

In Mother's Light

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SRI AUROBINDO'S
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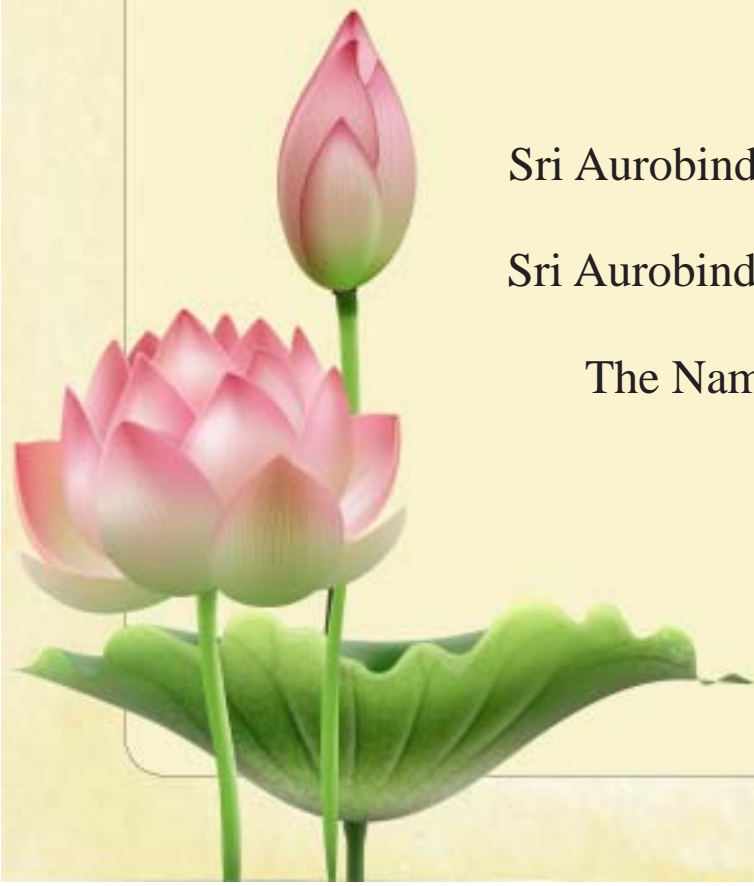
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Spiritual Significance of the flowers given by the Mother



Avatar - The Supreme Manifest on Earth in a Body
The red lotus is Sri Aurobindo's flower.

Nelumbo nucifera. Pinkish red

An Avatar, roughly speaking, is one who is conscious of the presence and power of the Divine born in him or descended into him and governing from within his will and life and action; he feels identified inwardly with this divine power and presence.

SRI AUROBINDO

TO THE STUDENTS

Sri Aurobindo

I have been told that you wish me to speak a few words of advice to you. But in these days I feel that young men can very often give better advice than we older people can give. Nor must you ask me to express the feelings which your actions, the way in which you have shown your affection towards me, have given rise to in my breast. It is impossible to express them. You all know that I have resigned my post. In the meeting you held yesterday I see that you expressed sympathy with me in what you call my present troubles. I don't know whether I should call them troubles at all, for the experience that I am going to undergo was long foreseen as inevitable in the discharge of the mission that I have taken up from my childhood, and I am approaching it without regret. What I want to be assured of is not so much that you feel sympathy for me in my troubles, but that you have sympathy for the cause in serving which I have to undergo what you call my troubles. If I know that the rising generation have taken up this cause, that wherever I go, I go leaving behind others to carry on my work, I shall go without the least regret.

I take it that whatever respect you have shown to me today was shown not to me, not merely even to the principal, but to your country, to the Mother in me, because what little I have done has been done for her, and the slight suffering that I am going to endure will be endured for her sake. Taking your sympathy in that light I can feel that if I am incapacitated from carrying on my work, there will be so many others left behind me. One other cause of rejoicing for me is to find that practically all my countrymen have the same fellow-feeling for me and for the same reason as yourselves. The unanimity with which all classes have expressed their sympathy for me and even



offered help at the moment of my trial, is a cause for rejoicing, and for the same reason. For I am nothing, what I have done is nothing. I have earned this fellow-feeling because of serving the cause which all my countrymen have at heart.

The only piece of advice that I can give you now is—carry out the work, the mission, for which this college was created.

I have no doubt that all of you have realised by this time what this mission means. When we established this college, and left other occupations, other chances of life, to devote our lives to this institution, we did so because we hoped to see in it the foundation, the nucleus, of a nation, of the new India which is to begin its career after this night of sorrow and trouble, on that day of glory and greatness when India will work for the world. What we want here is not merely to give you a little information, not merely to open to you careers for earning a livelihood, but to build up sons for the motherland to work and to suffer for her. That is why we started this college and that is the work to which I want you to devote yourselves in future. What has been insufficiently and imperfectly begun by us, it is for you to complete and lead to perfection. When I come back I wish to see some of you becoming rich, rich not for yourselves but that you may enrich the Mother with your riches. I wish to see some of you becoming great, great not for your own sakes, not that you may satisfy your own vanity, but great for her, to make India great, to enable her to stand up with head erect among the nations of the earth, as she did in days of yore when the world looked up to her for light. Even those who will remain poor and obscure, I want to see their very poverty and obscurity devoted to the motherland. There are times in a nation's history when Providence places before it one work, one aim, to which everything else, however



high and noble in itself, has to be sacrificed. Such a time has now arrived for our motherland when nothing is dearer than her service, when everything else is to be directed to that end. If you will study, study for her sake; train yourselves body and mind and soul for her service. You will earn your living that you may live for her sake. You will go abroad to foreign lands that you may bring back knowledge with which you may do service to her.

Work that she may prosper. Suffer that she may rejoice. All is contained in that one single advice. My last word to you is that if you have sympathy for me, I hope to see it not merely as a personal feeling, but as a sympathy with what I am working for.

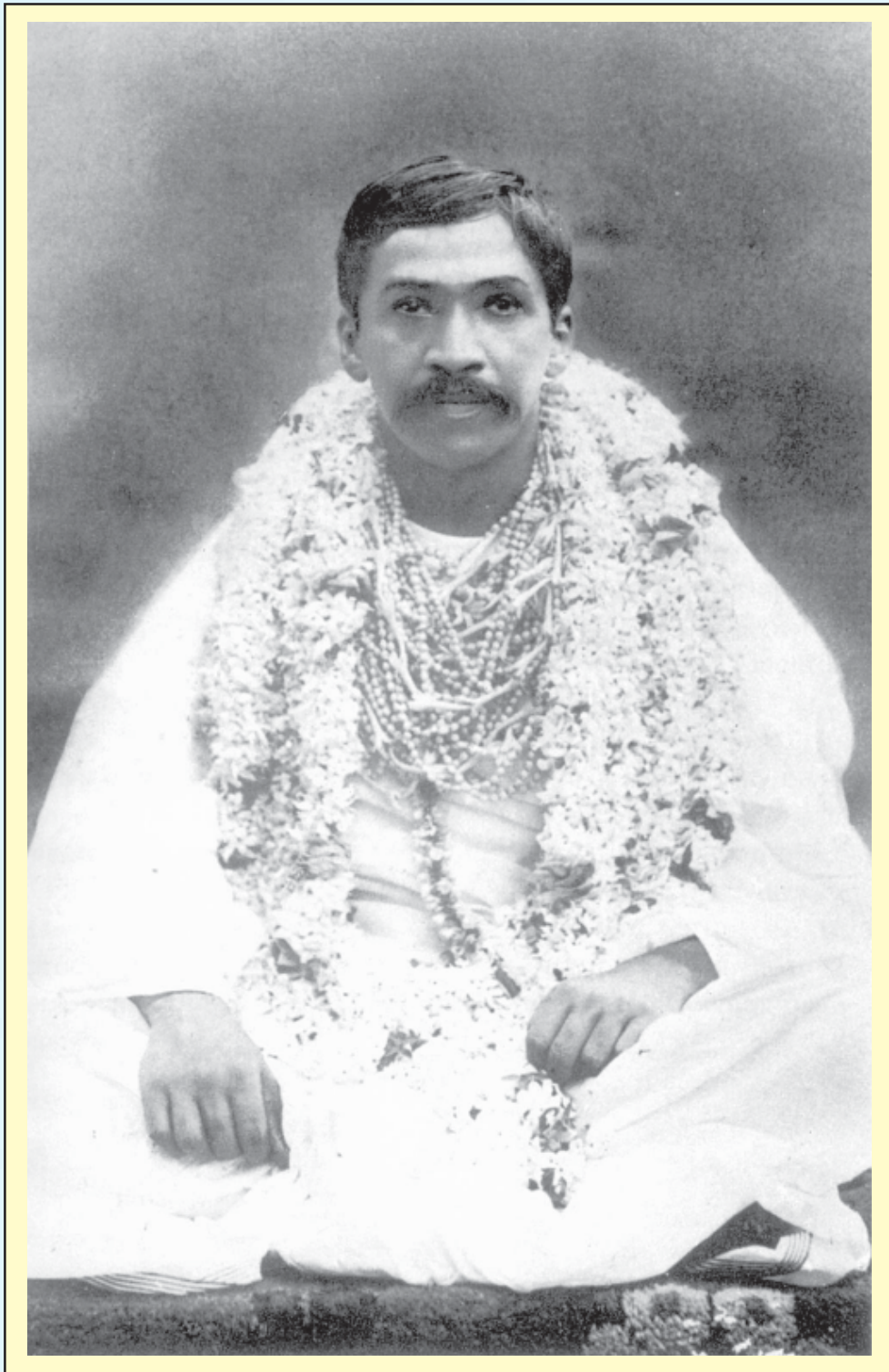
I want to see this sympathy translated into work so that when in future I shall look upon your career of glorious activity I may have the pride of remembering that I did something to prepare and begin it.

What did the teachers at the National College feel about Sri Aurobindo?

At home, in the domestic sphere, at the college, I had rare glimpses of his innate spirituality which made him always keep calm and reticent. I used to sit by him and had the natural advantage of studying some of the remarkable traits of his spiritual life at close quarters.

– Dr . Radha Kumud Mukhopadhyay





*23rd Aug 1907, Calcutta
Before giving the “Advice to National College Students”*

ON INDIA

Sri Aurobindo

Mother India is not a piece of earth; she is a Power, a Godhead, for all nations have such a Devi supporting their separate existence and keeping it in being. Such beings are as real and more permanently real than the men they influence, but they belong to a higher plane, are part of the cosmic consciousness and being and act here on earth by shaping the human consciousness on which they exercise their influence.

*

Each nation is a Shakti or power of the evolving spirit in humanity and lives by the principle which it embodies. India is the Bharata Shakti, the living energy of a great spiritual conception, and fidelity to it is the very principle of her existence. For by its virtue alone she has been one of the immortal nations; this alone has been the secret of her amazing persistence and perpetual force of survival and revival.

*

God always keeps for himself a chosen country in which the higher knowledge is through all chances and dangers, by the few or the many, continually preserved, and for the present, in this *Chaturyuga* at least, that country is India.

*

There are many who, lamenting the bygone glories of this great and ancient nation, speak as if the *Rishis* of old, the inspired creators of thought and civilisation, were a miracle of our heroic age, not to be repeated among degenerate men and in our distressful present. This is an error and thrice an error. Ours is the eternal land, the eternal people, the eternal religion, whose strength, greatness, holiness may



be over clouded but never, even for a moment, utterly cease. The hero, the Rishi, the saint, are the natural fruits of our Indian soil; and there has been no age in which they have not been born.

*

We are no ordinary race. We are a people ancient as our hills and rivers and we have behind us a history of manifold greatness, not surpassed by any other race, we are the descendants of those who performed Tapasya and underwent unheard-of austerities for the sake of spiritual gain and of their own will submitted to all the suffering of which humanity is capable. We are a people to whom suffering is welcome and who have a spiritual strength within them, greater than any physical force, we are a people in whom God has chosen to manifest himself more than any other at many great moments of our history. It is because God has chosen to manifest himself and has entered into the hearts of his people that we are rising again as a nation.

*

India's nature, her mission, the work that she has to do, her part in the earth's destiny, the peculiar power for which she stands is written there in her past history and is the secret purpose behind her present sufferings and ordeals. A reshaping of the forms of our spirit will have to take place; but it is the spirit itself behind past forms that we have to disengage and preserve and to give to it new and powerful thought-significances, culture values, a new instrumentation, greater figures. And so long as we recognise these essential things and are faithful to their spirit, it will not hurt us to make even the most drastic mental or physical adaptations and the most extreme cultural and social changes. But these changes themselves must be cast in the spirit and mould of India and not in any other, not in the spirit of America or Europe, not



in the mould of Japan or Russia. We must recognise the great gulf between what we are and what we may and ought to strive to be. But this we must do not in any spirit of discouragement or denial of ourselves and the truth of our spirit, but in order to measure the advance we have to make. For we have to find its true lines and to find in ourselves the aspiration and inspiration, the fire and the force to conceive them and to execute.



Sri Aurobindo presiding over Surat Nationalist conference
December 1907,
(At his right is G.S. Khaparde, at his left is Tilak, speaking)

ETERNAL PRESENCE

The Mother

You spoke of Sri Aurobindo's birth as "eternal" in the history of the universe. What exactly was meant by "eternal"?

The sentence can be understood in four different ways on four ascending planes of consciousness:

1. Physically, the consequence of the birth will be of eternal importance to the world.
2. Mentally, it is a birth that will be eternally remembered in the universal history.
3. Psychically, a birth that recurs for ever from age to age upon earth.
4. Spiritually, the birth of the Eternal upon earth.

1957

*

Since the beginning of earth history, Sri Aurobindo has always presided over the great earthly transformations, under one form or another, one name or another.

*

It is said that Sri Aurobindo in a past life took an active part in the French Revolution. Is it true?

You can say that all through history Sri Aurobindo played an active part. Especially in the most important movements of history he was there—and playing the most important, the leading part. But he was not always visible.

23 January 1960

Sri Aurobindo is constantly among us and reveals himself to those who are ready to see and hear him.



Sri Aurobindo, immense and very concrete (in the subtle physical), was sitting over the whole compound during the meditation.

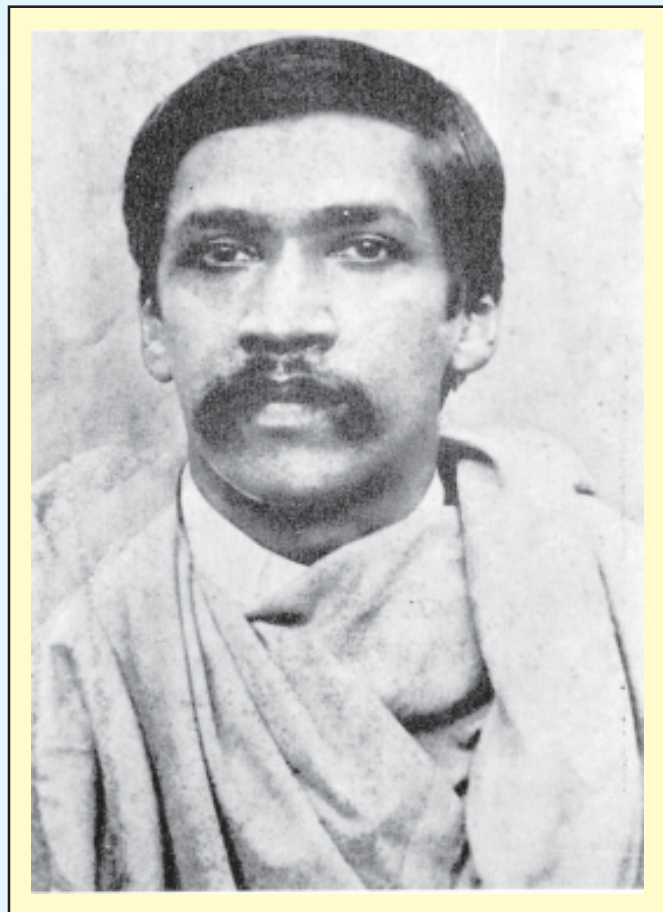
28 August 1962

*

Last night, we (you and I and some others) were together for quite a long time in the permanent dwelling-place of Sri Aurobindo which exists in the subtle physical (what Sri Aurobindo called the true physical).

1 February 1963

CWM Volume 13, page - 10



December 1907 - February 1908

SRI AUROBINDO'S ROOM

The Mother

Question : Somebody wants to visit Sri Aurobindo's room again and sit there to meditate for some time.

Answer : What are his qualifications and titles to such a great privilege? Visiting again is all right. People can come to Sri Aurobindo's room. But to be allowed to sit and meditate there, one must have done much for Sri Aurobindo.

11 June 1960

CWM Volume 13, page - 29

Question : Sweet Mother, You have said that to be allowed to sit in Sri Aurobindo's room and meditate there, "one must have done much for Him". What do you mean by that, Mother? What can one do for the Lord which will be this "much"?

Answer : To do something for the Lord is to give Him something of what one has, or of what one does, or of what one is. That is to say, to offer to Him one part of our goods or all of our possessions, to consecrate to Him one part of our work or all our activities, or to give ourselves to Him totally and without reserve so that He may take possession of our nature in order to transform and divinise it. But there are many people who, without giving anything, always want to take and to receive. These people are selfish and unworthy to meditate in Sri Aurobindo's room.

17 August 1960

CWM Volume 13, page - 29

Mother : Where are you coming from?

Disciple : I was in front of Sri Aurobindo's Room.

Mother : But for what?



Disciple : To concentrate and to absorb the atmosphere, Mother.

Mother : Hmm! But who gave you the permission?

Disciple : I had asked you Mother, sometime back.

Mother : Oh! And did you inform Champaklal?

Disciple : Yes, Mother, he said: If Mother permits, I have no objection. You can stand in front of the door.

*Mother :*All right. You know, one has to be very pure to be able to stand there. The atmosphere in his room is charged with an intense consciousness. One should not stand for a long time. One cannot.

Disciple :Mother, I remain there for five minutes.

Mother : It is all right.

There, — there is the manifestation of the Truth. To be in front of His room is to perceive the Absolute Consciousness. He who knows how to open himself, truly open himself wide and spontaneously, will find His invariable help for everything. It is unbelievable! It is Invincible! And All-Powerful! Do not pretend. In front of Him, one has to be straightforward, scrupulously frank and sincere and one has to simply open oneself to be able to feel His Beatitude.

It is extraordinary, the power of His Reality. No one could stand and no one could bear it if He reveals Himself in His entirety. That is why I was warning you in advance. Never pretend or make a semblance that you are one of those who have the permission to stand before His room. It vibrates with His Presence. Be happy and make of your life a consecration for accomplishing His work here below. It is an exceptional opportunity. Be worthy of it and do not waste time.

(Silence)

What a marvel! What a Power! What Grandeur! The One who was with us, His Power and His Force still vibrate in His room. It is a place for meditation and for receiving the Vibration of the Truth which it emits. It is charged. The presence of Sri Aurobindo is palpably felt by one who is sincere. *Voila.*

August 10, 1952

Blessings of The Grace , page - 109



April 1950
Sri Aurobindo in His Room



PRAYER

Let that Light, beautiful and yet more beautiful, whose home is Sri Aurobindo, be meditated upon – the Light that is the waveless sacred deep, the inmost of man, but which is radiant in union with the Power, the Shakti whose splendour outreaches conception, the Light, the Wonder worshipped by the Wise.

– T. V. Kapali Sastry

OUR SACRED RESOLVE

Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya

It is absolutely certain that we are extremely lucky to be born in the age of Mother and Sri Aurobindo. All their lives, Mother and Sri Aurobindo have worked untiringly for individual and collective progress. Their supreme contribution to the World- Consciousness is the glorious thought of Supramental Evolution. In unmistakable terms they have proclaimed that the Supramental is a Truth and its advent, inevitable.

Not only have they given us the ideal of Integral Supramental Transformation to live for, they have, through their various writings and sayings, shown us that the path to be followed is the path of self-purification through dedicated service, instructed us that the one thing needed to walk on this path is absolute and total surrender and armed us with the 'Ma Mantra' as the protection against all difficulties and dangers. And they have also created for us a place which takes care of all our needs so that, free from the burden of life's responsibilities, we can turn all our energies to the practice of this Truth.

Mother and Sri Aurobindo, our gigantic leaders, have taken up all the responsibility of all those of us who have come to take part in this Supreme Adventure. They are with us all the time, helping us in every possible way.

So, as true followers, should we not concentrate on this work alone and do our best to bring about their Triumph?

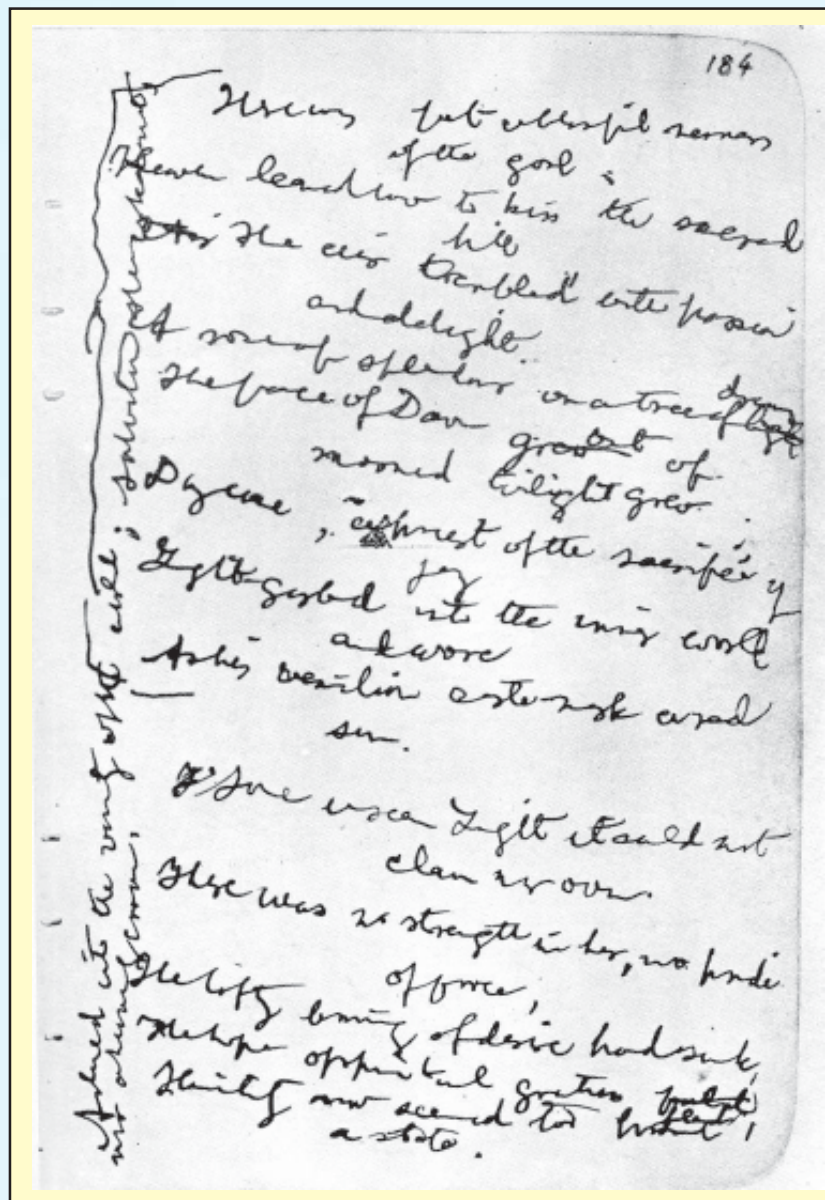
Should we not as their children, be preoccupied with that alone, in waking and in sleep, in all conditions and states of being? Should we not forget our petty selves completely and make a sincere and mighty effort to fulfill their Dream? If we can do that, we are men; otherwise we are no better than animals.



So, brothers and sisters, like true sadhaks, asking for nothing, not even success in sadhana, let us march on and fulfill our duty and responsibility, never forgetting all that we owe to them.

Victoire à la Douce Mère!

Vande Mataram!



SRI AUROBINDO'S HANDWRITING
Savitri. Book VII, Canto V



TO READ SRI AUROBINDO

Nolini Kanta Gupta

I learned that you want to know something about Sri Aurobindo and the Mother from me. But then there are three lines of approach: you may want to know about them, know of them or know them. Of course the last is the best. Indeed if you want to know truly something you have to become it. Becoming gives the real knowledge. But becoming Sri Aurobindo and the Mother means what? Becoming a portion of them, a part and parcel of their consciousness – that is what we are here for. And if you can do that, you know enough. . . . Once I told you, I think, how to study or approach Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in order to read them or understand their writings.

There are two things: studying and reading; I made a distinction between the two. To study Sri Aurobindo is – I won't say fruitless, that is too strong a word, but it can only be an aid or a supplementary way. Study means: you take the text, you understand mentally each word and phrase; if you don't understand, you take a dictionary and try to catch the external meaning expressed by the words. That may be necessary but it is not the way to approach their works.

Simply to read them in the right way is sufficient. Read, it does not matter what you understand and what you do not, simply read and wait in an expectant silence. In studying you approach them with your external mind, your external intelligence. But what is there in the text is beyond your mind, beyond your intelligence. And to understand mentally means you drive your intellect forward into the thing. It is an effort and takes you only to the outside of the thing. It is an exercise of your brain, developed in that way, but it doesn't take you very far. Instead of that, suppose you could keep quiet, silence your mind, and only read, without unduly trying to understand, and



wait for what is there in the text to enter into you. Instead of your intelligence driving forward, pushing forward and trying to catch the thing, let the thing come into you; for what is there in their writings is not words and phrases, dead material, it is something very living, something conscious, that they have expressed in the words, phrases and the sound and rhythm. And I may tell you that each sentence anywhere, not to speak of Savitri, is a living being with which you have to make acquaintance – not that you understand or are able to explain, but it is a living being, an entity, a friend, even a Lover whom you have to know. And your attempt in that way will be rewarded. You will enjoy much more. You may ask: “Just because I open a book and read, how can what are in the lines come to me?” But I say they are living entities – if you approach in the right spirit, they come into you. The consciousness, the being in each line comes to you. And you find how beautiful it is. This is an approach of love, not of the intellect to understand and explain. Take for example, the very first verse of Savitri:

*It was the hour before the Gods awake.*¹

It is a Mantra, a living person, how beautiful it is, you needn't understand much – and a whole world is there.

Or, take the opening sentence of The Life Divine – the rolling cadence of the vast ocean is there. It brings you a sense of vastness, a sense of Infinity and takes you there. And, as I said, it is a very living entity and personality...

Collected Works of Nolini Kanta Gupta, Vol- 4, Page - 254

¹ Book I, Canto 1. - Savitri



15TH AUGUST 1924

A. B. Purani

15 August. Celebration of Sri Aurobindo's birthday. The verandah where he sat was decorated with jasmine garlands and with lotuses which had been brought from a long distance. He came out at 9.15 in the morning and again at four o'clock in the afternoon. In the afternoon he remained silent for ten or fifteen minutes and then spoke for thirty or thirty five minutes. At 6.30 the evening sitting was held as usual. Questions about his life-work were asked. The number of disciples present was between twenty and twenty-two.

The following impressions of the day are reproduced from the records of a disciple.

“Who can describe this day? Nothing can be added by the colours of imagination, poetic similes, and loaded epithets. It is enough to say ‘It was the 15th August.’ No other day can come up to it in the depth and intensity of spiritual action, the ascending movement of the flood of emotions, and the way in which each individual here was bathing in the luminous atmosphere.

No outer materials for this intense joy. From where flows this unlimited Delight! They say the Master was not in such a happy mood these two or three years.

“From early morning the Ashram is humming with various activities: decorations, flowers, garlands, food, bath, etc. All are eager to go to the Master, for his Darshan. As the time passes there is a tide in the sea of rising emotion. It is ‘Darshan’ – we see him everyday, but to-day it is ‘Darshan’! To-day each sees him individually, one after another. In the midst of these multiple activities the consciousness gets concentrated. To-day is ‘Darshan’ – not of a human being but of some Supreme Divinity. To-day is the rare chance of seeing the Divine.



“There he sits – in the royal chair in the verandah – royal and majestic. In the very posture there is divine self-confidence. In the heart of the Supreme Master, the great Yogin – a sea of emotion is heaving – is it a flood that mounts or a flood that is coming down on humanity? Those alone who have experienced it can know something of its divinity. Those who have bathed in it once can never come out of that ocean. He sits there – with pink and white lotus garlands. It is the small flower-token of the offering by the disciples. Hearts throb, prayers, requests, emotions pour forth – and a flood of blessings pours down carrying all of them away in their speed. Lack of faith, all doubts get assurance. All human needs the Divine fulfils and, after fulfilling, his grace overflows. Love and grace flow on undiminished. The look! enrapturing and captivating eyes! Who can ever forget Pouring love and grace and ineffable divinity? If the transcendent Divinity is not here, where else can it be?

“He is usually an embodiment of knowledge. But to-day he is different. He is all love. Here is the Great Poet and the Supreme Lover incarnate! It is inquiring, loving and blessing in a glance! Man does wonders with his eyes and looks, but to do so much, divinity is needed.

“The question is what to ask, love or blessings! Or should one pray for love and blessings both and in addition for the acceptance of unworthy ones like us. Standing on the brink of Eternity the soul saw his dreamy and loving eyes, then was it captured forever. The inexplicable mystery of divine love was here a tangible experience! Who can explain a fact? A fact is a fact and an experience an experience. There is no explanation possible.



“‘What should I give him?’ is the question of the mind. ‘What should I ask?’ is the question of the heart. Both refuse to answer and both are unanswered. The mind feels the insignificance of its offering, and remains mute. The heart is ashamed of its beggar’s attitude, or even feels its pride wounded. How to solve this pleasant embarrassment? The beggar heart carries the day. There is even a kind of curiosity to find out how one is accepted, what happens to oneself.

“But all this was before Darshan. As one actually stands in front all curiosity, all pride, all thoughts, all questions, all resolutions are swept away in some terrific divine Niagara. Thou embodiment of Love Supreme! What transparency! In the heart of the Supreme Master also an ocean of emotion is heaving. The heart melts and falls at his feet without knowing, it surrenders itself! Where is here a place for speech! There is only one speech – the language of the body and its flexion, that of the prostration of the body in the act of surrender, the throbbing of the heart and the flow of tears from the eyes! What a peace, pregnant with divinity! What beauty, this experience!

“Everyone is trying to maintain Samata – equality. Everyone is quiet and is trying hard to remain calm. But to-day all the barriers of humanity are swept away by the flood of Divine Love.

The soul has its Samata – its equality – but the whole nature is in agitation as unknown waters have rushed into it. Knowledge is laid on the shelf – it is all a flood of love. To-day the soul has received the certitude of the Divine’s victory as it had never done before.



“In the dining room all are gathered, bathing and bathed in delight. Everyone is happy – supremely happy – in perfect ecstasy. To-day there is an empire of Delight! O Artist! what a marvellous art! So much of delight – for everyone! – delight that fills each one and overflows.

“At 4 p.m. all gather at the usual place – the verandah. All sit there full of hope in silence; one or two whisper to each other. The mind of the company is silently repeating: ‘When will he come? May he come.’ It is 4.15; the old familiar and yet new ‘tick’ behind the door! Slowly the door opens: The Master steps out first, behind him the Mother in a white creamy sari with a broad red border. He sat in his usual wide Japanese chair. The Mother sat on the right side on a small stool. For a short time, about five minutes, there was complete silence!

“Then he glanced at each one separately. The minutes were melting into the silence. There is again a wave of emotion in all, all bathe again in an ocean of some divine emotion. How wonderful if the whole of Eternity would flow in this experience! Time, poor Time and its flow are blamed by men. But where is the fault in the flow of time? If so much Love and such Divine Delight can have its play, let poor Time flow and have its Eternity! And let the world become divine! Another powerful aspiration that came to the surface was:

‘Expression is not needed – let the whole of eternity flow away in this silence!’ “When the Master came for the evening sitting emanating joy he asked with a smile, ‘What do you want to-day? – Silence or speech?’ As if he had come to confer whatever boon we asked. For a time it was silence that reigned. Then from that silence

a flow appeared to start. The hearts of the disciples were tip-toe with expectation, for to-day they were hearing not human speech but words from -the Divine. To hear with human ears the Lord speak! What a fulfilment!”

The substance of what Sri Aurobindo spoke on 15 August 1924:

“It has become customary to expect some speech from me on this day. I prefer to communicate through the silent consciousness, because speech addresses itself to the mind while through the silent consciousness one can reach something deeper. We are practising together a yoga which is quite different in certain essentials from other methods which go by the same name. According to the old method you have to select the intellect, the emotional being or the will as the starting point or to differentiate between Purusha and Prakriti, the conscious soul and nature. By that we arrive at an Infinite of knowledge, an all-loving and all-beautiful Supreme or an Infinite Impersonal Will, or the Silent Brahman beyond our mind – intellect, emotional being, or will or our individual Purusha.

“Our yoga does not aim at an Impersonal Infinite of Knowledge, Will or Ananda but at the realisation of a Supreme Being, an Infinite Knowledge which is beyond the limited infinity of human knowledge, an Infinite Power which is the source of our personal will and an Ananda which cannot be seized by the surface movement of emotions.

“I have said that the Supreme Being that we want to realise is not an impersonal Infinite but a Divine Personality; and in order to realize Him we have to grow conscious of our own true personality.



You must know your own inner being. This Personality is not the inner mental, the inner vital and the inner physical being and its consciousness as is many times wrongly described, but it is your true Being which is in direct communication with the Highest. Man grows by gradual growth in nature and each has to realize his own Divine Person which is in the Supermind. Each is one with the Divine in essence but in nature each is a partial manifestation of the Supreme Being.

“This being the aim of our yoga we want to return upon life and transform it. The old yogas failed to transform life because they did not go beyond mind. They used to catch at spiritual experiences with the mind but when they came to apply them to life they reduced them to a mental formula. For example, the mental experience of the Infinite or the application of the principle of universal Love.

“We have, therefore, to grow conscious on all the planes of our being, and to bring down the higher light, power and ananda to govern even the most external details of life. We must detach ourselves and observe all that is going on in the nature; not even the smallest movement, the most external act must remain unnoticed. This process is comparatively easy in the mental and vital planes. But in the physico-vital and the physical the powers of ignorance hold their sway and reign in full force, persisting in what they believe to be eternal laws. They obstruct the passage of the higher light and hold up their flag. It is there that the powers of darkness again and again cover up the being and even when the physico-vital is opened the elements of ignorance come up from the lower levels of the physical being. This is a work of great patience. The physico-vital and the physical being do not accept the higher Law and persist.



They justify their persistence and their play by intellectual and other justifications and thus try to deceive the sadhaka under various guises.

“Generally, the vital being is very impatient and wants to get things done quickly, on the physico-vital and physical planes. But this has very violent reactions and therefore the mental and the vital being, instead of seizing upon the higher light and power, should surrender themselves to the higher Power. We have not to rest satisfied with partial transformation. We have to bring down the higher Power to the physical plane and govern the most external details of life by it. This cannot be done by mental power. We have to call down the Higher Light, Power and Ananda to transform our present nature. This requires an essential utter sincerity in every part of the being, which wants only the Truth and nothing but the Truth and can see clearly all that is going on in the being.

“The second condition of the Light coming down and governing even the smallest detail of life is that one must grow conscious of his Divine Personality which is in the Supermind.

“There is sometimes a tendency in the sadhaks to be satisfied with experiences. One should not rest content with mere experiences.

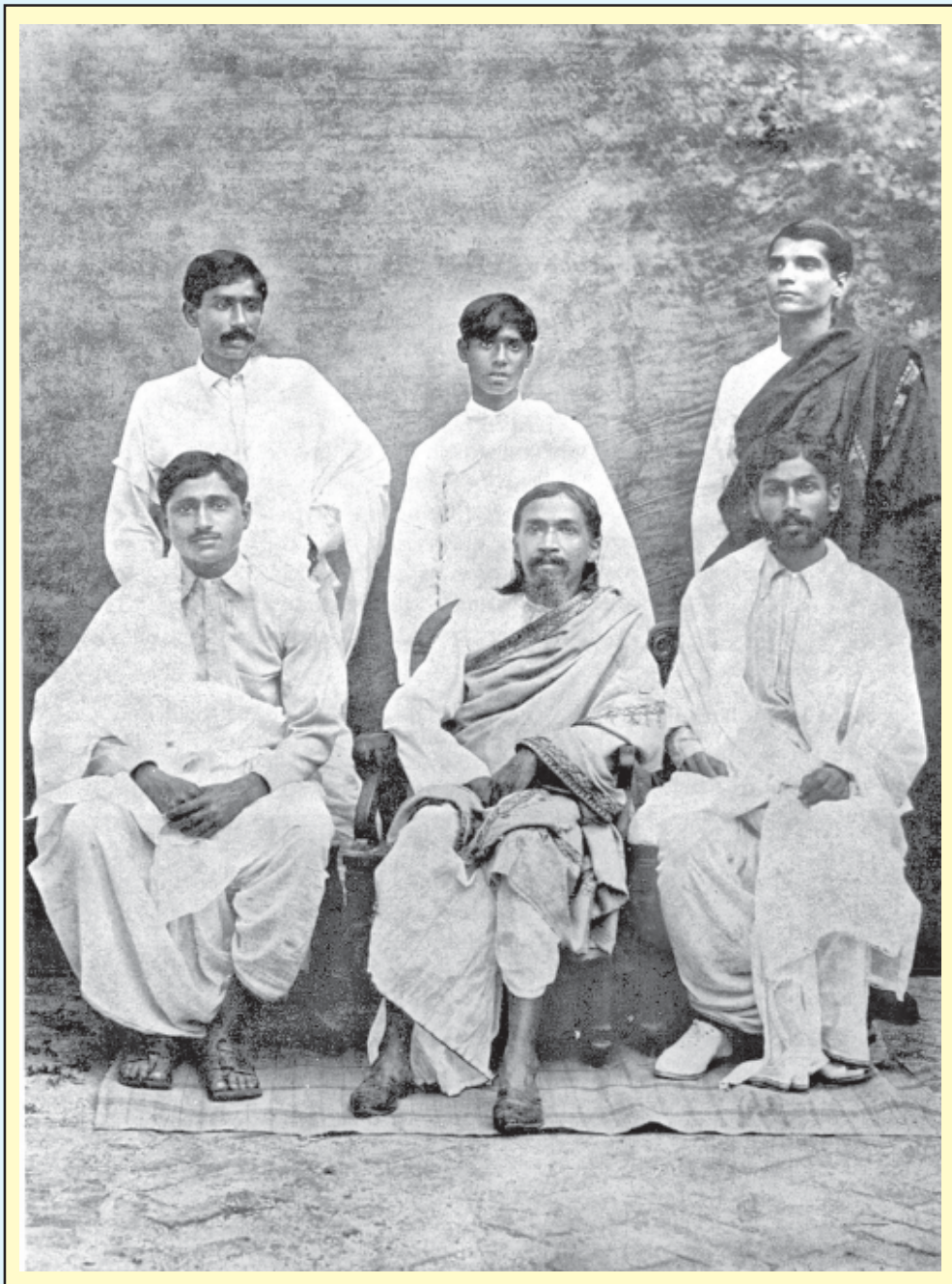
“Another thing is that, here, as we are all of us given to the pursuit of the same truth the whole time we have arrived at some kind of solidarity so that we can mutually help or retard our progress.

“The conditions of transformation of the being are: opening ourselves to the higher Light, the absolute surrender. If there is the entire essential sincerity, opening to the Light and surrender and a



gradual growth of consciousness on all the planes you can become an ideal sadhaka of this yoga.”

Life of Sri Aurobindo by A. B. Purani, Page -195



Lower row, from left to right - Nag Bijoy Kumar (unconfirmed), Sri Aurobindo, Nolini Kanta Gupta; upper row from left to right - Moni (Suresh Chakravarty), Domont (unconfirmed), Nagen.

MY FIRST DARSHAN OF SRI AUROBINDO

Sahana Devi

The next day was 24th November, the day when the Ashram would have Sri Aurobindo's Darshan. From our very childhood we had heard his name and since then was born in our hearts a spontaneous love and devotion for him. In our life he had taken his seat. We learnt to adore him and offer our soul's deepest homage. We had heard that he was a very great man, a friend and benefactor of mankind. His uncommon qualities of character, his supreme intellect and unparalleled love and self-sacrifice for the country — all these had been like fairy tales which had filled the air and which we children used to hear with avid attention and rapture. Now he came into my life as my Guru.

The atmosphere of the Ashram had changed. A good number of people had come from outside for the Darshan. The inmates were all a picture of brightness and their faces shone with an intense glow. The Darshan was to take place at 7 a.m. in the same room where the Mother used to meet people. In front of the staircase was a board on which the names of the pilgrims and their Darshan times were written. A carpet had been spread in the adjacent hall for people to sit and meditate and await their turn for the Darshan. Complete silence reigned everywhere. Incense and flower-fragrance helped to kindle the flame of aspiration. The pilgrims with flowers and garlands in their hands were silently going up to the temple to have their Darshan of the Deity, and were returning with an inexpressible radiance on their faces. Then came my turn.

It was the rule that one had to wait on the last step of the staircase until the preceding man had come back after the Darshan. As soon as Dilip entered inside, I took my stand on the highest step and glimpsed



Sri Aurobindo sitting majestically on a sofa slightly leaning against it — bright and immobile like the Himalaya. He was of a fair complexion and wore a white silk dhoti and chaddar; the bust was half covered and the hair and beard mixed together hung down to the chest. As I came near what a serene, collected and eye-enrapturing figure it was that I saw! All luminous, the Mother was sitting on his right side. As I bowed down to her, she placed her two hands on my head and poured her ineffable honeyed smile as her blessings, as I found when I looked up. Then my eyes turned to the feet of Sri Aurobindo. How beautiful they were! I laid my head on them and did not want to get up at all! My whole being prostrated itself in a complete and secure reliance. I marked a strange thing: when I was coming up for Darshan, my heart was palpitating with an unknown excitement, as if someone was striking it with a hammer, but the moment I saw him from a distance and stood before him and put my head on his feet, a totally different experience took place instead. Slightly leaning forward, he put his right hand on my head. Oh, how soft was the touch! I could not say what magic was in the touch or what I expected from it, but the fact was that I received something inconceivable which I had not received anywhere else, and that touch awoke an intense eagerness to give myself without the least reserve, free from all bondage. As I looked at his eyes, I could not turn away from his gaze, and the very bottom of some immeasurable sea was, as it were exposed to my vision. He then lowered his sight and I got up and turned to go. As to how I found myself back in my room or how the whole day passed, I had no idea. That image of eye-entrancing beauty filled my entire being.



At last, I had had his Darshan for which I had craved and brooded nights and days. I decided that if I could not take up his yoga, life would not be worth carrying on. To reach him alone, I had launched on a perilous voyage across a shoreless ocean. Whenever I thought of God, it was Sri Aurobindo's face that came to the front again and again. And now at last I had obtained his Darshan.

Was it as a guru?

"No," my soul assured me, "Sri Aurobindo is more than a guru."

Was it as a great seer or a great yogi?

"No," was the reply, "Sri Aurobindo is not even that."

As a creator of Purna Yoga?

"Even if it be so he is not that alone."

As what then?

"Only as Sri Aurobindo."

Sri Aurobindo is Sri Aurobindo. He does not fall into any category. He is one without a second. He is only Sri Aurobindo.

And Sri Aurobindo is my only refuge.

At the Feet of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo by Sahana Devi

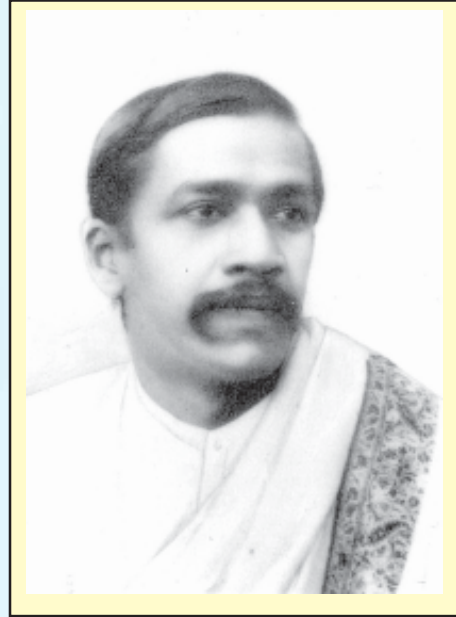
"At the very first sight I could realise he [Sri Aurobindo] had been seeking for the Soul and had gained it, and through this long process of realisation had accumulated within him a silent power of inspiration. His face was radiant with an inner light..."

I felt the utterance of the ancient Hindu Rishis spoke from him of that equanimity which gives the human Soul its freedom of entrance into the All. I said to him, 'You have the word and we are waiting to accept it from you. India will speak through your voice to the world, Hearken to me..."

O Aurobindo, accept the salutations from Rabindranath."

– Rabaindranath Tagore





SRI AUROBINDO

The earth is holy ground since thou art born
 And walk'st her clay
At thy angel tread a new-lit sun at morn
 Wakes every day.
All pathways at thy footfall break to flowers
 Of harmony
And the winds repeat thy hallowed name for hours
 In ecstasy.
The evening-star met in thy eyes of flame
 Her love's own fire,
And greeting thee the silent moon became
 Transformed to a lyre.
Rainbows descend below, thy robes to dye,
 O ageless Gleam!
A-heave with hue and vision the poets cry:
 “Comes true, our Dream!”

Poem by Nishikanta

SRI AUROBINDO ON NAMA - JAPA

Ramakrushna Das

“Any name, any form, any symbol, any offering has been held to be sufficient if there is the consecration along with it,…”

“There is, of course, a third way, the reliance on the power of the mantra or name in itself;”

“The name of the Divine is usually called in for protection, for adoration, for increase of bhakti, for the opening up of the inner consciousness, for the realisation of the Divine in that aspect. As far as it is necessary to work in the subconscious for that, the Name must be effective there.”

“Namajapa has a great power in it.”

“A psychic fire within must be lit into which all is thrown with the Divine Name upon it.”

“Here must the traveller of the upward way – For daring Hell’s kingdoms winds the heavenly route – Pause or pass slowly through that perilous space, A prayer upon his lips and the great Name.”

“Arousing consciousness in things inert, He imposed upon dark atom and dumb mass The diamond script of the Imperishable, Inscribed on the dim heart of fallen things A paeon-song of the free Infinite And the Name, foundation of eternity,”

“A key to a Light still kept in being’s core, The sun-word of an ancient mystery’s sense, Her name ran murmuring on the lips of men exalted and sweet like an inspired verse”

“They sang Infinity’s names and deathless powers In metres that reflect the moving worlds,”

“Usually the Mother’s Name has the full power in it; but in certain states of consciousness the double Name may have a special effect.”



(The double name – *Sri AurobindoMira*)

– Sri Aurobindo

Question : Despite the fact that Sri Aurobindo spoke so much about Japa, The Mother said, “Sri Aurobindo gave no mantra.” What is the significance of this statement of The Mother? Kindly explain it clearly.

Answer: Sri Aurobindo said, “the only *mantra* used in this Sadhana is that of the Mother or of my name and the Mother’s”. This is the mantra of this yoga. Apart from this, Sri Aurobindo has written about Japa at various places. At that time, sadhana was in such a stage that there was no special need to do mantra-Japa. That is why Sri Aurobindo did not put so much stress on it. Rather according to The Mother, Sri Aurobindo said that one should be able to do all the work without having to resort to external means.

Thereafter The Mother again said: “Had He reached the point where we are now, He would have seen that the purely psychological method is inadequate and that a japa is necessary, because only japa has a direct action on the body.” Within each of the old yoga sadhanas, there are many ways of practice. Accordingly, the sadhaks of different sects of one school give priority to one method while other methods, though practiced, are given a secondary importance.

Although Sri Aurobindo had spoken about Japa and written mantras, the power in Japa to influence the body had not been awakened or activated because the *Supramental Force* had not yet descended at that time. For this reason, Sri Aurobindo did not give the most important place to Nama-Japa, but to surrender and aspiration. This has been made clear in the book *The Mother*.

In 1950, Sri Aurobindo brought down the *Supramental Force* into His body and then left His body.



After that, The Mother reached such a level of transformation that She gave foremost importance to Japa in sadhana. She said that Japa was inevitable for the transformation of the body. Besides this, it has been written that The Mother used to do Nama-Japa in Her childhood.

The Mother Herself has said that when Sri Aurobindo was present in His body, She used to do Japa of *Oh Lord*, referring to Sri Aurobindo, whenever She was facing any difficulties or obstacles, and by this Japa all obstacles and difficulties disappeared in a short time. But after Sri Aurobindo left His physical body, whenever She would repeat this Japa of *Oh Lord*, She was, in effect, addressing Herself; for this reason She gave up this Japa.

The Mother has said that Sri Aurobindo gave no mantra, though He has written so many things about Nama- Japa. Although The Mother Herself had been doing Nama- Japa earlier, while the physical transformation was in process, She stated in 1959 that She had discovered an easy method for transformation: “I had to find the method all alone, to find my mantra by myself.” What The Mother may have wanted to point out is that all the sayings of Sri Aurobindo regarding Nama-Japa, and The Mother’s doing of Nama-Japa, were meant as a help in sadhana in order to overcome all sorts of hindrances and obstacles. But these secrets – that the Japa is inevitable for the physical transformation and that it acts directly on the body and that the sadhana of many years can be accomplished in a few months – had not been revealed at that time. Those secrets were discovered by The Mother Herself. Before that, transformation of the body had not begun. How then could others have known these secrets, and why should they have felt any necessity for knowing them? The purpose of The Mother’s statement was to give most importance to Nama-



Japa rather than to surrender and aspiration for the transformation of the body.

Question: If Japa was not necessary at that time, and Sri Aurobindo gave first place in sadhana to aspiration, rejection, and surrender, why then did He write about Japa in so many places in His books?

Answer: In the future, at the time of physical transformation, Japa would play the most important part.

This is the reason why Sri Aurobindo wrote about Japa.

All incarnations of the Divine come with a dual consciousness. When they remain in the Divine Consciousness, the entire course of action of the future is decreed by them. But all day to day work is done by them with the human consciousness. Occasionally, when it is necessary, even the day to day work is done while remaining in the Divine Consciousness. This happens rarely.

For this reason Sri Aurobindo did not include Japa in practice during the period of His sadhana, but wrote about Japa, because He knew that it would be needed in the future. This was an act of His Divine Consciousness

“...As in the past China was spiritually conquered by a great Indian, so in the future too she would be conquered by another great Indian, Sri Aurobindo, the Maha-Yogi who, `is the bringer of that light which will chase away the darkness that envelops the world to-day.

– Yun-Shan, Chinese scholar and director of Chinese studies at Visva-Bharati University, China’s cultural Ambassador to India in 1939.



SRI AUROBINDO'S HOME IN THE SUBTLE PHYSICAL

Sehra

A LETTER TO THE MOTHER, WITH THE MOTHER'S REPLY

The Letter

27.2. 1963

Last night Amal told me that you had spoken of “a permanent home of Sri Aurobindo in the subtle-physical”. At once my mind went back to a dream in last September.

This is how it ran:

I enter the Ashram and see that there is some difference in the building. I say, “Well, something has changed.” And I see a staircase and climb. I pass through a corridor upstairs towards a room at the end of it. In this room there are cupboards very high, reaching near to the ceiling. All the walls are lined with such cupboards which have moon-silver panels and glass doors.

On top of the cupboards there are lovely vases of various colours and designs-vases such as we never find on earth. I am standing at the door of the room. On the floor I see a carpet one-foot thick, adorned with beautiful designs and I say to myself, “This room with book cupboards is not Mother's room. It belongs to Sri Aurobindo. All these books are written by him.”

Then I look for another room, thinking Mother might be there. I see a room and go to its door. But I find something quite different from what I was expecting. It is not Mother's room. The whole room is made as if of moon-silver. And the furniture consists of two beds, two cupboards, two dressingtables- everything two. All the furniture is carved out of moonsilver.



And the arrangement of things draws from me the exclamation, “How beautiful!” Then I say to myself again, “Some day in the future, Mother and Sri Aurobindo will come and stay here.”

So again I search for another room where I may see Mother. Sri Aurobindo's Home in the Subtle-Physical I find a third room. This room is not of moon-silver. It is a little golden in colour. The carpet is also as if of gold stuff-very soft, with a flower-design in red. And I see on the carpet four or five low small Japanese tables, all carved in gold. On the tables there are plates with fruits that we never see on earth.

And there are some tiny toys on the carpet-rabbits and deer and other animals-as if they were decorations. Then I just kneel down and stretch my hand to touch and pick up one of the toys. Suddenly the toy becomes alive and runs away. All the others also start moving to form a new pattern. Then I know that all these animals are real ones. I say to myself, “Oh, this is the dining room. But where can I see Mother?”

While I am wondering, I hear a voice saying, “Mother is with Sri Aurobindo and very busy. So you won't see her today.” I turn back to go away and say, “My God, so much wealth is here-more than the wealth of the whole world, and why is Mother always telling me I must bring wealth to her?” Then I go down the stairs and wake up.

Mother, what do you think of my dream? Have I seen something really there? Is it Sri Aurobindo's permanent home?

I may add that the whole dream-everything in it-was bathed in an atmosphere and a light of moon-silver.

When I told Amal about it, he quoted to me four lines from Sri Aurobindo's poem, A God's Labour :



A little more and the new life's doors
Shall be carved in silver light
With its aureate roof and mosaic floors
In a great world bare and bright.

The Mother's Reply It is certainly part of His permanent home in the subtle-physical – a part of it only. Once surely, you will meet Him there.

Mother India, February 21, 1976.

Centenary : An Excellent Opportunity

*The country seems to be falling apart, so there they asked me what should be done. I told them that this Centenary [of Sri Aurobindo, in 1972] has come ON PURPOSE. It's certainly something that's coming now because the ONLY salvation for the country, the ONLY thing that can unify it, is for it to adopt Sri Aurobindo's ideal for the country – he had a plan, he very clearly saw how the country should be organised, he said it to me. It's there, if one reads his books seriously, one can see it. So I said that things should be so organised that **THROUGHOUT India there should be study groups, libraries, lectures, anything whatever, so the whole country should know Sri Aurobindo's thought and will.***

And the Centenary is an excellent opportunity.

– The Mother





Sri Aurobindo's painting by Danish author and painter
Johannes Hohlenberg

THE NAME OF THE RESPONSE

Anand Adhikari

Celebration of 15th August is the celebration of the advent of a New Consciousness, the advent of the Response and Intervention from Supreme to the aspiration of Man from the beginning of creation to regain its own Self and conquer Death and Suffering that have enshrouded the Earth making life unbearable to such an extent that to flee from the earthly existence either to the heavens above or dissolving personal existence in nameless, featureless Consciousness seemed to be the only way out. Sri Aurobindo is the Name of this ‘Response’ of the Supreme to the miserable condition engulfing earth and is ‘directly’ the ‘Intervention’ to liberate it and lift it out from the hard rock of Inconscient.

The Mother in Her Prayers has quoted the assurance of Lord (who is not different from Herself)—”*Poor sorrowful Earth, remember that I am present in thee and lose not hope; each effort, each grief, each joy and each pang, each call of thy heart, each aspiration of thy soul, each renewal of thy seasons, all, all without exception, what seems to thee sorrowful and what seem to thee joyous, what seems to thee ugly and what seem to thee beautiful, all infallibly lead thee towards me, whose endless Peace, shadowless Light, perfect Harmony, Certitude, Rest and Supreme Blessedness. Harken, O Earth, to the sublime voice that arises, Harken and take new courage!*”

Sri Aurobindo too scripts in His book ‘The Mother’ -”*But personally too she has stooped to descend here into the Darkness that she may lead it to the Light, into the Falsehood and Error that she may convert it to the Truth, into this Death that she may turn it to godlike Life, into this world-pain and its obstinate sorrow and suffering that she may end it in the transforming ecstasy of her sublime*



Ananda. In her deep and great love for her children she has consented to put on herself the cloak of this obscurity, condescended to bear the attacks and torturing influences of the powers of the Darkness and the Falsehood, borne to pass through the portals of the birth that is a death, taken upon herself the pangs and sorrows and sufferings of the creation, since it seemed that thus alone could it be lifted to the Light and Joy and Truth and eternal Life. This is the great sacrifice called sometimes the sacrifice of the Purusha, but much more deeply the holocaust of Prakriti, the sacrifice of the Divine Mother.”

It is true They have come and the great Assurance is given. But now what is the minimum collaboration expected from us, the minimum effort to welcome the saving Grace, the minimum condition to fulfill for the ‘Intervention’ to be effective?

The very first condition that paves the way is to recognise the Presence, which is essentially One but for the sake of the Work incarnated as Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in two human bodies. Next as She reminds us –”*You are here at this moment, that is to say upon earth, because you chose it at one time — you do not remember it anymore, but I know it — that is why you are here. Well, you must rise to the height of the task. You must strive, you must conquer all weaknesses and limitations; above all you must tell your ego: ‘Your hour is gone’. We want a race that has no ego that has in place of the ego the Divine Consciousness. It is that which we want: the Divine Consciousness which will allow the race to develop itself and the supramental being to take birth.”*

For that one must have the courage of a Hero Warrior, not in ordinary sense, but a real Hero who is strong, straight and bold



enough to resist any temptation of the ordinary consciousness and stand straight before the Great Dawn. It is strength of the Presence within, which if could be properly invoked could help solve any difficult situation.

By the sheer Grace of the Supreme Mother, we have been granted the chance, allowed to participate in this Great Adventure. Let us be grateful to Her in all ways –She too explains *“To be grateful, never to forget this wonderful Grace of the Supreme who leads each one to his divine goal by the shortest ways, in spite of himself, his ignorance and misunderstandings, in spite of the ego, its protests and its revolts.*

The pure flame of gratefulness must always burn in our heart, warm, sweet and bright to dissolve all egoism and all obscurity; the flame of gratefulness for the Supreme’s Grace which leads the Sadhak to his goal and the more he is grateful, recognises this action of the Grace and is thankful for it, the shorter is the way.”

The Mother’s appeal to Her Children *“My children, we are united towards the same goal and for the same accomplishment—for a work unique and new, that the divine Grace has given us to accomplish. I hope that more and more you will understand the exceptional importance of this work and that you will sense in yourselves the sublime joy that the accomplishment will give you. The divine force is with you feel its presence more and more and be careful never to betray it. Feel, wish, act that you may be new beings for the realisation of a new world and for this my blessings shall always be with you”*.

VICTORY TO LORD, VICTORY TO SWEET MOTHER



Published in four Darshan Days

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4. 24th April

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Kindly send your valuable suggesion to the Editor,

In Mother's Light, matrubhaban@gmail.com

Please Visit us: <http://www.motherorissa.com/>

