist agitator insisting on perfect autonomy, the revolutionist on separation, both being merely different forms of independence. The question for the autho-

rities is whether they will try to ignore or silence the public criticism or remove the cause of dissatisfaction. If they ignore without silencing public criticism, the dissatisfaction grows in volume until it becomes the aspiration for a better form of Government. They must then either satisfy that aspiration or silence it, they can no longer ignore it. This game of ignoring the obvious is, like the first crude attempt of Nationalism in India to ignore the Government, foredoomed to failure; it only postpones and intensifies the problem, it does not get rid of it. Yet this was the policy long followed by the Indian Government towards the Congress movement. On the other hand, they may silence the public criticism or trample on it. If they trample on it, the aspiration becomes disaffection not necessarily to the sovereign, but to the form and system of Government then obtaining, with a cry for absolute transformation. This was what happened in India in 1905. Trampling on public opinion without silencing its expression is mere madness; it leads to genesis of great revolutionary movements, injures the Government, endangers public peace and order, and helps nobody. This method does not even postpone the necessity of a solution, it hastens it by intensifying the problem to breaking point. Yet this was the policy of Lord Curzon. He not only permitted the expression of public discontent, but he fostered it by arguing with and trying to persuade it; yet he invariably trampled on the thing he permitted. It is a statesmanship of this kind which ruins empires and destroys great nations. There is another kind of policy, and that is to play with the monster of discontent, to chide it, whip it and yet throw its sops when taking advantage of the monster's preoccupation with the sop to win the chain round its neck tighter and tighter. This is also bad policy. The whip enrages, the sop does not soothe but irritates, the tightening of the chain only shortens the distance between the tamer and the brute;—for the difficulty is that, the tamer has to hold the chain, he cannot tie it to something else and get out of springing distance.

Eventually, either discontent has to be satisfied or silenced. If it is satisfied, the whole difficulty disappears and perfectly amicable relations are restored. That was the policy pursued by England with regard to its colonies after the severe lesson learned in America, with the result that the bond between the colonies and Great Britain still

defies the efforts of Time and Circumstance to loosen or snap them. But if discontent is not to be satisfied, the question then for the ruler is whether he prefers it to crystallize in public agitation and peaceful but possibly effective resistance, or in secret conspiracy, terrorism and eventually armed insurrection. It must be one of the two, for to expect an immense impulse like the national impulse to sink to rest without being either crushed or satisfied, is to expect impossible miracles. The Anglo-Indian appeal to the political leaders to be satisfied and cease from agitation is a singularly foolish and futile one. If the political leaders were to comply, even the most popular and trusted of them, they would cease to be leaders the next day. The dwindling numbers that attend the Convention sittings are a signal proof of this very obvious fact; that diminution has been effected, it must be remembered, without public agitation, without any organisation or activity of the Nationalist Party, by the mere operation of a law of Nature. The aspiration, however created, is there and it is a fire mounting out of the bowels of the earth, which no man's hand can extinguish. The political leaders know that they cannot quench it, if they would; the Government thinks it can. And the method it seems to favour, is the extension of the Seditious Meetings Act and the prosecutions of papers and publications or their leaders all over India....

If our view of the question is right, it is evident that to paralyse public agitation is to foster Terrorism, and we can only suppose that Government think Terrorism easier to deal with than public agitation. This seems to us a grievous error. If experience shows anything, it is that Terrorism is never extinguished except by the removal of its causes. The difference between Terrorism and open rebellion is that open rebellion often effects its object, but can easily be crushed, while Terrorism does not effect its object, but cannot be crushed. The only thing that Terrorism can do is to compel Government to satisfy partially the more moderate demands of peaceful agitation as the lesser of the two evils, and this is a result which the Terrorist looks on with contempt. He is always extreme and fanatical and will not be satisfied with anything less than immediate freedom gained by violence. He is confident of his result, he is passionately and intolerably attached to his method. Irish Terrorism only dis-

appeared because of the expectation of Home Rule by the alliance with British Liberalism ; Russian Terrorism is still kept alive by the impotence of the Duma ; Anarchism flourishes because the Governments of Europe have not found any way of circumventing it. Terrorism may perish of inanition ; coercion is its food and its fuel.

The policy now being followed by the Lord Minto's Government has neither immediate justification nor ultimate wisdom. It is the old futile round which reluctant authority has always trod when unable to reconcile itself to inevitable concession. It is a wasteful, ruinous and futile process. For if the Government were to declare tomorrow that it would no longer tolerate public opposition and deport all the leaders of public and peaceful agitation in the country, it would only stimulate more formidable and unscrupulous forces and substitute a violent, dangerous and agonising process for one which, even if a little painful, is helpful, economical and constructive.

#### THE VICEROY'S SPEECH

The speech of Lord Minto and the occasion of the first meeting of the Viceroy's Council under the new regime is a very important pronouncement ; and the most momentous of the passages in the pronouncement are two, the one in which he disposes finally of any lingering hopes in the minds of the Moderates, the other in which he threatens to dispose finally of any lingering hopes in the minds of the Nationalists. It has been a Moderate legend which still labours to survive, that the intention of Lords Morley and Minto in the Reforms was to lay the foundations of representative self-government in India. This legend was perseveringly reiterated in direct contradiction of the Secretary of State's famous pronouncement that, so far as his vision could pierce into the future, the personal and absolute element in Indian administration must forever remain. Lord Minto has now stamped his foot on the Moderate legend and crushed it into atoms. We quote the important passages in which he accomplishes this ruthless destruction.

"We have distinctly maintained that representative Govern-

ment in its Western sense is totally inapplicable to the Indian Empire and would be uncongenial to the traditions of Eastern populations—that Indian conditions do not admit of popular representation, that the safety and welfare of the country must depend on the supremacy of British administration—and that that supremacy can, *in no circumstances*, be delegated to any kind of representative assembly.... We have aimed at the reform and enlargement of our Council but not at the creation of Parliaments. I emphasise what I have just said in view of the opinions to which advanced Indian politicians appear not infrequently to commit themselves.”

In the face of speech so plain and uncompromising it will be difficult indeed to keep up the fiction that that it is only the regulations which are unobjectionable and, if only the regulations are changed, we can with a clear conscience accept and participate in the Reforms. The Act and the Regulations are not different in aim or parentage; they have one origin, one object, one policy. Lord Minto has emphatically stated that the initiative in the Reforms was from beginning to end his own, and the facts bear out the truth of his statement. His inaugural speech has put a seal of finality on the death doom of Moderatism of which the publication of the Council's rules was the pronouncement. The objective of Moderatism is colonial self-government, the means, the grace and good will of the British rulers, and the two British rulers whom they have hailed as apostles and fathers of Reform have declared explicitly that in no future age, however distant, and in no circumstances, however changed, can the official supremacy be delegated to any kind of representative assembly however safely constituted. Not even, therefore a Russian Duma, that simulacrum of a Parliament, is to be granted to India even in remote and millennial futurity.

The other passage is the reference to the licence of a revolutionary Press as a means of combating Terrorism. The revolutionary Press has long since disappeared and, therefore, we can only suppose that Lord Minto means the Nationalist Press and that this pronouncement heralds fresh coercive legislation. The platform has been silenced, the Press must follow. Then Thought alone will remain free from the prohibitions of the law and even that may be coerced by the deportation and exile of any one whom the Police may suspect of en-

tertaining liberal opinions. Just as the first quoted passage ensures the extinction of all Moderate activity, so this menace portends the extinction of all Nationalist activity. We do not know that we shall be altogether sorry. If *The Englishman* is tired of assassinations, we also are tired of the thankless and apparently unsuccessful task of regulating popular discontent and pointing out legitimate paths to the national aspiration on the one hand and attempting to save the officials from themselves on the other. We have only persevered in it on a strong sense of our duty to the country. But we are beginning to feel that Fate is more powerful than the strongest human effort. We feel the menace in the air from above and below and foresee the clash of iron and inexorable forces in whose collision all hope of a peaceful Nationalism will disappear, if not forever, yet for a long...

### BUDDHA'S ASHES

Again the powers that behave committed a blunder. If any of the wise men who weave the tangled web of Anglo-Indian statesmanship at Simla, had a little common sense to salt their superior wisdom, they would never have allowed the strong feeling against the removal of Buddha's ashes to vent itself so long in public expression without an assurance at least of favourable consideration. We have waited long for that simple and natural act of statesmanship, but in vain. It is such a trivial matter in itself, concession would be so graceful, natural and easy; yet the harm done by perverseness and churlishness is so immense! We wonder whether our official Governors ever think. It is very easy. What would they feel if the bones of a great Englishman, say, the Duke of Wellington, were so treated! But diseased attachment to prestige and the reputation of an assured wisdom and an inflexible power have sealed up the eyes of those in high places.

### TO MY COUNTRYMEN

Two decisive incidents have happened which make it compulsory on the Nationalist party to abandon their attitude of reserve and expectancy and once more assume their legitimate place in the struggle

for Indian liberties. The Reforms, so long trumpeted as the beginning of a new era of constitutional progress in India, have been thoroughly revealed to the public intelligence by the publication of the Council's Regulations and the results of the elections showing the inevitable nature and composition of the new Councils. The negotiations for the union of Moderates and Nationalists in an United Congress have failed owing to the insistence of the former on the Nationalists subscribing to a Moderate profession of faith.

The survival of Moderate politics in India depended on two factors, the genuineness and success of the promised Reforms and the use made by the Conventionists of the opportunity given then by the practical suppression of Nationalist public activity. The field was clear for them to establish the effectiveness of the Moderate policy and the living force of the Moderate party. Had the Reforms been a genuine initiation of constitutional progress, the Moderate tactics might have received some justification from events. Or had the Moderates given proof of the power of carrying on a robust and vigorous agitation for popular rights, their strength and vitality as a political force might have been established, even if their effectiveness had been disproved. The Reforms have shown that nothing can be expected from persistence in Moderate politics except retrogression, disappointment and humiliation. The experience of the last year has shown that, without the Nationalists at their back, the Moderates are impotent for opposition and robust agitation. The political life of India in their hands has languished and fallen silent.

By the incontrovertible logic of events it has appeared that the success and vigour of the great movement inaugurated in 1905 was due to the union of Moderate and Nationalist on the platform of self-help and passive resistance. It was in order to provide an opportunity for establishment of this union, broken at Surat, that the Nationalist gathered in force at Hughly in order to secure some basis and means of negotiation which might lead to united effort. The hand which we held out, has been rejected. The policy of Lord Morley has been to rally the Moderates and coerce the Nationalists; the policy of the Moderate party led by Mr. Gokhale and Sir Feroz Shah Mehta has been to play into the hands of that policy and give it free course and a chance of success. This

alliance has failed of its object; the beggerly reward the Moderates have received, has been confined to the smallest and least popular elements in that party. But the rejection of the alliance with their own countrymen by the insistence on creed and constitution shows that the Moderates mean to persist in their course even when all motive and political justification for it have disappeared. Discomfited and humiliated by the Government, they can still find no way to retrieve their position nor any clear and rational course to suggest to the Indian people whom they misled into a misunderstanding of the very limited promises held out by Lord Morley.

Separated from the great volume of Nationalist feeling in the country, wilfully shutting its doors to popularity and strength by the formation of electorates as close and limited as those of the Reformed Councils, self-doomed to persistence in a policy which has led to signal disaster, the Convention is destined to perish of inanition and popular indifference, dislike and opposition. If the Nationalists stand back any longer, either the National movement will disappear or the void created will be filled by a sinister and violent activity. Neither result can be tolerated by men desirous of their country's development and freedom.

The period of waiting is over. We have two things made clear to us, first, that the future of the nation is in our hands, and, secondly that from the Moderate party we can expect no cordial co-operation in building it. Whatever we do, we must do ourselves, in our own strength and courage. Let us then take up the work God has given us, like courageous, steadfast and patriotic men willing to sacrifice greatly and venture greatly because the mission also is great. If there are any unnerved by the fear of repression, let them stand aside. If there are any who think that by flattering Anglo-India or coquetting with English Liberalism they can dispense with the need of effort and the inevitibility of peril, let them stand aside. If there are any who are ready to be satisfied with mean gains or unsubstantial concessions, let them stand aside. But all who deserve the name of Nationalists, must now come forward and take up their burden.

The fear of the law is for those who break the law. Our aims are great and honourable, free from stain or reproach, our methods

are peaceful, though resolute and strenuous. We shall not break the law and, therefore, we need not fear the law. But if a corrupt police, unscrupulous officials or a partial judiciary make use of the honourable publicity of our political methods to harass the men who stand in front by illegal ukases, suborned and perjured evidence or unjust decisions, shall we shrink from the toll that we have to pay on our march to freedom? Shall we cover behind a petty secrecy or a dishonourable inactivity? We must have our associations, our organisations, our means of propaganda, and, if these are suppressed by arbitrary proclamations, we shall have done our duty by our motherland and not on us will rest any responsibility for the madness which crushes down open and lawful political activity in order to give a desperate and sullen nation into the hands of those fiercely enthusiastic and unscrupulous forces that have arisen among us inside and outside India. So long as any loophole is left for peaceful effort, we will not renounce this struggle. If the conditions are made difficult and almost impossible, can they be worse than those our countrymen have to contend against in the Transvaal? Or shall we, the flower of Indian culture and education, show less capacity and self-devotion than the coolies and shopkeepers who are there rejoicing to suffer for the honour of their nation and the welfare of their community?

What is it for which we strive? The perfect self-fulfilment of India and the independence which is the condition of self-fulfilment are our ultimate goal. In the meanwhile such imperfect self-development and such incomplete self-government as are possible in less favourable circumstances, must be attained as a preliminary to the more distant realisation. What we seek is to evolve self-government either through our own institutions or through those provided for us by the law of the land. No such evolution is possible by the latter means without some measure of administrative control. We demand, therefore, not the monstrous and misbegotten scheme which has just been brought into being, but a measure of reform based upon those democratic principles which are ignored in Lord Morley's Reforms,—a literate electorate without distinction of creed, nationality or caste, freedom of election unhampered by exclusory clauses, an effective voice in legislation and finance and

some check upon an arbitrary executive. We demand also the gradual evolution of executive government out of the hands of the bureaucracy into those of the people. Until these demands are granted, we shall use the pressure of that refusal of co-operation which is termed passive resistance. We shall exercise that pressure within the limits allowed us by the law, but apart from that limitation the extent to which we shall use it, depends on expediency and the amount of resistance we have to overcome.

On our own side we have great and pressing problems to solve. National education languishes for want of moral stimulus, financial support, and emancipated brains keen and bold enough to grapple with the difficulties that hamper its organisation and progress. The movement of arbitration, successful in its inception, has been dropped as a result of repression. The Swadeshi Boycott movement still moves by its own impetus, but its forward march has no longer the rapidity and organised irresistibility of forceful purpose which once swept it forward. Social problems are facing upon us which we can no longer ignore. We must take up the organisation of knowledge in our country, neglected throughout the last century. We must free our social and economic development from the incubus of the litigious resort to the ruinously expensive British Courts. We must once more seek to push forward the movement toward economic self-sufficiency, industrial independence.

These are the objects for which we have to organise the national strength of India. On us falls the burden, in us alone there is the moral ardour, faith and readiness for sacrifice which can attempt and go far to accomplish the task. But the first requisite is the organisation of the Nationalist party. I invite that party in all the great centres of the country to take up the work and assist the leaders who will shortly meet to consider steps for the initiation of Nationalist activity. It is desirable to establish a Nationalist Council and hold a meeting of the body in March or April of the next year. It is necessary also to establish Nationalist Associations throughout the country when we have done this, we shall be able to formulate our programme and assume our proper place in the political life of India.

SRI AUROBINDO

## OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

### VII

Illusion and Delusion—the twin blocked the way;  
This has confused the mind of Kanhu—  
Where can he go and live ?  
They who see with the mind stay away.  
Three are there : although three, the three are one.  
Kanhu says, the world is cut away from him—  
Whoever that came has gone :  
Because of this coming and going Kanhu is confused.  
It is visible, the city of conquest is near to Kanhu.  
Yet, Kanhu says, “it does not enter into my heart !”

### NOTES

The goal is the city of God—the city of conquest for Kanhu. He must go there and live for ever. But with the active mind, with its illusions and delusions, none can enter. Illusion is to see a thing which is not there, delusion is to see one thing for another. They remain outside, Kanhu sees the world abolished for him, the three worlds of the mind, the life and the body which although three are really one—their truth is behind and beyond in the unity. That destination seems to be near and yet Kanhu has not completely entered into it.

### VIII

The boat of Grace is filled with gold,  
There is no reason for silver in it.  
Kamali rows towards the heaven;  
How is it then that the past life returns again ?  
Pull out the peg, spread out the rigging;  
Row on, Kamali, and ask of the true Guru.  
Sit in the rear and look around.

The helm is not there ? How to ply and who can ply ?  
 Press evenly to the right and to the left as you go :  
 So do you find in the way the Great helpers.

### NOTES

Through the supreme Grace your being carries only gold—pure consciousness. The impure, mixed worldly consciousness is the silverware—it must not be allowed to return. With this pure Consciousness firm in you, let yourself go ahead. Do not turn to the right, nor to the left—go forward keeping a watchful eye all around.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

## THE SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

(Contd.)

### V. THE CRITIQUE OF THE SAMADHI-SOLUTION

The Voice replied : "Is this enough, O spirit ?  
And what shall thy soul say when it wakes and knows  
The work was left undone for which it came ?  
Or is this all for thy being born on earth  
Charged with a mandate from eternity,

\*\*

To pass and leave unchanged the old dusty laws ?  
Shall there be no new tables, no new Word,  
No greater light come down upon the earth  
Delivering her from her unconsciousness,  
Man's spirit from unalterable fate ?

\*\*

Is this then the report that I must make,  
My head bowed with shame before the Eternal's seat,—  
His power he kindled in thy body has failed,  
His labourer returns, her task undone ?"  
(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Bk. VII, C. II, p. 540)

"I am concerned with the earth, not with worlds beyond  
for their own sake, it is a terrestrial realisation that  
I seek and not a flight to distant summits."

(*Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, p. 193)

**T**RANCE-experiences are undoubtedly of great value in the pursuit of the spiritual goal as ordinarily understood, and the Nirvikalpa Samadhi taken in the specific sense in which the term is used,

no doubt represents a supreme height of realisation that a seeker may aspire after. Naturally enough, this most elevated trance-state proves to be adequate if the goal is to pass away into the Superconscient and not to bring down the Power and Glory of the Superconscient into our normal waking consciousness. But samadhi experiences cannot suffice in the least for the object of our Yoga of Transformation; for, our goal is no less than the dynamic divinisation of our total existence including the outermost parts of Prakriti. To be more specific, viewed from the perspective of *our* spiritual goal—the goal of embodying and manifesting the highest spiritual consciousness here upon earth itself—the trance-solution for the actual imperfections of our world-existence suffers, among others, from the following deficiencies:

(1) The supreme trance-state represents a state of consciousness or rather superconsciousness to which only a rare few can ordinarily attain. Thus, it has got no general validity so far as the goal of a wide-based terrestrial realisation is concerned.

(2) Even when attained, there is no return for the majority of seekers from this supreme height of spiritual consciousness. It is only the exceptionally gifted Isvarakotis or “divine souls” who succeed in coming back to the waking state. (Cf. Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. VI, p. 499 :

“When once they (ordinary Sadhakas) somehow attain to the direct realisation of Brahman, they cannot again come back to the lower plane of material perception. They melt away in Brahman—*kṣīre nīravat*—like water in milk.”)

So the question of the divinisation of the waking existence becomes otiose and irrelevant.

(3) Traditionally it is averred that even those rare few who happen to return from the supreme state can do so only through the intermediary of a trace of ego and desires. Hence a certain “lowering of the key” becomes unavoidable which places it at a remove from the perfect divine realisation we aspire after.

Cf. Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. VII :

“The conclusion of the Vedanta is that when there is absolute Samadhi and cessation of all modifications, there is no return from that state; as the Vedanta aphorism says: *anāvṛtti śavdāt...* But the Avatars *cherish a few desires* for the good of the world. By

taking hold of that thread they come down from the superconscious to the conscious state." (p. 140) [Italics ours]

Narrating his own personal experience the Swami says in the same context :

"I had just a trace of the feeling of Ego, so I could again return to the world of relativity from the Samādhi." (*Ibid.*, p. 139, [Italics ours])

(4) In a more general way we may state that if the entry into the higher reaches of our being is effected only in the absorbed super-conscious state of trance, the experience cannot become real to the whole being, being valid only for a remote part of it. Thus it militates against our goal of the complete spiritualisation of the totality of our existence.

(5) The Yogic trance helps us to fix the spiritual experiences in our inner consciousness alone; it cannot automatically lead to the spiritualisation of the outer waking consciousness. So for us who aim at a total spiritual and supramental change, even and in particular of the outer parts of our Nature, samadhi as an instrumentation proves to be altogether inadequate and futile.

(6) Because of the aforesaid inability to exercise anything but a relative and moderate elevating influence on the outer consciousness, it so happens that when the samadhi ceases, the thread is broken and the soul returns once again to the "distractions and imperfections of the outward life."

As a matter of fact, since one cannot continually remain in the trance-state,<sup>1</sup> while leading an embodied existence, *vyutthāna* or the "return" from the superconscious state becomes unavoidable, and with this *vyutthāna* "the lower consciousness from which the ascent took place falls back to what it was, with only the addition of an unkept or a remembered but no longer dynamic experience."<sup>2</sup>

It is because of this persistence of the disabilities of the waking mentality even after attainment of samadhi that it is sometimes asserted that an absolute eradication of Ignorance or a complete ascen-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Yes, this Samadhi... is a state not at all easy to attain. When very rarely it appears in somebody, it does not last for long."

(Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. VII, p. 112)

<sup>2</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 811,

sion of consciousness from the "mortal mentality" become feasible only when the body and the bodily life cease to function at death. (Cf. *Yoga-Shikhopanishad*, I.163: *piṇḍapātena yā muktiḥ sā muktirna tu hanyate*)

The foregoing discussion makes it clear that trance-experiences may be all right so far as the traditional Yogas are concerned; for, after all, according to them the true bondage is the very process of birth and the liability of the individual to rebirth in this "unhappy transient world" (*anītyamasukhaṁ lokam*). Liberation achieved through the attainment of the knowledge of Reality should therefore have for its practical consequence the definitive stoppage of this cyclic process of birth-death-rebirth.

And if this is so, if the cessation from embodied existence is considered to be the *summum bonum*, one need concentrate only on an inner realisation of the inner Divine and not bother oneself with the possibility or otherwise of an integral terrestrial realisation. Also the body, although initially a necessary instrument for the realisation of our spiritual destiny (*śariramādyaṁ khalu dharmasādhanam*), may be allowed to disintegrate once that goal is achieved (Cf Sri Ramakrishna: "Take out the thorn with the help of a thorn"; and *Yoga-Vasishtha*: "Renounce that with which you renounce" (*yena tyajasi tam tyaja*);

But this can by no means be our attitude to the body and bodily life. For the Integral Yoga has for its objective:

- (i) to make spiritual experiences real to the whole consciousness including that of the outer being;
- (ii) to establish the highest possible realisation in the waking state and make it endure there;
- (iii) not only to experience the truth subjectively and in one's inner consciousness alone, but to manifest it even in full activity;
- (iv) an integral possession of the integrality of the Divine in the life of this world and not only beyond it.

In short, in the words of Sri Aurobindo: "It is the object of my yoga to transform life by bringing down into it the Light, Power and Bliss of the Divine Truth and its dynamic certitudes. This Yoga is not a yoga of world-shunning asceticism, but of divine life....It aims at a change of life and existence, not as something

subordinate or incidental, but as a distinct and central object.”<sup>1</sup>

Elsewhere Sri Aurobindo points out that “not only must the mind be able to rise in abnormal states out of itself into a higher consciousness, but its *waking mentality also must be entirely spiritualised.*”<sup>2</sup> (Italics ours.)

This then is our goal, and hence trance-experiences *alone* cannot help us much in achieving our objective. Moreover the samadhi state as ordinarily realised suffers from another great disability which may not be considered as such when viewed from the standpoint of the goal of the traditional world-shunning Yogas but certainly so from our point of view. This is as regards the absence of any conscious memory of the trance-experience when one returns to the waking mentality again.

As a matter of fact the aim of the old Yoga is to pass away into the Superconscient and not to bring back its dynamic riches to the waking outer existence with a view to effectuate a spiritual transformation there. Hence, as soon as the Yogin goes above the level of the spiritual mind, he does not seek to retain any continuity of awareness there; instead, he passes into the “mystic sleep” of Samadhi, a state of superconsciousness in which the human mind in its actually evolved condition cannot remain awake even with what has been termed the “inner waking” and hence passes into “the blank incomprehension and non-reception of slumber.”<sup>3</sup> And as a result, because of the gulf of oblivion, the spiritual experiences, of the superconscient trance-state lose all their dynamic value for the waking consciousness.

But this disability has to be remedied. Since we seek to bring down the Superconscient into our normal waking consciousness, we must somehow bridge the gulf, heighten and intensify our spiritual awakening even in the normally superconscient reaches of being and train our consciousness to bring back in full the dynamic memory “from the inner to the outer waking.”

In this connection we feel tempted to reproduce *in extenso*

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother, pp. 150, 166.

<sup>2</sup> The Synthesis of Yoga, p. 453.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 599.

what the Mother said in reply to the question "Is the state of trance or Samadhi a sign of progress?"<sup>1</sup>

"To enter into Samadhi is to pass into a state of which no conscious memory remains on awakening.

"In ancient times this was considered as a very high condition. It was even thought that it was the sign of a great realisation. ...I have read in all kinds of so-called spiritual literature marvellous things about this state of trance or Samadhi; and it happened that I had never had it. I did not know if it was a sign of inferiority. And when I arrived here [at Pondicherry], one of my first questions to Sri Aurobindo was, 'What do you think of Samadhi, this state of trance which one does not remember? One enters into a condition which seems to be blissful but when one comes out of it one never knows what happened.'" He looked at me, he saw what I meant and told me, 'It is unconsciousness. ...Yes, one enters into what is called Samadhi, when one comes out of one's conscious being and enters into a part of one's being which is completely unconscious or rather into a domain where one has no corresponding consciousness—one goes beyond the field of one's consciousness and enters into a region where one has no more consciousness. One is in the impersonal state. That is to say, a state in which one is unconscious; that is why naturally one remembers nothing, because one has not been conscious of anything'...

"So you have the reply. *The sign of progress is when there is no more unconsciousness, when you can rise to the same regions without entering into a trance.*" (Italics ours)

At the time of the publication of this Talk, the Mother added the following remark:

"There are people who enter into domains where they have a consciousness, but between this conscious state and their normal wakeful consciousness there is a *gap*: their individuality does not exist between the waking state and the deeper state; then *in the passage they forget*. They cannot carry the consciousness they had there into

<sup>1</sup> Vide *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, Vol. XIV, No 3, pp.43-45.

the consciousness here because there is a gap between the two. There is even an occult discipline which consists in building the intermediary fields, so that one may be able to remember things."<sup>1</sup> [Italics ours].

But even this does not suffice for our goal. For what we aim at is not the conscious bringing back of the impressions, the reporting back to the waking consciousness, in transcriptions more or less perfect, what one experiences in states at present superconscious to it: we want instead an integral supramental transformation of the waking existence itself. In the luminous words of Sri Aurobindo :

"If the control of [the] highest spiritual being is to be brought into our waking life, there must be *a conscious heightening and widening* into immense ranges of new being, new consciousness, new potentialities of action, a taking up—as integral as possible—of our *present* being, consciousness, activities and a transmutation of them into divine values which would effect a transfiguration of human existence. For wherever a radical transition has to be made, there is always this triple movement—*ascent, widening of field and base, integration...*"<sup>2</sup> [Italics ours]

So we see that in order to have a divinely transformed waking existence, an ascension to the trance-state or even the building up of a conscious bridge between that and the waking state is not enough. Something much more revolutionary is needed : let us see what.

(To be continued)

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> *The Life Divine*, p. 657.

## THE MARCH OF INDIA

### V. INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND INSTITUTIONS :

#### ANCIENT INDIA

##### Functions of the State (I)

**N**OW that we have formed some idea of the limitations imposed by custom and public opinion on the powers of the state, we should examine in some detail the exact scope of the state's function in ancient India.

A slight confusion has been created in this matter by the attempt of modern scholars to read into some of the ancient texts and inscriptions certain ideas and institutions that savour of Western collectivism. Thus, it is generally held that Kautilya's *Arthashastra* advocates a thoroughgoing interference by the king and his officials in the day to day life of the people, and many look upon the so-called edicts of Asoka as an attempt on the part of a busybody to impose his arbitrary will on his subjects, in matters that had best be left alone. Asoka may be summarily dismissed as a freak. For all his zeal of a newly converted Buddhist, he managed in the end to lose his throne, apparently under public pressure, because he had been misusing state funds in making lavish donations to the Buddhist cause; this has been more than hinted at in the Buddhist tradition itself. And he left hardly an impress on later Indian history, whatever might have been his impact on the world-wide migration of Buddhism. As Sri Aurobindo had occasion to note (*The Ideal of Human Unity*, Chapter 31,) "Asoka's edicts remain graven upon pillar and rock, but the development of Indian religion and culture took its own line in other and far more complex directions determined by the soul of a great people." Kautilya's *Arthashastra* is a different matter, and we shall have to consider its reputed "communistic" bias.

We have already indicated in the beginning that a characteristic feature of ancient Indian political thought was its emphasis on duties rather than rights. This comes out very clearly in its view of the state's

functions. From the earliest times we find long enumerations of the king's duties, very little being said about his rights *vis-à-vis* his subjects, except the obvious injunction that he should be respected and obeyed provided he is worthy of the honour. The position assigned to the state is best brought out by the dictum often repeated in the texts, that the king is a servant of the people and the taxes that he can levy are as it were his wages, for services rendered. A variant is provided by saying that the foremost duty of the king is to keep his subjects happy and contented. Kalidas the representative poet of the classical age probably does violence to grammar but is certainly reflecting a common notion, when he derives the word *rājan* from a root meaning "to please", *rājā prajā-rañjanāt*.

If we are to borrow a term from modern parlance to describe the attitude of the ancient Indian state to its subjects, "paternalism" seems to fit the case best, provided we understand this term in its best and not the derogatory sense often attached to it. The *Mahabharata*, for example, describes the king as the 'father of the people, because he has compassion for them (Shanti, 139.105). In the *Ramayana* (II.2.49), the hero is said to have behaved like a father when he sympathised with the sorrows of his people and was highly pleased when they were happy and joined in festivities. Kautilya (I.19) reflects the same sentiments when he says: "In the happiness of the subjects lies the happiness of the king, in their welfare his welfare." Yajnavalkya (I.334) exhorts the king to behave like a father towards his subjects. Even Asoka, the heretic king, declares in his inscriptions: "all men are my children".

Paternalism implied a number of things: protection from internal trouble and external danger, maintenance of law and order involving a regular and efficient system of police and justice, guardianship of the traditional Dharma and keeping the people on the path of virtue, help and support to the needy and infirm, prevention of economic exploitation and undue influence on the part of the men in positions of power, and a vigorous promotion of the general well-being of subjects. The aim in view was always to maintain the national culture at a high level and ensure the continued prosperity of the country, to the extent these could be secured with the help of the state power, and without in the least degree impairing the initiative

and efficiency of the individual and the diverse cultural, social, economic and religious groups of which he formed part.

The main lines of this endeavour were laid down at a fairly early date in the nation's history, in the period of the Upanishads to begin with, and in the Great Epics in full detail. A few quotations will illustrate the point. They are not meant to be exhaustive, but they may be taken as typical of the ancient Indian ideas on the functions of the state. In *Chandogya Upanishad* (V.115), King Aswapati the Kaikeya proudly declares : "Within my realm, there is no thief, no miser, no drunkard, none who does not keep the sacrificial fire, none who defies the social law and acts according to his self-will, no woman who goes astray." In the *Mahabharata* (Adiparva, chapter 109), there is a description of Bhishma's kingdom which elaborates the theme in these words : "Here there were no thieves, there was none who was sinful; the people were devoted to virtuous acts, sacrifices and the vow of the truth. Bearing love and affection for one another, they grew in prosperity. None was there miserly, and there was no woman who was a widow. The wells were full of water, the groves abounded in trees, and the whole kingdom was full of prosperity." This is one of the earliest examples in history of a conscious and deliberate attempt to paint a Utopia which was to be the model of a successfully governed state. There is in the *Mahabharata* (Sabha, chapter 5) another well-known passage that will bear repetition; the passage is long but a few typical extracts will serve to bring out the spirit in which the state in ancient India was intended to be run. It is in the form of certain questions which the divine sage, Narada, puts to Yudhishthira the Pandava prince who has just been installed as king. Some of these questions, if answered in the affirmative and with truthfulness by any of our contemporary Heads of states would do credit to their governments; presumably, the Pandava prince gave the correct answers but the answers have not been recorded. "Have your chief officers of states been really deserving the pay they receive", Narada asks. "And do they continue to be loyal to you ? You do not surely settle everything by yourself ? And I trust the advice your ministers give does not leak out ? Do you get things done by officials who can be trusted to do their jobs well and who are incorruptible ? Your subjects are not surely oppressed by any severe measures taken

by you? Do the people look upon you as an embodiment of impartiality, and can they come to you without fear as if you were their father and mother? Are the peasants in your realm contented? Are large tanks dug in your kingdom at proper distances, so that the farmers do not have to depend solely on the vagaries of the weather? Are they ever in need of food or of seeds, and do you give them loans on easy terms? Do you give your soldiers their pay and rations regularly at the appointed times? Do you support the wives and children of those who have given their lives for your sake and those who are now in distress because of their army service? Surely you reward by bestowing wealth and honours on men of learning and humility and on those who are skilled in the different branches of knowledge? You no doubt protect yourself from your public servants, and protect them from your relatives, and protect all of them from one another?" This last injunction is a real gem which many modern governments would be the better for copying.

It may be argued that all this was very well in theory. But is there any evidence in history,—for according to the accepted notions the Upanishads and the Great Epics belong to pre-history,—is there any independent testimony to show that even a remote attempt was made in ancient India to approach anywhere near the ideal? We shall here omit the descriptions, given in Kalidas and the later poets of the classical age, of conditions prevailing in their time, although it is obvious to even a casual student of our literature that most of the great poets had been in closest touch with kings and courts and the common man, and the pictures they paint, however tinged with poetry and idealism, do reflect the contemporary scene. We shall also omit for our purpose the grandiloquent claims made by Asoka in his well-known inscriptions about the state of the country under his beneficent rule; for it may be justly objected that this self-styled "favourite of the gods" (*devānam priya*) was too full of his own righteousness, like the Achemenid kings of ancient Iran whom he seems to have taken as his models, to be telling the whole truth. But the honest and scholarly Buddhist monks who came to India all the way from China in search of the true knowledge cannot be accused of any bias in favour of the peoples whom they happened to have visited in the course of their travels through India. And the pictures they

paint are singularly true to the ancient Indian ideal. Here is the impression that one gathers from Fa Hien: he travelled through India around 400 A.D. The quotations are from the useful summary given in Smith's *Early History of India*. "The picture", avers Smith, "is a pleasing one on the whole, and proves that Vikramaditya (this was the honorific title adopted by Chandragupta II during whose reign the Chinese pilgrim happened to be in India) was capable of bestowing on his people the benefits of orderly government in sufficient measure to allow them to grow rich in peace and prosper abundantly." This is high praise, coming as it does from a hardened Anglo-India bureaucrat who has very few good things to say about the ancient Indian ways of government. According to Fa Hien, Smith continues, "the towns of Magadha were the largest in the Gangetic plain. The people were rich and prosperous, and seemed to him to emulate each other in the practice of virtue. Charitable institutions were numerous; rest-houses for travellers were provided on the highways, and the capital (Pataliputra, modern Patna) possessed an excellent free hospital endowed by benevolent and educated citizens. Hither came, we are told, all poor or helpless patients suffering from all kinds of infirmities. They were well taken care of, and a doctor attended them, food and medicine being supplied according to their wants. Thus they were made quite comfortable, and when they were well, they might go away." This sounds very much like the modern welfare state which by many is considered to be an absolute novelty. "The region south of Mathura specially excited the admiration of the traveller. The large population lived happily under a sensible government which did not worry it overmuch. With a glance at Chinese institutions, Fa Hien congratulates the Indians that they had not to register their households, or attend to any magistrates and rules. They were not troubled with passport regulations, or, as the pilgrim bluntly puts it, 'those who want to go away, may go, those who want to stop may stop.' The administration of the criminal law seemed to him mild in comparison with the Chinese system. Most crimes were punished only by fines, varying in amount according to the gravity of the offence, and capital punishment would seem to have been unknown. Throughout the country, no one killed any living thing, or drank wine, ate onions or garlic; there were no butchers' shops or

distilleries in the market-places." This last portion of the pilgrim's report needs to be taken with a certain amount of scepticism. For we know from the literary works and the Ajanta paintings as well as from the law books that men were not exactly tee-totallers in fifth century India, they were not all harmless vegetarians as a Buddhist might expect them to be, and punishments could be harsh in case of need. But the general picture presented here tallies well enough with that given by the native records.

Hiuen Tsang, the other well-known pilgrim from China who has left a record of his impressions, visited India early in the 7th century, during the reign of Harshavardhana in the north and Pulakeshin the great Chalukyan king in the Deccan. He too wrote from the Buddhist standpoint, but the general impression he carried away with him was quite in keeping with his reverence for the Sacred Land. "He was favourably impressed", says Vincent Smith, "by the character of the civil administration, which he considered to be founded on benign principles. The officials were remunerated by grants of land; compulsory labour upon public works was paid for; taxes were light; the personal services exacted from the subject were moderate in amount; and liberal provision was made for charity to various religious institutions. Violent crime was rare. Imprisonment was now the ordinary penalty. The other punishments were more sanguinary than in the Gupta period. Minor offenses were visited with fines." This, as pointed out above, does not indicate a degeneration in the public morals, as Smith suggests; it merely shows that Hiuen Tsang was more observant than his predecessor. "Education evidently was diffused widely, especially among the Brahmins and numerous Buddhist monks; and learning was honoured by the Government. King Harsha was not only a liberal patron of literary merit, but was himself an accomplished calligraphist and an author of reputation. Benevolent institutions on the Asokan model, for the benefit of travellers, the poor and sick, were established throughout the empire. The king also imitated his prototype in the foundation of numerous religious establishments, devoted to the service of both the Hindu gods and the Buddhist ritual." It may be added in this connection that the glories of Nalanda University, which, like Oxford and Cambridge of a later date, had been founded as a centre of religious

training, began about this time and continued under the patronage of Harsha's successors in this region, especially the Pala kings of Bengal. Incidentally, Hiuen Tsang has left some details of the royal munificence which throw a light on the way grants-in-aid, a potent instrument in the hands of the modern state, used to operate in those remote days. Hiuen Tsang is describing here the way largesses were distributed by the king every five years at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna at Prayag. "By this time the accumulation of five years was exhausted. Except the horses, elephants and military accoutrements, which were necessary for maintaining order and protecting the royal estate, nothing remained. Besides these, the king freely gave away his gems and goods, his clothing and necklaces, earrings, bracelets, chaplets, neck-jewel and bright head-jewel; all these he freely gave without stint. All being given away, he begged from his sister an ordinary second-hand garment, and having put it on, he paid worship to the Buddhas of the ten regions, and rejoiced that his treasure had been bestowed in the field of religious merit."

The ancient ideals of government outlasted the fall of Hindu empire in northern India. But the same ideals continued to govern kings in the south. The testimony of foreign travellers in the Vijayanagara kingdom during the days of its glory, in the sixteenth century, is illuminating. We shall choose a few typical quotations from Domingos Paes, a Portuguese visitor from Goa who has left a detailed record of what he saw. He is one among many others who were impressed by the wealth and organisation of the Vijayanagara kingdom before it fell, and may serve our purpose. "These dominions are very well cultivated and very fertile....The land has plenty of rice and Indian corn, grains, beans and other kinds of crops which are not sown in our parts; also an infinity of cotton....The whole country is thickly populated with cities and towns and villages; the king allows them to be surrounded only with earthen walls for fear of their becoming too strong....This country wants water because it is very great and has few streams; they make lakes in which water collects when it rains, and thereby they maintain themselves." Of the capital city of Vijayanagara, Paes says, "This is the best provided city in the world and is stocked with provisions such as rice, wheat, etc., and there is large store of these and very cheap. The streets and markets are full of

laden oxen without count....Then the sheep they kill every day are countless, for in every street there are men who will sell you mutton so clean....The state of this city is not like that of any other city, for in this one everything abounds....There live in this many honourable merchants, and it is filled with a large population because the king induces many honourable merchants to go there from his cities and there is much water in it. The king made a tank there, and water comes to it from more than three leagues by pipes which run along the lower parts of the range of hills outside. This water is brought from a lake which itself overflows into a little river." All this sounds very modern indeed, and also the way the tank was built: "In order to make this tank the king broke down a hill which enclosed the ground now occupied by the tank. In the tank I saw so many people at work that there must have been fifteen or twenty thousand men. This tank the king portioned out amongst his captains (that is, officers), each of whom had the duty of seeing that the people placed under him did their work, and that the tank was finished and brought to completion." Ancient Indian states spent considerable amounts on maintaining a standing army, and Vijayanagara followed the old practice. As Paes observes, "this king has continually a million fighting troops, in which are included 33,000 cavalry in armour. All these are in his pay, and he has these troops always together and ready to be despatched to any quarter whenever such may be necessary....Should any one ask what revenues this king possesses, and what his treasure is that enables him to pay so many troops, I answer thus : These captains whom he has over these troops of his are the nobles of his kingdom; they are lords, and they hold the city and the villages of the kingdom (as fiefs). There are captains amongst them who have a revenue of a million and a million and a half, and as each one has revenue so the king fixes for him the number of troops he must maintain, in foot, horse and elephants....Each of these captains labours to turn out the best troops he can get, because he pays them their salaries....I did not see a man (among these troops) that would act the coward." This again was very much in the old Indian tradition; for we must not forget that India lost her battles against the foreigner not because the soldiers were cowards, but because their equipment had not kept march with the times, and also because in the crucial stages, they were invariably let

down by their leaders and kings. These kings were in the habit of maintaining a full treasury which they kept on filling from generation to generation, thus incidentally providing an adequate incentive to hungry adventurers from abroad. So Paes goes on to add, "The previous kings of this place for many years past have held it a custom to maintain a treasury, which treasury, after the death of each, is kept locked and sealed in such a way that it cannot be seen by any one, nor opened. They are not opened except when the kings have great need, and thus the kingdom has great supplies to meet its needs...." We notice however a certain deterioration in the matter of giving punishments, although here too, precedents could be found in the code of Kautilya who wrote in the 4th century B.C. Another Portuguese traveller, Fernando Nuniz records : "The punishments that they inflict in this kingdom are these : for a thief, they cut off a foot and a hand.... Nobles who become traitors are sent to be impaled alive; and people of the lower orders, for whatever crime they commit, he forthwith commands to cut off their heads in the market-place." Brahmins no doubt were treated less harshly than the others, for as Nuniz says, "in this country they do not put Brahmins to death but only inflict some punishment so that they remain alive." Nevertheless, the state never hesitated to make its power felt, and we may accept the foreign traveller's picturesque verdict : "The people are so subject to the king that if you told a man on the part of the king that he must stand still in a street holding a stone on his back all day till you released him, he would do it."

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All this points to one conclusion, namely, that the state in ancient and medieval Hindu India was not a powerless entity. It was quite capable of giving protection to its subjects against misrule, and oppression by its own servants as well as by the anti-social elements among the general public. It was sufficiently strong, or at least took adequate precautions that foreign attacks would be met. Above all, it tried to ensure a decent standard of living for all its subjects by engaging in a number of welfare activities which many modern states even now hesitate to undertake under the pretext of *laissez-faire*. The doctrine

of *laissez-faire* obtained in ancient India as well, but it was not misinterpreted and misused, except in one or two glaring instances, to keep the down-trodden under foot forever. Of all these points we shall take note in the sequel.

(To be continued)

SANAT K. BANERJI

Life and Mind are in the fact of evolution conditioned by the body and therefore by the principle of Matter. The body is the chief difficulty in the way of spiritual transmutation of life; it has therefore been regarded by spiritual aspirants as an enemy and the escape from the material existence has been made an indispensable condition of the final emancipation.

The quartal begins with the struggle between Life and Matter with the apparent defect of life in death as its constant circumstance; it continues with the struggle of Mind against the life and body and eliminates with the struggle of the spirit against all its instruments but the right end and solution of these discords is not an escape but a severance but the complete victory of the higher over the lower. We have to examine the problem of the reality of Matter. Our present experience of Matter does not give us its truth for Matter is only an appearance of the Reality, a form of its force-action enclosed to the principle of sense in the universal consciousness. As Mind is only a final dividing action of Supermind and Life of Consciousness Force working in the conditions of the ignorance, so Matter as we know it is only the final form taken by consciousness as the result of that same working. Mind precipitating itself into life to create form gives to the universal principle of Being the appearance of material substance instead of pure substance, that is to say, of substance offering itself to the contact of mind as stable than or object. This contact of mind with its object is Sense.

In the divine Mind there is a movement which presents to the divine knower the forms of himself as objects of his knowledge and this would create a division between the knower and the object of

## THE LIFE DIVINE

### (BRIEF SUMMARY)

### CHAPTER XXIV

#### MATTER

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The quarrel begins with the struggle between Life and Matter with the apparent defeat of life in death as its constant circumstance; it continues with the struggle of Mind against the life and body and culminates with the struggle of the spirit against all its instruments; but the right end and solution of these discords is not an escape and a severance but the complete victory of the higher over the lower.

We have to examine the problem of the reality of Matter. Our present experience of Matter does not give us its truth; for Matter is only an appearance of the Reality, a form of its force-action presented to the principle of sense in the universal consciousness. As Mind is only a final dividing action of Supermind and Life of Conscious-Force working in the conditions of the Ignorance, so Matter as we know it is only the final form taken by conscious-being as the result of that same working. Mind precipitating itself into Life to create form gives to the universal principle of Being the appearance of material substance instead of pure substance, that is to say, of substance offering itself to the contact of mind as stable thing or object. This contact of mind with its object is Sense.

In the divine Mind there is a movement which presents to the divine Knower the forms of Himself as objects of His knowledge and this would create a division between the Knower and the object of

knowledge if there were not at the same time, inevitable, another movement by which He feels the object as Himself. This movement, in the divided state of existence created by dividing Mind, is represented to us as the contact of sense which becomes a basis for contact through the thought-mind by which we return towards unity.

Since the action of Mind is to divide infinitely the one infinite existence, Matter, the result of that action, becomes in its apparent nature an infinite atomic division and atomic aggregation of infinite substance. But its reality is one and indivisible, even as in the reality of Life and of Mind, Matter is Sachchidananda represented to His own mental experience as a formal basis of objective knowledge, action and delight.

## CHAP XXV

### THE KNOT OF MATTER

Spirit and Matter are the two ends of a unity, Spirit the soul and reality of Matter, Matter the form and body of Spirit. There is an ascending series of substance and Spirit at the summit is itself pure substance of being. Brahman is the sole material as well as the sole cause of the universe and matter also is Brahman; it is like Life, Mind and Supermind, a mode of the eternal Sachchidananda.

Stoll, practically, Matter seems to be cut off from Spirit and even its opposite and the material existence incompatible therefore with the spiritual. Matter is the culmination of the principle of Ignorance in which Consciousness has lost and forgotten itself and the self-luminous Spirit is represented by a brute inconscient Force in whose mere action there appears to be no self-knowledge, mind or heart. In this huge no-mind Mind emerges and has to labour besieged and limited by the universal Ignorance and in this heartless Inconscience a heart has manifested which has to aspire opposed and corrupted by the brutality of material Force. This is the form-absorbed Consciousness returning progressively to itself, but obliged to work under the conditions of Matter, that is to say, always bound and limited in its results.

For Matter is the opposite of the spirit's freedom and mastery, the culmination of bondage; it is a huge force of movement, but of inertly driven movement subject to a law of which it has no conscience nor initiative but mechanically obeys. It opposes therefore to the attempt of Life to impose itself and freely utilise and the attempt of Mind to impose itself and know and freely guide and constant opposition of its inertia; it yields reluctantly to a certain extent, but brings always in the end a definite denial, limit and obstruction. For this reason knowledge, power, love, etc. are always pursued, accompanied and hedged in by their opposites.

For Matter is the culmination of the principle of division and struggle. It can only unify by an association which carries with it the possibility of dissociation and an assimilation which devours. Therefore Life and Mind in Matter working under this law of division and struggle, that is to say, of death, desire and limitation, aggregation and subsequent dissociation, labour without any finality or certainty of assured progress.

But especially the divisions of Matter bring in the law of pain. Ignorance and Inertia would not be necessarily a cause of pain if the Mind and Life were not aware of an infinite consciousness, Light and Power in which they live but are prevented from participating by the Ignorance and Inertia of Matter or were not stirred to possess this wideness partly or wholly. Man especially, because he is most self-conscious, develops this awareness to a high degree, nor can he be permanently satisfied with increase of power or knowledge within the limits of the material world, for that is also limited and inconclusive and, being aware of and impelled by the infinite, within and around him, he cannot escape the necessity of seeking to know and possess it. This progression of the conscious being out of the Inconscient to the infinite consciousness might be a happy outflowering but for the principle of rigid division and imprisonment of each divided being in his own ego which imposes the law of struggle, the dualities of attraction and repulsion, pleasure and pain, effort and failure, action and reaction, satisfaction and dissatisfaction. All this is the denial of Ananda and implies, if the negation be insuperable, the futility of existence; for in this existence the satisfaction sought by the Infinite in the finite cannot be found, then

ultimately it must be abandoned as an error and failure.

This is the basis of the pessimist theory of material existence which supposes Matter to be the form and Mind the cause of the universe and both of these to be eternally subject to limitation and ignorance. But if on the contrary it is immortal and infinite Spirit which has veiled itself in Matter and is emerging, the development of a liberated supramental being which shall impose on Mind, Life and Matter a higher law than that of limitation and division, is the inevitable conclusion from the nature of cosmic existence. There is no reason why such a being should not liberate and make divine the physical existence as well as the mind and life, unless our present view of Matter represents the sole possible relation here between sense and its objects in which case, indeed, fulfilment must be sought only in worlds beyond. But there are other states even of Matter and ascending series of the gradations of substance, and their higher law is possible to the material being because it is there in it already latent and potential.

*(To be continued)*

SRI AUROBINDO

## TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

### THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY (*contd.*)

WE have seen that the service of humanity, in whatever form it is done, fails to contribute to the happiness either of the person who does it or of those for whom it is done. For real happiness, happiness which each one of us hankers after, cannot be brought about simply by material or mental means. It is certainly true that one has a birth-right to be happy, and that one's desire for happiness is quite a legitimate desire; for utter happiness is the inevitable destiny of all. But we have to see what happiness one secretly longs for, what is its nature, and how it can be achieved. But before we take up that point, we have to answer a question we have already posed ourselves: Can service of humanity lead to the elimination of one's ego and its selfish motives?

There is a lot of loose talk about one's being selfless in social, political or humanitarian work. We often hear of a social or humanitarian worker being universally eulogised as selfless. Well, if that were true, all these workers would be liberated souls. No spiritual discipline would then be needed for liberation. But spiritual wisdom asserts that the little, petty self of man which feels itself separate from others is the cause of his ignorance and bondage. Liberation, according to it, is the expansion of one's consciousness into the infinite consciousness and the transfer of one's centre of gravity from the mortal lump of thinking clay one is at present to the eternal and immortal Being or Self-existence. That was the selflessness to which the Buddha and others attained by so much self-discipline and concentration. But service of humanity, if the truth has to be faced squarely, enhances rather than diminishes egoism and renders one's self more subtly, more pervasively, more complacently selfish.<sup>1</sup> Of course, it is not the crude, narrow, repulsive selfishness of a man who makes no bones of inflicting privation or suffering on others in order to serve his own ends. It is the refined,

<sup>1</sup> "Very usually, altruism is only the sublimest form of selfishness."—Sri Aurobindo

sophisticated, wide-horized, ethics-coated selfishness of the idealist or the philanthropist who inflicts his own ideas and principles, his own views and plans and programmes upon others and insists on their adoption as the panacea for most ills of life. The infliction is done out of kindness and compassion, out of an earnest solicitude for the happiness and well-being of others, out of a deep sense of fellow-feeling. It is considered a laudable infliction to which humanity is expected to submit with a good grace. But the idealist or the philanthropist seems to be blissfully unaware of the fact that his mental views and moral principles are all ignorant and erring, deriving, as they do from his half-lit mind, and that to impose them on others whose line of evolution he cannot see, is to throw their nature out of gear and hinder rather than help their progress.<sup>1</sup> This is nothing but ambition—that disguised ambition of the presumptuous human mind to lead the world by the nose to the Kingdom of Heaven or the Utopia of which it has itself no direct and definite knowledge. “How do you propose to help humanity? You do not even know what it needs,” asks the Mother. The humanist does not bother about the true need of humanity, and even if he did, he could not know it; for it takes the insight of a spiritual man to discover it. What he considers to be its need, must be its need. The humanist helps, because he must, because without it his own life will lose its savour. He imposes his will upon others, cripples their initiative, bends their spirit of independence to his dominating will and congratulates himself that it is not for himself but for others that he is sacrificing his time and energy and money. It is a glorious sacrifice, and he is secretly, often subconsciously, proud of it.

“How can you help another if you do not have a consciousness higher than his?”, asks the Mother again. But the consciousness of others is no concern of the philanthropist. It does not deter him or damp his ardour if he finds that the person he is going to help has a consciousness higher than his. Is it not his mission to help the lame dogs over the stile, irrespective of their consciousness?

<sup>1</sup> “Selfishness kills the soul; destroy it. But take care that your altruism does not kill the souls of others.”—Sri Aurobindo

"It is only children who say, 'I am opening a dormitory, I am going to build a nursery, I will offer soup to the poor, preach knowledge, spread a religion etc....It is only because you consider you are better than others, that you know better than they what they should be or do...'" The whole secret of this kind of humanitarian drive is the truth that "you consider you are better than others."

"I do not think that humanity has become happier or that there has been a great improvement." The humanist gets a satisfaction from the feeling that "he is something" and that he is doing something well worth doing.

The Mother tells us of a wit who once said, "...If mankind had no suffering, philanthropists would be left without occupation." One can, indeed, well imagine the fret and uneasiness of the philanthropist if he is told that he had better stop meddling with others' affairs and tinkering at social reforms. His ambition masquerades as altruism and philanthropy but he knows it not. "Altruism," says Sri Aurobindo, "does the works of compassion more often for its own sake than for the sake of the world it helps." "Altruism, philanthropy, the service of mankind are in themselves mental or moral ideals, not laws of the spiritual life," Sri Aurobindo says again. The humanist is shocked and alarmed to hear it.

It is clear then that service of humanity is not a royal road to selflessness or liberation from the ego. Rather the contrary. The ego in man batters on its self-righteous humanitarian activities which appear glorified in the eyes of the world. Human evolution has reached a stage where it has become necessary to draw a clear line between mental tentatives and spiritual imperatives, between provisional palliatives and a radical therapy. Man must get beyond his ego and come in contact with the hidden springs of universal action, if he aspires to do real good to the world. Mental sympathy and fellow-feeling will not avail much. Knowledge alone with its inherent power can save the world. The One alone can save the Many.

*(To be continued)*

**RISHABHCHAND**

## LET US RECONSIDER EDUCATION

( continued )

**W**E must distinguish spirituality from morality and religion. Morality is an attempt to control, to guide and to direct our motives, seekings, impulses, desires, our life-force, by a mental standard of conduct. That it is a mental or a rational attempt is shown by the fact that the various standards of conduct are arrived at either by the calculations of consequences of action or by erecting a uniform law of some inner motive or intuition or conscience declared to be valid for all. The inadequacy of these moral standards has become too obvious in our day, and there seems to be hardly any way of formulating a stable moral theory. As in Thought, so in Morality there is a disequilibrium. If we examine the ethical situations, we find that they call for a unitary consciousness to deal with them ; and this unitary consciousness is precisely not obtained at the mental level. There is, we may affirm, above moral consciousness, a higher spiritual consciousness, intrinsically aware of the unity ; it is this [automatic awareness of the unity that would resolve the moral state of disequilibrium. An action proceeding spontaneously and effectively from an intrinsic unity-consciousness, that is the hall-mark of spirituality. Moral education, that is, morals instilled by mental considerations, may be necessary so long as humanity has not felt the need to pass beyond the mental consciousness ; one may justify the instilling of the guilt consciousness among men by showing how successful it is in checking the ruthlessness and wildness of Man, but true spirituality shows that it is like administering sickness to man to check the outer signs of some other sickness. In an ideal system of spiritual education, the harmony of life would be induced, not by moral principles, but by a wise channelising of energy, and in fact, by an effective elimination of the moral problems altogether. Life can directly be guided by the Spirit ; morality need not enter, even as an intermediate step.

Similar remarks apply to religion as well. Religion is not spirituality. Religion is also a mental way of leading Man to some kind of relationship with the Spirit. The underlying assumption of Religion is that by certain specific acts, by certain rituals, ceremonies, certain confessions, certain prayers, a relationship can be established with what is believed to be the highest Being or Beings. True spirituality shows, on the contrary, a plastic path, an open way, recognising for each individual a unique path leading him to develop a growing and living relationship and identity with the supreme Reality. Spirituality is a matter of inner life, dependent upon no external binding of rituals or ceremonies; in the words of Sri Aurobindo : "spirituality is in essence an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, soul, which is other than our mind, life and body; an inner aspiration to know, feel, to be that, to enter into contact with the greater Reality beyond and pervading the universe which inhabits also our own being, to be in communion with It and union with It, and a turning, a conversion, a transformation of our whole being as a result of the aspiration, the contact, the union, a growth or waking into a new becoming or new being, a new self, a new nature." The path of Yoga is the path of the Yogi, the Rishi, the Sufi, the mystic. There are dogmatic religions which negate this path. To these dogmatic negations, our reply is that as they are by definition above argument, we shall leave them where they are, and let those who want them have them, but we shall refuse to ourselves the privilege of the dogmatic blindness. Our concern is with light and illumination, and if any given religion has within its heart this element of light, the truth of spiritual growth, we shall accept it, not in a religious spirit, but in the yogic spirit, the spirit of sincere seeking, and in the spirit of the widest seeking, the seeking of the Infinite.

Yoga or spirituality is very much associated with the idea of the renunciation of the world and dynamic action. This association is due to an extreme tendency of asceticism based upon a certain truth of the nature of the Spirit. The truth behind asceticism is that it demonstrates that the Spirit is prior to and above the movement. But this truth is evidently partial, for even though Spirit is above movement, the movement is not devoid of Spirit; indeed, both reason and spiritual experience affirm that all movement has its origin and

source in the Spirit. In the original spiritual tradition of India, there was no opposition between the Spirit and the world; the Vedic and the Upanishadic Culture was not world-negating, and this culture, in fact, supplied the inspiration and basic bedrock for all the multifarious developments in the dynamic pursuits of the body, life and mind. It is wrong to suppose that the spirituality of India has been the cause of the poverty and misery of India; it was when spirituality became insufficiently spiritual, that is to say, partial in its movement and field of effort and achievement, that the seeds of its weaknesses were sown. This defective notion of spirituality has rightly been rejected by the spiritual pioneers of the modern Indian Renaissance. Dayananda stands out as a robust spiritual pioneer who boldly and confidently expounds dynamism as the truth of the Spirit and condemns with full force the theory and practice of world-negating Illusionism. In Sri Ramakrishna, we find a profound and wide and synthetic spiritual experience making way for the solid new foundation for the dynamic spiritual action. Vivekananda is for us the very embodiment of dynamism expressing the fire and passion of the Spirit; and all the truths and dynamic powers of the Spirit we find manifesting sovereignly and triumphantly in Sri Aurobindo. Spirituality finds its complete fulfilment in the sovereign embodiment in Matter and the most effective expression in Life. The divine life on earth, not an escape to an indifferent Nirvana or to a distant heaven of bliss, that is the great message of the Indian spirituality.

Life, it has been argued, is basically ignorant, and like a dog's tail, its curl towards corruption is irremediable. And yet, the defiant spirit of Man has throughout the centuries attempted to fathom, manipulate and change this very principle of existence. Religion, Morality, Culture, Polity, Economy, are so many ways by which attempts are made to churn the mysterious waters of Life so that it may deliver from its bosom something that is still so elusive and still promises to be perhaps the sweetest nectar. If these attempts have failed, the reason is that the secret of Life and Matter is not accessible to the Mind of which Religion, Morality, and Culture etc., are so many dynamic expressions. Mind is incapable of penetrating into the heart of Life and the message of our new spirituality is that it is the Spirit and its Supreme Power which alone can achieve what seems to be an

impossibility. There is, as we can discover through Yoga, behind our blind, impulsive, headstrong desire-soul, a true vital being, pure, calm, powerful and spontaneously turned to the inner and the higher Self, which we can bring forth and manifest in our surface activities the pure but powerful Hanumana. There is again, behind the true vital being, our true individual central being, pure and sweet and fragrant white flame, projecting into our outer being, and capable of suffusing all our life-activities with its nobility, sheer purity and devotion, and with the divine potency that can lead from the complicated cobwebs and snares of Ignorance into the highest sublimity, wideness and intensity of knowledge, action and delight. Not by fleeing from life, nor by accepting life as it is, but by a progressive discovery of the inner truth of life and its problems, and by an inner and delicate but effective change of the very vibrations of life-force that we can avoid the extremes of either killing and rejecting life or of drinking to death the sweet-bitter brew of life.

The West that is coming to us through Commerce, Politics, Culture or through Education, is full of a dynamism of Life; Life that is highly exploited, Life that is highly organised, Life that is highly and subtly mechanised. It is in a mad rush, and starting from the early Renaissance when it was liberated from the clutches of religion and religious morality, it has coursed through a finesse of equally liberated philosophy, literature and art, but has arrived now at a bottom point of a nude revelation of its unbridled phantasy and violence. It is as though by the blind but sure eye that it invades India and it could be the privilege of India to offer to it the real spiritual tranquilliser to liberate it from the pain that it carries within its bosom. It is in fact, a necessity on the part of India to discover the spiritual remedy that she inwardly has if she has to survive. For the only way in which India can receive the rush of life is by its majestic spiritual embrace; else, India will remain troubled and unequal to the task. India must be dynamic, but spiritually dynamic.

Spirituality and world-action are not incompatible with each other. On the contrary, since the Spirit is an all-embracing Reality and Power, the most effective world-action can proceed only on the spiritual basis. Caesar and Christ are not opposed to each other; only Christ has to apply himself to the works of Caesar. And we shall

then see that Christ will out-Caesar Caesar.

A perception of world-unity and an automatic action contributing to the world-unity would be the natural outcome of spirituality applying itself to the works of Life-Force. Internationalism which is being imposed on the humanity through world-ideologies, commerce, communications and political drives, is in its truest reality an expression of the spiritual consciousness and therefore it is native to the spiritual man. A progressive harmony of the individual, national and international relations is a natural law of spiritual action. The world-unity can ultimately be achieved and made secure only on the spiritual basis.

We speak today of the need of the unity of our country. But not knowing the fundamental truth of this unity, recommendations are made which are purely external and linguistic in their nature. The unity of India is spiritual, and once we recognise this truth, proclaim it, and act in the light of this inner unity, we can be sure we shall not have to go to external means to achieve the unity. It will simply be there.

Spiritual action is not a duty for duty's sake; spiritual action is not devoid of the mirth and joy and the shining laughter of the Life-Force. There is in the Life-Force a puissant will in the realisation of which is the ineffable joy and ecstasy. The idea of duty belongs to the moral plane, and duties often conflict with each other, and the justice sought after through the mental consciousness turns out to be a supreme injustice; and how often love abhors what duty demands ! This situation of conflict and disequilibrium does not belong to the spiritual consciousness. In Spirit there is inherent delight and in spiritual action there is a harmonious perception of unity which places each relation in its proper place and extracts from each shock of meeting the utmost Rasa, the sap of delight. Out of this delight or of the upward movement leading up to this delight can be born the highest forms of literature and art. The marvel of form is essentially the marvel of the presence of the Spirit. For this reason, then, the most marvellous forms of beauty can be the effortless and inevitable expressions of spiritual consciousness alone. An unending rush of the waves of joy and love pour out of the bosom that has opened its gates to the indwelling Spirit.

Such a downpour of love, expressing itself in various relations, mutualities, formations, in the varied play of life, such a truth of dynamic spirituality basing itself on the eternal Repose of the Silence must form the very pulse of the new education. The Education Commission speaks of the close connection between life and education. And this is the right perception. There are sermons in stones, Nature itself is an open book widely spread before us, life itself is the great teacher of life. But we have seen that life as it is, has a drive, but it needs to be illumined; education is the process of releasing the light and the force of Light that are in the heart of Life, so that it becomes concentrated and richly and subtly organised; and life so organised will be an unfailing and sure guide of life; life so organised quickens and sensitises our instruments to be in tune with the stone, insect, beast, man and woman, with the all-pervading Spirit itself.

Evidently, therefore, the method of spiritual education will have a foundation and spirit quite different from what is current in the ordinary systems of education. The pulsation that we seek in the educational process, the soul that we wish to implant in education, cannot be born of any external manipulation of organisation; the method of spiritual education is fundamentally that of constant fusion in the atmosphere of the spiritual experience, spiritual knowledge, spiritual force, the purifying force, the liberating and uplifting force. There must vibrate a constant idea of the Spirit, and there must be a constant meditation on the Spirit through each act; each activity of education must be directed to provide in it the presence and revelation of the dynamic Will of the Spirit. There must course through the whole educational process a wide understanding of the complex and varied ways through which the Spirit manifests itself in Nature and in Man; there must be correspondingly wise handling of the temperaments, possibilities and imperatives of the delicate natures that are entrusted to our care; there must be an insistence on the culture of the mind, emotions and the body, knowing full well that it is through the refinement, vigour, richness and perfection of these instruments that the Spirit can dynamically effectuate itself in the world; there must be an understanding of the various stages and principles of evolution of Nature and the understanding that each stage has its own norms and standards and that they have to

be organised on a vast and complex scale of values, all leading in their large movements as well as in detail to the consummation and realisation of the highest values moved by an intrinsic consciousness of the unity and oneness; there must be wideness, charity, even indulgence, sympathy, affection, love in relationships; every field of knowledge and art should find its proper place, each one contributing to the harmony and essential oneness; reading, conversation, study, casual or organised, pertaining to spiritual matters will have their place; even instruction too will have its legitimate place; but more important will be the methods of example and influence. The method of spiritual education is the method of life itself; it is the active and mutual participation of teachers and students in their spiritual and integral development. This is the heart and soul and method of education.

But it may be objected that this goal of education, even if desirable, is extremely difficult to realise. But in reply, we have to insist on the necessity of its realisation. Science demands it, Life demands it, the Spirit of India itself demands it. Without it, we shall be swept off our feet. We shall, therefore, not desist from the utmost effort that is demanded of us. Indeed, it is the realisation of this ideal of education that will mean the revolution in education.

The logic of the new educational methodology itself will call for a spiritual orientation in education. The modern educationist is truly in search of the soul of the child. He has come to realise that the child is not a plastic material to be moulded and pressed into a shape desired and decided upon by the parents or the educators. A psychology of freedom in education has gained a great ground. The idea that the education is the education of the whole personality has begun to find its practical application in many advanced schools. The idea of psychological counselling has also gained ground; the Education Commission itself has recommended the appointment of counsellors in schools and colleges. The demand for work-experience in education has become insistent, and one of the chief recommendations of the Education Commission is to introduce work-experience as an integral part of education. All these ideas and recommendations and practices bear in themselves the seeds for a great psychological explosion. For the present psychological ideas are the first crude beginnings and very largely they are derived from Beha-

viourism or from the Analytic or Gestalt or Hormic Psychology. These schools themselves are in conflict with each other and create by this conflict a disequilibrium which must inevitably lead to its own correction. But if we inquire into the nature of this conflict, we shall find that it is rooted in the hiatus of experience, the incompleteness of data ; the present data that we have are capable of being interpreted in several alternative ways, and we are not in a possession of those crucial data which would settle this quarrel. This would mean an exploration of the as-yet unexplored or ill-explored regions of consciousness which, however, have been the central field of yogic psychology. We have or can have in the yogic psychology a complete science of personality which is the key-concept for education. Personality is sometimes identified with character, but very often a distinction is made between the two; according to this distinction, character means the fixed structure of certain recognisable qualities while personality means the flux of self-expressive or sensitive and responsive being. But when we examine the distinction between the fixed structure and the flux, we find that the fixity and the flux are only relative terms, and in the movement of Nature, nothing is fixed. Personality then is a plastic expression of certain forces of Nature combined for the time being. Yoga affirms that this combination of forces can be disturbed; it can be modified, it can be totally changed. Personalities can be multiplied within the same individual; the conflicting personalities in the individual can be harmonised; one can become capable of putting forth the needed personality according to the circumstances or the demand of the work or the situation, even while the other personalities would remain behind contributing to the efficacy of the personality put in the front. One can even go beyond all personality and know the real Person that assumes so many personalities, and even beyond this there are still many more discoveries that await us. All this the educational methodology will be obliged to admit in due course, and in fact, imminently if we truly understand how accelerated is the modern pace of progress.

But above all, it is the evolutionary force working in the world that seems to confirm our hope of a sooner change that must overcome mankind and turn it inwards towards the discovery of the inner realities. There are, we might say, three fundamental operative

principles of evolution; first, a wide, subtle and complex organisation of the forms of the present term of evolution; next, an ascent of this into a higher term; and third, an assimilation of the lower by the higher. In the present complex and subtle organisation, we have the evidence of the imminent ascent of consciousness to what is above our present term of mentality. That which is above mentality should assume a most important subject of our inquiry both in the Universities and outside. For in this great movement of evolution, we are all equal partners; and the evolutionary force cannot be stayed by any dogma, doubt or obscurantism or denial. It is a cosmic necessity, and it is, therefore, wise to accept the meaning of this necessity, and prepare ourselves, to take the staff in our hands and to set out for the journey.

This evolutionary ideal can be a most satisfying goal that we can put forward before our youth. The realisation of this goal will demand from the youth a total consummation of his energy and the fire of his idealism. Not to be a mere citizen of the country or of the world, but to prepare a new world, to transcend the limitations of Man and to shape him into a new being, to evolve a new species,—let this be the project, the work-experience in our student's educational programme. This will prove indeed the project of their life itself.

The spiritual heritage of India is a most favourable circumstance for the project that we are presenting. The spiritual history of India reveals a logical development of the Spirit in the Intuitive Mind in the Upanishadic Age, of the Spirit in the Pure Mind in the Philosophic Age, of the Spirit in Life-Force in the age of the Purana, the Purana, Tantra, and the Bhakti and the later Bhakti Age. This movement would have found its completion in the development of the Spirit in Matter, but for the period of darkness and confusion that overcame India at a period of the exhaustion of the national life-force. But at the same time, when we are now renascent, we can continue from where we had left, and take the help of the fruits of the past spiritual labour and by a fresh effort, even if it be revolutionary, we can push forward, and fulfil the real role of India. The present national and international problems demand from us precisely that very thing which India as a spiritual laboratory has

still left undone, namely, the reconciliation of Spirit with the material life. This is the challenge for India : in rejecting it is the ruin of the nation ; in accepting and meeting it, we shall find ourselves and find our right place in the comity of nations.

It is fitting that at this historical juncture, Sri Aurobindo the foremost of the spiritual Teachers should have prepared and given unto this nation and to the world the most dynamic and the most spiritual goal, the manifestation of Spirit in Matter. In Sri Aurobindo then, as our spiritual Teacher, we should hope for the realisation of the regeneration of our nation and the birth and success of the new spiritual education. For spiritual education needs indeed the spiritual Teacher. And suffice it to say that Sri Aurobindo is present in our midst and my inner prayer is that He may invade us with all His glory and creative power and realise in us and through us all that we most ardently aspire for : Knowledge, Love, Power and Beauty.

Let me conclude by quoting here the Mother's message that She had given last year to the Education Commission :

"India has or rather had the knowledge of the Spirit, but she neglected Matter and suffered for it.

"The West has the knowledge of Matter but rejected the Spirit and suffers badly for it.

"An integral education which could, with some variations, be adapted to all the nations of the world must bring back the legitimate authority of the Spirit over a matter fully developed and utilised."

KIREET M. JOSHI

## REVIEWS

**The Science of Being and Art of Living** By *H.H.Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*. Allied Publishers, Bombay 1. pp.365, price Rs. 18.00

**I**N this commendable attempt to relate the truths of Soul and Nature in a working synthesis for the modern man, the author rightly stresses on the prior, indispensable understanding of the Truth of one's own being before proceeding to the problem of right living. The first section is devoted to this exposition of the nature of the basic reality—individual and universal and also transcendent—and it is followed by a section on Life and its meaning. The third section discusses the ways in which the real Being can manifest itself in the diverse spheres of life.

The central theme of the exposition is the system of 'Deep Meditation' which Swamiji develops for the purpose of bridging the gulf between Spirit and Matter, Soul and Nature. As he is today, man is hardly aware of a hundredth part of his existence ; his mind is extremely limited in its scope and power. If he is to govern his life in a better manner and lead it to some kind of perfection, he must learn to extend his area of consciousness. And the means therefore, as expounded by the author, is the technique of deep meditation. To start with a proper Thought of Sound or Form in its gross state, concentrate upon its less gross and then subtle and subtler states till one comes to the subtlest state and is landed at its source, the point of transcendence. Once this is done, the whole meaning of life undergoes a change. Even as things proceed, under the direction of a trained teacher, the mind and the life parts of the system being to partake of larger intensities of power, joy and knowledge ; they embrace life from a higher and deeper poise and fulfil themselves in its varied activities in a more effective manner. The consequences of such an inner change affect not only the individual life but equally the collectivity in which the person functions.

An interesting book in which the findings of modern science are sought to be integrated with the perceptions of the ancient Rishis of India.

**The Vedanta Sutras** with the Sri Bhashya of Ramanujacharya. Translated into English by M. Rangacharya and M. B. Varadaraja Aiyangar. Vol. III P. 611, Price Rs. 15.

This volume brings to a worthy close the great work of Prof. M. Rangacharya and his colleague in presenting a faithful English rendering of the Commentary of Acharya Ramanuja on the Brahmasutras of Badarayana. It covers the portions from Chapter II, Part II to the end of Chapter IV and discusses many important topics among which the major ones are : the views of the Sankhyas, Bauddhas, Jainas and Pashupatas on the cause of the world and their refutation by Ramanuja; the states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep of the self and the Brahman's freedom therefrom; important Vidyas like the Vaishvanara, Dahara, Prana and Sandilya; approved *karmas* as subsidiary to the Vidyas; the manner in which the release of the soul is effected at the time of death and the precise status of the liberated soul after the body is shed.

The translation is accompanied by accurate notes, a glossarial index, index to the *adhikaranas* and a valuable Analytical Outline at the beginning of the volume. The work is a great contribution to Vishishtadvaita literature in English and will always remain a book for study and reference to scholars in the Vedanta Philosophy of Qualified Monism.

**Sri Chaitanya's Teachings** By Sri Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaj. Pub. Sree Gaudiya Math, Madras 14. Pp. 434, Price Rs. 12.00

This is a collection from the extensive writings of the author who founded the Gaudiya Math and its several branches for the propagation of the Message of Sri Chaitanya. The contents are varied, ranging from an Enquiry into the nature of the Absolute to interviews with western journalists, but the one continuing note is that of the manifestation of the Divine as Love and the unfailing efficacy of the Divine Name as the means for atonement with the Divine. There is a good deal of dialectics in the section on Vedanta, plenty of philo-

sophy in the discussion on the theistic solution of the cosmic problem, but the heart of the writer lies in *bhakti* and *rati*.

The chapter on Bhagavatam and Vaishnava Cult, mainly comprising of the discussion with Pandit Shyam Sunder Chakravarty (famous leader of the Independence movement), is particularly interesting.

Whether one is a philosopher or a devotee or a sadhaka, there is something for each one in these pages.

**The Panchadasi** Translated by Swami Swahananda. Pub. Sri Ramakrishna Muth, Madras 4. Pp. 618, Price Rs. 9.50.

The *Panchadasi*, work of fifteen chapters on the Advaita, by Sri Vidyananda is a treatise of major importance for seekers of the advaitic persuasion. An English translation of the text has been long a desideratum and the recent publication in England of the late H. P. Sastri's rendering (with the text in roman characters) has not been of much service in India in view of its prohibitive cost. The present edition with the translation by Swami Swahananda, a conscientious scholar and senior monk of the Sri Ramakrishna Order, is a very welcome and reliable release.

The work itself is usually studied under three convenient groupings : the first five as dealing with the discrimination of the real from the non-real, *viveka-pancaka*, the next five describing the nature of the Self as pure consciousness, *dipa-pancaka*, and the last five discussing the Delight nature of Brahman, *ananda-pancaka*. The exposition covers a large field, quotes from Upanishads and allied texts, and emphasises the importance of practical discipline for the realisation of Brahman in preference to dry learning.

Dr. Mahadevan's Introduction provides a very helpful background to the work, explaining as it does some of the key terms in the Advaita System that are used freely in the text. The translation is free and yet faithful with the notes, index and glossary adding to the value of the book.

M. P. PANDIT



*The Advent*



You who are young, are the  
hope of the country. Prepare  
yourselves to be worthy of  
this expectation.

Blessings

# The ADVENT

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Thou must die to thyself to  
reach God's height.

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# THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

## EDITORIAL

### THE WORLD IS ONE

**T**HE world is one, in fact and in potentia.

There is already a realised unity; that unity runs as the fundamental chord in and through differing and discordant notes. These different and discordant and even denying notes have to be re-conditioned, blended, harmonised; that is the effective and patent unity that lies in potentia and has to be brought forth in front. The world is one at bottom; it is to be made one up to the brim.

The material world is a factual unity. For it is one matter that exists everywhere; the same fundamental elements constitute, although in different degrees, the earth, the sun, the stars, the distant galaxies and the extra-galactic rays. It is in the last analysis charges of electricity—infinitesimal and infinite charges of electric force, points of energy that form the entire creation—pullulating particles that fill the universe; but they are not isolated, disconnected, dis-united, they are a continuum. This continuum was called 'ether' at one time, it is now called 'field'. This material unity consists in the one extension that turns and swirls into creases and

eddies giving the impression of separateness and disunity. The task of the scientist is to know how to recondition the swirling disparate expanse so as to assimilate, polarise the disparate elements. That is the meaning of what the scientists are now handling as the 'laser' or 'maser' beams.<sup>1</sup>

Likewise, the vital world is also one. It is one life that pulsates in and through all living formations—one sea as it were, swaying and heaving and breaking into innumerable waves and ripples. In spite of infinite variations there is one over-all pattern that persists through the living creation. Anatomy and more clearly physiology links in a strange way even the plant and the animal and man. And in humanity if there is a great vital upsurge somewhere, it spreads its vibration far and wide like a seismic motion. And it is because of this vital unity that there arises the phenomenon known as contagion or pest and pestilence—that is to say, mass-movements are occasioned by one indivisible life-urge. A common suffering or a common elation is normal to human life.

This fundamental unity, here too, works through discord and disunion, battle and conflict, denial and negation. Here too the drive or purpose of progress and of evolution is towards the same polarisation, that is to say, reorientation, evocation of vibrations that are a pure or harmonious expression of the unity.

Coming next to Mind, the unity here too, is quite marked, clearly discernible. There is only one Mind that rules the myriad mentalities of this world. Thoughts and ideas are not in reality personal creations, they are various formulations of the one universal Mind; they enter into and possess individual minds as receptacles, and no doubt in the process undergo particular modifications in their general character. It is a very common experience to see the same or very similar ideas and thoughts expressed by individuals (or groups) living far from each other, having practically no mutual contact. We have known of "independent discoveries" of the same truth or fact and innumerable instances of this kind has history provided for us. It is not a freak of nature that we find Socrates and Buddha

<sup>1</sup> Laser : Light amplifications due to the stimulated emission of Radiation.

Maser : Multiple amplification, etc.

The result is that the light ray cuts diamonds, bores rocks, welds metals, and works as a surgeon's knife.

and Confucius as contemporaries. Contemporaries also were India's Akbar, England's Elizabeth and Italy's Leo X. Also the year 1905 has been known as *Annus Mirabilis*, a year of seminal importance—the sowing of the seed of a new earth-life—significant for the the whole human race, for the East and for the West, particularly for India, for Japan, for Russia and even for England. And today's world has indeed become a world of compact unity in human achievement and also, alas, in human distress !

Now if one goes to the very source, the very root of the matter, the cardinal fact of unity is that of the supreme Consciousness, the original oneness of the one Divine Existence. It is the Ultimate One, inviolate, inviolable—*ekam sat*. That unity is transferred or translated or imaged on all the levels and strands of creation. That is the basic reality that holds together all tiered multiplicities. True, there has been side by side a movement of aberration, denial, disjunction in the multiple formulations and translations of the One. A re-union remains to be achieved conveying and embodying the basic unity.

The disturbing factor in the universal sway of unity is the sense of individualisation, the sense of ego. That is the dark ray that cuts across the radiant harmony and produces the apparent discordance and disunion with all its attendant and consequent evil and bale.

The sense of separated and isolated existence, the feeling of a closed system that one assumes in opposition to others is the *Maya* of which the Vedanta speaks. It is real so long as it is taken to be real. But it possesses no inherent or absolute reality. A re-orientation or a re-modelling of the individual self is the way towards re-establishing in the forefront, the background unity. Egoism, as it happens to be now, is the broken-up and scattered unity. Polarisation means precisely re-ordering and re-orienting the dispersal movement of ignorance and bringing into a new purposeful existence the unity that already exists.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

## FROM THE *KARMAYOGIN* (1910)

### INDIAN NATIONALISM : (VI) THE EMERGENCE OF TERRORISM

#### NERVOUS ANGLO-INDIA

**T**IME was when Srijut Surendranath Banerjea was held by nervous Anglo-India to be the crowned King of an insurgent Bengal, a very pestilent fellow flooding the country with sedition and rebellion. The whirligig of Time brings round with it strange reverses and at this moment Srijut Surendranath is returning to India acclaimed by English Conservatives as a pillar of British Empire. India's representative with a mighty organisation behind him pledged to loyalty, co-operation and the support of Morleyan reform. After Surendranath, Srijut Bepin Chandra Pal, reputed editor of *Bande-mataram* and the author of the great Madras speeches, loomed as the arch-plotter of revolution and the chief danger to the Empire. The same Bepin Chandra is now a peaceful and unsuspected journalist and lecturer in London acquitted, we hope, of all wish to be the Ravana destined to shake the British Kailash. But Anglo-India needs a bogeyman and by a few letters to the *Times*, Mr. Krishna-varma has leaped into that eminent but unenviable position. Who knows? In another year or two even he may be considered a harmless, if inconvenient, idealist. What is it, one wonders, that has turned the firm, phlegmatic Briton into a nervous quaking old woman in love with imaginative terrors? Is it democracy? Is it the new sensationalist Press run by Harmsworth and Company? The phenomenon is inexplicable, but, it is to be feared, it is going to be permanent.

#### THE ANUSILAN SAMITY

The proclamation of the Anusilan Samiti in Calcutta is one of the most autocratic and unjustifiable acts that the bureaucracy have yet committed. The Calcutta Samiti has distinguished itself, since the beginning of its career, by the rigidity with which it has enforced

its rule of not mixing as an association with current politics and confining itself to such activities as were not only objectionable, but of such a nature that even the most autocratic Government, provided it had the least sympathy with the moral and physical improvement of its subjects, must wholly approve. Its original and main motive has been the improvement of the physique in the race, and there has been no instance in which the Samiti has gone beyond its function as a physical training institution or tried to use the improved physique for any combined purpose. Beyond this the main activities have been turned to the help of the Police and the public on such occasions as the Ardhodaya Yoga, to the organisation of famine relief, in which the Samiti has done a splendid work, and recently to other action recommended by the Government itself. We believe it has even to a certain extent enjoyed the approbation of high European officials. It is indeed an ironical comment on the demand for co-operation that the only great association born of the new movement which has shown any anxiety to depart from a line of strict independent activity and co-operate with the Government, should have been selected, at this time of peace and quiet, for proclamation on the extraordinary ground that it interferes in some undefined and mysterious way with the administration of the law. Advocates of co-operation, take note. Meanwhile what can the man in the street conclude except that the Government is determined to allow no organisation to exist among the Bengalis which has the least trace in it of self-help, training and patriotic effort? For no explanation is vouchsafed of this arbitrary act. In an august and awful silence the gods of Belvedere hurl their omnipotent paper thunderbolts, careless of what mere men may think, confident in their self-arrogated attributes of omnipotence, omniscience and omni-benevolence, a divine, irresistible, an irresponsible mystery.

#### THE DAULATPUR DACOITY

The extraordinary story from Daulatpur of a dacoity by young men of good family, sons of Government servants, is the strangest that has yet been handled by the detective ability of a very active police—more active, if not successful, we are afraid, in cases of this

kind than those in which the dacoits are of a less interesting character. The details as first published read more like a somewhat gruesome comic opera than anything else. Dacoits who wear gold watches and gold spectacles on their hazardous expeditions, dacoits who talk English so as to give a clue to their identity, dacoits who turn up at a railway station wearing gold watches, bare-footed and stained with mud, dacoits who carry in their pockets bloodcurdling oaths neatly written out for the police to read in case they are caught, are creatures of so novel and eccentric a character that they must have either come out of a farcical opera or escaped from the nearest lunatic asylum. The latter accounts modify some of the most startling features of the first but until the story for the prosecution is laid before the Courts, thoroughly known and thoroughly tested, sensational head lines and graphic details are apt to mislead.

#### THE INDISCRETIONS OF SIR EDWARD

The speech of Sir Edward Baker in the Bengal Council last week was one of those indiscretions which statesmen occasionally commit and invariably repent, but which live in their results long after the immediate occasion has been forgotten. The speech is a mass of indiscretions from beginning to end. Its first error was to rise to the bait of Mr. Madhusudan Das's grotesquely violent speech on the London murders and assume a political significance in the act of the young man, Dhingra. The theory of a conspiracy behind this act is, we believe, generally rejected in England. It is not supported by a scrap of evidence and is repudiated by the London police, a much more skilful detective body than any we have in India and, needless to say, much more reliable in the matter of scrupulousness and integrity. It is the opinion of the London police that the act was dictated by personal resentment and not by political motives. It is not enough to urge in answer that the young man who committed this ruthless act himself alleges political motives. His family insist that he is a sort of neurotic maniac, and it is a matter of common knowledge that natures so disturbed often catch at tendencies in the air to give a fictitious dignity and sensational interest to actions really dictated by the exaggerated feelings common

to these nervous disorders. Madanlal Dhingra evidently considered that Sri William Curzon-Wyllie was his personal enemy trying to alienate his family and interfere with his personal freedom and dignity. To an ordinary man these ideas would not have occurred or, if they had occurred, would not have excited homicidal feelings. But in disturbed minds such exaggerated emotions and their resultant acts are only too common. Unless and until something fresh transpires, no one has a right to assume that the murder was a political assassination, much less the overt act of a political conspiracy. Anglo-Indian papers of the virulent type whose utterances are distorted by fear and hatred of Indian aspirations, may assume that of which there is no proof,—nothing better can be expected of them. But for the ruler of a province not only to make the assumption publicly but to base upon it a threat of an unprecedented character against a whole nation is an indiscretion which passes measure.

#### THE DEMAND FOR CO-OPERATION

The second crying indiscretion in Sir Edward's speech is the extraordinary demand for co-operation which he makes upon the people of this country. It is natural that a Government should desire co-operation on the part of the people and under normal circumstances it is not necessary to ask for it; it is spontaneously given. The circumstances in India are not normal. When a Government expects co-operation, it is because it either represents the nation or is in the habit of consulting its wishes. The Government in India does not represent the nation, and in Bengal at least it has distinctly set itself against its wishes. It has driven the Partition through against the most passionate and universal agitation the country has ever witnessed. It has set itself to baffle the Swadeshi-Boycott agitation. It has adopted against that movement all but the ultimate measures of repression. Nine deportations including in their scope several of the most respected and blameless leaders of the people stand to their debit account unredressed. Even in giving the new reforms, inconclusive and in some of their circumstances detrimental to the best interests of the country, it has been anxious to let it be known that it is not yielding to the wishes of the people but acting on its own

autocratic motion. Against such a system and principle of administration the people of this country have no remedy except the refusal of co-operation and even that has been done only within the smallest limits possible. Under such circumstances, it is indeed a grotesque attitude for the ruler of Bengal to get up from his seat in the Council and not only request co-operation but demand it on pain of indiscriminate penalties such as only an autocratic government can inflict on the people under its control, and this with the full understanding that none of the grievances of the people are to be redressed. The meaning of co-operation is not passive obedience, it implies that the Government shall rule according to the wishes of the people and the people work in unison with the Government for the maintenance of their common interests. By advancing the demand in the way he has advanced it, Sir Edward Baker has made the position of his Government worse and not better.

#### WHAT CO-OPERATION?

The delusion under which the Government labours that the terrorist activities have a great organisation at their back, is the source of its most fatal mistakes. Everyone who knows anything of this country is aware that this theory is a fabrication. If it were a fact, the conspiracy would by this time have been exposed and destroyed. The assassinations have in all instances, except the yet doubtful Maniktola conspiracy now under judicial consideration, been the act of isolated individuals, and even in the Maniktola instance, if we accept the finding of the Sessions Court, it has been shown by judicial investigation that the group of young men was small and so secret in their operations that only a few even of those who lived in their headquarters knew anything of the contemplated terrorism. Under such circumstances we fail to see either any justification for so passionate a call for co-operation or any possibility of an answer from the public. All that the public can do is to express disapprobation of the methods used by these isolated youths. It cannot turn itself into a huge Criminal Investigation Department to ferret out the half a dozen men here and there who possibly contemplate assassination and leave its other occupations and duties after

the pattern of the police who in many quarters are so busy with suppressing fancied Swadeshi outrages that real outrage and dacoity go unpunished. We do not suppose that Sir Edward Baker himself would make such a demand, but if he has any other co-operation in view it would be well if he would define it before he proceeds with his strenuous proposal to strike out right and left at the innocent and the guilty without discrimination. On the other hand the Anglo-Indian papers are at no loss for the definite method of co-operation which they demand from the country on peril of "stern and relentless repression". They demand that we shall cease to practise or preach patriotism and patriotic self-sacrifice and submit unconditionally to the eternally unalterable absolutism which is the only system of government Lord Morley will tolerate in India. That demand has only to be mentioned to be scouted.

#### SIR EDWARD'S MENACE

The final indiscretion of Sir Edward Baker was also the worst. We do not think we have ever heard before of an official in Sir Edward's responsible position uttering such a menace as issued from the head of the province on an occasion and in a place where his responsibility should have been specially remembered. We have heard of autocrats threatening the contumacious opponents with condign punishment, but even an autocrat of the fiercest and most absolute kind does not threaten the people with the punishment of the innocent. The thing is done habitually in Russia, it has been done recently in Bengal, but it is always on the supposition that the man punished is guilty. Even in the deportations the Government has been eager to impress the world with the idea that although it is unable to face a court of justice with the "information, not evidence" which is its excuse, it had ample grounds for its belief in the guilt of the deportees. Sir Edward Baker is the first ruler to declare with cynical openness that if he is not gratified in his demands, he will not care whether he strikes the innocent or the guilty. By doing so he has dealt an almost fatal blow at the prestige of the Government. If this novel principle of administration is applied, in what way will the Government that terrorizes from above be superior to the dynamiter who terrorizes from below?

Will not this be the negation of all law, justice and government? Does it not mean the reign of lawless force and that worst consummation of all, anarchy from above struggling with anarchy from below? The Government which denies the first principle of settled society, not only sanctions but introduces anarchy. It is thus that established authority creates violent revolutions. They abolish by persecution all the forces, leaders, advocates of peaceful and rapid progress and by their own will set themselves face to face with an enemy who cannot so be abolished. Terrorism thrives on administrative violence and injustice; that is the only atmosphere in which it can thrive and grow. It sometimes follows the example of indiscriminate violence from above; it sometimes, though very rarely, sets it from below. But the power above which follows the example from below is on the way to committing suicide. It has consented to the abrogation of the one principle which is the life breath of settled governments.

#### THE PERSONAL RESULT

Sir Edward Baker came into office with the reputation of a liberal ruler anxious to appease unrest. Till now he has maintained it in spite of the ominous pronouncement he made, when introducing measures of repression, about the insufficiency of the weapons with which the Government was arming itself. But by his latest pronouncement, contradicting as it does the first principles not only of Liberalism but of all wise Conservatism all over the world, he has gone far to justify those who were doubtful of his genuine sympathy with the people. Probably he did not himself realise what a wound he was giving to his own reputation and with it to his chances of carrying any portion of the people with him.

#### MADANLAL DHINGRA

Madanlal Dhingra pays the inevitable and foreseen penalty of his crime. We have no wish whatever to load the memory of this unfortunate young man with curses and denunciations. Rather we hope that in his last moments he will be able to look back in a calm

spirit on his act and with a mind enlightened by the near approach of death prepare his soul for the great transit. No man but he can say what were the real motives for his deed. If personal resentment and exaggerated emotions were the cause of his crime, a realisation of the true nature of the offence may yet help the soul in its future career. If, on the other hand, a random patriotism was at its back, we have little hope that reflection will induce him to change his views. Minds imbued with these ideas are the despair of the statesman and the political thinker. They follow their bent with a remorseless firmness which defies alike the arrows of the reasoner and the terrors of a violent death. He must in that case go forth to reap the fruits in other bodies and new circumstances. Here his country remains behind to bear the consequences of his act.

#### PRESS GARBAGE IN ENGLAND

It is at least gratifying to find that the theory of conspiracy is exploded except in the minds of Anglo-Indian papers and perhaps of a few Anglo-Indian statesmen and officials. Not a single circumstance has justified the wild suspicions and wild inventions which journals like the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express* poured thick upon the world in the first few days that followed the occurrence. These strange fictions are still travelling to us by mail. The most extraordinary of them is perhaps that launched by a certain gentleman who is bold enough to give his name in the *World*. It seems that long ago the redoubtable Krishnavarma in a moment of benign and expansive frankness selected this gentleman and revealed to him the details of a gigantic plot he has been elaborating for the last eight years with a view to the murder, wholesale and retail, of Anglo Indian Officials. If the story were true, Krishnavarma's confidant ought certainly to have been put in the dock as an accessory before the crime on the ground of criminal concealment. These romances sound ridiculous enough now that we read them three weeks afterwards when the excitement of the hour has passed, but the harm this kind of journalism can do was sufficiently proved at the time of the Chinese disturbances and the trouble which preceded the Boer War. That these daily voidings of impudent falsehood and fabrication should be

eagerly swallowed by thousands shows the rapid deterioration of British dignity and sobriety.

### SHYAMJI KRISHNAVARMA

The exaggerated view of Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma as an arch conspirator of malign subtlety and power which has long been inculcating terrorist opinions among young men and building up a secret society, is one which none can accept who has any knowledge of this gentleman's past career. Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma is an earnest, vehement and outspoken idealist, passionately attached to his own views and intolerant of all who oppose them. He first went to England to breathe the atmosphere of a free country where he could speak as well as think as he chose. He was then a strong constitutionalist and his chief intellectual pre-occupations were Herbert Spencer, Home Rule and the position of the Native States. When the new movement flooded India it carried Mr. Krishnavarma forward with it. He became an ardent Nationalist, a confirmed passive resister with an idealistic aversion to violent methods and a strong conviction that, whatever might be the case with other countries, India would neither need nor resort to them. His conversion to Terrorism is quite recent and has astonished most those who knew him best. We know that Srijut Bepin Pal went to England with the confident expectation of finding full sympathy and co-operation from the editor of the *Indian Sociologist*. The quarrel between the two resulting from the change in Mr. Krishnavarma's views is a matter of public knowledge. We refuse therefore to believe that Mr. Krishnavarma has been a plotter of assassination and secret disseminator of Terrorism or that the India House is a centre for the propagation and fulfilment of the ideas he has himself ventilated in the *Times*.

### A FALSE STEP

Srijut Surendranath's maladroitness reference to the outrages when speaking at Bombay was a false step which he has since made some attempt to recover. However it be put, it was maladroitness and unnecessary. Any promise of co-operation in this respect implied an

admission that we have the power to prevent these incidents and are therefore to some extent responsible either for bringing them about or for not stopping them before. It echoes the indiscretion by which Sir Edward Baker sought to make a whole nation responsible for these acts of recklessness and excuses vindictive and headstrong utterances in which Mr. Gokhale tried to protect his own party and invoke the fiercest repression against his Nationalist countrymen. The isolated instances of assassination during the last year or more have been the reaction, deplorable enough, against the insane policy of indiscriminate police rule and repression which was started and progressively increased in the recent stages of the movement. Not by a single word or expression ought any public man to allow the responsibility to be shifted from the right quarter and to rest in the slightest degree on the people who had no part in them, no power to detect and stop the inflamed and resolute secret assassination and no authority given them by which they can bring about the removal of the real causes of the symptom. To dissociate oneself is a different matter. That should be done clearly, firmly and once for all.

#### THE ALIPORE JUDGEMENT

The judgement of the Appeal Court in the Alipore Case has resulted in the reduction of sentences to a greater or less extent in all but two notable instances, and on the other hand, the maintenance of the finding of the Lower Court in all but six cases, on five of which there is a difference of opinion between the Chief Justice and Justice Carnduff. So long as these cases are still subjudice, we reserve our general comments on the trial. At present we can only offer a few remarks on special features of the judgement. The acquittal of the Maratha, Hari Balkirshna Kane, must give universal satisfaction as his conviction, in the absence of any evidence in the least establishing his guilt, would have been a gross miscarriage of justice. The rejection of Section 121 and the consequent elimination of the death sentences is also a result on which the Government and the country may both be congratulated. Even in the case of actual political assassins the infection of the death sentences, however legally justifiable, is bad policy. Death sentences for political crimes only provide martyrs

to a revolutionary cause, nerve the violent to fresh acts of vengeance and terrorism, and create through the liberation of the spirits of the dead men a psychical force making for further unrest and those passions of political revolt and fierceness to which they were attached in life. The prolongation of terrorism is undesirable in the interests of the country; for, so long as young men are attached to these methods of violence, the efforts of a more orderly though not less strenuous Nationalism to organise and spread itself must be seriously hampered. We are glad to note that the Chief Justice has in no case condemned and accused on the evidence of the watch-witnesses alone. Such evidences, always suspect in the eyes of the people of this country, and the gross blunders, if they were no worse, committed by several of the police witnesses in this case deprive their identifications of all evidential value. Once the confessions were admitted as entirely voluntary and entirely true, the fate of the confessing prisoners and of those directly implicated by them as active members of the society was a foregone conclusion. The conviction of an accused on such a serious charge where there is no clear incriminating evidence against him except the confessions of others, is no doubt permissible under ordinary jurisprudence when these confessions create a moral certainty in the mind of the judge; but if this rule sometimes prevents the escape of the guilty, it not seldom lends itself to the punishment of the innocent. Of more importance, however, and the one serious flaw we are disposed to find in the Chief Justice's judgement, is the exaggerated importance attached to familiarity and intimacy between the leaders of the conspiracy and those whose guilt was open to doubt. When there is a secret conspiracy, it is inevitable that there should be numbers of men intimately associated with the members, perhaps even co-operating with them in surface political action, who are yet in entire ignorance of the close and dangerous proceedings of their friends. It was a recognition of this obvious fact that largely governed Mr. Beechcroft's findings; but we cannot help feeling that neither he nor the Appeal Court, ignorant, like all Englishmen, of the actual workings of the National Movement, have given sufficient weight to this consideration. As a result, the benefit of the doubt has not been extended where it should have been extended. Already it was a general conviction in the public mind that one innocent man had

been convicted and succumbed to the rigours of jail life, while two are hopelessly condemned to the brutal and brutifying punishments by which European society avenges itself on the breakers of its laws,—we refer to the Kabiraj brothers found by Mr. Beachcroft to be innocent of conspiracy and therefore presumably innocent tools of conspirators. There is an uneasy sense that some at least have been added to the list by the judgement in appeal. Even if it be so, however, the judges have done their best, and the European legal system has always been a lottery by which it is easy, without any fault on the part of the judge, for the guilty to escape and the innocent to suffer. It is perhaps one of the necessary risks of joining in Nationalist movements to be liable to be confounded in one fate with secret conspirators who happen to be associates in social or legitimate political relations, and when the C.I.D. throws its nets with a generous wideness, we ought not to whine if such accidents bring us into the meshes. The State must be preserved at any cost. In any case, the whole country must be grateful to Sir Lawrence Jenkins for the courtesy, patience and fairness with which he has heard the case and given every facility to the defence, an attitude which might with advantage be copied by certain civilian judges in and outside the High Court and even by certain Judges, not civilians, in other provinces.

### THE BOMB CASE AND ANGLO-INDIA

The comments of the Anglo-Indian papers on the result of the appeal in the Alipore case are neither particularly edifying nor do they tend to remove the impression shared by us with many thoughtful Englishmen that the imperial race is being seriously demoralised by empire. From the *Englishman* we expect nothing better; and in fact we are agreeably surprised at the comparative harmlessness of its triumphant articles on the day after the judgement. Its reference to the nonsense about there being no sedition in India and no party of Revolution leaves our withers unwrung. We ourselves belong to a party of peaceful revolution, for it is a rapid revolution in the system of Government in India which is the aim of our political efforts, and it is idle to object to us that there have been no

peaceful revolutions and cannot be. History gives the lie to that statement, whether it proceeds from Mr. Gokhale or from Anglo-India. We have also always admitted that there is a Terrorist party, for bombs are not thrown without hands and men are not shot for political reasons unless there is a Terrorism in the background. All we have contended,—and our contention is not overthrown by the judgement in the Alipore appeal, which merely proves that the conspiracy was not childish and by no means that it was a big or widespread organisation,—is that the attempt of the Anglo-Indian papers to blacken the whole movement, and especially the whole Nationalist party, is either an erroneous or an unscrupulous attempt, and the disposition of the police to arrest every young Swadeshi worker as a rebel and a dacoit is foolish, wrong-headed, often dishonest, and may easily become fatal to the chances of a peaceful solution of the dispute between the Government and the people. The *Englishman*, however, represents a lower grade of intellect and refinement to which these considerations are not likely to present themselves. The average respectable Englishman is better represented by the *Statesman*, and the one dominating note in the *Statesman* is that of regret that the Courts had to go through the ordinary procedure of the law and could not effect a swift dramatic and terror-striking vindication of the inviolability of the British Government. One would have thought that a nation with the legal political traditions of the English People would have been glad that the procedure of law had been preserved, the chances of error minimised and the State still safeguarded ; and that no ground had been given for a charge of differentiating between a political and ordinary trial to the prejudice of the accused. It is evident, however, that the type of Englishman demoralised by empire and absolute power considers that, in political cases, the Law Courts should not occupy themselves with finding out the truth, but be used as a political instrument for vengeance and striking terror into political opponents.

#### THE NASIK MURDER

The tale of assassinations is evidently not at an end ; and it

is difficult to believe that they will be until a more normal condition of things has been restored. The sporadic and occasional character of these regrettable incidents is sufficient to prove that they are not the work of a widespread Terrorist organisation, but of individuals or small groups raw in organisation and irresolute in action. The Anglo-Indian superstition of a great Revolutionary organisation like the Russian revolutionary Committee is a romantic delusion. The facts are entirely inconsistent with it. What we see is that, where there is sporadic repression of a severe kind on the part of the authorities, there is sporadic retaliation on the part of a few youthful conspirators, perfectly random in its aim and objective. The Nasik murder is an act of terrorist reprisal for the dangerously severe sentence passed on the revolutionary versifier Savarkar. It is natural that there should have been many meetings in Maharashtra to denounce the assassination, but such denunciations do not carry us very far. They have no effect whatever on the minds of men who are convinced that to slay and be slain is their duty to their country. The disease is one that can only be dealt with by removing its roots, not by denouncing its symptoms. The Anglo-Indian papers find the root in our criticism of Government action and policy and suggest the silencing of the Press as the best means of removing the root. If the Government believe in this antiquated diagnosis, they may certainly try the expedient suggested. Our idea is that it will only drive the roots deeper. We have ourselves, while strongly opposing and criticising the actions and policy of the bureaucracy, abstained from commenting on specific acts of repression, as we had no wish to inflame public feeling; but to silence Nationalism means to help Terrorism. Our view is that the only way to get rid of the disease is to disprove Mr. Gokhale's baneful teaching that violence is the only means of securing independence, to give the people hope in a peaceful and effective means of progress towards that ideal, which is now the openly or secretly cherished ideal of every Indian and to that end to organise peaceful opposition and progress within the law. If the Government can retrace their steps and remove the ban from lawful passive resistance and self-help and the Nationalist party, while holding its ultimate political aim, will define its immediate objective within limits which a Radical Government can here-

after consider, we believe politics in India will assume a normal course under normal conditions. We propose to do our part; we will see whether the Government think it worth their while to respond. They ought to be able to understand by this time that Nationalism and not Moderatism is the effective political force in India.

SRI AUROBINDO

## OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

### IX

Even so he had pulled out the solid stake,  
Broken all the bondages that encircle :  
Kanhu revels drunk with the sweetest wine,  
He enters heaven's lotus-grove and attains the calmness ;  
Even like the elephant in rut for his mate  
He rains Truth's own realities.  
All the sixfold movements in his nature are purified :  
Whether in the Presence or in the Absence  
even the hair's end does not stir.  
From the ten sides the ten delightful treasures  
have been gathered,  
To capture the Consciousness, as one does an elephant,  
with ease.

### NOTES

All the ties of the world are broken. Kanhu is free, he is free  
in the Supreme Ecstasy.

### XI\*

The central cord is set firm in its frame ;  
And in the heart the soundless drum  
resounds valiantly ;  
Kanhu the Kapali, the yogi, is engaged in his rites.  
He wanders in the city of his body  
in perfect identity ;  
The duals—vowels and consonants—are like  
tinkling bells and anklets on his feet ;  
The sun and the moon are his carvings.  
Love and hate and delusion are burnt to ashes.  
He has put on the pearl-necklace  
of Supreme Liberation ;

AT \* For X, see Advent : August 1966.

He has slain the mother-in-law and the sister-in-law  
 who held the house—  
 Indeed he has slain maya and become Kapali.

#### NOTES

The central cord : the cords (nadi) are the lines or channels of psycho-vital forces that govern the human organism, control the general functions of the body. These lines or channels are sometimes identified with the nervous system but they are more subtle than the material substance, more vital than physical. Their effective expression, their principal agency in the physical is the respiratory system. Their numbers are variously counted, sometimes sixty-four, sometimes thirty-four, but the principal ones are three. These form a trinity and follow the line of the spinal cord. They are the famous 'Ida', 'Pingala' and 'Susumna.' Ida and Pingala are on either side of the spinal cord, the central one being the Susumna. The two on either side are the ascending and the descending lines, (sometimes they are represented as the twins, knowledge and power); the central holds the balance between the two, representing the consciousness of unity or synthesis. These are the triple forces that control the breath and are made use of in Hathayoga—the intaking, the outgoing and the holding in of the the breath (Purak, Rechak and Kumbhak); these are described as the means of controlling and mastering the life-force, Prana.

The two lines on either side of the central one form a circulatory system, distributing the forces through the body; the central one, as I said, balancing the two, maintains the poise; it has also a special function of its own not only to guide the forces around itself but also to direct them upward. Along with the physico-vital movement there is also psychological movement, a movement of consciousness that establishes harmony among the forces around and also rises upward and through the crown of the head goes beyond. The whole operation may be transcribed as a movement of consciousness or consciousness-force (chit-tapas) seeking to establish a new purified order in the human system in relation to a higher order.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

## THE YOGA OF NATURE

All Life is Yoga.<sup>1</sup>

All Life is a Yoga of Nature.<sup>2</sup>

**T**HERE are two different views of Nature in Indian spiritual philosophy. The main issue is whether Nature is conscious or unconscious. In order to understand the idea of the Yoga of Nature, it is necessary to determine the character of Nature, to decide whether Nature of which all life is said to be an universal yoga can be unconscious. The Samkhya, Yoga and Shankara Vedanta look upon Nature as unconscious, a Power of Ignorance. On the other hand we have in the Veda, the Upanishads, the Gita, the Tantric Texts, and the philosophies based upon these ancient scriptures, a most clear formulation of the concept of Nature as Chit Shakti, Conscious Force.

In the Samkhya and the Yoga philosophies Purusha is pure consciousness without any capacity for self-reflection, self-enjoyment and self-projection as the manifest world. Prakriti, the origin of the Universe, is an unconscious power which evolves all existence out of itself. True, she starts functioning only when Purusha gazes at her though without in any other way moving her to act. The works of Prakriti are reflected on the pure Consciousness which is Purusha which due to Ignorance mistakenly thinks them to be its own acts and experiences. These two philosophies do not give any arguments why Prakriti is not or cannot be conscious.

Shankara conceives Reality as a pure identity of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. Any kind of power for him is and must be unconscious because it implies change which is foreign to the Nature of the Brahman; change means difference of which Reality is completely free. The question of the relation of power and that which is endowed with power is also a difficult point. Shankara does not admit that any kind of relation can belong to Brahman because things which are related by whatever kind of relation it

may be, must also be related to the relation itself and this will lead to infinite regress. Anyway whatever may be the logic, what we need to remember is that for Shankara, the power that projects the world is ignorant and unconscious. With regard to the relation between Maya and Brahman the answer is that Maya is the power of Brahman and yet cannot really be so. The point about relations can be answered by saying that a relation is something that can relate two things and in the very process is related with the relata (that is the things which are related). Regarding change, those who believe that Reality is dynamic, do not say that it itself undergoes transformation in such a manner that its nature itself is changed.

In the Veda That One, *tad ekam*, is said to have inherent strength. The Nasadiya-Sukta<sup>1</sup> says That One breathed without Air, because of its own strength.

This 'own strength' of the one is its self-nature. Vak is said to be the One<sup>2</sup> and Brahma.<sup>3</sup> We know that Vak is in the Veda as well as in the Tantras the dynamic aspect of the supreme Reality called either Purushottama or Parama Shiva. *Vāgīta tad Brahma*,<sup>4</sup> Vak is that Brahman. And Vak and Aditi are identified.<sup>5</sup> It is said that by Vak every thing is created.<sup>6</sup> So is Aditi said to be "the heaven, the mid regions...all that has been and all that will be," heaven in this context meaning the mind and the mid-regions, the life-force and the worlds created by it. Aditi is the Conscious Force of the One the Knowledge and will of the Deva. The Purusha Sukta says that He is all that has been and all that is to be.<sup>7</sup>

The Upanishadic vision of Reality is most comprehensive. Like the Veda, the Upanishads formulate it as transcendent, cosmic and individual. As transcendent it is beyond all categories, even those of existence and consciousness. But as the base and the origin of the cosmos it is existence, consciousness and bliss. *Tasya jñāna-*

<sup>1</sup> Rv. X. 129.2.

<sup>2</sup> Rv. X. 81.7. X. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Rv. I 3.21.

<sup>4</sup> Jai up Br. II 9.6 cf Vag Brahma. Gopatha Brahmana II 10. (II) Vagghi brahman. Aitareya Brahmana II 15.

<sup>5</sup> Vagar ditih Satopatha Brahman VI. 5.2.20.

<sup>6</sup> 29 Vak Vai brahman, Ait. BR. VI. 3; S.B. II 1.4.15.

<sup>7</sup> RV. X. 90.

*mayam tapaḥ*,<sup>1</sup> *tasyaiva śaktirvividhaiva śrūyāte devātma-śaktiḥ*—there are many similar phrases affirming that Power is inherent in the Divine, the Ishwara. The Gita in a similar manner speaks of Para-Prakriti which is other than Apara-Prakriti, the unconscious and eight fold nature.<sup>2</sup> Para Prakriti is the conscious-force of Purushottama and essentially spiritual in character. Their identity is clearly brought out in such statements, among others, like the 'Jiva is an eternal portion of Me' (Purushottama) and 'Paraprakriti has become the Jiva'. In the Tantras also we come across the idea of conscious force. It is described as the *sāra hr̥dya*, the essence and the heart of Shiva. Shakti is said to be in identity with Shiva without which it cannot be conceived. On the other hand Shiva without Shakti is Shava, dead as it were. In other words Shiva is never without Shakti. Shiva and Shakti are held in perfect equilibrium in Parama Shiva. The Consciousness Force is at once Shiva's power of Self-knowledge, Self-enjoyment and Self-manifestation as the Universe. In the school of Bengal Vaishnavism, Reality is conceived as *jñānam* <sup>†</sup>*advayam*, non-dual super-consciousness which is designated by seers and sages as Brahman, Paramatma and Bhagavan. The last is the highest of the three aspects. The distinction between the three aspects of the same Reality lies in the fact that in the last, the inherent own-shakti, Svarupa-Shakti, is fully manifest, in the second it is only partially so and in the first, it is unmanifest. Here again the Reality in its highest aspect has an inherent Conscious Nature. We see now that Nature in its essential character is Reality itself as dynamic. The precise nature of this dynamism is the Power of Self-knowledge, Self-enjoyment and Self-variation. In his book, *The Mother*, Sri Aurobindo writes "the Supreme transcendent Maha Shakti bears the Divine in Her consciousness". For him Cit is not only Consciousness but also Force of Consciousness. Due to this Force of Consciousness, Reality cannot but be Self-aware. The whole of existence is the result of an inexhaustible Force which in the last analysis turns out to be conscious both by itself and of its works. For Sri Aurobindo also Cit is not only the power of Self-Consciousness of the Divine

<sup>1</sup> Mundaka I 1.9. see ibid I. 1.8

<sup>2</sup> Abhinava Gupta—Ishwara Pratyabhignana Vimarshini. 1-5-14. Kshemarga Parapraveshika. h.1.

but also of Self-enjoyment and Self-manifestation as the world.

The Yoga of Nature, now that we have seen that it is Conscious Power, can be understood on three different levels. Yoga means Union. And the first aspect of the Yoga of Nature is that it is in eternal union with the Divine. There is a dalliance, a sport of love which the Reality enjoys with itself as Nature, its own inherent Power. "Being one and alone, he did not enjoy the bliss of Union.... He wished for a second... He divided his own self and became pati and patni".<sup>1</sup> The Taittiriya Upanishad also describes the self as *ānandamaya*, blissful and *ānandabhuk*, enjoyer of bliss. Abhinav Gupta has said of Param Shiva 'this Lord is ever eager to enjoy the bliss of play with the Devi'.<sup>2</sup> One of the chief features of Shakti in the Tantric philosophies is that it is Vimarsha, the Force of the sentiment of Camatkriti, wondering. Shiva looks at himself in Shaktias if in a mirror and is filled with wonder. This gives rise to Ananda or self-enjoyment of Shiva, as the integral "I".

In Bengal Vaishnavism also Bhagavan with the help of his Svarupa-Shakti loves himself and enjoys the bliss of loving. Of *svarūpa-śakti* there are three aspects Sandhini which upholds Bhagavan's own existence and that of others, Samvit by which he knows his existence and that of others and Hladini by which he enjoys bliss and makes others enjoy it. All these are of course aspects of *cit śakti* which eternally exists in him in the relation of identity and is called *antaraṅga śakti*, that is intimate and inherent Power. Bhagavan or Krishna has two aspects. He is rasika, enjoyer of rasa, bliss of love and also rasa that can be enjoyed. He has Svarupananda, he enjoys the bliss of his own self. He has Saktyananda also, that is, the bliss of enjoying his Shakti. This really implies two forms of enjoyable bliss. Krishna enjoys himself by his own intimate inherent Shakti with the Power of enjoyment, Hladini dominating. *Rupheri Apanar Krishner tage chatmakar alingite name uthe Kam*, when he sees his form, Krishna is filled with wonder and he wishes to embrace it. Love splits itself as Lover and Beloved. Krishna is both male and female just as Lalita, who is Tripurā of Shakta Tantric Literature also is both female and male. The *Tantrarāja* says, 'Lalita has the form of Krishna

<sup>1</sup> Br. U.p. 1-4-3-2.

<sup>2</sup> Bodhapancadasika. 6.

and is male and charmed the world by the flute.<sup>1</sup> Hladini, essentially delightful because of her connection with Ananda, becomes more enjoyable when Krishna throws her as it were into the hearts of his Parikaras. There it is transformed into devotion and love, bhakti and prema which are turned towards Krishna by the devotee in the act of service to him. And this is greatly enjoyed by the Supreme Lover. The devotees themselves also enjoy his intoxicating sweetness through prema.

All is a play of the Supreme.<sup>1</sup> In the tops gnosis and in the Ananda he (Purusha) is one with the Prakriti and no longer solely biune with her.... All is the conscious play of the Supreme and divine Shakti in its own and the infinite bliss-nature. This is the supreme mystery, the highest secret. And the Mother asks "But how to express certain silent secrets?"<sup>2</sup> These are the most hidden secrets of the oneness of each other enjoyed by the Supreme and the Parashakti.

Yoga also means supra-rational and mysterious Power. In the Rig Veda it is said that 'That One' concentrated into creation, downwards as the axis of the universe. This is *aja ekapāda*, the Unborn Onefooted, who carries the cosmic design in his consciousness but himself does not move, *acaram*.<sup>3</sup> And we have already seen that Purusha becomes everything, and yet he exceeds the universe by ten measures *atyatiṣṭhat daśāṅgulam*. This simultaneous capacity of the Reality to be beyond and in the universe is due to his own mysterious Power which baffles reason. It is this aspect of Paraprakriti which the Gita describes as My Yoga *aiśvara*. "By the power of a Divine Yoga we have come out of his inexpressible secrecies into this bounded nature of phenomenal things".<sup>4</sup> There is a Yoga of divine Power, by which the Supreme creates phenomenon of himself in spiritual, not a material self-formulation of his own extended infinity, an extension of which the material is only an image."<sup>3</sup> But "he is not in them... God is not the becoming... they are his becomings he is their being, and again "he sees himself as one

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo. On Yoga I. p.581 cf.p.573.

<sup>2</sup> The Mother—Prayers and Meditations June 22, 1914.

<sup>3</sup> RV III. 56.2.

<sup>4</sup> Sri Aurobindo—Essays on the Gita, second series 1942, p. 65.5.6, ibid 276—cf p.277-

with that, is identified with that and all it harbours. In that infinite self-seeing, which is not his whole seeing... he is at once one with all that is and yet exceeds it."

In the Tantric philosophies too Shiva is both Visvottarra and Visvatmaka, transcendent and immanent. While Shiva through Shakti becomes every thing and knows his identity with all that Shakti manifests and enjoys integral I-ness, he yet has a status beyond the universe projected by his own inherent Shakti. Here again we see a reference to what the Gita calls Yoga maya and Yoga *aishvara*. The creation of the universe itself is through yoga of the Divine. He desired "May I be many. He concentrated in Tapas, by Tapas he created the world, creating he entered into it."<sup>1</sup>

We have already made brief references to the concept of Cit Shakti as explained in Bengal Vaishnavism. While Bhagavan does not create, the Reality in its aspect of Paramatma does. And creation is carried out not by Hladini-Shakti but by Maya-Shakti which, a lower aspect of Conscious Force is described as *bahiranga* Shakti, external power. Yet the Tapas aspect is not absent in this concept and we find here again the Yoga of nature. For Sri Aurobindo Cit is the Divine's power of both self-reflection and of self-manifestation. "Cit is a power not only of knowledge but of expressive will, not only of receptive vision but of formative representation. The two indeed are one power. For Cit is an action of Being, not of the void. What it sees that becomes. It sees itself beyond space and time, that becomes in the conditions of space and time".<sup>2</sup> The concentration of Cit on itself gives rise to Ananda or bliss. In Ananda arises Ichcha, will to extend itself in a world of self variation. The overflow of Ananda as and into the world is the origin of all. It is not necessary to explain Sri Aurobindo's idea of self-limitation which is the origin of the World. It may sound a paradox but creation is at once self-expansion and self-limitation of the Divine. The Tapas practised by the Lord of the universe to manifest the world of variety from his inalienable unity is the yoga of Nature.

Yoga we have said is Tapas or energising of Consciousness. It is spiritual effort which man has to make in order to find his true

<sup>1</sup> Tait. Up.II.6

<sup>2</sup> Sri Aurobindo—Isha Up. 1951-9 38.

being and its ground and source. The Ground of all existence has many aspects, many facets. "It is the Zero which is all". Being, Consciousness, Force, Delight, the origin and support and moving power of all existence, it is in itself an unfathomable mystery. Yet it reveals a little of its secrets, partly unveils its nature by veiling its absoluteness. In other words by renouncing its own intrinsic ever unknown Mystery, it manifests itself to the enlightened intelligence of man. This self-revelation is varied and does not follow just one line of manifestation. Transcendent, Cosmic and Individual, detached from its own process of self-manifestation and yet freely engaged in it, the Reality becomes everything. Man thus may seek it in any one or more than one or all its aspects. And he does so according to his capacity and the particular aspect or aspects that attracts his soul. It is well known that there are many yogas or systems of spiritual discipline and culture. In some of these the idea of Conscious Nature is not present and they could not on the face of it be called Yogas of Nature. But even those are methods of concentration of man's powers which are ultimately powers of Nature or Prakriti. For example in Samkhya yoga it is the *buddhi*, purified intelligence, in which the disassociation of Purusha and Prakriti takes place. By definition, however, Purusha does nothing, it is *buddhi* which works towards a complete cessation of the modes of the mind stuff, *citta-vṛtti-nirodha*. And Buddhi is the first evolute of Prakriti and it is therefore Prakriti which does the yoga. Truly, Prakriti works for the good of the Purusha, even to the extent of working out the Purusha's freedom from its involvement in Prakriti. The same might be said of Maya in Shankara-Vedanta, which whatever the technical difference in its metaphysical conception of Reality, has the same idea of Nature. Maya in it having the same character as that of Prakriti of Samkhya Yoga except that Maya is said to be neither real nor unreal while Prakriti is real. As far as practical spiritual effort is concerned it is again Buddhi that undertakes it and it is through that that the direct *anubhava*, intuition and experience is had. All Vrittis or psychological modes are restricted and the Buddhi concentrated exclusively on Brahman. This gives rise to the last mode the *brahmākāravṛtti*, the mode of the form of Brahma. It burns itself out and what remains is pure consciousness. Maya in a sense breaks the false notion of a separate individual self

and also gives rise to the true Knowledge of the absolute and the rejection of the world as unreal.

In the systems which accept Nature as Conscious Power, it is the Force that does the yoga in the seeker. Aditi carries the seeker of Beatitude like a faultless ship. "May we ascend Aditi for Beatitude, the divine ship endowed with quick propellers, faultless, intact without slits, a capable protector, spacious as earth, like heaven, to which no hurt can come, a happy shelter and skilful career."<sup>1</sup> In the Gita Paraprakriti is the true mover of all movements of Nature. All subjective becomings are ultimately her becomings, though these are distorted in the field of lower Prakriti. But the higher and nobler impulses also come from her. We have said that the creation is a result of the divine Yoga. "By a reverse movement of the same Yoga" says Sri Aurobindo, "we must transcend the units of phenomenal nature and recover the greater consciousness by which we live in the Divine and the Eternal."<sup>2</sup> And again, "he has manifested the world in himself in all these ways by his divine yoga .... To awaken to the revelation of him in all these ways together is man's side of the same divine yoga".

Parama Shiva has five eternal functions—Tirodhana or Nigraha, Sristi, Sthiti, Samhara and Anugraha, that is, self-veiling, creation, preservation, and disillusion of the universe, and grace. Creation is the result of self-veiling or self-contraction of Paramashiva. Shiva through using his freewill limits himself and becomes Jiva which is atomic, *anu*.

Jiva is as truly Shiva which is its original status but does not know it. The atomic Jiva cannot by its own effort start on the spiritual path and attain Self-Knowledge. He must have the grace of Shiva for the opening of his consciousness towards liberation. The grace is nothing but the awakening of Shakti in, or from another side, the descent of Shakti on Jiva. Abhinava Gupta in his *Tantrasāra* has even said that one who is hit by a tremendous avalanche of Shakti can have realisation instantaneously. It is Shakti which after the Jiva's initiation carries on the spiritual effort in him. True, the Jiva may not realise it and as long as he has the sense that he can and has

<sup>1</sup> Y.V.21.6.

<sup>2</sup> Essays on the Gita, 275.

something to do, he must not be complacent and effect an inert surrender. But progress in Sadhana would reveal to him that Conscious Nature is doing the Yoga in him.

Grace is also a form and a function of Bhagavan without which Jiva cannot attain liberation according to Bengal Vaishnavism. And certainly there is no possibility whatsoever of Jiva's attaining devotion and love for Bhagavan without the work of Grace in him. It is said that Jivas must turn themselves as parts of Radha, who in the religious symbolism of Bengal Vaishnavism, is Svarupa-Shakti personified. For it is Radha alone who can approach and look up to Krishna. In the hearts of the devotees and lovers of Krishna Hladini-Shakti is transformed into Bhakti and Prema which find expression in loving services in Krishna's Lilas and is enjoyed by him. This is the Yoga of Nature in the most intense form of the religion of love.

It is however in the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo that the idea of the Yoga of Nature is most prominent. There is in Nature a secret aspiration for perfection which Yoga essentially is. Nature is full of a Knowledge-Will which is now veiled and not capable of functioning with its sovereign Force in the field of the body, life and mind,—and the existence of man is a complex of these three. Sri Aurobindo has said, "here in the material world life is her reaching out from a first inconscience towards return to Union with a Conscient Divine from whom she proceeded. In religion the mind of man, her accomplished instrument becomes aware of her goal in him, and responds to her aspiration."<sup>1</sup> And what starts in religion is fulfilled in yoga. The capital difference of this yoga from others is that its aim is far more comprehensive than that of the traditional ones. It not only seeks liberation from Ignorance, not only aspires that man, Nature's chosen instrument, should realise all the aspects of the ultimate Reality which he is in his secret self; but its goal is that his whole existence and nature should be transformed into divine existence and nature. Instead of being as it is now, a structure of Ignorance dimly lit by knowledge, of power lame and limping of love which demands more than it gives, the mind, life and body of man can and should be able to shed the hold of Ignorance on them and then open to

<sup>1</sup> Synthesis—p. 638.

the integral Knowledge—Will—Love of the Divine. This in Sri Aurobindo's language is Supermind which is the true origin of mind, life and matter and can transform them purifying them of their ignorance, disturbances and desires, inertia and rigidity. They will not be dissolved or destroyed but, as a result of the transformation, manifest new qualities and capacities. The mind will become a mind of Light, Life a movement of Will and the body a form of spiritual substance. It is through the Supermind that Nature will attain the perfection of which it is in travail. "The aim of synthetic or integral yoga...is union with the being, consciousness and delight of the Divine through every part of our human nature separately or simultaneously but all in the long and harmonious and unified, so that the whole may be transformed into a divine nature of being ....Not with the Knower in him alone, not with the will alone, nor with the heart alone but with all these equally and also with the whole mental and vital being in him he aspires to the God-head and labours to convert their nature into its divine equivalent".<sup>1</sup> The attainment in man of this integral union of Nature with the Divine will usher in a transformed world and the Life Divine for the manifestation of the Supermind in mind, life and matter will not be an individual achievement but will initiate the evolution of a gnostic community and ultimately a race of supermen. The following Meditation of the Mother, dated June 15th, 1913 describes the aim of the Yoga of Nature most beautifully and forcefully "Even he who might have arrived at perfect contemplation in silence and solitude could only have done so by extacting himself from his body, by making an abstraction of himself ; and thus the substance of which the body is constituted would remain as impure, as imperfect as before, since he would have abandoned it to itself, by a misguided mysticism, by the attraction of supraphysical splendours, by the egoistic desire of being united with Thee for his personal satisfaction, he would have turned his back upon the reason of his earthly existence, he would refuse coward-like to accomplish his mission to redeem and purify matter. To know that a part of our being is perfectly pure, to commune with that purity, to be identified with

<sup>1</sup> *Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 670. 1955.

it, can be useful only if we subsequently utilise this Knowledge for hastening the earthly transfiguration for accomplishing Thy sublime work."

But this aim can be attained only by the joint effort of two things—the aspiration of man and the responding Grace of the Divine. Even the aspiration is in the last analysis a movement of the Divine Shakti in man. The secret of this yoga is to have things done by the Shakti. Sri Aurobindo is perfectly clear on the point that the Sadhaka of his integral yoga is the Divine himself in man and the power of the Sadhana the Divine Shakti herself. The culmination of Sadhana of this Yoga of Nature in the sense of total conversion of existence and of life into a most perfect expression of the Divine being, Consciousness, force and delight is nothing short of the yoga of Nature as the bliss of the union of the Supreme with Mahashakti.... "Love becomes a movement by which the Divine Nature in man takes possession of and enjoys the delight of the universal and the Supreme Divine". This love is experienced and enjoyed not only by the soul of man but also by his mental, vital and physical consciousness. When Nature in all her levels and aspects including the material, will be in perfect union, Yoga, with her Master, that will be the fulfilment of the Yoga of Nature.

ARINDAM BASU

## THE SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

(Contd.)

### VI. THE CRITIQUE OF THE *Jivanmukti*—SOLUTION

THE passage describes the state of consciousness when one is aloof from all things even when in their midst and all is felt to be unreal, an illusion. There are then no preferences or desires because things are too unreal to desire or to prefer one to another. But, at the same time, one feels no necessity to flee from the world or not to do any action, because being free from the illusion, action or living in the world does not weigh upon one, one is not bound or involved.

(Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, pp. 660-61)

When one sees a mirage for the first time, he mistakes it for a reality, and after vainly trying to quench his thirst in it, learns that it is a mirage. But whenever he sees such a phenomenon in future, in spite of the apparent reality, the idea that he sees a mirage always presents itself to him. So is the world of Maya to a Jivanmukta (the liberated in life).

(Swami Vivekananda, *Collected Works*, Vol. VI, p.104)

I am neither the doer nor the enjoyer. Actions have I none, past or present or future. I possess no body nor does bodylessness characterise my state. How can I say what is mine and what is not?

(Dattatreya, *Avadhuta-Gita*, 1.66)

We have seen in the previous chapter why the Yogic trance even if it be of the supreme sort, the Nirvikalpa Samadhi, fail to meet the demands of the Yoga of Transformation. As a matter of fact what we envisage for our goal is very much wider in base, far superior in scope and loftier in its flight than the attainments offered by the Nirvikalpa trance. In Sri Aurobindo's own words, "the realisation of this yoga is not lower but higher than Nirvana or Nirvikalpa

samadhi."<sup>1</sup> For, we do not want to be satisfied with inner psycho-spiritual experiences alone, we seek also the total and complete realisation of the Divine in the outer consciousness and in the life of action.

But the detractor may interject at this point: "The waking realisation that you are aiming at—has it not been already possessed by those who have been variously termed *jīvanmukta* ('liberated while still leading a bodily life'), *sthītaprajña* ('established in the true Knowledge and Wisdom'), *atīvarṇāśramī* ('beyond all standards of conduct') or *brahmavid* ('one who has known and been the Brahman'<sup>2</sup>)?"—the implication of the question being that there is after all nothing essentially new in the ideal we pursue.

But a little reflection will suffice to show that the Jivanmukti realisation or realisations of the same *genre* fall far short of the goal of divinised waking physical existence that is the object of our own Yoga. After all, who is a Jivanmukta? And what essentially characterises his comportment vis-a-vis this world of dynamic manifestation? For a suitable answer let us fall back upon three citations, chosen at random from among a host of others and culled from ancient texts as well as from those of our day.

First from the great Monistic text *Yoga-Vasishtha Ramayana*:

"The Jivanmukta is one to whose consciousness only the undifferentiated Vyoma exists and this phenomenal world has lost all reality, although his organs may appear to function as before.... He maintains his body with whatever little comes to it naturally and effortlessly.... He is called a Jivanmukta who is no more awake to the world of senses although his sense-organs appear to be awake as ever.... He who has transcended the ego-sense and does not get involved in action, is indeed a Jivanmukta whether he is active or not."<sup>3</sup>

Now from Sri Ramakrishna: "He who has attained this knowledge of Brahman is a Jivanmukta, liberated while living in the body. He rightly understands that the Atman and the body are two separate things.... These two are separate like the kernel and the shell of

<sup>1</sup> On *Yoga II*, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> cf. "*Brahmavid brahma eva bhavati*" ("one who knows the Divine becomes the Divine").

<sup>3</sup> *Yoga-Vasishtha (Utpatti-Prakaranā)*, sarga 9, ślo. 4,6,7,9,

the coconut while its milk dries up. The Atman moves, as it were, within the body.... The kernel of a green almond or betel-nut cannot be separated from the shell; but when they are ripe the juice dries up and the kernel separates from the shell. After the attainment of the Knowledge of Brahman, the 'milk' of worldly-mindedness dries up."<sup>1</sup>

Finally a long excerpt from Swami Vivekananda: "...He has reached the perfection which the Advaitist wants to attain; and *at that moment*,...the veil of ignorance falls away from him, and he will feel his own nature. Even in this life, he will feel that he is one with the universe. *For a time*, as it were, the whole of this phenomenal world will disappear for him, and he will realise what he is. But *so long as the Karma of this body remains, he will have to live*. This state, when the veil has vanished and yet the body remains for some time, is what the Vedantists call Jivanmukti, the living freedom. If a man is deluded by a mirage for some time, and one day the mirage disappears—if it comes back again next day or at some future time, he will not be deluded. Before the mirage first broke, the man could not distinguish between the reality and the deception. But when it has once broken, as long as he has organs and eyes to work with, he will see the image, but *will no more be deluded*. That fine distinction between the actual world and the mirage, he has caught, and the latter cannot delude him any more. So when the Vedantist has realised his own nature, the whole world has vanished for him. *It will come back again, but no more the same world...*"<sup>2</sup>

[Italics ours]

The above three excerpts purporting to characterise the status of a Jivanmukta make it abundantly clear that *prima facie* Jivanmukti in the specific sense in which it is generally understood can by no means measure up to our ideal of the divinely dynamic transformation of the whole of our waking existence. But before we pass the final judgement it would be better for us to examine, in however brief a manner, some of the principal traits of the Jivanmukti-realisation.

<sup>1</sup> *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashram, Almora), p. 695.

<sup>2</sup> Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, vol. I, p. 365.

A. *Jivanmukti and Videhamukti*: Jivanmukti is never considered to be the goal in itself, ; it is, so to say, no more than a stop-gap arrangement, a wayside inn,—the ultimate goal, the goal *par excellence*, being always *videhamukti* or the liberation that is attained with the dissolution of the body. But this *videhamukti* or “disembodied liberation” is sought to be effected in two stages : the first stage, the penultimate attainment as it were, is reached when through the gaining of the true Knowledge of Reality of one’s own being as well as of the world-existence, the propensity to future births in this phenomenal universe is altogether stamped out ; the second and final stage being the dropping off of the current body-formation and the attainment to the status of *videhamukti*. Jivanmukti represents the status of that seeker who has already attained Self-Knowledge but is still leading the present bodily life awaiting the day when this will cease for good and he will become “liberated in bodylessness” (*videhamukta*).

It follows then that the Jivanmukti status is the more valued, the more it approaches the character of Videhamukti even while the siddha is still in his body. So the divine transformation of the bodily existence has here no relevance at all. As a matter of fact, the famous Vidyaranya Muni, one of the reputed authors of the Monistic Work *Panchadashi*, wrote a full treatise on Jivanmukti, called Jivanmukti-Viveka, only to prove at the end that after all Videhamukti is the *summum bonum* and Jivanmukti is a step towards this supreme goal.

But if this is so, the question arises : why, then, even after the attainment of Self-Realisation, should the siddha agree at all to remain for some time in the body in the Jivanmukti status and not pass immediately and directly into Videhamukti when the latter is the real objective sought after ? The answer that is generally offered is in terms of the Theory of Karma which we have already discussed in Chapter I. Since Prarabdha Karmas<sup>1</sup> (that is to say, those that have started bearing their fruits) have produced our present body and since these cannot be infructified except through their exhaustion by sufferance, even on the attainment of liberation, the body

<sup>1</sup> Vide Chapter I : The Bane of Oscillation.

may continue to remain viable for some time, but for some time only. When the prarabdhas are over, the body automatically disintegrates and the Jivanmukti status gives place to Videhamukti.

Thus the Jivanmukti realisation appears almost as the virtue of a necessity and the waking physical existence in this phenomenal universe cannot be considered in this view to be a field specially worthy of spiritualisation.

In order to substantiate the points that we have made above, we adduce below a few observations drawn from different sources.

“...After realising that state described in the scriptures, the saint sees the Self in all beings and in that consciousness devotes himself to service, so that *any Karma that was yet left to be worked out through the body may exhaust itself*. It is this state which has been described by the authors of the Shastras (scriptures) as Jivanmukti ‘Freedom while living’.” [Italics ours]

(Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, vol. VII, pp.112-113)

“A DEVOTEE : ‘Does the body remain even after the realization of God?’

MASTER : ‘The body survives with some so that they may work out their Prarabdha Karma or work for the welfare of others...Of course, he...*escapes future births*, which would otherwise be necessary for reaping the results of his past Karma. His present body remains alive as long as its momentum is not exhausted ; but future births are no longer possible. *The wheel moves so long as the impulse that has set it in motion lasts. Then it comes to a stop*.’” [Italics ours]

(*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishana*, p.431)

“The ultimate liberation [from the chain of births] is attained with the dawning of the Knowledge itself.” (“*jñānasamakālamuktaḥ kaivalyaṁ yāti*” : Sheshacharya, *Paramārthasāra* or *Arya-pañcāśiti*, 81).

“Once a Jivanmukta, one has no more future births”, (“*bhūyo-  
janmavinirmuktaṁ jīvanmuktasya tanmanah*” : *Yoga-Vasishtha*,  
Upashama-Prakarana, 90.18).

“He that has Knowledge...reaches that goal whence he is not

born again" ("yastu vijñānavān bhavati...sa tu tatpadamāpnoti yasmad bhūyo na jāyate" : *Katha-Upanishad*, III. 8).

"Even after attaining to the status of Jivanmukta, one continues for a while to remain in his body, merely to exhaust the momentum of the Prarabdha" ("prārabdhakarmavegena jīvanmukto yadā bhavet. Kañcit kālamathārabdhakarmavandhasya sañkṣaye" : Shankaracharya, *Vākyavṛtti*, 52).

"He has to wait [for his Videhamukti] only so long as he is not released from his body. At the fall of the body he attains to the supreme status" ("tasya tāvadeva ciraṃ yāvanna vimokṣe atha sampatsye" : *Chhandogya-Upanishad*, 6.14.2).

"Once the Prarabdhas are experienced and gone through, one acquires the supreme liberation" ("bhogena tvitare kṣapayitvā sampadyate" : Vyasa, *Brahmasūtra*, 4.1.19).

"Once the body gets consumed by Time, the Knower leaves his status of Jivanmukti and enters into the state of Videhamukti" ("jīvanmuktapadaṃ tyaktvā svadehe kālasātkr̥te, viśatyadehamuktatvaṃ" : *Yoga-Vasishtha*, II.9.14).

"...When he takes up his abode in it, he grieves not, but when he is set free from it, that is his deliverance"<sup>1</sup> ("anuṣṭhāya na śocati vimuktaśca vimucyate" : *Katha-Upanishad*, V.1.).

"The Jivanmukta, even while he is still alive, has in reality no body at all" ("jīvato'pi aśariratvaṃ siddhaṃ" : Shankar).

"The liberation that one gains at the fall of the body is indeed the highest one, for this liberation cannot be negated any more" ("piṇḍapātena yā muktiḥ sa muktirna tu hanyate" : *Yogashikhopanishad*, I.163).

"At the fall of his body the Yogi merges in his supreme self-being, just as the space inside an earthen pot vanishes in the great cosmic Space, when the pot is broken and gone" ("ghaṭe bhinnā ghaṭākāśa ākāśe līyate yathā, dehābhāve tathā yogī svarūpe paramātmāni" : Dattatreya, *Avadhūta-Gītā*, 1.69).

"Once one attains to Videhamukti, there is no more return to this phenomenal world" ("punarāvṛttirahitaṃ kaivalyaṃ pratipadyate" : Shankaracharya, *Vākyavṛtti*).

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo's translation (*Eight Upanishads*, p. 77.)

“There is no more coming back for them” (“*teṣāṃ na punar-āvṛttiḥ*” : Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 6.2.15).

“No more wheeling in this human whirlpool” (“*imaṃ mānav-amāvartam nāvartante*” : Chhandyogya Upanishad, 8.15).

It is clear from what goes before that, contrary to our attitude to the body and physical existence, the Jivanmukti ideal does not attach much importance to any terrestrial realisation as such; it only tolerates the bodily life so long as it has to be borne and thus tries, if we may say so, make the best of a bad bargain.

But whatever the nature of the ideal sought, how does a Jivanmukta behave so far as his waking state is concerned? Does his dynamic life satisfy the criterion of a divinely purposive and active physical existence? Here too the answer is an unambiguous NO.

*B. Jīvanmukta and the Dynamic Waking State* : The goal we envisage for our sadhana is, as we have stressed so many times before, is “not only to rise out of the ordinary ignorant world-consciousness into the divine consciousness, but to bring the supramental power of that divine consciousness down into the ignorance of mind, life and body, to transform them, to manifest the Divine here and create a divine life in Matter.”<sup>1</sup> It is thus almost an axiomatic truth that yoga by works should form an indispensable part of our sadhana and an essential element of our realisation if we would seek to transplant the fullness of the spirit in the field of life and action. But the Jivanmukta does not in the least manifest this divine dynamis and thus does not measure up to our ideal.

As a matter of fact he is altogether indifferent to action (*kurvato' kurvataḥ*<sup>2</sup>). For, although apparently still in his body, the Jivanmukta does not really participate in any of its workings. The world still appears before him, but he is no longer deceived by what he would call its *māyā*. Indeed he looks upon his body “as if a corpse separated from his Self” (“*svavapuḥ kuṇapamiva drśyate yatastadvapurapadhvastaṃ*” : Pāramahansa-Upanishad).

<sup>1</sup> *On Yoga II*, p. 478.

<sup>2</sup> *Yoga-Vasishtha*, III.9.9.

The result is that a Jivanmukta is indifferent to his bodily life. "Just as a person intoxicated with liquor is altogether oblivious of the absence or otherwise of his dress, so is the Jivanmukta of the state and location of his ephemeral body. Whether the body remains stationary at a place or gets displaced from there or even stumbles down is equal to him."<sup>1</sup> Also, "the Brahavid does never remember his body. It continues to be maintained by the Life-breath, *prāṇa-vāyu*, just as a trained horse goes on pulling the cart as ever even when the driver has withdrawn all his attention."<sup>2</sup>

Thus the bodily mechanism of a Jivanmukta may indeed continue to function because of the gathered force of Prakriti and he may apparently walk and speak and behave as before, but all this is like an empty machine in no way supported by any participating consciousness. The liberated spirit witnesses these actions (*sākṣyaham*) but does not take part in them ("kṣīyante cāsyā karmāṇi : Yoga-shikopaniṣad, IV.45). There is no sense of personal action (*na kurve nāpi kāraye*)<sup>3</sup> hence for the Jivanmukta there is no bondage or responsibility (*na sa muḍhavallipyate*<sup>4</sup>; *mamākarturalepsyate*)<sup>5</sup>.

As a matter of fact, it is the organs of sense and action that become automatically active for the continued maintenance of the body (*caḥṣurādīndriyam svataḥ pravartate vahiḥsvārthe*)<sup>6</sup> and the Jivanmukta himself living all the while "in communion of oneness with the Transcendent" seems to the outward eye to be acting as a somnambulist (*suptabuddhavat*)<sup>7</sup>. For "although he has eyes, he acts as the eyeless; although he has ears, he acts as the earless; although he has speech, he acts as the speechless; and although he has life, he acts as the lifeless."<sup>8</sup>

Thus there cannot be any dynamically purposive action in the life of a Jivanmukta. He participates, if at all, only in simple innocuous actions solely meant for the upkeep of the body (*Kevalarī śārīram karma*)<sup>9</sup>, or in those which are occasioned by his previous

<sup>1</sup> *Bhāgavatam*, XI. 13.36.

<sup>2</sup> *Chhandyogya Upanishad*, 8.12.3.

<sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup> *Avadhutopaniṣad*, 25,6,22.

<sup>5</sup> *Yoga-Vasishtha*, III. 52.59.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, III. 118.19. III.9.7., III. 16.22., III. 88. 13, VII.1.8.

<sup>7</sup> "sacāḥsuracāḥsurīva sakarṇo' karṇa iva savāgavāgīva sapṣāṇo'prāṇa iva" (cited in *Jivanmukti-Viveka* by Vidyanaraṇya Muni).

<sup>8</sup> *Dattatreya, Jivanmukti Gita*, 8.

samskaras ("purvācārakramāgataṁ ācāramācaranti"<sup>1</sup>) or at the most in those apparently significant actions which are brought about not through his personal initiation but only through the agency of the Prarabdha (*yathāprāptaṁ hi kartyavyam, kuru kāryaṁ yathāgatam*<sup>2</sup>).

The foregoing consideration unmistakably shows that Jivanmukti as traditionally conceived cannot at all be equated to our ideal. What we aim at is something radically different from this liberated status.

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

<sup>1</sup> *Yoga-Vasishtha*, III. 118.19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, III. 88.11—13.

## TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

### SERVICE OF HUMANITY (*contd.*)

WE have discussed the question of the service of humanity almost threadbare. We have considered it from various angles. We have seen that the way we go about the business of serving humanity is not the right way, and that it does not contribute to any substantial improvement of its lot. Since we are ourselves in ignorance—ignorance of our real self, ignorance of the significance and purpose of our life, ignorance of what constitutes our essential well-being and the essential well-being of others—any altruistic or philanthropic work undertaken by us cannot but be a pretentious bungle. We have perforce to act in this state of ignorance, for life is action, but our conscious endeavour should be directed more and more towards achieving freedom from it. So long as we act in ignorance, so long as we do not know what our own good consists in, we should have the humility not to meddle with the affairs of others and presume to better their condition.

But this perception of our ignorance is veiled by our self-conceit, and it is this conceit that impels us to the so-called service of humanity. It gives us the sense that we are doing something, that we are superior to others, earnestly exerting ourselves to render help to those who stand in sore need of it. "That is what I meant when I said that it is ambition or egoism that makes you humanitarian," says the Mother, "of course, if it pleases you to do the work, if you feel happy in doing it, you are at perfect liberty to do the work and continue. But do not imagine that you are doing any real or effective service to humanity; particularly, do not imagine that by that you are serving God, leading a spiritual life or doing Yoga."<sup>1</sup>

If humanity does not reap any solid or substantial benefit and our only gain or reward is an inflated ego, what then, is the rationale of our humanitarian work? Does it make us happy? We have already pondered this point at some length and found that it

<sup>1</sup> *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*, Part 7: Nolini Kanta Gupta.

does not. Bertrand Russel's recipe for the conquest of happiness is a cheap distraction. It diverts our consciousness from the very thing which would lead us to eternal happiness. In ignorance, there is no possibility of conquering happiness ; what one gets is a fleeting pleasure or a precarious and delusive satisfaction. But the yearning for happiness, if it is not a mere craving for transient pleasures, is a profound and legitimate yearning, and it cannot rest till it is fulfilled.

What then, is happiness as distinguished from pleasures, and how to conquer it? That is the last point we have to consider.

The Upanishads give a very terse definition of happiness :

यो वै भूमा तत् सुखं नाल्पे सुखमस्ति

—that alone which is vast is happiness, there is no happiness in what is little. It means that happiness is found only in the infinite, and not in what is finite and limited. The objects of the world are all finite. They can give us only finite, fugitive happiness, which is another name for pleasure ; and pleasures are invariably followed by sorrows and suffering. Happiness, illimitable and unebbing, uncaused and unconditioned, inheres only in the Infinite, and we can enjoy this happiness only by renouncing all our attachment to to finite forms and identifying ourselves with the Infinite.

The Mother says, "True happiness has its origin in the Divine, it is pure and unconditional."<sup>1</sup> Here we get not only the Infinite, but the living, loving Infinite, the Author and Master of our being and of all beings, the Supreme, the Divine, as the sole origin of eternal happiness. In Him we fulfil our yearning for happiness. In Him we slake our thirst for love and beauty, peace and harmony, purity and perfection. All that we have been seeking for in vain in the perishable forms of the world we realise at once and for ever in Him. That is happiness. That is Ananda. That is the luminous matrix of the whole universe. It is this eternal Mother of Love and Delight that the benighted souls have been searching for, life after life, in the obscurity of ignorance. Each cry they utter, each

<sup>1</sup> Gems from the Mother in *The Mother of Love* by M. P. Pandit.

sigh they heave, acts as a lever of ascent to the supreme happiness. From Ananda they have come and to Ananda they must return. And it is this termless Ananda that they are destined to pour upon this sorrowful earth until earthly life itself is transmuted into the Divine Life and the tears and sighs of suffering melt into the everlasting Ananda of the Divine. Love and joy and beauty are the essence of the soul of man, and it is its eternal essence in the Divine that it seeks for.

How to conquer this happiness ? It cannot be conquered by the human ego. "The only way to a true and lasting happiness is a complete and exclusive reliance on the Divine Grace."<sup>1</sup> This Grace is but the dynamic aspect of the Divine's Love, creative and redemptive.

How can we realise the Divine's Love and receive the benediction of His Grace ? Love alone can invoke Love. Love is the master passion of human heart. If we can turn it from the finite forms of the world and direct it with all the intensity of our being towards the Divine Infinite, we are sure to be taken up into it. It will mean the end of all our anguished wanderings in the world of mortal forms and our rebirth into immortality, even here on earth, in the human body.

We shall then realise that "Love alone can put an end to the suffering of the world".<sup>2</sup> In the service of the Divine lies the secret of the true service of humanity.

RISHABHCHAND

<sup>1</sup> Gems from the Mother in *The Mother of Love* by M.P. Pandit.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## THE LIFE DIVINE

### (BRIEF SUMMARY)

#### CHAPTER XXVI

##### THE ASCENDING SERIES OF SUBSTANCE

**T**HE materiality of Matter consists in a concentration of the density of substance and its resistance to the conscious-force of which through sense it becomes the object. An ascending scale of substance from Matter to Spirit must mean a diminution of resistance, division and bondage and an increasing subtlety, flexibility, power of assimilation, interchange, transmutation, unification.

There is such an ascending scale from the dense to the subtle even in material substance and beyond the subtlest material essence we have grades of other substance corresponding to the series of Matter, Life, Mind, Supermind and Spirit. Each, that is to say, is the basis of a world or other kind of existence in which these higher principles successively dominate the others and fulfil themselves with their aid. In each therefore there is an ever wider range of being, consciousness and force ascending from the unconsciousness of spiritual. But all these principles are interconnected. Matter contains all of them and evolves them out of itself in obedience to the constant pressure of the higher worlds, and evolution which must continue until they are able to express themselves fully in the material principle.

Man is the fit instrument for this fulfilment. He has other bodies besides the physical in which he can become conscious and so enter into the supraphysical grades of substance and impose their law upon his material existence. Therefore his complete perfection is through the ascent to supermind and the conquest of the physical also by the supramental substance so that he will be able to command a diviner physical life and conquer death in a divine body.

## CHAPTER XXVII

## THE SEVENFOLD CHORD OF BEING

There are, therefore, seven or else eight principles of being and the four which constitute divine existence, but in inverted order. The Divine descends from pure existence to Supermind to cast itself into cosmic existence, the creature ascends from Matter to Mind towards the Divine and meets it where mind and Supermind meet with a veil between them. By the rending of the veil each of the four divine human principles can find its transfigured self in its divine equivalent. This transfiguration is the only possible positive goal of the creative evolution.

The presence of the seven principles is the essential to all cosmic being. For cosmic being cannot exist except as the All-existence figuring itself in its self-conception as Time and Space, nor can this figuration take place except by an infinite Force which being of the nature of an all-determining and all-apprehending Will must repose on the action of an all-comprehending infinite Consciousness. Nor could the result be a cosmic but for a power of infinite knowledge and will determining out of the infinity in each figure of things their law, form and course through a self-limitation by Idea proceeding from a boundless liberty within. That power of Knowledge-Will, that Idea is the fourth name of the Divine; it is the Supermind or supreme Gnosis.

The lower trilogy is also necessary in some form however different it may be from our experience of Life, Mind and Matter. For there must be a subordinate power and action of Supermind measuring, creating fixed standpoints of mutual view and interaction in the universal self-diffusion as between an infinite number of centres of the one Consciousness; and such a power would be what we mean by Mind. So too, Mind once given, Life, which is the working of the will and energy and conscious dynamis of being dependent on such fixed standpoints of interaction, must accompany it and substance with differentiation of form must also be present.

It follows that in every cosmic arrangement the seven principles must be existent, either manifested in simultaneous apparent

action or else all apparently involved in one of them which then becomes the initial principle, but all secretly at work and bound to evolve into manifestation. Therefore out of initial Matter latent Life and Mind have emerged as apparent Life and Mind, and latent Supermind and the hidden Spirit must emerge as apparent Supermind and the triune glory of Sachchidananda.

SRI AUROBINDO

## WORLD UNITY

**I**T was during the recent seminar of the World Union on *Education for One World*, that a friend asked me what was the meaning of the Mother's message that world unity is a fact and it is only to be manifested. Did it mean, he asked, that the Unity is on the supramental plane awaiting its translation on earth into human terms? I told him that was not how I had understood the message. There is a unity of being, a unity of consciousness, on all planes of existence including our physical world. Only, that unity is at present veiled by our Ignorance. When that veil is dissipated by conscious effort the underlying unity becomes patent. It is there naturally and does not have to be forged by our effort; the effort needed is to remove the obstruction of Ignorance in our consciousness and *let* that unity manifest.

Later I had an opportunity to ask the Mother about it. She confirmed and said that the Unity is there as a fact, a living truth behind the surface being. Man is not aware of it in his active consciousness because of its faulty looking. The moment he changes the standpoint of his consciousness, he sees the Unity as a self-evident truth, a dynamic fact which displaces the false sense of division that prevailed till then. The key lies in the proper placement of one's consciousness.

Speaking in the universal context, the Mother observed that the Mind has come to accept the truth of oneness of all being; even the Vital has come to have that feeling and experience; but the difficulty is in the Physical. The Physical is still under the load of past habit and even when it gets enlightened in parts, it shifts back to the old poise after a time. The cells have that perception, they embody it for a while but it is yet to be established.

This consciousness of oneness, the Mother continued, is dominant in plant-life. The plants are aware of it in a concrete way.

Has it been always so, or is that a result of the descent of the Supramental Force, I asked.

It has been now expedited, the Mother replied, their conscious-

ness has grown. She mentioned that She has been seeing many remarkable things in this direction with flowers. Even in the animal world that consciousness is growing; though, of course,—the Mother added with a gesture of helplessness—animals, who live close to man, do not share in that growth; they have lost their capacity to progress in their own way.

As a whole, the Mother concluded, the general consciousness in the world at all levels is moving in the direction of Oneness, as an immediate result of the influx of the Higher Power of the Supramental. The awareness of Oneness is emerging from within outward. The movement is all round. For, She explained, the supramental change does not simply mean a change at the top, a new dimension added to evolving creation; it certainly means a change all over. The whole imbibes and breathes the vibrations of the New Power, the New Consciousness; the whole undergoes a consequent transformation in the very stuff of its being.

Thus the Unity of All, its Oneness, is not a truth that lies in some high plane of existence above, awaiting its transition to the earth below but a truth that underlies our life here as its substratum. And this truth is steadily pressing into the zone of our awareness as a result of the pressure of the Supramental Descent on our consciousness.

M. P. PANDIT

## PERSONALITY AND INTEGRAL YOGA\*

MANY who are present here have known me as interested in psychology; and it was psychology, which concerns itself with the study and the growth of personality, that led me on to 'Yoga'. *Yoga* is indeed, nothing but a system of practical psychology, or an art of living which aims at the growth of personality. Personality is a subject very dear to the teacher in a double way. His aim is to help the growth of personality in the students that come under his charge. And to do that, he has himself to become a personality. But there is another reason why personality is an interest with all men. Lately there has been an interesting study of the subject by perhaps the profoundest of Western psychologists, viz., C. G. Jung. His book entitled "The Integration of the Personality" can be heartily commended to the study and careful consideration of everybody. An average human individual is far too much environment-determined and environment-dependent. He hardly lives independently. His thinking, his actions and his emotional reactions are mostly determined by the passing suggestion, the immediate example, and the catch-words of society. He is surely not a personality in any true sense of the word. A personality, in fact, comes into being only when an individual learns to live by himself. That is to say, when he knows himself as an individual centre of consciousness, an individual centre of existence, and seeks his direction and guidance from himself rather than from the environment. His reactions to the environment will then obviously be very different from that of an average man. He will not seek guidance for his decisions in life from other people's actions and precedents. He will also not be guided by utilitarian considerations of more gain and less loss or things of the kind. He will act in a different manner. A situation comes. He will try to feel himself in that situation. He will be aware of himself as being in the situation. He will not allow himself to become situation-dominated. "He, in the situation, seeking a solu-

\* A speech delivered at a teachers' gathering in Delhi.

tion" will be the position. If he is spiritually disposed he will seek his solution from the Universal Consciousness by an inner act of appeal and supplication, otherwise he will try to think out his solution and in doing so he might consider other people's experience, precedents and even statistical data, but he will not be governed by them. They will be his merest aids. The decision, in fact, will proceed from himself, his own self-conscious life and being.

We have referred above to Jung's study of personality. He presents this idea in another manner. He says that the average man lives by tradition. Now what is tradition? Tradition is the established usage or custom of society. Society has tried and experimented with a number of reactions to different situations of life and has come to acquire certain established modes of responding to those situations. If we compare several societies, we will find that they have distinctive features regarding their mode of conduct in the different situations of life. Let us take the situation of war as an example. Surely all societies will not act in the same way. But Jung goes on to argue that tradition can never be an adequate guidance to meet all the situations of life. When, for example, an unprecedented situation arises, society seeks to fall back upon some previous usage, but since the situation is unprecedented, no usage comes to help. Then we get into a crisis. The society does not know what to do. Jung says it is in just a situation like this that personality shows its worth. Personality is an individual who is so evolved from within, rather than under the governance of external circumstances, that he can put forth a creative activity at every moment of his life. He can, therefore, meet a crisis, he can act in a situation to which no precedents exist. Evidently personality is a supreme value of life. But how is one to develop personality? Jung simply says that one should so grow up that one does not act as a slave of tradition, but as a master of it. But again, how is that to be done? He does not give a method, but his analysis and facts are perfectly correct. Personality is a supreme value, personality alone is capable of acting in unprecedented situations and it involves a mastery of the situation and not a slavery to it. But how is such a value to be created? It is just on this issue that the Indian mind has exercised itself in a very profound and tenacious manner. From times immemorial

of Indian history, what appears to have interested man most is knowing himself. The watch-word of Indian culture has been "*ātmanam viddhi*". The ancient Greeks too had a parallel expression as the motto of their culture and that used to be on the porches of their temples.

In the West since Renaissance, the attitude to life has been of a complementary kind. That is to say, man has been interested in external nature. He has sought to study how plants grow, how a stone moves down an inclined plane, or what the laws of physical and chemical functions of material nature are. It is a most interesting thing that modern physics has come to conclusions which are comparable to those reached by Indian thinkers and seekers after knowledge by another approach. It affirms that what appears to be solid, impenetrable, hard matter, is in fact not so; that it is merely an appearance, that the reality behind this appearance is energy—electric energy—and there are some physicists who affirm that this energy ultimately must be of the nature of will, which we know by direct experience in our own personality. That was exactly the conclusion reached by the Indian seekers after knowledge. The *ātman* in the individual and the Brahman in the universe are in fact, such will and consciousness and the rest is the outer expression. Regarding human personality, they said that its thoughts and feelings, its instincts and sentiments and habitudes of body, constitute only the surface part of it. This is not the whole of it. They talked of personality as consisting of different concentric zones or *koṣas*. The outermost is the material body. Next is the *prāṇa*, the different instincts and the habits built upon them. Then came the thoughts and feelings, the *manas*. These constitute the outer frame or the circumference of the personality. But there are also the *koṣas* of *vijñāna* and *ānanda*, which are the more central facts of personality, and these control and govern its circumferential formations. We find parallel ideas in some modern psychologists too. James, for example, talks of the bodily self, the social self, and the intellectual self. He arranges them in a hierarchy too. Next to the bodily self stands the social self and then the intellectual self and beyond them all is the transcendental self. Modern and ancient studies of human personality seem to converge a good deal; and

so far as Jung is concerned, this convergence becomes more evident. An important conclusion of his book is that all our explanations of personality in terms of heredity or environment or childhood conflicts prove to be inadequate. These are merest "psychological medicaments", which fail miserably in the case of genius and they fail in explaining average personality too. A centre hidden behind the apparent psychological facts seems to be a necessary supposition. A centre which integrates the diverse facts of experience and provides the true basis of uniqueness to personality.

If personality is really the supreme value in life then we are interested not only in a study of it but in finding out the ways and the means of helping its growth too. Our exposition so far confirms us in the conclusion that there is a centre in the personality, which is the true focal point of it, which constitutes its originality and its uniqueness. Now that has somehow to be made a dynamic force in life. One might ask, is it not already a dynamic force. May be, but let us see that for ourselves. Philosophers have called human personality a microcosm, a universe in miniature. It is indeed a universe and therefore a vast subject. It comprehends worlds or planes of existence and an individual has to find out for himself whether he lives at the centre of his personality or any of the outlying regions or zones of it. That requires a careful self-observation. If we live at any of the outlying parts, then evidently our identification is not with the centre of our personality. But how are we to test it? By simple instances of our behaviour? For example, when we ask somebody, what are you doing? and he says, I am sitting in a chair, then we have to enquire, what does this 'I' refer to? Does it refer to his body, to his mind or to any particular part of his body or mind? Evidently here it refers to the body. It does not apply to the mind. On the other hand, when we ask somebody why he looks rather down cast and he says that a letter had brought him bad news and he has felt very sad since then, the reference of the self is to the mind. If we thus examine our self-references, we will find very few instances where the centre is at all in contemplation. It is somewhere on the circumference that we usually sit and regard that as 'ourselves'. And when we take our stand on the circumference we are, of necessity, subject to the environment. The reverse

is also true. If, for example, we complain and suffer from the circumstances of life, if we complain (not dispassionately affirm) that the conditions are not good for congenial work, for the discharge of duties, surely we are taking a stand on the circumference. Once we take a stand at the centre we will find ourselves independent of the environment, master of it, even when we are not in a position to change it according to our will. But in no case shall we suffer from it.

The attitude of complaint, of grievance, or blaming the situation is widespread today. It is not necessary to go into the objective reasons and conditions of it. Psychologically and yogically we ourselves are responsible for our weal or woe. We suffer from circumstances when we submit to them. This is a great truth and what a vision of life and existence it gives. We can be the master of the environment, the whole realms of social tradition and of nature. We are, as it were, sufficient unto ourselves to be happy. In its fullness the vision involves the status and glory of spiritual personality.

But how is this quality of life to be achieved? We might without much difficulty agree that the 'situation,' the external environment is primarily a field for human action and the growth of human personality. That it is essentially a means and material by which man can be helped to grow, and situations, both good and bad, can be useful. No situation, however severe and hard it may be, can kill a personality unless the personality agrees to be killed by it. Our general cultural attitude today is obviously wrong and should we be able to see the fallacy of it and choose to take the right one, we would be making the greatest contribution to the solution of our problems, whether educational, social, economic [or political. Even the food problem would become less severe] than it is today. But how is this new attitude, the new cultural outlook to be acquired? It is in another form the same question of creating a new quality of personality and has obviously to be attempted at the first instance by the individuals who have clearly seen the need and the value of it. And the method of it is, in the hoary language of our country, *Yoga*.

But there is no time now to undertake an exposition of this method, of the technique of *Yoga*, to evolve the new quality of personality. We have primarily stated the problem, the true charac-

ter of personality and the need for its growth. We have treated only one part of the matter. The other part is, how is the personality to be helped to grow? How, is the centre or the inner *koṣas* to be brought into play? so that the supreme value of personality may be realised. That method, we have just said, is *Yoga*, and every system of it is good in some respects. However the system of Integral Yoga formulated and taught by Sri Aurobindo is a fresh and living synthesis of the best spiritual traditions of the past and an original creative impulse of present supramental experience. Sri Aurobindo's inspiration in life was primarily spiritual. When he returned from England after 14 years of study he felt a call to understand the culture of his own country, which by his father's planning had been denied to him. Those were the days when everybody was fond of English education and his father in particular had wanted that his children should grow up in that cultural atmosphere right from the beginning. And therefore Sri Aurobindo was sent to England when he was only 7 years of age. When he came back his mind turned with great vigour and energy to the understanding of Indian culture and before long he felt that the essential truth of it consisted in the perception of the spirit in life and existence. And he felt more and more drawn to it and sought a full practical experience of it. And since 1910, when he withdrew from politics, his one occupation had been the exploration and the full achievement of the spiritual truths of life and existence. And since 1926, when he achieved the status of consciousness he had aimed at, he had been engaged in helping others in the attainment of spiritual life and working for a general spiritual regeneration of mankind, in fact the realisation of divine life on earth. In the course of the long labours of this work he evolved and perfected his integral yoga. Integral yoga does not look upon *samādhi* as its sole objective. It seeks rather a change of life as a whole, in fact a change in consciousness, the outer setting of life will then automatically acquire a new meaning. Its basic principles are all psychological and the fundamental movement is aspiration for a higher, fuller and a more powerful life. But this aspiration must be sincere and must ever grow wider and deeper so as to permeate our entire conscious and subconscious life.

Evidently for a fuller understanding of the system one will have

to turn to Sri Aurobindo's books on Yoga, and his letters on the subject are indeed the best to begin with. There are any number of people who have succeeded in re-creating themselves, in discovering the joy of their life by immersing themselves deeply in the thought and inspiration of these letters. And they are also the indication and the promise of the new quality of personality we cherish so heartily.

INDRA SEN

## REVIEW

**THE AITAREYA UPANISHAD** Tr. by *Velury Chandrasekharam*. Pp. 31. Price Re. 1/-Personal Book Shop, 111 Mount Road, Madras 6 or the Ashram, Pondicherry.

**V**ELURY Chandrasekharam certainly does not need introduction to students of Sri Aurobindo literature. Apart from his significant contributions in Telugu expounding the Thought of Sri Aurobindo in the light of the pristine tradition of the Veda and pure Vedanta—in which he was steeped—his Essays in English stand in a class by themselves. His brilliant summary of the *Life Divine*, within a hundred pages of inspired writing, won special appreciation from Sri Aurobindo and is easily the best book of its kind on the *magnum opus* so far. The present publication is a faithful and lucid translation of the Aitareya Upanishad (along with the text). The tone of the rendering is set in the Peace Chant itself :

“My speech is firmly held in my mind ; my mind is firmly held in my speech. O Thou who art Manifestation, be manifest unto me ! Guarding my knowledge like a lynch-pin the wheel, do not let fall away the truth taught to my ear ! By this knowledge, that I learn I shall firmly hold the days and the nights. I will utter the Reality, I will utter the Truth. May that nourish me, may that nourish the Teacher. Me may that nourish, the Teacher may that nourish. Let the Peace descend.”

The entire translation is forceful and authentic with the note of the original in every line.

M. P. PANDIT