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Collaboration

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The Light comes not by struggle or by thought.
In the Mind's silence the Transcendent acts
And the hushed heart hears the unuttered word.
- Sri Aurobindo, Savitri

Since the passing of the Mother we have often been asked, "Who is taking her place? How does one practice the Yoga without a living teacher?" In 1972 we received a letter from the Mother in which she said, "Sri Aurobindo has written 30 volumes and all the answers to all the questions can be found in those books." Over and over again in their writings both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother emphasized the necessity to find the teacher within, to be open to the force of the Truth Consciousness (and to no other). In this issue we are presenting some passages from their works concerning basic steps on the path. In connection with this, we might quote here the answer the Mother gave to a disciple who asked how one should read Sri Aurobindo's works: "The true method is to read a little at a time with concentration; then keep the mind as silent as possible without trying to understand but turned upward in silence and aspiring to the Light. The understanding will come little by little. "And later, in a year or two, you will reread the same thing and then you will know that the first contact was vague and incomplete and that the true understanding comes later on when you have tried to

NEWS OF AUROVILLE

Matrimandir: The skeletal curve of the upper sphere is now plainly visible. A massive concreting was scheduled for the end of April. Aurovilians from all communities are devoting as much time as possible to carrying out the construction.

The outer gardens around the Unite office have been planted with trees, which have taken root and appear to be thriving in spite of the drought. Patricia, who is coordinating the work, along with several helpers handwaters the trees and shrubs. Raquelda, one of the Ashram's oldest members, comes regularly to help.

Matrimandir Plant Nursery: Mary Helen and Narad visited Delhi to add to the nursery's collection for the gardens. Assembling a library and gathering a wide variety of orchids are current projects.

put it into practice." (From a letter by the Mother, 16 October 1967.)

We have had many requests from people asking if there was a Sri Aurobindo group in their area. In Collaboration we have been listing the activities of some of the more established centers. However, Matagin and several other centers began quite simply, as a small group of people coming together in a private home for meditation and study or reading of the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Only three people are needed to start such a group. If you would like to come together with some people in your area for this purpose, please write to Muriel Spanier at Matagiri. We can provide you with information to help such a group to get started. We continue to invite readers to send names and addresses of people they feel would like to receive Collaboration. We also welcome any pertinent news for inclusion. We are especially interested to learn of any Sri Aurobindo meditation or study groups.

Third-class mail is not forwardable. Please be sure to inform us of your new address when you move.

NOTICE: Because of the importance the Mother attached to the construction of the Matrimandir, the Sri Aurobindo Society of Minneapolis is keenly interested in obtaining funds for Auroville and especially for the Matrimandir "as the Soul's priority in this crucial point of evolution for a New Creation in Higher Consciousness." The Society, a tax-exempt organization, also maintains a Sri Aurobindo library and sells the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Donations may be made payable to the Sri Aurobindo Society and sent to 3124 Dupont Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

Auro-Ami: Auroville's guest community has been accepting guests since last July. Accommodations consist of unique bamboo and keet structures called "capsules." Meals are taken communally in a permanent central building. Guests help in maintenance and housekeeping and, if they plan to stay more than

a week, are asked to participate in meaningful work in one of the Auroville communities.

Kottakarai has received funds from the Auroville group in Montreal, Canada, for further development of their handicrafts, which include silk-screen cards and fabrics and leathercrafts. A grain storage and distribution center has been built where grain, produce, milk and eggs, all produced in the community, are distributed to over 30 families each day. Funds have also been received to reopen the Ayurvedic medical clinic that serves the village.

Abri: Auroville's central services workshop now houses a construction unit and a vehicle maintenance department.

In the construction unit a lime kiln has been completed and funds have been granted for the construction of a lime pozzolana (a cement substitute) kiln.

Aurocreations: The Tamil Fund renewed its commitment to Aurocreations and on 21 February the new work center, Kolum, was opened. Ashramites, Aurovilians and about 30 Tamil women employees participated in the ceremonies.

Auroville Centre for Environmental Studies has been given a grant by the Tata industrial complex to carry on their research in solar energy. An official opening of the project was held on 4 February. The first project planned is to build Eco House, which will incorporate such environmental technology as wind and solar energy and alternate methods of waste disposal.

Aspiration: A tea shop was opened last November which serves as a meeting place for Aurovilians and visitors.

Pour Tous (For All) in Aspiration has been organized as a central food purchase and distribution service which in future will supply all the needs of Auroville. The ideal behind Pour Tous was put forward in the letter given to the Mother asking permission to initiate the project: "One day Auroville must function smoothly for need and demand without the internal exchange of money and perhaps the time has come to create that proper channel." The Mother gave the name, her consent and blessings. Pour Tous now buys food and general supplies and distributes them to the various communities. There is also a free store where items are exchanged among Aurovilians.

Auromodel is the first permanent model community in Auroville. The first residential unit has been completed and four more are under construction. A new guest house is also being built.

Fraternity continues to produce handloom cloth, woven grass mats and hammocks. The woodworking section received funding to increase production of creative toys and household accessories.

Aurogreen has received a grant from the German Tamil Fund group. They are preparing the land for reforestation by bunding to prevent runoff, planting trees as windbreaks, and building a road. A pond for growing water hyacinths, a highly productive plant that can be plowed directly into the soil as compost

and green manure, is also being developed.

(This report was adapted from June Maher's report for AURA and news from Seyril.)

NEWS OF THE ASHRAM

In February 1975 an important event took place in the Ashram: The Seminar on National Reconstruction. Four organizations affiliated with the Ashram—Sri Aurobindo's Action, Sri Aurobindo Society, World Union and Navajyoti—joined together to participate. While the subject of the seminar was the revitalization of India, we feel that principles voiced at the seminar and the conclusions reached will be of interest beyond the boundaries of India. Therefore we are giving a summary of the proceedings. The conference was inaugurated by a message from Nolini Kanta Gupta: "All sincere and earnest endeavour at harmony and collaboration, ever higher and greater, in life and consciousness has the Mother's blessing. Indeed, it is the way to bring close to us her living Presence. That living and loving Presence and Blessing we invoke here to settle in us and guide us."

After the convening of the full seminar, the participants grouped themselves freely into four working committees: Spiritual Integration, Social Reconstruction, Economic Regeneration and Education. Each committee held three sessions and people were allowed to move freely from one meeting to another.

At the seminar's end a joint statement was issued, portions of which follow:

"For any social programme to be meaningful and effective the individual must be accepted as the key. Secondly the orientation of life must be changed; it should proceed from within outward.

"Individuals who accept this discipline of inner change should organise groups of like-minded individuals for the preparation of the needed climate and the means for the execution of these programmes. These groups or centres are to be autonomous bodies deriving guidance directly from their source of inspiration—the Mother.

"...The aim is to rise out of the various imperfections, deformations and deviations that characterise the present society towards an increasing enlightenment, progression and, perfection. The endeavour at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram is the working model for this purpose.

"These centres...should have distinct wings for the development of the youth and of women. Facilities should be provided for a sound programme of physical education since a strong physical base is indispensable for a total growth. Apart from studies, exercises in self-discipline, etc., there should be a dedication to social service for the Divine.

"Naturally the main motive force for this movement is spiritual. But this spirituality is not anything that touches only the soul or only part of oneself; it is the central truth around which everything is to be organised. Each individual must exert himself to

awaken in himself his soul or psychic centre.... It is equally important to normalise these elevations of consciousness by expressing them in day to day life.

“Studies must be undertaken...to recover the spiritual bases of religions and ethics...; side by side explorations into the future expressions of spirituality must be promoted....
“Application of the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on the lines attempted at Auroville for the integration of personality, resolution of the conflict between the individual and the collectivity, integration of values of the different civilisations of the East and the West, must be given priority.

“The importance of the right type of education that alone can help in an organised realisation of these ideals cannot be gainsaid. A total change in the attitude of the child who is to be educated, a radical change in the role of the teacher and the taught are called for. The ideal education is that which is imperceptibly woven into every detail of the day to day life.... The encouraging results of the modes of integral education developed in the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education must be propagated.

“...It should be recognised that problems cannot be solved at the same level of consciousness that has given rise to them. One has to rise to a higher level and seek their solution....”

The first result of the seminar was the establishment of the Central Coordinating Committee with one representative from each of the four participating organizations and a convener from the Ashram. At least two of the seminar committees have continued operate and the Coordinating Committee was scheduled to meet once a month. Reports on this seminar have appeared in several Ashram periodicals, notably Service Letter, World Union, Advent, Sri Aurobindo's Action, and Mother India. The full joint report of the seminar appears in World Union, April 1975. (Prepared from material supplied by M. P. Pandit's office, chiefly from World Union and published articles by Ronald Jorgensen.)

NEWS OF CENTERS

Clovis, California: A Sri Aurobindo study group has formed, which meets on Friday evenings. Anyone interested in joining this group should write to: Richard Aspen, P.O. Box 715, Clovis, CA 93612, for the time and place of meetings.

Honolulu, Hawaii: There is a small group of Sri Aurobindo disciples residing in Honolulu. There are hopes of establishing a center and for that purpose a suitable building is being sought. If anyone is interested in getting in touch with this group, he should write to Matagiri for the address.

Chicago, Illinois: Darshan programs are held four times a year by the SRI AUROBINDO CENTER-CHICAGO. The next ones are scheduled for August

16 (to mark Sri Aurobindo's birthday, August 15) and November 22 (to mark Sri Aurobindo's Day of Siddhi, November 24). These observances feature talks, bhajan and music, meditation, special events and prasad (refreshments). They are held usually in the basement of the Vivekananda Society Temple, 5423 S. Hyde Park Blvd., Chicago, IL 60615.

Boston, Massachusetts: **SRI AUROBINDO BOOKS**, 84 Charles St., Boston, MA 02114 (telephone 617-723-5759). Three study groups have now been organized: Mondays, 7:30-9:00 p.m., the Mother's works; Wednesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., *The Synthesis of Yoga* (these two are held at the Charles St. address); and Sundays, 6:30-8:00 p.m., *The Life Divine* (held at 153 W. Newton St.). Advanced Hatha Yoga classes are given Mondays at 7:30 p.m. and beginning classes on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. at 153 W. Newton St. (telephone 617-267.6847). The Newton St. address is also the center for bimonthly Saturday evening meetings of a more informal kind. On May 24 the Boston group held a fair featuring music, crafts, food, articles for sale, etc. In addition they have been coordinating the speaking engagements of Dr. Madhusudan Reddy (see General News).

New York City: **SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTER**, 140 W. 58th St., Apt. 8C, N.Y., N.Y. 10019 (telephone 212-246.5465). In addition to the regular meditation meetings Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. and *The Synthesis of Yoga* study-group Mondays at 6:30 p.m. the center sponsors special talks, etc.

On May 22 Robert McDermott, author-editor of *The Essential Aurobindo* and *The Six Pillars*, gave a lecture on *The Life Divine*.

On May 25 Sheryl Weinberg gave a presentation on Findhorn.

The center reports that they are reorganizing their mailing list. Those who would like to be informed of events at the center, please write for their newsletter, the first issue of which is expected to be ready soon.

Gambier, Ohio: Dr. Chitta R. Goswami, professor of Eastern religion at Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio 43022, is available for talks on the philosophy and yoga of Sri Aurobindo. He is a long-time Sri Aurobindo scholar and the author of a number of books on Sri Aurobindo's thought, including *Soul-Culture in the Upanishad* (available from Matagiri). Interested people may contact Dr. Goswami directly.

Chambersburg, Pennsylvania: Naren Bhatt, 334 Lincoln Way West, No. 5, Chambersburg, PA 17201, welcomes anyone interested in Sri Aurobindo in his area to contact him. He has recently returned from the Ashram and has produced a short film on Auroville.

Matagiri: Two members of the Matagiri community, Muriel and Joseph Spanier, who toured the South last

winter with an Auroville slide presentation, took a similar trip through the Midwest and Southwest this spring. In their travels they came across many New Age bookstores not listed in the regular trade channels. These are the very stores that are interested in the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and many related works stocked by Matagiri. It would be appreciated if readers would send us the names and addresses of any such bookstores or centers in their area, so that we can contact them.

NEWS OF FOREIGN CENTERS

Paris, France: *CENTRE D'ETUDES SRI AUROBINDO*, 7 avenue Carnot, 75/Paris 17, France. Begun in 1956 with the dual purpose of helping to spread Sri Aurobindo's thought and to assist the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, the center holds meetings where the Mother's recordings are played. They also issue a quarterly bulletin to members and are currently engaged in translating into French Sri Aurobindo's letters.

A *URO VILLE INTERNATIONAL—FRANCE* (formerly Association pour Auroville), 6 rue de l'Eglise, 92 Neuilly, France, was established in 1968 to participate in all suitable ways in the creation of Auroville. They issue a publication containing extensive news of Auroville: *Auroville...Lien*.

There is also a section of Centre d'Etudes in Marseilles.

Andre Morisset of the Centre d'Etudes recently supplied Matagiri with a copy of *L'Ecole du Libre Progres de l'Ashram de Sri Aurobindo* by Gabriel Monod-Herzen and Jacqueline Benezech, the first book-length study of the Free Progress system developed under the Mother's guidance at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education. The book makes clear the fundamental differences between such "free" educational systems as Summerhill and that developed in the Ashram.

The Netherlands and Belgium: *SRI AUROBINDO A URO VILLE SOCIETY*: "Mira Hoeve," Nieuwmoersesteenweg 17, Essen, Belgium; and Th. Jeffersonlaan 311, Rijswijk, Z.H., Netherlands. Sri Aurobindo Auroville Society was begun in 1972 and now has 200 members. A newsletter is issued 8 times a year and funds are collected for Auroville. A Yoga workshop meets on alternate Thursdays and a Hatha Yoga class is given on alternate Fridays. The Rijswijk center is open every other Saturday from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. for reading, music, meditation, sale of books, incense, photographs, etc. There are plans for a series of lectures this spring and summer by Georges van Vrekhem of the Ashram. They are also seeking contact with other countries for films and new ideas. This center is the headquarters for Belgium and the Netherlands; the Rijswijk address is the actual working office, the Essen address is a private apartment. They are about an hour from each other.

London, England: *SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY* and *AUROVILLE INTERNATIONAL*, 82 Bell St., London NW 1, England, have given several Auroville slide shows and talks

in the London area. They have been given considerable help and encouragement by Sir Paul Reilly, head of the Design Centre of London.

An extremely critical article on the Ashram and Auroville has appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*, the influential British newspaper. While the London center wrote a letter to the paper answering inaccuracies in the article, they report that their feelings are best expressed by Yehudi Menuhin, who wrote to them: "I do not think there is much use in spending one's breath on contradictions or correcting. The only thing we can do is to strengthen the resolve and keep the ultimate purpose undeviatingly in mind." (*From Auroville International United Kingdom newsletter*.)

Mauritius: *SRI AUROBINDO CULTURAL CIRCLE*, 105 Pontre St., St. Croix, St. Louis, Mauritius, recently suffered damage as the result of a cyclone and have been requesting aid to make repairs and assist in their future development. (*From London center newsletter*.)

NOTICE: We have received an urgent request from *Sri Aurobindo's Action* for subscribers and advertising. *Sri Aurobindo's Action* is an excellent newspaper-format journal, issued monthly, with news and photos of Auroville, writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and articles by disciples and others. Subscriptions are \$5.00 a year and the paper is sent airmail. Anyone interested in advertising, either a sponsored quotation or for goods or services, or wanting to subscribe, may write directly to the editor: Roger Toll, Auroson's, Auroville 605101, India. Subscriptions may also be ordered through Matagiri.

GENERAL NEWS

At the November 1974 General Conference of UNESCO in Paris, the government of India introduced a resolution inviting

"the member States, nongovernmental organizations and all interested people to collaborate, by establishing their national pavilion for the February 1978 celebration of the tenth anniversary of Auroville; ask UNESCO to take all appropriate measures towards the realization of this important undertaking of Auroville and to present to the General Conference, at its next meeting, a report on progress accomplished in this regard." (*Translated from Auroville...lien*.)

Seyril Schochen Rubin of Auroville and Anie Nunnally, connected with the New York center, are planning to attend the United Nations International Women's Conference in Mexico City, June 19-July 2. Seyril will be representing both Auroville and the Women's Commission of the Sri Aurobindo Society. Their goals are to bring to the conference the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and the spiritual

role and liberation of women. The conference is being attended by both governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

Seyril Rubin will also be giving a course entitled Auroville and the Evolution of a New Consciousness: Synthesis of East and West, at Kent State University. The course, sponsored by the Dept. of Comparative and International Education and the Division of Continuing Education, will be given July 7 to 25 at the College of Education Center for Peaceful Change. Seyril hopes to arrange for leaders in various disciplines who are open to the new consciousness and methods to take part in the course as guest lecturers. Dr. Chitta Goswami is already scheduled to give some lectures on Sri Aurobindo's philosophy and yoga, and his wife Shila will give an evening of bhajans (Indian devotional songs). Anyone interested in this credit course should write to the Dean, Division of Continuing Education, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242.

Kent State University also sponsors an annual India Seminar. This year it is entitled Culture and Education in India. About 100 educators and other professionals are expected to participate. They will tour India and visit the Ashram and Auroville as part of the seminar.

Dr. Madhusudan Reddy, head of the philosophy department of Osmania University, Hyderabad, India, author of a number of books on philosophy and Sri Aurobindo, and a long-time disciple of Sri Aurobindo, visited the United States in May and June. He delivered a series of talks in Boston on various aspects of Sri Aurobindo's teaching and Auroville.

Dr. Reddy was also expected to participate in the World Invocation Day activities May 24 in Boulder, Colo. Many New Age and spiritually oriented groups take part in this event.

Dr. Haridas Chaudhuri, founder and head of the Cultural Integration Fellowship and the California Institute of Asian Studies of San Francisco, attended a conference on international education sponsored by Obadiah Harris, author of *Unitive Spirituality*, in El Paso, Texas, this spring. Dr. Chaudhuri also attended the annual conference of the Assoc. for Humanistic Psychology in May, where he spoke on New Developments in Meditation and Self-Discipline and conducted a workshop on

Integral and Kundalini Yoga.

MD, a medical newsmagazine for doctors and other professionals in medicine, published an article on the life and thought of Sri Aurobindo, his Ashram and Auroville, in their February 1975 issue. Several photographs illustrate the article.

Matagiri recently submitted samples of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram handmade papers, at the suggestion of Barbara White, to the Dard Hunter Paper Museum of the Institute of Paper Chemistry in Appleton, Wisconsin. Arnold E. Grummer, curator of the museum, wrote to us: "The Ashram papers are indeed attractive. The color treatment should be right to attract people who do not have a developed appreciation for the all-rag content or the handmade process, and the functionalism seems to me to be appealing to those of us who do have the appreciation.... The marbling is excellent. I feel that these papers might get more response from the average museum visitor than some of the decorative sheets we have exhibited from Japan, Taiwan, India, France, and a few domestic hobbyists and art class members, as well as some of the older sheets from China that were used mostly for wall hangings in temples, etc. At any rate, these Ashram materials present the extra dimension of functionalism to a degree that we have seldom been concerned with -in -the Museum. It is very much a pleasure to have had the opportunity to see and study them....

"We will shortly put them on display. At the earliest opportunity we will remove India materials from one of our display cases near the museum entrance and set up the Ashram display there."

Samples submitted included several items made up specifically for Matagiri's customers for this paper.

Anyone interested in a charter flight to Madras, India, in December 1975, please contact Roberta Slade, 90-11 68th Ave., Forest Hills, N.Y. 11375, who is trying to organize such a flight. Please indicate how long you would like to stay in India if you are interested.

"The secret of action," so we might summarise the message of the Gita, the word of its divine Teacher,

"is one with the secret of all life and existence. Existence is not merely a machinery of Nature, a wheel of law in which the soul is entangled for a moment or for ages; it is a constant manifestation of the Spirit. Life is not for the sake of life alone, but for God, and the living soul of man is an eternal portion of the Godhead. Action is for self-finding, for self-fulfilment, for self-realisation and not only for its

THE LAW OF ACTION Sri Aurobindo

own external and apparent fruits of the moment or the future. There is an inner law and meaning of all things dependent on the supreme as well as the manifested nature of the self; the true truth of works lies there and can be represented only incidentally, imperfectly and disguised by ignorance in the outer appearance of the mind and its action. The supreme, the faultless largest law of action is therefore to find out the truth of your own highest and inmost existence and live in it and not to follow any outer standard and

Dharma. All life and action must be till then an imperfection, a difficulty, a struggle and a problem. It is only by discovering your true self and living according to its true truth, its real reality that the problem can be finally solved, the difficulty and struggle over-passed and your doings perfected in the security of the discovered self and spirit turn into a divinely authentic action. Know then your self; know your true self to be God and one with the self of all others; know your soul to be a portion of God. Live in what you know; live in the self, living in your supreme spiritual nature, be united with God and Godlike. Offer, first, all your actions as a sacrifice to the Highest and the One in you and to the Highest and the One in the world; deliver last all you are and do into his hands for the supreme and the universal Spirit to do through you his own will and works in the world. This is the solution that I present to you and in the end you will find that there is no other."

"This is the solution, this the salvation, this the perfection that I offer to all those who can listen to a divine voice within them and are capable of this faith and knowledge. But to climb to this pre-eminent condition the first necessity, the original radical step is to turn away from all that belongs to your lower Nature and fix yourself by concentration of the will and intelligence on that which is higher than either will or intelligence, higher than mind and heart and sense and body. And first of all you must turn to your own eternal and immutable self, impersonal and the same in all creatures. So long as you live in ego and mental personality, you will always spin endlessly in the same rounds and there can be no real issue. Turn your will inward beyond the heart and its desires and the sense and its attractions; lift it upward beyond the mind and its associations and attachments and its bounded wish and thought and impulse. Arrive at something within you that is eternal, ever unchanged, calm, unperturbed, equal, impartial to all things and persons and happenings, not affected by any action, not altered by the figures of Nature. Be that, be the eternal self, be the Brahman. If you can become that by a permanent spiritual experience, you will have an assured basis on which you can stand delivered from the limitations of your mind-created personality, secure against any fall from peace and knowledge, free from ego.

Thus to impersonalise your being is not possible so long as you nurse and cherish and cling to your ego or anything that belongs to it. Desire and the passions that arise from desire are the principal sign and knot of ego. It is desire that makes you go on saying I and mine and subjects you through a persistent egoism to satisfaction and dissatisfaction, liking and disliking, hope and despair, joy and grief, to your petty loves and hatreds, to wrath and passion, to your attachment to success and things pleasant and to the sorrow and suffering of failure and of things unpleasant. Desire brings always confusion of mind and limitation of the will, an egoistic and distorted view of things, a

failure and clouding of knowledge. Desire and its preferences and violences are the first strong root of sin and error. There can be while you cherish desire no assured stainless tranquillity, no settled light, no calm pure knowledge. There can be no right being—for desire is a perversion of the spirit—and no firmer foundation for right thought, action and feeling. Desire, if permitted to remain under whatever colour, is a perpetual menace even to the wisest and can at any moment subtly or violently cast down the mind from even its firmest and most surely acquired foundation. Desire is the chief enemy of spiritual perfection.

Slay then desire; put away attachment to the possession and enjoyment of the outwardness of things. Separate yourself from all that comes to you as outward touches and solicitations, as objects of the mind and senses. Learn to bear and reject all the rush of the passions and to remain securely seated in your inner self even while they rage in your members, until at last they cease to affect any part of your nature. Bear and put away similarly the forceful attacks and even the slightest insinuating touches of joy and sorrow. Cast away liking and disliking, destroy preference and hatred, root out shrinking and repugnance. Let there be a calm indifference to these things and to all the objects of desire in all your nature. Look on them with the silent and tranquil regard of an impersonal spirit.

The result will be an absolute equality and the power of unshakable calm that the universal spirit maintains in front of its own creations, facing ever the manifold action of Nature. Look with equal eyes; receive with an equal heart and mind all that comes to you, success and failure, honour and dishonour, the esteem and love of men and their scorn and persecution and hatred, every happening that would be to others a cause of sorrow. Look with equal eyes on all persons, on the good and the wicked, on the wise and the foolish, on the Brahmin and the outcaste, on man at his highest and every pettiest creature. Meet equally all men whatever their relations to you, friend and ally, neutral and indifferent, opponent and enemy, lover and hater. These things touch the ego and you are called to be free from ego. These are personal relations and you have to observe all with the deep regard of the impersonal spirit. These are temporary and personal differences which you have to see but not be influenced by them; for you must fix not on these differences but on that which is the same in all, on the one self which all are, on the Divine in every creature and on the one working of Nature which is the equal will of God in men and things and energies and happenings and in all endeavour and result and whatever outcome of the world's labour.

Action will still be done in you because Nature is always at work; but you must learn and feel that your self is not the doer of the action. Observe simply, observe unmoved the working of Nature and the play of her qualities and the magic of the Gunas. Observe unmoved this action in yourself; look on all that is being

done around you and see that it is the same working in others. Observe that the result of your works and theirs is constantly other than you or they desired or intended, not theirs, not yours, but omnipotently fixed by a greater Power that wills and acts here in universal Nature. Observe too that even the will in your works is not yours but Nature's. It is the wife of the ego sense in you and is determined by the predominant quality in your composition which she has developed in the past or else brings forward at the moment. It depends on the play of your natural personality and that formation of Nature is not your true person. Draw back from this external formation to your inner silent self; you will see that you the Purusha are inactive, but Nature continues to do always her works according to her Gunas. Fix yourself in this inner inactivity and stiffness: no longer regard yourself as the doer. Remain seated in yourself above the play, free from the perturbed action of the Gunas. Live secure in the purity of an impersonal spirit, live untroubled by the mortal waves that persist in your

To choose without preference and execute without

desire is the great difficulty at the very root of the development of true consciousness and self-control. To choose in this sense means to see what is true and bring it into existence; and to choose thus, without the least personal bias for anything, any person, action, circumstance, is exactly what is most difficult for an ordinary human being. Yet one must learn to act without any preference, free from all attractions and likings, taking one's stand solely on the Truth which guides. And having chosen in accordance with the Truth the necessary action, one must carry it out without any desire.

If you observe yourself attentively, you will see that before acting you need an inner impetus, something which pushes you. In the ordinary man this impetus is generally desire. This desire ought to be replaced by a clear, precise, constant vision of the Truth.

Some call this the Voice of God or the Will of God. The true meaning of these words has been falsified, so I prefer to speak of "the Truth," though this is but a very limited aspect of That which we cannot name but which is the Source and the Goal of all existence. I deliberately do not use the word God because religions have given this name to an all-powerful being who is other than his creation and outside it. This is not correct.

However, on the physical plane the difference is obvious. For we are yet all that we no longer want to be, and He, He is all that we want to become.

Disciple: How can we know what the Divine Will is?

The Mother: One does not know it, one feels it.

members.

If you can do this, then you will find yourself up, lifted into a great release, a wide freedom and a deep peace. Then you will be aware of God and immortal, possessed of your dateless self-existence, independent of mind and life and body, sure of your spiritual being, untouched by the reactions of Nature, unstained by passion and sin and pain and sorrow. Then you will depend for your joy and desire on no mortal or outward worldly thing, but will possess inalienably the self-sufficient delight of a calm and eternal spirit. Then you will have ceased to be a mental creature and will have become spirit illimitable, the Brahman. And into this eternity of the silent self, rejecting from your mind all seed of thought and all root of desire, rejecting the figure of birth in the body, you can pass at your end by concentration in the pure Eternal and a mighty transference of your consciousness to the infinite, the Absolute. (From *Essays on the Gita*, pp. 553-4, 562-5; also *The Gita*, pp. 237-8, 246-9.)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS AND SELF-CONTROL The Mother

And in order to feel it one must will with

such an intensity, such sincerity, that every obstacle disappears. As long as you have a preference, a desire, an attraction, a liking, all these veil the Truth from you. Hence, the first thing to do is to try to master, govern, correct all the movements of your consciousness and eliminate those which cannot be changed until all becomes a perfect and permanent expression of the Truth.

And even to will this is not enough, for very often one forgets to will it.

What is necessary is an aspiration which burns in the being like a constant fire, and every time you have a desire, a preference, an attraction it must be thrown into this fire. If you do this persistently, you will see that a little gleam of true consciousness begins to dawn in your ordinary consciousness. At first it will be faint, very far behind all the din of desires, preferences, attractions, likings. But you must go behind all this and find that true consciousness, all calm, tranquil, almost silent.

Those who are in contact with the true consciousness see all the possibilities at the same time and may deliberately choose even the most unfavourable, if necessary. But to reach this point, you must go a long way.

Disciple: Should preferences be neutralized or forgotten?

The Mother: One should not have them!

When the mind becomes silent, when it stops judging, pushing itself forward with its so-called knowledge, one begins to solve the problem of life. One must refrain from judging, for the mind is only an instrument of action, not an instrument of true know-

ledge—true knowledge comes from elsewhere.

If one refrained from judging, one would arrive at an ever more precise knowledge of the Truth and nine-tenths of the world's misery would disappear.

The great disorder in the world would to a large extent be neutralized if the mmd could admit that it does not know.

(The Mother then read a passage from Sri Aurobindo's "Thoughts and Glimpses":)

"When we have passed beyond enjoyings, we shall have Bliss. Desire was the helper, Desire is the Bar." ...according to the stage where you are.

Naturally, I speak to those who sincerely want to

become conscious of their true truth and to express it in their life....

And I tell the teachers (*in the Ashram school*) that they must teach more and more in accordance with the Truth; for if we have a school here, it is in order that it be different from the millions of schools in the world; it is to give the children a chance to distinguish between ordinary life and the divine life, the life of truth—to see things in a different way. It is use-to want to repeat here the ordinary life. The teacher's mission is to open the eyes of the children to something which they will not find anywhere else. (From *Questions and Answers 1950-51*, pp. 1-3.)

A Word About Ego

When the vast majority of people say "I", it is a part of them, of their feeling, their body, their thought, indifferently, which speaks; it is something that always changes. Therefore, their "i" is innumerable, or the "I" always varies. What is the constant thing therein?... The psychic being, evidently. For, to be constant a thing must first be immortal. Otherwise it cannot be constant. Then, it must also be independent of the experiences through which it passes:

it cannot be the experiences themselves. Hence, it is certainly not the bed of the river which constitutes the river; the bed is only a circumstance. If the comparison is carried a little further (besides, comparisons are worthless, people find in them whatever they want), it can be said that the river is a good symbol of life, that what is constant in the river is the species "water". It is not always the same drop of water, but it is always water—without water there would be no river. And what endures in the human being is the species "consciousness". It is because it has a consciousness that it endures. It is not the forms which last, it is the consciousness, the power of binding together all these forms, of passing through all these things, not only keeping a memory of them (memory is something external), but keeping the same vibration of consciousness.

And that is the great mystery of creation, for it is the same consciousness, the Consciousness is one. But the very moment this Consciousness manifests itself, exteriorises itself, deploys itself, it divides itself into innumerable fragments for the need of expansion, and each one of these fragmentations has been the beginning, the origin of an individual being. The origin of every individual form is the law of this form or the truth of this form. If there were no law, no truth of each form, there would be no possibility of individualisation.

It would be something extending indefinitely; there would be perhaps points of concentration, assemblages, but no individual consciousness. Each form then represents one element in the changing of the One into the many. This multiplicity implies an innumerable quantity of laws, elements of consciousness, truths which spread out into the universe, and finally become separate individualities. So the individual being seems constantly to go farther and farther away from its origin by the very necessity of individualisation. But once this individualisation, that is, this awareness of the inner truth is complete, it becomes possible, by an inner identification, to reestablish in the multiplicity the original unity: that is the *raison d'être* of the universe as we perceive it. The universe has been made so that this phenomenon may take place. The Supreme has manifested Himself to Himself so as to become aware of Himself.

In any case, that is the rationale of *this* creation. Let us be satisfied with our universe, let us make the best use possible of our life upon earth and the rest will come in its time.

It is purposely, mind you, that I have not mentioned the ego as one of the causes of the sense of individuality. For the ego being a falsehood and an illusion, the sense of individuality would itself be false and illusory (as Buddha and Shankara affirm), whereas the origin of individualisation being in the Supreme Himself, the ego is only a passing deformation, necessary for the moment, which will disappear when its utility is over, when the Truth-Consciousness will be established. (From *Questions and Answers 1950-51*, pp. 152-54.)



Collaboration

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