



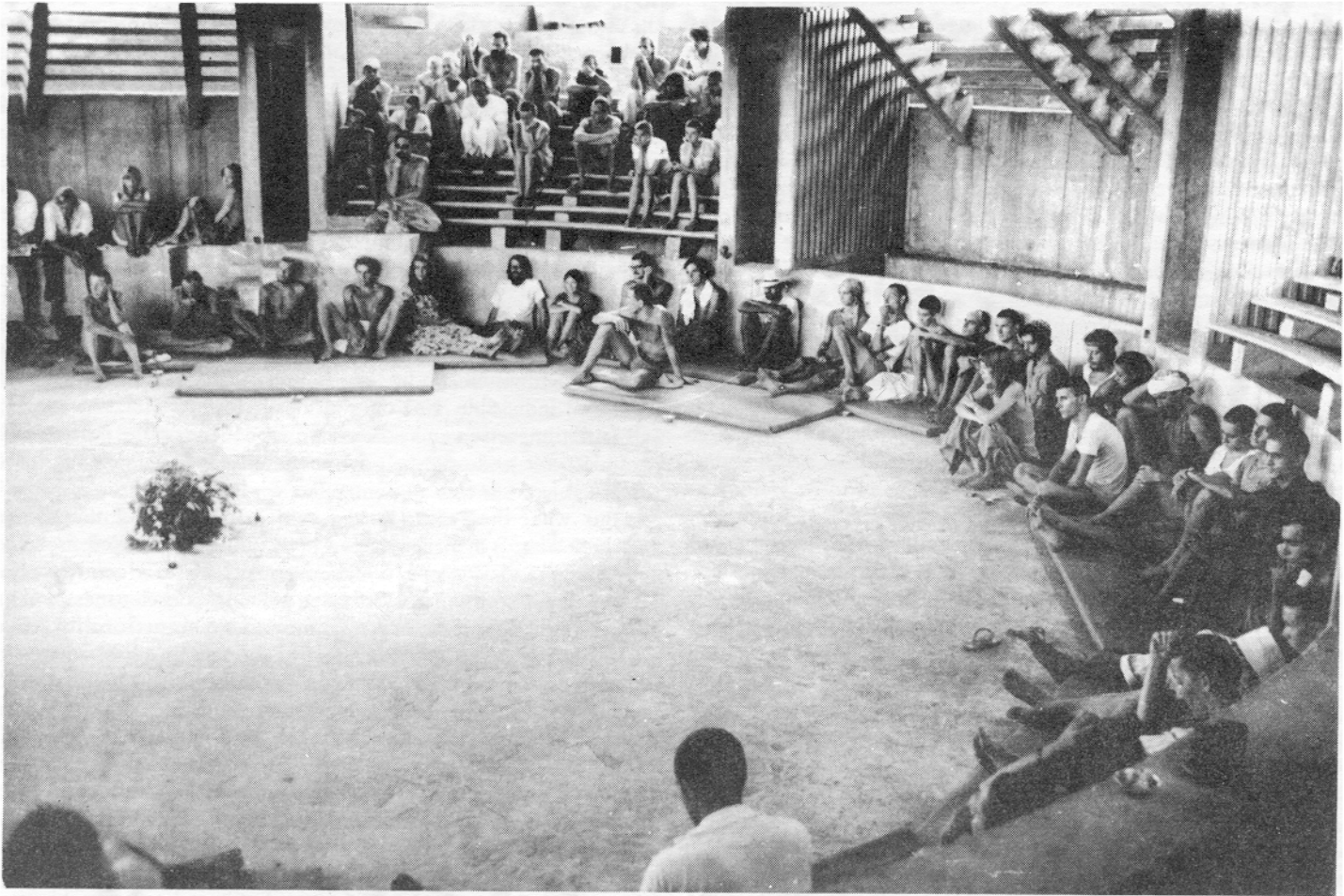
Collaboration

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Community meeting at the Bharat Nivas, Auroville.

One of the most difficult problems for aspirants, especially perhaps Westerners, who are so action-oriented, is that of works, action. In this issue we present Sri Aurobindo's revealing outline of successive stages in standards of conduct and several passages from the Mother's works on inner guidance for action.

In addition, we offer another instalment in our Integral Psychology series, two short pieces by Sri Aurobindo on the Integral Yoga (which we hope will help make clear the difference between Sri Aurobindo's concept of Integral Yoga and that of other yogas being offered under that name), and two articles on Sri Aurobindo's views, by Lloyd Fellows and S.D. Verma.

Our series on Flowers and Their Messages is being discontinued as, we are happy to announce, the book of that title by the Mother has been reissued; it is available from Matagiri.

This issue concludes with three poems by sadhaks, one of which

expresses a humor and playfulness somewhat in the style of Lewis Carroll. Our readers are invited to submit their own work for consideration, either fiction or nonfiction.

* * *

Matagiri is in need of funds to help with the costs of our work, which, besides *Collaboration* (many copies of which are sent free to prisoners), includes help, both financial and in materials, to both Auroville and the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. We ask all our friends to help us by sending a donation of any amount to Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc., Mt. Tremper, NY 12457. We are hoping to keep the subscription rate for *Collaboration* at \$2.00, but there are other expenses as well. We appreciate the steady support many of our friends have given over the years, but we ask that a special effort be made at this time to provide us with needed funds. All contributions are, of course, tax deductible.

The knowledge on which the doer of works in Yoga has to found all his action and development has for the keystone of its structure a more and more concrete perception of unity, the living sense of an all-pervading oneness; he moves in the increasing consciousness of all existence as an indivisible whole: all work too is part of this divine indivisible whole. His personal action and its results can no longer be or seem a separate movement mainly or entirely determined by the egoistic "free" will of an individual, himself separate in the mass. Our works are part of an indivisible cosmic action; they are put or, more accurately, put themselves into their place in the whole out of which they arise and their outcome is determined by forces that overpass us. That world action in its vast totality and in every petty detail is the indivisible movement of the One who manifests himself progressively in the cosmos. Man too becomes progressively conscious of the truth of himself and the truth of things in proportion as he awakens to this One within him and outside him and to the occult, miraculous and significant process of its forces in the motion of Nature. This action, this movement, is not confined even in ourselves and those around us to the little fragmentary portion of the cosmic activities of which we in our superficial consciousness are aware; it is supported by an immense underlying environing existence subliminal to our minds or subconscious, and it is attracted by an immense transcending existence which is superconscious to our nature. Our action arises, as we ourselves have emerged, out of a universality of which we are not aware; we give it a shape by our personal temperament, personal mind and will of thought or force of impulse or desire; but the true truth of things, the true law of action exceeds these personal and human formations. Every standpoint, every man-made rule of action which ignores the indivisible totality of the cosmic movement, whatever its utility in external practice, is to the eye of spiritual Truth an imperfect view and a law of Ignorance.

Even when we have arrived at some glimpse of this idea or succeeded in fixing it in our consciousness as a knowledge of the mind and a consequent attitude of the soul, it is difficult for us in our outward parts and active nature to square accounts between this universal standpoint and the claims of our personal opinion, our personal emotion and desire. We are forced still to go on dealing

with this indivisible movement as if it were a mass of impersonal material out of which we, the ego, the person, have to carve something according to our own will and mental fantasy by a personal struggle and effort. This is man's normal attitude towards his environment, actually false because our ego and its will are creations and puppets of the cosmic forces and it is only when we withdraw from ego into the consciousness of the divine Knowledge-Will of the Eternal who acts in them that we can be by a sort of deputation from above their master. And yet is this personal position the right attitude for man so long as he cherishes his individuality and has not yet fully developed it; for without this viewpoint and motive-force he cannot grow in his ego, cannot sufficiently develop and differentiate himself out of the subconscious or half-conscious universal mass-existence.

But the hold of this ego-consciousness upon our whole habit of existence is difficult to shake off when we have no longer need of the separative, the individualistic and aggressive stage of development, when we would proceed forward from this necessity of littleness in the child-soul to unity and universality, to unity and universality, to the cosmic consciousness and beyond, to our transcendent spirit-stature. It is indispensable to recognise clearly, not only in our mode of thought but in our way of feeling, sensing, doing, that this movement, this universal action is not a helpless impersonal wave of being which lends itself to the will of any ego according to that ego's strength and insistence. It is the movement of a cosmic Being who is the Knower of his field, the steps of a Divinity who is the Master of his own progressive force of action. As the movement is one and indivisible, so he who is present in the movement is one, sole and indivisible. Not only all result is determined by him, but all initiation, action and process are dependent on the motion of his cosmic force and only belong secondarily and in their form to the creature.

But what then must be the spiritual position of the personal worker? What is his true relation in dynamic Nature to this one cosmic Being and this one total movement? He is a centre only—a centre of differentiation of the one personal consciousness, a centre

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in a wave of persistent individuality the one universal Person, ... Transcendent, the Eternal. In the Ignorance it is always a broken and distorted reflection because the crest of the wave which is our conscious waking self throws back only an imperfect and falsified similitude of the divine Spirit. All our opinions, standards, formations, principles are only attempts to represent in this broken, reflecting and distorting mirror something of the universal and progressive total action and its many-sided movement towards some ultimate self-revelation of the Divine. Our mind represents it as best it can with a narrow approximation that becomes less and less adequate in proportion as its thought grows in wideness and light and power; but it is always an approximation and not even a true partial figure. The Divine Will acts through the aeons to reveal progressively not only in the unity of the cosmos, not only in the collectivity of

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living and thinking creatures, but in the soul of each individual something of its divine Mystery and the hidden truth of the Infinite. Therefore there is in the cosmos, in the collectivity, in the individual, a rooted instinct or belief in its own perfectibility, a constant drive towards an ever increasing and more adequate and more harmonious self-development nearer to the secret truth of things. This effort is represented to the constructing mind of man by standards of knowledge, feeling, character, aesthesis and action,—rules, ideals, norms and laws that he essays to turn into universal Dharmas.

If we are to be free in the Spirit, if we are to be subject only to the supreme Truth, we must discard the idea that our mental or moral laws are binding on the Infinite or that there can be anything sacrosanct, absolute or eternal even in the highest of our existing standards of conduct. To form higher and higher temporary standards as long as they are needed is to serve that Divine in his world march; to erect rigidly an absolute standard is to attempt the erection of a barrier against the eternal waters in their outflow. Once the nature-bound soul realises this truth, it is delivered from the duality of good and evil. For good is all that helps the individual and the world towards their divine fullness, and evil is all that retards or breaks up that increasing perfection. But since the perfection is progressive, evolutive in Time, good and evil are also shifting quantities and change from time to time their meaning and value. This thing which is evil now and in its present shape must be abandoned was once helpful and necessary to the general and individual progress. That other thing which we now regard as evil may well become in another form and arrangement an element in some future perfection. And on the spiritual level we transcend even this distinction, for we discover the purpose and divine utility of all these things that we call good and evil. Then we have to reject the falsehood in them and all that is distorted, ignorant and obscure in that which is called good no less than in that which is called evil. For we have then to accept only the true and the divine, but to make no other distinction in the eternal process.

To those who can act only on a rigid standard, to those who can feel only the human and not the divine values this truth may seem to be a dangerous concession which is likely to destroy the very foundation of morality, confuse all conduct and establish only chaos. Certainly, if the choice must be between an eternal and unchanging ethics and no ethics at all, it would have that result for man in his ignorance. But even on the human level, if we have light enough and flexibility enough to recognise that a standard of conduct may be temporary and yet necessary for its time and to observe it faithfully until it can be replaced by a better, then we suffer no such loss, but lose only the fanaticism of an imperfect and intolerant virtue. In its place we gain openness and a power of continual moral progression, charity, the capacity to enter into an understanding sympathy with all this world of struggling and stumbling creatures and by that charity a better right and a greater strength to help it upon its way. In the end where the human closes and the divine commences, where the mental disappears into the supramental consciousness and the finite precipitates itself into the infinite, all evil disappears into a transcendent divine Good which becomes universal on every plane of consciousness that it touches.

This, then, stands fixed for us that all standards by which we may seek to govern our conduct are only our temporary, imperfect and evolutive attempts to represent to ourselves our stumbling mental progress in the universal self-realisation towards which Nature moves. But the divine manifestation cannot be bound by our little rules and fragile sanctities; for the consciousness behind it is too vast for these things. Once we have grasped this fact, disconcerting enough to the absolutism of our reason, we shall better be able to put in their right place in regard to each other the successive standards that govern the different stages in the growth of the individual and the collective march of mankind...

There are four main standards of human conduct that make an ascending scale. The first is personal need, preference and desire; the second is the law and good of the collectivity; the third is an ideal ethic; the last is the highest divine law of the nature.

Man starts on the long career of his evolution with only the first two of these four to enlighten and lead him; for they constitute the law of his animal and vital existence, and it is as the vital and physical animal man that he begins his progress. The true business of man upon earth is to express in the type of humanity a growing image of the Divine; whether knowingly or unknowingly, it is to this end that Nature is working in him under the thick veil of her inner and outer processes. But the material or animal man is ignorant of the inner aim of life; he knows only its needs and its desires and he has necessarily no other guide to what is required of him than his own perception of need and his own stirrings and pointings of desire. To satisfy his physical and vital demands and necessities before all things else and, in the next rank, whatever emotional or mental cravings or imaginations or dynamic notions rise in him must be the first natural rule of his conduct. The sole balancing or overpowering law that can modify or contradict this pressing natural claim is the demand put on him by the ideas, needs and desires of his family, community or tribe, the herd, the pack of which he is a member.

If man could live to himself—and this he could only do if the development of the individual were the sole object of the Divine in the world—this second law would not at all need to come into operation. But all existence proceeds by the mutual action and reaction of the whole and parts, the need for each other of the constituents and the thing constituted, the interdependence of the group and the individuals of the group.... Man, pressing after the growth of his separate individuality and its fullness and freedom, is unable to satisfy even his own personal needs and desires except in conjunction with other men; he is a whole in himself and yet incomplete without others. This obligation englobes his personal law of conduct in a group-law which arises from the formation of a lasting group-entity with a collective mind and life of its own to which his own embodied mind and life are subordinated as a transitory unit. And yet there is something in him immortal and free, not bound to this group-body which outlasts his own embodied existence but cannot outlast or claim to chain by its laws his eternal spirit....

...Long after the individual has become partially free, a moral organism capable of conscious growth, aware of an inward life, eager for spiritual progress, society continues to be external in its methods, a material and economic organism, mechanical, more intent upon status and self-preservation than on growth and self-perfection. The greatest present triumph of the thinking and progressive individual over the instinctive and static society has been the power he has acquired by his thought-will to compel it to think also, to open itself to the idea of social justice and righteousness, communal sympathy and mutual compassion, to feel after the rule of reason rather than blind custom as the test of its institutions and to look on the mental and moral assent of its individuals as at least one essential element in the validity of its laws. Ideally at least, to consider light rather than force as its sanction, moral development and not vengeance or restraint as the object even of its penal action, is becoming just possible to the communal mind. The greatest future triumph of the thinker will come when he can persuade the individual integer and the collective whole to rest their life-relation and its union and stability upon a free and harmonious consent and self-adaptation, and shape and govern the external by the internal truth rather than to constrain the inner spirit by the tyranny of the external form and structure.

...The moralist erects in vain his absolute ethical standard and calls upon all to be faithful to it without regard to consequences. To him the needs and desires of the individual are invalid if they are

in conflict with the moral law, and the social law has no claims upon him if it is opposed to his sense of right and denied by his conscience. This is his absolute solution for the individual that he shall cherish no desires and claims that are not consistent with love, truth and justice. He demands from the community or nation that it shall hold all things cheap, even its safety and its most pressing interests, in comparison with truth, justice, humanity and the highest good of the peoples.

No individual rises to these heights except in intense moments, no society yet created satisfies this ideal. And in the present state of morality and of human development none perhaps can or ought to satisfy it. Nature will not allow it....

The fact is that when we have reached the cult of absolute ethical qualities and erected the categorical imperative of an ideal law, we have not come to the end of our search or touched the truth that delivers....

...There is, above society's external law and man's moral law and beyond them, though feebly and ignorantly aimed at by something within them, a larger truth of a vast unbound consciousness, a law divine towards which both these blind and gross formulations

are progressive faltering steps that try to escape from the natural law of the animal to a more exalted light or universal rule. That divine standard, since the godhead in us is our spirit moving towards its own concealed perfection, must be a supreme spiritual law and truth of our nature....

The perfect supramental action will not follow any single principle or limited rule. It is not likely to satisfy the standard either of the individual egoist or of any organised group-mind. It will conform to the demand neither of the positive practical man of the world nor of the formal moralist nor of the patriot nor of the sentimental philanthropist nor of the idealising philosopher. It will proceed by a spontaneous outflowing from the summits in the totality of an illumined and uplifted being, will and knowledge.... Its sole aim will be the expression of the divine in us and the keeping together of the world and its progress towards the Manifestation that is to be.... The happy and inspired movement of a divine Power and Wisdom guiding and impelling us will replace the perplexities and stumblings of the suffering and ignorant ego. [From the chapter of the same title in *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1971)]

MORALITY, DESIRE AND ACTION

The Mother

Purity

What does to be pure mean? One is truly perfectly pure only when the whole being, in all its elements and all its movements, adheres fully, exclusively, to the Divine Will. This indeed is total purity. It does not depend on any moral or social law, any mental convention of any kind. It depends exclusively on this: when all the elements and all the movements of the being adhere exclusively and totally to the divine Will.

Now, there are stages, there are degrees. For example, insincerity, which is one of the greatest impurities, always arises from the fact that a movement or a set of movements, an element of the being or a number of elements, want to follow their own will and not be the expression of the divine Will. So this produces in the being either a revolt or a falsehood. I don't mean that one tells lies, but I mean that one is in a state of falsehood, of insincerity. And then, the consequences are more or less serious and more or less extensive according to the gravity of the movement itself and its importance. But these, if one sees from the point of view of purity, these are the real impurities.

For example, if you take your stand on a moral viewpoint—which is itself altogether wrong from the spiritual point of view—there are people who apparently lead an altogether perfectly moral life, who conform to all the social laws, all the customs, the moral conventions, and who are a mass of impurity—from the spiritual point of view, these beings are profoundly impure. On the other hand there are some poor people who do things...who are born, for instance, with a sense of freedom, and do things which are not considered very respectable from the social or moral point of view, and who can be in a state of inner aspiration and inner sincerity which makes them infinitely purer than the others. This is one of the big difficulties. As soon as one speaks of these things, there arises the deformation produced in the consciousness by all the social and moral conventions. As soon as you speak of purity, a moral monument comes in front of you which completely falsifies your notion. And note that it is infinitely easier to be moral from the social point of view than to be moral from the spiritual point of view. To be moral from the social viewpoint one has only to pay good attention to do nothing which is not approved of by others; this may be somewhat difficult, but still it is not impossible; and one may be, as I said, a monument of insincerity and impurity while doing this; whereas to be pure from the spiritual point of view means a vigilance, a consciousness, a sincerity that stand all tests.

Now, I may put you on your guard against something...about people who live in their vital consciousness and say, "I am indeed above moral laws, I follow a higher law, I am free from all moral laws." And they say this because they want to indulge in all irregularities. These people, then, have a double impurity: they have spiritual impurity and in addition social impurity. And these usually have a very good opinion of themselves, and they assert their wish to live their life with an unequalled impudence. But such people we don't want.

Yet usually the people whom I have found most difficult to convert are very respectable people. I am sorry, but I have had much more difficulty with respectable people than with those who were not so, for they had such a good opinion of themselves that it was impossible to open them. But the true thing is difficult. That is to say, one must be very vigilant and very self-controlled, very patient, and have a never-failing goodwill. One must not neglect having a small dose of humility, a sufficient one, and one must never be satisfied with the sincerity one has. One must always want more. [Mother's Collected Works, Volume 6, *Questions and Answers 1954* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1979), pp. 438-40]

Knowing the Divine Will

How are we to know...when it is the Divine Will that makes us act? The Divine Will is not difficult to recognize. It is unmistakable. You can know it without being very far on the path. Only you must listen to its voice, the small voice that is here in the heart. Once you are accustomed to listen, if you do anything that is contrary to the Divine Will, you feel an uneasiness. If you persist on the wrong track, you get very much disturbed. If, however, you give some material excuse as the cause of your uneasiness and proceed on your way, you gradually lose the faculty of perception and finally you may go on doing all kinds of wrong and feel no uneasiness. But if, when once you feel the least disturbance, you stop and ask of your inner self, "What is the cause of this?" then you do get the real answer and the whole thing becomes quite clear. Do not try to give a material excuse when you feel a little depression or a slight uneasiness. When you stop and look about for the reasons, be absolutely straight and sincere. At first your mind will construct a very plausible and beautiful explanation. Do not accept it, but look beyond and ask, "What is it that is behind this movement? Why am I doing this?" Finally you will discover, hidden in a corner, the little ripple—a slight wrong turn or twist in your attitude that is causing the trouble or disturbance.

One of the commonest forms of ambition is the idea of service to humanity. All attachment to such service or work is a sign of personal ambition. The Guru who believes that he has a great truth to teach to humanity and who wants many disciples and who feels uncomfortable when the disciples go away or who seizes on anybody that comes and tries to make him a disciple, is evidently following nothing but his ambition. You must be able, if you are ready to follow the divine order, to take up whatever work you are given, even a stupendous work, and leave it the next day with the same quietness with which you took it up and not feel that the responsibility is yours. There should be no attachment—to any object or any mode of life. You must be absolutely free. If you want to have the true yogic attitude, you must be able to accept everything that comes from the Divine and let it go easily without regret. The attitude of the ascetic who says, “I want nothing” and the attitude of the man of the world who says, “I want this thing” are the same. The one may be as much attached to his renunciation as the other to his possession.

You must accept all things—and only those things—that come from the Divine. Because things can come from concealed desires. The desires work in the subconscious and bring things to you which, although you may not recognise them as such, nevertheless do not come from the Divine but from disguised desires.

You can easily know when a thing comes from the Divine. You feel free, you are at ease, you are in peace. But when something presents itself to you and you jump at it and cry out, “Oh, at last I have it,” then you can know for certain that it does not come from the Divine. Equanimity is the essential condition of union and communion with the Divine. [Mother's Collected Works, Volume 3, *Questions and Answers* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1977), pp. 8-10]

Spirituality and Morality

Men have the impression that their desires are born within; they feel as if they come out of themselves or arise within themselves; but it is a false impression. Desires are waves of the vast sea of the obscure lower nature and they pass from one person to another. Men do not generate a desire in themselves, but are invaded by these waves; whoever is open and without defence is caught in them and tossed about. Desire by engrossing and possessing him makes him incapable of any discrimination and gives him the impression that it is part of his nature to manifest it. In reality, it has nothing to do with his true nature. It is the same with all the lower impulses, jealousy or envy, hatred or violence. These too are movements that seize you, waves that overwhelm and invade; they deform, they do not belong to the true character or the true nature; they are no intrinsic or inseparable part of yourself, but come out of the sea of surrounding obscurity in which move the forces of the lower nature. These desires, these passions have no personality, there is nothing in them or their action that is peculiar to you; they manifest in the same way in everyone. The obscure movements of the mind too, the doubts and errors and difficulties that cloud the personality and diminish its expansion and fulfilment, come from the same source. They are passing waves and they catch anyone who is ready to be caught and utilised as their blind instrument. And yet each goes on believing that these movements are part of himself and a precious product of his own free personality. Even we find people clinging to them and their disabilities as the very sign or essence of what they call their freedom.

If you have understood this, you will be ready to understand the difference, the great difference between spirituality and morality, two things that are constantly confused with each other. The spiritual life, the life of Yoga, has for its object to grow into the divine consciousness and for its result to purify, intensify, glorify and perfect what is in you. It makes you a power for manifesting the Divine; it raises the character of each personality to its full value and

brings it to its maximum expression; for this is part of the Divine plan. Morality proceeds by a mental construction and, with a few ideas of what is good and what is not, sets up an ideal type into which all must force themselves. This moral ideal differs in its constituents and its ensemble at different times and different places. And yet it proclaims itself as a unique type, a categorical absolute; it admits of none other outside itself; it does not even admit a variation within itself. All are to be moulded according to its single ideal pattern, everybody is to be made uniformly and faultlessly the same. It is because morality is of this rigid unreal nature that it is in its principle and its working the contrary of the spiritual life. The spiritual life reveals the one essence in all, but reveals too its infinite diversity; it works for diversity in oneness and for perfection in that diversity. Morality lifts up one artificial standard contrary to the variety of life and the freedom of the spirit. Creating something mental, fixed and limited, it asks all to conform to it. All must labour to acquire the same qualities and the same ideal nature. Morality is not divine or of the Divine; it is of man and human. Morality takes for its basic element a fixed division into the good and the bad; but this is an arbitrary notion. It takes things that are relative and tries to impose them as absolutes; for this good and this bad differ in differing climates and times, epochs and countries. The moral notion goes so far as to say that there are good desires and bad desires and calls on you to accept the one and reject the other. But the spiritual life demands that you should reject desire altogether. Its law is that you must cast aside all movements that draw you away from the Divine. You must reject them, not because they are bad in themselves—for they may be good for another man or in another sphere—but because they belong to the impulses or forces that, being unilluminated and ignorant, stand in the way of your approach to the Divine. All desires, whether good or bad, come within this description; for desire itself arises from an unilluminated vital being and its ignorance. On the other hand, you must accept all movements that bring you into contact with the Divine. But you accept them, not because they are good in themselves, but because they bring you to the Divine. Accept then all that takes you to the Divine. Reject all that takes you away from it, but do not say that this is good and that is bad or try to impose your outlook on others; for, what you term bad may be the very thing that is good for your neighbor who is not trying to realise the Divine Life. [Ibid., pp. 117-19]





The Mother, 1950s. Photo courtesy Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

The Physical (2)

Everything has a physical part—even the mind has a physical part; there is a mental physical, a mind of the body and the material. So the emotional being has a physical part. It has no location separate from the rest of the emotional. One can only distinguish that when the consciousness becomes sufficiently subtle to do so. [1]

* * *

...[The material consciousness] is a separate part of the physical consciousness. Physical mind for instance is narrow and limited and often stupid, but not inert. Matter consciousness is on the contrary inert as well as largely subconscious—active only when driven by an energy, otherwise inactive and immobile. When one first falls into direct contact with this level, the feeling in the body is that of inertia and immobility, in the vital-physical exhaustion or lassitude, in the physical mind absence of *prakasa* [light] and *pravriti* [impetus to action] or only the most ordinary thoughts and impulses. It took me a long time to get down any kind of light or power into this level. But when once it is illumined, the advantage is that the subconscious becomes conscient and this removes a very fundamental obstacle from the sadhana. [2]

* * *

By the gross physical is meant the earthly and bodily physical—as experienced by the outward sense-mind and senses. But that is not the whole of Matter. There is a subtle physical also with a subtler consciousness in it which can, for instance, go to a distance from the body and yet feel and be aware of things in a not merely mental or vital way. As for mind and vital, they are everywhere—there is an obscure mind and life even in the cells of the body, the stones or in molecules and atoms. [3]

* * *

The physical nerves are part of the material body but they are extended into the subtle body and there is a connection between the two. [4]

* * *

[The physical consciousness] is inert, conservative, does not want to move, to change—it clings to its habits (what people call their character) or its habits (habitual movements) cling to it and repeat themselves like a clock working in a persistent mechanical way. [5]

* * *

Tamas, inertia, ignorance, stupidity, littleness, obstruction to the true movement are universal characteristics of the material consciousness, as long as it is not enlightened, regenerated and transformed from above. [6]

* * *

The physical sadhana is to bring down the higher light and power and peace and Ananda into the body consciousness, to get rid of the inertia of the physical, the doubts, limitations, external tendency of the physical mind, the defective energies of the vital physical (nerves) and bring in instead the true consciousness there so that the physical may be a perfect instrument for the Divine Will. The food and care for the body is only to get it into good condition, afterwards it would not be necessary to attend to such things. [7]

So far as [living in the physical consciousness] can be said to be distinguishable by outward signs, it is a state of fundamental passivity in which one is and does what the forces of the physical plane make one be and do. When one lives in the mind, there is an active mental intelligence and mental will that tries to control and shape action and experience and life and everything else. When one is in the vital one is full of energy and enthusiasm and passion and force which may be right or wrong but is very much alive. [8]

* * *

[Defects of the physical consciousness:] There are many—but mainly obscurity, inertia, tamas, a passive acceptance of the play of wrong forces, inability to change, attachment to habits, lack of plasticity, forgetfulness, loss of experiences or realisations gained, unwillingness to accept the Light or to follow it, incapacity (through tamas or through attachment or through passive reaction to accustomed forces) to do what it admits to be the Right and the Best. [9]

* * *

It is the nature of the physical mind to be obstinate. Physical nature exists by constant repetition of the same thing—only a constant presentation of different forms of itself....

There are two aspects of physical nature as of all Nature—the individual and the universal. All things come into one from the universal Nature—but the individual physical keeps some of them and rejects others, and to those it keeps it gives a personal form. So these things can be said to be both inside it and coming outside from within or created by it because it gives a special form, and also coming in from outside. But when one wants to get rid of them, one first throws out all that is within into the surrounding Nature—from there the universal Nature tries to bring them back or bring in new and similar things of its own to replace them. One has then constantly to reject this invasion. By constant rejection, the force of recurrence finally dwindles and the individual becomes free and able to bring the higher consciousness and its movements into the physical being. [10]

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A great part of the body-consciousness is subconscious and the body-consciousness and the subconscious are closely bound together.

The body and the physical do not coincide—the body consciousness is only part of the whole physical consciousness. [11]

* * *

The first rule is—there must be sufficient sleep and rest, not in excess but not too little.

The body must be trained to work, but not strained beyond its utmost capacity.

The outer means without the inner is not effective. Up to a certain point by a *progressive* training the body may be made more capable of work. But the important thing is to bring down the force for work and the Rasa [taste] of work in the body. The body will then do what is asked of it without grudging or feeling fatigue. [12]

References

1-4. *Letters on Yoga* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1971), 1: 351, 352.
5-12: *Ibid.*, 3: 1426, 1430, 1432, 1433, 1434, 1435, 1445, 1463.

The First Conditions of the Integral Yoga

The first conditions of this Yoga are:

1. A complete sincerity and surrender in the being. The divine life and the transformation of the lower human into the higher divine nature must be made the sole aim of all the life. No attachments, desires or habits of the mind, heart, vital being or body should be clung to which come in the way of this aspiration and one object of the life.

One must be ready to renounce all these completely as soon as the demand comes from above and from the divine Shakti.

2. A fundamental calm, peace and purity in the mind, vital being and all the nature.

The hours of meditation should be devoted to the formation of these two conditions in you, by aspiration and by self observation and rejection of all that disturbs the nature or keeps it troubled, confused and impure. Aspiration, if rightly done, quietly, earnestly and sincerely, brings the divine help from above to effect this object.

As to the hours devoted to work, needs, family, etc., they can be made an aid only on the following conditions:

1. To regard all these things as not belonging to yourself, your inner being, but as things external, work to be done so long as it remains on your shoulders to the best of your ability without desire or attachment of any kind.

2. To do all work as a sacrifice without any egoistic motive.

3. To establish and deepen the inner calm and quiet. If that is done, all these things will be felt more and more as external and the falling off of desire and attachment will become possible.

For getting rid of passion the same condition. If you separate yourself from these movements, and establish calm and peace inside, the passions may still rise on the surface, but they will be felt to be external movements and you can deal with them or call down the divine aid to get rid of them. So long as the mind does not fall quiet, it is not possible to deal finally with the vital being from which these forces rise. [From *Champaklal's Treasures* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1976), p. 206.]

Natural Order of the Yoga

All should understand that the true Supramental does not come in the beginning but much later on in the Sadhana.

First: The opening up and illumination of the mental, vital and the physical beings.

Secondly: Making intuitive of the mind, thought, will etc., and development of the hidden consciousness progressively replacing the surface consciousness.

Thirdly: The supramentalizing of the changed mental, vital and the physical beings and finally the descent of the true Supramental and the rising into the Supramental plane.

This is the natural order of the Yoga. These stages may overlap and intermix, there may be many variations, but the last two can only come in the advanced stage of the progress. Of course, the Supramental Divine guides this Yoga throughout but it is first through many intermediary planes; and it cannot easily be said of something that comes in the earlier periods that it is the direct and full Supramental. To think so when it is not so may well be a hindrance to progress. [From *Champaklal's Treasures*.]

INTUITION, TRANSFORMATION, AND SRI AUROBINDO Lloyd W. Fellows

[Lloyd Fellows is the founder/director of the Institute of Integral Psychology in Ojai, Calif. The following is a slightly edited talk he delivered in August 1979 at the annual meeting of the Association for Humanistic Psychology in Princeton, N.J.]

The intuitive mind is the first step toward superconsciousness, according to Sri Aurobindo. Its development is the important initial task of mankind toward supramental consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo's ideas form an integral psychology which is concerned with the total and radical transformation of the nature and form of human beings. Behind the evolution of our species, he sees an evolution of consciousness, which is moving toward the individual and collective transformation of humankind.

All evolution is defined as spiritual evolution. This does not mean spiritual in the religious sense, but rather involves a refinement of form. It is a transformation from the gross physical to a subtle formless reality called Spirit. As in ancient Vedic texts, Sri Aurobindo assumes that form arose out of the involution of polarities. Evolution is the consequent interplay or return of the energies of Spirit and Matter [1].

When we review the comparatively short period of our human evolution, as compared to the 15-billion-year span of this universe, we can see that our present physical form and mentality are only intermediate limited manifestations of what is later to emerge. Sri Aurobindo envisions a transformed humankind in the distant future, with qualities of supermind and superbeing....

In all evolutionary process, new functions are built upon existing structures. Sri Aurobindo views our presently developed form and level of conscious awareness, however limited, as sufficiently evolved at this time to allow for the next step: our own contributing involvement in the very process of evolution. We can quicken the pace of nature's slowly moving development toward its future

manifestation as supermind, and the achievement of what he calls the Divine Life.

"A divine life upon earth, the ideal we have placed before us, can only come about by a spiritual change of our being and a radical and fundamental change, an evolution or revolution of our nature" [2].

Sri Aurobindo asserts that we must become conscious collaborators of our own evolution. To accomplish this, it is necessary to open our mentality to that which exceeds it. The present intermediate task, toward that larger goal of the emergence of a new race beyond *Homo sapiens*, is to learn to resonate and participate with Spirit.

"If a spiritual unfolding on earth is the hidden truth of our birth into Matter, if it is fundamentally an evolution of consciousness that has been taking place in Nature, then man as he is cannot be the last term of that evolution: he is too imperfect an expression of the spirit, mind itself a too limited form and instrumentation; mind is only a middle term of consciousness, the mental being can only be a transitional being. If then man is incapable of exceeding mentality, he must be surpassed and supermind and superman must manifest and take the lead of creation. But if his mind is capable of opening to what exceeds it, then there is no reason why man himself should not arrive at supermind and supermanhood or at least lend his mentality, life and body to an evolution of that greater term of the Spirit manifesting in Nature" [3].

The possibility of transformation sets upon us a responsibility and choice which he calls a "crisis of transformation" [4] in the

process of evolution. It is "as crucial as must have been the crisis which marked the appearance of life in matter or the crisis which marked the appearance of Mind in Life. And our choice is crucial also, for this time, instead of letting Nature work out her transmutations without caring much for living contingencies, we can be the conscious collaborators of our own evolution, accept the challenge or, as Sri Aurobindo says, let ourselves be surpassed" [5].

The consciousness of supermind, or pure Spirit, operates from a transcendent dimension, where nothing is separate or limited. Past, present, and future are linked beyond distinctions of finite and infinite. Consciousness is not only cosmic, but operates as conscious force, at the very heart of matter. Evolution is the divine process of conscious becoming.

In Sri Aurobindo's vision of evolutionary development, our gross physical body and its organs will become unnecessary. They will diffuse into their more subtle spiritual essence, as concentrations of energy force, each having a different mode and play of vibrations, representing present organs only symbolically. This force-field matrix is like chakras or acupuncture points. The force of Mind, linked to Supermind, would direct and move these fields as necessary to accomplish transcendent purpose. Recognizable form would remain, but rather than the solid particles of gross material form, there would be supple, light qualities of Spirit.

The transformation toward supermind is at first gradual and imperfect. We experience it now intermittently as supernormal abilities and exceptional qualities of will and knowledge, or intuition. It is an inner secret, a creative potentiality to be discovered and nurtured. Since there are no presently evolved functions or organs of body and mind adequate for the full expression of supermind, existing systems must be transformed for that purpose.

This radical change is brought about by the energy of kundalini shakti. The kundalini corresponds to earth energy and the shakti to Spirit. Kundalini shakti is a subtle, self-intelligent energy which, when awakened and evoked, can take hold of the human life processes and perfect them by harmonizing them with the transcendent.

The shakti is the descending, transforming force of supermind. A person with "quiet mind" can experience this as a flow of current or fluid mass, drawn down through the head and body. It may form itself as a spiritualized intuitive light and power in the mind, or it may momentarily transform the whole being to the supramental level.

Kundalini is the latent ascending earth energy, symbolized by a coiled serpent at the base of the spine. When it is awakened it rises up, working up through the field of the spine, to break through constructions and impediments which limit spiritual development.

The aim of Sri Aurobindo's approach, beyond awakening the ascending energy of kundalini, is to answer that aspiration with an invocation, calling upon the descent of Spirit as the transforming force of shakti.

"When the Peace is established, this higher or Divine Force from above can descend and work in us. It descends usually first into the head and liberates the inner mind centres, then into the heart centre...then into the navel and other vital centres...then into the sacral region and below.... It works at the same time for perfection as well as liberation; it takes up the whole nature part by part and deals with it, rejecting what has to be rejected, sublimating what has to be sublimated, creating what has to be created. It integrates, harmonises, establishes a new rhythm in nature" [6].

As the new higher energy rhythm becomes established, it drastically changes one's relationship to the Spirit-Matter matrix. One comes to participate more and more fully with Spirit, as one's physical and mental state moves toward the properties of Spirit.

Itzhak Bentov describes a Western technical physiological model of the kundalini mechanism [7]. He sees it as the operation of a stimulus moving along the cortex caused by acoustical standing waves. Since the body is reflected in the cortex, these changes in

resonance overcome the accumulation of stress or blockages in body functioning. Thus kundalini involves the accelerated development of the nervous system. It provides an increased harmony with the underlying pulsing of the universe.

Sri Aurobindo describes various levels of consciousness between nature and supernature, mind and supermind. The "psychic being" is...the personality of the evolved soul. It acts to guide one toward the right and true from within. In his epic poem *Savitri*, Sri Aurobindo writes:

"Earth must transform herself and equal Heaven
Or Heaven descend into earth's mortal state.
But for such vast spiritual change to be,
Out of the mystic cavern in Man's heart
The heavenly Psyche must put off her veil
And step into common nature's crowded rooms
And stand uncovered in that nature's front
And rule its thoughts and fill the body and life" [8].

A simplified model of some of Sri Aurobindo's thought can be represented as 4 concentric bands which interpenetrate each other. The outer one represents the concept of supermind, which has just been discussed. It is without outer boundary. It is the infinite-beyond, pure Spirit, operating outside our presently evolved possibilities of direct contact. The band in the center, with greatest density, represents earthbound characteristics, called "life-mind." It includes instinct, impulses, and unconscious mental dynamisms. This is surrounded by a higher functioning, less dense, "rational mind," which has the potentiality of controlling and improving the life-mind. This in turn is enveloped by the "intuitive mind." Its functioning is more closely linked to supermind, the source of pure reason. The accomplishment of an intuitive mind is thought to be within the presently evolved possibilities of human development.

The life-mind, in the center of the model, is equated with density in the subconscious and physical processes. It is controlled by fears, desires, needs and attachments. It is perplexed by throwbacks and failures, convictions of errors, and is dragged down by illness of body and mind. It is experienced as weariness, sorrow, revolts, and fearful reluctance to escape from its own unsatisfactory condition. The life-mind is governed by lower, irrational instincts and impulses, without much higher intuitive contact. Its thoughts are those of rationalization, which directly serve the ego's illusions. Its actions tend to be irrational or erratic, dull or imbecile. At worst, it is without the essential character of humanity [9].

The rational mind, or reasoning intelligence, can be viewed as a continuum or intermediary agent between the lower life-mind and the pure reason of the higher intuitive mind. Sri Aurobindo suggests that the person relying on intellectual reason alone has a limited range of functioning, because the Self, the larger thing behind reason, is not included in its activity: "If he limits himself by the rational will and intelligence, he imposes an arbitrary restriction both in extent and kind on his self-development, self-expression, knowledge, action, Ananda" [10].

He distinguishes between pure reason and mixed reason [11]. What we typically think of as rational he calls mixed reason, as it is limited to conclusions reached from the input of our senses. It knows only the phenomenon which appear in relationship, process, and utility. Its rationality cannot see beyond its own present field to an awareness of the depths of being. Rational intelligence ignores its own limitations by reducing all of its experience to rational formulas which obscure the real nature of underlying thought and action. It is prone to illusion and misdirects the lower life-mind. "The excess of the reason only makes life artificial and rationally mechanical, deprives it of its spontaneity and vitality, and prevents the freedom and expansion of the spirit" [12].

The true place of the rational mind is as a functionary of the higher intuitive mind, translating its pure reason and higher wisdom into terms of intelligent mentality, in order to enlighten the lower

life-mind. "To accept, examine, develop, intellectually utilise the intuitions that escape the barrier and descend into the mind from the superconscience" [12]. It can, in Freud's terms, "make the unconscious conscious," and serve to govern and regulate the life-mind toward a higher rationality. A far more important function of the rational mind, however, is that it can aid in nature's evolving process by infusing the life-mind with the supramental energy of the Divine Shakti.

Intuitive mind, the third band, is a power of our psychic being, breaking through into the denser nature, which can direct us always toward that higher evolution. "The supermind in the lower nature is present most strongly as intuition, and it is therefore by a development of the intuitive mind that we can make the first step toward the self-existent spontaneous and direct supramental knowledge" [14]. In the development of the lower by the higher reaches of consciousness, intuition awareness is the important initial task of mankind. [To be continued]

EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

S.D. Verma

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1. The Force

The concept of consciousness and its accelerated evolution is rooted in the ancient Vedic lore and the scriptures of almost all spiritual adventures of the world in some form or other. In the present century this doctrine and its yogic techniques have been unraveled by Sri Aurobindo in a unique manner to suit the modern intellectual mold of mankind.

Western thinkers have described consciousness in abstract terms as the faculty of knowing and as the totality of a person's thoughts and feelings. On the other hand, the Indian seers found in their inner perception that consciousness is a living force which is capable of being evolved to higher planes. It is concrete as an electric current, but the main difference between the two is that while consciousness is an animate and growing force, the electric current is not. The Vedas mentioned consciousness as Agni, the mystic fire, and the yogis described it as "Jeevani Shakti," the force of life. In Tibetan yoga it has been termed the "silver chord" and severe disciplines have been prescribed for its infinite expansion.

There are 3 main streams in a living body—the blood, the vital force, and the consciousness. Their main flow is either downward or diffused throughout the body. However, the yogis discovered in the laboratory of their spiritual realization that, if the flow of these 3 streams is turned upwards to the apex of the head, the human personality acquires tremendous power—physical, mental, and spiritual. For this purpose the yogis devised special techniques. By constant yogic practice the individual consciousness not only rises upward but can expand beyond the gross physical body. On the other hand, consciousness is capable of being evolved, in quality so to say, up to the highest supramental level, within the human body or outside it, in an infinite silence. And then peace, power, freedom, knowledge, and bliss become manifest. Therefore the yogis came to the supreme conclusion that the true evolution of man does not lie in becoming more and more intelligent or more and more saintly, but more and more conscious.

The Vedic Rishis discovered that the fundamental components of the entire creation are only two, viz., Akasha (ether or space) and Prana (energy). Out of Prana all forces of the universe have emerged. Motion and thought are manifestations of Prana. The ultimate source of Akasha and Prana being the same primeval Power

Notes

1. Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1960), p. 152.
2. Sri Aurobindo, *The Mind of Light* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1971), p. 78.
3. *The Life Divine*, p. 109.
4. Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1949), p. 292.
5. Satprem, *Sri Aurobindo or The Adventure of Consciousness* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1970), p. 308.
6. Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, Tome II (letters on yoga) (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1958), p. 277.
7. Itzhak Bentov, *Stalking the Wild Pendulum, on the Mechanics of Consciousness* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1977), pp. 137-153.
8. M.P. Pandit, *Light from Sri Aurobindo* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1966), p. 34.
9. Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1976), pp. 750, 818.
10. Ibid., p. 767.
11. *The Life Divine*, p. 60.
12. *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 820.
13. Ibid., p. 819.
14. Ibid., p. 767.

(the dynamic aspect of the Divine, in the terminology of Sri Aurobindo), these two are mutually convertible, i.e., Akasha into Prana and vice versa. And consciousness is the manifestation of that primeval Power in the universe, as on the physical plane sunshine is manifestation of the sun. According to the Mundaka Upanishad (I.1.8), "By energism of consciousness Brahman is massed, from that matter is born and from matter, life and mind and the worlds." Consciousness can be evolved to act on matter and transform it. The ultimate conversion of matter into consciousness and of consciousness into matter is the aim of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga.

Modern science has also arrived at the similar conclusion that the atom, which is the most minute indivisible form of all substance, is composed of space, in which electronic charges move with tremendous velocity. Einstein has proved that matter and energy are convertible and that matter is condensed energy.

Consciousness is a universal force, a presence without which nothing exists in the universe. In inert and insentient matter consciousness exists in the dormant state of nescience or unawareness, although matter appears to be inconscient. In vegetation and plants it exists in a sleeping or subconscious state. In animals it is in the primary stage and in man in a further evolutionary stage. But man is not the last rung of the ladder of evolution and is heading towards the next stage, that of supramental beings, or supermind. The further evolution (or transformation, in Sri Aurobindo's terminology) of the consciousness of man to the supramental consciousness can be accelerated by the sadhana of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga.

In relation to the human body the various functions of consciousness are

1. *an inner consciousness within the body.* According to the Mother (of Sri Aurobindo Ashram), mind is an instrument of action and formation, and not an instrument of knowledge. Spiritual life is a vast field of the evolution of consciousness. Knowledge comes from a higher consciousness which is evolved from the depth of the soul.

All great discoveries and inventions in the fields of spiritual and material sciences, all great works of poetry, literature, art, philosophy, administration, etc., have been possible through the evolution of higher consciousness in man. This truth had been es-

established by the Vedic Rishis. However, modern science has stumbled upon the same fact without recognizing the role of consciousness in the evolutionary process of the human race. Albert Einstein, who advanced the Theory of Relativity, has said: "The mind can proceed only so far, upon what it knows and can prove. There comes a point where the mind takes a leap—call it intuition—and comes out upon a higher plane of knowledge, but can never prove how it got there. All great discoveries have involved such a leap."

With the ascent of the inner consciousness to higher planes, the intellect becomes more and more subtle and refined. The mind also mounts to higher planes of superconsciousness, viz., higher mind, illumined mind, intuitive mind, and overmind. Ultimately, after crossing the barriers of the mind, one enters the realm of the Truth-Consciousness, or the supramental consciousness.

2. as a protecting envelope of the body.

In this form it is termed "environmental consciousness" or the "circumconscient." Various yogis have also described it as aura or etheric body. According to Sri Aurobindo, if one becomes aware of the consciousness, one can erect a protective envelope around oneself, so that any vibration (of lust, anger, violence, etc.) gets dissolved in it like smoke, instead of entering one's body and harming it or moving it to action. Even the uplifted arm of an assassin or the leap of a snake or tiger can be stopped by it, as was witnessed on several occasions in the life of Gautama Buddha. Another remarkable instance of the positive and stable peace established by the environmental consciousness is that one night a cyclone had burst with torrents of rain, in Pondicherry. The Mother hastily came to Sri Aurobindo's room to help him shut the windows. However, she was surprised to see that he was seated at his writing desk as usual. The windows were wide open and not a drop of rain had entered his room. The conscious peace which reigned in that room was so compact that the cyclone could not penetrate it.

The circumconscient can also be evolved as sufficiently sensitive to disclose to us a person's approach beforehand or to make us avoid a mishap just at the moment it is going to overtake us.

3. as a stream of force emanating from the body.

Through such stream of consciousness (termed the "silver chord" by the Tibetan yogis) one can direct an idea so that it enters someone's head in a far-off place and make him act accordingly. One can also create a visionary body at a far-off place or bring informa-

tion even from a distant place. One can see, one can feel across the continents, even to the planets and stars, as though distance did not exist. The limits of space do not hamper consciousness, which can be anywhere it wishes in a moment if it has learned to widen itself. When the consciousness of a yogi becomes liberated from his physical body, it expands in such infinite vastness that he lives always, occasionally materializing a visionary body. Instances of such liberated beings, who are devoted to some particular mission of the Divine, have been cited in Theosophical literature and Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

The universal and omnipresent force of consciousness evolves and then involves in a perpetual cycle in the universe. It is manifestation of the ultimate reality of the cosmos.

Science has not been able to explain the real cause of the phenomenon of gravitation. This can be explained by yoga quite rationally as the result of the presence of consciousness in each atom. To cite another instance, an American scientist, engaged in research into the nature and working of unicellular bacilli, discovered that, although the organism consisted only of the nucleus, the protoplasm and the cellular wall, it was attracted by and drawn towards certain substances but was repelled by and moved away from other substances. During the 17 years of his research, he could not discover any scientific reason for this phenomenon. According to the Mother, there is "the Presence of the Divine in the atom." God is Sat-Chit-Anand (Existence, Consciousness, Bliss). The unknown entity which the scientist failed to detect is consciousness (the Sat-Chit), which animates the one-celled organism.

Sigmund Freud reiterated the conjecture of the Vedic Rishis that nine-tenths of the consciousness of man pertains to the inconscient and subconscient realms. This vast storehouse of past experiences and latent knowledge is utilized for accelerated evolution of consciousness by yogic techniques which have been devised by Sri Aurobindo after deep research of various disciplines of the East as well as the West. Thus what would have evolved normally in the universe in millions of years can be attained in a few centuries; what would have taken innumerable lives to perform and achieve can be realized by the individual aspirant even in his present birth. And the summit of such evolution is the manifestation of the supramental consciousness and the appearance of a race of supramental beings on earth.

THE WORD

In the beginning was the Word. In the spiritual history of mankind the word has held special sway. There is the Word of God, the inner word, and all the words that spiritual seekers and seers have used throughout the ages to give a mental form to the spiritual truth they have experienced and to help lead others to it. All of them, however, have complained of the frustrating inadequacy of words to express their experience.

Still, monuments of the Word mark man's wandering evolution, each speaking to its own time and place, each with its greater or lesser power of useful endurance, often inspiring and uplifting far beyond their time. And each generating lesser words, a kind of obligato accompaniment, sounding the overtones and undertones of the primary Word. But, of course, words are disputable, even when charged with Power. After all, two things must be ready together: the Word and the hearer.

And now once again we have the Word. And, as before, this new Word is adapted to our time and place. This Word comes to us in English and in French. We are not accustomed to having the Word come to us in accessible languages, modern languages, the language of our passports, our road signs, our advertising, our popular fiction, the very breath of our idiomatic cries to each other. But so it has.

Sri Aurobindo, of course, wrote in English. He wrote English as no Englishman or anyone else has ever done before. His works are all the more monumental when one remembers that the major ones were written serially, often more than one at the same time. *The Life Divine*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *The Human Cycle*, *Essays on the Gita*, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, *The Foundations of Indian Culture* and others came pouring through Sri Aurobindo like a mighty flood of light, crystallizing into a great still living palace of light towering upward, lifting up those who look upon it. Here is the Word turned like a diamond, the one Word seen from countless angles but drawing the sight to one single source, the source of Light itself.

The power of these words is mantric, for Sri Aurobindo's power of expression was breathtaking, his mastery of the English language so far surpasses that of anyone who has written in English. So great was his mastery of it that he could use English with a creative ease, handling complex structures and long sentences effortlessly and lucidly, incorporating structures from other languages (notably French) and even coining new words that seem quite natural, while bringing the greatest clarity, a luminous, vibrating clarity to the mental sense. Consequently, his works, even his most "prosaic

prose," take even more power when read aloud.

And then, of course, there is *Savitri*, his unfinished epic—one hesitates to call it a poem so much beyond what we consider poetry is it. But there it is, over 25,000 lines of the greatest poetry ever written, with a vision of the universe and man and God that throbs with an immediate life, and a brilliant coherence throughout its complexity, accompanied by a symphonic music which is there just behind the words even when read silently, and a power for evoking mental images that is so great that reading it is like watching a three-dimensional motion picture.

This living body of writing is Sri Aurobindo's gift to the world, that is, a gift one can hold in one's hands, caress in one's mind, guide one's life with—there are naturally other gifts. He came to do more than write.

And then there is the Mother. Her language is French. I say "is," for She seems still to speak. French, of course, is the language of precision, clarity and accuracy. You can say exactly what you mean in French and leave no doubt about it.

Mother's writings and published conversations have been familiar to many for some time. The English translations, except for those she made herself and what Sri Aurobindo made, are serviceable, sometimes awkward, but convey the sense and, frequently enough, a very moving power ("I invite you to the great adventure"). The Energy which presses for change, the change the Mother wants to lead us to, is always there in her words (and in her photographs). They are full of little snares which catch hold of you and make you think that now, perhaps, after all, it's time to get over the silliness of this life you've been leading and do something worthwhile.

And there is her *Prayers and Meditations*, a work of extraordinary power, but not written with a view to being read. They are intimate conversations with God, prose poems one could call them, fire and ice, elegant, passionate, yearning, humble, sublime.

Yet one always had the feeling that either words were not Mother's métier (she would be the first to agree) or that she was holding back and perhaps holding back a very great deal. At least in her talks and her writings (her physical presence was another matter altogether). Was Mother's work to be almost wholly within herself and, as she often enough said, visible to others only at the end, when she had achieved the goal? Was she holding back? All her energy expended in her "inner work" (which turns out to be an outer work after all), in the creation of concentric circles of work and organization (the Ashram, Auroville), like the ripples on a pool? Was that to be her splash? And a few paintings, some music (which she herself said were not extraordinary)? And, of course, an indelible mark on several thousand souls. A footprint burned into their breast filling them with bliss, or kicking them forward, forward, ever forward on the path. But yet why that nagging sense that she was holding back?

It turns out that the Mother was not holding back. She was not broadcasting, but she was recording everything. And that record is the *Agenda*.

The *Agenda* is a work so unique that it may take several centuries (as Mother suggested for *Savitri*) for people to grasp it. So far 5 volumes of the projected 13 have been issued, of these conversations Mother held with Satprem, who tape-recorded most of them, transcribed them and read them back to her for further elucidation. Ostensibly, they were to be concerned with the process of physical transformation; in fact, they deal with a spectrum of spiritual experience and life so broad and encompassing as to stagger the reader. For here in the *Agenda* the Mother stands revealed as she was revealed for the most part only to the inner consciousness of aspirants.

Here is the Mahashakti embodied, words spilling from her lips as she spontaneously gives a verbal shape to an inner life of breath-taking vastness and complexity. And unsheathed is her power, the Divine Energy pulsing, throbbing, radiating, punctuated by her laughter—oh, how she laughs! That she may not weep.

The *Agenda* reveals in a minute, detailed way what it means to live a "spiritual life." Many people talk of it, some do it, for a few minutes or a few hours, a day, a few days, a month. Here is a spiritual living minute by minute, hour after hour, in which the aspirant allows not one thing to escape being a possibility for growth—she never stops growing, she never stops progressing, not for one second. She never "relaxes." Waking and sleeping, her experiences go on, never being repeated. And Mother seems to live consciously on all planes at once, functioning on all planes, but always, always trying to bring out into the physical plane the supreme truths, always pressing to make a real change in the physical plane.

And here is a Mother we have not seen before, not speaking to children on the Ashram Playground or to recalcitrant disciples (though Satprem has his rebelliousness), but speaking as though to a friend, a cultural equal, a confidant, in her native tongue, laughing and joking. She is unrestrained as she pours out what she sees and feels and "thinks"—about experiences with disciples near and far, world events (the Chinese attack on India, the assassination of Kennedy, an inner contact with two Popes, the war in Algeria), about the human resistance everywhere, about Tantrism, Buddhism, Christianity, occultism, about her own life—and lives—, her family, her mother, her associations in various incarnations with the Lord of Falsehood ("I've had fine company in my life"), but most of all about the unique experience of the transformation. Step by step, day by day, she gives the account of the process in her body. It is an extraordinary document—and only 5 volumes have so far been issued! There are 8 more!

And her force is so present in the *Agenda* that it is as though her hand were pulling back the fingers of our mental grasp upon the world, releasing, almost forcibly, the mental grip we have on things, so that something else can happen. It is a liberating experience to read it.

And the *Agenda* is a demonstration/illustration of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, particularly the concluding section, the Yoga of Self-Perfection, which deals specifically with physical transformation. It is this section of Sri Aurobindo's work which most of his commentators ignore—it is notably absent, for instance, from M.P. Pandit's *Dictionary of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga*. But it is perhaps just as well that commentators have avoided it—Mother makes plain how far from the mark many interpreters of Sri Aurobindo have been and the Yoga of Self-Perfection was in fact left for Mother to do. It had had no practical application before she undertook to do it. But it required the ascent of the consciousness to the supramental plane and then its descent into her embodied being to transform the instrumental nature, and the body is last in the process.

Her experience in this Yoga of Self-Perfection is a revelation, for she plumbs the depths of the subconscious and casts new light on that dark and vast field, finds her body consciousness becoming one with all bodies, the very cells of her body becoming conscious (so conscious that she even suggests that the cells may be able to carry on the work of transformation without being maintained as a body!), makes extraordinary discoveries about death and dying, illness and pain. The experiences come one upon the heels of another, her whole life is experience, conscious experience. Indeed, her whole life is Yoga, an unrelaxing demonstration of Sri Aurobindo's three cardinal principles of Yoga: aspiration, rejection and surrender. Relentlessly, through every difficulty and pain. And indeed her repeated motto is "Endure, endure, endure." She watches her body beginning to take on new functioning, her hearing, her vision, her sensation. In fact almost all her spiritual experiences of her last 20 years were physical, felt in the physical consciousness.

Her capacity for spontaneous verbalization of her experiences (and she is experience-prone!) is awesome, the equal of Sri Aurobindo's poetic capacity. And yet throughout she complains of the restricting inadequacy of words to express the experience and the sense. Fortunately, Satprem has been able to give more than just the words themselves: he records her gestures and expressions, and

also there are cassettes of many of these conversations available, so one can hear the Mother's voice, its intonations and inflections, her laughter, her exclamations—and her organ playing and her singing.

Perhaps of special interest in the *Agenda* is the role of Satprem, a destined role. Many, Westerners in particular, will probably find a great affinity with many of the problems he faces in his sadhana, about which he speaks, sometimes at length, with Mother. (And his difficulties, too, provide Mother with experiences in her own sadhana. Indeed, Satprem writes *The Adventure of Consciousness* during the *Agenda* and reads it to Mother, who reveals its origins and its far future.) His active, seeking mind, his restless and rebellious vital nature, his romanticism, his wish to have "experiences," to "see something," will all strike chords in other seekers, and Mother's replies to him should certainly be of enormous help. Satprem may be a sort of prototypical disciple, and many will be able to identify with his particular problems, and will even find the questions he puts to Mother regarding passages in the *Agenda* so much something that would occur to them that they may feel Mother is speaking directly to them.

And of course she is. For this *Agenda*, she says, is her gift to "those who love me."

It is unique in the spiritual history of the world, it is autobiography, occult history, evolution, news commentary, handbook

of Integral Yoga, a vibrant illustration of spiritual living. But most of all it is a "laboratory notebook" of transformation. And it will certainly be *experienced* as her gift by all who feel love for Mother. Her energy is in every page, and her unyielding aspiration that *this world change* and no longer be the cradle of suffering and darkness and pain and falsehood it has been throughout its evolution. And it is her own body she uses as the laboratory to bring about the change. Her body is the body of the earth. And she makes quite tangible what many things we have heard really mean: feeling all the world in oneself, widening the consciousness, rising above, standing back, being both witness and participant, etc. These are experiences people have had on the higher and inner planes; Mother has them in the physical consciousness.

So the world has been given two great gifts: Sri Aurobindo's and Mother's legacy of radiating love and power touching every act, every movement of consciousness, every feeling and thought, every nerve and cell, and sweeping them up into "a mother's arms." Who can doubt that the time has come? —Eric

[The Agenda, of which 5 volumes have so far been issued, is available only in French, from Institut de Recherches Evolutives, 32 avenue de l'Observatoire, 75014 Paris, France (cassette recordings of most of the conversations are also available from the Institut). An English translation is in preparation but the publisher has not given any date when it will be issued. If you wish to be notified when an English translation is finally ready, please write to Matagiri.]

EXPRESSIONS OF AUROVILLE

FOOD GROWING IN AUROVILLE

It has been six months since our Food Growing in Auroville pamphlet went out expressing our new agricultural hopes and prospects and requesting financial help towards their realisation. We feel that it is now time for a brief assessment of the first phase of the project, to let you know what progress has been made so far. We plan also to send you a full report of our production and a summary of the food-growing accounts when all the crops are in for this season.

First, however, let us thank everyone whose response to the food-growing proposal has helped us not only to get moving physically on the land, but also really to come closer together here in our efforts to create a more coordinated food production and distribution organization in Auroville. Out of this process a Food-Growing Cooperative has already emerged in which 14 different food-growing centers in Auroville are now participating. To outline briefly how this makes possible a clearer overall view of the food-growing situation and a greater degree of mutual support among those who are involved in this activity:

1. All the Food Coop members meet once a month, and more often if necessary.
2. A Food Coop Envelope has been established with a monthly budget requirement fixed at Rs 6,000 [about \$750] (to be modified as required).
3. A record is kept of all food produced and supplied to the community by each food grower.
4. The aim of the members is to produce food for the community and to produce a minimum yearly average of food equivalent to at least 50% of the amount of funds provided by the Envelope for food growing. (Keeping in mind the condition of Auroville's soil, the time and energy required to regenerate it, our organic approach, and our many other simultaneous activities, this 50% return may be understood to be more realistic than it might sound, and a reasonable margin within which to accomplish the work.)

For this season's overall food-growing effort we have received (as of November 10, 1979) a total of Rs. 23,718 [about \$2965] to help us get the "monsoon" phase of the planting season underway, with varagu, rice, ragi, ulundu, peanuts, etc., which will either soon be harvested or else planted late. Because of the unexpected failure of the summer monsoon, it has been impossible to plant kambu, a millet that is particularly important here as a food for ourselves and for the cows and chickens—and, on the whole, much less agricultural activity has been possible than we had hoped. Of the Rs. 52,867 [about \$6600] requested for monsoon crops, only about Rs. 20,000 has actually been required, and so the remaining Rs. 3,000 that we have received above our requirements, and any further amount that we may receive, will be used for what we have called "irrigated crops," such as vegetables and fruit orchards, and in some cases rice and peanuts, etc.

The Food Coop will be responsible for the allotment of these funds, as it has been for the monsoon crops, and the work will now be based on a regular monthly budget of Rs. 6,000, as we have said (in good faith). One-half of this amount has been guaranteed each month by a member of the Auroville community and so we have the grace to be able to say at this point that we need only cover the remaining one-half, or about Rs. 3,000 [about \$375] per month, and any additional expenses that may arise. The food-growing activity will, of course, be an ongoing work in Auroville and with this season's formation of the Food Coop, it should continue in an increasingly organized, harmonious and effective way.

If you wish to help, please send your contributions for food growing to the Auroville Pour Tous Fund or to the food-growing centers in Auroville. [Contributions may also be made through Matagiri and other U.S. centers.]

Thank you, from all of us in Auroville.

There is a lot of work to do in Matrimandir now:

- to remove the old wooden tower, useless for the next phases of the work and dangerous because it's rotten; to store this wood, which will be needed for the construction of the sphere;
- to build the new crane to lift the precast beams (two months' job in the workshop);
- to continue to precast the beams for the sphere;
- to complete the shutterings for the concretings of the first ring-beam of the sphere;
- to start the ferrocement cover on the pipe structure of the ramps.

For all this huge work that is ready to be done there are only 15 and 20 people working there daily.

It is not easy, it is not simply a physical work; one has to bear the tension of the inner battle, we hope the last Auroville battle, against the forces that want to suffocate it.

Now the Matrimandir workers realise the impossibility of going on in the work without a complete clarification with the claims of the Sri Aurobindo Society:

"The ownership of the Matrimandir is vested in the Sri Aurobindo Society..."

"...you are not cooperating with the Society or obeying its order. This is tantamount to gross indiscipline."

"...You are given a month's time to vacate the house allotted to you for residence in Auroville..."

"You are hereby relieved from all or any job assigned to you in Auroville." (From letters of the Sri Aurobindo Society of 17 October and 26 September 1979, directed to Piero Ciconesi, the architect of the Matrimandir.)

The SAS again pretends to be entitled to the absolute obedience and total surrender of Aurovilians. But it is only to Mother and Sri Aurobindo that we will submit and to no human beings or institutions. The surrender is a free choice and not an imposition or something that can be obtained with the help of law and the police. [From *Auroville Notes*.]

Faced with physical facts, what do we do about them? Meeting them in the day-to-day life, we do not, yet, meet them all the time in the same way, neither do we, all of us, meet them at the same in one identical way—even if this "us" is limited to the number of beings who live physically in Auroville. Many layers influence, color, alter each one's capacity to perceive—the ideal, and the individual's formations or interpretations of it—the aspiration, its quality, vibration, and the role one allows it to play within oneself as well as in one's life-movements and mental evolution—the frustrations, the desires, the delicate balance of forces and movements that occur in each one's particular atmosphere and reality—and, inescapably, at every instant, the whole of the terrestrial situation constantly changing, uncountable opportunities passing by one after another.... And the mind gives up!

One is left with one unique absolute imperative necessity: to learn to perceive truly, more and more truly, and accurately, and to move along. This very necessity implies all the terms of the progress, of the Yoga, when grasped within the reality of each one of us.

For everyone, an objective picture of the events at Matrimandir would be taken, one grey morning, late October 1979: in the newly rearranged office, a dozen or so Aurovilians discussing quietly the different needs and tasks of Auroville's present, in the format of the just reborn Cooperative; in the back room, freshly rewalled, a bunch of gentle "constables" quietly playing cards, and trying to discreetly listen to the radio, to pass time not too badly; on the structure, two Aurovilians busy dismantling a half-rotten wooden tower; in the workshop, a few Aurovilians and a few employees precasting small concrete beams, cutting and welding steel pipes to construct a new crane; out by the sheds, another few Aurovilians clearing off and storing the wooden beams recovered from the old towers; on top of the roofs of some of the sheds, several hired men rethatching and fitting asbestos sheets; nearby, out on the first hill of the Gardens, under a hospitable neem tree, a group of men, once carpenters at Matrimandir, now paid by the Sri Aurobindo Society



Matrimandir construction, 1979. Photo by Bill Sullivan.

to make an act of presence at Matrimandir; somewhere by the entrance to the area, a police van; walking back and forth in the gloomy day, carrying files under his arm, a single man, one of the secretaries of the Society; down in the Gardens, two hired watchmen chasing cattle away....

Depressing? Humorous? Encouraging? Upsetting? Mysterious? Meaningless?

For one who is part of the events, being directly concerned with them, daily, and, through them, with the processes which they merely help to fix and materialize...there's a great deal of sense. And "good sense"!

Here are the seeds of all wars and conflicts held in the silence of the Grace.

Held by the pervasive humor of a smile that knows and grows.

Held by the wisdom and strength of a conscious Reality slowly, inevitably, realizing itself in Matter.

Held? Held...and something more...held and...quietly, thoroughly...undone.

One spot. One moment. One place. A daily crude experience. And yet...so much more, so much...

The old hierarchies gently break down, at least, as a rotten fruit gently turns to soil?

At times, one would like to tell one's ideal, as one reaches for a child who knows not enough yet that after the rain the sun shines again. "Don't worry! Yes, one day soon, everyone of goodwill and sincerity *will be* able to come and help and grow here!! But now, see, the door is narrow. Please, let us concentrate. Let us pray. And trust. Let us move." [From *Auroville Notes*.]

GREENWAYS: AN INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM FOR AUROVILLE

[Following are extracts from a report prepared by Auroville Land Service.]

...There's a story about an anthropologist studying a group of "primitive" people who used trees to communicate across long distances. A man on a trip would call home by tuning in to the proper tree. When his wife attuned to her home tree, she'd get the message. "Why is it that you use trees for communication?" the anthropologist wanted to know. "This is a *very* poor land," came the response, "and we've never been able to afford telephones."

People living in intensely industrialized situations rarely experience the full spectrum of human synchronistic/synergetic possibility. The calm joys of "just happening" to be in the right place at the right time are denied to a civilization constantly talking to itself, bent on arranging everything in advance.

Living without mechanical means of communication, when contacting someone is *always* a matter of personal effort, a kind of sense develops which tells you—not infallibly but accurately enough to be interesting—when and where you're likely to run into someone you want to meet. You go out on the road with "just a hunch" that the person you want to meet might be out there too and—not always, but often enough—you do in fact meet that person. There's nothing mystical or "new age" about this. It's a simple fact of life for that majority of the world's population still surviving beyond the borders of industrialized civilization.

But the calm joys of synchronicity are dependent to a large degree on a vibrant supportive atmosphere, and most of the planet's roads are far from that. Trundling achingly through hot dust, in the sun's unshielded glare, an attitude of communicative openness is hard to come by.

What we have in Auroville is a traditional communications medium—teashop, temple and road. To ignore the ecological root causes of communications failure in our area by overlaying a high-tech network is thus not a solution, besides the inevitable complications with maintenance and servicing and governmental resistance



David Wickenden at work in Auroville. Photo by Sally Walton.

to such a system. In communication as in economics, politics, religion, recreation—any area of human life that you care to name—the Earth now demands approaches that are life-giving, nonexploitive, serviceable, kindly, arising out of an interactive and interrelating and *wholly responsible* consciousness.

So, as a primary option for internal communications in Auroville we've chosen greenways, the "simple act" of planting trees along the roads: the cleansing and cooling, protection and regeneration of our collective nervous system. Around here, however, the "simple act" of planting trees is not so simple at all.

In the Auroville area the forces of exploitation and entropy so far outbalance the forces of life and growth that a "simple" tree-planting project takes on the aspect of a military operation. Thousands of pits need to be dug in the compacted red earth, tons of compost hauled in to replace long-vanished topsoil, hundreds of workers organized into coordinated teams, watchmen deployed to keep off free-grazers and foragers, support facilities such as bullock carts, hand and wind pumps, water tanks implemented, a complicated operation set underway not merely to plant a few thousand trees in a flurry of activity, but most importantly to support, protect and manage the plantation for years to come.

It seems like a lot of trouble and energy, just to plant a few trees. It seems, though, more and more, that the "simple basics" of life on this planet, things such as trees and water and crops that past generations took for granted, have been so undermined and exhausted by the rush of industrial civilization that *enormous* expenditures of "trouble and energy" are now required "simply" to recreate a capacity for continuing growth on Earth. *This* is the real point, after all, no matter what else we may say or do about the "new age" or the "whole planet" or the "infinite universe."

We're going to plant trees along the roads here and it'll be a true communications medium benefitting all in the area. The work of setting up the system will involve hundreds of local villagers, and channel thousands of rupees directly to the small farmers, landless and unemployed who need it most. Maintenance—watering, weeding, pruning, protection, etc.—will keep many employed over longer periods of time. Choosing trees of economic (and nutritional) value opens further future employment possibilities—as with our larger afforestation program, eventual economic uses of trees are expected to generate a wide variety of local work options.

As many of the roads are under governmental control, we'll be working directly with the District Forest Office on this project and, as in previous collaborations with them, a fair portion of what we spend on the work will be refunded by the government to be reinvested in the green work. The Hexiad project germinated the green-

ways program and will be capable of some degree of seed funding, but carrying out this work will take more funds than Hexiad has presently available. Auroville belongs to humanity as a whole and all are invited to participate in the experiment. For further information on the project, write:

Green Communications
Auroville Land Service
Unity Resources
Auroville 605101, India

[Donations for the project may be made through the centers listed below.]

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR AUROVILLE

May be made through Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc., Mt. Tremper, NY 12457; East-West Cultural Center, 2865 W. 9th St., Los Angeles, CA 90006; Auroville Association, 212 Farley Drive, Aptos, CA 95006; all tax-exempt; or through Sri Aurobindo's Action Center, P.O. Box 1977, Boulder, CO 80306. Please specify how you wish your donation to be used. In India tax-deductible contributions may be made to Auromitra—Friends of Auroville Research Foundation, Auromitra Centre, Aspiration, Kottakuppam 605104, India. Those wishing to send their donations directly to Auroville can send them by registered airmail to Auroville Pour Tous Fund, c/o Myrde Fator, Tapoloka at Certitude, Auroville 605101, India.

Auroville Today, an all-India exhibition, with audio-visual display, talks, workshops, and sales of Auroville products is being planned. It will travel to the major cities of India, with about 5 Aurovilians. Contributions for the program are invited. Donations may be made through the organizations listed at the end of the Auroville news section.

THE MOTHER ON AUROVILLE

Question: Does the construction of Auroville require a working method, organisation and coordination?

Mother: Discipline is necessary for life. To live, the body itself is subject in all its functions to a rigorous discipline. Any relaxation of this discipline causes illness.

Q.: What should be the nature of this organisation, in the present and in the future?

M.: Organisation is a discipline of action, but for Auroville, we aspire to go beyond arbitrary and artificial organisations.

We want an organisation which is the expression of a higher consciousness working to manifest the truth of the future.

Q.: Until this group consciousness appears, and until we can work collectively in the true and right way, what should we do?

M.: A hierarchical organisation grouped around the most enlightened centre and obeying a collective discipline.

Q.: Must we use organisational methods which have proved effective but which are based on human logic and the use of machines?

M.: This is a makeshift which we should tolerate only very temporarily.

Q.: Must one allow individual initiative to manifest freely and inspiration and intuition to be the moving force behind personal action, and should one reject all ideas not felt as good by the interested party?

M.: In order to be workable, this requires all workers of Auroville to be yogis conscious of the Divine Truth.

Q.: Has the time come to wish for, to set up, to try for a general organisation, or should one wait for the right attitude and men?

M.: An organisation is needed for the work to be done—but the organisation itself must be flexible and progressive.

Q.: If to wait is the solution, nevertheless it is necessary to define organisational principles and to avoid uncontrollable disorder?

M.: All those who wish to live and work at Auroville must have an integral goodwill; a constant aspiration to know the Truth and to submit to it; enough plasticity to confront the exigencies of work and an endless will to progress so as to move forward towards the ultimate Truth.

And, finally, a word of advice: be more concerned with your own faults than with those of others. If each one worked seriously at his own self-perfection, the perfection of the whole would follow automatically. 6/1/69

At Auroville nothing belongs to anyone in particular. All is collective property. To be utilised with my blessings for the welfare of all. 14/5/70

To the inhabitants of Auroville: Only those who have resolved to stay in Auroville for good have the right to intervene in its organisation. 22/1/71 [From The Mother on Auroville (Auroville: Auropublications, 1977), pp. 70-72.]

PROGRESS (2)

[Following is the second installment from the Auroville report Progress, concerned with "the physical work and manifestation in Auroville with an aim to providing regular information about communities and projects for friends around the world."]

Handicrafts (2)

Fraternity: Late in the fall of 1972, Brian and Sally, an American couple, met with Palit, a Bengali living in Aspiration, to discuss ways of realizing his idea for establishing a cultural interchange with the local village and providing employment to its inhabitants. They decided to establish a handicraft center and on February 2, 1973, Fraternity was founded across the road from Kuilapalayam behind a grove of ancient tamarind trees. A large keet and bamboo workshop was quickly erected to accommodate the first work in weaving, crocheting, and grass table mats. The number of Tamil villagers involved quickly grew from 10 to 30, a kindergarten was added for their children, and several new Aurovilians joined the work bringing ideas and skills to develop new projects, such as floor mats, tailoring, glowballs (paper lanterns), and hammocks. With all this under one roof, the need for expansion became apparent and in mid-1973, with funds from the German FAO, they were able to construct 4 modern workshops and a new kindergarten. A well and pump were also provided for use by both Fraternity and the village. (This was their first really adequate water supply and was especially appreciated by those in the community who had been planting trees and gardens on the barren land.) The move to the new buildings made it possible for a Belgian man to bring his woodworking shop to Fraternity from Aspiration, more villagers were employed and new looms were added to the weaving unit.

Up to this time, products had been sold exclusively in the local shops, but towards the end of 1974 the first export order was received for a large number of woven cotton bedspreads. During 1975 exports increased dramatically, especially as a result of a made by Brian with the English firm of Oxfam. Sally's year-long stay in Findhorn established contacts between the two communities and a friend from Findhorn later joined Fraternity to set up a candle-making unit. Towards the end of the year the first export license was granted by the government and regular orders began coming in from Ashram and Auroville centers around the world.

From the beginning a number of Aurovilians and visitors had participated in Fraternity for varying periods of time and in various aspects of the work. Early in 1976 several more permanent members joined—Roswitha and Valdemar from Germany, who initially took up the care of the garden, and the first Tamils to join as Auro-

vilians. The latter included John, who shares some of the administrative responsibilities, his brother Stephen, who joined the weaving section, and Ramesh, a graphic artist. As sales continued to expand, several new workshops, an office, a showroom, and a community kitchen were added, and Lotus, a retail outlet, was established in Pondicherry for all Auroville handicrafts. About a year later Roswitha began seriously developing the tailoring section and Valdemar began organizing a pottery, called Pour Fleur, for making flower pots, cujas (water jugs) of all sizes, and special creations such as temple horse figures. These items are not produced for profit but as a service to Auroville.

On January 1, 1979, Fraternity joined the Artisana Trust. During the year other new developments included the reconstruction of the original keet and bamboo workshop to provide space for a second woodworking unit and construction of new workshops for crochet, mats and pottery.

Joy: In September 1973 Auroville found itself pushed out of the nest financially and a concentrated search began for ways to develop self-sufficiency both in long-term projects such as food production and in more immediately beneficial ways. It was this crisis that brought Janet (who had come to Auroville from Canada in 1968) into handicrafts work. She went to Aurocreations, where she received a supply of thread, a 5-minute lesson in crochet, which she had never tried before, and a lot of encouragement. During the next year she went regularly into one of the villages not far from where she lives, near the Center, taught 20-25 women to crochet simple halter tops to be sold in Pondicherry, and gave art classes to their children. About a year later someone gave her a crocheted lampshade to see if it could be copied and she began working up various designs, using cane rings as a solid form for the crocheting. As a result of a modest donation in early 1975 from friends in Canada, she was able to construct a simple workshop near her house which afforded a more controlled environment than was possible in the village, and the women began coming there to work. In September of the same year samples were taken to Germany by another Aurovilian, resulting in the first large export order and a possibility for expansion. From that time, due to gradually growing exports, she has been able to hire and train many women, though she has found that the lampshades, more than other kinds of crochet work, demand a skill and degree of perfection which puts a natural limit on the number of women she can work with effectively. She now has about 6 women working daily in a new, simple, attractive studio with up to 6 other women taking work to their homes...

Harmony: ...In 1973, Gerhardt, who had been doing design work with Aurocreations in Pondicherry, came in contact with an American living in the new community of Kottakarai who had an interest in silk screening. Together with 2 other Aurovilians, one of whom provided funds for the construction of a workshop, they took on their first printing order from Auropress in Aspiration. With this seemingly auspicious start, they went on confidently printing Kolam cards on handmade paper (a Kolam is a traditional Indian design having a particular meaning or symbolism), but further orders were not forthcoming. Finally, with shelves overflowing, Gerhardt went to Germany to search for an export market. He came back with an order—but not for Kolam cards! Quickly, he and his wife, Bobby, constructed a tailoring workshop complete with sewing machines, tailors and helpers, with funds provided by Gerhardt, and worked hard to complete the large order for men's cotton shirts. But again, this single order proved a dead end as far as export was concerned and, though they continued selling locally, this was not successful enough to offset the running expenses and reluctantly they closed the workshop. Through their contact with the tailors and helpers, they had come to appreciate the seriously inadequate conditions in the nearby villages, especially in the harijan (untouchable) colonies. As they were searching for another product that would create both employment for the villagers and support for Auroville, they were joined by Andre, who had the idea

for making incense. While Andre set up a workshop (again privately funded by Gerhardt), Gerhardt and Bobby went to the U.S. to try to establish export contacts, and returned with a sufficiently large order. A few small orders followed, then stopped, and for the third time they found themselves with a project dependent on local sales for survival. In order to reach a potentially larger market and also with the idea for a permanent exhibit of all Auroville and Ashram handicrafts, they opened a boutique in the main department store in Madras. But overhead is very high, tourist seasons very short, and this project, as with all the others, is being kept afloat only through Gerhardt's personal finances. Without an upswing in the next few months, the shop will have to close.

During this time Gerhardt and Bobby have supported the building of schools in 2 neighboring villages, each attended by 80 children from the harijan colonies. The children are given a light meal and the 2 employed Tamil teachers are instructed in English and teaching methods by Ivar, an Aurovilian living in the Greenbelt community of Discipline. It has always been hoped that the handicrafts would eventually support this work.

Kottakarai Pottery: With a donation from America, the first workshop and kiln were built in Kottakarai in 1975. Constructed in a Japanese style, its simplicity, attention to detail and site in the center of a grove of casuarinas give one the feeling of stepping into a transported corner of Japan. Initially it succeeded in producing colored, unglazed beads for jewelry and decoration for lampshades, and a few specially designed earthenware pots. But pottery, especially here in India, is far from being a ready-made business and requires many months or years of research into clay types, firing temperatures and glazes. As there was neither funds nor people to carry the work further, the pottery was unused for some time.

With the arrival of Raina, a young Indian girl from Calcutta who had studied pottery in Delhi, at the beginning of 1979, energy was put into the reopening of the workshop. Now 3 to 4 Aurovilians are working with the help of the Golden Bridge Pottery in Pondicherry. Funds have come for the construction of a new wood-fired kiln for salt-glazing and for improvement of the workshop. Their plan is to produce beautiful houseware, a much needed item here, as well as beads, special pots, etc., for use in Auroville and for sale.

Santosham began in March 1976 when Valerie, who had come months before from England, began to realize the importance of Auroville's effort towards self-sufficiency. She began designing clothing, beginning with a few simple styles which were made by local tailors and decorated with embroidery by one village woman working in her home. During the first year she gradually developed several new styles and began using only cross-stitch for the handwork. With financial help from the Auroville Association in California, she was able to build a small workshop for the 4 village women who were then coming daily. As the women developed more skill in embroidery, more delicate cross-stitch designs were introduced and some of the women learned to do fine crochet work which is used for yokes and edging.

Working in collaboration with Aurocreations, Santosham developed export contacts abroad, especially in France, but the workshop remained about the same in size. This year, however, it was felt to expand to include 4 more women and a tailor. This step was taken not only to increase production but to expand the potential of the village women, to offer them a wider possibility of expression and the opportunity to learn useful skills through contact with Auroville....

Douceur: The name Douceur is most often associated with the attractive and carefully tailored clothes found in several boutiques in Pondicherry, but Douceur is also a partially self-sufficient community near Aspiration, with fruit trees, agricultural areas, chickens and two cows. When it began with 3 Aurovilians in May 1976, it was first a kindergarten and then an informal school which included older children as well. As a result of their contact with the children, they began making puppets, and this gradually evolved into the cre-

ation of clothing. Though some export orders came through Aurocreation, most of their items were shown locally and, as sales increased, they were able to expand the workshop while contributing to the community. As the growth of the handicraft workshop began to demand more and more time and energy, it became impossible to maintain the high quality of their products and keep up the work in agriculture and animals. Therefore, they decided to cut back production to a controllable limit so that their products would again reflect their aspiration for perfection.

Encens d'Auroville: In November 1976, using an available space in Fraternity, 5 Aurovilians began working to develop a new incense that would be superior to commercially available products in both fragrance and manner of presentation. Although one of them had had some pharmaceutical experience, none knew anything about perfumes or incense making, and everything had to be discovered by trial and error. As soon as possible, they began selling the new incense in local shops, using the profits for further experimentation in both incense and scented candles. But it was not until the last months of 1978 that they felt they had solved the major problems and reached a level of quality acceptable as a minimum standard and a base for further refinement. They then moved to an empty building in Aspiration, reduced the number of paid workers as more Aurovilians became involved, and concentrated on developing the business aspects of the work. They feel strongly that products made here are a representation of Auroville itself and as such should always reflect our highest aspirations. The products are constantly being improved and much energy has gone into new ways of packaging often evolving into useful and beautiful handicraft items in themselves. An attractive handcrafted wooden holder is distributed to retailers for displaying the incense packets in their shops and the packets themselves are made from handmade paper decorated with a new design printed by silk screen in Aspiration. Finely crafted rosewood boxes are also made and sold containing incense packets, one design having a brass incense holder in the lid. Beautifully hand-stitched leather bags (again, sold containing incense packets) have been so well received that they have begun creating new styles specifically designed as purses.

At present, profits which go to the community through Artisana Trust are generated mostly from exports to Europe. Encens would like to develop more contacts in India and America. The 7 regular Aurovilians who are sometimes joined by others from the community, feel that they have now achieved a good balance with 20 paid workers who roll the incense and do some of the carpentry. Though they have always given primary consideration to quality, they now feel in a position to grow without sacrificing this aspiration for perfection and beauty.

Bellaura Crafts: Another of the small-is-beautiful projects is Bellaura Crafts, which makes uniquely ornamented leather items. It was begun by Dee, an American who learned leather work in Australia in 1976, and when she returned to Auroville near the end of that year, she set up a small workshop in the bottom of her towering keet and bamboo house (or, as she puts it, the house is in the workshop). Beginning with one Tamil boy who soon displayed an exceptional natural ability and an especially affable personality as well, she began experimenting with different types of dyes and polishes, learning how to handle the Indian leather, which is rougher and less uniform in shape than the Australian leather. Although the bags, wallets and other items have always sold in local shops as fast as they were made, it has only been in the past few months that Dee feels finally satisfied with the quality of the finishing. She now has a very harmonious group of 5 boys who assemble the articles and are learning to do painting, dyeing and some carving of the designs. Most important, and Dee includes herself in this, they are all developing a more acute sense of detail and perfection. Other Aurovilians help with the accounts and occasionally with designing, but most of the designs are Dee's, usually highly ornamented symbolic themes, often using figures from Indian mythology.

Dee was one of the founding members of the Artisana Trust.

Varuna: A wish for comfortable and beautiful shoes, here where the local offering is usually limited to rubber thongs and plastic variations, inspired a couple of young women to begin experimenting during the last months of 1978 using crepe soles and crocheted tops. Aware that other Aurovilians would also be interested in an alternative to Indian chappals, the work was soon taken up seriously, first with 4 people and finally by an Australian couple working in their house with one Tamil woman. Using leather or crepe soles, the tops are crocheted in a variety of colors and in any of four basic styles. They have experimented with different types of material for the crocheting, dyeing it themselves, but commercial dyes have not proved satisfactory and they are still searching for alternatives.

During the past month several new possibilities have opened up. One which is perhaps the most important to future development is a small workshop. They have hired a cobbler with some basic experience who can be trained to do their special type of work and he has already shown a talent for copying their designs. As a result, they are now offering sandal repair as a service to all. They have also hired a second Tamil woman for crocheting and have been joined by another Aurovilian who helps with bookkeeping. New directions in creativity involve the very recent discovery of cold-water, colorfast batik dyes and the beginning of a new line of imaginative designs for children.

Services

Pour Tous: The original inspiration for Pour Tous (For All) came from Clair, a young woman who had come to Auroville from the U.S. It was a very wide idea in keeping with the Mother's wishes concerning the use of money and material goods in Auroville. The Mother envisioned an economic system based on contributions according to capacity, material support according to need and the evolution of consciousness necessary for this system to be effectively true. Inherent in such a system would be a movement away from the use of money as such within Auroville—an ideal towards which we are still growing but which is much too complex (or too simple) to be achieved overnight as can be seen from the development of Pour Tous.

When Pour Tous opened on February 28, 1974, one of the first functions was to establish a system to translate money coming into Auroville into material goods and to pay hired Tamil workers in goods rather than wages. This contact with the villagers determined the location of Pour Tous at the point where the community of Aspiration touches the village of Kulapalayam. The effort to supersede wages did not eventually succeed. The orientation then shifted to provision for Aurovilians on an individual account basis; Aurovilians would deposit a lump sum, either personal funds in the case of newcomers and visitors, or "Prosperity" money from donations to Auroville, which were at that time channeled through the Sri Aurobindo Society. Another function of Pour Tous from the beginning was the first emergence of what was later organized separately and called the "Free Store," a free exchange of goods of goods of all kinds, new and used.

During this time the work of Pour Tous was mainly carried out by 3 people, Clair, Surabhai, another Aurovilian, and one paid worker. They were joined in February 1975 by Christine, who still carries most of the responsibility for accounting, purchasing and distribution, and in July by Ramesh, a young Indian living in Pondicherry. Ramesh also joined Auroville about this same time and still does purchasing in the market in Pondicherry. Meanwhile, Clair had to return to the U.S., but several other Aurovilians began to participate in the work. One idea that was successfully implemented for some time was the incorporation of other services, such as the bakery and laundry in Aspiration.

In January 1975 Auroville took its first step towards financial independence with the establishment of the Pour Tous Fund. Ironically, the Sri Aurobindo Society provided the catalyst with a pledge for the continuation of a monthly sum to be paid directly to Pour Tous, replacing the individual "Prosperity" allotments. In

BILA Pierre

I was trying hard to concentrate: I had to write something for the *Auroville Notes*. That was very important. I could not be disturbed. Trying hard to build a wall against all intrusion, all noises, all laxity.

Then, I was asked to bring Bila to Ami. She wanted to play with her friends. Asking that, to me! Now!

I kept the grumbling for myself and took the burden....

I walked in silence and she followed me...not in silence, but like a little cascade of sunny remarks. I started to melt down and listen to her. Oh, not to the words, but to this wonderful message, behind. Then I saw myself playing a little hide and seek. "After all, five minutes' recreation is all right," and she laughed and played funny mischievous tricks....

Then, it was as if I had not seen the sun...and the blue of the sky ...and the leaves and the birds.

And then, suddenly, that was IT. A joyous vastness, multitudinously vibrant, laughing, inviting, with the beautiful laughter of Bila in the center and her two large blue eyes which seemed to reflect this joyful immensity. Everything collapsed: it was so good to bathe in the instant, to be, just be, beyond all these plans of words, ideas, work, responsibilities. "It's so simple," she seemed to say, "just be like me!"

And we came back, digging every detail, the curve of this branch of cashew, this little hiding place, the footprints of a dog, the cry of this green bird.

I looked at her, the little sorceress who had led me into that beautiful world, into THE world, but she had no time to ponder: she was too busy with her new friends—a group of caterpillars hiding behind a flower pot...

* * *

And this leads to a quite important issue: education.

Who is educating whom?

Who needs guidance?

The children? The adults? This experience seems to point to the latter. And yet, little Bila did need, really needed, someone to accompany her in the frightening adventure of 200 meters of cashew topes to cross.

I gave her some of "my" time, but she "paid" it back so much that even now, after 3 weeks, writing this article put me back in contact with the sky, the birds, the leaves gently dancing in the wind, a beautiful world's whole key was two blue eyes.

Bila, and you too, Angiras, Usha, Mukta, Swaha, Sukrit, Swada, you need us...but we need you too, a lot. Without us, you are lost, your energy easily turns to tears or circles aimlessly... Without you, we would become so strong, so sure, so important, so dry, so empty....

In order not to repeat the mistakes of usual teaching and education, we have simply dropped the whole thing. That was no doubt necessary.

But still, there is a sort of need, a gap to fill.... [From *Auroville Notes*]

MORNING REVERIE

John H.

Ah.... Tuesday! my morning to go up and help out at the Workshop. Three dozen Aurovilians on the job there every day. Fantastic! By the end of this year [1979] we should have the job done—one thousand precast beams for the Matrimandir skin. Let's see, at the rate of 4 beams a day, and now we're in February with 200 done...that means 200 days more.... Today there will be that group from Fraternity and those 3 from the Green Belt and...

And that crew that's putting them up on the structure, wow! I haven't seen such a flow of energy since back in '72. Imagine! Forty people, 4 teams...the skin has grown more every week I go up to Center and see it.

Maybe I'll move up there and work full time... Friday afternoons for sure, for now.

So much joy there...dynamism...feels really like the heart of it all.... [From *Auroville Notes*.]



Scenes at Matagiri.

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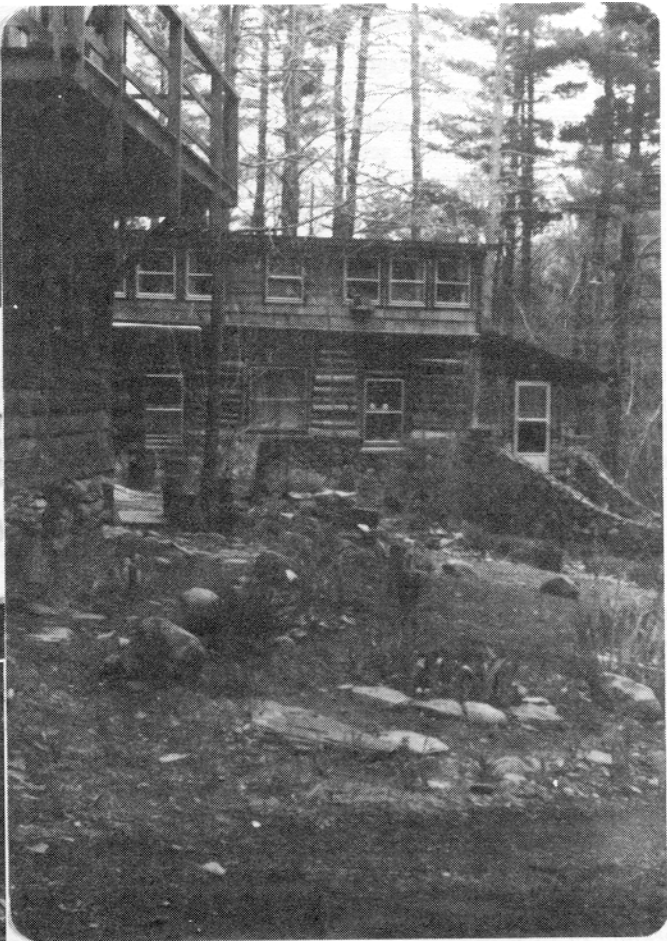
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NEWS OF MATAGIRI

Recent visitors to Matagiri included Muriel Spanier of Sri Aurobindo's Action Center in Boulder, Colo.; Edith Schnapper and Joy Calvert, from England; Arabinda Basu, a longtime disciple of Sri Aurobindo and eminent scholar and writer, who taught the fall term at the University of Iowa in Dubuque; Balkrishna Poddar of the Sri Aurobindo Books Distribution Agency in Pondicherry, India, who had attended the Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany.

GENERAL NEWS

- Aaron Miller, dean of experimental and interdisciplinary studies at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights, Ky., reports that the Urban Studies Program of the university presented a program on "What Is a City" the week of November 26, 1979. The slide presentation, which was given continuously in the Student Center lobby during lunch time, contained material on Auroville.

NEWS OF CENTERS

East-West Cultural Center (2865 W. 9 St., Los Angeles, CA 90006; 213-480-8325) offered a number of programs recently, including a talk by Dr. Vasant Merchant of Northern Arizona University on January 6 on "Man and His Symbols." For details on regular activities and meetings, including Sanskrit classes, call or write the center.

Dr. Tyberg, founder of the center, who had been ill for some time, is reportedly doing well.

Casa Sri Aurobindo has moved into new quarters. The new address is Antonio F. Germano 442, Jardim Vitoria Regia, 15100 S.J. Rio Preto, Sp., Brazil. They report that they have also resumed publication of their beautiful magazine *Ananda*, which contains translations into Portuguese of Sri Aurobindo and Mother's works, articles and graphics and photographs.

- Eugene Finn (91 Kilmarnock St., Boston, MA 02215; tel. 617-262-6390) holds a meditation for those interested in Sri Aurobindo on Tuesday evenings. Call or write for further details.

Gene is also teaching a course on Sri Aurobindo at the Free Fenway University in Boston.

CANTICLES

Erika Renon

It is of course the wind that is my friend.
He and the fire, may they blow and glow
and sweep and singe my fringe before I go,
and never pass me by.

And never pass me by as strangers do,
They—friends to one another—
may they be fast friends to me.

I know of course of earth and Sister Moon,
As Francis called her, and of sun and star.
But earth is close, and galaxies are far,
and water, although humble, quick and pure,
is always flowing by.

And it is hard to praise gray Sister Death
who robs and kills, while immortality
remains remote and labors distantly.

So I must trust my dust to wind and fire.
They are my friends because they blow and glow.
One fans the other, both fan my desire
to soar and rage and sweep before I go.

- Tom O'Brien of Matagiri gave a talk and slide show on Auroville to a class in Ideal Societies taught by Professor Judith Gomez at LaGuardia Community College in New York on December 20. Anyone interested in an Auroville presentation for their group may contact Tom at Matagiri.

- Seyril Schochen, an Aurovilian now living in Boulder, Colo., is teaching a course on creative poetry and mystic poems of East and West at Boulder's Free University. The course embraces the visionary poetry of Sri Aurobindo as well as that of Milarepa, Blake, Whitman and others.

- Steve Phillips and Hope Schlorholtz, who had a Sri Aurobindo study group in Cambridge, are currently in India, where Steve is completing work on his thesis.

- M.P. Pandit has recently reported the establishment of the following centers:

Life Divine Center
Stan Andersen
959 Almanor Court
Lafayette, CA 94549
tel. (415) 284-2422

Integral Life Center
P.K. Ramchander
111 Benton St.
Columbia, MO 65201
tel. (314) 442-5256

Sri Aurobindo Study Center
Jack & Mary Alexander
4114 Vesta Dr.
Wichita, KS 67208
tel. (316) 683-1856

Integral Knowledge Study Center
Dr. R.M. Kleinman
P.O. Box 2834
Pensacola, FL 32503
tel. (904) 477-8224

Sri Aurobindo Meditation Center
Navaja Mitchell
17 Mead Ave.
Coscob, CT 06807
tel. (203) 869-4508

Sri Aurobindo Study Center
Manjit Mishra
2721 Luther Dr., Apt. 12
Ames, IA 50010
tel. (515) 232-5836

If you are interested in joining one of these study and meditation groups, call or write the person in charge.

PROMISE *Cliff Gibson*

Till the sun rays
his head over the earth,
and cuts the clouds clean away
and fills our head with his light

and the moon hugs down low
and soothes the heaving sea
and tells the winds
they can stop their storming

and all the men
and all the birds
sing
and the trees and all the earth
finally are flooded
with what they have been reaching up for
all along,

Well, just keep tryin' the best we can.

TAVENTURENTURES IN THE BLACK FOREST

Lynda Lester

[Lynda Lester is a sadhika from California currently spending time at Matagiri. Written several years ago, this piece has a kind of "Alice in Wonderland" flavor.]

Once upon a time I was walking alone through the Black Forest,
Alone, lone, me just myself thinking,
"I've never seen a finer afternoon in the woods;
All the dark pines touched aglowing with
Bright spots of sun gold, oh yes,
A fine afternoon—
Never a sweeter, clear day—
But is there a hue in the air, just beyond?
A subtle magic breathing of spell,
If I read portensions at all..."

When all of a moment,
Rounding a corner in the turny twist path,
Astonishing to my eyes there was unmistakably
Quite effervescently walking, a wizard—
Unmistakenably, oh yes—
Bedecked, berobed in silver.

"Hodie," he said.
"Hodie to you then again," said I.
"And hodie hoho; such a sweet kind of day!
Cyril is my name and magic my lore;
Will you venture an unknown adventure?"
He rambled in an offhandedly mannerism.
"Me, adventure? Turenture? I would," I replied,
A bit confused, albeit ready for a strange affair.

Then chanted the wizard,
"Tarainery, lainery, zamberdee doe,
Dovishka, tovishka, away you go!"
And I began, "Oh Cyrilyril, what *are* you doing?"
But forthwith found myself asailing on...

On asailing and on,
Through water space lands trailing bubbles behind,
Shimmering song all about and inside
With a harmony rill:
And lo, I've become two;
Round we go, me and me, double time
With new notes: I am four;
Melody tone sung in foam I am eight;
Strange to be a profusion of me's,
On sailing on in a water refrain.

Then I tumble and slow,
Lightly ride a rain which falls, falls,
Takes me falling to earth;
And touching, I spring to life:
Eight queer little bodies.
"Hello, me; hello, hullo. Don't you look strange
With your short legs and long beards,"
I say to each other.
"A lovely orange fire is burning alight;
Shall we join hands for a prance in the night?"

"Hey down, hody down,
Tody redody down,
Tootenpah rootento
Dory dundee!"

Such fun I have in the vagary,
Flinging and reeling a one-step two three;
Never the least bit askance
At myself doing a dance made for eight,
Quite the right thing for me to be we.
"Everyone to the center! I hear us all chant,
So we jump into the fire to finish the dance:

ZZZZzzzzZZZ Pfff!

There I am one person, one once more;
Alone, lone, just me myself thinking,
I've never seen such a fine eve in the woods;
Never a finer eve;
Quiet isn't it quiet, quite,
All the dark pines shadowed under the moon

I winder and wander a year smiling,
A pindering and pondering;
And after many the miles stop stocked still:
For before me is none whatinother than a black bear,
Furry curly bear black.

"Hello, bear. Hello, hullo," I said.
"Who are you and what do you do?"
When spoke the bear with twinkle brown eyes,
"My name is Jerome.
I'm a Guide-Over-Sky."
"Oh?" I asked.
"Quite so," said he.

And with that he produced an odd-looking thing,
Called it "guitar" and started to sing;
Pleasing me indeed, and at that
Giving me some puzzlement,
For it seemed he was truly familiar—
Especially parcilarcily when he grew into a man,
A very man!

"Now hooty hoty, what is this about?" I queried.
But he just laughed and offered me more music,
Music so pure of gladness it stole my heart;
And even as the notes left his hands,
They transpired into a crystal stairway
Leading upaway, onup.
Innocent smile-honest, he nodded to say:
"Go ahead, my dear, try;
You know my stairway climbs very high."

So quickly I rose, steps crystal under my feet,
Following, afollowing, afraid not at all;
And the air grew so clear;
Clear, so clean, clear,
Drawing near...

Here:
In curving galaxies a throne made of stars;
And Queen born to infinity I assume my place—
Gold in my hair, peace jewels on my gown,
Crownshine of freedom,
Light winds sweeping my mind.

Here I dwell for an age and a spell
Here I dwell for an age and a spell.

But distant enchantment brings a rhyme round;
Dimly remembered assortment of sound:
"Tarainery, lainery, zamberdee dum,
Dovishka, tovishka—and now, back you come!"

"Oh, Cyrilyril, what *are* you doing?
Cries a child no longer mid-universe;
And forthwith I find myself asailing down,
Sailing adown, down, adown,

To a grassy fine glade at woods' edge
Where I take a glance overshoulder
Seeing only but ordinary quiet,
Quiet quite,
Normal Black Forest trees.

"Oh," I say, "Surely this must be the end.
Thank you for the adventure,
Cyril, my friend.
No more strange magic, places to see..."
So I skip 'cross the meadow,
Home for some tea.



A birthday party in Auroville.