

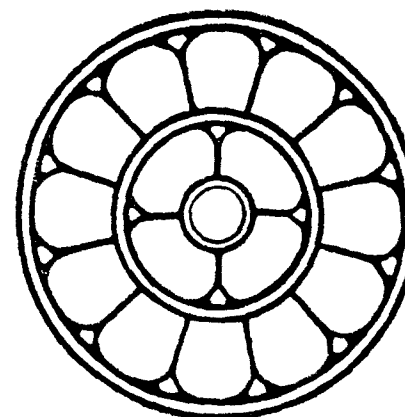
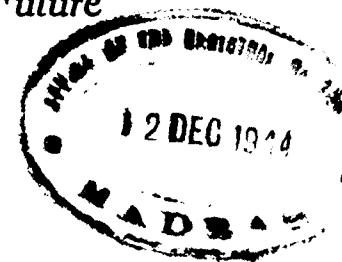
November 1944



476

The ADVENT

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

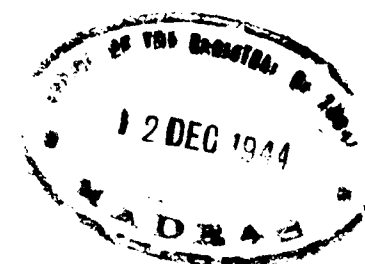


2148/13

JL
A2m2, 644 AD. Sri Aurobindo Library, George Town, Madras
N44.1.4. , Rupees Five; Foreign, Twelve Shillings Six Pence
128967 Single Copy, Rupee One and Annas Eight

THE ADVENT

*A Quarterly
devoted to the exposition of
Sri Aurobindo's Vision of the Future*



Editor
R. VAIDYANATHASWAMY, D.Sc.

Publisher
SRI AUROBINDO LIBRARY, MADRAS

THE ADVENT

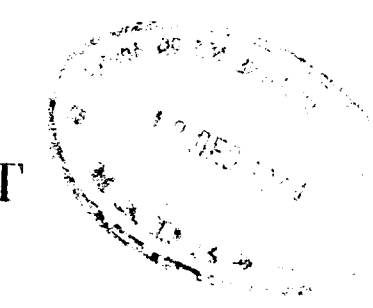
November 1944

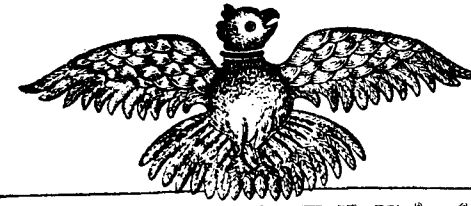
CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. EDITORIAL:—	
(i) India One and Indivisible	169
(ii) The Basic Unity	171
(iii) The Way to Unity	172
(iv) The "London Times" and Sri Aurobindo	173
II. DEDICATION (<i>Poem</i>)—Punjalal	175
III. LETTERS ON "DEATH AND AFTER-DEATH" Second Series —Sri Aurobindo	179
IV. THOUGHTS ON CURRENT EVENTS—Critic:—	
(i) A Confession of Faith	180
(ii) Scientific Planning	182
V. THE SUFFERING GOD?—K. C. Varadachari	185
VI. INDIA IS ONE (III)—Sisirkumar Mitra	189
VII. AUROBINDONIAN VIEWPOINTS—(A LETTER)—K. D. Sethna	194
VIII. THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD—V. Chandrasekharam	200
IX. JEWELS RECOVERED By A. B. Purani	207
X. REVIEWS:—	
(i) The Fundamentals of the Four Schools of Vedic Philo- sophy—A. B.	210
(ii) Man the Master—S. K. Maitra	215

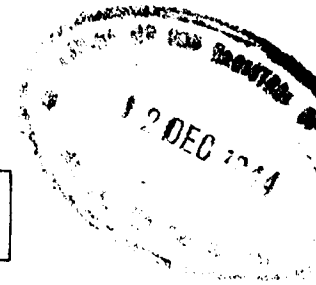
JL
A2000. N2000
11/11/11

178967





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.

INDIA ONE AND INDIVISIBLE

India is one and indivisible, culturally and spiritually ; politically too she must be one and indivisible and is, as a matter of fact, already on the way towards that consummation, in spite of appearances to the contrary. It has got to be so, if India is to be strong and powerful, if her voice is to be heard in the comity of nations, if she is to fulfil her mission in the world.

It is no use laying stress on distinctions and differences : we must, on the contrary, put all emphasis upon the fundamental unity, upon the demand and necessity for a dynamic unity. Naturally there are diverse and even contradictory elements in the make-up of a modern nation. France, for example, was not one, but many to start with and for long. We know of the mortal

feud between the Bourguignons and the Armagnacs and the struggle among the Barons generally, some even siding with foreigners against their own countrymen (an Indian parallel we have in the story of Prithwiraj and Jayachand), poor Jeanne Darc lamenting over the "much pity" that was in sweet France. There were several rival languages—Breton, Gascon, Provençal, besides the French of Isle de France. Apart from these provincial or regional rivalries there were schisms on religious grounds—Huguenots and Catholics, Jansenists and Ariens were flying at each other's throat and made of France a veritable bedlam of confusion and chaos. Well, all that was beaten down and smoothed under the steam-roller of a strong centralised government. It was the invincible spirit of

France, one and indivisible and inexorable, that worked itself out through Jeanne Darc and Francis the First and Henry the Great and Richelieu and Napoleon. But all nations have the same story. And it is too late now in the day to start explaining the nature and origin of nationhood: it was done long ago by Mazzini and by Renan and once for all.

Indeed, what we see rampant in India today is the mediæval spirit. This reversion to an older—an extinct, we ought to have been able to say—type of mentality is certainly a fall, a lowering of the collective consciousness. It has got to be remedied and set right. Whatever the motive forces that lie at the back of the movement, motives of fear or despair or class interest or parochial loyalty, motives of idealism, misguided and obscurantist, they have to be taken by the horns and dominated and eliminated. A breath of modernism, some pure air of clear perception and knowledge and wider consciousness must blow through the congested hectic atmosphere of the Indian body politic.

It will do no good to any one to try to Balkanise India. The Balkan malady is no longer tolerated even in its homeland: it cannot be transported to India in

this century and after this Great War. To be and remain free and strong and invincible, India must be and remain indivisible. The strength of the United States of America, of the united Soviets of the Russias, of the British Commonwealth (*pace* Churchill) lies precisely on each one of them being a large unified aggregate, all members pooling their resources together. India cannot maintain her freedom, nor utilise her freedom to its utmost effectivity unless she is one and indivisible. The days of small peoples, of isolated independence are gone—gone for ever even like Thebes and Nineveh, like Kosala of Dasarathi and Mathura of Yadupati.

India can be and is to be a federation of autonomous units. But then we must very carefully choose or find out the units, those that are real units and not fractions (esp. irrational fractions) and at the same time lay as much stress on federation as on autonomy. To choose or create units on the basis of religion or race or caste or creed, that is exactly what we mean by irrationalism, in other words, mediævalism. The Units must be, on one side, geographical wholes, and, on the other, cultural (or spiritual—not religious) wholes.

THE BASIC UNITY

There is one unity which cannot be denied to India, because Nature has given it and man cannot withdraw or annul it. It is the geographical, the physical unity. It is so clearly and indelibly marked that it has always been looked upon as a definite unit by all outside its boundaries; one may call in question the cultural unity, if one chooses, one may be sceptic about the spiritual unity, but the unity of the body leaps to the eyes, even as the clear contour of a living organism. As we know, however, an individual human frame may contain many personalities, many Jekyls and Hydes may lodge in the same physical tenement, even so, the physical unity that is India may harbour many and diverse independent elements. Admitting even that, the problem does not end there, it is only the beginning. The problem that is set in such a case is, as has been pointed out by the psychologists, the problem of the integration of personality.

A firm physical unity presupposes, at least posits the possibility of an integral unity. Otherwise the body itself would tend to break up and disintegrate. Such physical cataclysms are not unknown in Nature. However, a geographical unity cannot

remain exclusively limited to itself; it brings about other unities by the very pressure, by the capillary action, as it were, of the boundary. The first unity that is called into being is the economic. A Zollverein (Customs' Union) has almost always been the starting point of a national union. Next or along with it comes the political unity. India's political and economic unity has been the great work of the British rule, however that rule might be distasteful to us. It is an illustration of Nature's method of compulsion and violence, when man's voluntary effort fails. India possesses a resounding roll of great names who endeavoured to give her this solid political and economic unity: Bharata, Yudhishtira, Asoka, Chandragupta, Akbar, Shivaji have all contributed to the ever-growing unification of Indian polity. But still what they realised was not a stable and permanent thing, it was yet fluent and uncertain; it was only the hammerblow, the plastering, as one would say today, from an outside agency that welded, soldered and fixed that unity.

Fissures of late have opened again and they seem to be increasing in depth and width and in

number. What appeared to be a unified structure, of one piece, whole and entire, now threatens to crash and fall to pieces. We are asked to deny the unity. The political unity, it is said, is an impossibility, the geographical unity an illusion.

In such a predicament the

vision of a prophet counts more than the arguments of a political huckster. That an Indian consciousness is there and has grown and taken more and more concrete shape through the ages is a fact to which history bears testimony and honest common sense pays homage.

THE WAY TO UNITY

Common love, common labour and, above all, as the great French thinker, Ernest Renan,* pointed out, common suffering—that is the cement which welds together the disparate elements of a nation—a nation is not formed otherwise. A nation means peoples differing in race and religion, caste and creed and even language, fused together into a composite but indivisible unit. Not pact nor balancing of interests nor sharing of power and profit can permanently combine

and unify conflicting groups and collectivities. Hindus and Muslims, the two major sections that are at loggerheads today in India, must be given a field, indeed more than one field, where they can work together: they must be made to come in contact with each other, to coalesce and dovetail into each other in as many ways and directions as possible. Instead of keeping them separate in water-tight compartments, in barred cages, as it were, lest they pounce upon each other like wild

* "Dane le passé, un héritage de gloire et de regrets à partager, dans l'avenir un même programme à réaliser; avoir souffert, joui, espéré ensemble, voilà ce qui vaut mieux que des douanes communes et des frontières conformes aux idées stratégiques: voilà ce que l'on comprend malgré les diversités de race et de langue. Je disais tout à l'heure: "avoir souffert ensemble"; oui, la souffrance en commun unit plus que la joie. En fait de souvenirs nationaux, les deuils valent mieux que les triomphes..."

Ernest Renan: "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?"

Translation: In the past a heritage of glory and regrets to share, in the future the same programme to realise; to have suffered, enjoyed, hoped together, that indeed is better than common customs and strategic frontiers: that is what one understands in spite of diversities of race and language. I said just now: "to have suffered together"; yes common suffering unites more than common joy. In respect of the memories of a nation griefs are worth more than triumphs.

beasts, it would be wiser to throw them together; let them breathe the same air, live the same life, share the same troubles, face the same difficulties, solve the same problems. That is how they will best understand, appreciate and even love each other, become comrades and companions, not rivals and opponents.

To have union, one must unite—division can never lead to unity. Also this unity is established automatically and irrevocably, not by any abstract sense of justice and equality, nor by any romantic or imaginative feeling of fraternity, but by a dynamic *living together*. A common political and

civic and economic life creates a field of force that can draw together into a harmonious working the most contrary and refractory elements.

We have said, however, time and again, that the present war is a great opportunity offered by Nature and Providence, opportunity that comes only once in a way: it is precisely the field of which we speak, the field *par excellence*, which can compel all centrifugal elements to come together, labour together, enjoy and suffer together and turn and transmute them into the very strongest centripetal components.

THE "LONDON TIMES" AND SRI AUROBINDO

The London Times in its LITERARY SUPPLEMENT, dated July 4, 1944, in the course of a review of Sri Aurobindo's Collected Poems and Plays, says:

"After the collapse of France he returned to his *home town* where he now lives, surrounded by a growing band of admirers."

The information is, of course, quite incorrect, as everybody in India knows. Sri Aurobindo has never left Pondicherry (French India), he has always been there since he went into retirement. The reference to his "home town" sounds also somewhat strange.

For, Calcutta, although his birth place, can hardly be called his home; by far the longest periods of his life he passed in England, in Baroda, in Pondicherry, not in Bengal. Besides Sri Aurobindo was never—he will allow us to say—a "homely" or domestic man, his home was always within him.

The reviewer refers to another legend—which is more current—that Sri Aurobindo tried and could not pass the Civil Service test and became chagrined and disappointed and disgruntled and turned Nationalist. Well, it is nothing short of a legend. The

real fact is that he purposely and deliberately failed to be present at the riding test, because he did not want to enter the Service: it was only to please his father that he at all consented to prepare for the Service. There was no question of his being sad or disappointed; he was never so even in more serious circumstances.

There is still another story referred to by the reviewer—which is more strange and which we hear for the first time—that the Japanese tried to win over Sri Aurobindo, but he did not deign to reply. We do not know how the Japanese tried; if it was through the Tokio Radio, the appeal naturally fell on unlistening ears. Sri Aurobindo's views in this matter of the war are well-known and have been broadcast far and wide.

Another error is worth correcting. The reviewer seems to assume that Sri Aurobindo was sent straight from India to King's College, Cambridge, and that he had to learn English as a foreign language. This is not the fact; Sri Aurobindo in his father's house already spoke English and Hindustani; he thought in English from his childhood and did not even know his native language, Bengali. At the age of seven he was taken to England and remained there consecutively for fourteen

years, speaking English and writing in English and no other tongue. He was educated in French and Latin and other subjects under private tuition in Manchester from seven to eleven and studied afterwards in St. Paul's School, London, for about seven years. From there he went to King's College. He had never to study English at all as a subject; though it was not his native language it had become by force of circumstances from the very first his natural language.

The reviewer's judgment of Sri Aurobindo's poetry and philosophy, with a few lacunæ here and there, is appreciative and even illuminating, as, for example, when he says:

"In fact, he is a new type of thinker, one who combines in his vision the alacrity of the West with the illumination of the East. To study his writings is to enlarge the boundaries of one's knowledge".

Or again,

"And he has crystallised the mellow wisdom of a lifetime into luminous prose in 'The Life Divine', which, it is not too much to say, is one of the master works of our age. The book has length, breadth and height. In a real sense, it enriches our experience."

DEDICATION

What's there in me that I can call my own
And place before Thee as my offering?
For Thy revealing Grace has sweetly shown
Of everything Thou art the mother-spring.

A tiniest portion of Thy infinite
Being became these universes vast,
Wherein Thy single breath has breathed a bright
Luxuriant life of mysteries amassed.

And on this earth inert and stupefied
Thou badest me emerge, a blessed being,
A speck but still a centre of the wide
And various play of Thy powers beyond mind's seeing.

And faithfully my conscious nature now
Endeavours to work out what Thou hast willed,
And for which Thou hast come here with the vow
That life divine on earth shall be fulfilled.

And every moment now my dull dead clay
Awakes to life's celestial symphonies,
Transforming all into a blissful play
Of Thy love's supremely sweet profundities.

The miracles of Thy all-surpassing Grace
Have chosen to be manifest in me,
And change silently my nature's worthless face
Into a gem of Thy divinity.

A cripple that I am, Thou mak'st me climb
Up heights of heaven I have sensed in dream,
And turn my discord into a sweet rhyme
That makes my dumbness burst into songs supreme.

Accept them with indulgence, condescend,
And bless them with Thy smile that I may feel
The joy of offering: Oh let me bend
Before Thy feet: reveal Thyself, reveal.

And break my night-filled ego-shell beneath
Thy sun-specked feet, that I reborn may rise,
A songful golden dawn's eternal wreath
For Thee to wear and as thine own to prize.

—Punjatal

LETTERS ON DEATH AND AFTER-DEATH

SECOND SERIES

I

About spiritism I think I can say this much for the present. It is quite possible for the dead or rather the departed—for they are not dead—who are still in regions near the earth to have communication with the living. Sometimes it happens automatically, sometimes by an effort at communication on one side of the curtain or the other. There is no impossibility of such communication by the means used by the spiritists; usually, however, genuine communications or a contact can only be with those who are yet in a world which is a sort of idealised replica of the earth-consciousness and in which the same personality, ideas, memories persist that the person had here. But everything that pretends to be communication with departed souls is not genuine,—especially when it is done through a paid professional medium. There is there an enormous amount of mixture of a very undesirable kind—for, apart from the great mass of unconscious suggestions from the sitters or the contributions of the medium's subliminal consciousness, one gets into contact with a world of be-

ings which is of a very deceptive or self-deceptive illusory nature. Many of these come and claim to be the departed souls of relatives, acquaintances, well-known men, famous personalities, etc. There are also beings who pick up the discarded feelings and memories of the dead and masquerade with them. There are a great number of beings who come to such seances only to play with the consciousness of men or exercise their powers through this contact with the earth and who dope the mediums and sitters with their falsehoods, tricks and illusions. (I am supposing, of course, the case of mediums who are not themselves tricksters.) A contact with such a plane of spirits can be harmful (most mediums become nervously or morally unbalanced) and spiritually dangerous. Of course all pretended communications with the famous dead of long-past times are in their very nature deceptive; most of the talk professing to come from recent great names are also largely spurious—that is evident from the character of these communications. Through conscientious mediums one may get

sound results (in the matter of the dead) but even these are ignorant of the nature of the forces they are handling and have no discrimination which can guard them against trickery from the other side of the wall. Very little genuine knowledge of the nature of the after-life can be gathered from these seances; a true knowledge is more often gained by the experience of individuals who make a serious contact or are able in one way or another to cross the border.

II

It is necessary to understand clearly the difference between the evolving soul (psychic being) and the pure Atman, self or spirit. The pure self is unborn, does not pass through death or birth, is independent of birth or body, mind or life or this manifested Nature. It is not bound by these things, not limited, not affected, even though it assumes and supports them. The soul, on the contrary, is something that comes down into birth and passes through death—although it does not itself die, for it is immortal—from one state to another, from the earth-plane to other planes and back again to the earth-existence. It goes on with this progression from life to life through an evolution which leads it up to the human state and evolves through it all a being of

itself which we call the psychic being. This being supports the evolution and develops a physical, a vital, a mental human consciousness as its instruments of world-experience and of a disguised, imperfect, but growing self-expression. All this it does from behind a veil showing something of its divine self only in so far as the imperfection of the instrumental being will allow it. But a time comes when it is able to prepare to come out from behind the veil, to take command and turn all the instrumental nature towards a divine fulfilment. This is the beginning of the true spiritual life. The soul is able now to make itself ready for a higher evolution of manifested consciousness than the mental human—it can pass from the mental to the spiritual and through degrees of the spiritual to the supramental state. Till then, till it has reached the spiritual realisation, there is no reason why it should cease from birth, it cannot in fact so cease. If having reached the spiritual state, it wills to pass out of the terrestrial manifestation, it may indeed make such an exit, but there is also possible a higher manifestation, in the Knowledge and not in the Ignorance.

Your question therefore does not arise. It is not the naked spirit, but the psychic being that

goes to the psychic plane to rest till it is called again to another life. There is therefore no need of a Force to compel it to take birth anew. It is in its nature something that is put forth from the Divine to support the evolution and it must do so till the Divine's purpose in its evolution is accomplished. Karma is only a machinery, it is not the fundamental cause of terrestrial existence—it cannot be, for when the soul first entered this existence, it had no Karma.

What again do you mean by "the all-veiling Maya" or by "losing all consciousness"? The soul cannot lose all consciousness, for its very nature is consciousness, though not of the mental kind to which we give the name. The consciousness is merely covered, not lost or abolished by the so-called Inconscience of material Nature and then by the half-conscious ignorance of mind, life and body. It manifests, as the individual mind and life and body grow, as much as may be of the consciousness which it holds in potentiality, manifests it in the outward instrumental nature as far as and in the way that is possible through these instruments and through the outer personality that has been prepared for it and by it—for both are true—for the present life.

I know nothing about any terri-

ble suffering endured by the soul in the process of rebirth; popular beliefs even when they have some foundation are seldom enlightened and accurate.

III

The movement of the psychic being dropping its outer, its vital and mental sheaths on its way to the psychic plane, is its normal movement after death. But there can be any number of variations; one can return directly from the vital plane without passing on to farther and higher states, and there are cases of an almost immediate rebirth, sometimes even attended with a detailed memory of the events of the past life.

Hell and heaven are often imaginary states of the soul, or rather of the vital being, which it constructs about it after its passing. What is meant by hell is a painful passage through some vital world or a dolorous lingering there, as for instance in many cases of suicide where one remains surrounded by the forces of suffering and turmoil created by this unnatural and violent exit. There are also, of course, real worlds of mind and vital worlds which are penetrated with joyful or dark experiences, and one may pass through these as the result of things formed on the nature which create the necessary affinities. But the idea of reward or retri-

bution is a crude and vulgar conception and we can disregard it as a mere popular error.

There is no rule of complete forgetfulness in the return of the soul to rebirth. There are, especially in childhood, many impressions of the past life which can be strong and vivid enough, but a materialising education and the overpowering influences of the environment most often, but not quite always, prevent their true nature from being recognised. There are even a number of people who have definite recollections of a past life. But these things are discouraged by education and the atmosphere and cannot remain or develop; in most cases they are stifled out of existence. At the same time it must be noted that what the psychic being mainly carries away with it and brings back is the essence and effect of the experiences it has in former lives, and not the details, so that you

cannot expect the same coherent memory as one has of past happenings in the present existence.

A soul can go straight to the psychic world but that depends on the state of consciousness at the time of departure. If the psychic is in front at the time, this immediate transition is possible. It does not depend on the acquisition of a mental and vital as well as a psychic immortality—those who have acquired that would rather have the power to move about in the different planes and even act on the physical world without being bound to it. On the whole it may be said that there is no one rigid rule for these things; manifold variations are possible depending upon the consciousness, its energies, tendencies and formations, though there is a general frame-work and design into which all fit and take their place.

—Sri Aurobindo.

For the burden of death to man the thinking, willing, feeling creature is not the loss of this poor case or chariot of a body, but it is the blind psychical finality death suggests, the stupid material end of our will and thought and aspiration and endeavour, the brute breaking off of the heart's kind and sweet relations and affections, the futile convicting discontinuity of that marvellous and all-supporting

soul-sense which gives us our radiant glimpses of the glory and delight of existence,—that is the discord and harsh inconsequence against which the thinking living creature revolts as incredible and inadmissible. * * * Re-birth takes the difficulty and solves it in the sense of a soul-continuity with a beat of physical repetition.

—(The Significance of Re-birth—Sri Aurobindo)

THOUGHTS ON CURRENT EVENTS

A CONFESSION OF FAITH

The spiritual power behind the man who has mobilised China for her epic resistance against Japanese aggression, Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek, is said to be the influence of his wife who has already won the respect and loving admiration of people both in the East and the West. In a recent talk given in America, she has made a confession of her faith in which are clearly indicated the three stages through which she has passed in her spiritual evolution. By nature, she admits, she is not a religious person at least in the common acceptance of that term. "I am practical minded", she said, "and somewhat sceptical. I used to think Faith, Belief, Immortality were more or less imaginary. I believed in the world seen, not the world unseen." But the hard school of life has wrought a great change in her, a spiritual conversion. During the first years of her married life, there was a tremendous enthusiasm and patriotism—a passionate desire to do something for her country. With her husband, she would work ceaselessly, to unite China and make her strong. Then came the second

phase, beginning with the Japanese invasion. She said, "I saw the Japanese overrun our richest provinces, I saw our people die from enemy action and flood and famine. All these things have made me realize my own inadequacy and all human insufficiency. To try to do anything for the country seemed like trying to put out a great conflagration with a cup of water. I was plunged into spiritual despair, bleakness, desolation."

Then the influence which her saintly mother had exercised on her in her young age began to bear fruit and in despair she turned to God as her mother used to do. She said, "Feeling my human inadequacy, I was driven back to my mother's God. I knew there was a power greater than myself . . . I had formerly prayed that God would do this or that. Now I prayed only that God would make His will known to me. Thus I entered into the third period, where I wanted to do not my will but God's. And despair and despondency are not mine to-day." That gives the direct lie to the communistic slogan, Religion is the opiate of the people.

Whatever evil consequences might have followed from the abuse of religion, as of any other good thing in life, religion can be of the greatest help even in our worldly activities and struggles. Leaders in the present world war like Churchill, Roosevelt, Montgomery are intensely religious men, yet they are showing the highest qualities of dynamism and organising capacity. And in Madame Chiang Kai Shek we find well illustrated the coming of the spiritual type in the general upward evolution of humanity. She is a Christian, though the credal part of that religion has not had much effect on her: she was influenced by the trust of her mother in a higher divine power, and that is the essence of all religion; and the spiritual type can emerge out of any religion and even from sceptics. And yet the type represented by Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, as revealed in her confession of faith, is hardly yet the spiritual human being: she is still a religious being or a preliminary spiritual form preparing for the true spiritual emergence. There is as yet no awakening to the inner Reality or the Soul which is the essence of spirituality. "An awareness comes perhaps of an inner light, of a guidance or a communion, of a greater Control than the mind

and will to which something in us obeys; but all is not yet recast in the mould of that experience. But when these intuitions and illuminations grow in insistence and canalise themselves, make a strong inner formation and claim to govern the whole life and take over the nature, then there begins the spiritual formation of the being; there emerges the saint, the devotee, the spiritual sage, the seer, the prophet, the servant of God, the soldier of the spirit." (The Life Divine, Vol. II, P. 896).

"I am often bewildered," says Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, "I question and doubt my own judgments. Then I seek guidance; in prayer God enlightens my understanding, and when I am sure, I go ahead, leaving the results with him." Thus she is really in the first stage of the Gita's Karma Yoga; she still regards herself as the doer, though she sincerely wants to know the will of God and do it without regard to consequences. But to have a really Yogic spiritual life we must go beyond that; we must find the self within us by inward concentration and meditation (M. Chiang Kai-Shek prefers prayer to meditation); we must realise that it is Nature which does all our actions and that ultimately Nature is an instru-

ment in the hands of the Divine with whom we are one in our inmost Self. "The last or highest emergence is the liberated man who has realised the Self and Spirit within him, entered into the cosmic consciousness, passed into union with the Eternal and, so far as he still accepts life and action, acts by the light and energy of the power within him working through his human instruments of nature. The largest formulation of this spiritual change and achievement is a total liberation of soul, mind, heart and action, a casting of them all into the sense of the cosmic self and the Divine Reality." (L.D. II-997). This is essentially the ideal of the Jivanmukta as we find it delineated in the Gita. But it may be contended that there have been many saints and seers and soldiers of the spirit in the past, still the world goes on pretty much the same as it always has done, then of what avail is it to humanity if a few more exceptional men attain the highest spiritual ideal by a

most difficult and arduous sadhana?

Sri Aurobindo has fully discussed this question in *The Life Divine*. The problems of human life cannot be solved on the past or present mental basis. "Spirituality cannot be called upon to deal with life by a non-spiritual method or attempt to cure its ills by the panaceas, the political, social or other mechanical remedies which the mind is constantly attempting and which have always failed and will continue to fail to solve anything." It is not that spiritual men have not rendered great services to humanity, but all that has been in the way of alleviation and not of any radical cure. And that cure can only come when Nature has taken a further step in her evolution and man finds in the supermind the basis of a higher life. To help in that evolution has always been the proper work of spiritual men, and their age-long efforts have gradually prepared mankind for this supreme uplifting.

SCIENTIFIC PLANNING

"We are on the thresh-hold of great changes. As regards the world in general, what the religious precepts of prophets and saints could not achieve for the unity and brotherhood of man, the devastating discovery of modern ex-

plosives and flying machines is tending to achieve. Willy-nilly, nations of the world have to live like a family if not out of love, out of fear. What the Gita and the Quran and the Bible could not do, bombers will do. Bom-

bers will make brothers of us all." So spoke Mr. Darab Cursetjee Driver in his Presidential Address at the annual General Meeting of the Engineering Association of India. Mr. Driver is a scientist with experience of Indian business conditions and he has given several useful suggestions about post-war large scale industrial planning in India without which the appalling poverty of the Indian masses cannot be remedied. But why did he go quite out of his way to cast aspersions on religion and religious scriptures? Eminent scientists in the West have already definitely turned away from the 19th century obscurantist hostility of science to religion, but the Indian scientists seem still to be far behind them in this respect. How could Mr. Driver be so innocent of human psychology as to assert that brotherhood can be born out of fear, if not out of love? People saw appalling sufferings and destruction in the last world war, but the fear of those sufferings could not bring about the brotherhood of humanity. What better prospects have we now? It is not willingly that most people have entered into the present war; the Munich episode is there to show how unwilling and unprepared the Allies were for a second World War. Still it could not be prevented. Hitler

almost succeeded in exploiting human horror of war in order to establish his barbarous sway over the whole of humanity. No, fear of bombing is certainly not going to inaugurate a new order; if humanity indulges in that, it will easily fall a prey to any Hitlerite gangster who will invent new hellish weapons to intimidate humanity, and scientists will come forward to help him.

It is only if the passion for power and domination can be rooted out of human nature and egoism be replaced by love that there can be real brotherhood and lasting peace and it is spirituality alone which can bring about such a radical change in human nature.

As Mr. Driver has apparently no faith in spirituality, his vision of the New Order does not exclude the possibility of war; according to him every nation must remain armed to the teeth and in his post-war plan for India the question of Defence expenses looms large. Thus he says: "The problem is that if we spend too much on defence, there is so much less with which to plan; but defend ourselves we must." Indeed if India is to protect her vast frontiers against foreign aggression, the expenses under modern conditions will be so great that there will not be much left for post-war

reconstruction. Moreover, if the countries and nations of the world keep and maintain national armies, however small on the plea of self-defence, there is bound to be war, sooner or later; only if an international machinery can be set up in which all national armies will be abolished leaving only an international police force, there will be a reasonable chance of lasting peace, and nations freed from the crushing burden of defence expenditure can look to effective reconstruction insuring a satisfactory standard of life for all men. But humanity will have to change much in order to arrive at this consummation; in the meantime some half-way-house measures have to be adopted; but these can be tolerated only on the presupposition that the problem will be tackled at the very root in all seriousness—the problem of changing human nature integrally.

At the same time we must realise that this change will not come simply by preaching the ideals of non-violence, love and brotherhood or by the old customary ways of religion. It is only by following a technic based on deep knowledge of human nature and world forces that this can be accomplished and that is precisely the aim of Yoga. So long Yoga has been perfecting its methods in solitude and in retirement far from the turmoil of life leaving religion

and other cultural activities to prepare the hearts and minds of mankind for the final transformation. Now it is coming back to take its proper place in the organisation and uplifting of human life. Scientific planning is necessary, but it can be effective only when it has a spiritual vision behind it and every step is taken to further the spiritual evolution of mankind.

Mr. Driver draws pointed attention to the menace of over-population in India: "Our present population of 400 millions is expected to reach the figure of 550 millions in thirty years. Would it be practicable to give work and food to so many, even with the best planning in the world to modernize our economy? Will not our population, with its unrestricted growth, ultimately pulverize all plans?" Here again it is obvious that some form of birth-control is indispensable; but that by itself would only be a palliative. It is only men who are in the lowest level of culture, the material men who still form the majority, who take eating, sleeping and breeding as the highest aims of life. When these people are awakened to the spiritual goal of life and uplifted by spiritual and cultural influences, the problem of over-population will be solved automatically.

—*Critic.*

THE SUFFERING GOD?

All Religions are agreed that Reality or God is in essence spiritually governed, that is to say, the nature of God is Love. By love it is usually held to mean that which is sympathetic to the human beings in general and to votaries in particular. There can be no antipathy to any creature in the nature of the Reality or God and therefore God cannot and indeed does not inflict injuries on His creatures. Not only that, His Love is not merely a negative fact, but the positive fact about it is this that He redeems those who are fallen, or have sinned and fallen. The human being turns to its creator in order to be saved. It prays to Him and serves Him in all the ways that it knows and in turn it expects His help and succour. The creature suffers and the creator is the redeemer from its suffering. All this means also that the creator can save and redeem, help and lead. This is an article of faith. If God be finite and limited, He may grieve over the failures and sorrows of others without being able to rescue them or relieve them or redeem them. This would be the quintessence of Tragedy. If God be infinite and omnipotent and illimitable, there is no reason whatsoever for the occurrence or continuance of grief for He could, if so minded, relieve the distress of the creatures He had created. Indeed there is no need for the creatures to suffer at all if He created properly or wisely. It would be therefore a love of self tragedy that must have led to this creation of creatures doomed to suffer and to sin!

3

Thus the capital fact about these two views will lead to the denial of omniscient Omnipotence on the one hand and on the other the affirmation of a kind of masochistico-sadistic delight in tragedy on the part of God. Now theism cannot accept either of these schools of thought though it seeks to reconcile God's Love with His wisdom. Some Christian theologians say that the dualism is one between the God of Love and the God of Wrath. It is stated that the love of God is seen when He acts as the helper towards peace and understanding of the creatures and that the wrath of God is seen when He punishes the traducers of the Law of Justice of God. But this takes into account only the law and the love and does not see that law may itself be a form of Love and the restoration of law may involve a recovery of love that establishes the real and true understanding of the status of the creature in the scheme of Divine Harmony. The Hindu view has been to shew that the maintenance of Order or law or the right relationship between things is one of the most important functions of the Divine, and Divine intervention in the scheme of existence has this purpose as its foremost aim. Further, God's love is not to be measured by human criteria, though this by no means is to be excluded.

We know that Love is most fully displayed when one gives up oneself completely for the well-being of another. This passion for self-offering or sacrifice is the test of love. It is possible only when the offerer of oneself is capable

His eternal manyness in supreme integral oneness or unity not only as individual souls but also as *avatār* who is the supraconscious Descent, aware supramentally of the integral oneness of Himself with all His transcendence and immanence and creatorship and indwellingness in all and the Goal of all creatures or the many. Thus it becomes possible to arrive at that supreme status on the part of the other souls who are not aware of their integral unity with Godhead, to perceive that in the life and activities of the *avatār*. The suffering of man or the pain in the many is neither the truth about the creation nor its meaning; spirit is not enthroned in matter by the deity so that one may understand how spirit suffers crucifixion in matter, but that one may understand how matter is a possible tenement of the Divine Himself—that is what the miracles of Christ and other great *avatārs* and seers and prophets of God have shown. It is this that is the truth of the spiritual evolution; not the suffering God nor the suffering man. Suffering is the sign, the external sign of the historical juncture as it is at present; and God's incarnation as Son or as *avatār* or Teacher is not merely or even primarily

to reveal His condescending Grace and Love of man, but also to exalt and elevate and transform the human being from his lowly and suffering status and to which his consciousness constantly calls him back and society condemns him to the status of the free individual who does not submit to any outer power, arbitrary or otherwise, but only to the rediscovered Divine within. For by the light of this supreme indwelling Seer (*Ekarsi*) who is the indwelling truth of all creatures also, the illumined consciousness of man finds all the solace and integral unity with all creation. Man divinised by this indwelling seer-consciousness, seer-will, and delight becomes verily a ocean of delight that nothing can disturb.

The finite God, the indefinite God, the suffering God or Neronic God are all postulations of the human mind which is baffled by the supreme mystery of the Multi-manifestational Integral Deity. Delight is the essence of the movement, and delight is the essence of the ultimate integral destiny. Man and God, the Many and the One, play with the terms of Love, and suffering is a term not the whole truth of this Love.

—K. C. Varadachari.

Wherefore he selected or made such a material when he had all infinite possibility to choose from? Because of his divine Idea which saw before it not only beauty and sweetness and purity, but also force and will and greatness. Despise not force, nor hate it for the ugliness

of some of its faces, nor think that love only is God. All perfect purification must have something in it of the stuff of the hero and even of the Titan. But the greatest force is born out of the greatest divinity.

(Thoughts and Glimpses - Sri Aurelindo)

INDIA IS ONE

III

The centres of learning in ancient India had also its contribution in the making of the one cultural life of the people. The hermitages of well-known sages are the earliest universities of India where students from far and near used to flock for instruction in various subjects. The Mahabharata abounds with descriptions of these hermitages in the Naimisha forest of which the presiding personality was Saunaka who was honoured with the title of *kulapati*, sometimes defined as the preceptor of ten thousand disciples. There were conferences convened by great kings where representative thinkers were invited to meet and exchange their views. During sessions of sacrifices the courts and palaces of kings were also the scenes of congregations of learned men who would enter into deliberations over the deepest problems of philosophy in which women also took part. In the age of Buddhism, monasteries were the strongholds and distributing centres of Buddhist culture, which enabled it to maintain its hold upon the country and helped to spread it evenly among the different parts thereof. We may mention the four famous special Buddhist Convocations and many other regular and ordinary ones where religious and philosophical problems were discussed and important decisions taken. In his travels from the north-west across the Punjab along the Jumna-Ganges valley down to Tamruk in Bengal Fa-Hien in the fifth century noticed almost numberless monasteries full of monks belonging to

either of the great Paths of Buddhism. There were no rigid rules for admission to many of these monasteries which accommodated monks of different schools. When Hiuen Tsang visited India in the seventh century there were about five thousand monasteries with a population of more than two hundred thousand monks. The well-known universities of this period, developed out of these monasteries, were Taxila, Nalanda, Odantapuri and Vikramsila.

The most notable of these centres of learning in the North was the international University of Nalanda in Magadha, the largest of its kind in the contemporary world in which scholars of different castes, creeds and races hailing not only from the farthest ends of India but also from countries far beyond her geographical boundaries, from China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Bokhara, gathered for carrying on advanced studies in the various branches of knowledge as embodied in the culture, both Brahminical and Buddhist. Of the 10,000 residents in the University 8,500 were *alumni*, and 1,510 were faculty members. Nalanda was famous for the freedom it sought to encourage in education, for the wide catholicity of its method, for the liberal character of its curriculum. Through its schools of discussion, and the debating and conference methods according to the old Indian tradition it surely helped to unite its varied elements into a superb intellectual fellowship in which the contribution of the wide variety of subjects taught was no less

remarkable. The curriculum included all the systems of thought, then prevalent in the country, in spite of the fact that Nalanda was a centre of Mahayanist studies. The Vedas were there as also the arts and sciences of the Hindus. The various schools of Buddhism were represented by their reputed exponents and earnest learners. People belonging to almost all the sects and creeds of the times shared a common cultural life in Nalanda which may be characterised as having upheld the high ideal of a cosmopolitan university in the true sense of the term. No wonder that it should foster a spirit of fellowship among the vast number of its members.

While in the North cultural fellowship grew and developed almost invariably in the Buddhist monasteries, in the South it thrived mostly in the temples, those massive structures of wonderful architecture, surrounded by buildings in big compounds. In fact, each such temple in South India was like a small university town which was the centre of the cultural and religious life of the locality. These temple-colleges maintained free hostels and hospitals and attracted students from different parts of India. Learned Brahmins, in charge of temple worship were connected with the colleges as their professors. Inscriptions furnish authentic information about these centres of learning, many of which flourished during the ninth and the tenth centuries of the present era. A Rastrakuta minister founded the famous residential college at Salotgi in Bijapur, which had twenty seven boarding-houses. The Sanskrit College at Ennayiram in the South Arcot district was well-known as a recognised seat of Vedic studies. The rolls of its *alumni* were strengthened

not inconsiderably by learners from the North. The districts of Tanjore, Chingleput, Chitaldrug, Shikarpur and Guntur, had in those glorious days a number of educational institutions where the study of philosophy and grammar, of arts and sciences, were pursued by scholars from all parts of India. Thus the Peninsular plateau and the Gangetic plain were linked up by their culture-centres which provided opportunities for the varied expressions of the Indian mind to build up an intellectual brotherhood that for centuries was a unifying force in the cultural life of the people. Indeed, in the world of learning the whole country was one.

The various forms of Indian art are united by their common quality of some spiritual motivation which characterises them more than anything else. In the delicacy of line in painting, in the suggestiveness of plastic figuration or in the majestic grandeur of sacred architecture, the one thing that strikes is a tendency to fulfil some spiritual purpose. In style also there are many points that are identical in works of art produced in places at long distances from one another. In painting, whether in Bagh, Sittannavasal in the South or Sigiriya in Ceylon, the dominating style is that of the Ajanta masterpieces. The tradition continued, however indistinctly, in the Rajput and Pahari miniatures; and not a little has it been a source of inspiration to the neo-Bengal School in modern times. In sculpture the Dhyanī Buddha of the North cannot be distinguished from its southern figuration and it does not differ much even from its Javanese adaptation. There are many characteristics common to the Saranath and the Mathura Schools of Sculpture and their widespread influence is discernible, that of the former in the work

of plastic art in Bengal, that of the latter in the sculpture of as far away as Sind. The art of ancient India had its heyday during the Buddhist age when the Buddhist monks made no distinction in their choice of subjects. It was not unoften that they painted and sculptured Hindu themes. And instances are not rare of Hindu artists working on Buddhist subjects.

A peculiar tendency of the builders of ancient India was to make free use of any style or technique, if it would enhance the beauty of their work. Thus the sacred architecture of India owed very little of its origin and development to a particular creed or cult. No definite idea could therefore be conveyed by designating any type of Indian architecture as specifically Buddhist, Jaina or Brahminical. The Vedic sacrificial altars and the *mandapam* (porch) are common to temples in the North and the South. The Buddhist *stupas* (mounds) were adapted from the archaic Vedic mounds. The north Indian *nagara*-shrines of Siva and Vishnu influenced enormously the Jaina temples at Khajuraho. The forms of Chalukya or the later Hayasala order were indiscriminately used for Hindu or Jaina shrines. Many Brahminical shrines adopted the barrel-shaped *Vesara* temples of early Buddhist uses. The monolithic temples at Mahabalipuram are lineal descendants of the earlier Buddhist *Viharas*. Many features of the *shikhara*-temples of the North are unmistakable in the Mahabodhi temple in Bodh-Gaya. If "architecture is the matrix of civilisation" the building art of India was more so, since it not only nurtured other forms of art but has also stood through the ages as the principal visible and material record of the cultural evolution of the race, as the

symbol of the unity of its godward aspirations.

The attempt so far has been to make a brief survey of the cultural unity of India in the early days of her history, which was the result not always of any conscious effort but largely of the forces that were released by the creative endeavours of the people, their inborn spirituality having inspired them all through. It may now be seen what India was able to achieve towards the political unification of the country. As in their religious and social thinking so also in their political idealism the ancient Indians have always showed a tendency to value freedom above everything and to so build the political structure that it may provide every member in it with ample freedom of self-expression. The governing idea was not to strengthen the frame-work by imposing rules from outside as was done in periods of decline but to allow every man to grow into the fulness of his creative possibilities by which only is a country's culture enriched. It was this outlook of the Indians that among others enabled them to build their great civilisation. But individual freedom was not their only aim. The freedom of the community too was deemed equally necessary for the social progress of the people. To the Indians, like the individual the collectivity also is a manifestation of the Divine. Their scriptures therefore enjoin upon the householder certain duties that he must discharge for the well-being of the community. In their idea of the state they wanted the voice of the people to dominate in all its administrative affairs. That is why a central authority could not fully develop in ancient India. When the king came into the scene h

did so more as a protector and servant of the people than as an autocratic ruler.

The life of peace and prosperity, led by the Indus Valley India, (Indians) has been already referred to. It is not yet known if they had developed any kind of political organisation. But that they had a form of corporate life is proved by the excavations which show the high order of civic facilities enjoyed by them. The earliest corporate institution of the Indians was the *samiti* or assembly, mentioned in the Rig Veda, which was constituted by representatives from a group of villages under its jurisdiction. Its function was to conduct every work of administration, social, political and religious. This idea of *samiti* is the seed of all the democratic institutions evolved in India in the past. It did not grow into an unwieldy structure. Its smallness was its sustaining virtue that kept up its vitality throughout the ages in spite of the various disrupting forces that swayed over India. The village assemblies, to-day, the *Panchayats* as they are called in popular parlance, have descended from their proto-types in ancient India. With the expansion of Aryan civilisation there arose the idea of territory, *janapada*, which gradually developed into a territorial state, *janapadarajya*, and then a great territorial state, *mahajanapadarajya*, with a king more secure in his position than before. These states were most of them of a republican character. But all the time the autonomous forms of local bodies in the villages continued. Social life in the Vedic times was one of happiness and all-round prosperity. It was the splendid youth of humanity in India to whom the vision came of the divinity of man and of the essential unity of all exist-

tence. It is not difficult to visualise from the stirrings of a new intellectual life in the age of the Upanishads that a happy and contented but more organised social life was there to stimulate those cultural activities of which the Upanishads give vivid pictures. Ideal kings like Janaka were the protectors of the people.

The epics testify to the existence of many prosperous kingdoms where abundant wealth and continued happiness combined to produce a condition in society that was, as they call it, "the envy of the gods." The essential historical significance of the Ramayana was the expansion of the Indo-Aryan culture in the south that was effected by a series of cultural and military campaigns, which is perhaps the second attempt, the first being by Bharata, to extend Aryan supremacy and include within it the non-Aryans after Aryanising them. The sense of territorial unity under the impact of a single culture which began to grow as a result of the campaigns of the king Bharata is found to be more developed in the Ramayana. But it had its yet further flowering in the Mahabharata which reflects the evolution of empire, the first of its kind in India, out of a host of petty states fighting for supremacy with one another. Problems of social and political unity are tackled in this epic with consummate mastery. The fusion of clans and tribes, not wholly Aryan, into the social structure of the Hindus is another important event that took place in this period, when the affirmation of the ideals of Dharma, the religious, ethical, social, political, juristic and customary law, organically governing the life of the people served as an effective check on any arbitrary abuse of sovereign power by the king.

Any violation of Dharma by the king was severely dealt with. Not to speak of deposition, Manu prescribes even death for the king who would infringe the Law. Thus Dharma asserted as greater than the sovereign whose sole duty it was to administer the Law faithfully and to look to the strict observance of its every injunction both in the individual and the community life of the people. In this way a common Dharma, a common culture administered by a benevolent king and followed by a dutiful people helped to build up a social and political integrity which gave to the state all its power and vitality.

But the state did not expand beyond a limit; neither was there any organised attempt to co-operate with others towards the formation of a confederacy or any such league. Though the ideal of an all-India empire, *chaturanta-rājya*, and a feeling to regard all Aryans or Indians as one people was always there, and a struggle for empire incessant, yet a kind of regional patriotism remained strong and active. A territorial synthesis, broadbased on a common culture, was all that could and did exist under

the conditions prevailing in the period, but a vast empire ruled by a single power or a league of states was far from a reality. Each state valued its own independence as a sacred thing and would resent any interference with it from outside, thereby allowing no neighbouring state to grow into a big power to be able to assert its suzerainty and form a strong central government. An excessive love of freedom made these states selfish and blind to the wider interests of the whole country, with the result that by their internal dissensions and disunity they exposed the country to foreign aggression and were not able to take a concerted stand against it. There were of course other reasons why India then was not able to build political unity in the strict sense of the term. In the beginning of the sixth century B. C. we find that northern India was divided into sixteen independent kingdoms. There were also a number of republics and tribal territories. But no strong power was there to combine them, at least against any invasion from outside. Hence, the way was prepared for the Persian conquest, and then the campaigns of Alexander.

—Sisirkumar Mitra.

Until man in his heart is ready, a profound change in the world conditions cannot come; or it can only be brought about by force, physical force or else force of circumstances, and

that leaves all the real work to be done. A frame may have then been made but the soul will still have to grow into that mechanical body.

—(Ideal of Human Unity—Sri Aurobindo)

AUROBINDONIAN VIEWPOINTS

(A LETTER)

I

You say that it is not in the mind alone that endless contradiction can happen. I concur with you. It is not only philosophers who keep disagreeing. Yogis also take up positions poles apart from one another on the basis of their actual spiritual experiences. This is possible because reality can be spiritually experienced, no less than intellectually reconstructed, in various aspects. But we are naturally led to inquire what should be considered the ultimate truth of which so many aspects are possible. You suggest that to ascertain that truth we require a new faculty which you call "insight"—a faculty "which, if its possession is gained, will function in precisely the same manner in all persons." And you add the important remark: "Such a faculty was, I believe, used by sages like Krishna and Buddha." Two implications I read in your belief. One is indirect—namely, that reality has been "insighted" in past ages and that all we can do is to repeat their performance: the new faculty is in fact old and is new only for those who have not developed it. The other and direct implication is that Sri Krishna and Buddha had the same insight into reality. I hope you will excuse me if to neither implication I can give a fervent Yea. I don't think that except on very general grounds we can speak of Buddha's insight and Sri Krishna's as the same. Immediately we probe into the matter we come upon a big difference. And the difference serves to indicate the line of progress

which, despite my acknowledging the grandeur of past spirituality, I consider to be beckoning us beyond everything the past has grandly achieved.

Buddha made an ultimate dichotomy between the world and reality. The world he regarded as an illusion to be discarded at last for a formless and featureless and impersonal beatific a-cosmism which he named Nirvana. Before the final dropping of the world there goes on a strange concomitance of reality and illusion, Nirvana and embodied nature. During that prelude Nirvana throws a luminous quiescence on our mind, vitality and body. Rather, since it is itself actionless, we should say our mind, vitality and body reflect the luminous quiescence of Nirvana. This quiescence means a lot of wonderful change in our nature—a change dynamic as well as static since our nature or Prakriti is a dynamism and unavoidably puts whatever light it catches to active uses. But the change due to Nirvana is not all that is involved in the Gita nor is Nirvana there the *summum bonum*. Though Sri Krishna in the Gita speaks of Nirvana—Brahma-Nirvana he terms it to distinguish it from the utterly negative spiritual shade given it by Buddha—it is for him one aspect of Brahman, an aspect we cannot do without, yet not all-fulfilling. Brahman is Purushottama, the Transcendental Being who is not limited by His own static eternity and who dynamically manifests our universe and acts as its Lord. And Purushottama

manifests our universe through His Para-Prakriti or Super-Nature. Super-Nature is marked out from Nature here which is a derivation or veiled play of it: it is that which is divine and has the power of divinalising all that is below. Its dynamism is the perfect original of the lower one which is the sole dynamism Buddha deals with and Nirvana illuminates. Towards the Supreme Being who is both impersonal and personal and towards His divinising Super-Nature we with our instruments of mind, vitality and body have to move by the Krishnaesque insight: in our experience in the cosmos we have to manifest them. The ideal of divinising the person in us and our embodied existence is involved in Sri Krishna's pronouncements as it certainly is not in Buddha's, for it is clear that in Nirvana there can be no divine counterpart of the varied complexity that is active in Nature.

In the works of Sri Aurobindo the ideal is brought out in its clearest fullness. His Yoga is founded on his experience of a Consciousness which over and above combining all that Yogis in the past have known, holds the secret of satisfying and fulfilling on earth our whole embodied existence. Such a Consciousness seems to me, because of its integral character, the ultimate Reality—and "insight", therefore, is in my opinion developable with utter completeness only through the Aurobindonian Yoga. The conditions mentioned by you for developing it are very good indeed, but, as formulated by you, are they not liable to appear somewhat onesided, since they are, in your words, "a ruthless self-pruning?" "Only by this ruthless self-pruning," you write, "can we respond utterly impersonally to reality and not falsify it."

One may suggest that self-pruning is necessary and impersonality is necessary, yet there is the fact of a diverse personality in us. By self-pruning and impersonality we rise above personality's defects, but, if carried to an exclusive extreme, they might throw personality entirely into the shade and move finally to submerge it in some Beyond which takes us for good out of the manifested universe. Personality is an important fact of our existence and for manifestation it is indispensable. It wants fulfilment in the Divine and not just to be transcended until it can be annulled. Reality must answer to its impassioned many-toned appeal. So, except at the risk of one-sidedness, "insight" cannot be developed by paying scarce heed to the essence of personality and to personality's complex richness. We must not grow bare in growing pure. I don't think you actually mean "bareness" by your "purity". Manifestation to the utmost is not outside your path. Yet, I may say, your utmost does not reach far enough because you believe we can do nothing save ring appropriate changes of application on the spiritual possibilities revealed in the past. I do not wish to sound cocky. I have a deep reverence for the rishis and masters and prophets whose souls shine from the past like everlasting torches along our troubled ways and I see that we cannot throw aside the core of their realisations. But I can't help seeing too that the evolution Sri Aurobindo is out to accomplish has no exact precedent.

Taking up the synthesis Sri Krishna made of the Yogas of Knowledge, Works and Devotion, he goes forward to a spiritual integrality exceeding even that splendid synthesis. He says that liberation is not enough; nor is it

enough to let our embodied nature be influenced by the light of the Divine, not even the dynamic light that was displayed by the synthesis à la Sri Krishna. If everything came originally from the Divine, there must be in the Divine the archetypal truth of everything, a truth not lying idle in the Transcendental but ever pressing for manifestation. And the manifestation of it would be a divine person with a divinised mind, vitality and body. So Sri Aurobindo speaks of a descent into us of what he designates Gnosis or Supermind as well as of an ascent to it. The descent will mean an embodied existence of a divine order in every respect and no longer of an order that is flawed by the human and the mortal. Yes, in every respect there must be Godhead and immortality: even our physical stuff must be entirely transformed! A new apocalypse is here beyond the visions of the past—divinisation has, in Sri Aurobindo's vocabulary, a novel significance*—and yet we feel that the unprecedented is most logical. Anything short of the Aurobindonian divinising leaves Nature without sufficient justification of her being: as an emanation of the Divine she must be capable of divinisation in every inch of her when her whole principle is a progressive evolving. Because she is capable we have the thirst for perfection. The thirst has been recognised since the dawn of history, but up to now the integral logic of it has not been grasped. Until it is grasped we shall never be satisfied: always a clash will take place in our psychology and under various guises we shall have "the refusal of the ascetic"

and "the denial of the materialist." No compromise will be lasting: every apparent equilibrium will collapse. For, there is an imperative in man's constitution driving him towards the spiritual integrality insisted on by Sri Aurobindo. Without our openly feeling that imperative, there will never be a common "insight" for all persons. How can we reach in the sphere of spiritual experience a common insight unless we envisage with unblurred eyes our total constitution's bedrock need? The bedrock need shows itself in our thirst for perfection—and the common origin, in God, of everything denotes the integral range of the need and the integral range of its satisfaction. You say you believe with me that the thirst for perfection is a pointer to its eventual slaking in the Spirit. But you erect a certain barrier: "there is," you write, "no necessary implication that this will be attained whilst we are here in the flesh and on a level of existence where everything is doomed, as Buddha points out, to decay and death. It is more likely to be done on a higher level where such limitations could not exist." If you attend closely to the words "thirst for perfection" you will seize Sri Aurobindo's view. Can our thirst be for perfection if the cry of the physical being is left without an answer from God? Our physical being has its innate demand for joy, for luminous effectivity, for healthy perpetuation. These demands are summed up in the age-long quest for the *elixir vitae*. Can you ignore the intensity of such a quest?

The misery of an imperfectly constituted body open to attack on every side and gravitating towards dissolution is

* The novelty, of course, is not restricted to body transforming. The latter is a sign of the utter integrality of the divinising process and the integrality extends also a transforming to mind and vitality beyond anything done before.

not due simply to our attachment to material things: it is due also to our innate sense of a great lack—a lack of what our body is hungering after. We try and try to appease its hunger. Blind alleys meet us everywhere because we do not turn to "the secret path" of mysticism for the body's fulfilment. Our failure leaves us frustrated: we may detach our attention from the failure but deep in our subconscious there lurks a brooding dangerous sadness packed with resistance to spirituality if spirituality finds no means to justify earth in terms of earth itself. Not to see in bodily life the thirst for perfection is to close our eyes to a mighty fact. To seek its appeasement outside the Divine is to keep groping for ever. To hold that it will never be slaked in the Divine is to give up aiming at integral realisation of Him, for that realisation must consist in His descent in all the levels of our nature as well as in our ascent to Him in the Gnosis. If we admit that matter has come originally from God and if we admit that matter cries out for fulfilment, there can be no getting away from the conclusion that our body can be divinised and should be divinised. Perfection would not be perfect without fulfilment on our level of flesh no less than on every other level.

By acquiescing in Buddha's doctrine of the doom of the body we erroneously take a present condition as an everlasting one. It is quite obvious that the body as at present inhabited by us decays and dies. But Sri Aurobindo discerns no inevitability of decay and death. What is the doom Buddha speaks of? Who or what has fixed the doom? The doom, to Buddha, is consequent on the body's being compounded of parts. The compounded must fall

asunder: that is his logic. It is, however, conceivable that a force counteracting the tendency of a compound to break up can hold together the parts indefinitely. It is all an affair of balance. The mere compounding need bring no decomposition and disintegration. So the real cause must lie deeper. The real cause is that no force in Nature is able to maintain the body for good, much less to keep it up at a pitch of perfect health. Must we accept this inability in Nature as final? We must if our attitude is, like Buddha's, illusionist. Buddha's logic is binding only if our attitude argues no support or archetype of the body in the Spirit. Give up illusionism and the logic crumbles down. Declare that it is the Spirit that has become all things and immediately we unchain ourselves from Buddha's dictum. For then there must be, unknown to us, a connection between the incorruptible substance of Spirit and matter's corruptible substance. Not only this, but, as the Spirit must be one-yet-multiple to manifest a multiple universe, there is a spiritual formation connected with the material formation that is our body. A spiritual body, whose substance and form are in absolute tune with the light and perpetuity that are proper to the Spirit, is all the time behind the unstable aggregate of elements in which we live, and waits to manifest itself in it. Indian Yogas have often spoken of a casual body—*kârana sharira*—governing the gross and the subtle ones from its occult station above in the Spirit's ether. No complete descent, emergence and organisation of the casual in both the gross and the subtle were taught or methodised. Sri Aurobindo is the first to proclaim the necessity and practicableness of making the *kârana sharira*

totally active in the open. When the substance, form, law and force of that body are brought into play within our present material being, there is no reason why our components, freed from their imperfections, should not perpetually hold together in unmarred health. We are mortal simply because we have not discovered yet how to make our body share in the Spirit's perfect and immortal consciousness. There is no radical gulf between that consciousness and our body, there is only an apparent and pragmatic gulf.

Everything depends on what power of being is in charge. The vital or mental power is unable to bring about a divinisation. Buddha's spirituality, though gigantic in itself, also misses the superb secret. Buddha looked for liberation from the cycle of births, not for divinisation of all that birth involves. The Vedic attempt to establish the Gods in our nature-parts, the Vaishnava attempt to incarnate the personal deity through the love-surge of the central person in us, the soul or psyche round which our personal nature is organised, and the Tantric attempt to render the Shakti, the Mother-power, of the Supreme effective in all our chakras come near to it. There has, however, been a general falling short both in idea and practice because the particular dynamis of the Divine which Sri Aurobindo names Supermind or Gnosis was never completely possessed—or, if possessed, it was mostly in the tranced consciousness and seldom in the wide-awake one. In Sri Krishna the wide-awake possession seems to have been there, but it was not directly operative: the directly operative dynamis was a secondary power of the Supermind—the Overmind. The Overmind is a global and not an integral

truth-consciousness: there is in it a well-rounded harmony, on the whole, of the one-yet-multiple Spirit but in detail a penchant for multiplicity and hence for division, while in the Supermind a precise all-balancing and hence all-fulfilling harmony subsists both on the whole and in detail. Under the Overmind's rule we can grow divinised on earth to a considerable extent without being able to preserve ourselves from that outermost dividing-up which is the body's death. Under the sway of the Supermind there can be entire divinisation and no compulsive dragging away from it: we are free to cast aside what we have done, we are not bound to it but we are also able to manifest perfection and preserve it here and now. This capacity and that freedom are the goal of earth: they are the Supermind's prerogatives which Sri Aurobindo wants exercised. Sri Krishna in the Gita heads towards them without overtly disclosing them: while the Supermind is his background the Overmind is his forefront. If his forefront had been supramental he would have done what Sri Aurobindo is doing today.

But the reason why, where dynamic operation was concerned, the Supermind, despite being Sri Krishna's conscious poise, stayed in the background is not just some individual defect in Sri Krishna. Buddha's a-cosmic extremism is also not traceable to merely a *lacuna* in him. There are universal factors no less than individual: the stage of world-evolution, the *Zeitgeist* and the urgent need of the hour combine to colour the spirituality of leaders like Buddha and Sri Krishna. To deem them altogether myopic and incapable is a mistake, as it is also a mistake to deem them the *ne plus ultra* and forget new conditions

and the new spirituality those conditions must demand. Sri Krishna used the Overmind dynamis and could not help doing so because the time was not ripe for the work of the Gnosis, especially on the body. Many ups and downs, many divergent zig-zags had to occur before the time could ripen for the Aurobindonian Yoga. It appears that, among several factors, an age of Science had to emerge for such a work to be taken in hand. Nothing save a stress on the physical as blindly strong as at the beginning was Science's could help the psychological moment of an unusual task like laying the Spirit's touch on its old enemy and despised impediment, the body, for integral divinisation. Then there is the subconscious effect of Science's brilliant endeavour to see in the body the cause, function and aim of everything that we are: by its advances towards proving all spiritual states to be material it also paved the way for a vision of matter as no utterly incommensurate contrary of spiritual states. Further, the development of the radio has in a very impressive manner given the human mind a sense of effective wideness and of practical simultaneity of presence everywhere through a sort of physical translation of the Spirit's consciousness. As impressive in diminishing the incubus of unconquerable inertia and grossness associated with matter in opposition to Spirit is the dissolving of matter into pure energy by the break-up of the atom into electrons. Lastly, we have the admission that so far as the science of physics is concerned we do not require to know the nature of the entities we discuss but only their mathematical structure, the way they affect

our measuring instruments; physics, indeed, reflects the fluctuations of world-qualities but our exact knowledge is of their "pointer-readings", not of the qualities and as a result it leaves us open-minded as to what reality is. Developing out of this open-mindedness there are the celebrated Jeans-Eddington trends: what began as a tremendous stress on the physical has, in an important domain of Science, ended in a doubt in the mind of one scientific school whether the physical universe is its own explanation. The doubt does not remove the stress on the physical which is now an inalienable portion of whatever life-programme we may adopt, but it has robbed of trenchant finality the line once drawn between the actual spatio-temporal phenomena and the hypothetical mystery of God. In addition, it has suggested a change in our idea of Nature's laws. Both in Jeans and Eddington you will observe the disposition to consider the nineteenth century's "laws of iron" statistical and nothing more. So the obsession about decay and death is weakened and Buddha's "doom" for the body is found likely to be a statistical law, a generalisation from a large number of past and present cases rather than an absolute inevitability. Thus Science has by many routes co-operated obliquely or straightforwardly with Sri Aurobindo's mission. Apart from the scientific *milieu* the integral Yoga would be an anachronism. Apart from the integral Yoga the scientific *milieu* would lose its deepest *rationale*.

Living in that *milieu* and wanting to do Yoga, a man is bound to be restless and discontented until he embraces Sri Aurobindo's integrality.

—K. D. Sethna.

THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD

I

The world is the infinite self-formation of a Spiritual Reality on different levels of itself, covering over covering and sheath within sheath, within and within, over and over. It is not a static formation; it is an infinitely flowing movement all through, from within outward and without inward. The originating Reality resides within the ultimate ether in the inmost centre of its self-formations, as in a cave of secrecy. Knowing it, we attain to the Highest. Knowing it, we know all there is to know. Knowing it, we reach the fulfilment of all desires "along with Brahman"—that is, we share, so to say, in the perfect fulfilment of all desires which dwells in the truth-aware, blissful being of the Supreme.

For desires are the translation in the terms of Life of the great movement of the Spirit, one in its impulsion outward into expression and in its returning impulsion towards its source. The Chandogya¹ speaks of desires as belonging to truth, but as being covered up by untruth,—the untruth of a part which loses the vision of the whole. It is this loss and limitation of vision, this untruth, that vitiates the aim and direction and working of desire and splits it up into man's good and evil, right and wrong. Man, recovering his unity with the one Vast, the Supreme, the Brahman, reaches the fulfilment that is in Him of all desire. Then is he not troubled by the thought, "Why did I not do this right, why did I fall into that wrong?"

¹ *Ta ime satyāḥ kama anṛtapidhānah, 8-3-1.*

For he now knows the nature of good and evil and has transcended them both and his desire has become the movement of truth. And because for him the distinction between them is abrogated, it is not an empty or unreal one or one that belongs to a dream or illusory existence. The distinction is based on truth in its application to a particular region of existence and when it is passed beyond the distinction vanishes.

This self-formation of Brahman, or Creation, is founded in joy and its culmination is in joy. But how is it that suffering is the badge of life? Partly because life is desire-stricken, *kāma-hata*, that is, it is stricken by the accretion of the untruth on desire; and partly because life has to put on a material vesture in a world founded on Matter. It is these special conditions of a particular mode of existence that bring in infelicity and suffering, but otherwise existence is joy. For pleasure and pain do not touch him who remains free from the body—*āśarīram vīna santama na priyā priye spṛśataḥ*, as the Chandogya declares. It is material existence that, as it diffracts truth into various shades of good and evil, also breaks up joy into various shades of pleasure and pain. And all this suffering's well-nigh infinitude in material existence is borne and sustained and triumphed over by just an infinitesimal measure of that joy which is the deep foundation of existence, *etasya eva īmandasya anyāni bhūtāni mātṛīm upajīvanti* (Bṛ. Up. 4-3-32)

THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD

128467 201

And with a quiet sublimity of expression the Taittiriya says: Verily, who should move at all, who should breathe at all, if this vast space itself be not joy—*ko hyevānyāt kaḥ prānyāt yad eṣa ākāśa īmando na syāt*.

The seeker who reaches the goal of his world journey reaches this joy, and goes beyond law and fear. He enters and irradiates with this bliss every sheath of his being even to the outermost. To him comes the freedom of the Universe. And he ranges through all realms of existence taking whatever food of enjoyment he may like and whatever form or body he may choose,—an unshackled rapture breaking forth into this paen of victory and triumph: "O ye! I am both the Food and the Eater. I am the maker of the harmonies of Knowledge. I am the first-born of Truth, and prior to the gods am I. I am the navel of immortality. I front and master all existence, like light the world of Heaven!"

This is how the Taittiriya Upanishad presents the Ancient Knowledge, the Knowledge handed down by the Rishis of a previous age, the Knowledge as particularly taught by Varuṇa to Bhṛgu. But how is one to enter into this Knowledge?

II

The Upanishad represents the human being as a five-fold person, one inside another. The outer is the material bodily person, the physical being. It is called the *annamaya puruṣa*. The

outer person is composed of food that is, Matter, for life is on matter and is sustained by it. Matter is the basic creative principle of our world-existence. They who commune with Food, that is, Matter, as Brahman they come by all Food, says the Upanishad; that is, they come to know Matter fully and entirely and have access to the riches of sustaining and renovating power locked up in the physical body or the food-sheath, the *annamaya koṣa*. For food is the eldest of things and is rightly called the all-healer, and all living beings are constituted out of it and grow by it.

Permeating and filling the physical being, ensouling it, presiding over it as soul over body, is there within it the vital being, the *prāṇamaya puruṣa*. And this self or being is figured by the Upanishad in the likeness of the physical body. The up-moving energy of life is its head; the pervasive energy of life is its right arm or wing; and the down-moving energy of life is its left arm or wing, while its main body is ether¹ and earth its rump or supporting bottom. After Matter, life is the next creative principle of our world existence. They who commune with Life as Brahman, reach the entire length of life, that is, the fulness of life, the whole extent and depth of its active functioning; for to them are opened up all its capacities that lie coiled up in it like a spring, its inherent supremacies over matter.

¹ Akāśa. Sankara makes *ākāśa* mean the *samāna* which is situated in the *ākāśa*, and he retains the earth, taking it to mean its presiding deity, who holds firm the *apāna*. Sayana gets rid of the earth too by making it stand for the *udāna*, on the ground that we are concerned here with the vital being, who should be all made up of the motions of life, and thus completes the system of the five vital motions constitutive of the life principle. There are passages in the Upanishads in which the vital principle seems to be regarded as complete with the three divisions of *prāṇa*, *apāna* and *udāna*. Taking this to be the case here, ether and earth may be taken to have been intended as entering into the composition of the life sheath in their subtle forms. There should be no difficulty on this score, seeing that mind itself is regarded as *annamaya*.

Permeating and filling this vital being, enselving it, presiding over it as soul over body, is there within it the mental being—the *manomaya puruṣa*. *Yajus*, the Veda of the holy rite is its head; *Rik*, the Veda of the illumining hymn is its right arm or wing; *Sāman*, the Veda of the divine melody is its left arm or wing; Commandment or Teaching is its main body; and the Secret Knowledge handed down by the Rishi Atharvan and the Angirases is its rump or support. Mind is the next creative principle of our world-existence and in reference to this principle occurs the following verse: "He who knows the joy of Brahman, from which fall back both speech and mind, getting no hold, him no more does fear visit."¹

Permeating and filling this body, enselving it, presiding over it as soul over body, is there within it the knowledge-being—the *viññānamaya puruṣa*. The faith of Truth is his head; Truth Creative is his right arm or wing; Truth actualised is his left arm or wing; union with the Spirit is his main body or self; and the world of the vast Truth is his rump or support. *Viññāna* is the eldest of creative principles. It is *viññāna* which effectuates the purifying worship, and works also it accomplishes. He who knows *viññāna* as Brahman and does never fall away from the knowledge, he throws out all the sins in his body and obtains all desires completely.

Permeating and filling the *viññānamaya* being, enselving it, presiding over it as soul over body, is there within it the joy-being or the *ānandamaya*

puruṣa. Endearment is its head; gladness its right arm or wing; delight is its left arm or wing; joy is its main body or self; and Brahman its rump or support. He who knows the joy of Brahman, from which both speech and thought turn back unable to reach, for him no more is there anything that can give rise to fear. For it is Brahman who has created all that is and entered into it. He is the sap of ecstasy, the sap that builds the worlds. Only by getting at this sap does man become a being of Joy. He finds fearless station invisible, in the ineffable, abodeless Reality that transcends all self-hood. He sees that he who dwells in the human being and he who dwells in the Sun—that is, the Truth which is the source, life and light of all existence,—both are one. His is the highest knowledge and the supreme realization, for *ānanda* is the supreme Brahman himself. With this realization he enters into sheath after sheath of his being and ranges through the worlds, singing the paen triumphal: "O Ye! I am both the Food and the Eater. I am the maker of the harmonies of knowledge; I am the first-born of Truth, and prior to the gods am I. I am the navel of immortality. I front and master all existence, like light the world of Heaven!"

III

We shall here just remark that this Upanishad of joy and spiritual victory casts not the lightest suspicion on the reality of the world. What is the spiritual victory of which it speaks? It

is first a realisation of the truth of the creative principles of Matter, Life, Mind, *Viññāna* and Ananda, then a realization of the one indwelling Person in all existence, and finally, with this realization a re-entering, as it were, into the different personal formations based on Matter, Life, Mind, *Viññāna* and Ananda. Then sounds forth the proclamation of complete victory—I have overcome the entire world—*aham viśvam bhūvanam abhyabhavam!* This is not just an exit from an unending cycle of births and deaths, nor merely an escape from some perversion, illusion, wrong self-projection or evil dream, but a real fulfilment and victory, a triumphal re-entering into every part of the dark cave of our being with the luminous and blissful truth and a ranging forth over all realms of becoming in joyous freedom. The Upanishad shows existence as having a divine purpose and goal—something entirely different from that stupendous desperation which is Eternal Recurrence.

We shall now concern ourselves to examine a little more closely the Upanishad's description of the *manomaya puruṣa* and the *viññānamaya puruṣa*; for between these two, evidently, it places the great Crossing from the Ignorance into the Knowledge. He who knows *viññāna* as Brahman and gets himself firmly fixed in the knowledge, the Upanishad declares, casts away the sins in his body and reaches the entire fulfilment of all his desires—*viññānam brahma ched veda, tasmāt chenna pramādyati, śarīre pāpmano hitvā sarvān kāmān samāśnute*. So, the crossing from sin into sinlessness, from desire, suffering and evil into fulfilment has been effected by the knower of

viññāna. Sinlessness and fulfilment the *manomaya puruṣa* has not, and it is for them that he seeks. In order to find what he seeks, according to the Upanishad therefore, he has to transform himself into the *viññānamaya puruṣa*.

It represents the head and arms and the support of the *manomaya puruṣa* as constituted by the highest knowledge attained or attainable by the mind of man—the highest, of course, in the view of the Upanishad. The highest knowledge to which the human mind can attain is, obviously, the knowledge about the Reality of existence and the way of reaching it; this for the Upanishad is embodied or symbolized by the *Yajus*, the *Rik* and the *Sāman*, which are figured as the head and the two arms of the mental being. The secret knowledge of the truth whose discovery has been ascribed by Vedic Tradition to the Rishi Atharvan and the Angirases, the Ancient Fathers of the Race, is represented as the foundation on which the structure of the mental being rests. But all this knowledge of the mental being is external to it, so to say; something based upon inference or belief or tradition or teaching. So the Upanishad calls the main body of the *manomaya puruṣa*, as distinguished from his limbs, *ādeśa*¹, that is, Commandment or Teaching. The why and ultimate cause of things is above the reach of the mind, for the world is *urdhvamūla*, it has its roots above. The why of right and wrong, of good and evil, mind cannot satisfactorily tackle; for its knowledge and guidance on these things it has to rely on a categorical imperative, either within man's own heart, or, when it is not sufficiently imperative, within the accumulated

¹ Sankara makes *ādeśa* mean the ritual injunctions of the *Brahmanas*.

¹From the regular pattern followed in the text, we should expect here a verse of authority showing mind as a creative principle and then a statement of the results that would ensue from its realization as such. On the other hand we find here a verse showing the mind's constitutional incapacity to arrive at the joy of Brahman. The original passage here seems to have been lost and its place filled up by the verse of authority in the section on the *Anandamaya puruṣa* with just one slight verbal alteration, simply because the word *manas* occurs in it. Sankara, however, makes an unconvincing effort to show that the verse is intended "in praise of mind".

experience of the human race. So, in respect of fundamentals, both as regards knowledge and action, the human mind has to rely on "Teaching" or "Commandment." *Adesa*, therefore, forms the fundamental part of man's mental life.

The *viññānamaya puruṣa* is described as constituted of quite a different order of knowledge. *Sraddhā*, the implacable urge of the inmost truth of the being into expression, known or unknown, ever exerting its pressure; not to be deceived, not to be refused; no mental belief or matter of assent or dissent, but if belief, a belief of the very being itself; this *śraddhā* is what is called the head of the *viññānamaya puruṣa*. *Rta*, the rhythm of the Spirit going forth into the ways of manifold being, the free creative Truth presiding over the manifestation and beckoning to the *śraddhā* in the depths of manifested being, the unerring working of the Divine Agencies, this is what is called *Rta* by the Rīgvedic Rishis: this *Rta* is the right arm of the *viññānamaya puruṣa*. And the support for this structure is *mahāh*¹—the Vast Truth, the world which is the "foundation above" of the three worlds, *Bhūh*, *Bhuvah* and *Svabh* and which are called the three *vijāhrtis* or the three great Utterances of the Spirit. These are the several limbs; but *yoga*, union with the Spirit, is the main body, the essential part of the *viññānamaya Puruṣa*, in contrast to *ādesa*, Commandment or Teaching, which has been said to be the main body of the *manomaya puruṣa*. Ever-present union with the Spirit is the essential characteristic of the

viññānamaya Puruṣa; it is his main self. It is through this union with the Spirit that for him is illumined the why of things, the why of right and wrong, the why of good and evil. Now he is gone beyond the *ādesa*, which is the light on the path of the mental being. *Yoga* is his light; he knows through *yoga*, he acts through *yoga*.

Now, what should we understand by the term *viññāna*? There is the difficulty that it is used with varying significance in the Upanishads, and the precise meaning of the term in any place can be fixed only by the context. We have in this place a sufficiently detailed description of *viññāna* and the *viññānamaya puruṣa* to be able fully to understand its import, though it would be hazardous to fix too precisely the connotation of the psychological terminology of the ancient mystics of a far-away age. First, we can see that *viññāna* is regarded as a creative principle, like Matter, Life and Mind, and not as a particular activity or working of the mind. Secondly, it is not the "Word" conveying the truth that forms the parts of its body, as is the case with the Mind. Truth itself, of different grades or levels, goes to make up its body. So in the *viññāna* knowing is becoming; it is experience, not report; it is a growth in the very nature of the being, not a growing store, as it were, in one of its rooms, as is the mind's knowledge. Thirdly, he that is fixed in the knowledge that *viññāna* is the first Creative Principle, *jyēṣṭham brahma*, casts away sin and suffering, *śarīre pāpmano hntvā*, and reaches the utter fulfilment of all desires, *sarvām kāmān*

¹ Mahāh. In the earlier portion of the Upanishad *Mahāchamasya* is said to have announced it as the fourth *vijāhrti*. Sankara says the word means *Mahattatva*, which is identified by him with *Hiranyagarbha*. But why stray into what is probably a different order of ideas when the Upanishad itself gives an explanation of the word?

samaśnute. From this it is clear that *viññāna* is the consciousness of that level of being where, freed from suffering and sin, it reaches fulfilment.

But Sankara makes *viññāna* mean the determining *buddhi*. The *antahkaraṇa*, man's inner instrument of knowledge, is said to function in three ways—as mind, *buddhi* and *ahamkāra*. That which helps us to come to a definite conclusion or decision on the given content of a perception is called *adhyavasāya*, and this is made the distinguishing characteristic of *buddhi*. And the *viññānamaya puruṣa* in the human being, according to Sankara, is he that proceeds on the basis of proved definite knowledge. But surely, mental *adhyavasāya* or *buddhi* cannot be "the eldest of creative principles which the Divine Agencies wait upon and serve"; and the *viññānamaya puruṣa* who is described as constituted of truth-knowledge and as founded on *mahāh*, the fourth world of truth-being,—*Bhūh*, *Bhuvah* and *Svabh*, standing for the three worlds of Matter, Life and Mind respectively, where the truth of being is broken and distorted—cannot be the being that proceeds, as Sankara says, on definite knowledge ascertained to be true through proper logical ways of proof. If we follow Sankara, we are still in the province of the *antahkaraṇa*, and even when we reach the *ānandamaya puruṣa* we are still concerned with another working of the *antahkaraṇa*. And from the *antahkaraṇa* we have to take the great leap into the Ineffable,—the *adrśya*, *anātmya*, *anirukta*, *anilayana*, and in between there is nothing but void.

IV

From all this it is clear we cannot follow Sankara in his interpretation.

The Upanishad speaks of the *viññānamaya puruṣa* as the inner self of the *manomaya puruṣa* and of *viññāna* as a creative principle superior to the mental. *Vijñāna* is knowledge which is quite different from the mental knowledge, it is the knowledge of the spiritual being in man. The Upanishads speak of the self in the human being as *viññānamaya*—*ātman viññānamayah*, and of the infinite Being as *viññānaghana*. Obviously *viññāna* is gnosis, the knowledge in the spiritual consciousness. But Sankara says that the self is called *viññānamaya* because it is realized only in contact with the understanding of the mind—*buddhi-vijñāna*, and that *viññānaghana* is Pure Awareness or Intelligence and is so called because there is nothing else but awareness or intelligence in it. And upon this misunderstanding of *viññāna* and the wrong turn which it gave to philosophy hangs a tale of grave consequence to Indian life and spirituality. We shall, therefore, make no apology in quoting here a passage from Sri Aurobindo touching upon this important matter.

".....But the *viññāna* or gnosis is the very working of the infinite and divine nature; it is the divine knowledge one with the divine will in the delight of spontaneous and luminous self-fulfilment. By the gnosis, then, we change our human into a divine nature.

"What then is this gnosis and how can we describe it? There are in the ordinary philosophical notions of the term *viññāna* two opposite errors which disfigure two opposite sides of the truth with regard to the gnosis. In one *viññāna* is used as synonymous with the *buddhi* and the Indian term *buddhi* as synonymous with the reason or discerning intellect. The classifications which accept this significance, pass at once

from a plane of pure intellect to a plane of pure spirit; they recognise no intermediate power, no diviner action of knowledge than the pure reason. In the other error it is supposed that *viñāna* is the consciousness which gives us the knowledge of the Infinite free from all ideation or with ideation packed into one essence of thought, lost in the single and invariable idea of the one, the *chaitanyaghana* of the Upanishad. But the gnosis, the *viñāna* is not only this concentrated consciousness of the infinite Being, it is also the infinite knowledge of the play of the Infinite; it contains all ideation in itself though it is not limited by ideation. This ideation, however, is not in its character intellectual ideation, not what we call the reason; for that is mental in its methods, mental in its basis, mental in its acquisitions, but the ideation of the gnosis is supramental in its methods, its basis, its yield of thought-light. There is a relation, even a sort of broken identity between the two forms of thought, one indeed proceeds from the other; but they act on different planes and reverse each other's process. Even the purest reason, the most luminous rational intellectuality is not the gnosis."¹

What the Taittiriya teaches is the discovery by man, the mental being of the *viñānamaya puruṣa* who is his self. And the means of casting out suffering and evil, *pāpam*, from his body is to

establish himself in *viñāna*, the consciousness of the *viñānamaya-puruṣa*. *Viñāna* is a power not only for the purifying adoration which lifts the being to the ultimate goal, *yajna*, but it is also a power for works which help forward the world, *karmāṇi*—*viñānam yajñam tanute, karmāṇi tanute'pi cha*. And evil touches him not who is fixed in *viñāna*, for he lives and acts in union with the Spirit—that is, in *yoga*.

And the entire teaching of Sri Aurobindo is hinged on the true conception of this Upanishadic *viñāna*. Man's fullest spiritual development is through *viñāna*. It is not merely to reach the rippleless peace and joy of the Brahman-consciousness and then to wait till the body falls away for the final mergence. Man is called to a greater adventure. He is to bring down the power of *viñāna* into his life here, and free it from evil and suffering. And to that end, he has to transform his nature from top to bottom—the very physical nature of the body must see and act with the light and power of *viñāna*.—May I, O Lord of Light, become a vessel for immortality! May my body be envisioned! Rapturous—sweet be my tongue! May I with my ears hear the Vast!—*Amṛtasya deva dhāraṇa bhūyasam, sannam me vicchayaṣaṇam, jihva me madhumattamā, karṇābhyām bhuri vīśravam*.

—V. Chandrasekharam.

JEWELS RECOVERED

—By A. B. Purani

I

There are three demands of the Yoga:

1. The will—not mere inclination or desire—for a greater truth.
2. Complete consecration to that truth.
3. Complete transformation by the working of the Higher Power.

First *śamata*, then complete quiet. Then working of the *Shakti* in the instruments: This is the basis.

II

Two things really matter:

1. The Spirit above that is dynamic.
2. Life which is its expression in the actual field of consciousness—i. e. Mind, emotion, life etc.

Mind, emotion, nerves, body etc. are only intermediate terms.

Mind is only a channel, so is heart. Body is only a mould.

To go through this Yoga—two things are necessary:

1. Balance.
2. A strong hold on earth.

Balance means different parts of the being well adjusted, a certain steadiness and a quiet poise in the being.

In the Integral Yoga:

1. Permanent change of consciousness is the one thing important.

2. Want of one-pointed concentration for the achievement of the goal is a great bar.

3. And so is also the tendency *not* to be harsh to oneself. Man generally wants self-satisfaction and self-justification.

III

Even among things that come from above there are degrees and gradations and one has to find the true truth.

At one stage certain things appear to be the final truth. But when one goes higher, it appears only as partial.

There are ranges of the higher consciousness.

The Universal is full of things, true and false. One must distinguish between the true and the false.

It is not safe to open to the Universal without discrimination.

All things—good and bad, Asuric, Paishachic even can come into the *Sadhaka* through indiscriminate opening.

There are Yogis who take delight in Universal manifestation feeling themselves free-Mukta. But that is not spiritual perfection. The Universal is unmoral and so those who go into it try to behave indifferently. But they do not get transformation. Those people who want to run away into the Infinite not satisfied with the Universal do not care for the manifestation.

¹ Arya. Vol 4. Page 80.

IV

SAT: is existence,—the essence of pure Being, infinite, and undivided.

CHIT-TAPAS: is pure energy of consciousness, free in its rest or action, sovereign in its will.

ANANDA: is the bliss of pure Existence, of pure consciousness.

VIJNANA: the Supramental is the Causal Idea which by secretly guiding and supporting the confused activities of mind, life and body ensures and compels the right arrangement of the Universe.

BUDDHI: is the lower, divided intelligence.

MANAS: is the sense mind: The coordinating perceptive faculty which presides over sensations—nervous responses of our senses.

CHITTA: is the seat of emotions.

PRANA: is the conscious life-force,—the hampered dynamic energy which is concerned with creation, with power, and conquest, action and expansion—with satisfaction of desire.

ANNAM: is the divisible being which founds itself on the constant changeableness of physical substance.

V

What you generally know as yourself is only the surface being and its superficial workings: what a man thinks of as "himself" is only a movement in nature—a movement in universal mind, in universal life and universal matter.

What you have to do is to separate, that is, detach yourself from the movements of nature.

VI

To be free from the ego:—what does it mean?

In ordinary sense anything done for oneself is egoistic. That which is not done for the self is regarded as un-egoistic.

But that is not the sense in the Yoga. One can do all unselfish actions and yet be full of egoism. Egolessness means first desirelessness. One should therefore establish within a condition in which bad as well as good desires are absent.

1. What do we want to achieve in this Yoga?

We want to bring down the Truth, the Divine Himself into the integral human being—no part of him left out.

2. Who can achieve this goal?

It is Higher Power that can achieve the goal; it is the Divine Mother coming down into the human being that can fulfil the Yoga.

3. Then, what has the sadhaka got to do?

To open himself to her.

4. Why does not the Divine Shakti work in all openly and directly?

Because at present man is shut up in his mental, vital and physical being and its limitations.

5. What do you mean by "opening" yourself to the Divine Consciousness, to the Mother?

By opening is meant an aspiration in the heart for Her coming down, a will in the mind that She should act and even a will above the mind.

6. What happens when you open yourself to the Divine Mother?

VIII

Obscurantism is of various kinds. e.g.

1. there is an obscurantism which refuses to enquire;

2. An attachment to the boundaries of mental normality also leads to an obscurantism.

These shut away or turn away from new vistas.

Metaphysics is reason examining its own data, its own laws.

Science is reason studying objects and processes of things.

VII

Yoga and work for humanity:

What one puts forth outside in the form of action is generally what he internally is.

Our first aim is not to work for humanity in the current sense of the term, but first to found life on a Higher Consciousness than the present limited and ignorant consciousness of mind, life and body.

The present average man is physical and vital in his nature using his mind for satisfying his vital being.

What we see in the material universe is a stupendous system of mechanical recurrences. A huge mechanical recurrence rules that which is long-enduring and vast: a similar but frailer recurrence sways all that is ephemeral and small. The suns leap up into being, flame wheeling in space, squander force by motion and fade and are extinct, again perhaps to blaze into being and repeat their course or else other suns take their place and fulfil their round. The seasons of Time repeat their unending and unchanging cycle. Always the tree of life puts forth its various flowers and sheds them and breaks into the same flowers in their recurring season. The body of man is born and grows and decays and perishes, but it gives birth to other bodies which maintain the one same

terile cycle. What baffles the intelligence in all this intent and persistent process is that it seems to have in it no soul of meaning, no significance except the simple fact of causeless and purposeless existence, dogged or relieved by the annulling or compensating fact of individual cessation. And this is because we perceive the mechanism, but do not see the Power that uses the mechanism and the intention in its use. But the moment we know that there is a conscious Spirit self-wise and infinite brooding upon the universe and a secret slowly self-finding in things, we get to the necessity of an idea in its consciousness, a thing conceived, willed, set in motion and securely to be done, progressively to be fulfilled by these great deliberate workings.

—(The Significance of Rebirth—Sri Aurobindo)

The Fundamentals of the Four Seasons of Vedic Philosophy, by Dr. A. S. Iyengar, B.A., LL.B., J. P. Narayana Sagar Press, Bombay 2, Price One Rupee (net).

This was originally written as an introduction to the *Mañjara-panjananagraha** of Sri Udaya-Vedatamerga V. K. Ranganācārya Swāmin. The book is "a pioneer among pundits in the field of comparative philosophy" and his book is "an epoch-making publication as it brings together within a small compass all the salient arguments for and against the different interpretations of each adhikarana by the three schools of Dvaitam, Advaitam, and Viśiṣṭadvaitam." Though a Ramanujist himself, he is said to have done full justice to the different points of view in "this monumental piece of work." Mr. Vyengar, who himself had studied the *Mañjara* under renowned Sanskrit pundits, was specially chosen by the author to write this introduction. So we can assume that this booklet gives a faithful presentation of the views and the attitude of the orthodox Ramanujist school of the present day. The account he has given of the four schools of Vedānta — Advaitam, Viśiṣṭadvaitam, Dvaitam and Suddhīadvaitam — is too meagre and has nothing very remarkable in it. His real intention is to show the immense superiority of the system of Ramanuja and he approaches the subject with a philosophical attitude. Thus he observes: "Some writers try to make out that there is no difference at all among the Ācāryas. This, however, does more credit to their spirit of conciliation than to their intellectual acumen or honesty. . . . Others try to shirk the issue by stating that we intellectual pygmies should not sit in judgment over the Ācāryas (who were all avatārs and therefore infallible). All honour to this spirit of humility, but we have to be convinced of the truth and there is no other way but to weigh the pros and cons although in a mood of humility and prayerfulness." He even goes so far as to say that the Upanishads cannot be believed if they

still, a genuine and unswervingly opposed to religion. But he does not make a matter of his own mind, coming in his support to the "moral and intellectual revolution" he is trying to bring about in the Sanskrit literature. He is a Hindu, but he seems to be his position. Indeed, his enthusiasm for Hinduism makes it doubtful whether he can find any merit in his teacher or indirectly in any of the other philosophers. Thus, in one of his passages he is sure that all religions and philosophies are the work of all teachers and prophets, down to Lord Krishna/Vivekananda. And in the last of his papers it is to be said that the religions of an infinitesimal part of the story that was Sri Kṛṣṇa's life. It is a misfortune of souls Sri Kṛṣṇa's life, as some are even when he thought of Sri Kṛṣṇa was able to believe."

"No Advaita" is a paper Sankara distinguishes between nigama Brahman and Suguna Brahman and paramārthika and vyavahārika types of prakāśins that the individual self and the Overself are identical. These theories mainly based on *śaśāstrabhasya* are supported neither by the Śaśāstra of Advaita, nor by the Upanishads of the vedāngams", so says Śaśāstrācārya. But it is well-known that Śaśāstra has nullified these theories on the Suguna and the Semi-texts to refute bhakti and jñāna bhāsa that has interpreted bhāsa wrongly. We see no attempt made in this direction in the booklet under review. Mr. Pengar quotes some of the Semi-texts interpreted by Bhāsaṃpā. "For example, *chanda-dāsa-ānā-sa-dāyāśāśā bhāram bhāsa* would mean the absence of a friend on the day of a rival".

He is *omnipotent* does not mean that He has no other power at all but only that He has no bad qualities: *deus a-temporalis, a-spatialis* does not mean that He is beyond time and space and that He is everything but that He is everywhere, and does everything.

belong to Him, is under His inner and outer control, and that He is superior to everything even in their social merits: *Parma* does not mean the Absolute without any relation, but the infinite and perfect whole with it any relation brought about by *paramahansa*; *yujya* does not mean identity but only similarity of enjoyment; *aijya* does not mean unity but union; *acha n asti bhavana* and *yatra n jagat pasyati* do not mean that there is no diversity at all but only that there is no manifoldness anywhere without Brahman as the inner directing spirit, etc. etc. There are innumerable matters in which Sri Ramanuj has led the way and other Acaryas after him have followed."

If words have any meaning, the *math vākyas* of the Upanishads mean that Brahman is essentially one and identical with the Jiva. *naismasi, aham brahmasmi; ajameralittiyam* means that Reality is absolutely one without a second. But as this obvious and natural meaning does not fit with the theory of Ramanuja, he has put his own meanings into the words of the *Śruti* and passed them as true interpretations; in this respect all the *agrhas* seem to be on the same boat. "The Advaitic commentators," says Swami Vivekananda, "whenever an Advaitic text comes, preserves it just as it is; but the same commentator, as soon as a Dualistic text presents itself, tortures it, if he can, and brings the most queer meaning out of it. In the same way, if not in a still worse fashion, the texts are handled by the Dualistic commentators." Ramanuja got his inspiration from the Vaishnava saints, the *Azhvārs* who had a dualistic approach to the Divine, their path being that of *bhakti*, devotion. There is no place for devotion in absolute Monism; so real dualism must be asserted to give a philosophical basis to this spiritual path. But the *Sūtra*, which must be followed if any system is to be recognised as a *siddhānta*, unmissably teaches Monism. So Ramanuja each was resorted to a real Dualism which he interpreted as necessary for justifying the path of devotion. To

meet this requirement he found out the formula, *satvītmabhīva*, which is a fundamental principle of his philosophy. "The meaning of a body is not a thing which has limbs and senses but a thing whose characteristic is to exist for the use of a sentient being, to be supported and controlled by him. What the individual soul is to the body, Brahman is to the entire universe including the individual selves. In this sense, He is the Atman and the cosmos is His body." With this formula Ramanuja gave an explanation of the *bheda* and *abheda* Srutis. The *bheda* Srutis signify that the world of *cit* and *acit* is essentially different from Brahman, just as the material body is essentially different from the spiritual self. The *abheda* Srutis mean that the world is dependent on Brahman and cannot exist or function apart from it. But this is a gross misinterpretation of the *abheda* srutis like *tattvamasi*; and *visistadvaita* is miscalled Advaita or monism, it is pure and simple Dualism. Madhwa recognised this and threw away this garb and openly called the system Dualism; there is really no other difference between him and Ramanuja. Madhwa went so far as to say that the *tattvamasi* of the Sruti is a misprint, the real word is *atatvamasi*; or if the word is correct it can only mean *tadāhinas tvam asi*.

Shankara, on the other hand, was impressed by the spiritual experience of the *nirguna* Brahman, of a Reality which is one, indivisible, silent, inactive, immutable, undifferentiated; in that experience there is no world, no separate Jivas. Once experiencing the peace and silence of that immutable Brahman, the whole world with all its multiplicity appears to be unreal; but the world is there as a hard fact of experience; so to explain this he constructed mentally the famous theory of Mayavad. He probably got the suggestion of this theory from the Buddhists, and he supported it by the common experience of mistaking a rope for a snake. There is some inexplicable power which for the time being creates a snake, and the man under its influence regards it as hard fact. It is a similar

* In Sanskrit, 600 pages, Rs. 12. Can be had from the Library, Ashokaaram, Padakkotai.

power which creates the illusion of a manifold world in the absolute unity of Brahman; it has no reality and disappears completely when one has the knowledge of Brahman. So the only effective means of escaping from this world full of suffering is to have the knowledge of *nirguna* Brahman. He found support for this theory in the *abheda* texts of the Upanishads; the *bheda* texts he explained as referring to the *vyāvahārika satya* created by Maya. It was the real strength of Ramanuja to have refuted this logical theory of Mayavada by a still subtler logic. But judging from the hold which the Mayavad of Sankara still has on the Indian mind, it becomes apparent that Sankara has had a greater influence than Ramanuja. And there are good reasons for this; for Sankara's fundamental experience of the *nirguna* Brahman is supported both by the Srutis and high spiritual realisation. Sankara did not deny the Saguna Brahman and the world created by it, but called it a lower truth. If we drop the *nirguna* Brahman of Sankara and keep only his *saguna* Brahman as the highest Reality, there is practically no difference between Ramanuja and Sankara in spiritual theory or practice. Sankara went beyond Ramanuja and the other Acāryas in his conception of the *nirguna* Brahman; but he did not go sufficiently far to find a place for the essential truths of the other systems in a higher synthesis. That synthesis we find in the great conception of the Puruṣottama of the Gita, who is both *saguna* and *nirguna*,* *ksara* and *akṣara*, one and many, and yet above all these realities, holding all those apparently contradictory things as different aspects of his being. Sankara did not see the significance of this synthesis and explained away the world-creating and dynamic aspect of the Puruṣottama as Maya or illusion. Ramanuja in the same manner did not see the transcendent aspect of the divine Puruṣottama in which he is above all manifestation in time and space; the Lord says in the Gita, "Nei-

ther the gods nor the great Rishis know any birth of Me" (10.2); the transcendent Ineffable is altogether and in every way the origin of the gods and the great Rishis. What Ramanuja calls Sri Narayana is really the Kṣara Puruṣa of the Gita and the *saguna* Brahman of Sankara.

The Ramanujists criticise Sankara by saying: "It is not clear how Brahman, the self-luminous, and maya, the enveloping veil of subtle avidya or ignorance, can co-exist any more than the blazing sun and pitch darkness can. The real answer of the Advaitin is that he does not know. A strange answer in a philosophy purporting to explain the why and wherefore of things." This is a finally valid reasoning no doubt, but is not the Ramanujist system open to the same objection? There also no attempt has been made to explain how such impure and imperfect things as *cit* and *acit* constituting the world remain organically connected with the self-luminous Brahman as his body. In this respect, Madhwa, who puts these things altogether outside Brahman is more consistent, but he then flagrantly goes against the *abheda* srutis. Ramanuja, of course, cites Sruti texts in support of his theory and calls his system Monism in a special sense, *Viśiṣṭadvaitam*. Mr. Iyengar thus interprets the term: "The famous Tattvamasi does not show the *svarupaikya* of the Over-self and the individual self. It merely indicates that Brahman Himself is the cause and effect with the *cetanacetanas* in their subtle and gross states as His body or inseparable attributes. The *suksma cidacidvisista* Brahman is the cause and the *sthula cidacidvisista* Brahman is the effect and both cause and effect are identical. This is what is meant by *Viśiṣṭadvaitam* and the mahāvākya Tattvamasi." This no doubt makes clear the significance of the term *viśiṣṭadvaita*, but as an interpretation of the mahāvākya it seems to us to be most wonderful. But apart from that, the other fundamental question remains, how can *acit* be the body of a

self-luminous *cetana* Brahman? Ramanuja does not give any explanation of this, but simply cites Sruti texts where it is said that the earth is the body of Brahman, he enters into the world as its soul and so forth. No doubt the Srutis say that this world is the body of Brahman, but nowhere it has been said that this world is essentially different from Brahman and that it is not made of the same stuff as Brahman himself; as a matter of fact the Sruti has said in so many terms that Matter is Brahman, all this world is Brahman, *anna brahma, sarvam khalu idam brahma*.

So coming to ultimate explanation, Ramanuja's system fails as much as that of Sankara. That however is not a serious objection against either of them. After all, philosophy has no fundamental importance; its only utility is to serve as an aid to spiritual experience; so if the *mayāvād* of Sankara has helped people to realise the imperfection and transitoriness of human life and the eternal truth of the spirit, and if *viśiṣṭadvaita* has helped people to enter into a relation of devotion and love with the supreme Divine Being, they have amply justified themselves. Still if a philosophy can be found which gives a rational and reasonable answer to all questions which the modern mind can raise, that will be a great aid to the spiritual endeavour of mankind at this critical stage, and it is obvious that such a philosophy should be able to take into itself all that is essential in the different schools of thought. "The hard and intellectual notion of truth as a single idea which all must accept, one idea or system of ideas defeating all other ideas or systems, or a single limited fact or single formula of facts which all must recognise, is an illegitimate transference from the limited truth of the physical field to the much more complex and plastic field of life and mind and spirit. This transference has been responsible for much harm: it brings into thought narrowness, limitation, an intolerance of the necessary variation and multiplicity of view-points without which there can be no totality of truth-finding, and by the narrowness and limitation much obstinacy in error. It

reduces philosophy to an endless maze of sterile disputes; religion has been invaded by this misprision and infected with credal dogmatism, bigotry and intolerance." (The Life Divine, Vol. II, pp. 904).

The Srutis make it quite clear that as all pots made of earth are essentially nothing but earth, though they differ in their forms, so the manifold world with *cit* and *acit* is essentially made of the stuff of Brahman who is Saccidananda and One without a second; but the logical minds of Sankara as well as of Ramanuja find it impossible to admit that this world so full of misery, suffering and imperfection should be made of the saccidananda stuff; even the Srutis cannot be accepted if they offend reason. So Sankara says it is not real, and Ramanuja says it is real but essentially different from Brahman. But, as the two schools of thought by their wrangle with each other have shown, none of these positions is, in themselves, logically tenable. So if the Srutis appear as illogical, still they should be accepted as true, as truth is above the principles of formal logic. That seems to be the position of Sri Vallabha, the founder of the school known as *Suddhadvaitam*. "It is monism because it believes in one *sat* or Brahman, from whom *sat* (matter), *cit* (individual selves) and Ananda (Overself) are voluntarily manifested as sparks from fire or the web from the spider as a result of the operation of the free will of Brahman. It is pure because it believes in *avikṛta-parināma-vāda* or evolution without change as in the case of the serpent lying in a circle or a straight line or ornaments of gold and not in *vikṛta-parināma* or evolution with change as in the case of curds produced out of milk... In *sat* or matter the *cit* and Ananda aspects of Brahman are not manifested and in *cit* or individual souls the Ananda aspect of Brahman lies concealed. The Jiva attains bliss by realising Brahman who is Rasa... Whenever any apparent discrepancy or philosophical discrepancy arises in his system it is explained away by resorting to God's attribute of *viruddha-dharmāśrayatta* or being the

* *nirguna gunabhoktrica*.

abode of contrary qualities or sarva-saktatya or omnipotence." This, as far as it goes, seems to be closer to the Srutis than the systems of Sankara or Ramanuja; but it is philosophically defective as it offers no explanation why or how God manifests this world so full of misery and suffering. Thus Mr. Iyengar argues: "That God in spite of His omniscience should Himself become *cit* and *acit* and subject himself to all the ills which flesh and stone are heir to is incomprehensible... We would rather believe in an intelligent and apparently cruel but really good God than in a foolish one who torments Himself and is beyond reform." But what should we say of a God who lives eternally in Bliss but inflicts torments on creatures who are essentially different from him? Of course the Ramanujist explains that the jivas suffer from their own sins; but wherefrom they got their impulse to commit sins if not from God Himself who is their source, origin and eternal abode? The theory of *avadi* or beginningless karma is no philosophical explanation but only shifts the question. The only satisfactory explanation of evil in the world is that God Himself has become the individual souls and undergoes all their torments, though the suffering is only in their external superficial consciousness,—all individual souls remaining eternally as blissful and perfect as God in their essential self in which they are one with God; and this suffering in the superficial consciousness has been deliberately accepted by God as a temporary device for manifesting His eternal Bliss in ever new forms.

The fundamental difficulty with Ramanuja was that he could not reconcile Vaishnava *bhakti* with Upanishadic Monism. If the individual souls were not really different from God there could not be the relation of devotion and service, and that relation is a fact of the deepest spiritual experience as evidenced in the lives of great saints. Dualism is no doubt necessary for the experience of relation and it is for this purpose that Brahman who is above all relation and indivisibly

and eternally one has become many souls in a manifold world. If he could not become many, if he were confined to His unity he would be a limited and imperfect Absolute, that is, no Absolute at all. It is His Yoga Maya that while remaining eternally One he can assume many forms and relations. The Upanishad says, "As one Fire has entered into the world and taken shapes according to the various forms in the world so the one being has become all these names and forms and yet remains the one." And it is this mystery which is the real foundation of the highest form of devotion which is love; in that highest consummation the individual soul feels his essential unity with the Divine Beloved while still remaining different from Him in his self-formulation. It was this aspect of love, which was realised by Sri Chaitanya. We find the same truth emphasised in *Sandilya Bhakti-Sutra*, 85: "The entire phenomena is one with the Adorable as everything indeed is He."

But how the one can become many without losing His oneness was not clearly grasped by the intellect, so this relation of identity-in-difference, *bhedabheda*, was called *acinitya*, unthinkable. It is Sri Anubinda who has for the first time given in his *magnum opus*, *The Life Divine*, a detailed philosophical account of this mystery of the self-manifestation of Brahman in the world and its multiplicity of Jivas. Brahman is consciousness the essential nature of which is bliss, and the souls and the material world are all made of the same stuff, the difference is only in the status of the same consciousness; the individual is a particular centre through which Brahman enjoys his own bliss in infinite variety; in Matter the Brahman consciousness remains, as it were, in a trance. As we withdraw our consciousness from some of our physical movements allowing them to go on mechanically, so in Matter the Brahman consciousness remains behind allowing Matter to operate mechanically thus furnishing a stable mould for the manifestation of the One as the Many in a world of relations where the individual soul can taste the ineffable

joy of the most intimate union with its own highest Self.

It is indeed only when our human mentality lays an exclusive emphasis on one side of spiritual experience, affirms that to be the sole eternal truth and states it in the terms of our all dividing mental logic that the necessity for mutually destructive schools of philosophy arises. Thus, emphasising the sole truth of the unitarian consciousness, we admit the play of the divine unity erroneously rendered by our mentality into the terms of real difference, but not satisfied with correcting this error of the mind by the truth of a higher principle, we assert that the play itself is an illusion. Or, emphasising the play of the One in the Many, we declare a qualified unity and regard the individual soul as a soul form of the Supreme but would assert the eternity of this qualified existence and deny altogether the experience of a pure consciousness in an unqualified oneness. Or, again, emphasising the play of

difference, we assert that the Supreme and the human soul are eternally different and reject the validity of an experience which exceeds and seems to abolish that difference. But the position that we have now firmly taken absolves us from the necessity of these negations and exclusions; we see that there is a truth behind all these affirmations, but at the same time an excess which leads to an ill-founded negation. Affirming, as we have done, the absolute absoluteness of That, not limited by our ideas of unity, not limited by our ideas of multiplicity, affirming the unity as a basis for the manifestation of the multiplicity and the multiplicity as the basis for the return to oneness and the enjoyment of unity in the divine manifestation, we need not burden our present statement with these discussions or undertake the vain labour of enslaving to our mental distinctions the absolute freedom of the Divine infinite."

(The Life Divine, Vol. I, pp. 227-28).

—A. B.

Man the Master—By Gerald Heard, Faber and Faber, London, 1942.

This new book by Mr. Gerald Heard is a very important contribution to the study of problems connected with human evolution and human destiny. Coming as it does from the pen of such an acute and constructive thinker as Mr. Heard, it merits serious consideration, not only from philosophers, but also from sociologists. In the few remarks which we propose to offer here, we shall, however, confine ourselves to the philosophical aspects of the views which the author has propounded in this book.

As the author states in the Introduction, "the thesis of the book is that the present crisis is a psychological crisis; it is due to a state of mind." This is a very correct diagnosis of the malady from which the world is suffering at the present moment. Important as each of them is, it is neither the economic, nor the political, nor the social problem which can be said to be the problem of the present day. The real problem of to-day is undoubtedly that of a psycho-

logical change, that is to say, a change in the nature of human consciousness. Unless this occurs, no improvement in the economic or political or social conditions of man can bring about a fundamental change in the conditions of his life.

The book is divided into two parts, called respectively, diagnosis and prognosis. In the first part the author has given a diagnosis of the present malady of the world. The malady in his view is due to its neglect of the subconscious and exclusive preoccupation with the surface consciousness. The latter is an atomic consciousness which splits the world into an infinite number of separate and isolated entities. Thanks to our preoccupation with this consciousness, individualism of an extreme form has raised its hydra head. Indeed, the growth of individualism in the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century was so great that it became necessary to check it. Fascism

and Bolshevism owe in fact their origin to this necessity. To quote our author's own words: "Totalitarianism has succeeded because natural, traditional cohesion has become exhausted and no religious reform, no extension of knowledge, has appeared to show how that natural cohesion may be renewed. The one-sided evolution of consciousness has ended in producing communities filled with self-conscious individuals. These self-conscious individuals, severed from their own subconscious, cannot experience social cohesion. Hence, to save society from collapsing, it is necessary to have an autocrat who will by force of arms preserve that which can no longer cohere by consent". (p. 13).

But the remedy has proved worse than the disease. And quite naturally, for coercion destroys more quickly than even individualism whatever vestiges there remain of cohesion. Thus, both democracy producing an extreme type of individualism, and fascism, which destroys individualism only to set up in its place coercive dictatorship, are inimical to the growth of humanity. If, therefore, mankind is to be saved, we must steer clear of both democracy and dictatorship.

It is psychology that can come to the rescue of man at this crisis. What is wanted is the discovery, or rather the rediscovery—for mankind did possess in ancient times a good deal of knowledge of the subconscious which unfortunately it has lost today—of the subconscious forces working within us. It is unfortunate that due to our preoccupation with the physical universe, we have neglected psychological studies. To quote our author again: "Had there been proportionate discoveries made in the human mind, in discovering how it apprehended the universe which it was now seeing with such intense but narrow clarity, there would have been true progress. But the important fact which we have overlooked, and which we must now recognize, is that, far from proportionate discoveries being made in psychology, the psychological discoveries of the past were actually being lost" (p. 39).

It is clear, then, that it is only on the emergence of a higher level of consciousness, where the fissure between the surface-consciousness and the profounder inner consciousness is removed, that there can be any hope of man being lifted out of the rut in which he finds himself at the present moment. But is there any such chance? Is there really any hope of man being saved from his present hopeless condition? None, if the dictators' world-view is correct. That view is the completely amoral view of the world. In that view goodness has no place at all in the universe; it is only a notion which exists in men's minds.

Fortunately, however, the dictators' world-view is wrong. Their prognosis about the continuance of the present conditions is false. They have totally misjudged the course of human evolution. "The dictators were right", says our author (p. 81), "in realizing that the age of individualism was over. But they have wholly misconceived the form into which human consciousness is tending to evolve once it discards the transition-cocoon of individual self-consciousness, once the temporary division of the human mind into self-conscious and subconscious is reconciled. Their vision of this evolution was of man evolving as the insects in their societies have evolved. The individual then would be submerged in the social unit, as in the hive, the ant-hill and the termitary. But, as we have seen, the fissure is not between man and his community but in the individual himself, between his conscious and his subconscious minds. The goal then is not the fusing of all individuals in a giant organism, the State which alone would be conscious."

We have already evidence of the emergence of this higher consciousness. This we find in what our author, borrowing an expression of Jung's, calls 'second adolescence'. The evidence consists in this, that many men who have led successful lives, who have happy homes and have achieved success in their professions, come to be oppressed, when they reach the age of forty, with doubts and questionings and

exhibit a kind of peculiar restlessness. They feel that with all their success, there is something lacking in their lives. This consciousness of something lacking, this uneasiness, this restlessness are a sure sign, according to our author, of the emergence of a higher consciousness. Proper use should be made of this fact for the purpose of building up a higher society. Unfortunately, in our country, where this fact was clearly observed, no proper use was made of it, for "the second adolescent did not proceed through his adolescence to a second adulthood." "Instead of returning to society after his break-away", as he should have done, our author observes, "he remained away; as though the boy, seized with the wanderlust of the first adolescence, should never come back to yield and harvest his experience, but become a chronic nomad, a confirmed migrant." (p. 111).

But although India failed to rear a higher society by not utilizing properly this fact of second adolescence, this is no reason why we should not make use of it in order to create a better and nobler society. India's failure here does not prove, thinks our author, the impossibility of attaining a higher level of evolution than what we have so far succeeded in doing.

In fact, the constructive suggestions of our author, which he has given in the second part of the book, consist in showing how we can make proper use of this higher consciousness that emerges in the form of the second adolescence. This second adolescence should remain in the world and should be helped to grow into the second adulthood. In other words, the world should be given an opportunity of benefiting by it. The policy followed in India, which encourages it to leave the world and seek shelter in the forest, is a very wrong one.

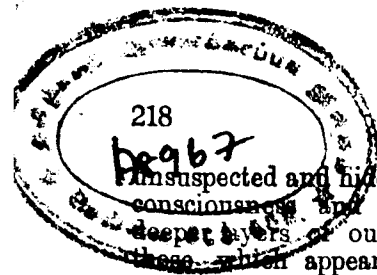
What the author suggests here is in plain English that the man with the superior consciousness, the 'seer', should be given his due place in society. His suggestion, in fact, is very similar to that of Plato who wanted to make the philosopher the ruler of the State.

Just as Plato said, "Until philosophers are kings and kings are philosophers, cities shall not cease from evil", so our author says that until these men with the right vision, these seers, are made our leaders, we cannot advance to a higher stage of evolution.

On the seer-leader as the foundation, our author wants to build a quadritype social organization, somewhat similar to our ancient social order based upon the four castes. To the position of the Brahmana in our ancient system corresponds that of the seer in our author's scheme. He is to be the guide, the director, the initiator of the policy of the whole State. Under him and guided by him are the three other classes, the politicians, the technicians and the 'domesticians'. When properly guided by the seers, these three classes are absolutely essential to the maintenance of the social well-being. The pivot of the whole scheme, however, is the seer. "He must give up his life to seership, he must so become the conscience and sanction of mankind. He will thus be able to guide and inspire the actual administrator. Himself not touching actual power he will be able to keep both himself and the handler from contamination. Here is a true balance of power." (p. 248).

Such, in brief, is our author's conception of the higher social order which it should be our endeavour to establish. Such is his scheme of the future social organization that must replace the present degenerate one, if mankind is to be saved.

The central-idea which guides the whole of this scheme is that of the emergence of a higher consciousness. The recognition and clear enunciation of this principle constitute, as we have already remarked, the great merit of this book. But when we examine the nature of this higher consciousness, the emergence of which, according to our author, will mean the deliverance of the world from its present hopeless state of confusion, then our difficulties begin. Our author, in the first place, calls it the subconscious and contrasts it with our surface-consciousness. Granting that the subconscious reveals to us



THE ADVENT

Unsuspected and hidden regions of our consciousness, and brings into view deeper layers of our personality than those which appear on our surface-consciousness, can it be said that the mere opening of this underground current is enough to ensure a radical change of our consciousness? Due to the influence of Freud, it is the fashion in these days to credit the subconscious with almost supernatural powers. But even if we credit it with such powers, Freud's own theory shows that it cannot be regarded always as a power that makes for good, for it possesses sometimes demoniac powers which have an absolutely contrary tendency. The subconscious *qua* subconscious, therefore, cannot be treated as being necessarily something higher than our surface-consciousness, and its light cannot be regarded as a better guide than that of our ordinary consciousness. Various strands of consciousness are blended in what we call the subconscious. There is, in the first place, the true subliminal consciousness emanating from the inner core of our being, what Sri Aurobindo calls our psychic being or *chaitya purusha*. But mixed with this there are various strands of our desire-soul or the demoniac element in us which creates sudden disturbances in our mental economy and tend to bring us down to a lower level.

But even the true subliminal consciousness, illumined by the light of our psychic being, is not enough to bring about that fundamental change in our consciousness which is needed to raise us to a higher level of evolution, unless it is reinforced by light from above. So although the value of subliminal consciousness is very great, it by itself is not in a position to effect that radical change in our nature which is necessary for lifting us out of our present rut. What is needed above all things is the emergence of a higher light from above, from the domain of the supra-conscious. This emergence must be in the nature of a descent of a Superior

Light. Not until such a descent from the supra-conscious realms takes place, can we hope for that radical transformation of our nature which is implied in a higher stage of evolution.

Secondly, there is a good deal of confusion in our author's statements about what he calls the second adolescence. Is this second adolescence a kind of subconscious which emerges at a certain stage of a man's life, or is it of the nature of an intuition which makes its appearance at this stage? Unfortunately, our author has nowhere made any distinction between the subconscious and the intuitive, although much of what he puts under the subconscious properly comes under the class of intuitions. Moreover, can it be said that there is any particular age or stage of life where this type of the subconscious or this kind of intuition makes its appearance? The lives of saints show a bewildering variety in this respect. Further, the mere appearance of this kind of intuition in a man's middle age is not a matter of much importance. It is the quality of the emergent consciousness that really matters. Sometimes young men and even children are found to possess intuitions of the requisite quality which older people may not possess.

Thirdly, our author does not seem to realize fully the radical transformation of society that will be needed if man is to attain a really higher status than what he enjoys to-day. He seems to think that the same quadritype order of society which more or less prevails to-day will continue in the future. But this is to forget that this order may have no meaning when there is a radical change in human nature.

In spite of these shortcomings, however, the book under review is a very valuable contribution to philosophical thought and fully maintains the very high standard of excellence which characterizes all the works of our author.

—S. K. Maitra.

Edited by Dr. R. Vaidyanathaswami, D. Sc.

Printed by T. K. Venkatesan at The Jupiter Press, Ltd., 16, Sembudoss St., Madras.

Published by I. K. Roy, B.A., for Sri Aurobindo Library, Madras.

ASRAM BOOKS

MALADY OF THE CENTURY: By Nolini Kanta Gupta. Price Rs. 2 8 0

"A collection of brilliant Essays, on various themes.

The Essay on spiritual genius of India is illuminating.....The other Essays are equally thought-provoking and sparkling with clear thinking and transparent expression."
—Prabudha Bharata.

".....I was specially interested in your analysis of 'Modernism'..... greatly attracted by your Essay on 'Modernist Poetry'.....I was much impressed by your Essays and hasten to congratulate you on the thought bestowed on them and the wide range of reading and research evidenced."
—(Sd.) C. P. Ramaswamy Ayyar.

THE COMING RACE: By Nolini Kanta Gupta. Price Rs. 1 12 0

Contents: The New Humanity—The Creative Soul—Rationalism—The Intuition of the Age—The Basis of Social reconstruction—A Theory of Yoga—the Parting of the Ways—etc. etc.

SRI AUROBINDO AND THE NEW AGE: By S. Anilbaran Roy. Price Rs. 1 12 0

Contents: The Ideal of Sri Aurobindo—Sri Aurobindo and Future of Mankind—Modern Science and Spirituality—Basis of Yoga—Sri Aurobindo and Modern English Poetry—etc. etc.

FUTURE OF INDIA: By Sisir Kumar Mitra. Price Rs. 0 10 0

".....Spiritually refreshing.....those who really love India, those who want to find her soul, those who are not slaves of political theories who want a new dawn for humanity should not miss this inspiring book."
—Hindusthan Standard.

".....A vigorous call to India to reconstruct her life on a spiritual basis."
—The Hindu.

A HOMAGE: By Tan Yun-Shan & Sisir Kumar Mitra. Price Rs. 0 4 0

SRI AUROBINDO LIBRARY,

369, ESPLANADE, G. T., MADRAS.