



Collaboration

Mt. Tremper, N.Y. 12457
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We must know how to depend for everything on the Divine. He alone can surmount all difficulties.

—The Mother

The news appearing in the press and on television is almost totally negative in character. Its effect, especially when repeated daily, is deleterious to the general consciousness and to efforts to bring about a true remedy and progress. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother constantly exhorted aspirants not to judge from appearances or allow their thoughts, feelings and actions to be dictated by them. For appearances are only the result of the working of a complex of forces behind, and what is being prepared cannot be read correctly from the shifting and changing face of events. It is with this in mind that we have chosen the

passages from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in this issue.

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.

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

NEWS OF AUROVILLE

The Matrimandir gardens work is proceeding according to schedule. Recently 50,000 casuarina seedlings were planted.

Construction of the Matrimandir has reached the third-slab level.

Aspiration: Sanskrit School is being used as a study center. Last School is now used for dance and music classes and for rehearsal of the year-end drama. A report from Shraddavan says: "The lines have become more fluid, less clear-cut between school and outside."

Auro-Green: A newly formed agriculture-reforestation project of 54 acres. A deep well, reportedly the first of its kind in Auroville, was being drilled and was expected to be completed in February. Tree seeding along roads and green manuring have already been undertaken.

Chamanlal Gupta, head of Environmental Studies in Auroville, hopes to visit the U.S. in July for an important conference on solar energy at the Jet Propulsion Laboratories in California. Financial sponsorship for this trip is needed. Any individual or corporation interested to help should contact Mr. Gupta (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605002, India) or Robert Dane (% East-West Cultural Center, 2865 West Ninth St., Los Angeles, CA 90006). (These items from AURA.)

FUNDS FOR AUROVILLE

Readers who would like to contribute to the growth of this unique city of human unity should send donations payable to Auroville Association,

212 Farley

Drive, Aptos, CA 95003; or Sri Aurobindo Society, 3124 Dupont Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55408. Donations to these organizations are tax deductible.

AUROVILLE ASSOCIATION

In December 1974 the association held an exhibition of Ashram and Auroville products being imported by Mere Cie, an import company founded by a group of Auroville and Ashram workers in California. Presently the company is marketing Auroville incense and marbled goods in the Los Angeles area but has recently proposed exchanging sample goods with other centers to expand markets. O-Pti-Zoizo, a resident Sri Aurobindo center with a restaurant and store in Montreal, is participating. Mere Cie's address is 10880 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 500, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY

The International Section has issued its first newsletter, with news of branches around the world, a listing of books published in various countries of interest to students of Sri Aurobindo, and a list of publications available from centers in Europe, and North and South America. Also now available are slides of Auroville. For details, write to Sri Aurobindo Society, International Section, Beach Office, Pondicherry 605002, India.

Navajata, founding member and chairman of the society, visited the U.S. in January-February. The society is the organization behind the building of Auroville, and Navajata was engaged in enlarging the society's base and support of the new city.

NEWS OF CENTERS

Sedona, Arizona: SRI AUROBINDO CENTER, Crescent Moon Ranch, Sedona, AZ 86336 (telephone 602-282-7552 or 282-5794). Regular program: Sunday morning meditation, 10:00 A.M., followed by a gathering for tapes, readings, music, etc. Books, incense, and other items from the Ashram are available as well as a large library of Sri Aurobindo literature for research and study.

Los Angeles, California: EAST-WEST CULTURAL CENTER, 2865 West Ninth St., Los Angeles, CA 90006 (telephone DU 6-0999). Regular open house for lecture and questions and answers on various topics of interest to aspirants, Sunday afternoons. Dr. Judith Tyberg, founder of the center, conducts an informal seminar on the wisdom of the East, with mantra and meditation, Friday afternoons. Thursday evenings there is an informal seminar on the philosophy and yoga of Sri Aurobindo. Books, incense and other items are also on sale. Dr. Tyberg teaches Sanskrit and courses on Indian wisdom. Call the center for details of time, etc., and the monthly bulletin of events and classes.

ATMANIKETAN ASHRAM, 4432½ Burns Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90029 (telephone 213-662-0080). A residence center for those practicing the Integral Yoga. Discussions, seminars, lectures and slide shows presented periodically. Individual and group meetings are scheduled for evenings and weekends. There is also a library of Sri Aurobindo's works and other Indian spiritual texts and a book-sales department. Visitors should call or write in advance. A philosophical quarterly journal is being planned.

San Francisco, California: In our last issue we reported the establishment of a Sri Aurobindo meditation and study group by Ken and Marti Gilbert. The Gilberts have now left for an indefinite stay in India. Interested people should call the Cultural Integration Fellowship, 3494 21st St., San Francisco, CA 94110 (telephone 415-648-1489 or 752-9890), which has regular meditation and lecture meetings; a course in classical Hindu dance; courses in integral psychology and creative meditation, etc. There is also a Sunday school for children where the basic ethical and religious principles of all world religions are taught. Call or write for details.

Boston, Massachusetts: SRI AUROBINDO BOOKS, 84 Charles Street, Boston, MA 02114 (telephone 723-5759). Meditation, Wednesdays, 8:00 P.M. The store, with a wide selection of books of Sri Aurobindo and others as well as Ashram and Auroville products, is open daily from 10:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.

An introductory course in the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo is given by Eugene Finn, 91 Kilmarnock, Boston, MA 02115 (telephone 262-6390). Please call or write for details.

Matagiri: Matagiri wishes to express its gratitude to all the people who showed such great kindness and hospitality and provided much help to Muriel and Joseph Spanier on their recent trip through the Southern states. The Spaniers visited more than 40 cities in 12 states, giving the slide presentation on Auroville and the Ashram to a wide variety of groups and individuals and introducing the works of Sri Aurobindo to a large number of bookstores. A similar trip is planned for the Midwest and Southwest between April 16 and June 15. To schedule this presentation for your group, write to the Spaniers at Matagiri.

New York City: SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTER, 140 West 58th St., Apt. 8C, N. Y., N.Y. 10019 (telephone 212-246-5465). *Synthesis of Yoga* study group meets Mondays at 6:30 P.M. Reading and meditation Thursdays, 7:30 P.M. The center is open for reading, meditation, sale of books and Ashram products Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons, and Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 P.M.; other times by appointment. Please call in advance. There is also a meditation with Ashram music Thursdays, 7:00 P.M. at 90-11 68th Ave., Forest Hills, N.Y.; call 263-1040.

London, England: The SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY (82 Bell St., London NW 1) has announced the formation of a branch of Auroville International. At present energies are being focused on making Auroville better known in England and in raising funds. Anyone interested may contact Tim Wrey, 7 Wood-thorpe Road, London SW 15 6 UQ (telephone 01-788-7461).

Karlsruhe, West Germany. Heinz Kappes of the SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY (D-75 Karlsruhe 51, Belchenst, 19) has announced that volume 3 of his German translation of *The Life Divine* will be issued this spring. The first two volumes came out last year.

Amsterdam, Netherlands: NAMASTE, an Auroville shop (located at Tweede, Bloemdwarsstraat 9, Amsterdam) has been opened by Frank and Marianne Winubst. It sells handloom clothes, incense, batik and marbled silks from Auroville and the Ashram as well as the works of Sri Aurobindo. There is a permanent display of photographs of Auroville, and an exhibition of works by artists practicing the Integral Yoga is planned. (From Sri Aurobindo Society International. Section newsletter.)

GENERAL NEWS

As part of the celebrations of the Mother's Birth Centenary, 21 February 1978, the publication of her

works (in English) is planned. It will comprise her early writings, *Prayers and Meditations*, *Questions and Answers*, commentaries, messages. The 15 volumes will be issued in two editions, popular and deluxe, the final volume being ready by her centenary. For further details and subscriptions to this set, write to Matagiri.

Alternative Sources of Energy (Rt. 2, Box 90A, Milaca, MN 56353) has a feature article by Bob Lawlor of Auroville in its December 1974 issue. The article details Bob's work in raising algae for food and green manure, with reference to the experimental work done elsewhere. Several photographs accompany the article.

Robert magazine, Rodale, publisher of *Organic Gardening* according visited Auroville in January and is planning, future issue, to reports, to do an article on the city in a

Founding the Life Divine, by Morwenna Donnelly, long out of print, is being reissued sometime next fall by the Dawn Horse Press of California. The work, a portion of which was read and corrected by Sri Aurobindo prior to its first publication over 25 years ago, is one of the best introductions to his philosophy and yoga. It will be available from Matagiri.

Sri Aurobindo and Teilhard de Chardin are often compared. We draw your attention to Beatrice Bruteau's *Evolution Toward Divinity* and Jan Feys' *Philosophy of Evolution in Sri Aurobindo and Teilhard de Chardin*, both of which are available from Matagiri, as well as K.D. Sethna's *Teilhard de Chardin and Sri Aurobindo*. Mr. Sethna is currently serializing his book *The Spirituality of the Future in Mother India*. This book resulted from his reading R.C. Zaehner's *Evolution in Religion: A Study of Sri Aurobindo and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin* (Oxford University Press). Readers are invited to bring to our notice other books and articles linking Sri Aurobindo and Teilhard de Chardin.

Satprem's *Sri Aurobindo or The Adventure of Consciousness* has been published in Spanish with the title

THE ONE HOPE FOR MAN Sri Aurobindo

The one safety for man lies in learning to live from within outward, not depending on institutions and machinery to perfect him, but out of his growing inner perfection availing to shape a more perfect form and frame of life; for by this inwardness we shall best be able both to see the truth of the high things which we now only speak with our lips and form into outward intellectual constructions, and to apply their truth sincerely to all our outward living. If we are to found the kingdom of God in humanity, we must first know God and see and live the diviner truth of our being in ourselves; otherwise how shall a new manipulation of the constructions of the reason and scientific systems of efficiency which have failed us in the past, avail to establish it? It is because there are plenty of signs that the old error continues and only a minority, leaders perhaps in light, but not yet in action, are striving to

see more clearly, inwardly and truly, that we must expect as yet rather the last twilight which divides the dying from the unborn age than the real dawning. For a time, since the

El Yoga Integral or La Aventura de la Conciencia, by Ediciones El Caballito, Av. Benito Juarez 64, Mexico 1, D.F., Mexico.

It is also available in Portuguese from CASA SRI AUROBINDO, Caixa Postal 2378, 40,000 Salvador-Bahia, Brazil. This center, the only one in South America which distributes the works of Sri Aurobindo, also publishes a beautiful magazine (in Portuguese) devoted to the philosophy and yoga of Sri Aurobindo, *Ananda*, with special emphasis on the esthetic.

K.D. Verma of the University of Pittsburgh presented his paper "Myth and Symbol in Aurobindo's *Savitri: A Revaluation*" at the 72nd annual convention of the Philological Assn. of the Pacific Coast, held at San Diego State University last November. A copy of this paper has been acquired for the Sri Aurobindo Library at Matagiri through Atmaniketan Ashram. We would like to be kept advised of any other scholarly papers and dissertations on Sri Aurobindo.

In February and March, Gene Maslow gave a course at the New School for Social Research in New York City entitled "Adventure into the New Consciousness," which included a presentation of Auroville and of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy and yoga and their bearing on individual and group evolution, the creative process, etc. Mr. Maslow also gave a lecture and slide presentation on Auroville at the Asia Society in New York, in January.

NOTICE: Matagiri distributes the Sri Aurobindo Ashram incense in the United States and Canada. To expand the market for this fine incense, Matagiri offers a sales commission to anyone interested in selling it to stores not already carrying it. This would provide additional income, involving work which anyone can do in his spare time. For further details, write to Sam Spanier at Matagiri.

mind of man is not yet ready, the old spirit and method may yet be strong and seem for a short while to prosper; but the future lies with the men and nations who first see beyond both the glare and the dusk the gods of the morning and prepare themselves to be fit instruments of the Power that is pressing towards the light of a greater ideal. [from *The Teaching of Sri Aurobindo*]

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The question you have put raises one of the most difficult and complicated of all problems and to deal with it at all adequately would need an answer as long as the longest chapter of *The Life Divine*. I can only state my own knowledge founded not on reasoning but on experience that there is such a guidance and that nothing is in vain in this universe.

If we look only at outward facts in their surface appearance or if we regard what we see happening around us as definitive,

not as processes of a moment in a developing whole, the guidance is not apparent; at most, we may see interventions occasional or sometimes frequent. The guidance can become evident only if we go behind appearances and begin to understand the forces at work and the way of their working and their secret significance. After all, real knowledge — even scientific knowledge — comes by going behind the surface phenomena to their hidden process and causes. It is quite obvious that this world is full of suffering, and afflicted with transience to a degree that seems to justify the Gita's description of it as "this unhappy and transient world", *anityam asukham*. The question is whether it is a mere creation of Chance or governed by a mechanical inconscient Law or whether there is a meaning in it and something beyond its present appearance towards which we move. If there is a meaning and if there is something towards which things are evolving, then inevitably there must be a guidance — and that means that a supporting Consciousness and Will is there with which we can come into inner contact. If there is such a Consciousness and Will, it is not likely that it would stultify itself by annulling the world's meaning or turning it into a perpetual or eventual failure.

This world has a double aspect. It seems to be based on a material Inconscience and an ignorant mind and life full of that Inconscience: error and sorrow, death and suffering are the necessary consequence. But there is evidently too a partially successful endeavour and an imperfect growth towards Light, Knowledge, Truth, Good, Happiness, Harmony, Beauty, - at least a partial flowering of these things. The meaning of this world must evidently lie in this opposition; it must be an evolution which is leading or struggling towards higher things out of a first darker appearance. Whatever guidance there is must be given under these conditions of opposition and struggle and must be leading towards that higher state of things. It is leading the individual, only, and the higher state, but through the double terms of knowledge and ignorance, light and darkness, death and life, pain and pleasure, happiness and suffering; none of the terms can be excluded until the higher status is reached and established. It is not and cannot be, ordinarily, a guidance which at once rejects the darker terms, still less a guidance which brings us solely and always nothing but happiness, success and good fortune. Its main concern is with the growth of our being and consciousness, the growth towards a higher self, towards the Divine, eventually towards a higher Light, Truth and Bliss; the rest is secondary, sometimes a means, sometimes a result, not a primary purpose.

The true sense of the guidance becomes clearer when we can go deep within and see from there more intimately the play of the forces and receive intimations of the Will behind them. The surface mind can get only an imperfect glimpse. When we are in contact with the Divine or in contact with an inner knowledge and vision, we begin to see all the circumstances of our life in a new light and can observe how they all tended, without our knowing it, towards the growth of our being and consciousness, towards the work we had to do, towards some development that had to be made, — not only what seemed good, fortunate or successful but also the struggles, failures, difficulties, upheavals. But with each person the guidance works differently according to his nature, the conditions of his life, his cast of consciousness, his stage of development, his need of further experience. We are not automata but conscious beings and our mentality, our will and its decisions, our attitude to life and demand on it, our motives and movements help to determine our course: they may lead to much suffering and evil, but through it all, the guidance makes use of them for our growth in experience and consequently the development of our being and consciousness.

All advance, by however devious ways, even in spite of what

seems a going backwards or going astray, gathering whatever experience is necessary for the soul's destiny. When we are in close contact with the Divine, a protection can come which helps or directly guides or moves us: it does not throw aside all difficulties, sufferings or dangers, but it carries us through them and out of them — except where for a special purpose there is need of the opposite.

It is the same thing though on a larger scale and in a more complex way with the guidance of the world-movement. That seems to move according to the conditions and laws or forces of the moment through constant vicissitudes, but still there is something in it that drives towards the evolutionary purpose, although it is more difficult to see, understand and follow than in the smaller and more intimate field of the individual consciousness and life. What happens at a particular juncture of the world-action or the life of humanity, however catastrophical, is not ultimately determinative. Here, too, one has to see not only the outward play of forces in a particular case or at a particular time but also the inner and secret play, the far-off outcome, the event that lies beyond and the Will at work behind it all. Falsehood and Darkness are strong everywhere on the earth, and have always been so and at times they seem to dominate; but there have also been not only gleams but outbursts of the Light. In the mass of things and the long course of Time, whatever may be the appearance of this or that epoch or movement, the growth of Light is there and the struggle towards better things does not cease. At the present time Falsehood and Darkness have gathered their forces and are extremely powerful; but even if we reject the assertion of the mystics and prophets since early times that such a condition of things must precede the Manifestation and is even a sign of its approach, yet it does not necessarily indicate the decisive victory — even temporary of the Falsehood. It merely means that the struggle between the Forces is at its acme. The result may very well be the stronger emergence of the best that can be: for the world-movement often works in that way. I leave it at that and say nothing more. [from *Letters on Yoga*, 111:1626 - 29]

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Human nature and the character of the individual are a formation that has arisen in and out of the inconscience of the material world and can never get entirely free from the pressure of that Inconscience. As consciousness grows in the being born into this material world, it takes the form of an Ignorance slowly admitting or striving with difficulty after knowledge and human nature is made of that Ignorance and the character of the individual is made from the elements of the Ignorance. It is largely mechanistic like everything else in material Nature and there is almost invariably a resistance and, more often than not, a strong and stubborn resistance to any change demanded from it. The character is made up of habits and it clings to them, is disposed to think them the very law of its being and it is a hard job to get it to change at all except under a strong pressure of circumstances. Especially in the physical parts, the body, the physical mind, the physical life movements, there is this resistance; the tamasic element in Nature is powerful there, what the Gita describes as *aprakasa*, absence of light, and *apravru*, a tendency to inertia, inactivity, unwillingness to make an effort and, as a result, even when the effort is made, a constant readiness to doubt, to despond and despair, to give up, renounce the aim and the endeavour, collapse. Fortunately, there is also in human nature a sattwic element which turns towards light and a rajasic or kinetic element which desires and needs to

act and can be made to desire not only change but constant progress. But these too, owing to the limitations of human ignorance and the obstructions of the fundamental inconscience, suffer from pettiness and division and can resist as well as assist the spiritual endeavour. The spiritual change which yoga demands from human nature and individual character is, therefore, full of difficulties, one may almost say that it is the most difficult of all human aspirations and efforts. In so far as it can get the sattwic and the rajasic (kinetic) elements to assist it, its path is made easier but even the sattwic element can resist by attachment to old ideas, to preconceived notions, to mental preferences and partial judgments, to opinions and reasonings which come in the way of higher truth and to which it is attached: the kinetic element resists by its egoism, its passions, desires and strong attachments, its vanity and self-esteem, its constant habit of demand and many other obstacles. The resistance of the vital has a more violent character than the others and it brings to the aid of the others its own violence and passion and that is a source of all the acute difficulty, revolt, upheavals and disorders which mar the course of the yoga. The Divine is there, but He does not ignore the conditions, the laws, the circumstances of Nature; it is under these conditions that He does all His work, His work in the world and in man and consequently also in the sadhak, the aspirant, even in the God-knower and God-lover; even the saint and the sage continue to have difficulties and to be limited by their human nature. A complete liberation and a complete perfection or the complete possession of the Divine and possession by the Divine is possible, but it does not usually happen by an easy miracle or a series of miracles. The miracle can and does happen but only when there is the full call and complete self-giving of the soul and the entire widest opening of the nature.

Still, if the call of the soul is there, although not yet full, however great and obstinate the difficulties, there can be no final and irretrievable failure; even when the thread is broken, it is taken up again and reunited and carried to its end. There is a working in the nature itself in response to the inner need which, however slowly, brings about the result. But a certain inner consent is needed; the progress that you have marked in yourself is due to the fact that there was this consent in the soul and also in part of the nature; the change was insisted on by the mind and desired by part of the vital; the resistance in part of the mind and part of the vital made it slow and difficult but could not prevent it.

You ask what I want you to do. What I want is that you should persist and give more and more that assent in you which brought about the progress you have made so that here too the resistance may diminish and eventually disappear.

And get rid of an exaggerated insistence on the use of reason and the correctness of your individual reasoning and its right to decide in all matters. The reason has its place especially with regard to certain physical things and general worldly questions - though even there it is a very fallible judge - or in the formation of metaphysical conclusions and generalisations; but its claim to be the decisive authority in matters of yoga or in spiritual things is untenable. The activities of the outward intellect there lead only to the formation of personal opinions, not to the discovery of Truth. It has always been understood in India that the reason and its logic or its judgment cannot give you the realisation of spiritual truths but can only assist in an

intellectual presentation of ideas; realisation comes by intuition and inner experience. Reason and intellectuality cannot make you see the Divine, it is the soul that sees. Mind and the other instruments can only share in the vision when it is imparted to them by the soul and welcome and rejoice in it. But also the mind may prevent it or at least stand long in the way of the realisation or the vision. For its prepossessions, preconceived opinions and mental preferences may build a wall of arguments against the spiritual truth that has to be realised and refuse to accept it if it presents itself in a form which does not conform to its own previous ideas: so also it may prevent one from recognising the Divine if the Divine presents himself in a form for which the intellect is not prepared or which in any detail runs counter to its prejudgments and prejudices. One can depend on one's reason in other matters provided the mind tries to be open and impartial and free from undue passion and is prepared to concede that it is not always right and may err; but it is not safe to depend on it alone in matters which escape its jurisdiction, especially in spiritual realisation and in matters of yoga which belong to a different order of knowledge.

[from *Letters on Yoga*, III: 1618- 20]

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There is something a little too personal in your attitude — I mean the insistence on personal strength or weakness as the determining factor. After all, for the greatest as for the smallest of us our strength is not our own but given to us for the game that has to be played, the work that we have to do. The strength may be formed in us, but its present formation is not final, —neither formation of power nor formation of weakness. At any moment the formation may change — at any moment one sees, especially under the pressure of yoga, weakness changing into power, the incapable becoming capable, suddenly or slowly the instrumental consciousness rising to a new stature or developing its latent powers. Above us, within us, around us is the All-Strength and it is that that we have to rely on for our work, our development, our transforming change. If we proceed with the faith in the work, in our instrumentality for the work, in the Power that missions us, then in the very act of trial, of facing and surmounting difficulties and failures, the strength will come and we shall find our capacity to contain as much as we need of the All-Strength of which we grow more and more perfect vessels.

[from *Letters on Yoga*, III:1506 - 07]

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Inconscience - is the fundamental basis of all resistance in the individual and in the world to the victory of the Spirit and the Divine Work that is leading toward that victory. The difficulties themselves are general in the Ashram as well as in the outside world. Doubt, discouragement, diminution or loss of faith, waning of the vital enthusiasm for the ideal, perplexity and a baffling of the hope for the future are the common features of the difficulty. In the world outside there are much worse symptoms such as the general increase of cynicism, a refusal to believe in anything at all, a decrease of honesty, an immense corruption, a preoccupation with food, money, comfort, pleasure, to the exclusion of higher things, and a general expectation of worse and worse things awaiting the world. All that, however acute, is a temporary phenomenon for which those who know anything about the workings of the worldenergy and the workings of the Spirit were prepared. I myself foresaw that this worst would come, the darkness of night before the dawn; therefore I am not discouraged. I know what is preparing behind the darkness and can see and feel the first signs of

its coming. Those who seek for the Divine have to stand firm persist in their seeking; after a time, the darkness will fade and begin to disappear and the Light will come.

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I know that this is a time of trouble for you and everybody. It is so for the whole world. Confusion, trouble, disorder and upset everywhere is the general state of things. The better things that are to come are preparing or growing under a veil and the worse are prominent everywhere. The one thing is to hold on and hold out till the hour of light has come.

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I am afraid I can hold out but cold comfort – for the present at least – to those of your correspondents who are lamenting the present state of things. Things are bad, are growing worse and may at any time grow worst or worse than worst if that is possible – and anything, however paradoxical, seems possible in the present perturbed world. The best thing for them is to realise that all this was necessary because certain possibilities had to emerge and be got rid of, if a new and better world was at all to come into being: it would not have done to postpone them for a later time. It is, as in yoga, where things active or latent in the being have to be put into action in the light so that they may be grappled with and thrown out or to emerge from latency in the depths – they can remember the adage that night is darkest before dawn and that the coming of dawn is inevitable. But they must remember too that the new world whose coming we envisage is not to be made of the same texture as the old and different only in pattern, and that it must come by other means — from within and not from without; so the best way is not to be too much preoccupied with the lamentable things that are happening outside, but themselves to grow within so that they may be ready for the new world, whatever the form it may take.

[from Letters on Yoga, III: 1611- 12]

Equality is the chief support of the true spiritual consciousness and it is this from which a sadhak deviates when he allows a vital movement to carry him away in feeling or speech or action. Equality is not the same thing as forbearance, – though un-

doubtedly a settled equality immensely extends, even illimitably, a man's power of endurance and forbearance.

Equality means a quiet and unmoved mind and vital, it means not to be touched or disturbed by things that happen or things said or done to you, but to look at them with a straight look, free from the distortions created by personal feeling, and to try to understand what is behind them, why they happen, what is to be learnt from them, what is it in oneself which they are cast against and what inner profit or progress one can make out of them; it means self-mastery over the vital movements, – anger and sensitiveness and pride as well as desire and the rest, – not to let them get hold of the emotional being and disturb the inner peace, not to speak and act in the rush and impulsion of these things, always to act and speak out of a calm inner poise of the spirit. It is not easy to have this equality in any full perfect measure, but one should always try more and more to make it the basis of one's inner state and outer movements.

Equality means another thing – to have an equal view of men and their nature and acts and the forces that move them; it helps one to see the truth about them by pushing away from the mind all personal feeling in one's seeing and judgment and even all the mental bias. Personal feeling always distorts and makes one see in men's actions, not only the actions themselves, but things behind them which, more often than not, are not there. Misunderstanding, misjudgment which could have been avoided are the result; things of small consequence assume larger proportions. I have seen that more than half of the untoward happenings of this kind in life are due to this cause. But in ordinary life personal feeling and sensitiveness are a constant part of human nature and may be needed there for self-defence, although, I think, even there, a strong, large and equal attitude towards men and things would be a much better line of defence. But for a sadhak, to surmount them and live rather in the calm strength of the spirit is an essential part of his progress.

[from Letters on Yoga, 11:661 . 62]

THE VOICE OF A FRIEND The Mother

You who are weary and bruised and beaten down, you who fall, who think perhaps that you are defeated, listen to the voice of a friend, he knows your sorrows, he has shared them, he has suffered like yourselves from the ills of the earth; he has like you crossed deserts under the burden of day, he has known hunger and thirst, solitude and abandonment, and, most cruel of all, the destitution of the heart: alas! he has known too hours of doubt, he has chings, all kinds of weakness.

But he says to you: Courage! hearken to the lesson that, every morning, the rising Sun brings to the earth in its first rays. It is a lesson of hope, it is a message of consolation.

You who weep, you who suffer, you who tremble, not daring to foresee the term of your ills, the issue of your pangs, behold! There is no night without daybreak, when darkness is thickest dawn is ready; there is no fog that the Sun does not dissipate, no cloud that

it does not gild, no tear that it does not one day dry, no storm after which its bow of triumph does not lift up its rays, no snow that it does not melt, no winter that it does not change into radiant spring.

And for you likewise, there is no affliction which does not bring forth its counterpoise of glory, no distress that cannot be transformed into joy, no defeat that does not turn into victory, no downfall that does not change into an ascension to greater heights, no solitude that does not become a very home of life, no discord that does not resolve into harmony; sometimes it is the misunderstanding between two minds which obliges two hearts to open themselves for communion; in short, there is no weakness so infinite that it cannot change into power. Even, it is in supreme weakness that it pleases the All-Powerful to reveal himself.

Listen, my little child, who feel yourself so broken, so fallen, who have nothing, nothing any more to cover your misery and nourish your pride, yet never before have you been so great! How close is he to the summits, who awakes in the depths! for the deeper the abyss the more the heights reveal themselves.

Know you not this, that the sublimest forces of cosmic extension seek, to clothe themselves, the most opaque veils of Matter? O splendid nuptials of so-cities, of the desire of the darkness with the most royal light!

If ordeal and fault have flung you down, if you have sunk into an abysm of suffering, do not at all be grieved, for it is there that the divine affection, the supreme benediction will reach you! Because you have passed through a crucible of purifying sorrows, for you are the glorious ascents.

You are the wilderness: well, listen to the voices of the silence. The noise of eulogistic words and applause from outside has gladdened your ears, but

the voices of the silence will gladden your soul, awakening in you the echo of the depths, the chant of divine harmonies!

You are walking in deep night: well, gather there the priceless treasures of the darkness. Bright sunshine lights up the ways of the intelligence but in the night with its white luminosities are the hidden roads of perfection, the secret of spiritual riches.

You are following the path of denudation; it is the way to plenitude. When you have nothing left, all will be given to you. For those who are sincere and straight, out of the worst emerges always the best.

Each grain that one puts in the earth produces a thousand. Each beat of the wing of sorrow can be a soar towards glory.

And when the adversary rages against man, all that he does to annihilate him serves only to make him greater.

Hearken to the story of the worlds! see, the great enemy seems to triumph. He throws into night the creatures of the light and the night is filled with stars. He wars with a growing rage against the working of the cosmos, he attacks the integrity of the empire of the primal sphere, shatters its harmony, divides it and subdivides it, scatters its dust to the four winds of infinity, and, behold, the dust turns into a golden sowing which fertilises the infinite and peoples it with worlds which will gravitate, henceforth, in a larger orbit of space around their eternal centre; so division itself produces a richer and profounder unity and, multiplying the surfaces of the material universe, aggrandises the empire which it set out to destroy.

Beautiful, doubtless, was the song of the primordial sphere rocked on the bosom of immensity, but how much more beautiful and triumphal is the symphony of the constellations, the music of the spheres, the immense chorale

filling the heavens with an eternal hymn of victory.

Hearken yet. No state was ever more precarious than that of man when he was separated on earth from his divine source. Above him spread the hostile frontier of the usurper, and at the *gates* of the horizon watched gaolers armed with flaming swords. Then, since he could climb no more to the source of life, the source sprang up within him; since he could no longer receive the light from on high, the light shone forth at the very centre of his being; since he could not cominutie with transcendent love, that love made a holo

caust of itself, gave itself as an offering, choosing each terrestrial being, each human ego as its dwelling-place and its sanctuary.

That is how, in this matter despised but fertile, desolate but blessed, each atom contains a divine thought, each being carries in himself the Divine Inhabitant, and if nothing in all the universe is so frail as man, nothing likewise is so divine as he!

Verily, verily, in humiliation is found the cradle of glory.

[from *The Supreme Discovery*]

OUR GODHEAD CALLS

Sri Aurobindo

OUR godhead calls us in
unrealised things. Asleep in the wide fields of destiny,
A world guarded by Silence' rustling wings
Sheltered their fine impossibility.

But part, but quiver the cerulean gates,
Close splendours look into our dreaming eyes,
We bear proud deities and magnificent fates;
Faces and hands come near from Paradise.

What shone thus far above is here in us;
Bliss unattained our future's birthright is;
Beauty of our dim soul is amorous;
We are the heirs of infinite widenesses.

The impossible is the hint of what shall be,
Mortal the door to immortality.

.....

This is what we mean by "Divine": all the knowledge we have to acquire, all the power we have to obtain, all the love we have to become, all the perfection we have to achieve, all the harmonious and progressive poise we must make manifest in light and joy, all the unknown and new splendours that are to be realised.

– The Mother

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