



# LIGHT TO SUPER LIGHT



# LIGHT TO SUPERLIGHT

(Unpublished letters of Sri Aurobindo)

With Explanatory notes by

**SHREE ARUN CHANDRA DUTT**

and revealing annexures.

**PRABARTAK PUBLISHERS**

**CALCUTTA-12**

Akshoy Tiritiya—1379 B. S.  
1894 Saka, May 1972

Price—Rs 15.00

Published by Sri Krishna Prosad Ghosh from Prabartak Publishers, 61, Bepin Behari Ganguly Street, Calcutta-12 and printed by Sri Phani Bhuvan Roy at Prabartak Printing & Halftone Ltd, 52-3, Bepin Behari Ganguly Street, Calcutta-12.

## DEDICATION

The twenty-six letters of Shree Aurobindo were placed in my hands to be edited with an annotating commentary for the purpose of publication during the Shree Aurobindo Centenary Year.

The twenty-six letters—like the twenty-six letters of the English Alphabet—were felt to be inspired with life as the days passed in deep and silent contemplation over the mute text-scrap in the Master's own handwriting—some in mere pencil scribbling, mostly faded, somewhat defaced and rendered almost illegible after 60 years' ravages of time. I had hard labour with singular faith and patience along with my brother co-editor, Shree Durga Shankar Mahalanobis to decipher these precious texts.

Gradually however, after a couple of months or so, the concentration proved to me at least amply self-rewarding. The twenty-six letters as it were, in the sense of the ancient *varna-matrika* of our Sanskrit literature—lit up into living units of supernal light. A heavenly splendour of spiritual presence and aura surrounded me and overwhelmed myself during the concentration-hour every morning. Even the words came rolling forward in a torrential flow from somewhere above the crown of my head and I was in a supreme mood of exalted elation,

This *Varnamatrika*—I am forced to acknowledge—has revealed to me—unsought yet spontaneous—my Guru of Gurus—Mahaguru himself merging into *Ista-devata*. His own story is revealed by himself in regalia of light—a resurrection of spiritual illumination and uplifted life.

This is indeed, a true and vivid life-story—an eventful as well as crisisful chapter of our spiritual and national life-history. It is to me an indispensable life-key to open our new nation's as well as new humanity's new dawn of coming future.

I offer my cordial thanks to all concerned in this inner revelation: To my lineage of spiritual Gurus, my Samgha-Guruji Shree Motilal—to our Maha Guru Shree Aurobindo himself—to our Parama Guru Shree-Shreemat Vishnu Bhasker Leleji—to Paramesthi Guru and Mahayogavatara Shree-Shree-Dattatreyaaji—and to all the hierarchy of guardian-angels of

India's past, present and future—I tender my all-souled homage —my utter consecration.

To thank our Prabartak Publishers for undertaking to publish this volume is only to thank myself or ourselves.

I dedicate this fruit of my toil of love and devotion to the Youths of Bengal, India, Euro-Africo-Asia and the World.

ARUN CHANDRA DUTT

Prabartak Samgha  
Chandernagore (West Bengal)  
Akshoy Tritiya 15th May 1972

## FOREWORD

There are twenty-six letters in this series, written between 1912 and 1921, all addressed to Sri Motilal Roy except the second one, which was to Anandrao. Sri Aurobindo's letters of this period are not only of gripping national interest to his countrymen, but are of vaster importance to a greater humanity that could read in them the extraordinary evolution of a meteoric patriot-politician emerging out of his ten years' veil to become the renowned architect of *The Life Divine*. It may be helpful to unknowing readers better to understand the situation in which he wrote those letters, with a little contextual preliminary background, which we shall try to supply here, briefly.

Sri Aurobindo had gone over to Pondicherry as he had come, in secrecy, under "a command from above", on 4th April, 1910, from his retreat at French Chandernagore, arranged by Sri Motilal Roy. His coming here, if anything, forestalling his arrest<sup>1</sup> on a sedition charge that was to fail, was to his fortuitous host a rarest god-send, whom it was providentially given thus to receive his future spiritual Guru and charismatic guide one historic morning, which we would date on Sri Roy's authority, as 21st February, 1910. Sri Aurobindo did not know his good Samaritan, much less thought to be his guest. On a chance information Sri Motilal hastened to meet his distinguished countryman at the river-ghat at Chandernagore, where he had come in a country-boat from Calcutta. Like a true Yogin dependent on his inner call, Sri Aurobindo did not refuse his adventitious host and followed him to his home,—unobserved or undetected.

He could not stay put here long and left for an undisclosed destination. By an irony of fate, his incognito travel however, succeeded only in its discovery to the police on the very day of his arrival on the 4th day of April 1910 at Pondicherry, betrayed by the grandiose reception that his young friends had unwittingly arranged at the landing pier, and in consequence he was virtually made a prisoner in his own house under British

---

[1] This was in connection with an article published in the Karma-yogin. The printer who was also sued, was exonerated by the Calcutta High Court.

Police surveillance. His compatriots in Bengal however, knew nothing of his movements, and gossip started being bandied about.

Sri Aurobindo's 39 days' stop-over at Chandernagore in close touch with his humble devotee, Sri Roy, made the latter in days to come, his trusted friend and instrument through whom for some years his politico-revolutionary activities guided from Pondicherry, seeped and fanned out to his followers in Bengal and made Sri Motilal famous almost overnight, while the prime mover remained veiled in far-off French territory unlocated and unbeknown except to a few, until the curtain was raised by the appearance of his cultural review, the *Arya*, on the 15th August, 1914. Even then he preferred to live in seclusion. Thus Sri Roy's house functioned as a hot-bed of subversive activities—often independently of Sri Aurobindo in later years, and served as a secret base of operation for British India, in the comparative safety of the French Administration. His doors remained open to all coming from the rough and tumble of the battle for freedom.

Sri Aurobindo's earlier correspondence on secret matters between 1910 and 1912 was in a numeral code invented by him or his followers to obviate the police. He wrote in this code by French post to his disciple Sri Roy and received replies through the French postal system at a given local address a friend had arranged. All this correspondence of this period in code had to be burnt in 1916 on the eve of a search in Sri Roy's house by the Police Commissioner of Calcutta, Sir Charles Tegart, forewarned by the French authorities at Chandernagore. The language-correspondence that survived has been included in this series.

The earliest communication that Sri Roy received was not a letter but a blank sheet of paper on which was inscribed in pencil in the Guru's own hand, just three Sanskrit *mantras* based on *Jnana*, *Shakti* and *Prema*, transmitted through Sudarshana Chatterjee, who had been commissioned from Chandernagore in the last week of April, 1910, to get news of Sri Aurobindo, who had since his departure kept up an uneasy silence. The messenger returned on the day of Akshoy Tritiya, 11th May, 1910, with these *mantras* and a secret address to which letters could be written for Sri Aurobindo. Sri Roy availed himself of the special benefit of holy Akshoy Tritiya, accepting under its auspices the *mantras* for spir-

itual *sadhanas*, side by side with his earlier *mantras* of other Gurus. Thus began for him a new spiritual novitiate under a new Master's guidance in an all-inclusive Maha yoga. The Prabartak Samgha built itself over the years, held by this life-line, with its organ, the "Prabartak" founded at its headquarters at Chandernagore on the 1st September 1915. Sri Aurobindo was an eager reader of this Bengali magazine.

The intimate nature of the Master's relationship with his disciple can be discerned in every one of these letters. The former's solicitude for,—his trust, dependence and hope on, the disciple, are out of the question; they are restrained evenly behind the script with yogic equanimity. Sri Aurobindo was in extreme straits at this time, almost stony-broke, yet with superb humour expressive of his inner calmness he writes to Sri Motilal: "No doubt God will provide, but he has contracted a bad habit of waiting till the last moment."

Sri Aurobindo's financial difficulties had started almost from the beginning and continued for some years, easing off as his freedom enlarged. If he wrote for money in harrowing snippets, one must realise that he had his companions' pressing needs in mind, that he was constantly spied on to immobility, and those who could help him were beyond communication. Naturally Sri Motilal Roy was his only dependable stay at this time, not only for the upkeep of the Pondicherry establishment but also for contact with friends in Bengal unprotected by the safety of the French territory that Sri Roy enjoyed. Sri Roy was grateful for this; he tried to serve his Master in a way that his jejune offertory could be taken as a devotee's tribute to his Guru. It was a blessing in disguise, opening out rich vistas of new creation in the economic field to the contributor.

Sri Roy went to Pondicherry four times, viz. in 1911, 1913, 1920 and 1921. In 1920 Madame Mirra Richard—later the Mother, had taken charge of the Ashram. Sri Aurobindo's financial situation and personal well-being had been in a mess-up. The Mother had retrieved him back into shape. Sri Motilal Roy had noted all that then. Now when he went for the last time with his wife at his Guru's desire, the Pondicherry Institution was well on its feet with an assured future. The Mother's infinite care and far seeing had freed Sri Aurobindo of his external pressure, her-

self taking it and more. She had put the Ashram in its right evolutionary setting. Sri Aurobindo now could devote himself more intensely to his Yoga.

The Master was full of tenderness for his pupil—solicitous for his spiritual well-being, affectionate; the disciple, reverent, dedicated. Yet Sri Motilal somehow was not happy. In his previous visit in 1920 he had almost a presentiment of what was to follow without knowing what it was to be. Struck one day by the Master's remark, "he puts a wall between him and me", the pupil had been distressed and disconsolate beyond measure for three days. Reconciliation however, had then healed the wound. This time, when all was well, a brace of months had scarcely gone, events of that scarred past cast their shadows again, foggily. The separation had to come—the "wall", inexorably, none of them knowing it. Sri Roy's unhappiness visibly proved to be a call from Chandernagore to go back, Sri Aurobindo tried to stay it,—"Write a big 'No' there", he advised. True, Sri Roy had new faces and other minds to care for there in his own Ashram, but that could hardly account for his irresistible unhappy impulse. The mystery of the unhappiness then burst out and the stern hand of Destiny tore Sri Motilal away from his Master's bosom. He turned back tears in eyes, with his wife. That was the end of this series of correspondence, 10th August, 1921. Sri Motilal was not happy at this finale, either.

There is a semblance of similarity between Sri Roy's parting and Sri Aurobindo's unseating of his spiritual preceptor, Vishnu Bhaskar Lele, in favour of his awakened Inner Guide. The one,—Sri Lele, was "a bhakta with some experience and evocative power", "infinitely inferior" and hardly known to his illustrious disciple; the other, in the eyes of his followers, a penultimate Superman, who even in his bounty of spiritual gift, overshadowed Sri Roy's innate genius, that by this seeming rift, found back its full measure to try it in a different creative field on his own, with conspicuous success, without deviating from the Master's basic teachings.

A word needs to be said about the chronology and condition of the letters. Few of them are dated; they are address less and signed with a pseudonym, "Kali". There was a purpose in it—a matter of precaution,

we believe. Later when things had begun to return to normal, he subscribed his letters with his initials, A. G. for Aurobindo Ghosh.

We have marked the undated letters with the approximate year of their issue in each case with a note of interrogation following. The original dates, if any, have been left in their places.

Sri Aurobindo had to write these important letters in an absurdly ill-provided situation. He used any scrap of paper he could make available, writing closely on both sides. Now, for more than half a century, the ravages of time have impaired their textural quality, colour, and legibility. They are brittle, some have crumbled in parts or extensively. We have had a formidable task in deciphering them. No pains have been spared in this toil, yet a few gaps remain—to the readers' guess, or are filled as we felt suggested, by expressions of our choice, segmented in brackets with interrogation marks juxtaposed inside. The blanks however, are not likely to distort the integral sense or seriously to extenuate interest in them. No punctuation marks have been placed where they are not in the original.

The original letters contain a few words under-lined by the writer himself, which have been replaced by italics.

The letters have been prefaced with a commentary, which will serve as guide-notes to the understanding of the times and circumstances that shaped their contents in the hands of the Master, whom Sri Arun Chandra Dutt, the writer of the commentary, had the exceptional privilege to personally know in his retreat at Pondicherry, sitting at his feet during his intimate talks<sup>1</sup> to his half a dozen early disciples on topics of varied interest—spiritual, cultural, constructive nationalism, etc. Sri Dutt also was, from the beginning, closely associated with Sri Motilal Roy's political and spiritual activities directed from Pondicherry by means of these secret letters, and happens at present to be the only living authority competent to undertake an illuminative exposition of them. Sri Dutt is the present successor as President of the Prabartak Samgha founded by Sri Motilal Roy.

---

[1] Sri Arun Chandra Dutt has recorded a part of the conversation in his book, *Aurobindo Mandire*, in Bengali.

D. S. MAHALANOBIS  
CHANDERNAGORE,  
MAY, 1972

## Table of Contents

DEDICATION.....	i
FOREWORD.....	iii
LETTERS OF SHREE AUROBINDO.....	1
Notes on letter 1.....	2
Notes on letters 2 thru 9.....	6
EPISTLES OF THE MASTER.....	114
Letter No. 1.....	114
Letter No. 2.....	116
Letter No. 3.....	118
Letter No. 4.....	121
Letter No. 5.....	123
Letter No. 6.....	124
Letter No. 7.....	126
Letter No. 8.....	127
Letter No. 9.....	128
Letter No. 10.....	128
Letter No. 11.....	131
Letter No. 12.....	135
Letter No. 13.....	141
Letter No. 14.....	146
Letter No. 15.....	147
Letter No. 16.....	148
Letter No. 17.....	150
Letter No. 18.....	155
Letter No. 19.....	158
Letter No. 20.....	160
Letter No. 21.....	162
Letter No. 22.....	166
Letter No. 23.....	167
Letter No. 24.....	168
Letter No. 25.....	178
Letter No. 26.....	180

APPENDIX—A.....182  
APPENDIX—B.....184  
APPENDIX—C.....188  
APPENDIX—D.....199  
APPENDIX—E.....203  
APPENDIX—F.....206  
GLOSSARY.....228

## LETTERS OF SHREE AUROBINDO

The letters—dated and undated in our hand—have been arranged here in some sort of a chronological series with the dated ones placed in their given order and the undated ones taking place according to some internal evidence within them indicative of time-reference; while a few only without date or without any available data for time-indication, located uncertainly in the time-stream on a bit of probable guesswork, either before or after a near fixed one, so as to link up continuity in the great life-story running throughout this letter-series.

The letters now presented, unfold a hitherto generally unknown chapter in the life of the great national and spiritual leader, Shree Aurobindo, writing to Shree Motilal Roy, the Samgha-Guru, Founder-president of Prabartak Samgha, between the years 1910 and 1920—a decade of storm and transition also in our national history. They will therefore, surely throw some new light on an eventful period of our national life and movement, mostly hidden till now from the view of the general public.

Shree Aurobindo was regarded by Shree Motilal and also by many of us of his time as the living seer-prophet and incarnate soul-symbol of Indian Nationalism. His deep and hard *tapasya* as the purest instrument in the hands of Kali, the Divine Mother whether at Chandernagore or in Pondicherry, his two divinely chosen places of self-exile, may be considered, as the continuance of his supreme spiritual experience received during his forced confinement for a year within the iron-bars, of Alipore prison-cell.

The letters are important as written records of the inner process and stages of his spiritual and supramental self-discovery as well as complete, all-round self-preparation for his new divine mission during this decade of revolutionary-evolution, in-as-much-as they faithfully reveal also the changing phases and poises of his national as well as spiritual leadership pari-passu his inner yogic development and transformation.

His every word, every line of thought expressed in these letters verily springs directly from the nation-soul—the heart of the nation-being itself

and we feel it our sacred duty and peremptory task to present same to every true son and daughter of Mother India, nay to every pure and aspiring soul of the new humanity, who are the real inheritors of the coming future, foreseen and fore-cast by Shree Aurobindo—his message and mission divine for all those who are chosen for it.

## Notes on letter 1

The first letter in our series is a dated one—dated the 5th July 1912. It thus gives us a fixed starting-point.

Shree Aurobindo's connection with Shree Motilal Roy began from 21st February 1910, the day of his arrival at Chandernagore. It was truly a *Yoga* at first sight, which grew into or rather revealed itself in course of time as a spiritual relationship—pure and profound, rich in essence with heavenly aroma as well as pregnant with deep and far-reaching meaning and consequence for our nation as well as humanity.

The first Holy Writ to reach Shree Roy from Pondicherry was on 11th May 1910, when all on a sudden, unexpected and unsought-for, he got his *mantree deeksha* or formal baptism in the *trimarga yoga*—the triple preliminary spiritual formulas of light, life and love from Shree Aurobindo on that very holy and auspicious akshoya tritiya day.

This was therefore, the opening communication, in fact, the first spiritual communion between Guru and Disciple, the Initiator and the Initiate.

True seed to fall on a fit soil. Its germination must culminate in a new creation.

But the intervening gap between 11th May 1910 and 5th July 1912 is a big gap, which we have no written material to fill up. The first letter in our hand, however, bears witness to the fact that there was continual correspondence going on between Pondicherry and Chandernagore ere-long through open and secret channels.

The French Post regularly irregular, as we get from the writer's description, was teasing enough and not free from suspicion. 'I see no signs of the seals being tampered with, but that is not an absolutely sure indi-

cation of security—the postman may be paid by the police' writes Shree Aurobindo, although he wittily phrases it to say that this is only because 'the Republican administration likes to have time on its hands.'

His instruction however, is, under the circumstances to change the old address for 'important communications to any other address known to him for the present' adding 'of course by French Post & a Madrasi address,' while 'all others should come by the old address.'

Here the writer has also enquired about a particular letter sent by French Post 'to Mr Bonomali Pal from Achari, enclosing another to Parthasarathi.'

Evidently, Achari, Parthasarathi, Pal constitute a living channel of secret communication arranged with such meticulous care and attention for and we suppose also by Shree Aurobindo himself for his work after his retreat to Pondicherry.

Bonomali Pal, a disciple of Shree-Shree Vijoy Krishna Goswami and gurubhai (co-disciple) of the great nationalist leader, Bipin Chandra Pal, was a senior advocate of Chandernagore and as a nationalist at heart, always friendly to Shree Motilal Roy and indirectly helpful to his secret revolutionary activities.

Parthasarathi's letter enclosed by Achari, duly reached Shree Pal, who in his turn must have duly handed it over to his friend, Shree Motilal Roy for necessary action in the manner enjoined. The following account given in Shree Roy's authentic Bengali book, *Amar dekha Biplaba O Biplabee*, on the affair, will show the important place and role of Parthasarathiji in this secret circle of Shree Aurobindo:

"Shree Aurobindo wrote to me that the political refugee, Shreenivas Iyengar's brother was going to Calcutta under nom-de-plume of Parthasarathi and would be staying at a certain address in Burrobazar. I was directed to secretly meet him there to get the latest news and direction about work from Shree Aurobindo. As a political leader Shree Aurobindo was very much cautious in these matters. I too was a police suspect and was dogged at every step by the C.I.D. But I managed to meander my way avoiding them and reached his house. I met him there—a handsome young man of robust health and also of sweet temper. After

some introductory talk, he explained to me a code system of secret communication, which he ended saying 'It is in this code that henceforth you will have to correspond with Shree Aurobindo on important political matters and you will also get his replies in the same code. Such correspondence even if it falls into the hands of the police, they will not be able to make anything out of them.'

"Shree Parthasarathi then went on to say that he had been sent to Calcutta by Babuji (Shree Aurobindo) and from here he would have to go to Nepal to spread the revolutionary movement there. For this purpose, he needed to train some Nepali youths in bomb-making and he asked me if and how far I would be able to help him in that. The Native States of India would have to be induced and prepared to rise against British rule and he would personally approach the Rana of Nepal with this intention.

"Before leaving for Pondicherry, Shree Aurobindo had introduced us to a young man, named Suresh Chandra Dutta, an M. Sc. student then, but who subsequently became a professor of the then Ripon College, Calcutta. It was he, who taught my disciple, Manindra Nath Naiek, also an M. Sc. student to make bombs and 'the most powerful type of bombs that were made in Chandernagore' as reported in the Sedition Committee Report (Rowlatt) were manufactured by this Manindra Nath in our secret cell. So the very next day, I took Manindra Nath to Parthasarathi, who immediately arranged to engage Shree Naiek as a private tutor to a Nepali student reading science in a Calcutta college and the secret training started."

About the Marathi friend of Shree Aurobindo mentioned in this letter, Shree Roy gives the following interesting statement in his other book *Yuga-purusha Shree Aurobindo*, narrating about his dramatic meeting with this Marathi gentleman in his residence in Calcutta with the letter sent enclosed for him through Bonomali Pal:

"Shree Madgodkar, a non-Bengali cloth-merchant, had his godown at Burbobazar. He resided in Ballygunje. I had to search for his address where I reached him. Perhaps, he took me at first for a police spy and so bade me farewell. But he kept Shree Aurobindo's letter with him. I met him again the next day. I now found that meanwhile he had taken particular information about me. In course of his talk now, he made queries

about Shree Aurobindo—how he stayed at Chandernagore and how he left for Pondicherry. But he did not give any money in my hand, saying with a smile, 'Please do not think that I am not handing over the money to you out of disbelief. Much money meant for Aurobindo has been lost in the hands of intermediaries; so knowing this, we have decided to so arrange that the sum may directly reach his hands. You may therefore, rest assured. However, you may write to him to inform that I would send Rs 1000/- (Rupees one thousand only) through our agents, the Grindlay Company.

I felt relieved and returning to Chandernagore, reported to Shree Aurobindo accordingly.

In due course of time, Shree Aurobindo informed me that he had received the money sent by Madgodkar through the Grindlay Company.”

But this money-order from Shree Madgodkar reached Shree Aurobindo later. In this letter dated 5th July, while he enclosed his letter to this Marathi friend of his, he is not so sure of the result, for he writes to Shree Motilal in this clear tone of an uncertain urgency:

"If he can give you anything for me, please send it without the least delay. If not, I must ask you to procure for me by will-power or any other power in heaven or on earth Rs 50/- (Rupees fifty only) at least as a loan.

The situation just now is that we have Rs 1¼ or so in hand."

He of course, suggests several possible sources known to him in Calcutta that Shree Roy may try to sound for the too urgently required money. His own all approachable points in Pondicherry where he could ask for or look to for help, can hold out no single ray of hope or light for him at the time. In such a situation of darkest despair, the S. O. S. message in the language of utmost urgency as quoted above, issuing from the pen of the Great Master to his chosen disciple at Chandernagore, is a historic utterance of supreme significance, which it will be our endeavour to read between the lines of this letter-series and unravel the heart of its divine mystery.

The Swadeshi-case referred to, was part of an effort of the French Government at the instigation of the British Police, to lay its hands on political suspects such as Shreenivas Iyengar and others, connected with

Chidambaram Pillai's 'Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company' some of whom had taken shelter in Pondicherry. There was some general investigation, but the case brought against the Swadeshis 'collapsed into the nether region'—as described in the letter, mostly due to the personality of Shree Aurobindo, who by dint of his spiritual genius and tact, had gained considerable influence with the local French authorities, as a result of which they not only 'gave him protection, but also treated him with great courtesy' (Vide, Evening Talks, first series, Page 55).

Ultimately, not only the Swadeshi friends of Shree Aurobindo escaped legal prosecution, but Pondicherry ever since has remained a safe and peaceful haven for political suspects, swadeshis and revolutionary fugitives like Shree Aurobindo fleeing from British India and taking refuge in French territory.<sup>1</sup>

## Notes on letters 2 thru 9

We now come to nine letters in our series—all undated ones, which we shall deal together—as from internal evidence, they appear to fall within the period between 1912 and 1914, before we get to the next letter with a fixed date on it.

The first one of these (letter No. 2) which we have to take up is one written by Shree Aurobindo to one Shree Anandrao, whose identity we have not been able to find out even from the closest associates of Shree Aurobindo who are still living, but who appears to have sent a message to Shree Aurobindo in the name of a Baroda friend of his (Shree Aurobindo's)—'who left service and was therefore, in difficulty in finding

---

[1] It was on information secretly supplied by the Late Bholanath Dash, a friend of Bonamali Pal and patriotic-hearted millionaire of Chandernagore, who was one of the partners with Chidambaram Pillai of this Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company, Trichinopoly, that Shreenivas Iyengar, V. V. S. Iyer, the Tamil poet Bharati etc, had gathered on the beach of Pondicherry seaport and arranged a demonstration to receive Shree Aurobindo on his arrival there from Chandernagore in disguise on the 1st of April 1910. This was regarded by Shree Aurobindo as an act of imprudence on the part of the young nationalist enthusiasts and it resulted in a partial disclosure of his plan of incognito concealment, at least for the time being.

money'—evidently in support of his life-mission. 'He asks', says Anandrao, 'now that you have become a sannyasin, on what ground he can collect money. Still, if you let him know clearly your future, the time it will take to effect your siddhi and the amount of money you need, he will try to collect from Rs 600/- to Rs 1000/-.'

In reply to these pertinent questions, Shree Aurobindo comes out with a clear and outspoken statement about his mission and practical needs, as he himself envisages at this time in one of the most critical stages of his life-sadhana. This letter therefore, if studied closely and with detailed attention, will be found to be rewarding enough, serving as a luminous torch to throw a flood of light on some unknown corners of his inner and outer sadhana during this most crucial period of his lifetime.

Shree Aurobindo announces here in unmistakable language that in retiring from active and open political life, he has not become a sannyasin.

"I have even made it clear enough in the public press", *he emphatically declares*, "that I have not taken sannyasa but am practising yoga as a house-holder, not even as a brahmacharin. The Yoga I am practising has not the ghost of a connection with sannyasa. It is a Yoga meant for life & life only".

As the object of this Yoga, he has in mind 'the perfecting of the moral condition and mental and physical being along with the possession of certain powers—the truth of which 'he has been establishing by continuous practical experiment with the aim of carrying out a certain mission in life which God has given' him.

He explodes the idea of sannyasa imputed to him tersely in this meaningful, laconic sentence—'If I were a sannyasin, there would have been no money difficulty to solve.'

The explicatory exposition that immediately follows brings out his clear and deep in look into his sadhana as well as the achievement he has in his view—at once intimate, interesting beyond measure, and at the same time even chronologically self-revelatory. We cannot do better than quote his own words laying bare a clear outline of his integral spiritual endeavours:

"There are four points of the siddhi, roughly, moral, mental, physical and practical. Starting from December 1906, the moral has taken three years and a half and may now be considered complete. The mental has taken two years of regular sadhana and will be (closed?) for the present purposes. The physical is backward and nearing completion only in the immunity from disease, which I am now attempting successfully to perfect and test by exposure to abnormal conditions. The physical also does not matter so much for practical purposes, as the moral, mental and a certain number of practical siddhis are sufficient."

A matter of enormous importance indeed, coming as it does from a yogin's own pen—the elaboration of his own yoga process, its evolution and working out in his own original manner and way, leading to the re-discovery of certain occult powers, known as *asta-siddhi* in the realm of Indian Yoga and what is still more note-worthy is their application in modern times and under modern circumstances by one of the greatest leaders of modern thought, standing in the fore-front for the advancement and guidance of ascending modern humanity. Let us quote verbatim from the same letter again to get a clearer and more precise view of the Master's practical aim and intention:

"It is these practical siddhis that alone cause delay. I have had first to prove to myself their existence and utility; secondly, to develop those in myself so as to be working forces; thirdly, to make them effective for life and impart them to others. The development will, I think, be complete in another two months, but the application to life and the formation of my helpers will take some time—for the reason that I shall then have a greater force of opposition to surmount than in the purely educative exercises I have hitherto practised. The full application to life will, I think, take three years more; but it is only for a year of that time that I expect to need outside assistance. I believe that I may have to stay in French India for another year. I presume that is what the question about my future means. But on this point I cannot speak with certainty."

Linking such an inner spiritual effort with its direct application to outer life-activity, evidently it is hard to measure its spiritual and psychophysical progress with the yard-stick of actual material time. Evident too is his ardent desire to come out of his self-imposed exile in French India as early in time as possible, which however, did not materialise. But his fore-vision about his future work has proved itself accurate and true even as he himself briefly yet luminously outlines in the passage to follow:

"If however, it refers to my future work, that is a big question and does not yet admit of a full answer. I may say briefly that I have been given a religious and

philosophical mission to explain the Veda and Vedanta (Upanishads) in the ancient sense which I have recovered by actual experience in Yoga and to popularise the new system of Yoga (new in arrangement and object) which has been revealed to me and which as I progress, I am imparting to the young men staying with me and to others in Pondicherry. I have also to spread certain ideas about God and life by literary work, speech and practices, to try to bring about certain social changes and finally, to do a certain work for my country in particular, as soon as the means are put in my hands. All this to be done by God's help only and not to be begun till things and myself are ready."

This is indeed, a grand master-view of a great life-mission, embracing within its sweeping gaze the entire panorama of a new vision of the past, present and future of Indian culture and spirituality, and in that light also the re-valuation and transformation of the religious and philosophical thought, idealism as well as the social life of mankind, but being based on a deep and growing self-realisation, not merely academic and static, but also full of a dynamism of creative potentiality, ever ready and vibrantly urgeful to spread and expand, to act and materialise. And when in this panoramic in-view and out-view he includes also the urge and aim of what he cryptically puts as 'to do a certain work for my country in particular', we are apt to take it in the sense and term of his inborn, life-long will and aspiration, gradually hardening into a crystallised, resolute determination—the completion of his work for the liberation of his dear, beloved motherland. But he is very much careful here, in the light of his mature political and revolutionary experience of life—to add with it a clause of inner caution—'all this to be done by God's help only and not to be begun till things and myself are ready' or 'as soon as the means are put in my hands.'

Forthwith now he proceeds to the other important point of the questioner's query—coming down pointedly to answer about his actual requirement of money. He writes:

"The amount of money I shall need for the year in question are Rs 300/- to clear up liabilities, I have contracted during the last nine or ten months (in which I have had only fortuitous help) and some Rs 1200/- (or 1500/- reckoning up to August 1913) to maintain myself & those I am training. I had hoped to get the money from a certain gentleman who had promised me Rs 2000/- a year for this purpose and given it for the first year from October 1910 to October 1911. But there are great difficulties in the way and I can no longer reckon merely on this support

which would render it unnecessary for me to tax my friends. If I get other help from this side, the same will be lightened."

Apparently, the good-hearted donor who had promised to help him with Rs 2000/- a year, could not continue his donation for the second year. His contribution for the first year, which was to cover the period from October 1910 to October 1911, ended by that time. From this time, nine or ten months onward, Shree Aurobindo had to carry on 'with only fortuitous help', incurring a debt of Rs 300/-. Reckoning from July 1912 or August 1912 therefore, at the rate of Rs 100/- a month, he estimates a sum of Rs 1200/- plus Rs 300/- to clear off the liability, i.e. Rs 1500/- that he will require for his maintenance and of those under his training up till August 1913—a time-clue which fits in well in a way with the time-table, already given above—to schedule his moral, mental, physical and practical chart of Yoga. Thus starting from December 1906, his moral *sadhana* took three years and a half reaching completion towards the middle of 1910. From thence two years more being taken for his regular mental *sadhana*, we come up to about July or August 1912, which tallies almost exactly with the economic timing enumerated above. So we now stand on a very sure and solid ground to read and interpret the import of his letters in their proper time-setting.

Shree Aurobindo had always an inborn faith and reliance on God for his material needs and living. From his very school and college days in early boyhood or growing maturity, it had ever been so in his long and trying life-experience. He had never thought of saving anything from his earning when he earned. From his intimately—nay actually the most private letters written from Boroda to his wife—indecorously, perhaps also unlawfully seized and produced in the Alipore Bomb Case, even the general public came to know how intensively he had imbibed and been practising the teaching of the Geeta to dedicate one's all—even every bit of farthing earned—for God's work, in this case for the uplift of the 300 millions of his countrymen, living images of God struggling against grim poverty. God provides such all-consecrated yogins according to the Geeta itself—with their *yoga-kshema*—all their actual and potential necessities of life.

Since Shree Aurobindo suddenly left Calcutta for Chandernagore at the Call of God and thence for Pondicherry, he had neither time nor op-

portunity to think of or make any financial arrangement for his own self and for those who would be staying with him. Shree Motilal just on his first visit to Pondicherry in October 1911, came to realise in what an abject condition of poverty the great leader of the nation was living. 'That we had so long kept no information whatsoever of how our great leader was faring in a distant land and arranged nothing for his provision is a matter of shame as well as misfortune for us'—so confessed he to one of his *guru-bhais* there and resolved in his heart of hearts to do his duty on behalf of the Bengalee people in this matter on his return to Chandernagore.

Writes Shree Motilalji in his *Yuga-purusha Shree Aurobindo*, in this connection: "I had come to know about Shree Aurobindo's monetary needs when I had been in Pondicherry. Not only want of money but want of clothing too. So (on my return to Chandernagore), I hurriedly took Rs 50/-out of the current account of my family cabinet-firm and sent same to Pondicherry along with some clothings. Shree Aurobindo's acknowledgement came forthwith: 'Your money (by letter & wire) & clothes reached safely.'

Letter No. 3 of Shree Aurobindo opens with the money account first:

"We have received from you in December Rs 50/- & Rs 20/- and in this month Rs 10/-. According to N's (Is it Shree Nalini Kanta Guptaji?) account, Rs 10/- belongs to November account, Rs 50/-to December, Rs 20/- we suppose to have been sent in advance for the January account. If so, we still expect from you Rs 20/- this month."

Although undated, the account given in the letter justifies a rough fixation of a month of January as its writing-time. Can it be January 1912 or 1913? Let us find out which dating fits in with any given data available or discoverable. We know that Shree Roy after his first visit to Pondicherry returned to Chandernagore about the middle of December 1911. We also may recall in this time-connection that the first monetary arrangement made by "a certain gentleman" who had given Rs 2000/- for one year's expenses of Shree Aurobindo had ended in October, 1911. We may call it a step of destiny that Shree Roy, his disciple in Bengal, forthwith went to Pondicherry to take up a God-given charge in this very month of October 1911. In the letter to Anandrao, Shree Aurobindo ad-

mitted that for the nine or ten months to follow he had had 'only fortuitous help', as already noted by us. On his own admission, he was then 'at the height of his difficulties—in debt, with no money for the morrow, besieged in Pondicherry and all who could help him in temporary or permanent difficulties or else absent and beyond communication'. But one must not fail to note in what brave spirit of exalted optimism his inner being was facing such an abnormal situation. We have to listen to his own memorable words vibrating with a hope and faith, conscious and confident of self-victory:

"I take it from my past experience as a sign that I am nearing the period of trial. I would ask you if you can do no more, at least to send me some help to tide over the next month or two. After that period for certain reasons, *it will be easier for me to create means, if they are not created for me*",

The period of trial is not actually over. The financial contributions from Shree Roy which this letter No. 3 acknowledges, is clearly a monthly instalment of Rs 50/- which may be starting from a previous November-December and January following suit on the same limited scale. This is obviously insufficient. The more so, as the letter itself explains in the writer's own words:

"Up till now we have somehow or other managed to fill in the deficit of Rs 35/- monthly; but now that all our regular sources here are stopped, we have to look to mere luck for going on."

So writes Shree Aurobindo to Shree Roy:

*"I should be glad to know if there is any prospect of your being able to increase the amount now or shortly"*

The great Yogin, of course has not lost his faith in the 'Yoga-Kshema'-Law of spiritual life. His resignation is not passive inactivity, but creative energy awaiting divine knowledge to descend and inform it for application as normal working of the siddha is in life. So he goes on to say further in this same letter:

"Inactive *nirbhara* can only be a temporary movement of our sadhana, it cannot be permanent. There will have to be a change before long, but I cannot see clearly whether the regular and sufficient arrangement which must be instituted some time, is to come from you or from an unexpected quarter or whether I have myself to move in the matter. It is a question of providing some Rs 450/- a year in

addition to what you send, unless God provides us with some new sources for the Sharirajatra as he did two years ago."

If the financial arrangement provided for his 'Sharirajatra' two years ago be the one we have already referred to in the context of the Anandrao-letter, the date of this present letter would bring us from the 1910-1911 year-period to 1912-1913.

The amount figures mentioned in the course of this very letter also lead us to a conclusion as may be shown below.

Shree Roy has arranged to send a regular monthly contribution of Rs 50/- only from Chandernagore from November 1911, onwards whose yearly yield would total a sum of Rs (50 x 12) = Rs 600/- only. The deficit falling there-after at the rate of Rs 35/-monthly would bring us to Rs (35 x 12)=Rs 420/- i.e. a round figure of Rs 450/- approximately.

This therefore, was the economic question looming large in Shree Aurobindo's mind at the time he wrote this letter to Shree Roy, which explains particularly well its contents on the economic side. But no less remarkably does it fit in also with his central yogic endeavour, which he elaborately discloses thus:

"All these matters as well as the pursuance of my work.... depend on the success of the struggle which is the crowning movement of my sadhana—viz, the attempt to apply knowledge and power to the events and happenings of the world without the necessary instrumentality of physical action. What I am attempting is to establish the normal working of the siddhis in life i.e. the perceptions of thoughts, feelings and happenings of other beings and in other places throughout the world without any information by speech or any other data. 2nd, the communication of the ideas and feelings I select to others (individuals, groups, nations) by mere transmission of will-power. 3rd, the silent compulsion on them to act according to these communicated ideas and feelings, 4th. the determining of events, activities and results of action throughout the world by pure will-power. When I wrote to you last, I had begun the general application of these powers which God has been developing in me for the last two or three years, but as I told you, I was getting badly beaten. This is no longer the case, for in the 1st. 2nd, & even in the 3rd I am now largely successful, although the action of these powers is not yet perfectly organised. It is only in the 4th. that I feel a serious resistance."

Thus continuing, he comes to the financial point at last:

"In some directions I seem to succeed, in others partly to fail & partly to succeed, while in some fields, e.g., this matter of financial equipment both for my personal life and for my work I have hitherto entirely failed. When I shall succeed even partially in that, then I shall know that my hour of success is at hand and that I have got rid of past karmas in myself and others, which stands in our way and helps the forces of Kaliyuga to baffle our efforts".

The fourth letter placed in our series contains a reference to *Yoga & its Objects*, a booklet on the new Yoga of Shree Aurobindo, which in type-written manuscript was handed over personally by Shree Aurobindo to Shree Roy on the eve of the latter's departure from Pondicherry in December 1911. In this letter, the Master enjoins upon his disciple not to print the booklet—'unless and until he gives the latter positive directions.'

There is reference to money matters in it also—about 'the financial position' in which they in Pondicherry have 'to provide any cases for every need and the failure of any expected sum reduces them to difficulties.'

A special reference to the Madgodkar transaction as we find here, recalls to mind the predicament a great national leader like Shree Aurobindo had to face in these critical times for our failure to meet adequately his pecuniary requirements on promised lines. No wonder therefore, that he has to write in a rather painful language when describing the situation:

"I had reckoned on the remainder of Madgodkar's money to pay the sum still due for the rent of our last house. Fortunately, the litigation connected with the house has kept the matter hanging, but it may be demanded from us any day and we shall have to pay at once or face the prospect of being dragged into court and losing our prestige here entirely. In future, let me ask you, never to undertake any payment to us which you are not sure of being able to fulfill, because of the great disorder in our arrangements which results."

Subsequently however, it is learnt that the arrear rent of Rs 130/- which Shree Aurobindo had kept unpaid thitherto on the excuse of the litigation connected with the house, could be liquidated with the balance of Madgodkar's money.

Shree Aurobindo's removal to No. 41 Rue Francois Martin in Pondicherry also took place in 1913.

In this letter too, Shree Aurobindo had to write in some detail about the extremely hard-pressed monetary situation he and his disciples were passing through:

"Our position here now is at its worst, since all efforts to get some help from here have been temporarily fruitless and we have to depend on your Rs 50/- which is insufficient. We have to pay Rs 15/- for rent, other expenses come to not less and the remaining Rs 20/- cannot suffice for the food expenses of five people. Even any delay in your money arriving makes our Manager 'see darkness!' That is why he had to telegraph."

This fourth letter, which may, as seen above, be placed in our series—either just before or after—but very close to the third one, ends with this pertinent paragraph reflecting the actual struggling mood and trying situation:

"I shall write nothing about Sadhan etc, until I am out of my present struggle to make the spirit prevail over matter and circumstances, in which for the present I have been getting badly the worst of it. Till then you must expect nothing but mere business-letters, if any."

The disciple took up the cue as he should, ardently eager to meet the keenly felt desire and need of his Guru. But he himself was now in a very hard-pressed, precarious pecuniary situation at home. Disruption having taken place in his family-life, he had to dissociate himself from his family business-firm and purse—he had been forced to shift for himself depending on a petty voluntary contribution of Rs 12/- a month from one of his early devotee-friends.<sup>1</sup> He, however, soon set up a cabinet-firm of his own with the help of another young devotee-student—the urge behind all this was to earn an independent living for himself and there-through also for his Master, Shree Aurobindo. After a heroic struggle he did succeed too and when the first instalment in the increased amount reached Shree Aurobindo, he wrote back in a mood of deep spir-

---

[1] It should be noted for the sake of historic authenticity in this matter that in the interim-period, Shree Motilal Roy, had to seek the help of his revolutionary friends, especially that of the 'Anushilan Samiti' to get the money required to be sent to Pondicherry to meet the needs of Shree Aurobindo. He has expressed his heart's gratitude to them for same in his "Jeevan-sanginee" volume here-after in its proper place.

itual satisfaction, clearly reflecting itself from the very first line of his letter that followed:

"It is a great relief to us that you are able to send Rs 80/- this time and Rs 85/- for March. Owing to the cutting off all other means of supply, we were getting into a very difficult position. I welcome it as a sign of some preliminary effectiveness through you in this direction, in which everything has gone against us, also as one proof of several that the quality of your power and work is greatly improving in effectiveness and success. I need not refer to the other proofs, you will know what I mean."

The other proofs that he refers to above, of course, are no other than the outstanding revolutionary activities that were being enacted at this time under the leadership of Shree Motilal Roy's group of Chander-nagore revolutionists, one of which actions 'had been attended with unique spectacular success' about the year-end of 1912, of which we shall have to write in greater detail later on.

The economic urge and action, effort and fulfilment on the part of the disciple in response to his Guru's spiritual as well as material need and demand was undoubtedly a great fact of their life-yoga, which essentially served to change the very nature and character of money. Lucre, that is the ordinary need and motive for money here appears to have lost its sordid sense and value through such a spiritual operation and became the symbol and standard of a spiritual battle and victory. The Master himself like a veteran Generalissimo is building up as if his crack fighting team of tried and experienced generals in the rough and crude battlefield of actual economic strife. Shree Aurobindo's very language here is couched in a military sense and term which cannot escape any one's notice while going through these epistles. Let us quote his own words again from this letter to appreciate better by getting into deeper touch with his true battle-spirit and mood:

"Just now I find every forward step to be made is violently combatted and obstinately obstructed. Our progress is like the advance of a modern regiment under fire in which we have to steal a few yards at a run and then lie down under cover and let the storm of bullets sweep by. I neither hope for nor see any prospect of a more successful rapidity."

He does not pause here, but proceeds on with a vivid and accurate description as well as assessment of his own actual fighting position:

"I have been lying down under cover ever since February after a very brilliant advance in January and the early part of February. I keep the previous ground, but can make as yet no sure progress further. There is only a slow preparation for further progress. The real difficulty is to bring force, sureness and rapidity into the application of power and knowledge to life—specially sureness, for it is possible to bring the force and rapidity, but if not attended by unfailing sureness of working, they may lead to great errors in knowledge and great stumbles and disasters in action which counteract the successes. On the other hand, if sureness has been gained only by not stepping except where everything is sure (which is the first stage of action and knowledge necessary to get rid of rajasic rashness.), progress is likely to be slow. I am trying to solve the dilemma."

This is purely military language of an exactly militant commander-in-chief thinking out deeply and intensively in terms of his war-strategy—only the context is not that of the ordinary, actual, blood-red battlefield, but part of a spiritual-cum-material warfare—of Shree Aurobindo's *poorna-yoga* or integral life-sadhana.

This poorna-yoga, which includes within its vast, all-round purview and scope all the salient parts and features of life and society—cannot and does not leave money-matters out of it. One has to read between the lines of the epistles of Shree Aurobindo, specially such of those where-in he refers to his financial needs and in most of these letters in our letter-series of this time, there is hardly any single one, where-in there is no mention at all of his acute monetary needs—which all bear witness to the continuous economic strain and struggle of a very extreme nature that he had been undergoing during all this period between 1910 and 1920—a span of time spread over a decade—if one is to get an inner glimpse into this important aspect of his integral life-sadhana, which however, few even among his closest and most devoted disciples or followers have cared to dwell upon, much less even felt the need to study and know. They like perhaps to stress more upon the *sidclhi* than upon the *sadhana* and are thus more likely to miss the essential truth and greatness of the *siddhi* itself. Success is only the crowning movement of a hard and toil-some struggle and endeavour. The long and pain-staking process of Shree Aurobindo's creative life-yoga—his will and effort, 'to make the spirit prevail over matter and circumstances—especially in the matter of financial equipment both for his personal life and for his work'—as mirrored in line after line of these letters—is a running story of an epic bat-

tle waged in the coarse and crude economic field by this great spiritual man—the priest-prophet of a new age and a new life—and it has also been an inspiring, living, flaming lesson to his worthy spiritual disciple, to whom these letters were written—demonstrated and illustrated in the very life-creation of the latter—to be, we hope and believe, an equally impelling and instructive, inspired message of creative life for all chosen leaders of the new nation and the new humanity of the future.

Let us now turn our gaze to four other undated letters, obviously belonging to this period—as inferable from their internal data before we reach up to the dated one.

From two of these letters—(Letter No. 6) and (Letter No. 7), we find that Shree Aurobindo himself wrote two letters to Shree C. R. Das between 1913-1914:

"I enclose a letter to C. R. Das"—

Writes he in one of them to Shree Motilal, then adding.

*"Please transmit it and get a reply written or verbal."* (Letter No. 6).

In the second one, (Letter No. 7) wrote he in the same manner to Shree Motilal again:

"I enclose a letter to C. R. Das. Please let me know as soon as possible whether he has received the M. S. S."

The M. S. S. mentioned in the second letter undoubtedly refers to Shree Aurobindo's translation of C. R. Das's *Sagar-sangeet*—a book of Bengali poems composed by the latter which it was the author's desire to have it rendered in the English language. When the appeal for financial assistance from Shree Aurobindo himself through his letter conveyed by Shree Motilal Roy reached him, we have it on the authority of Shree Roy, writing in his *Yuga-purusha Shree Aurobindo*—that Barrister Eas made up his mind to provide this assistance in a way so as to serve both the donor's as well as the receiver's purposes—without exposing either to any possible suspicion in the eyes of the then ever-watchful British Government that would sense a liaison of the Barrister in a revolutionary conspiracy with the Arch-revolutionary Shree Aurobindo, now staying out of their reach under the protection of a foreign Government in

French territory. This he thought could best be done under cover of this non-political i.e. purely business transaction.

Shree Motilal who carried Shree Aurobindo's enclosed letter in person to Shree Das writes about his first visit in his book thus:

"Shree Aurobindo wrote to me again in his letter to approach Chit-taranjan Das for some monetary help for him (Aurobindo). I went to Das with Shree Aurobindo's letter. Shree Das sat for a while a thinking, then he asked me to come and see him on another day. I went to him on the appointed date. He took out his book of poems 'Sagar-sangeet' and told me 'If Shree Aurobindo translates this into English for me, I shall give him one thousand rupees for this work.'

"I reported the talk to Shree Aurobindo, who wanted the book 'Sagar-sangeet' to be sent to him. Shree Aurobindo made two sets of English translation (so far as we remember)—one in rhymes, the other unrhymed. Das also paid the sum in course of some time."

It appears that a great literary genius that he was, Shree Aurobindo did his part of the job in an exceedingly satisfactory manner to deserve Rs 1000/- fetched by it—a sum however, he badly needed at the time. We learn from Shree Nalini Kanta Gupta that 'Shree Aurobindo took only two or three days to complete this translation—one may say almost at one stretch of breath in an easy flow of spontaneous inspiration.' The second letter in this connection was evidently sent by Shree Aurobindo just after the task of translation had been completed and the manuscripts sent to Shree Das. A sum of Rs 300/- seems also to have been received from him through his agents Grindlay & Co with a note saying that he will get Rs 1000/- for the translation—this made Shree Aurobindo ask Shree Roy:

"Is the Rs 300/- part of the Rs 1000/- or separate? I ask this for information only, because you wrote that he intended to give me one year's expenses & Rs 300/- extra. I need some extra money badly now for materials for the work I have now seriously entered on in connection with the Veda and the Sanskrit language:'

We may note that in letter no. 5, Shree Aurobindo while 'acknowledging receipt of Bipin Pal's *Soul of India*, previously sent to him, he had asked for getting from 'Hiranyagarbha' (probably it was the revolutionary

Amarendra Nath Chatterjee of Uttarpara who had been so nicknamed by Shree Aurobindo or it might be this was—as was the prevailing vogue among revolutionaries themselves in those days to take to such nom-de-plumes to hide their identities from the British Government and Police) —Sister Nivedita's, *The Master as I Saw Him*, and also a copy of R.C. Dutt's Bengali translation of the Vedas which he needed obviously for his research-work in Vedic-literature. In this letter No. 7, he reiterates this need and asks Shree Roy 'to make a serious effort this time to get hold of Dutt's Bengali translation of Rigveda and send it to him or any translation for the matter which gives the European version.'

This is a phase of Shree Aurobindo's mission of culture we may have occasion to come to again for discussion in our letter-commentary later on.

In letter no. 6, Shree Aurobindo recalls an episode which has some interesting connection with this move of approach to Shree C. R. Das.:

"You will see"

Writes he to Shree Roy that

"I did not authorise Bhaga to ask him for money; at the same time, in doing so, he obeyed an unspoken general vyapti from myself which his mind seems to have got hold of and mixed up with its own desires and anxieties. I am drawing now towards the close of my internal Yogic tapasya and the time is not very distant when I shall have to use its results for the work God has sent me to do in this world. For that work I shall need larger sums of money. So long as I was only perfecting myself and sending out Shakti to others, all I needed was enough for the maintenance of myself and those who are with me. *This charge I gave to you and the charge is not withdrawn*; (the italics are ours) but, as you know, it covers only the bare physical necessities of life in Pondicherry. More than that, you are not likely to afford and certainly you could not provide me with the same I shall need even in the earlier part of my work. To limit myself to the Rs 85/- a month you can send us, would be denying myself the material means for doing what I have to do and to accept stagnation and quiescence.

It is true I am not beginning the work immediately, but before it begins, I have to bend circumstances to my will in this very particular, so that the obstacle of paucity of means which has been my chief stumbling block for the beginning, may be got rid of once for all. My will has to become effective on this point above all and the impediments both subjective and objective for its mastery have to be eliminated. Therefore I have sent out the general *Vyapti* I spoke of. Biren's action was one of first responses, but as it was impure response, it has created more golmal

than effect. As to confining the appeal for pecuniary assistance to those who are entirely of one way of thinking with ourselves, it was a good rule for you to observe, but it cannot bind me when I begin my larger movement. From whatever quarter money or help comes to me, it comes from God."

Apparently, it was Biren, nicknamed Bhaga, who on his own initiative, but virtually in obedience to an inner compulsion, which Shree Aurobindo terms and recognises as his *vyapti siddhi*, had first approached Barrister Das for contribution of money in aid of his Guru, Shree Aurobindo. This urge, being not pure but mixed up with his desires and anxieties, 'created more golmal than effect'. Yet the idea was taken up by the Master himself, when he decided to send his letter to Das through his newly chosen disciple, Shree Motilal Roy. And, the result we know—was this *Sagar-sangeet* transaction.

As in the two previous letters, we have already gone through before, where he speaks of his 'nearing the period of trial' (Letter No. 2) or 'the success of the struggle which is the crowning movement' of his sadhana, here too, he takes occasion to touch on the same vital issue once again:

"I am drawing now towards the close of my internal Yogic tapasya and the time is not very distant when I shall have to use its results for the work God has sent me to do in the world. For that I shall need larger sums of money."

Here he has spoken also of 'a charge' he has given to Shree Roy and he clearly declares too 'and the charge is not withdrawn.'

This charge—in his own words—'covers only the bare physical necessities of our life in Pondicherry. More than that, you are not likely to be able to afford. To limit myself to the Rs 85/- a month you can send us, would be denying myself the material means for doing what I have to do.'

The 'charge' spoken of therefore, concerns—in one word—with Shree Aurobindo's '*Sharirjatra*' for which God provided him from 1910 to 1911 through 'a certain gentleman' referred to in our Anandrao letter.

This 'certain gentleman'—noble-hearted first 'rasaddar' (to use Thakur Shree Rafnakrishna-deva's apt term used by him in his usual colloquial parlance to mean his 'financial supporters') of Shree Aurobindo has remained unnamed and unknown to us up till now. But the 'charge'

resting on him—we may say 'created' by destiny or Providence—ended automatically, as we have seen, on October 1911 and it was from November 1911 i.e. the very next month of the same year, that Shree Motilal stepped into that place—for the function of the second 'rasaddar' of Shree Aurobindo, if we so view it—but here, remembering his own memorable words in such connection—'it will be easier to create means, if they are not created for me,' we may say also, that the Master by imposing the 'charge of his *Sharirajatr*' on his new disciple Shree Roy, was now busy partly 'creating' his second 'rasaddar'—for an appointed period of time.

In letter No. 6, his cogitation on this point is worth our attention and reflection. It was on the eve of his new spiritual mission just as it was unfolding itself before his opening inner eye, that he was rallying his self-energy 'to bend circumstances to his will in this particular, so that the obstacle of paucity of means which has been his chief stumbling-block from the beginning may be got rid of once for all'. Indeed, for this, 'his will has to become effective on this point above all and the impediments both subjective and objective for its mastery have to be eliminated.'

The *vyapti-siddhi* he has applied for such purpose—is to awaken this will-power in others not only to *contribute* and *dedicate* but also to *create* money and means for the upkeep of life and its organisations—all that is necessary for the expression of the Divine in life. This will is to be exercised first through his own people, his chosen disciples who are fit for it; but for his larger movement, it is also necessary to take the help of his known friends, whom he can count upon as his helpers, willing to come to his aid out of deep and genuine admiration and sympathy for his great spiritual work and mission, so far as they are able to understand its aim and purpose and also materially to assist it.

This observation of ours will emerge with greater relevance and assume helpful significance if read alongside another letter—a third one, written from Arya office, Pondicherry and sent to C. R. Das on 18th. November 1922—almost a decade after—through Shree Barin Ghosh (Vide Appendix—A). There also he speaks in even clearer accents of his

larger movement—'work on a larger scale than before' and for which he 'needs therefore, much larger resources than he can at present command.'

In that letter (Vide Appendix—A), he, however, hastens to make it clear to his same large-hearted friend whom he addresses as 'Dear Chitta'—that there is a distinction between this new work and the work already undertaken—specially that going on at Chandernagore.

"One word" says he "to avoid a possible misunderstanding. Long ago I gave to Motilal Roy of Chandernagore the ideas and some principles and lines of a new social and economic organisation and education and this with my spiritual force behind him he has been trying to work out in his Samgha. This is quite a separate thing from what I am now writing about—*my own work which I must do myself and no one else can do for me.*" (the italics are ours.)

A confirmation of this financial charge on Shree Motilal Roy and his Samgha at Chandernagore, we may find also in "Evening Talks", first series, page 22, where we read:

"A. B. Purani told him (Shree Aurobindo) that financial aid would be arranged from Boroda, if necessary, to which he replied:

"At present, what is required comes from Bengal, especially from: Chandernagore. So there is no need."

The date of this talk was an evening in December 1918.

Four other letters No. 10, 11, 12 and 13 have now to be taken up in their order of time-sequence to complete our review of this economic phase of Shree Aurobindo's sadhana as revealed through his letters, before we touch upon some other salient, very important features of his integral yoga of life as also involved there-in.

Here we get also two letters with fixed dates along with two undated ones. The date of one is 17th. April 1914 and that of the other is 5th. May 1914. The two undated ones lie closer either to the first one or to the second. The first two deal purely with an election matter of French India, to which we shall have to return later on.

In his letter No. 12 dated 5th. May 1914, Shree Aurobindo refers to his acute financial situation once again:

"Next as to money-matters. My present position is that I have exhausted all my money along with Rs 60/, Richard forced on me and am still in debt for the Rs 130/- due for the old rent. I do not like to take more money from Richard, for he has sold one fourth of his wife's fortune (a very small one) in order to be able to come and work for India, and the money he has, can only carry him through the two years he thinks of staying here. I should therefore, be impoverishing them by taking anything from them. Of course, they believe that money will come whenever it is necessary but then God's idea of necessity and ours do not always agree."

There is reference in this letter No. 12 and letter No 13, to a few possible sources from which he was expecting money due to him. As one of such expected sources, we find the mention of a Madras gentleman's name—that of Rangaswamy. But he is a disappointment as Shree Aurobindo himself writes about him:

"As for Rangaswamy, there is a fatality about his money—it is intercepted by all sorts of people and very little reaches me even on the rare occasions when he sends anything. I have no hope therefore, of any regular help from that quarter. Even in the facts of your being unable to meet him, fate has been against us."

We do not know if this Rangaswamy is the same "messenger to the South" of whom Shree Aurobindo wrote in letter No. 1 of 5th. July 1912, about two years ago, thus:

"The last time he came, he brought a promise of Rs 1000/- in a month and some permanent provision afterwards, but the promise like certain predecessors has not yet been fulfilled and we sent him for cash. But though he should have been here three days ago, he has not returned and even when he returns, I am not quite sure about the cash and still less about the sufficiency of the amount."

In any way, as this promise of Rs 1000/- frittered away in 1912, so even two years after also, such a source did prove equally disappointing.

The 'Das' money of Rs 1000/- however,—paid in installments—as we gather from his letters—was in fact, money actually earned by him by his literary labour.

The 'garden-money', we are told, was his share of the sale-proceeds received by his uncle for selling the garden-property owned by the joint-family and this he had to get after too much delay and after too many 'tagids' through Sourin and others. The amount of this share was Rs 500/- only as mentioned by him.

In letter No. 12, writes he to Shree Motilal about this garden-money:

"Sourin says there is Rs 500/- awaiting me, my share of the garden-money. He wants it for his 'commerce', but when I have no money to live on, I can hardly comply.....If you see him in Calcutta, ask him to get it and send it to me at once. With this money I may be able to go on for a few months till something definite and regular can be settled and worked out."

He continues:

"As for the sum I need monthly, so long as Sourin and others do not return, I need Rs 50/- monthly for my own expenses and Rs 10/- not for myself, but still absolutely indispensable. When S and the others return, that will no longer be sufficient. I am writing to S to try and make some real bundobasta about money before coming back.

Please also press Shyam Babu and the others for the money due to me. This habit of defalcation of money for noble and philanthropic purposes in which usually the ego is largely beneficiary, is one of the curses of our movement and so long as it is continued, Lukshmee will not return to this country. I have sharply discontinued all looseness of this kind myself and it must be discouraged henceforth wherever we meet it. It is much better and more honest to be a thief for our own personal benefit than under these holy masks. And always, if one must plunder, it is best to do it as a Kshatriya, not with the corruption of the Vaishya spirit of gain which is the chief enemy in our present struggle....."

We have not hesitated to quote this passage from the letter at some length, because this strong and pungent remonstrance coming as it does from one of the greatest of our spiritual and national leaders, deserves our closest attention even in our present-day public life and body politics. Shree Aurobindo categorises this as 'one of the curses of our movement' and says that 'so long as it is continued, Lukshmee will not return to this country'—a clear-worded note of caution and warning for all to note and heed.

In letter No. 13 also, he writes again:

"I have written to Sourin about the garden-money and he says he has asked Sukumar to send it. But I have received nothing as yet."

He then calculates:

"If I get this money and the remaining Rs 200/- from Das (out of Rs 1000/- which he hopes to receive by next August in addition to Rs 400/- already received through Grindlay company), that will be Rs 1100/- in hand. With 100/- more and Rs 130/- on account of the old rent, say Rs 250/- altogether, we shall be provided

for bare necessities for a year during which other conditions may arise. That Rs 250/- ought to come from Shyam Babu and Sharma."

But about this latter sum, he still feels as diffident as ever, for he goes on to say, with a bit of bitter and painful humour:

"But there is little hope of money once swallowed by a patriot being disgorged again. His philanthropic stomach digests sovereignly. I must seek it elsewhere. If this can be done, the only burden which will fall on you is to refurnish us with apparel and foot-wear from time to time. At the same time our attempt should be made to keep up the arrangement with Das, if possible, for we do not know whether our attempt to provide otherwise will succeed."

To a Yogin like Shree Aurobindo, even so minute a detail of life's everyday necessity such as 'apparel and footwear' is not excluded from his attention. In letter No. 5,

"There is the pressing cry for cloths in this quarter, as these articles seem to be with us to remind us of the paucity of matter".

In letter No. 12 he appends a similar note again with a singular personal touch upon it this time as follows:

"Please get us some clothes sent from Calcutta, as they are very urgently needed, specially as I may now have to go out from time to time breaking my old rule of seclusion. I am also in need of a pair of shoes, as Bharati has bagged the pair I had."

In letter No. 13, while acknowledging receipt of the cloth and shoes. he drops in a witty personal remark anew:

"But for myself only the slippers are useful, as the shoes are too large."

His conclusive speculation expressed with almost childlike simplicity in the sentence quoted above—'If this can be done, the only burden which will fall on you is to refurnish us with apparel and foot-wear'—may well appear to us as an oversimplified summary of his bare physical needs—when just before in his fore-going letter No. 12 he has given a very clear-cut call or mandate to his disciple, Shree Roy, in the following words:

"What you have to do is to try to make some real arrangement, not a theoretical arrangement by which the burden of my expenses may be shifted off your shoulders until I am able to make my own provision. Meanwhile, get me Rs 500/- due to me (garden-money) and if afterwards we can make no other arrangement,

we shall then have to consider the question again. It is this point of equipment, not only for myself but for my work in which the opposition of the Kaliyuga forces is just now the most obstinate. It has somehow to be overcome."

Such a call or demand coming from the Guru, though covered in terms of material need and money, was received by his worthy spiritual disciple in a deep spiritual sense and significance. It was a call of the spirit hidden in the material claim, which had touched Shree Roy's heart and fired his creative imagination. He felt in his heart of hearts that a claim like this for one's material requirement can only come from one who looks upon the other as his very own. The will and effort to fulfil it were a veritable practical sadhana.

The subjective keynote of this objective sadhana is best expressed in his own words by Shree Motilal Roy himself writing, in the pages of *Jeevan Sanginee*—his autobiographical masterpiece of great historical value as well as exquisite literary excellence.

"My anxieties and efforts to meet the demands of Shree Aurobindo—it is hard to express in words. In those days when men were afraid to take the name of Shree Aurobindo out of fear of the British Government—when I myself lived surrounded day and night by a ring of police spies—it was this burden of responsibility in bearing which my own foot-stand became steady and firm. I learnt the true lesson of life that it would not do to take into account my own needs alone, but that I should also make Shree Aurobindo's needs too as my very own. This right to take up my Master's charge upon my shoulders as mine own was my very sadhana at that time. It is as the crowning experience of that sadhana—as its very siddhi—that I can claim to regard all my economic endeavours as a part of my religion of life today. The divine use of money was taking shape in me through that strenuous labour of love it was my fortune to undergo in those times.

"The mandate of my Guru upon me was to procure the money he needed 'by will-power or any other power in heaven or on earth'—I also felt intense satisfaction and highest fulfilment my self in this endeavour to fulfil his needs through any means that came to my hands—from my family expenses, my business-income, my wife's ornaments, by loan.

"My dream to build one indivisible spiritual family—which I am striving to realise—grew out of this spring-root of economic consecration and dedication received from and through Shree Aurobindo. It is also the ever-green seed-essence of our new life-creation—the Samgha."

Indeed, through the purest aim and effort to meet his Master's needs and demands, slowly but irresistibly awakened the disciple's hidden creative genius, which took shape after shape as the years rolled by in a hundred-fold avenues of economic activity and fruitfulness.

"What little Shree Aurobindo needed or demanded from me for his personal requirement contained within it like a shell the seed of 'Iswara-prasada' or the 'Grace of the Lord'"—uttered the elated disciple out of a fullness of heart in gratefully recognising and acknowledging this perennial source-spring of all his spiritual and material creativities."

In the annals of sadhana, the truth of such intimate spiritual relationship over-flowing like *sahasradhara* in an abundance of spiritual as well as mundane creativity—is a rare but precious phenomenon of life—the fruit of affinity of heart and mutual understanding—a spiritual and living communion of two great souls resulting in a new creation—a spiritual and living ideal community—the Samgha, with a new mission of its own for the regeneration of life and society.

Like pure and supernal heavenly blossoms—the evolving life at the two divinely chosen centres at Pondicherry and Chandernagore, will bear living witness to the inner and outer sadhana that took place during this decade—long hidden from the public view, but which one day has to reveal itself to the nation and humanity to inspire and guide them both in the spiritual and the material spheres of their life and existence.

We shall now have to come to some other points in these letters, which should require elucidation. In letter No. 9 Shree Aurobindo writes about sending of some 'proofs' and also about 'despatch of books'. —'Tantric books' as he says in his letter No. 9. What can these words actually mean? The first mention about the "books" occurs in letter No. 6 in connection with one, who is called 'psalmodist'—apparently a nom-de-plume.

Evidently, these are cryptic or code words referring to some secret fact or facts which cannot be known unless disclosed by some one who directly knew. Shree Motilal Roy states in his *Yuga-purusha Shree Aurobindo* on this point:

"Pondicherry being a free port at that time, numerous articles from foreign countries were imported there. The revolutionaries of Chandernagore decided to import six revolvers from Pondicherry and entrusted this task to me. I had to refer the matter to Shree Aurobindo and wrote to him for the purchase of these six revolvers. Shree Aurobindo did not leave my prayer unfulfilled. But prompted by caution, when the revolvers were procured, he had arranged to keep them concealed underground. For a long while no opportunity presented itself for their despatch to Chandernagore. Shree Aurobindo had found many friends in Pondicherry but to them he had stated that he had arrived there for the practice of Yoga. That he had any connection with the Bengal revolutionaries he would by no means let them know. It was almost after a year that arrangement was made to take the revolvers to Chandernagore with great care and caution through Sachindra Nath Sannyal. But having remained underground for about a year, the revolvers had become practically useless."

'Tantrik books' in this passage therefore, stand for 'revolvers'. But the 'Psalmodist'—who might he be? Could he be Bharati, the budding South Indian poet of Tamil literature? Bharati was indeed, a fiery revolutionary youth, but the description that just follows from the writer's pen about him as 'a future karmobira' (Karmaveera) does not seem to fit well with that great and genuine poet's character. We may therefore, leave aside any such fumbling guess-work here and keeping in mind the *mantra-gupti* rule (practice of secrecy) in strict vogue, amongst the revolutionary workers in those days, it is better to let the 'psalmodist' remain incognito to us even now too.

Then about the West Indian friend, his publication and about the 'usual formula' of communication mentioned in letter No. 7.

We had personally heard from Samgha-Guruji about a retired Mahratta General, who had met Shree Motilal with a manuscript on War-strategy, written in English, with some Sanskrit quotations in it in the de-

vanagri script—this he had a mind to publish, if approved by the Revolutionary Party and especially, the great revolutionary leader hiding in Pondicherry. Shree Aurobindo writes to Motilalji:

"Also let me know the address of your West Indian friend in that connection which you omitted to give in your last letter, of course, in the usual formula. Please explain how you expect him to befriend you if there is any difficulty in the final stage of the publication."

As we had then come to know from our Samgha-Guruji, that this Mahratta General from West India, like some others at the time, was thinking of a revolutionary insurrection under the leadership of the Hindu King of Nepal. His revolutionary fire and fervour as a true Mahratta, we felt, had the naming inspiration of the great Shivaji and the warrior Peshwas. We had a chance occasion to skip through the pages of this rare manuscript and dimly remember (after this long lapse of about 56 years)—some of its contents bristling with descriptions about '*Vy-ooaha-rachana*' on the lines laid down in ancient Sanskrit texts—formation of army manoeuvres, guerilla warfare etc, adapted to modern battle-strategy. As youngsters in teens, we had no further access to more serious consultations in our leading circle about this matter. But from the tone and trend of Shree Aurobindo's remark in his letter on this point we have to conclude that there must have been what he says 'difficulty in the final stage of the (risky) publication' and the matter had to be dropped. Under the crucial circumstances of those times, the publication surely could not proceed farther—for nothing further we remember to have heard about it then or there-after.

The 'usual formula' of communication alluded to by Shree Aurobindo himself, also requires an explanatory comment on our part, which too, we shall give in the words of Shree Motilalji again. Writes he in *Yugapurusha Shree Aurobindo*: "Shree Aurobindo of that day not only used a secret code himself in communicating such secret messages, but he actually regarded the revolutionary movement itself as *Veeracharee Tantra* or *Shakti-sadhana* in Indian politics and his only aim in view there-in was to achieve *Mukti* and *Bhukti*—liberation and happiness—not for any individual person but collective—salvation and happiness for the entire nation. I did not fully comprehend like many others in those days the full implication and application of this great endeavour and aim he was pur-

suing, but I had taken the determination to follow his lead and do whatever he would dictate me to do."

It was according to such direction that Shree Roy had gone to meet Shree Parthasarathi sent by Shree Aurobindo in Calcutta and it was through Parthasarathi that this secret code-system was transmitted to Shree Roy with the instruction that the communication about secret matters thenceforth would have to be carried on in this code between Shree Aurobindo and his group in Bengal through Motilalji.

Such code-communication must therefore, be the 'usual formula' mentioned in the letter No. 7.

In letter No. 9, Shree Aurobindo 'subjoins certain explanations about the matter of the Tantric books' and he himself 'puts them in cypher.' Why in cypher? He himself explains it in the very next clause to follow 'because there are certain things, as you can understand, not *comme de faut* according to the ideas of modern social decorum which ought not to fall under unfit eyes.'

And here, he utters a clear and verily stern note of warning to his spiritual-cum-revolutionary disciple for what seems to be an unwary serious lapse of writing or action on the part of the latter:

"It appears that you did not understand my last letter. However, from henceforth please leave the mailer entirely in my hands. You will see from the explanations given how highly undesirable is the kind of correspondence you have been carrying on in another quarter."

An amount of Rs 30/- at least that Shree Aurobindo had to spend 'for expenses attached to that particular transaction ought to be replaced'—he enjoins, while he hurries to send the urgent 'accompanying note in cypher' 'subjoining his explanations about the matter of the Tantric books'—for speedy attention of the Chandernagore revolutionary group engaged in secret action. The 'proofs'—mentioned above—however, if concerned in any way with this book'—i.e. secret arms-supply transaction—it is not clear to us what the word positively refers to.

The reference to one R. S. Sharma in letter No. 4 and to Biren in letters No. 6, 8 and 12, may need certain observations worthy to be noted in their connection.

Sharma, professing to be a nationalist and devotee of Shree Aurobindo, was sent by Shree Shyam Sundar Chakravarty to Shree Motilal Roy to be introduced. to Shree Aurobindo. Shree Roy, relying on Shree Chakravarty's words, sent the man to Pondicherry with his introduction. But Shree Aurobindo refused to see him on receiving 'a warning against him from within', which was always repeated and also confirmed by external facts. He was undoubtedly a police-spy, who having failed to win the confidence of the swadeshi friends of Shree Aurobindo in Pondicherry who were warned against him, tried his hand with Shree Roy through Shree Chakravarty at Calcutta and succeeded beyond his expectations. Therefore, this clear note of caution and warning from Shree Aurobindo to Shree Roy:

"I wonder when you people will stop trusting the first stranger with a glib tongue who professes nationalist fervour and devotion. Whether you accept my estimate of him or not, you may be sure that his bhakti for me is humbug.

..... You must accept at least the facts I have given you and draw any conclusion that common sense may suggest you."

Just in contrast to this case of Sharma, is the case of Biren (Ghose). Biren is an actual devotee of Shree Aurobindo, but a controversial character in the eyes of Sourin etc. Biren had been a close associate of Shree Aurobindo,—one of the two who accompanied him in the boat on the way to his '*agnatabas*'— secret retreat in Chandernagore.

In his letter No. 6, the Master himself cites the endeavour of this same Biren from an inner compulsion of spiritual influence (termed as *vyapti*-power) to collect money for his. Guru, though he criticises at the same time his mixed psychological state of mentality. In letter No. 8, Shree Aurobindo writes about him again:

"Biren is all right, I believe, he said nothing to anybody about that matter. There were some legitimate doubts in some quarters, owing to his unsteady nature and other defects of character. I thought it right to give them as much value for practical purposes as was reasonable; therefore, I wrote to you."

In letter No. 12, in face of some accumulated black impressions about Biren from some of his close associates, Shree Aurobindo came out with a clear and unprejudiced reading of the young man's mind and character from his own deep and unbiassed spiritual viewpoint. Shree Motilal, on hearing from Shree Sourin Bose some statements about

Biren, full of suspicion against him, suspecting him even to have become a police-spy, wrote to his Master by way of setting him on his guard. It was in course of reply to this letter from Shree Roy that Shree Aurobindo wrote this serious note, which reveals a super-luminous aspect of a great Spiritual Guru's will and heart, bent upon purifying and transforming the life of his disciples and through the disciples the life of the nation and society:

"You write about Biren being here. I do not hold the same opinion about Biren as Sourin etc do, who are inclined towards a very black interpretation of his character and action. It seems to me that events have corroborated all he said about his relations with certain undesirable persons. Moreover, I see that he has taken yoga earnestly and has made for him a rapid progress. I am also unaware of anything he has said to other persons which would help any evil-minded person in establishing wrong interpretation of your philosophic and social activities. I fail to find in him, looking at him spiritually, those ineffable blacknesses which were supposed to dwell in him, only flightiness, weakness, indiscretion, childishness and erratic impulsiveness and self-will and certain undesirable possibilities present in many Bengalis, in a certain type indeed, which has done much harm in the past. All these have recently much diminished and I hope even to eradicate them by the Yoga. In fact, the view of his presence here forced in me by that which guides us, is that he was sent here as representative of this type and that I have to change and purify it. If I can do this in the representative, it is possible in the future to do so in the class and unless I could do it, the task I have set for myself for India will remain almost too difficult for solution. For as long as that remains strong, Bengal can never become what it is intended to be."

The Master does not stop here in his thought, in his process of deeper and wider self-examination. So he further writes on:

"You will say, supposing I am wrong and Sourin right or supposing I fail. In any case, he cannot strike your work except by first striking at me, since he does not know anything about you directly or independently of his stay here. Still, there is the possibility (intellectually) of even that happening. That raises a whole question which it is necessary to settle—the entire separation of Vedantic Yoga from other activities."

The great leader's deep and firm faith in the highest possibilities of human nature, his undying optimism as well as superb resolve as a true spiritual nation-builder 'to change and purify' the character of his countrymen, specially that of the young generation—so shinningly manifest in every word and sentence in the first-quoted passage concerning Biren and the type of the youthful generation of Bengal—as it is felt by Shree

Aurobindo, he has been sent by the Guiding Power above to represent—do not get a bit bedimmed by the second quotation of his further cogitation; but we find his great intellect now shooting out towards a central question—a question of questions—that is bound to arise out of an overall consideration of the entire situation. His new assessment of this overall situation and his own re-adjusted position there-in—are placed in view of Shree Roy on the basis of certain palpable facts in words which speak in a language of concrete personal experience as follows:

"You must realise that my work is a very vast one and that I must in doing it, come in close contact with all sorts of people including Europeans, perhaps even officials, perhaps even spies and officials. For instance, there is Biren. There is a French-man, named Shair Sidd here now in Chandernagore, who came to me and whom I had to see and sound. He is a queer sort of fool with something of the knave but he had possibilities which I had to sound. There is Richard who is to know nothing about Tantricism. There are a host of possible young men whom I must meet and handle, but who may not turn out well. It is obviously impossible for me to do this work, if the close connection with Tantrics remains and every one whom I meet and receive is supposed by people there to be a mighty and venerable person who is to be taken at once into perfect confidence by reason of having been for a time in my august shadow. It won't do at all. The whole thing must be re-arranged on a reasonable basis."

After a four-step outline for such reasonable re-arrangement along with some other necessary particular details, he ends the letter No. 12 with this closing remark:

"Unfortunately, the manner in which the Tantric Yoga has been carried out is so full of the old faults of the former Tantric sadhana that a catastrophe was inevitable. The new Yoga cannot be used as a sort of sauce for old dishes, it must occupy the whole place, on peril of serious difficulties in the Siddhi and even disasters. I shall write to you about what I propose to do about Vedantic Yoga and publication as yet it has not been sufficiently formulated to write. We have only started a new society here, called L'Idea Nouvelle (the New Idea) and are trying to get an authorisation."

A new idea is on the anvil—a transition from new thought to new action also at the same time. In his letter No. 10, we find Shree Aurobindo 'waiting to give some shape to the decision he has arrived at to resume personally his work on the material plane' and to that end, he has felt it necessary to make some new arrangement by which the Vedantic work can go on unhampered by the effects of error in Tantric kriya, which if

carried on in the old style, 'to which the Bengal revolutionaries seem to be undivorcably attached, can only help to keep up the yogic flame in the hearts of a few, but full of danger to the spirit and the body.'

"It is only by a wider Vedantic movement leading later to a greater Tantra that the work of regeneration can be done."

—declares the great Master to his disciple—in a tone and mood of experience, unique and intimately self-revelatory as never so emphatically, unequivocally and outspokenly uttered before:

"and of that movement neither you, nor Sourin can be the head. It needs a wider knowledge and a greater spiritual force in the Adhara through which it is engineered; it needs, in fact, the greatest which India contains and which is at the same time willing to take it up. I see only Devavrata and myself who have the idea for the Dayanandas, and others are a negligible quantity and Devavrata seems to me to have gone off for the moment on a wrong route and through egoism has even allowed his spiritual force to be used against us by secret forces, in the sukshma world which he is not advanced enough to understand. Therefore, if God wills, I will take the field." (letter No. 10)

The new idea or rather the new spirit descending on Shree Aurobindo was in fact, a new attempt which took the form of a new philosophical review with Paul Richard and himself as-editors—the Arya to be brought out in French and English two separate editions—one for France, one for India, England and America. In this Review—as he says in his letter No. 13:

"my new theory of the Veda will appear, as also translation and explanation of the Upanishads, a series of essays giving my system of Yoga and a book of Vedanta philosophy (not Shankar's but Vedic-Vedanta) giving the Upanishadic foundation of my theory of ideal life towards which humanity must move."

Along with this as his own intellectual contribution to the world, there will be published also in it Mr. Richard's collection of the central sayings of the great sages of all times, called the 'Eternal Wisdom.'

Since the time when his great nationalist friend and colleague, late Bipin Chandra Pal, wrote about him in his *Swaraj* that 'Aurobindo who was the leading spirit, the central figure in the new journal, found in the pages of the *Bandemataram* the opportunities that were denied him in the National College and from the tutor of a few youths he thus became

the teacher of a whole nation'—since that time this was his third venture in the journalistic line.

The *Bandemataram*—renowned daily organ of the Nationalist Party of Bengal—started on the initiative of the great nationalist leader, Bipin Chandra Pal himself, but subsequently whose charge devolved on Aravinda Ghosh, 'was almost unique in journalistic history in the influence it exercised in converting the mind of a people and preparing it for revolution, but its weakness was on the financial side, for the extremists were still a poor man's party'—we are quoting from *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and the Mother*. So long as Shree Aurobindo was there in active control, he managed with great difficulty to secure sufficient public support for running the paper, and when he was arrested and held in jail for a year—in the desperate economic condition generated, the paper was made 'to die a glorious death.'

Shree Aurobindo's later venture in the journalistic line, were the twin weekly organs of spiritual nationalism—*Dharma* and *Karmo yogin*—started by himself, on his own initiative we have it from his same direct evidence—these 'had a fairly large circulation and-were, unlike the *Bandemataram* easily self-supporting.'

When launching his latest journalistic magnum opus—the *Arya*—Shree Aurobindo's inherent care or concern was to make it not only self-supporting but also lucrative. In his own words in letter No. 13:

"If the *Review* succeeds, if that is to say, we get in India 850 regular subscribers, and 250 in France etc, we shall be able to meet the expense of the establishment, translation-staff etc and yet have enough for each of the editors to live on with their various kinds of families, say Rs 100/- a month for each. In that case the money-question will practically be solved. There will of course, be other expenses besides mere living and there may be from time to time exceptional expenses, such as publication of books etc, but these may be met otherwise or as the *Review* increases its subscribers".

'Therefore,' he writes to Shree Motilal, 'use your best endeavour towards this end.' He there-after adds that the prospectus would come out in the middle of this month (June, as we suppose) and the *Review* on the 15th of August, 'so there would be nearly two months for collecting subscribers.' So he would naturally like to know how much he (Shree Roy)

can help him in this work and how many copies of the prospectus should be sent to him for the purpose of circulation.

But it should really be not only interesting but even striking to note in this connection that quite confident as he seems to be about his prospective project as a sound practical proposition, his optimism is carefully bracketted with a singular ring of caution in these words:

"There is one thing about which great care has to be taken, that is, there should be no entanglement of this review in Indian politics or a false association created by the police finding it in the houses of some political suspects they search for, in that case people will be afraid to subscribe."

"There are difficulties enough"—he goes on to say, "let us not will fully increase them" and incidentally points out: "you have seen for instance, that in recent political trials, yoga pamphlets and books seem to have been kept together everywhere with the queerest incongruity. That is a thing we could not control, we can only hope it will not happen again. But meanwhile the work of publicity and spreading our Yoga has got an unnecessary difficulty thrown in its way. Do not let any add to it by associating Vedanta and Tantra together in a most undesirable fashion."

Shree Motilal's reply brought the promise of 200 subscribers that he would try to collect. Such a response while kindling a ray of hope in Shree Aurobindo's mind, evokes a quick reply in letter No. 14 as follows, mixed up with the same feeling of concern and caution as before:

"I do not think we can dispense with the 200 subscribers whom you promise. The only difficulty is that, if there are political suspects among them, it will give the police a handle for connecting politics and the *Review* and thus frightening the public."

A way out was of course, immediately suggested by him in the same letter, as he writes on:

"But this is not a sufficient reason for the *Review* refusing so many subscribers or for so large a number being deprived of the enlightenment it may bring them. Therefore, some arrangement must be made."

And the arrangement proposed by him—in the absence of a better one—was to appoint a trustworthy representative to act as a commissioned agent to take over that number of copies of the *Review* without the necessity of enlisting subscribers.

The subscription matter perhaps did not materialise as expected or dropped due to the above reason; for Shree Aurobindo in his letter No. 15 (Vide footnote) writes:

"Received your letter. Please let us know how many copies of the *Arya* you want sent to you for sale, since you cannot get subscribers."

"The divorce from Tantricism is necessary"—it is again insisted upon— "if you are to do the work of the *Review* or the other work I wish you to undertake. You must surely see that, neither will march, if there are any occurrences of the old kind of mixing them up together."

Undoubtedly, the two main currents of Tantra and Vedanta—which we have already come to know in Shree Aurobindo's terminology, mean—on the one hand, the method and technique of armed revolution with its branching offshoot of active terrorism as a temporary tactical policy and measure; and on the other hand, spiritual philosophy and culture, the subjective discipline of the mind and soul with its larger outlook on life and society even as his letter-series continually bears witness to, are undergoing a process of fundamental transformation in accord with the changing world-situation and his own increasing inner self-unfoldment. In letter No. 13, he says:

"Tantric yogins are few and should be comparatively reticent—for Vedanta is a wider thing and men may then help to fulfill it in all kinds of ways. Let the Tantrics then practise Vedanta silently, not trumpeting abroad its connection with their own particular school but with self-restraint and the spirit of self-sacrifice, knowing that they are only one small corps in a march that is vast and (so) meant to be all-embracing. The more they isolate themselves from the rest of the host that is in formation, the more they will be free for their own work and the more they will help without hampering the wider march."

He then turns to the work of the Tantric discipline and Kriya itself. The Master asks his disciple to:

"Remember that Tantra is not like Vedanta, it is a yoga for material gains, that has always been its nature. Only now not for personal gains, but for effectivity in certain directions of the general yoga of mankind."

He asks his disciple too, if he thinks that with its present imperfect basis it can really do the work for which it was intended. For himself he sees it cannot.

"There have been two stages: first, the old Tantra which has broken down and exists only in a scattered way, ineffectual for the great end of humanity; secondly, our new Tantra which succeeded at first, because it was comparatively pure in spite of the difficulties created by the remnants of egoism. But since then two things have happened. It has tried to extend itself with the result of bringing in undesirable elements; secondly, it has tried to attempt larger result from a basis which was no longer sufficient and had begun to be unsound. A third stage is now necessary that of a preparation in full knowledge, no longer resting on a blind faith in God's power and will, but receiving consciously that will, the illumination that guides its workings and the power that determines its results. If the thing is to be done, it must be done no longer as by a troop stumbling on courageously in the dark and losing its strength by failures and the results of unhappy blunders, but with the full divine power working out its will in its instruments.

After this clear analysis of the situation, as quoted above, he then follows it up to its logical as well as the only intimate practical conclusion thus:

"What is necessary for that action? First, that the divine knowledge and power should manifest perfectly in at least one man in India. In myself it is trying so to manifest as rapidly as the deficiencies of my mind and body will permit, and also—this is important—as rapidly as the defects of my chief friends and helpers will permit. For all those have to be taken on myself spiritually and may retard my own development. I advance, but at every stage have to go back to receive some fresh load of imperfection that comes from outside. *I want now some breathing-time—however brief—which will enable me to accomplish the present stage which is the central of my advance. This once accomplished, all the rest is inevitable. This not accomplished, the seed of our yogic movement is externally a failure or a pitiful small result. That is the first reason why I call a halt.*" (Italics are ours)

He continues:

"The second necessity is that others should receive the same power and light. In the measure that mine grows, theirs also will increase in power provided always they do not separate themselves from me by the *ahankara*. *A sufficient Vedantic basis provided, a long and obscure Tantra will no longer be necessary. The power that I am developing if it reaches consummation, will be able to accomplish its effects automatically by any method chosen. If it uses Tantric kriyas, it will then be, because God has chosen that means, because He wishes to put the Shakta part of it to go forward first and not the Vedantic and that Kriya will then be irresistible in its effect, perhaps even strange and new in its means and forms. I have then to effect that power and communicate it to others.*

But at present the forces of the material Prakriti strive all then-remaining energy against the spiritual mastery that is being sought to impose on them. And it is especially in the field to which your kriyas have belonged and kindred fields that

they are too strong for me. You will remember that the Sadhana shall first be applied in things that do not matter and only afterwards used for life. This is not an absolute rule, but it is the rule of necessity to apply for sometime now in this particular matter. *I see that I have the necessary powers, I shall communicate them to you and some others, so that there may be a centre of irresistible spiritual light and effective force wherever needed. Then a rapid and successful Tantra can be attempted. This is the second reason why I have called a halt.*" (Italics are ours)

Thereafter the clear and distinct directive of Shree Aurobindo now to Shree Roy, his Bengal revolutionary disciple, is:

"The first and supreme object you must have now is to put forward in yourself and in others the Vedantic Yoga in the sense I have described. The spread of the idea is not sufficient, you must have real yogins, not merely men moved intellectually and emotionally by one or two of the central ideas of the Yoga. Spreading of the idea is the second necessity, for that the *Review* at present offers itself among other means. The other is to form brotherhood, not formal but real, (not societies of the European kind but informal groups of people united by one effort and one feeling) for the practice of the Vedantic Yoga (without any necessary thought of the Tantric). (Letter No. 13).

In this same letter to Shree Roy the Master has given a strict note of warning against unenlightened mixed organisation or misconstrued propaganda. Writes he:

"The second part of my work is the practical, consisting in the practice of Yoga, by an ever-increasing number of young men all over the country. We have started here a society called the 'New Idea' with that object, and a good many young men are taking up Vedantic Yoga and some progressing much. You say it has spread in the North all over. But in what way? I am not at all enamoured of the way in which it seems to be practised outside Bengal. It seems there to be mixed up with the old kind of Tantrik, sometimes of the most *paisachic* and undesirable kind and to be kept merely as a sauce for that fierce and gruesome dish. Better no *vyapti* at all outside Bengal, if it is not to be purified and divine Yoga. In Bengal itself, there are faults which cannot but have undesirable consequences. In the first place, there is the misplacement of values. Vedanta is practised or so seems to be in some quarters, for the sake of Tantra, and in order to give a force to Tantra. That is not right at all. Tantra is only valuable so far as it enables us to give effect to Vedanta and in itself has no value or necessity at all. Then the two are mixed up in a most undesirable fashion, so that the Vedanta is likely to be affected by the same disrepute and difficulties on the way of profession as hamper the recognition of the truth in Tantra i.e. in its real sense, value and effectivity."

His followers—he hopes—should take note of these difficulties and not do anything that are likely to enhance them.

The World War I had already started and was vigorously going on.

"Our position here since the war has become increasingly difficult and delicate", he states in letter N o. 16: "I have therefore, adopted a policy of entire reserve including abstention from correspondence with Bengal even with officially unobjectionable people. Our correspondence now is chiefly limited to Arya business."

To Shree Roy also he advises an attitude of similar spiritual awareness and caution:

"Your internal struggle in the Yoga has naturally its causes. I shall help you as much as possible spiritually, but you must get rid of everything that gives a handle to the enemy in ourselves. Your letters for a long time showed a considerable revival of rajasic egoism contracted, I suppose, by association with the old Tantrics and that always brings in our Yoga disagreeable consequences. If you could make yourselves entirely pure instruments, things would go much better. But there is always something in the prana and intellect which kicks against the pricks and resists the purifier. Specially get rid of the *Ahang Karta* element, which usually disguises itself under the idea 'I am the chosen yantra'. Despise no one, try to see God in all and Self in all. The Shakti in you will then act better on your materials and instruments."

Meanwhile, news has reached Shree Aurobindo that Bejoy Nag, one of his closest associates, has been arrested and detained under the Regulation III Act, on his way to Khulna, his hometown. Monsieur Paul Richard at Shree Aurobindo's instance, wrote to the Madras Government pleading for the release of Bejoy as a spiritual follower of Shree Aurobindo and having no anti-government political connection or activity to deserve such a punishment, but to no result. In Pondicherry, V. V. S. Aiyar, known as a Swadeshi, has been hauled up for circulating unauthorised pamphlets from America. "So Aiyar, a fervently anti-German in his sentiments—pro-Belgian and pro-Servian— has been made a martyr"—comments Shree Aurobindo—"by this wonderful French administration—for the cause he denounces.' A hit of bitter sarcasm!

"My connection with Aiyar has been practically nil, as in normal times I only saw him once in two years"—(also says Shree Aurobindo), "But here all the Swadeshis are lumped together—so we have to be careful not only that we give no handle to our enemies, but that other people don't give them a handle against us which is just a little difficult."

About pamphleteering, he adds a little note of interest:

"One thing I could never appreciate is the utility of this pamphleteering business, of which Indian revolutionaries are so fond. Pamphlets won't liberate India, but they do seem to succeed in getting their distributors and non-distributors also into prison."

In the paragraph:

"You have decided, it seems, to carry on Tantra and Mantra, *anusthatr* and pure Vedanta together. My objection to it was from the standpoint of the *Review* and Vedanta-work generally. Anusthan and the *Review* do not go well together. Of course, a synthesis is always possible, but amalgamation is not synthesis".

Indeed these were words breathing a certain calm toleration mixed with a dose of mild enlightening caution. But the Master just there-after does not miss to add in postscript—a word from spiritual experience—in fact, a hint as an internal eye-opener:

"By the way, try to realise one thing. The work we wish to do cannot produce its effects on the objective world, until my *Ashta-siddhi* is strong enough to work upon that world organically and as a whole and it has not yet reached that point. No amount of rajasic eagerness on my part or on yours or any body else's will fill the place or can substitute itself as the divine instrument which will be definitely effective. In the matter of the *Review* Bejoy has found that out by this time. I have found it out myself by constant experience and warning. You also, if you wish to profit by my teaching, should learn it also without the necessity of experience."

It may be noted that Bejoy Nag, his devoted disciple, had left Pondicherry to come over to Bengal apparently out of an eagerness of heart to spread the Arya—*i.e.* to propagate the new gospel of his Guru. One is sure to appreciate that this heart's urge of a devout and sincere disciple was pure and noble, but we are reminded by the Master that even such pure and noble eagerness of heart, unless dittoed directly and one-d with the divine will, is of the rajasic (or even sattwa-rajasic, if we may say so) natural-quality, and motion or movement sped by such a high impulse too, could serve only to make the young devotee move out of the ring of spiritual protection of his Guru, with the result that he is clapped into detention for an indefinite period in those very uncertain times. From letter No. 15, we have already noted the Master's direction to Shree Roy about 'the work of the *Review* or the other work I wish you to undertake,' for which 'the divorce from Tantricism' is felt by him as necessary. This has a clear reference to his specific direction given in course of his earlier letter No. 13 already quoted:

"Spreading of the idea is the second necessity, for that the *Review* at present offers itself among other means. The other means is to form brotherhood, not formal but real (not societies of European kind, but informal groups of people united by one effort and one feeling) for the practice of the Vedantic Yoga (without any necessary thought of the Tantric)".

The idea of organisation—based on pure Vedantic Yoga and unmixed with any necessary thought of or connection with the Tantric or political revolutionary idea—is worth noting. We are reminded of one of his remarkable speeches delivered at Howrah in 1909 shortly after his release from Alipore Jail-custody, in course of which we meet with a very suggestive utterance, (Vide *Karmo yogin* Vol. 1, 2nd issue dated 12th Ashar 1316 B.S.), that may be regarded as the incipient stage of a growing intuitive idea. The reported passage, long yet lucid, will speak for itself:

"...After all, what is an association? An association is not a thing which cannot exist unless we have a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary. An association is not a thing which cannot meet unless it has a meeting-place. Association is a thing which depends upon the feeling and the force within us. Association means unity, association means brotherhood, association means binding together in one common work. Where there is life, where there is self-sacrifice, where there is disinterested and unselfish toil, where there are these within us, work cannot stop. It cannot stop even if there is one man who is at all risks prepared to carry it on. ... It is a question of working and not of means. It is not that these things cannot be done except by the forms which European education has taught us to value.

The association that we shall have, will be the association of brothers who are united heart to heart, of fellow-workers joined hand-in-hand in a common labour, the association of those who have a common motherland. It is the whole country, to which every son of India and every son of Bengal ought by the duty of his birth to belong—an association which no force can break up, the association of a unity-which grows closer everyday, of an impulse that comes from on high *and* has drawn us together in order that we might realise brotherhood, in order that the Indian nation may be united and united not merely in the European way, not merely by the common self-interest, but united by love for the common country, united by the ideal of brotherhood, united by the feeling that we are all sons of the common Mother, who is also the manifestation of God in a united humanity. That is the association which is coming into being—the mighty association which unites the people of West Bengal with the people of East and North Bengal and defies partition—because it embraces every son of the land—*bhai-bhai ek fhairt*—brother and brother massed inseparably together. This is the ideal that is abroad and is waking more and more consciously within us. It is not merely a common self-interest. It wakes God within us and says 'You are all one, you are all brothers. There is one place where you all meet and that is your common Mother. That is not merely

the soil. That is not merely a division of land but it is a living thing. It is the Mother in whom you move and have your being.

Realise God in the nation, realise God in your brother, realise God in a wide human association. This is the ideal by which humanity is moved all over the world, the ideal which is the dharma of the Kali-yuga and it is the ideal of love and service—love and service to your brothers, love and service to your Mother—and this is the association we are forming—the great association of the people of Bengal and of the whole people of India, This is forever our national ideal and in its strength our nation will rise and live by the force of the law of its own being. For the fiat of God has gone out to the Indian nation—'unite, be free, be one, be great.'

When this ideal of association was first uttered in that memorable speech at Howrah—the idea of association within the heart—as a seed-idea of love and service to bind together in one common bond of unity an entire nation and people—it was spoken in a political situation—amidst turmoil and transition that Bengal and India were then passing through. It had a political ring or echo about it—for the conception of nationhood then in Shree Aurobindo's mind was yet a political nationhood though to be well-founded on the spirituality of its ancient soul and culture. His own mission of life however, was emerging purer and clearer, ever brightening with his inner spiritual and supramental illumination, till the nebulous idea in his mind developed and ripened into a more concrete and realizable form—the idea of the "Samgha."

Both the ideal and the dynamic form of collective organism as that ideal is going to put itself into its proper mould, are on the way to an increasingly revealing clarification and formulation.

In letter No. 16, the Master is significantly clarifying his own mission-ideal to his Chandernagore disciple:

"There is another point. You sent a message about an 'Aurobindo Math', which seemed to show you had caught the contagion which rages in Bengal. You must understand that my mission is not to create maths, ascetics and Sannyasis, but to call back the souls of the strong to the Lila of Krishna and Kali. That is my teaching, as you can see from the review and my name must never be connected with monastic forms or the monastic ideal. Every monastic movement since the time of Buddha has left India weaker and for a very obvious reason. Renunciation of life is one thing; to make life itself—national, individual, world-life greater and more divine is another. You cannot enforce one ideal on the country without weakening the other. You cannot take away the best from life and yet leave life stronger and

greater. Renunciation of ego, acceptance of God in life is the Yoga I teach—no other renunciation."

Shree Aurobindo is preaching his message through the Arya, as he himself declares, but he is getting report from many quarters that the Arya philosophy—both in its language—style as well as thought-contents—is being felt even by great scholars, and even renowned philosophers of the first rank to be too stiff and hard to digest. The Master is sorry to learn about it. In letter No. 19, he comes out with a pensive comment on it:

"It is regrettable that Bengal should be unable to find anything in the Arya, but not surprising. The intellect of Bengal has been so much fed on chemical tablets of thought and hot-spiced foods that anything strong and substantial is indigestible to it. Moreover people in India are accustomed only to second-hand thoughts—the old familiar ideas of the six philosophies, Patanjali etc, etc. Any new presentation of life and thought upsets their expectations and is unintelligible to them. The thought of the Arya demands close thinking from the reader; it does not spare him the trouble of thinking and understanding and the minds of the people have long been accustomed to have the trouble of thought spared them. They know how to indulge their minds, they have forgotten how to exercise them."

After this first psychological analysis he probes deeper in a more optimistic mood about the real, dynamic prospect of such a new philosophy

"It does not matter very much just now, so long as the people who practise the Yoga, read and profit. The Arya presents a new philosophy and a new method of Yoga and everything that is new takes time to get a hearing. Of course, in reality it is only the old brought back again, but so old that it has been forgotten. It is only those who practise and experience, that can at first understand it. In a way, this is good, because it is meant to change the life of Bengal and not merely satisfy the intellect. In France, it is very much appreciated by those who are seeking the Truth, because these people are not shut up in old and received ideas, they are on the look-out for something which will change the inner and outer life. When the same state of mind can be brought about here, the Arya will begin to be appreciated. At present, Bengal only understands politics and asceticism. The central ideas of the Arya are Greek to it."

What follows just hereafter in this very connection throws a flood of self-luminous light on his own new message and life-mission thus:

"Soon after Arya began, I got a letter from some graduates saying that what they wanted was 'man-making'. I have done my share of man-making and it is a thing which now anybody can do. Nature herself is looking after it all over the

world, though more slowly in India than elsewhere. *Arya business is now not man-making, but divine man-making*: My present teaching is that the world is preparing for a new progress, a new evolution. Whatever race, whatever country seizes on the lines of that new evolution and fulfills it, will be the leader of humanity. In the *Arya I* state the thought upon which this new evolution will be based as I see it, and the method of Yoga by which it can be accomplished. Of course, I cannot speak plainly yet my whole message, for obvious reasons, I have to put it in a severe, colourless fashion which cannot be pleasing to the emotional and excitement-seeking Bengali mind. But the message is there, for those who care to understand.

It has three parts—(1) for each man as an individual to change himself into the future type of divine humanity, the men of the new Satyayuga which is striving to be born. (2) to evolve a race of such men to lead humanity and (3) to call all humanity to the path under the lead of these pioneers and this chosen race.

India and especially Bengal have the best chance and the best right to create that race and become the leaders of the future—to do in the right way, what Germany thought of doing in the wrong way. But first they must learn to think, to cast away old ideas and turn their faces resolutely to the future. But they cannot do this, if they merely copy European politics or go on eternally reproducing Buddhistic asceticism. I am afraid the Ramakrishna Mission with all its good intentions is only going to give us Shankaracharya *Sc* Buddhistic humanitarianism. But that is not the goal to which the world is moving. Meanwhile, remember that these are very difficult times and careful walking is necessary. It is just possible that the War may come to an end in a few months, for the old immobility is beginning to break down and the forces at work behind the veil are straining towards a solution. While the war continues, nothing great can be done, we are fettered on every side. Afterwards things will change and we must wait for the development."

In this letter No. 19 and also in the next letter No. 20, we find the war-situation continuing. To Shree Roy, he advises special caution—to beware of political entanglement.

"It is regrettable" says Shree Aurobindo "that the Government should think you are mixed up in political matters and that you are in the list of suspects. But once they get that idea into their heads, it is impossible to change it—once a suspect, always a suspect is their rule. They are particularly good at purchasing trouble for themselves and others in this way and just now they are all fear and suspicion and see revolutions in every bush. The only thing is to be extremely careful. You should not on any account move out of Chandernagore so long as the war-measures are in force, for in these times innocence is no defence."

The Master is always alert about the world-situation. His global sight of circumspection is constantly studying the world around and weighing the nature, direction and impact of the universal forces working behind the veil and at the same time measuring his own spiritual will and energy

to be able to make a break-through for outer self-assertion. Letter No. 20 begins with such an over-all assessment of the world-forces in action and his mission-position there-in:

"I have not written for a long time, because nothing definite came to me to be written. We are in a state of things in which every movement fails to come to a decisive result, because everywhere and in everything the forces are balanced by contrary forces. At the present moment the world is passing through an upheaval, in which all forces possible have been let loose and none therefore, has a triumphant action. Ordinarily there are certain puissances, certain ideas which are given a dominant impulsion and conquest, those opposing them being easily broken after a first severe struggle. Now everything is different. Wherever a force or an idea tries to assert itself in action, all that can oppose rushes to stop it and there follows a 'struggle of exhaustion'. You see that in Europe now, no one can succeed; nothing is accomplished; only that which already was, maintains itself with difficulty. At such time one has to act as little as possible and prepare and fortify as much as possible—that is to say, that is the rule for those who are not compelled to be in the battle of the present and whose action tends more towards the future."

With an in look from his own stand-point of self-mobilisation, his reflection continues;

"I had hoped that we should be much 'forward' at this period, but the obstacles have been too great. I have not been able to get anything active into shape. Consequently we have to go on as before for some time longer. Our action depends on developing sufficient spiritual power to overcome the enormous material obstacles opposed to us, to shape minds, men, events, means, things. This we have got as yet in very insufficient quantity."

He, however, expresses a certain feeling of satisfaction at the rather changed stand taken by his disciples at Chandernagore or for that matter—of Bengal, in the light and lines of his own spiritual outlook and objective direction with regard to Vedantic and Tantric Yoga—for he now writes in the very next paragraph of this letter to Shree Roy, the leader of the Bengal group of his followers:

"You have done well in confining yourself to Vedantic Yoga; you can see for yourself that the Tantric bears no secure and sufficient fruit without a very strong and faultless Vedantic basis. Otherwise you have a medley of good and bad sadhakas associating together and the bad spoil the kriya of the good; for a collective Yoga is not like a solitary one, it is not free from collective influences, it has a collective soul which cannot afford to be in some parts raw or rotten. It is this which modern Tantrics do not understand, their aspiration is not governed by old Shastra founded on the experience of centuries. A *Chakra* for instance, must either be per-

fectly composed or immediately governed and protected by the spiritual force of some powerful Guru. But our modern minds are too impatient to see to these things."

Regarding the practical situation—specially in relation to the police and government, his advice to Shree Roy is very particular, in a sense personal and intimate, and that much crystal clear:

"As for your external difficulties, I mean with regard to the bad ideas the government and police have about you and the consequent obstacles and pressure, that is a result of past karma and probably of some present associations and can hardly be cured. I see people are interned who have no connection at all with politics or have long cut off whatever connection they had owing to the work, the authorities are uneasy and suspicious and being ill-served by their police, act on prejudgments and often on false report. You have to sit tight, spiritually defend yourself and physically avoid putting yourself where the police can do you harm, and so far as possible, avoid also doing anything which would give any colour or appearance of a foundation for their prejudices. More can hardly be done. One cannot throw aside friends—because they are suspects: in that case, we should have to begin with ourselves. If on the ground of such associations we are ourselves more suspected, as for instance, the officials make it a grievance against me that although I am doing nothing political myself yet I associate with my Madrasi friends against whom they have chosen to launch warrants for sedition—it cannot be helped. We cannot suffer political or police dictation in our private friendships."

The words are bold and robust, the advice is correct and sound, inasmuch as the stand taken by the Master himself and to be taken by his disciple is at once one based on dignified manhood, self-respect, yet not unsauced with cautious wisdom, but no more. Sycophancy or anything of cringing spirit or obsequious servility in fear of an all-powerful hostile Government or its watchful, ever-suspicious myrmidons hanging about all around—is far from his view or intention in the matter of our household family or social relationships.

In this same letter, he queries about *Prabartak*—the Bengali magazine started with his benediction from 1st September 1915. He anxiously asks:

"What has become of *Prabartak*? The last number was very good, but for a long time we have had no other. Is the administration withholding visa or are there other reasons for the irregularity? I hope it is not discontinuance. We have the Arya here visaed without delay or difficulties."

Then in a re-assuring tone he adds a paragraph not only of solace and consolation, but also quick spiritual re-inforcement, in memorable words, sure to inspire new strength and confidence in the heart of his dear disciple—nay in all true disciples of a true Guru of such a noble stature:

"If you have difficulties of any kind, it is as well to let me know at once; for I can then concentrate what force I have more particularly to help you. The help may not be always or immediately effective, but it will count and may be more powerful than a general will not instructed in the particular necessity. *You must not mind if you do not get always a written answer: the unwritten will always be there.* I leave it to the Manager of the Arya to write to you about business matters." (Our italics).

"The unwritten will always be there"—this is a word of spiritual assurance and promise, which like the one uttered by Shree Krishna to Shree Arjuna in the Geeta—

' मामेबैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे '

(Thou shalt certainly dwell in me, this I truly promise thee, O my beloved one.)—when thus confidently spoken and listened to with appropriate grace and reverence, is bound to create a heaven of this earth and life of man through such hallowed transfiguration of our mortal relations.

The transition from old Tantra to new Vedanta is progressing apace. This has been already noted above. In letter No. 18 which we have a little by-passed, for reasons which will be soon made evidently clear, Shree Aurobindo's attention has been drawn to a case recently appearing in the papers—"of one Rasbehary Bose against whom a warrant of extradition has been granted by the Chandernagore Administrator *in a political case.*" This is a matter which he has reasons to take up with particular interest as he himself says:

"Although ordinarily we do not concern ourselves with political matters, this concerns me and my friends, because it is an attack on the security of our position. If this kind of thing is allowed to go unchallenged, then any of us may at any moment be extradited on a trumped up charge by the British police. I must therefore, ask you to interest yourself in the matter even though it interferes with your Yoga."

So this is a matter of importance—so very important that the Master has to ask his Chandernagore disciple, Shree Motilal Roy, to take it up in right earnest, even if it offers some interference in his yogic sadhana.

Rasbehary Bose is a revolutionary figure of historical importance—not only in the revolutionary history of our country —India, but also in the international life and history of the joint-continent of Eurasia *i.e.* Europe and Asia. He is an arch-revolutionary personality who played an active, super-significant part in a revolutionary struggle which extended uninterruptedly from World War I to World War II—without a moment's pause or leisure. His case deserves therefore, worthy attention of a world-statesman like Shree Aurobindo even from an impartial standpoint of national revolutionary history as well as international revolutionary chronicles. But Rasbehary is more than a mere political revolutionary figure and personality to draw Shree Aurobindo's more than impersonal interest and academic study of his extradition warrant issued by the French administration. Here is needed more than a mere impersonal study of his case and its intellectual solution. Rasbehary Bose is not only a great revolutionary hero, but also a spiritual follower of Shree Aurobindo's school of thought, one of those few political yogins of the rarest dimension and quality of character, who accepted the *Yoga of Atmasamarpana or Self-consecration*, re-discovered and formulated by Shree Aurobindo, which Bose received in a moment of highest patriotic exaltation through his friend and revolutionary co-worker Shree Motilal Roy and dedicated himself heart and soul thereafter to the cause of national independence. Rasbehary coined a new name and term for this Yoga, calling it the *Yoga of Automation*—and he held himself from that very holy moment to be a living automaton—moved from within—head and heart and limbs—in the hands of a Third Power—Mahashakti Kali, the Inner Goddess, whom he felt in his heart of hearts to have chosen him for the purpose of achieving the freedom of his dear Motherland.

Let us therefore, skip through a few pages back across this letter-series to pick up the inner thread of the present theme—of the heroic revolutionary or Tantra-sadhana of this great son of India, who in conjunction with the great Motilal Roy and his other revolutionary colleagues and collaborators, galvanised the secret movement of armed revolution, initiated by Shree Aurobindo himself and spread it throughout the length and

breadth of India and even outside India's borders—from Kabul to Singapore, during the First World War. The inward roots of this Tantric Yoga-Sadhana are well-recorded in-between the lines of Shree Aurobindo's letters, a bird's eye review of which may be now a worth-study for our present purpose—to enter into the inner reason and essential significance of his momentous call—'the cry of halt'.

In his earlier letters, we have taken note of his secret communication-channel and code for continuing contact with a few selected revolutionary followers and friends. We have read about his future plan 'to do a certain work for his country with God's help as soon as the means are put into his hands.' In his letter No. 3 in the series, writing about Tantric Yoga, Shree Aurobindo mentions about a Tantric kriya with a degree of elation, which may seem strikingly amazing to come from the pen of one so serious-minded a thinker-philosopher as Shree Aurobindo. This matter that we had over passed before, now needs a closer study and appraisal in connection with the Tantra-Vedanta theme under our present discussion.

"Your experiment in the smashana" Writes Shree Aurobindo in a language of symbolic euphemism purposely invented and used by him

"was a daring one—but it seems to have been efficiently and skilfully carried out and the success is highly gratifying".

One has to know what this "experiment in the smashana" really meant, if the true connotation and denotation of the entire discourse that follows in this letter is to be properly understood.

It is just after the historical Delhi Bomb incident that took place in the imperial capital of Delhi on 23rd December 1912, on the Coronation Celebration-day, that Shree Aurobindo gives expression to his immediate re-action in his mind as the revolutionary leader of leaders in this historic letter. No wonder this was indeed, one of the boldest deeds known in the annals of revolutionary history not only in this country of ours, but in any country where-so-ever the freedom-struggle is on—an event which like an electric thunderbolt hurled from the blue, stupefied the ruling authorities and shook the very foundations of the British Empire.

The bomb-incident was hatched and planned by the Chandernagore revolutionary group led by Shree Motilal Roy. The actual plan itself was conceived by Shree Shreesh Chandra Ghosh and executed by Shree Rasbehary Bose—both colleagues hailing originally from Raina, Burdwan, but who had made Chandernagore the home-seat and centre of their revolutionary inspiration and activities under the direct leadership of Shree Roy. The bomb itself—of the same type, termed 'as a most powerful one' in the infamous Sedition Committee Report (Rowlatt Act), was manufactured in the Chandernagore bomb-making factory conducted by Shree Manindra Nath Naiek and actually hurled at Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, riding on the elephant with his consort, Lady Hardinge at Chandni Chawk, Old Delhi—by Shreeman Basanta Kumar Biswas, a youth still in his teens—all belonging to the Chandernagore revolutionary school and in heart and soul dedicated to Shree Aurobindo, as their supreme spiritual leader. Shree Aurobindo's profound interest in this striking Tantric kriya in imperial Delhi, aptly and perhaps sarcastically also designated in figurative contrast as 'smashana'—cemetery-ground of mighty empires in the past and destined sepulchre of the ruling British Empire too—as well as his feeling of genuine gratification at its world-shaking, nay also world-recognised success—are therefore, both thoroughly understandable.

Such warm appreciation followed immediately thereafter by what may be regarded as a long thesis on the theme of Tantric kriya itself—flowing from the very pen of Shree Aurobindo, adept leader and guide of this under-current movement—will remain a memorable document on the object and technique of Tantric kriya—presented to Shree Roy as a guide-line to his group for their activities to be carried on with greater mastery and fuller success in the future—and bearing out outstanding testimony to the practical genius of the leader of the team in a hitherto mostly unknown and surely unsuspected line, but a from the standpoint of an adhyatma-yogin, viewing it as part and parcel of his spiritual and national sadhana.

It runs as follows:

"In these kriyas there are three considerations to be held in view; 1st. the object of the kriya. Of course, there is the general object of *Mukti-Bhukti* which Tantriks in all ages have pursued, but to bring it about certain subjective results and

conditions are necessary in ourselves and our surroundings and each separate kriya should be so managed as to bring about an important result of the kind. Big kriyas or numerous kriyas are not always necessary; the main thing is that it should be faultlessly effective like your last kriya or the small one with which you opened your practices. That is the second consideration viz, the success of the kriya itself and this depends on the selection and proper use of the right mantra and tantra—mantra, the mental part, and tantra, the practical part. These must be arranged with the greatest scrupulousness. All rashness, pride, ostentation etc,—the rajasic defects, also all negligence, omission, slipshod ritual,—tamasic defects—must be avoided. Success must not elate your minds, nor failure discourage. 3rdly (Thirdly), *angarakshana* is as important as *siddhi*. There are many Tantriks in this Kali-yuga who are eager about siddhi, careless in anga-rakshana. They get some siddhi, but become the prey of the devils and *bhutas* they raise. Now what is the use of the particular siddhi, if the sadhakas are destroyed? The general and real object—mukti, bhukti—remains unfulfilled. Angarakshana is managed, first by the selection and arrangement of the right siddha-mantra and kriya, secondly, by the presence behind the sadhaka of one who repeats what is called an anga-rakshana mantra, destructive of the *pretas* and *rakshasas* or prohibitive of their attacks.

*The last function I have taken on myself*; it is your business so to arrange the kriya that the bhutas get no chance for প্রবেশ (Prabesha) or for the seizure and destruction of the sadhaka. I have found that my mantra has been more and more successful in protection, but it is not strong enough to prevent all উপদ্রব (Upadraba) of a dangerous character. It will take some more আবৃত্তি (Avritte) to increase its power. It is for this reason that I do not yet tell you to go on swiftly with your practices. Still there is no harm in quickening the pace in comparison with the past. Remember always the supreme necessity of *mauna* in Tantric practices. In Vedantic and Puranic exercises, expression is not dangerous, but the goddess of the Tantra does not look with a favourable eye on those who from pride, ostentation or looseness blab about the mantra and the kriya. In Tantra-sadhana secrecy is necessary for its own sake. Those who reveal mantra or kriya to the unfit, suffer almost inevitably; even those who reveal them unnecessarily to the fit, impair somewhat the force of their Tantric action.

*Kali"*

The sentence above in our italics is meant to signify what role of serious and leading responsibility, the Mahaguru of Revolution or national Tantra-sadhana had self-chosen and self-undertaken for the success of the Tantric kriyas or acts of political terrorism and armed revolution involved in the process of the mighty movement—with the goal of mukti-bhukti— liberation and happiness of this great nation.

Undoubtedly, we have to recognize and admire him as the greatest revolutionary leader of the times and even adore him not only as an adept worshipper of Kali, the Mother, but even as Mahashakti Herself incarnate in body—just as admittedly Shree-Ramakrishna of Dukshineswar in his spiritual being was. Shree Aurobindo's significant signature itself as 'Kali' under-signed in this very letter No. 3 as in several other letters, may be understood only thus in its proper sense lying deep beneath the outer surface, the mighty spiritual force or revolutionary mother-energy hidden in that *shuddha adhara* or purest human receptacle—descended to initiate the greatest change in the life of mankind—its most potent, profound and fundamental *revolution*.

That Shree Aurobindo was keenly watching all the while the progress of this under-flowing revolutionary movement is also evidenced in course of some other of these letters.

Thus in letter No. 9, his foot-note remark says:

"I received information of your Tantric kriyas. It is clear that you are far from perfect yet, all the more reason why you should not be in a hurry to progress physically. Get rid of the remnants of sattwic ahankara and rajoguna, for that which we are within, our karma and kriya will be without. Kali demands a pure adhara for her works and if you try to hurry her by rajosic impatience, you will delay the success instead of hastening it. I will write to you fully about it later."

Meanwhile, Monsieur Paul Richard and Madame Richard—a rare type of European Yogins—as Shree Aurobindo describes—have arrived. The elections in French territory are on. Shree Aurobindo, residing in French territory, has to involve himself in the vortex of this political election in a so-called dernocratic, republican administration—in a certain indirect way from behind—of course, under a veritable spiritual impulsion. In writing to Shree Roy on this impending election a little before April 1914, he gives in his own words the reason which has impelled him to take part in this election:

"I send you to-day the electoral declaration of M. Paul Richard, one of the candidates at the approaching election of the French Chamber. This election is of some importance to us, for there are two of the candidates who represent our views to a great extent, Laporte & Richard. Richard is not only a personal friend of mine and a brother in the Yoga, but he wishes like myself and in his own way works for a general renovation of the world, by which the present European civilisation will

be replaced by a spiritual civilisation. In that change the resurrection of the Asiatic races and especially India is an essential point. Monsieur and Madame Richard are rare example of European Yogins who have not been led away by Theosophical and other aberrations. I have been in material and spiritual correspondence with them for the last four years. Of course, they know nothing of Tantric Yoga. It is only in the Vedantic that we meet. If Richard were to become deputy for French India, that would practically mean the same thing as myself being deputy for French India. Laporte is a Swadeshi with personal ambitions, his success would not mean the same but at any rate it would mean a strong and, I believe, a faithful ally in power in this country and holding a voice in France.

Of course there is no chance, humanly speaking, of their being elected this time..... Still, it is necessary, if it can at all be done, to stir things a little at the present moment and form a nucleus of tendency and, if possible, of (positive?) result which would be a foundation for the future and enable us at the next election to present one or other of these candidates with a fair chance of success."

With this aim in view, Shree Aurobindo wanted to know from Shree Roy whether it would be possible for him 'without exposing himself—to spread the idea in Chandernagore, especially among the younger men, of the desirability of these candidatures and the abandonment of the old parochial and rotten politics of French-India with its following of interested local Europeans and sub-servience to their petty ambitions in favour of a politics of principles which will support one of our own men or a European like Richard, 'who is practically an Indian in belief, in personal culture, in sympathies and aspiration, *one of the Nivedita type.*' (Our italics).

The idea was that 'if a certain number of votes could be recorded for Richard in Chandernagore, that will mean a practical beginning, a tendency from the sukshma world materialised initially in the sthula'. "If you think this can be done, please get it done", so went on the clear cautious mandate, but "always taking care not to expose yourself—for your main work is not political but spiritual"—and to be "always steering clear of extremism, and British Indian politics in any statement to be issued and distributed. on the situation campaigning the desirability of the candidature succeeding.

There was an auxiliary intention too, working in Shree Aurobindo's mind, which he expressed when he said:

"I lay stress on these things, because it is necessary that the conditions of Chandernagore and Pondicherry should be changed, the repetitions of recent events rendered impossible and the cession of French territories put out of the question. There would be other, more positive gains in the change, but these I need not emphasise now."

It may be noted that it was the time when the question of cession of Chandernagore was in the air and Shree Aurobindo in his talks with the French or French-Indian leaders, had been informed that under the cover of a move for the 'rectification of Pondicherry boundaries', the cession of Chandernagore was a settled fact and therefore, any refugee in Chandernagore, desiring safety under French protection must run to Pondicherry at once. It was his desire therefore, to make this fact known to the population of Chandernagore, if it was not already known, so that they might have a solid reason to decide their choice of votes in favour of that candidate, who would stand against such a move of cession as its stern and furious opponent as well as be a staunch defender of the Swadeshis.

The election went on in full swing. We need not go into the thick and thin of this electoral warfare, rampant with ugly evil practices as usual every-where and more so in the then French territory, a hot-house of republican experiment with its electoral colleges, full of all possibilities—in the testimony of Shree Aurobindo—'of fraud and violence and purchase of votes with even foreign money and help. For in his letter No 11, he cites the instance of a candidate, supported by the entire local administration who 'has brought over 50,000 rupees for his election and is prepared to purchase the whole population, if necessary'.

"Is it British rupees, I wonder?"—he exclaims, "The British Government is also said to be interfering in his behalf and it is certain the Mahommedan Collector of Cuddalore has asked his co-religionists to vote for this master of corruption."

And not only so, it seemed to him just as if 'this candidate by the help of the administration money, the British Government and the devil were likely to win an easy victory'.

Shree Aurobindo's call to Shree Roy was virtually a call to the youth of Chandernagore, as he wrote:

"Therefore, I say, throw aside all other considerations and let the young men of Chandernagore put all their strength on Richard's side and against the two repre-

sentatives of Evil who dispute the election between them. For if they do not, humanly speaking, Chandernagore seems to be doomed."

Every vote given for the other two candidates in Chandernagore is in his view, a vote for the cession of Chandernagore—late or soon—to the British—for while one is 'an Anglo-phil with English connections', the other has 'sold himself to England, selling and buying himself and others seeming to be his only profession in the world'.

On the other hand, he wants it to be known that Richard, the candidate of his choice

"is a Hindu in faith, a Hindu in heart and a man whose life is devoted to the ideal of lifting up humanity and especially India and Asia and supporting the oppressed against the strong, the cause of the future which is our cause against all that hampers and resists it. If after that Chandernagore still votes for Bluysen or Lemaire, it is its own choice and it will have itself to thank for anything that may follow."

His final word to Shree Roy on this matter is typically spiritual in its ring and urge:

"Put faith in God and act. You have seen that when He wills, He can bring about impossibilities. Do not look too much at the chances of success and failure in this matter."

His following letter dated 5th. May 1914, opens with the lines:

"The election is over or what they call an election—with the result that the man who had the fewer real votes has got the majority."

Such a result was indeed, a foregone conclusion.

The elected candidate, Paul Bluysen—who 'has made himself a by-word for every kind of rascality and oppression', would now—says Aurobindo

"reign inspite of the hatred and contempt of the whole population by the terror of the administration and the police. This Madras! population is so deficient in even the rudiments of moral courage that one cannot hope very much from it."

Closely connected with this latter remark of Shree Aurobindo on the Madras electorate together with this other observation of his on the French political system as revealed in such an election —let us quote his own words:

"There is an ugly rumour that (President) Poincare supports Bluysen and there are always corrupt financial dealings underlying French politics which the outside world does not see."

Which all together makes the great seer pronounce the only verdict that now comes out from his lips:

"If so, we must put spiritual force against the banded forces of evil and see the result."

No wonder, in one of his famous 'Evening Talks' some years after, Shree Aurobindo has been heard to say:

"In Pondicherry, we have seen a very fine object-lesson in democracy. If I had not come to Pondicherry, perhaps, I would not have lost all my faith in democracy."

To Shree Motilal Roy, his effort to work for the election of Monsieur Paul Richard at the bidding of his Master in 1914 served as a political training-ground in electioneering experience, which acted as urge and inspiration for his participating in the election of 1919 just after the declaration of Royal Clemency, when his disciples Shree Manindra Nath Naiek and Shree Nirmal Chandra Bakshi were duly elected from Chandernagore to the General and Local Assembly respectively of French India.

Mons. Richard after the election did not leave India, but decided to remain here for two years and work for the people. The Arya was started by Shree Aurobindo in collaboration with him as we have already seen and also an Association of the young men of Pondicherry and Karikal as a sort of training-centre from which 'men can be chosen for the Vedantic Yoga'.

Everything was indeed, nebulous, but the transition had already taken a new, clear and firm tone and turn.

In Europe, the War was raging in full vigour. Britain had to withdraw the major part of her occupation troops from India. The revolutionary leaders of Bengal—restless to take advantage of the weak situation of the British Power in India, had assembled together in the darkness of night at a dilapidated temple on the Ganges-ghat at Uttarpara to consult and decide upon a course of active programme with the firm determina-

tion to strike a fatal blow on a vast scale at the enemy. The great giants—Rasbehary, Jatin Mukherjee (Bagha Jatin), Jadu Gopal Mukherjee, Amarendra Nath Chatterjee, Bipin Behari Ganguli, Motilal Roy had grouped together there to fix up the plan of insurrection—a simultaneous rise among the Indian soldiers—in their armed camps at strategic points—from Rawalpindi to Singapore. A date also was fixed—the 21st. of February 1915 for this general uprising—vast and simultaneous—a *second Sepoy-rebellion*. Rasbehary himself took the lead specially in the Punjab and Northern and Central India, Jatin Mukherjee, Jadu Gopal along with the great Anushilan Party leaders in north-eastern India, including Bengal, Assam and Orissa. Maharastra-leaders Pingley and others joined with Rasbehary to work among the Shikh and Mahratta regiments. But treachery betrayed. The Government fore-warned, took ruthless measures to nip the movement in the bud. The plan was changed and the rising pre-dated to 21st. January to forestall and mislead the wily enemy. But the mischief was already at work. The military uprising was checked and halted everywhere except in the Singapore Garrison, where the regiments unapprised, rose in revolt according to plan, and was immediately seized, rounded up and drastically crushed. The entire plan crashed and the rebellion collapsed. A dismal failure—a revolutionist disaster, due to failure in national character!

The leaders themselves were left to their fate. Jatin Mukherjee, hero of heroes, with his equally heroic associates boldly faced the challenge of the redoubtable Mr. Tegart with his armed battalion and after a bloody hand-to-hand gun-battle at Balasore on the Buribalam river-bank—a *second history-famed patriotic battle of Haldighat*—laid down their lives—in the heart of Orissa. Amarendra with his tall bulky body escaped from an Assam jungle-site after a deadly resistance against the British armed forces and slipped into hiding, while Nalini Kar fell down dead under enemy bullets. Jadu Gopal and Rasbehary also went into hiding under-ground. A heavy five-figure—sum-price was specially set on Rasbehary's head, who had conspired with the Shikhs and had even won a place of confidence amongst the followers of Ajit Singh as their succeeding warrior-guru. Rasbehary with his legendary tales and actual instances gathering about his name of dodging, outwitting, misleading the wily British C.I.D. and Police, himself moving about in a hundred disguises

side by side or even face to face with them, as if throwing dust in their very eyes—was coming and going off and on and to and from Benares, Bengal or even Chandernagore—traced and followed too often, but without being discovered or caught red-hand—an extradition warrant was extorted from the French administration of Chandernagore by the British Government as a measure of assistance and co-operation from their war-ally. It is this Extradition Warrant that Shree Aurobindo, the leader of leaders of the revolutionary movement of India, has taken up for challenge and grapples within his letter No. 18 with a forensic skill and political wisdom befitting a seasoned Barrister or a veteran lawyer-statesman. Let us follow closely his clear and detailed arguments as given in the letter:

"The case is clearly a political one; for the main charges in the Delhi case seem to be (1) a charge of conspiracy relating to State (i.e. political offences); (2) a charge of murder u/s 302 read in connection with the State offences section, therefore an assassination with a political intention; (3) a charge under the Explosive Act which is an extraordinary measure passed in view of certain political conditions.

Moreover, all these cases may be tried together and form part of the same transaction, i.e. a political conspiracy directed against the existing form of Government and having for its object the change and overthrow of that Government.

Under the Extradition Treaty between France and England —unless that has been altered by the latest Treaty to which I have not had access, there can be no Extradition for (1) a political offence, (2) an offence of political character or tendency, (3) on a charge which, though preferred as for an ordinary offence, is really an excuse or device for laying hands on a political offender.

Rash Behary Bose is reported to be in hiding either in Chandernagore or in the Punjab. If any body moves therefore, it can only be a relative or friend on his behalf,—a relative would be much better. What you have to do is to get hold of some one entitled to act for him, consult the text of the latest Extradition Treaty between France and England and, if it is as I have stated, then let it be put in the hands of a lawyer of the French Court who must move in the matter according to the French procedure about which I know nothing. I presume he would have to move the Government in France or failing there the Court of Cassation in Paris, but the latter would be an expensive affair. So long as Bose is not handed over to the British (if he is in Chandernagore), the Court of Cassation has, I should suppose, the power of canceling the warrant. I do not know whether it is necessary first to appeal to the Procureur-General in Pondicherry before going to the Higher Court. On these points of procedure Bose's representative will have to consult a French lawyer.

In case he is handed over, the Hague decision with regard to Savarkar will come in the way and make the thing almost helpless. The French Government may

still move on the ground that Bose is a French subject, but it could only succeed by strong diplomatic pressure, which the present French Government might be unwilling to employ.

In any case, it might be worthwhile to get a decree of the Court of Cassation so as to establish the principle. There is always, however, the danger in these political cases, where justice and law are so seldom observed, often opposite decision making the position worse than before. It would be worthwhile finding out what exactly was done and on what grounds in Charu Chandra Roy's case and seeing whether these grounds can be made to apply. If you will give me the exact facts of the warrant, the charges etc, I may be able to get a letter written to France so that Jnanon or others may move in this matter."

The lucid reasoning based on factual analysis makes our quotation long, but it is worth our study and reflection; because it shows with what clarity and cogency of logical insight, legal acumen and well-informed argumentation, his brilliant, versatile, gifted intellect works upon a matter of such international forensic complication in defence of his great revolutionary follower and it bespeaks also his deep and ardent desire to get him out of the Extradition trap-net, so desperately laid down by two conspiring governments in war-alliance ingeniously acting together. Shree Aurobindo naturally remembers in this connection the case of Shree Charu Chandra Roy, his co-accused in Alipore Bomb Case, who had been unlawfully dragged out of Chandernagore under perhaps similar extradition warrant and clapped into prison, but had subsequently to be released on the strength of French Treaty-laws, by the Calcutta High Court presided over by a wise, independent-minded legal luminary like Justice Ashutosh Mukherjee and possibly with some helpful conniving support from the Paris Parliament, which had been ably and successfully moved by nationalist-minded advocates like Bonomali Pal on behalf of the republican citizens of Chandernagore.

May we not passingly also recall here in our memory or imagination under the law of association of thought how the Master himself might have been working out in his brilliant brain a similar deft and cogent defence-brief of his own, until God sent Barrister Das to take up his case and prompted him to leave the matter entirely and unreservedly in the hands of that able, noble man of law who had come to defend him under inner divine guidance?

There arose no need or opportunity however, to seek or take recourse to the law-court on the lines suggested by Shree Aurobindo for the defence and release of Rasbehary; for this great political yogin impelled by his own inner automatory guidance, soon decided to move out of India and escape under an adopted nom-de-plume of P. N. Tagore—as 'a fore-runner of Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore himself as if deputed by him to arrange things for the great poet on the eve of his impending visit to Japan. Rasbehary Bose started on his voyage to Japan by the Japanese Ship "Sankimaru" of Nippon Company on the 12th of May 1915.

But this letter does not end here. The historic failure of the revolutionary movement was stinging deeply in the Master's mind and heart. He comes out in the very next part of the letter with his strong and piercing comment on this Tantric Yoga:

"As to your Tantric Yoga, the reasons of your failures are so obvious that I am surprised you should attribute it all to the Goddess and not to the unpardonable blunder we have all been making in our Yogic kriya. Kali of the Tantra is not a Goddess who is satisfied with mere tamasic faith and adoration. Perfection in kriya is indispensable or at least a conscientious and diligent attempt at perfection. This has not been made; on the contrary, all the defects that have made Tantra ineffective throughout the Kali-Yuga abound in your anusthana. All this must be changed; for the warning has been given and it will be wise to give heed to it. If not, well, you know what the Gita says about those who from ahankara hear not."

The situation in which the Master has taken up his pen, is thus a very extra-ordinary one. The revolutionary movement as we have seen had taken its most daring and aggressive turn and expansion under the heroic stalwarts, whose names we: have mentioned before. The military insurrection planned by the leaders and to be supported with German money and arms expected to be supplied from abroad through Naren Bhat-tacharya (Manabendra Nath Roy), Abani Mukherjee and others-had failed through inner treachery or heaviest outer odds and opposition presented by a most powerful Government, which had staked its all to fight a ruthless life-and-death war. Our leaders were almost all gone into concealment, if not arrested, jailed or hanged—hunted and hounded everywhere by police-spies—they seemed to have nothing to do now except to bide their time for new and more opportune turn of events and circumstances. It was at such a juncture, in an atmosphere of gloom, frustration and despair, wide-spread amongst his revolutionary followers, that the

Guru hits at the root of the matter in an incisive, penetrating analysis to drive home into the minds of those followers through Shree Roy, who was in a sense, in his person, their dynamic nerve-centre, where the different revolutionary leaders and parties with their different active currents met and merged together and to them he expounds his new stand thus:

"The root of the whole evil is that we have been attempting an extension of Tantric Kriya without any sufficient Vedantic basis. You specially were going on the basis that if a man had faith, enthusiasm, intellectual and emotional sincerity and preferred self-surrender, all that was necessary was there and he could go on straight to difficult Tantric anusthana. *This basis is condemned.* A much stronger and greater foundation is necessary. It was the basis of the Sattwic ahankara, which said to itself; 'I am the chosen of Kali, I am her bhakta, I have every claim on her. I can afford to be negligent about other things, she is bound to help and guard me.

It is this sattwic ahankara, which I have long felt to be the great obstacle in our Yoga, some have it in the sattwa-rajasic form, others in the sattwa-tamasic, but it is there in you all, blinding your vision, limiting your strength, frustrating your progress. And its worst quality is that it is unwilling to admit its own defects, or if it admits one, it takes refuge in another. Open your eyes to this enemy within you and expel it. Without that purification you can have no success.

'To do rajasic kriya in a sattwic spirit'—is merely to go in the old way while pretending to oneself that there is a change. Going on in the old way is out of the question. That path can only lead you to the pit. *I speak strongly, because I see clearly,* if not yet with absolute vision, yet without misleading false light which marred all my seeing till now and allowed me to be swept in the flood of confused sattwa-rajasic impure Shakti which came with you from Bengal.

My first instruction to you therefore, is to pause, stand on the defence against your spiritual enemies and go on with your Vedantic Yoga. God is arranging things for me in my knowledge, but the process is not yet finished. I shall send you (it will take two or three letters) the lines on which I wish the Vedantic and Tantric lines have to be altered and developed; afterwards we shall see when we have recovered these from the Shastras, that is Upanishadic elements to work them out in practice." (*Italics are ours*)

From the other end, Shree Motilal was slowly but keenly realising that since the advent of Monsieur Richard, Shree Aurobindo was changing his outward poise and attitude in tune with an inner change of his consciousness and to create a new field and environment for spiritual enlightenment and renovation of life and character of the men and women of our country or of other countries on the foundation of that higher light and truth and in the process, he was withdrawing himself more and more

away from connection with the old revolutionary movement and its outmoded activities. Shree Roy was very keenly feeling also that it was the Master's deepening intention to have him—his disciple to follow suit on the same lines. It was increasingly evident from his letters that to Shree Aurobindo the old revolutionary path seemed to have exhausted its necessity and therefore, he was preparing himself to start his work on a new level and scale. He was also searching for fit instruments into whom he could transmit his new power as his helpers and spiritual missionaries. But surrounded as Shree Roy was by his revolutionary comrades and co-workers and deeply immersed in the roaring tide of the revolutionary movement, originally initiated by Shree Aurobindo himself and so long led by him from behind with Shree Roy only at the fore-front of the active group—it was not easy for Shree Roy now to stem this mighty rolling tide and to get out of its whirling torrent at the new bidding of the Master. Shree Aurobindo expressed his appreciation and inner satisfaction at his disciple's heart-moved endeavour to confine himself to Vedantic Yoga which we have already seen from his earlier quoted letter No. 20.

Shree Motilal from his own similar, maturing experience in connection with his Tantric Yoga *i.e.* revolutionary endeavour, was veering round to his Master's intended aim and goal as he himself records in his semi-auto-biographical treatise, *Amar dekha Biplaba O Biplavee*, (The Revolutionary Movement and the revolutionaries as I have seen) thus:

"Shree Aurobindo, who himself had initiated me in the Cult of Revolution, now gave me the call to halt in the mid-current.

"The force of circumstances eventually however, compelled me to carry his order into actual effect. I had heard that in 1907, Shreemat Vishnu Bhaskar Lele, the adhyatma-guru of Shree Aurobindo in the Yoga of Atma-samarpana, had given him the warning and to his band of revolutionary workers (at Maniktola-garden secret centre) that the independence of India would not come in the orthodox revolutionary way, but would be achieved through the power of Yoga. Shree Aurobindo could not however, desist from that path even long, long after he had heard that word of warning. The same cry of halt now came from Shree Aurobindo himself to me. And no less than two years after, that is in August 1916

that I could dissociate myself completely from that path of armed revolution and finally adopt the constructive task of character-transformation of the nation.

"Whatever the course of historical events and happenings, the freedom of India has come at last on the line and lead given by its spiritual souls or saintly leaders.

"Shree Aurobindo wanted Sangathan—regeneration of man through the yoga of complete self-surrender and consecration to God and creation of *Samgha* or a spiritual community by bringing together such re-born men and women and evolving a new nation and society on the foundation of divine love and unity.

"I have accepted this aim and objective as the summum bonum of my life-mission. Dropping the curtain over my tale of revolution, I sing this mantra-tune to-day

घम्मं शरणं गच्छामि सहघं शच्छामि"

Historic confirmation from the other end of the same spirit and almost similar maturity of conviction and conclusive decision comes from Shree Aurobindo himself in his own version of this momentous course of events as given in the authentic volume of "Sri Aurobindo on himself and the Mother"—here he is writing about himself in the 3rd person singular:

"At Pondicherry, from this time (4th. April 1910) onwards, Shri Aurobindo's practice of Yoga became more and more absorbing. He dropped all participation in any public political activity, refused more than one request to preside at sessions of the restored Indian National Congress and made a rule of abstinence from any public utterance of any kind not connected with his spiritual activities or any contributions of writings or articles except what he wrote afterwards in the *Arya*. For some time he kept up some private communication with the revolutionary forces he had led through one or two individuals, but this also he dropped after a time and his abstention from any kind of participation in politics became complete.

"As his vision of the future grew clearer, he saw that the eventual independence of India was assured by the march of forces of which he became aware, that Britain would be forced by the pressure of Indian resistance and international events to concede independence and that she was already moving towards that eventuality with whatever opposition and reluctance. He felt that there would be no need of armed insurrection and that the secret preparation for it may be dropped without injury to the nationalist cause, although the revolutionary spirit had to be maintained and would be maintained in tact. His own personal intervention in politics would therefore, be no longer indispensable. Apart from all this, the magnitude of the spiritual work set before him, became more and more clear to him and he saw that the concentration of all his energies on it was necessary. Accordingly, when the Ashram came into existence, he kept it free from all political action; even when he intervened in politics twice afterwards on special occasions, this intervention was purely personal and the Ashram was not concerned in it.

"The British Government and numbers of people besides could not believe that Sri Aurobindo had ceased from all political action and it was supposed by them that he was secretly participating in revolutionary activities and even creating a secret organisation in the security of French India. But all this was pure imagination and rumour and there was nothing of the kind. His retirement from political activity was complete, just as was his personal retirement into solitude in 1910."

His open declaration through the columns of our weekly Chandernagore organ, the *Standard Bearer* in 1920, will also bear out in the clearest manner his new super-revolutionary view and stand as we shall find just here-after when we come to letter No. 26, the last one in our series.

The urge and need to abstain from revolutionary Tantra which arose in Shree Aurobindo's mind about 1914 almost synchronised with the arrival of Richard couple at Pondicherry; it grew clearer and clearer with the march of events both in the inner and outer worlds. It however, could take firm foothold only when the one or two individuals, specially his spiritual-cum-revolutionary disciple Shree Motilal Roy, along with his Chandernagore group was seized with the same necessary urge and zeal

in their growing mature experience. This was between the years 1915 and 1916. The complete change came from both ends, when the two one-d together in pure Vedantic aim and purpose, as we have found in this thorough study of the foregoing letter-series. By 1918-1920, the transition was accomplished and successfully concluded, both wings entering into a new phase of creative spirituality or spiritual creativity at the same time.

Letter No. 17, dated 29.8.1914, is a memorable, historic document of grave national importance. It was in early August 1914, that Lord Hardinge had declared an offer on behalf of his Government to take 2000 young men as stretcher-bearers to constitute a Volunteer-Corps, subsequently whittled down to a mere harmless 'Ambulance Corps'—as interpreted by Shree Aurobindo, 'in which the young men have plenty of chances of getting killed, but none of learning real warfare.' The idea behind Lord Hardinge's policy was to give an opportunity to the youths of Bengal to take training in some kind of war-service, thus finding some outlet for their youthful energy and thereby diverting their mind from the revolutionary path. Chittaranjan Das, as one of the leading men in Bengal at that time, referred the matter to Shree Motilal Roy and other revolutionary leaders to know their views regarding this Government-proposal. The heads of the various revolutionary groups had met together at Chandernagore in the house of Shree Motilal and had a long consultation. But no definite decision could be arrived at. So it was resolved that Shree Motilal would write about this to Shree Aurobindo at Pondicherry for his considered view as well as final decision.

The letter that Shree Aurobindo wrote in reply is one worthy of the genius, fore-sight and far-sight of the greatest national and revolutionary leader of the country during that time. And we have to remember that 50,000 heroic youths of Bengal were to be led by him—to rise and move at his beck and call.

The Government eventually withdrew the proposal. As Shree Aurobindo says, 'after testing the temper of the people and you may be sure, watching closely what young men came forward as volunteers and who did not, they have removed an offer, already whittled down.' He clearly points out that 'Loyalty and Ambulance Corps means the same thing in

India and that 'the conditions of India are not those of (Gandhiji's) S. Africa; our position is different and our aim is different.'

"What Gandhi has been attempting in S. Africa is to secure for Indians the position of kindly treated serfs,—as a stepping-stone to something better; whereas our aim is not to secure a few privileges but to create a nation of men fit for independence and able to secure and keep it.

"We have been beaten in the first attempt, like every other nation similarly circumstanced. That is no reason why the whole people should go back to a condition of abject fear, grovelling loyalty & whining complaint. The public Nationalist policy has always been.

1. Eventual independence.
2. No co-operation without control.
3. A masculine courage in speech & action.

Let us add a fourth,

4. Readiness to accept real concessions & pay their just prices, but no more. Beyond that, I do not see the necessity of any change. We recognise that immediate independence is not practicable & we are ready to defend the British rule against any foreign nation, for that means defending our future independence."

The four-fold principles so precisely and concisely defined by him, had been the wisest guide-line of public Nationalist policy as enunciated by Shree Aurobindo and deserves to be remembered in spirit as well as letter by every nationalist statesman of every country struggling for its right of freedom.

The aim is eventual independence. The people can co-operate with the ruling power only where the latter offers substantial control. But this would be possible not through a spineless policy of 'abject servility' or 'whining complaint', but through manly will and character—'a masculine courage in speech and action.' To these three vital principles, the leader—as a practical diplomat and politician—has soundly added a fourth—'readiness to accept real concessions and pay their just prices, but no more.

Shree Aurobindo was far-seeing enough to recognise that immediate independence was not practicable and that we should be ready to defend the British rule against any foreign nation, for that means defending our future independence.

With this clear-sighted light in view, the great leader therefore, pronounces his considered opinion in the matter at issue saying 'if the Gov-

ernment accepts volunteers or favours the institution of Boy-scouts, we give our aid, but not to be mere stretcher-bearers.'

Shree Aurobindo does not appreciate the attitude of Sarat Maharaj of Ramakrishna Math, Belur, who in this matter, would advise the acceptance of the Government offer as an opportune channel for the exercise of 'seva-vritti'—the cult of service and self-sacrifice. Shree Aurobindo frankly declares—'if self-sacrifice is the object, every human being has the whole of life as a field for self-sacrifice and does not depend on any Government for that. We can show our sacrificing activities every moment, if we want. It is not a question of sacrifice at all—it is a question of military training. If the young men wish to organise for charitable work, the Government is not going to stop it, even though they may watch and suspect. I put that aside altogether.'

Stressing from his own standpoint, based on the second and fourth principles as enunciated by him, his comment on the attitude of some political leaders over this very question is also clear-cut, logically correct and also diplomatically sagacious though couched in very bitter, caustic terms. He says:

"The leaders suggested co-operation in return for some substantial self-government. They are now offering co-operation without any return at all. Very self-sacrificing, but not political. If indeed. Government were willing to train thousands of young men in military service, as volunteers, territorial or boy-scouts, whether for keeping the peace or as a reserve in case of invasion, then we need not boggle about the return. But, after so much experience, do these addle-headed politicians think the Government is going to do that except in case of absolute necessity and as a choice between two evils? When will that absolute necessity come? Only if the war goes against them seriously and they have to withdraw their troops from India."

His analysis about the 'utility of the things offered us or offered by us' is also not only penetrative, but also cautious and circumspective, really befitting a clear-headed, far-sighted, constructive national leader bent on rebuilding his nation's life and character on effective, fruitful lines so as to make it fit 'to win independence and able to secure and keep it.' One by one he discusses the alternatives thus:

"Our men generally do not need to become stretcher-bearers in a European war in order to have the necessary nerve, courage, steadiness and discipline. If

therefore, an Ambulance corps is again suggested and accepted, either refuse or let only those young men go who are enthusiastic but still light-headed, self-indulgent or undisciplined.

Possibly the experience may steady and discipline them. It may be necessary to let this be done if the circumstances are such that to refuse entirely would reflect on our national courage or be interpreted as a backing out from a national engagement.

Boy-Scouts—Volunteer Corps—Territorial—all these are entirely good, provided the police are kept at a distance & provided officers as well as men are trained & the Government control is limited to the giving of military discipline in the first two cases. Even without the second proviso, any of these things would be worth accepting."

Here again he adds a cautious but very judicious rider:

"Only in the case of volunteers going to the scene of war, you must see that we are not crippled by all our best men or even a majority being sent; only enough to bring in an element among us who have seen actual warfare."

The leader's intention was clear and definite. What Bengal needs is not any opportunity for cultivation of seva-discipline—such opportunities we have in ample abundance here. What we need is real military training. If such an opportunity arrives, we should accept and take full advantage of it without any condition or stipulation, at once. And Shree Aurobindo prophetically uttered:

"I think any of these things may one day become possible."

His words proved true to the very letter in a singular manner in the contemporary life-history of Chandernagore. It was on 30th December 1915, that President Poincaire, the then President of the Republic of France, declared that the people of French India, Hindu, Muslim or Christian, would be allowed to enlist as volunteers in the European War.

This was at least a symbolic fulfilment of the hidden martial desire of our countrymen, specially of the Bengali sub-nation. In 1886, during the 2nd session of the Indian National Congress, under the presidentship of Mr Dadabhai Naoroji, a resolution was proposed by Shree Ram Pal and with the entire support of a House of 440 members unanimously passed that every Indian be given the right to enter as volunteer in the Indian Army. We know that this resolution was not carried into execution.

Exactly about the same time, the French Government also had taken a move to pass the Conscription Law in French India.

The citizens of Chandernagore had piteously appealed to the French Government to desist from such a move. Bengalis of those days spoke fiery language, but ventured not to act up to it. But in 1915, it was at Shree Motilal Roy's house-compound that hundreds of young men gathered together with the fiery aspiration to face death for the freedom of their country. A number of youths—mostly from Chandernagore and two from outside its borders—enthusiastically applied to be enlisted as "volunteers for the French Army and were selected. They started in two batches—to be trained first in Pondicherry and then in Marseilles, France, and were ultimately sent to the battle-field—the great blood-red, historic battle-field of Verdun. They formed the first Bengali artillery regiment since the battle of Plassey, fighting side by side, shoulder to shoulder, with the heroic sons of the great French nation.

It was 158 years after—since the battle of Plassey—that Bengali heroes found the opportunity and scope to display their martial character. A red-letter day indeed, it was for the whole Bengali sub-nation, when these heroic bands were marching forward, greeted by the entire population, men and women, young and old and blessed by the leading men of Calcutta such as Lord S. P. Sinha, Justice Chandravarkar, Motilal Ghosh etc who had on that occasion come to Chandernagore with an upsurge of patriotic feeling of pride and glory overflowing in their hearts. The mothers, wives or sisters of these volunteer youths—with their mixed feelings of glory as well as tearful separation—together with the representative womanhood of Chandernagore and also outside, had collected together at Shree Roy's house, under the leadership of reverent Samghamother Sm. Radharani Devee, wife of Shree Motilal, from whose holy hands, the war-bound heroic youths were receiving *vijoy-tilak*—the auspicious mark of victory—on this send-off triumphant journey.

We are glad to add in this connection that these youths all except one who died of cholera on the way, returned with victorious laurels—at the end of the World War 1.

It was a fulfilment also of Shree Aurobindo's prophetic utterance from which we have quoted before. A further excerpt even though a very

lengthy one from the same letter will be well worth our deeper consideration in-as-much-as it will testify also to the far-seeing genius and statesman-like fore-sight' of our great national leader:

"Since the last year new forces have come into the world, and are now strong enough to act, which are likely to alter the whole face of the world. The present war is only a beginning, not the end. We have to consider what are our chances and what we ought to do in these circumstances. The war is open to a certain number of broad chances:

I. Those bringing about the destruction of the two Teutonic Empires—German and Austrian.

This may happen either by an immediate German defeat, its armies being broken and chased back from Belgium and Alsace-Lorraine to Berlin, which is not probable, or by the Russian arrival at Berlin and a successful French stand near Rheims or Compiègne, or by the entry of Italy and the remaining Balkan States into the war and the invasion of Austria-Hungary from two sides.

II. Those bringing about the weakening or isolation of the British Power.

This may be done by the Germans destroying the British Expeditionary Force and entering Paris and dictating terms to France, while Russia is checked in its march to Berlin by a strong Austro-German force opening in the German quadrilateral between the forts of Dazing, Thorn. Posen and Kongsberg. If this happens, Russia may possibly enter into a compact with Germany based on a reconciliation of the three Empires and a reversion to the old idea of a simultaneous attack on England and a division of her Empire between Germany and Russia.

III. Those bringing about the destruction of British Power.

This may happen by the shattering of the British fleet and a German landing in England.

In either of these two last cases, the invasion of India by Germany, Russia or Japan is only a question of time and India will be unable to resist except by one of three means—

1. Universal conscription in England & the colonies.

2. The aid of Japan or some other foreign power.

3. The aid of the Indian people.

The first is useless for the defence of India in case III, and can only be applied in case II, if England is still mistress of the seas. The second is dangerous to India herself, since the ally who helps, may also covet. The third means the concession of self-government to India.

In case I, there will only remain four considerable powers in Europe and Asia—Russia, France, England and Japan, with perhaps a Balkan Confederacy or Empire as a fifth. That means at the next stage a struggle between England and Russia in Asia. There again England is reduced to one of the three alternatives or a combination of them.

Of course, the war may take different turns from the above, with slightly altered circumstances & result; the one thing that is impossible is that it should leave

the world as it was before. In any case, the question of India must rise at no very long date. If England adopts more or less grudgingly the third alternative, our opportunity arrives and we must be ready to take it—on this basis, continuance of British rule & co-operation until we are strong enough to stand by ourselves. If not, we must still decide how we are to prepare ourselves, so as not to pass from one foreign domination to a worse."

When the World War 1 ended and the Treaty of Versailles, was signed on the 28th of June 1917, of the three sets of chances forecast by the prophetic seer, it was the first set, outlined by him, which from the world of possibilities took realised shape in the world of actuality. German defeat and Allied victory—was the outcome. It certainly did not leave the world as it was before. The question of India also did arise in the course of historical circumstances.

The August Declaration of the British Government, ushering the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, Rowlatt Bills, Jallian-wallabagh tragedy and the Khilafat issue—all leading to the momentous Non-cooperation Movement launched by the All-India National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi—all following one after another as if in a quick-changing chain of ceaseless succession in the hands of destiny. But Shree Aurobindo who under divine call, had already moved far away from the open political arena, was by then slowly but surely steering away also from the under-ground terrain of revolutionary thought and preparation.

The Royal Clemency declared by the British Government on 23rd December 1919 set the field clear for release of the political prisoners, which was a sure indication for the opening of a new era in the movement of our national awakening.

On the 15th of August 1914, as we have already noted, had come out Shree Aurobindo's Arya in collaboration with the French savant, Monsieur Paul Richard. It was—so far as Shree Aurobindo's share in it was concerned in his own words—'the intellectual side of his work for the world.'

"Curiously enough" significantly remarked Professor Jyotish Chandra Ghosh—our "Master Mahashaya"—one of the purest of Shree Aurobindo's revolutionary-cum-spiritual disciples—in his tiny master-piece

under the title "Life-work of Shree Aurobindo"—a gem of genuine tribute to his Master's memory—"the birth of the Arya synchronies with the great war in Europe, thus illustrating the truth that when the West was busy in breaking and destroying, the East was engaged in upholding the Causal Truth and in opening the sacred fountain of life to thirsty humanity, thus indicating the line of the future evolution of humanity and the respective functions of the two master-continent; each absolutely necessary for the final consummation, the two processes being counterparts of each other."

The Arya in Pondicherry was followed in September 1915, by the publication of the Bengali fortnightly (which subsequently several years after developed into a monthly) organ—*Prabartak* from Chandernagore—as a vernacular mouthpiece of the same constructive ideal and mission of spiritual nationalism. About *Prabartak*, Shree Aurobindo later told Shree Upendra Nath Banerjee, another revolutionary follower of Shree Aurobindo after his return from Andaman exile: "Whether I myself write or not, it is God who through me, makes Moti write *Prabartak*"—a recognition in his way of the true missionary role of this Bengali mouthpiece of the *Prabartak* Samgha.

Still later, on 15th August 1920, the *Standard Bearer* was started with the words "under the inspiration of Shree Aurobindo" inscribed on it—as a weekly organ in English published from Chandernagore to preach in the light of his new thought and directive to the nation. Its opening article under the caption "Ourselves"—from the pen of the Master himself—was at once a blessing for the journalistic venture as well as a guide-light, outlining the message for the future and a call to the young generation of India to imbibe and follow.

On 1st November, towards the close of the same year appeared *Navasamgha*—Bengali weekly—another vernacular mouthpiece to voice and spread the gospel of the "New Commune" amongst the Bengali-speaking population.

Thus from the side of Shree Aurobindo, his new movement had already begun in right earnest and on the right lines—that of 'satyam-ritam-vrihat'—as envisaged by him in his new spiritual vision. And meanwhile, amidst the amorphous conditions of the mind and life of humanity

in this exciting period of transition, a new creation too, of untold potentiality had at the same time commenced to sprout forth from the seed of this new vision or causal idea—in India—the heart of Asia.

Letter No. 21 begins with the topic of "discipline"—It is a deep and luminous spiritual discourse on the first principles of Adhyatma Yoga. The occasion was a 'hunger-strike' of a disciple of Shree Motilal Roy at Chandernagore, about which Shree Roy had reported to the Mahaguru as to what should be done to deal with such a disturbing internal situation. The very language and trend of the Master's reply bespeaks a mood of self-poised calmness, an assured and secure stability in Vedantic Yoga, enabling the Master now not only to take his stand, but to play his part with fullest confidence as a spiritual preceptor and guide, a teacher of the new yoga. It is now the Guru of gurus asserting himself and imparting to his intimate disciples yogic lessons; and this is a first lesson or a lesson on the first fundamental principle of the new yoga, which he wants to be learnt, assimilated and followed by those who have determined to follow him. We may note that there is no word here in this letter as in most of the earlier letters—having any reference to Tantric Yoga or Tantric matters. Both the Guru and the Disciple are now completely seated in the adhyatma yoga of the Vedantic path that they were so long struggling for. The new mission is discovering itself and taking its stand on its own pure, spiritual foundation. Shree Aurobindo's 'cry of halt' has been fully responded to and successfully implemented. The Samgha, based on yoga—adhyatma-yoga—is born. Above struggle, there is a calm and reposeful self-footing now.

"If you want discipline" declares the Master in a very calm and confident tone, "the first thing of that kind I would impose on you or ask you to impose on yourselves is self-discipline—*atmasatnyama* and the first element in that is obedience to the law of the Yoga, I have given to you. If you bring in things which do not belong to it at all and are quite foreign to it, such as 'hunger-strikes' and vehement emotional revolt against the divine will, it is idle to expect any rapid progress. That means that you insist on going on your own bypath and yet demand of me that I shall bring you to my goal. All difficulties can be conquered, but only on condition of fidelity to the way that you have taken. There is no obligation to any one to take it—it is a difficult and trying one, a way for heroes, not for weaklings—but once taken, it must be followed, or you will not arrive."

It is the Veera-marga—the way for heroes as he says and repeats that it is the strong who can accept it and follow it—those who believe in heroic self-conquest and world-conquest—attainment of *swarayya* and *samrayya*—‘न मे मतं तस्य दुर्बलस्य’—it is not the faith or the path for weaklings.

There is a distinction to be noted between this adhyatma yoga and the old bhakti school, which the Master clearly expounds:

"Remember what is the whole basis of the Yoga. It is not founded upon the vehement emotionalism of the bhakti-marga to which the temperament of Bengal is most prone, though it has a different kind of bhakti, but on *samata* and *at-masamarpana*. Obedience to the Divine Will, not assertion of self-will, is the very first *mantra*. But what can be a more violent assertion of self-will than to demand the result you desire, whether external or internal, at once, এই মুহূর্তে, এই ক্ষণে (Ei Muhurte, Ei Kshane,) and not in God's muhurta, God's moment? You say that there is complete *utsarga* but it cannot be complete, if there is any kind of revolt or vehement impatience. Revolt and impatience mean always that there is a part of the being or something in the being which does not submit, has not given itself to God, but insists on God going out of His way to obey it. That may be very well in the Bhakti-marga, but it will not do in this Way. The revolt and impatience may come and will come in the heart or the prana when these are still subject to imperfection and impurity; but it is then for the will and the faith in your *buddhi* to reject them, not act upon them. If the will consents, approves and supports them, it means that you are siding with the inner enemy. If you want rapid progress, the first condition is that you should not do this; for every time you do it, the enemy is strengthened and the shuddhi postponed. This is a difficult lesson to learn, but you must learn it. I do not find fault with you for taking long over it. I myself took full twelve years to learn it thoroughly and even after I knew the principle well enough, it took me quite four years and more to master my lower nature in this respect. But you have the advantage of my experience and my help: you will be able to do it more rapidly if you consciously and fully assist me, by not associating yourself with the enemy 'Desire'; *Jahi Kamam durasadam*,—remember that utterance of the Gita, it is a key-word of our Yoga."

*Adhyatma Sadhana* is a spiritual battle. The Geeta itself as we believe or know—was spoken in the battle-field of Kurukshetra on the eve of a World-war. The incident of hunger-strike that has occasioned this letter of Shree Aurobindo—was that of Haradhan Bakshi, the young boy, who yet in his teens took the lead in Chandernagore to be the first volunteer to respond to the call of the French President announcing the Volunteer Force to be raised in French India and in other colonies of France.

Haradhan joined in the great battle of Verdun, fought on French soil, as a heroic soldier with his classmate, Siddhaswar Mullick and their other Bengali comrades and won laurels of worthy praise from the French Lieutenant, their Commander. Shree Aurobindo therefore, takes this opportunity to remind Haradhan as a soldier just coming from a world-war:

"As for Haradhan, he should show the way in calm patience and endurance. He has been a soldier. How does he think that the nations of Europe could carry this war to an end, if they had grown so impatient of the fatigue of the trenches, suffering, disturbance, scarcity, continual postponement of the result, and declared that either they must have victory in a given time or throw up the struggle? Does he expect the inner war with our lower selves, the personal habit of thousands of lives and the human inheritance of ages, to be less arduous or to be carried out by a rapid and easy miracle? Hunger-striking to force God or to force any body else is not the true spiritual means. I do not object to Mr. Gandhi or any one else following it for quite other than spiritual purposes, but here it is out of place; these things, I repeat, are foreign to the fundamental principle of our Yoga."

Hunger-strike as a means—whether for *atma-shuddhi* self purification or for the attainment of any other objective, 'other than spiritual purposes' has become a vogue since Gandhiji's days in our society and body-politics. As a peaceful and somewhat innocuous measure of self-reform or social reform, though generally preferable to the other cruder and far more harmful method of physical violence, hunger-strikes because of its cheap fashion ability, fast losing its popular glamour and charm and also even practical effectivity now-a-days. Even in terms of coercion, hunger-striking is looked upon as a method of self: coercion in the eyes of the Geeta itself—and is classified amongst qualities under the asuric category, Shree Aurobindo's denunciation of hunger-striking, as 'not the true spiritual means'—justified by both reason and scripture, is therefore in the case of Haradhan appropriately considered as 'out of place'.

Shree Aurobindo's denunciation of hunger-striking, as 'not the true spiritual means'—justified by both reason and scripture, is therefore in the case of Haradhan appropriately considered as 'out of place'.

*Shuddhi* is necessary in sadhana. Shree Aurobindo significantly writes:

"Shuddhi is the most difficult part of the whole Yoga, it is the condition of all the rest, and if that is once conquered, the real conquest is accomplished. The rest becomes a comparatively easy building on an assured basis—it may take longer or shorter, but it can be done tranquilly and steadily. To prevent the Shuddhi, the lower nature in you and around you will exhaust all its efforts, and even when it cannot prevent, it will try to retard. And its strongest weapon then is, when you think you have got it, that it is far away, and so arouse disappointment, grief, loss of faith, discouragement, depression and revolt, the whole army of troubles that wait upon impure Desire. When you have once found calm, peace of mind, firm faith, equality and been able to live in it for some time, then and only then, you may be sure that Shuddhi is founded; but you must not think it will not be disturbed. It will be so long as your heart and prana are still capable of responding to the old movements, have still any memory and habit vibrating to the old chords. The one thing necessary when the renewed trouble comes, is to stand back in your mind and will from it, refuse it the sanction of your higher being, even when it is raging in the lower nature. As that habit of refusal fixes itself,—at first you may not be able to do it, the buddhi may be lost in the storm,—you will find that the *ashuddhi*, even though it still returns, becomes less violent, more and more external, until it ceases to be anything more than a faint and short-lived touch from outside and finally comes no more. That is the course it has followed with me, not only with regard to this kind of disturbance, but with regard to all imperfections. You, since you have chosen to share my Yoga for mankind, must follow the same way, undergo the same disturbances."

He enlighteningly continues:

"This is a thing which it is necessary for you to understand clearly. I myself have had for these fourteen years, and it is not yet finished, to bear all the possible typical difficulties, troubles, downfalls and backslidings that can rise in this great effort to change the whole normal human being. How else could I have been able to help or guide others on the same way?

Those who join me at the present stage, must share in my burden, especially those who are themselves chosen in any degree to lead, help and guide. It may be that when I have the complete siddhi—which I have not yet, I am only on the way to it,—then, if it be God's will to extend very largely and rapidly my work in this body, those who come after may have the way made very easy for them. But we are the pioneers hewing our way through the jungle of the lower prakriti. It will not do for us to be cowards and shirkers and refuse the burden, to clamour for everything to be made quick and easy for us. Above all things I demand from you endurance, firmness, heroism—the true spiritual heroism. I want strong men. I do not want emotional children. Manhood first, দেবত্ব (Devatwa) can only be built upon that. If I do not get it in those who accept my Yoga, then I shall have to understand that it is not God's will that I should succeed. If that be so, I shall accept His will calmly. But mean-while I go on bearing whatever burden He lays on me, meeting

whatever difficulties He puts in the way of my siddhi. Personally, I am now sure of success of everything except in the *Kaya siddhi*, which is still doubtful, and in my work. The work can only succeed, if I find noble worthy helpers, fitted for it by the same struggles and the same endurance. I expect them in you. Again you must not expect the shuddhi or any part of the siddhi to be simultaneous and complete at once in all whom you associate with. One may attain, others progress, others linger. You must not expect a sudden collective miracle.

I have not come here to accomplish miracles, but to show, lead the way, help, in the road to a great inner change of our human nature,—the outer change in the world is only possible if and when that inner transmutation is effected and extends itself. You must not expect to establish a perfect Samgha all at once and by a single leap. If you make such demands on me, I can only say, that I cannot do what is not God's will. Go forward calmly and firmly, not attached to success, my help will then not fail you."

It is a master-piece sermon, in which the Guru of gurus has begun to reveal himself in all his true and self-completing *guruhood*. His voice is calm, but clear and firm. His call is ringing, vibrant and resounding—to the strong, the brave—the true spiritual heroes among men—not emotional babies and children—those who have elected to share the burden of the Master—'especially those who are themselves chosen in any degree to lead, help and guide.'

These are the pioneers in the great march, leaders of 'the true spiritual movement'—they are the God-chosen *yuga-Prabartak*, heralds and fore-runners of the coming new age that the Master himself has foreseen. And in a sure and certain language does he proclaim his own hope and faith:

"My work can only succeed, if I find noble and worthy helpers fitted for it by the same struggles and the same endurance. I *expect them in you.*" (our italics)

Shree Motilal Roy, after turning from the old revolutionary path, is now intent and bent upon starting his constructive work and movement on new, positive lines. He seems to have submitted also a scheme—a rough outline of this work for the sanction and blessing of the Master.

Shree Aurobindo's comment on that scheme or idea is also worth-noting here:

"As to your idea of work, it seems to me a little crude in form; but I have no objection to your beginning it, since you feel the pressing necessity. I shall write to you later on about it at more length. The only reason why I do not lay great stress

on outer work, is that it must always be *kachha*, much embarrassed by difficulties, at least only a preparatory thing, until we are inwardly and spiritually ready. That is no reason why it should not be done. Work done in the right spirit will itself become a means of the inner siddhi,"

From letter No. 22 of this series, we are nearing towards the close of this period of correspondence that is left in our hands. We first pass on to the scheme of a weekly paper in English, proposed to be published from Chandernagore.

Several names were suggested for the name to be given to this new weekly mission-organ—'Path-finder,' 'Standard Bearer' etc, of which the name 'Standard Bearer' was finally chosen and received the blessing of the Master's approval. He writes about it thus:

"About your scheme of weekly paper—as for the name it is not difficult to find—it could be called the 'Standard Bearer'. But are you quite sure you will be able to live up to the name and carry the thing on in the requisite manner?"

The question was pertinent and important. His own suggestive thought and advice on the matter is also interesting enough to deserve our attention even at this distance of time—for it shows with what clear precision and detailed attention he would give his directions in any matter.

We have marked such precise and detailed direction on his part when launching the publication of the *Arya Review*. That main burden he had taken then on his own shoulders—from the writing and editing side of the *Review* down to the side of its management and circulation.

As to this scheme of weekly organ now going to be undertaken by his Chandernagore disciple, the Master's circumspect thinking is also no less interesting or remarkable.

As to possible available writers for the English weekly, he estimates:

"Nalini (Gupta) and Suresh (Chakraborty) are not likely to be able to write; one does not write at all in English, the other can do it if he likes, but even more 'মন্থর-গতি' (manthara-gati) than in Bengali. To write for an English weekly would be beyond his present energies".

As to whether his own contribution could be expected, he states:

"As for myself, I am at present unable to write or do anything substantial, because of the extreme pressure of my Yoga, which has entirely occupied my time, except for what I am obliged to give to the Arya and even that I have cut short as much as possible,—for the last few months. This state of things is likely to go on for the rest of the (English) year,—whether it will be changed in the beginning of the next is more than I can tell with any certainty."

So, his suggestive advice on this point is:

"The whole work might fall on your two Chandernagore writers. An English weekly cannot be conducted like a Bengali monthly or fortnightly. And it is not going to be a political paper of the ordinary kind which can be filled up anyhow. It will have to maintain a high reputation to be at all successful.

These things however, are for you to consider; you know your own strength and how far the field in Bengal is ready."

There was the question of symbol also to be considered and decided by him. He gives his views:

"As to the symbol, none has come to me. I am not altogether favourably inclined to the Uttar-Yogi idea nor any one else here. It sounds too like the old style of spiritual pretension, and, when it is put in a current English production, suggests *bugrake*. Plain colours and as few symbols as may be are what we want at the beginning. Indian spirituality has lost itself in a jungle of symbols and shlokas and we have to get out of these to the plain and straight ways and the open heights, where we can see the much work that had still to be done."

He however, suggested a design for the paper—

"the only thing that now suggests itself to me is the Hansa in Sun, that is the free soul lodged in the Vijnana and the legend 'in this sign thou shalt conquer' which is appropriate, but has the disadvantage of being borrowed from Christianity and Constantine, It would perhaps be better if you could find a Sanskrit equivalent or substitute."

'The Hansa in the Sun' design was adopted and it found its proper place in every issue of the *Standard Bearer*.

The Master did not miss to give his impersonal dictation about who is to be the editor. "Why an editor? Let the Shakti herself be the editor."—this was his own pertinent, significant, reply. It is indeed, remarkable that this letter is the last one in the series bearing his initial of 'Kali' or 'K' at the end and remembering the idea that Shree Aurobindo was now the incarnate embodiment of Shakti, the Divine Power, we sub-

stituted the words "Under the inspiration of Sri Aurobindo" in place of any editor's name—for the *Standard Bearer*.

Some interesting remarks about the Bengali magazine *Prabartak* and its writing and writers do not escape our notice, so clothed in his usual witty humour as they are, yet bespeaking his keen sense of observation of as well as particular and affectionate interest in every detail characteristics of the men and things about him, not even sparing himself and his own genuine mood and manners in the vivid presentation:

"As to articles for the *Prabartak*, Nalini used to be your mainstay and he is now in another atmosphere, mainly hitherto of marriage and football, and complain of inability to write. As for the other, he has produced nothing since he left here, except a drama for the Bijoli and the answer to his Prabasi articles which was written and sent before he left for Bengal—Moni's inspiration now flowing in channels hardly suitable for *Prabartak*.

As for myself, it was only as a result of a solitary inspiration and with much trouble of re-writing that I got one thing done for you. Since then I have been too much occupied by my Yoga and not at all visited by any prerana or at least none which lasted long enough to produce more than a few lines. In this matter I am entirely dependent on the थथानियुत्लोस्मि as I have no natural control of the language and I have no time at present for exercising it by constant practice. It seems to me that *Prabartak* is getting on well enough as it is, though if Nalini could write, it could produce an element of greater variety."

But his suggestive comment about the development of writers for *Prabartak* applied equally to both the Bengali and the English sections of the mission-publications running under the new flag—it is indeed a very useful, helpful and fruitful message of creative urge, still applicable to all and sundry, eager to develop and evolve men and institutions, not only in the literary but also in every other field of human activity and self-manifestation, being conversant with this deep, universal, spiritual law of creativity:

"You should be able to develop more writers with the necessary spiritual experience, grasp of the thought and literary ability—these things the Inner Shakti can bring to the surface if it is called upon for them,—so that *Prabartak* will not have to depend on three or four people only for its sustenance."

Shree Aurobindo himself—we do remember—had contributed a memorable article—an original Bengali article from his pen for the Bengali magazine, *Prabartak*—under the caption of "Jagannather Rath"—a

masterpiece of constructive thought, suggestive of a new cultural, social and economic world to be evolved in the coming future by the World-Spirit. It was subsequently also translated into English and published in *Standard Bearer* under the title 'The Car of Jagannath' for English-knowing readers.

We have already neared the year 1920 and letter No. 23 comes with the date of January 2, 1920 on it.

The World War I had already ended. The Royal Clemency Proclamation was declared on 23rd December 1919. An election had taken place in French India and from Chandernagore, Shree Manindra Nath Naiek had been returned as a member of the General Assembly of French India, holding its sittings in the capital town of Pondicherry and Shree Nirmal Chandra Bakshi, the other elected member to the Local Assembly, had also to attend it under rule.

Hitherto Manindra Nath had been like Shree Motilal Roy and a few other political suspects living a self-interned life confined to Chandernagore, since the beginning of the War. Should Shree Naiek now take the risk of going out of Chandernagore? This question was put to Shree Aurobindo by Shree Roy, to whom Shree Aurobindo replies in this letter with a positive affirmation:

"they have only to get a sauf-conduit from the Chandernagore Administrator and then, as they are called here by the French Government for Government work, nobody can interfere with their coming and going. 'This is what I am told'—

writes the Master after having had necessary consultation in the matter with local officials or non-officials in the know—

and it ought obviously to be so."

Shree Aurobindo wants to know "How are you people going to vote?" and notes: "Martineau and Flandin are the two candidates at present and Martineau is impossible."

He also 'notes with some amusement' the Secretary's letter to Bejoy Chatterjee, with the comment: "The logic of the Bengal Government's attitude is a little difficult to follow." However, he 'supposes that the King's proclamation will make some difference,' but at the same time 'fancies

that the Government of India is the chief obstacle in these matters and that they will perhaps try to limit the scope of this qualified warrant.' Still he hopes that the restriction of Shree Roy's own movement will be removed before long.

On another side, Shree Aurobindo had received the news of Shree Bejoy Nag's 'release from his quite causeless imprisonment after five long years, but that he had been interned again in or near Ramnagar in Birbhum.'

Interesting indeed, is to read in this letter:

"As for me, I do not see, if Lajpatrai is coming to India, how they can object to my going to Bengal. But allowed or not allowed, I have not the least intention of doing that at present or for another year at the earliest. When I do go, this or that circumstance will make no difference."

His intention to return to Bengal, it is obvious—was till then lying in his mind.

Meanwhile, in the field of Indian politics Mahatma Gandhi was just now about to launch his historic movement of non-violent non-co-operation and he had sent his son, Shree Deva das Gandhi, as a messenger to Shree Aurobindo. Shree Aurobindo's reply was consonant with his changed spiritual stand. Writes he about this in this same letter:

"Mr Gandhi, like the man in Macedonia with St. Paul, sent me a message to 'come over and help,' but I had to say that I was not ready to join in the old politics and had no new programme formed for a more spiritual line of work, and it would be no use my going till I see my way."

As to writing for the *Standard Bearer*, he says:

"I cannot write now, as it would take too long and delay this letter. I shall write afterwards or send word."

The *Standard Bearer* however, was soon to come out from the 15th of August 1920, his 48th birthday even as Arya had come out before on another 15th August 1914, his 42nd holy birthday; and he blessed its first number with his very first article "Ourselves" of outstanding light and inspiration (Vide Appendix)—another master-piece from his master-pen to guide, inspire and set the thought-standard not only of the narrow, limited circle of his contemporary reading circle, but also successive gener-

ations of men and women called upon there-in to conceive, perceive and materialise that highest ideal of regenerated life and society in India and the world of the new times.

His famous book, compiled from the pages of the Arya—under the title of 'War & Self-determination' was also out by this time—as we note K. Amrita, devotee-manager of Arya publications, adding a foot script to this letter to-day that '50 copies of the new volume are being sent soon,'—surely for sale and circulation. No doubt, this timely publication was a fit work to carry the Master-thinker's new word of hope and light to all those peoples like of India herself, struggling for self-determination in a world just risen from a global, epochal bloodbath.

The last three letters in our series are all dated ones and also initialed with signatures of A. G. instead of K or Kali.

This, in our view, it will be right for us to regard as a sure-sign of completion of this decade of transition from 1910 to 1920—a transition as we have rightly assumed to be an inner release from '*aropa*' to '*swarupa*'—from '*Kali*' to '*Atma*' or '*Brahman*' to use Shastric terms to denote or connote significant phases of such spiritual self-realisation. We have it in the life of Shree Ramakrishna, that Shreemat Totapuri, the great Reverend Vedanta-Guru, had to watch and help with supreme spiritual interest a similar transition of his great disciple Ramakrishna—from the phase of relative but all-absorbing *Kali-consciousness* to the phase of absolute self-absorbed *Atma-consciousness* or *Brahma-consciousness*.

In Shree Aurobindo's own words, he has risen from "the mind of knowledge"—the highest mental—to the "vijñanamaya or supramental gnostic consciousness." Our assumption should be taken of course, as only that of a humblest student in spiritual life, basking in the sunshine of the Supreme Master's Grace and Love—a child in the lap of the Divine Mother—tasting the milk of her heavenly breast—the milk of supreme affection and elixir of life—confident in the aim of entering through such grace and affection into the heart of its deepest truths and feasting on the sweetness of its life-nourishing nectar-qualities.

In letter No 24, the Master, who has already given call to Shree Roy to come over to Pondicherry for which he is waiting, meanwhile draws

the attention of the latter to some matters of pressing importance for the work. He says:

"The circumstances under which you have to work have now changed a great deal and you will have in order to meet it to enlarge your view and inner attitude on many sides; this I think you are preparing to do, but it will be as well for me to make it as precise as possible. Up till now you were working alone in a Bengal which was in a state, first, of the last fragmentary and chaotic agitations of the old violent spirit of rajasic qualities and then of torpor and inaction; and the thing that had to be done was to get rid of the errors of the past (errors once necessary for the development, but likely if persisted in to ruin and frustrate the future), to get at a firm spiritual basis and found a centre of spiritual unity and action; a samgha, on a small scale but sure of its principle and capable of a large development. This has now been done, but at the moment of its firm effectuation, new conditions have come in, which create a new and larger problem. First, many imprisoned forces have been let loose and, secondly, the chaos of incertitude, confused agitation and unseeing unrest which has followed upon the war and is felt all over the world, is now at work in Bengal.

The nature of this unrest is a haste to get some thing done without knowing what has to be done, a sense of and vague response to large forces without any vision of or hold on the real possibilities of the future of humanity and the nation. The old things are broken up in their assured mould and are yet persisting and trying to form themselves anew, the new exist for the most part only in vague idea without a body or clear action and without any power as yet to form what is lacking to them. The old politics of India persist in a chaos of parties and programmes centred round the Congress quarrel and the Reforms, and in Bengal we have a rush of the commercial and industrial spirit which follows the western principle and, if it succeeds on these lines, is likely to create a very disastrous reproduction or imitation of the European situation with its corrupt capitalism and the labour struggle and the war of classes. And all that is the very reverse of our own ideal. The one advantage for us is that it is a chaos and not a new order, and it is essential that we should throw our spirit and idea upon this fermentation, and draw what is best among its personalities and forces to the side and service of our ideal so as to get a hold and a greater mass of effectuation for it in the near future."

This as he conceives it, has to be done on two lines:

*"First, what has already been created by us and given a right spirit, basis and form, must be kept in tact in spirit, in tact in basis and in tact in form and must strengthen and enlarge itself in its own strength and by its inherent power of self-development and the divine force within it. (Our italics).* This is the line of work on which you have to proceed.

We have to confront the confusion around us with a thing that is sure of itself and illumined by self-knowledge and a work that by its clear form and firm growth will present more and more the aspect of an assured solution of the problem of the

present and the future. The mind of the outside world may be too shallow, restless and impatient to understand a great, profound and difficult truth like ours on the side of the idea, but a visible accomplishment, a body of things done has always the power to compel and to attract the world to follow it. The only danger then is that when this body of things becomes prominent and attractive, numbers may rush into it and try to follow the externals without realising and reproducing in themselves the truth and the power of the real thing that made it possible.

It was that against which I warned you when there came the first possibility of a considerable expansion. It is your business to enlarge your field of work and the work itself but not at the cost of any lowering or adulteration of its spirit. The first condition you have to assure is that all who have the work in hand or share in its direction must be of the spirit and work from the self outward; they must be men of the yoga; but, secondly, all who enter in, must have this imposed on them as the thing to be developed, must learn to develop this self-realisation first and foremost and the work only as its expression. The safety of the work lies in a strict adherence to this principle. The majority of the educated people of Bengal care only to get something done—and are not troubled by the fact that really nothing sure and lasting does get done or else only something that is likely to do as much harm as good; they care nothing about the spiritual basis of life, which is India's real mission and the only possible source of her greatness, or give to it only a slight, secondary or incidental value, a something that has to be stuck on as a sentiment or a bit of colouring matter. Our whole principle is different and you have to insist on our principle in all that you say and do. Moreover, you have got a clear form for your work in association and that form as well as the spirit you must maintain; any loosening of it or compromise would mean confusion and an impairing of the force that is working in your samgha."

But the Master himself now visualises and has come face to face with a new situation which he indicates thus just here-after:

"But on the other hand, there is another line of work which is also necessary at the present moment, because the Shakti is moving in that direction also and the Shakti is the doer of the work,—and that is for others, like Barin, to enter into the fermenting mass and draw out of it elements that are fit but not yet ready to take our whole idea and first to get into and then occupy existing or newly created means and activities,—as he is doing with the Narayan, —which can be increasingly made instruments of our purpose. This work will be attended with all the difficulties and uncertainties and obstacles which go with a mixed and yet unformed working,—such as *you had at the beginning, but have now got over* (our italics),—but we must trust to the Divine Shakti to overcome them. The one difficulty that it is in our power to avoid is that of the relation between those who are working on these different lines. There the first necessity is that there should be no clash or spirit of rivalry, sense of division or monopolising personal or corporate egoism to bring discord among those who receive their inspiration from the same source and

have the same ideal. A spiritual unity and a readiness for co-operation must be the guiding principle of their relations."

The Master himself has taken up this question for discussion and is ready with a true solving answer. Thus he writes:

"I have already answered to Shirish the first very natural question that arose in your mind at the inception of these new conditions, why Barin and others should cast themselves separately into the अरूप to create a रूप out of it, when there is already a form and a body of associated communal work in the spirit of our ideal and why all should not unite in that form and create a greater power of associated driving force to bring about a rapid enlargement and victory of the ideal. The first thing is that the particular form given is the right thing for those who are already associated together, because it has arisen naturally out of themselves and by the Will that guides, but it may well be that the same precise form may not be applicable or extended everywhere. The spirit, the truth must be the same, but the formations may be different with advantage to the spirit. To insist on one form only might well bring in that rigidity which grew upon Indian society and its civilisation in the past and brought about an imprisonment and decline of the spirit. India was strongest and most alive when she had many variations of form but one spirit. And I think, —that at least was the pre-vision that came on me in the Alipore jail and I do not yet see a different prospect,—that this will be the case also in the future. Then, secondly, there is a psychological necessity which we cannot at the present moment leave out of consideration. *The Samgha at Chandernagore is a thing that has grown up with my power behind and yours at the centre and it has assumed a body and temperament which is the result of this origination (our italics).* But there are others, people of strong personality and full of shakti, who receive their spiritual force direct from me and are made themselves to be central spirits and direct radiators of the Shakti; and for these to subordinate themselves to the existing body and temperament would not be easy for any and in most cases impossible,—such a subordination would not have grown out of themselves and would only be imposed by *nigraha*, a thing contrary to the *prakriti*, —and it would besides, clog up the natural action of the power in them. And on the other hand to bring them in as co-ordinated central figures into the existing form would not be feasible, for it would mean a disturbing change and new fermentation of forces in the work that is already being well done on established lines. It would mean, even if at all successful, a sort of conducting by spiritual committee and that is not the line on which the Shakti has proceeded at Chandernagore. The more perfect co-ordination of all who are at work can only come, as far as I can see, after I myself go to Bengal and can act by my direct presence. Thirdly, there are a considerable number of people in the country who are not yet of us, yet can be given the necessary turn, but owing to temperamental and other causes they would not be drawn to the existing centre, but could be easily drawn by Barin, Sourin, Bejoy and others. And in all these and similar cases we must leave freedom to the guiding Shakti to use her own means and

instruments. Finally, there are things to be done which need to be done, but which I would not like to impose on your Samgha as it now stands; first, because it would disturb the characteristic frame and ideal temperament of your work, a thing which it is important to keep; and secondly, because it would impose on you unnecessary complications; and these things can best be done by Barin and others while seeming to work independently for their own hands. And there are needs also to be met for which these other activities are required. Of that I can better speak to you in person than by letter. This being the situation, the need that remains is to keep a right relation between those who are working, and that means to extend the spirit of unity which is our basis so as to embrace all the work and workers, undeterred by differences of mentality and divergences of actions."

The return of Barindra Kumar Ghose, with his other revolutionary co-workers from the Andamans on the strength of the Royal Clemency, has created a new situation. Barindra himself was a fiery soul who with Shree Aurobindo's inspiration behind, had worked as the most potent instrument in the hands of Kali in the previous decade to initiate the revolutionary movement in India. His natural relationship with Shree Aurobindo together with his indomitable urge to resume work again and play his part as a prominent figure in the new movement now initiated by and evolving in the hands of the Master, has compelled such a re-thinking and a re-assessment of the forces at work. The Master's mind is deeply busy—first, in observing the different trends and temperaments of the persons who are already working and those who have accepted his new ideal and lead and are willing to work for it—and secondly, to establish and maintain the right relation between them so as to avoid any clash of minds and temperaments in the course of the movement both afoot and ahead.

We have to read very closely and carefully the entire long passage that follows, if we are to enter more fully into his vast and over-seeing outlook and appreciate his salutary direction and stand. Taking up the main theme of relations, he goes on to say:

"In our work we have to fix our relations with three different kinds of people; first, those who are working for the country but without any greater ideas or spiritual motive; secondly, those who have the spiritual motive but not the same ideal and inspiration as ourselves; thirdly, those who have the same ideal and inspiration, but are working in different bodies and at first on different lines. Our relation to the first class of people and their work must be based on the fundamental principle of our Yoga to see God in all and the one Self in all acting through different natures

and all energies, even those which are hostile, as workings of the Divine Shakti although behind the veil of the ahankara and the ignorant mentality. There are movements at work new and old which are not the definite reality of the future but are needed at the present moment as part of the transition. It is in this light, for example, that I regard many things that are in process in Europe and I am even moved to give a temporary spiritual support to efforts and movements which are not in consonance with our own and must eventually fail or cease by exhaustion of their utility but are needed as transitional powers. This too is how I regard the work of men like Tilak and Gandhi. We work in the faith that it is our vision of the future that is the central divine will, the highest actualisable possibility and therefore, the one thing that must be made the object of our action; but that does not mean that the Shakti is not working in her own covert way and for her own ends through others. No doubt, these movements are of a western and materialistic inspiration or else an imperfect mixture, and some day it may be we shall have to give battle to them as certainly we shall have to overcome the spirit that informs them. But that time has not come yet, and meanwhile what we have to do is to develop and spread our own vision and idea and give it body so as eventually to confront the things that are in possession of the present with a realisation of the things that belong to the future. I think that at this juncture we should avoid a too direct attack or criticism of them as that only creates avoidable opposition to our own work. The positive rather than the negative method is the one we should adopt until we are strong enough to convince by our visible strength and work the minds that are now attracted by the present power and activity of other movements,—to assert our own ideal as the true and the right way but not to invite conflict by a destructive frontal attack on the others."

'As for the second class,'—now he faces them with the blazing analytic gaze of acute discernment just as before, and referring to 'such as the other spiritual movements in Bengal,' clearly declares:

"Our attitude to most of them should be that of a benevolent neutrality and sympathy for such of their elements as are at all in consonance with our own ideal. The one thing which we have to get rid of is the idea of Maya and ascetic abandonment of the life and effort of humanity and also though that is social and religious rather than directly spiritual, the clinging to old forms and refusal to admit new development. The movements that admit life and Ananda and are ready to break away from the old narrowness of social and other forms, are so much to the good even though they have not the full largeness of the integral spiritual idea and realisation. These we must leave to go on their own way and run themselves out or else enlarge themselves till they are ready to coalesce with us. I do not mean that with regard to either of these classes we should refrain from all criticism of the insufficiency of ideal or method, but this should be as far as possible quite general, a discussion on the enforcement of a greater principle and truer method, distinguishing truth from error but not too pointedly aggressive against particular things or so ex-

pressed as to seem to hit straight on this or that person or body. To insist on our own propaganda and work is always necessary and sometimes though not always to meet any attack on it; but we need not go out of our way to invite conflict. To this rule there may be particular exceptions; I only indicate what seems to me for the present the right general attitude."

On the back-ground of such a deep and wide-bracing spiritual understanding between the inner subjective and the outer environmental movement and forces, the Master now comes directly to the most salient point drawing the attention of his disciples to the heart of the problem thus:

"This once understood, the really important thing becomes at once our own work and the relation between different workers, and here, as I have said, what we need is the growth of spiritual unity and a readiness to take the work of others as supplementing one's own and, where ever it is called for and possible, to co-operate.

There is a danger here from the subtler forms of egoism. It is not enough to realise unity among those who are already working with one mind as one soul in many bodies; there must be unity of spirit with others who are following different ways or working separately for the present and complete *samata* with regard to their action, even if it seems to one wrong or imperfect, and patience with regard to mental and moral divergences. This should be easy for you, as it means only getting rid of the remnants of your sattwic ahankara, it may not be so easy for others who have still a rajasic ahankara to trouble them. But if people like you and Barin give the example, that difficulty can eventually be got over; if on the contrary, you also allow misunderstandings among yourselves, the work is likely to be very unnecessarily hampered."

He cites an instance in point—a very particular one which may appear somewhat interesting enough in a way not altogether to pass over:

"I may give as an instance, the matter about the *Prabartak*. Certain casual utterances of Sourir's, made in answer to queries and not volunteered, have come to you quite misreported as a sort of intentional campaign to belittle the paper and the other half of what he said, namely, that the *Prabartak* was inspired, though not actually written by me and the spirit and substance were that of my ideal, never reached your ears."

The Master himself recognised a spiritual identity with his creation or creations inspired by him to such a profound and cordial degree, which we may well note and remember as remarkable as for example, he had written in a private letter to Shree Upendra Nath Banerjee, in connection with this very matter of *Prabartak* the following words, which

subsequently were quoted on the front page of that magazine as a source of self-inspiration:

“Whether I myself write or not it is God who through me, makes Moti write *Prabartak*.”

There is another alleged incident to which he refers with a view to clearing up:

"I may add also that the alleged incidents to which you took exception, as to his method of raising money, never actually happened. Again the advertisement or rather paragraph about *Narayana* in the *Amrita Bazar* was not inserted by Barin, but by some one else according to that other person's idea after a conversation with him. Barin was not responsible for the form nor had he any intention of claiming the *Narayana* as the sole and direct mouth-piece of my ideas."

"It is these misunderstandings"—he very definitely and emphatically calls upon at least all his chief disciples "which I want to see all of you avoid and it can be easily done, if those who are among the principal channels of the Shakti preserve the spiritual unity which ought to prevail among those, who derive their inspiration from the same source and follow the same ideal. Others less developed may give cause for offence owing to their inability to control the rajasic ego still working in them, but calm, patience, *prema* and *samata* are the spirit in which we should meet such causes of offence; otherwise where is the perfection we seek by our Yoga?"

Another small matter due to such mis-information of Haradhan about Nalini Gupta, he does not miss to clarify:

"Let me add, while I am on this subject that Haradhan seems to have been misinformed about Nalini. As a matter of fact, he has mixed with no *দালা* (Dala) nor engaged in any kind of associated activity while in Bengal. And if he had, it would have been with no other purpose than to draw others to our yoga and our way of thinking; but as a matter of fact he remained inactive."

Anticipating difficulties in the field of propaganda-work, immediately in his view, he thinks out in a clear-seeing, deliberative as well as practical manner such as follows:

"As for the other matter of the different lines of work, there is one instance which illustrates the difficulties that may arise. Barin has taken up the *Narayana* with the idea of gradually and eventually making it another instrument of propa-

ganda for our ideas, and if he succeeds, that will be so much the more strength for us. It will not be a mere doubling of the work of the *Prabartak* as it will present our ideas in a different way and so as to catch minds of a different type from those who are naturally attracted by the *Prabartak* which demands from its readers, a mind already tuned to spiritual things or at least naturally able to enter into that atmosphere. To others who are of a less spiritual and intuitive, a more intellectual or literary and artistic temperament, the articles of the *Prabartak* written out of an experience to which they are strangers, are not easily assailable, and it is these minds which it may be possible to approach through the *Narayana*. But if there is not a right understanding, the attitude of the two to each other may be that of separation and competition rather than of activities supplementary to each other in the same work. In addition he has now the chance of getting hold of a strong publishing agency in Calcutta, as Shirish must have already told you, but he hesitates to take it up from fear that it may be regarded as a rival agency to the Prabartak Publishing House. He is not afraid of any misunderstanding between you and him, but of others connected with either work taking things in the wrong light and bringing in an unwholesome spirit of competition. This is a thing which might easily happen, but must not be allowed to happen. I have told him that I would write to you and ask you to see that there is no misunderstanding in the matter, before giving him sanction to take up the possibility. Afterwards, it will be for you and him to see that things on both sides are managed in the right spirit. This agency, if it comes into Sarin's control, will be conducted with the same idea and method as the *Narayana* and all the profits except what is necessary for the maintenance and extension of the agency, will come to us and our work. These two things are the first fields the Shakti has offered to his energy and they are of a kind for which he is well-fitted; their success means for us a great advantage. A time is now coming in which the Shakti is pressing to break down the barriers in which we have had hitherto to move and we must be ready to follow her indications without allowing our personal preferences and limitations to attempt to dictate to her any mind-made limits."

With what heartfelt affectionate care would the great Guru interest himself even in personal matters affecting his disciple.

Regarding extension of certain Samgha-works he has already discussed the matter personally with Shirish Chandra Ghosh, the indefatigable all-dedicated co-worker of Shree Roy, for which he had gone on a special visit to Pondicherry to meet Shree Aurobindo in connection with the nationalist movement in Bengal in general and Chandernagore affairs in particular. He expresses his intention to say what more he has to say in a more particular manner on those matters, when Shree Roy himself comes to Pondicherry as he has already been summoned.

A bit worried on being informed about Shree Roy's ailment, he has not missed to advise his disciple by way of warmhearted precaution:

"It is regrettable that at this moment the physical strain should take an effect on your body; I trust it is only a part of a temporary invasion of Roga, of which many of us, including myself have recently felt some touch. But you must be careful not to throw too much strain on the physical system. A timely sparing of the physical system when there is an indication of overstrain is often necessary before the Shakti has taken perfect possession of the more external parts of the adhara or the vijnana-will is strong enough to set right at once weaknesses and disturbances."

Shree Aurobindo has now made up his mind to settle some differences amongst his old and newly arrived disciples—who are now all on the way to move each on his line of work according to his bent of nature and mind. For this, he is calling them together to come to Pondicherry and in his presence evolve accord and harmony among them on the basis of spiritual understanding and self-illumination. Apprehending from Shree Roy's letter about the suspicious and watchful attitude of the Government and that they might be putting opposition in the way or pouncing upon him having got the chance to find him in their clutches out of the wall of protection enjoyed under the French Administration, Shree Aurobindo after a close and careful consideration over the matter gives this final all-clear decision:

"I hardly suppose that Nelson's curious reservation about your visit means anything serious; otherwise he would have been more positive about it. I take it that they do not like the idea and would be suspicious about its motive and watch your actions more narrowly after it; but as they are obstinately determined to be suspicious about anything we do in any case, this by itself cannot be allowed to be an obstacle. I should suggest therefore, that you might come over after making arrangements for work in your absence *in such a way that the visit may be a fairly long one.*" (our italics)

The Master's own mind, intention and occupation are vividly reflected in the concluding paragraph of this letter, which has an importance for us to note:

"The work of the Arya has fallen into arrears and I have to spend just now the greater part of my energy in catching up, and the rest of my time, in the evening, is taken up by the daily visit of the Richards. I hope to get over the worst part of this necessity by the middle of June, so that by the time you come, I may have a freer atmosphere to attend to the currents of the work and the world about me. There is now the beginning of a pressure from many sides inviting my spiritual attention to

the future कर्म and this means the need of a greater out flowing of energy than when I had nothing to do but support a concentrated nucleus of the Shakti. I doubt however, whether I shall be in a fit condition for meeting the demand till August, especially as I have not been able to get the physical basis yet put right by the power of the vijnana. After that we shall see what and how much can actually be done under the new circumstances.

*Meanwhile your visit may help to get things into preparatory line both in the inward motor-power and the outward determination." (Our Italics)*

The last but one letter (No. 25) is dated the Sept. 2, 1920. It centres round a Samgha-affair about a social marriage, to which the Master's attention has been drawn from Chandernagore. The commune or Samgha-idea has taken name and form in Chandernagore as the Prabartak Samgha. Shree Aurobindo is alert to give it guidance and direction whenever occasion arises as regards its way of happenings and development.

The new life to be evolved in the Samgha includes within its integral ideal not only celibate life but also married life. Marriage according to the ancient Hindu ideal is not only confined to physical connection of flesh and blood, but also sublimated into a spiritual relationship between man and woman. Marriage proposal coming from a disciple of Shree Motilal, Khagendra Nath Bose by name, within the communal circle, had raised a storm of opposition in the social environment Arovindo. The matter was referred to Shree Aurobindo both in respect of the idealism behind as well as the fact of social opposition in the society. It was in reply to this information from Shree Roy, that Shree Aurobindo writes in this letter in a detailed manner, but in the light of his wise and far-seeing cautious comprehension:

"My impression about your marriage idea is that you are going too fast. What you say about the commune and the married couple is quite right as our ideal or rather as one side of our ideal, but there is here a question of time and tactics. In our work there must be not only spiritual hardihood, साहस, but skill and prudence, कौशलम्. The question is whether it is necessary or wise and advisable to engage in a battle with society at the moment on a point which it considers to be vital but which is to us subordinate."

In his considered view:

"Our first business is to establish our communal system on a firm spiritual, secondly on a firm economical foundation, and to spread it wide, but the complete social change can only come as a result of the other two. It must come first in spirit, afterwards in form.

If a man enters into the commune by spiritual unity, if he gives to it his life and labour and considers all he has as belonging to all, the first necessity is secured.

The next thing is to make the movement economically self sufficient, and to do that requires at the present moment all the energy you can command.

These two things are, the one a constant, the other an immediate necessity. The institution of a communal ceremony of marriage can only be a future necessity; it involves nothing essential at the moment."

He elaborates his idea more clearly as he further writes on the point:

"The idea is that the family in future is not to be a separate unit, but a sub-unit of the communal whole. It is too early to decide exactly what form the family life will take, it may take many forms. not always the same. The principle is the important thing. But this principle can be observed whatever the form of the marriage ceremony they may have gone through at the time of personal union, whether recognized or not by the present social system. An external necessity does not arise in the present case, as Khagen is not marrying outside his caste."

Now he discusses the pros and cons of the step in his larger outline of thought and more experienced judgment as he goes on:

"It remains to be seen whether this step, though not necessary, is advisable. In the first place, by your action you declare your commune to be an entirely separate thing from the rest of Hindu society; you will be following in the way of the Brahmo Samaj or more exactly in that of Thakur Dayananda. That means a violent scission and a long struggle, which is likely greatly to complicate your other work and put difficulties in the way which need not have been there. My own idea was for our system to grow up in the society, not out of it, though different from it, first bringing in a new spiritual idea,—a field in which opposition and intolerance cannot now long endure, —and secondly, justifying itself in the outward plane by becoming a centre of economical regeneration and new power for the country, a work in which we shall have sympathy more than opposition, and getting forward with other matters according to need and opportunity and with a considerable freedom and latitude, meeting social orthodoxy with the plea of reemploying the old free Hindu idea in new forms rather than with the profession of a violent rejection both of the past and the present.

In this process a clash will be inevitable sooner or later, but a deliberate precipitation of the conflict in so extreme a form as you suggest was not within my intentions. That was to come, but only when we were strong and had already a hold on the country, so that we might have a strong support as well as enemies."

The Master's own balanced judgement as reflected in the suggestive discourse to follow is strikingly interesting and packed with ripe, practical, and mature constructive wisdom:

"Your point is that the commune should not depend either on Government or society for the validity of the union. It seems to me sufficient if that is spiritually insisted on or at most given an outward indication. I would suggest that the exchange of garlands should be done before the commune, as it was done in the old Swayamvara before the assembly. The conventional marriage can then be added as a concession to the present society, as in old times the *sampraddya* by the father was added to the *Swayamvara*, although in fact the *swayamvara* itself would have been quite valid without it. If a case should arise in future where the mutual giving would be necessary by itself, we then might go to the more extreme course.

This would, it seems to me, satisfy everything immediately necessary or advisable,—first, the assertion of free choice as the principle of marriage; secondly, the formal inclusion of the couple in their united life in the commune, apart from any conventional marriage ceremony; thirdly, the justification of a continuity between our movement and the great past of India.

The movement, of course, is not to stop with the forms of the past or a modernisation of them, but this sort of preliminary advance under cover will prepare more easily its future advance into the open, which we can afterwards make as rapid as we choose. At the same time it will have the advantage of awaking a less vehement opposition at a moment when it seems to me we are not yet ready for a frontal attack in the social field and a decisive battle. If a battle becomes necessary, of course, we must not flinch from it, but I should myself prefer to have it after I have reached the proper state in my Yoga and after I return to Bengal. At present, I have so many calls upon an energy which is still largely occupied with pushing forward to its own perfection that I do not quite like the idea of the heavy drain on it such a struggle would entail. This at least is my present view on the matter."

The Master's stand in this matter as in his general stand everywhere, whether in the spiritual or political or even economic field—is that of a Supreme Kshatriya, a General fighting his battle of life and he couches his thought or feeling in all such matters in terms of warfare—spiritual battle, economic battle, so also social battle as here. We may also note here that he is still thinking of returning to Bengal, where it is his intention and idea to launch the final decisive battle in all fields of his supreme mission of life.

His remarks on *Standard Bearer* at the end of this letter is just to be noted also:

"It is a sort of weekly Arya, but the Arya style and method are not what is wanted for a weekly paper." What should be done is "to make the ideas easy to the people and give them a practical direction—instead of only a difficult philosophy and abstract principles."

The anxiety felt by the Master for the weekly paper brought out with his blessing, due to its actual imperfections as correctly indicated in his remarks, naturally recalls to our mind his interrogative observation in letter No. 22, when he christened the name *Standard Bearer* for the weekly scheme:

"But are you quite sure you will be able to live up to the name and carry the thing on in the requisite manner?"

The instruments were undoubtedly not up to mark and should have much benefited by further guidance, if the Master thereafter had found time to write more about it, as promised in the closing line.

In the *Standard Bearer* Vol 1, No. 13 issue, of Sunday, the 21st November 1920, appeared the following authorised declaration of Shree Aurobindo along with an explanatory editorial note there-on, which will throw apposite light on Shree Aurobindo's letter, (the last one in the letter-series) bearing date Nov. 11, 1920, now to follow.

### ***"Sri Aurobindo's declaration***

In view of the conflicting rumours that have been set afloat purporting to represent Shree Aurobindo's views on the Reforms and on Non-co-operation, Shree Motilal Roy, his spiritual representative in Bengal was requested by those in charge of *Standard Bearer* to write to Shree Aurobindo in Pondicherry—as a result of which, Shree Motilal has received the following reply from his Master, which being authorised, we are publishing below:

"Dear M

All these assertions are without foundation. I have made no pronouncement of my political views. I have authorised nobody whether publicly or privately to be the spokesman of my opinions. The rumour suggesting that I support the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms and am opposed to Non-co-operation is without basis. I have nothing to do personally with the manifesto of Sir Ashutosh Choudhury and others citing a passage from my past writings. The recorded opinions of a public man are public property and I do not disclaim what I have written; but the respon-

sibility for its application to the Montague Chelmsford Reforms and the present situation rests entirely with the signatories to the manifesto. The summary of my opinions in the *Janmabhumi*, representing me as an enthusiastic follower of Mahatma Gandhi of which I only came to know the other day, is wholly unauthorised and does not 'render justice to my views' either in form or in substance. Things are attributed to me in it which I would never have dreamed of saying. It is especially adding insult to injury to make me say that I am ready to sacrifice my conscience to a congress mandate and recommend all to go and do like-wise. I have not stated to anyone that 'full responsible Self-Government, completely independent of British control or any other purely political object is the goal to the attainment of which I intend to devote my efforts. I have not made any theoretical prophecy of a colossal success for the Non-co-operation movement. As you well know, I am identifying myself with only one kind of work or propaganda as regards India, the endeavour to reconstitute her cultural, social and economic life within larger and freer lines than the past on a spiritual basis. As regards political questions, I would request my friends and the public not to attach credence to anything purporting to be a statement of my opinions which is not expressly authorised by me or issued over my signature."

### ***"Our Explanation***

"It has become necessary for us to give a categorical denial to all the rumours and ascriptions of opinion which irresponsible people are publishing from time to time about Sri Aurobindo and his mission and objects. The *Janmabhumi* nonsense was especially unwarranted (we refrain from quoting the still stronger word from the unpublished portion of the letter addressed to Sri Roy.) and as we are privately told, Sri Aurobindo himself does not understand how any one with brains in his head could have accepted such childish rubbish to have come from him (Aurobindo). The authorised declaration of Sri Ghose, which we publish above, over his own initials, giving the lie direct to all the misleading attributions woven around his name, will, we hope, be sufficient to silence for ever these wild outbursts of fertile imagination and seal the mouth of silver-tongued Dame Rumour against all such light-hearted pronouncements about the man and his mission in future.

"There is only one truth in all these other wise meaningless talks, it is that the country is anxious to know Aurobindo and have him in their midst in this day of supreme trial to lead them and guide them, to inspire their hearts and show them the way. The desire is sincere, it is natural, it is inevitable; for the country loves Aurobindo and Aurobindo loves his

country and the longing, the attraction, the call of real love is always genuine, natural and inevitable. Such a call is bound to be fulfilled at the right moment and in the right direction, in the manner decreed by the Mother Herself and not as you or we resolve or as the country determines. The path chosen by human wisdom and the path willed by the Mother do not always agree. Sri Aurobindo's all-consecrated sadhana is to incarnate the Mother's Will. That Will in him with which he has identified himself—let the country read and remember his words:

*"As you well know, I am identifying myself with only one kind of work or propaganda as regards India, the endeavour to reconstitute her cultural, social and economic life within larger and freer lines than the past on a spiritual basis"*

"That is Aurobindo's mission, so far as it is yet revealed by the Mother. That is the work given unto us in Bengal.

"Men wonder how the great political leader of yesterday is changed into the new spiritual Man of today. They are not to blame for this astonishment of theirs, poor people, they could never find opportunity to go deep into the soul of their past political Guru and read the heart of his intention. Before the Swadeshi movement began in Bengal and Aurobindo was drawn into the vortex of the national struggle, before even his stay at Boroda as the great educationist and the expected helmsman of that paramount Indian State, even far back in the days of his youth, when still as the young lad yet in his teens, as the brilliant scholar, who scored marks in literature unexampled in the academic history of England since the day of Milton, he was prosecuting his studies in the chilly climate of London, half-fed and half-clothed, subsisting on the scantiest diet of a few crumbs of bread and a cup of tea and a penny-worth slice of saveloy at dawn or at nightfall, left by a rich and noble, yet self-forgetful father under the shelter of a kind-hearted English host, a friend of his father, in a far-off foreign land—Aurobindo had felt a cry, a voice, a call in his heart of heart coming from somewhere he knew not whence nor what all it meant for his life and soul in that distant immaturity of youth—yet though dim, though mystic, though inscrutable, that call was always irresistible to him and it had compelled him in the morning of his early life to withdraw willfully from the Civil Service Examination, when he absented himself from the last day's riding test to the mighty wonder and sorrow of his high-minded guardian and all the host of his expectant rel-

atives, who have been legitimately with buoyant hope dreaming of a highly prosperous prospective official career for him. At a later stage, it was the same Secret Power that had whispered in half-audible, half-intelligible language an unknown message of inspiration, which made him leave at an instant his calling worth Rs 700/- per month and dragged him into the public field—it was the same that tried to express and articulate itself out through him when he was brought to man the National Education Movement and then to conduct the *Bandemataram* journal in Calcutta—organs and instruments seized by Force wprk-inginhim for the purpose of the education and enlightenment— first of the youths of his land and then of his countrymen in general, but which failed as it was destined to fail, for he had not yet completely seen and realised what he felt half-consciously or rather half intuitionally in him and by what he was moved about from experiment to experiment, till he was driven into a final baptism of fire, when in the silent secrecy of his hallowed jail-life, blessed by the divine touch of his hidden Lord and Master, Sri Krishna, he was visited with a new revelation and received a new sadhana and he could pounce upon the heart of the infinite mystery, which is at the back of the new awakening of New India and New Asia.

"Then as the days rolled on, the touch grew deeper, the call clearer. Sri Aurobindo, as he came out of the ordeal, preached the new word to the nation—the word which is the true and real word of the nation itself, but lies deep down at its heart, still hidden and unexplored—for in the passion and agitation of the passing hour, it is unable to catch its own hidden *mantra* and sells itself up to a call of distraction. The eyes, hovering over the troubled surface of the sea of national self-existence, are barred from a deeper vision of itself and in the midst of a misty atmosphere of sattwic egoism, are misled from blind-driven disaster to disaster. Bengal in 1910 was passing through such a dark age—the people in agony, the government in anger were too agitated, too self-blind to hearken unto the new message or understand the new call, which spoke through Aurobindo. Then, as we have told once before in these columns on another occasion, Aurobindo was made to leave his dear land of work, for a greater tapasya, for a mightier siddhi on behalf of his nation and mankind.

"We are pledged to the country to reveal Sri Aurobindo to his people, as his lowliest of the lowly channel of expression. But for which Aurobindo? We, ourselves know definitely, certainly, unmistakably only one Aurobindo, the Aurobindo of unbroken spiritual career, the Aurobindo, who in his soul of soul, (through whatever exterior expression of work or outward direction, circumstances and the needs of the time and the will of the Mother might have sped its movement and variegated its formation with diverse tone and complexion)—has all along borne a mighty spiritual message for his country and humanity, which he has always attempted to deliver with consummate strength and clarity and which now in his ripe maturity of spiritual experience and life-realisation he has now commenced to materialise in right earnest and single-minded concentration. We know only this Aurobindo of mighty faith and Yoga—the great Spiritual Hero—the Man of Consecration—the Man of God. Any other Aurobindo is only a hearsay history to us and it will be a blasphemy on our part to speak in any definite terms, of one whom we know not for certain. Him, whom we know, we solemnly declare. To ourselves, Aurobindo is Shakti, the Shakti of Divine Utsarga—it matters little what name or form, what idea and action he holds up to our superficial gaze—our inner vision of him remains steadfast and unchangeable as of the Sun. Aurobindo involves in himself the galvanic conception of a new future in process of revelation, a new age of untold contents in actual construction, of this we are absolutely sure. In intimate touch and spiritual identification, in outer expression and direct communication—this is the one great truth of which we can speak from sure and direct experience and knowledge. In the living history of this man of the future, of which we possess a burning record both in our heart and soul as well as in material characters, the country will one day find to their infinite wonder the fiery record of the new world in the making. The New Commune, breathed into life by the Mother at work through the direct Yoga of Sri Aurobindo has been given this special divine mission to realise and express, to establish and fulfil.

"Aurobindo demands a re-born nation—an entire reconstitution of Indian humanity. It is not his demand—it is the demand of the Mother. The reconstitution has been begun from the very foundation—the basis of the spirit, but not circumscribed within the limitations of the past. The

new spirituality of the greater India of the future is pre-destined to be more expansive and synthetic, than what it ever had been in her old history. An India, liberated from even her sattwic national ego, rejuvenated and renovated India, the mighty Mother of the re-birth—that is the great national vision, which Aurobindo has seen in his sadhana and ensouls in his new creation. When that is complete, the Shakti not only—*shuddha* but also *siddha*, full-ripe and all-perfect, his vision and power he will fully transmit to his nation and the Siddhi of *Sri Aurobindo* will be the siddhi of the people for their spiritual possession and materialisation. Till then the sadhana proceeds, in silence and without ostentation and pomp, but sure to its goal and crowning culmination. Happy we, if in the meantime, along with our countrymen in our deep confidence, we can clearly and rightly grasp his new vision and through thorough self-surrender receive in shower-baths his illimitable strength and infallible inspiration."

### *Conclusion*

We now conclude our running commentary on the letter-series. A responsible task which we had to undertake from a compelling sense and urge of duty, but with a heart full of palpitating hesitation, because of the risks involved—the risks to use one of Thakur Shree Ramakrishna's apt similes—of a doll of salt venturing out to measure the vast boundless ocean—from shore to shore—but itself bound to melt and lose itself in such an impossible, dare-devil effort.

We have always kept in mind the valid truth of Shree Aurobindo's own personal saying in such matters:

"It would be only myself who would speak of things in my past giving them true force and significance. Neither you nor any one else knows anything at all of my life; it has not been on the surface for men to see."

It is Shree Aurobindo himself who has left these few letters with us to speak for himself. Therefore, really it is the letters themselves that speak or rather the Master himself—the writer of these letters, who has projected his guru-personality in these historical epistles—to speak of things in a particular past decade of his life between 1910 and 1920, also 'giving them' their 'true force and significance.' And these are things of his life which he alone and those directly concerned, do know and if

something of these are now brought on the surface from their depths to see the light of day, it is because as we feel quite sure—that no other than the Master himself and his disciple have willed to lay bare the true meaning and story of their coming together—their communion and relationship, which had at once both an inner as well as an outer aspect of self-revelation—imperative to their own necessary life-evolution, but no less pertinent and necessary with regard to their joint bearing on the life of their creation—the Prabartak Samgha—nay also through this Samgha on the life of the world.

The story revealed through merely twenty-six letters cannot be regarded as a full and complete life-history of the two great personalities nor can it be a full and complete account of what they had come to give to the world through their gospel and life-work. But it has very necessary, adequate and revealing light to throw on the birth and growth of the "Samgha at Chandernagore"—which in the very words of Shree Aurobindo as one of the letters has already told us—

"is a thing that has grown up with my (Shree Aurobindo's) power behind and yours (Shree Motial Roy's) at the centre."

Evidently, the Samgha is a creation, which received its general name and spirit from the Master, Shree Aurobindo himself, but the specific designation and concrete, living form and mould that it got or took, were given by Shree Motilal Roy. The Prabartak Samgha thus is a creation of history, whose seed took root in the soil of Chandernagore—the fruit of a joint spiritual and creative will and endeavour in which the two great personalities made different contributions together from two ends and each had an important part to play from each respective end.

In the Yoga of Shree Aurobindo, life is accepted as the field for the manifestation of the Divine. Its main aim is not liberation merely but the manifestation of divine perfection. In his vision not only the individual but the collective life also is a term of the Divine. Acceptance of life includes collective life.

The Prabartak Samgha admittedly was such a form of collective life which "was started at Chandernagore by Motilal Roy and others under

the inspiration of Shree Aurobindo." (*Evening Talks*, First series page 25).

(In *Evening Talks*—page 186), we have it also from Shree Aurobindo's own lips:

"At that time I had some construction in my mind. Of course, there was something behind it, which I knew to be true. Even then I was not sure that it would work out successfully. Any way, I wanted to give it a trial and gave that idea to Motilal. Then he took up that idea, and as you know, he took it up with all his vital being and in that egoistic way. So all the vital forces found their chance there. They tried to take possession of the work and of the workers."

The construction in the mind of Shree Aurobindo, referred to by the Master himself, was undoubtedly that of the Samgha. It was this idea and spirit of the Samgha that Shree Aurobindo gave to Shree Motilal Roy for trial, but the latter did not certainly take it as a trial, but dedicated himself utterly and whole-heartedly for its fulfilment. This dedication was an all-out devotion and consecration of life, which must include within it the vital being and even the ego too along with all its egoistic ways, if any do apply. But behind this vital being and the ego, was there not that "something" which Shree Aurobindo 'knew to be true'?

We therefore, cannot leave out of our consideration—this "something"—and should not brush it away as "nothing," if we are to read this truth of history in its true and proper perspective and light. The Prabartak Samgha took its birth in Chandernagore, as the God-chosen centre of a movement of life, amidst the chaos and confusion of a period of history in our country and also in world-history which none can ignore, miss to study or gloss over with impunity. It was a creation of the Time-spirit to serve its historical purpose— a very necessary, meaningful, nay also momentous purpose in the process and march of history and therefore, a very significant event for our nation and for the world.

We must thus necessarily regard this significant fact and event —an event and fact willed by God, to fulfil his divine purpose. We have to and cannot but call this Samgha—*a creation of destiny*.

The Prabartak Samgha in our illumined realisation is a Yogic creation—essentially the seed and nucleus of a new truth of being, imperative, potential and actual, out flowing as a new step of history to grow

and develop in the process of time as well as destined eventually to bloom and blossom as the chosen centre and starting-point of a new-born faith, life and future.

The Samgha has been given the mission to realise and fulfil step by step—as intended by God and revealed accordingly through Mahaguru Shree Aurobindo on the one hand who subjectively inspired, initiated and instilled the idea, and Shree Motilal Roy—the Founder, who objectively bore it out in living, concrete, formal life and body, and delivered on the laps of the Earth-mother.

It must live, grow and also move step by step swimming in the pure stream where have melted together as a perennial flow their blessing and love, along with their inmost will and thought towards the intended goal—incarnating their joint aim and desideratum at every step both Innerly as an ever-revealing one-d, unified, spiritual self-consciousness and at the same time outwardly and manifestly as the ever-flowing objective movement, vindicating not only its own faith in life, but also materialising and accomplishing the unfinished tasks left by Mahaguru and Samgha-Guru in the process of that life's creative manifestation in organisation and work.

This unaccomplished task—this continued movement of spiritual and collective life—the movement of the Prabartak Samgha—will deserve a key-point mention here before the close of this running commentary of ours—to bring out the true and full implication and application of this very commentary in our very lives and in the life of the people.

For, we are now wheeling round a turning point in the history of our nation and also in the history of all the peoples of the world. The great Swamee Vivekananda in the year 1897 delivered a prophetic message to the youths of his country to worship the Motherland as Goddess for fifty years to come. It was not merely a message but a mandate, burning with the fire of faith, which the youths of Bengal and of India did not only appreciate but rushed forward to accept and follow. Vivekananda, the man of light, was immediately followed on this line of inspiration by Rishi Bankim Chandra on the one hand, who through his song of Bandemataram and his novel, a creative literary work—the 'Ananda Math' inspired a whole generation of the youth of Bengal in the fiery cult of pa-

triotism—and on the other hand, by Shree Aurobindo Ghosh, who took up this cult of worship of the Motherland—visualising the living personality of the Country-Mother and dedicating himself heart and soul at her altar for her service and worship, all-time, all-out and entire.

Shree Aurobindo thus became not only a seer, but also the priest-prophet of a new nationalism—spiritual nationalism— based on and informed by the Spirit or a Spiritual Consciousness and sadhana of which he himself became the living leader and flaming torch-bearer.

It was Shree Aurobindo, who subsequently in the ripeness of his experience in this Motherland-worship and out of an outgrowing urge towards a greater revelation of life, that was felt as the intensive need of the hour that he wrote:

"We have worshipped the Country, the National Mother, as God. That was well. That carried us far. But it was only a stage, a means to bring the Europeanised mind back to spirituality. It was the worship of a 'Rupa', 'Ista' by which to rise to the worship of God in His fullness. We used the mantra 'Bandemataram' with all our heart and soul, and so long as we used and lived it, relied upon its strength to overbear all the cry of the mantra began to sink and as it rang feebly, the strength began to fade out of the country. It was God who made it fade and falter, for it had done its work.

A greater mantra than Bandemataram has to come. Bankim was not the ultimate seer of Indian awakening. He gave only the term of the initial and public worship, not the formula and ritual of the inner secret Upasana. For the greatest mantras are those, which are uttered within and the seer whispers or gives in dream or vision to his disciples. When the ultimate mantra is practised even by two or three, then the closed Hand of God will begin to open; when the Upasana is numerously followed, the closed Hand will open absolutely."

The Word of Swamee Vivekananda, became true—through the patriotic devotion and dedication of a galaxy of self-sacrificing sons and daughters from Bengal, nay from all India—inspired by the mantra of Bandemataram given by Rishi Bankim Chandra and galvanised by the dedication of heart and even sacrifice of life's blood by thousands of heroic souls, led by the great spiritual and patriotic hero-of-heroes—Shree Aurobindo & other towering personalities leading and guiding the nationalist as well as the revolutionary movement in India or abroad.

Just fifty years after—on 15th of August 1947, India reached the goal of independence—vindicating the prophetic utterance of the Swamee

Vivekananda. This arrived on the very date of 15th of August, the holy birth-day of Shree Aurobindo, thus in a way, putting a seal of significance and recognition of a stage of fulfilment in Shree Aurobindo's patriotic and national sadhana.

But it was a fissured and fractured independence—accepted wrongly but unavoidably by the weaknesses of our the then political leaders, and sponsored and exploited hiddenly from behind the screen by imperialist powers, leading to the inevitable consequence of making this vast South Asian subcontinent the cock-pit of international conspiracy against the rise of Indian Nationalism to its fullness of height and growth and there-along against also the yet unseen but surely forth-coming vaster up-surge and torrent-tide of Asiatic Super-nationalism— a new international commonwealth of Asia and also Asia-Africa.

Shree Aurobindo openly and clearly fore-warned as well as post-warned his countrymen against this weak-kneed Indian political policy as well as international diplomatic conspiracy, which however, went unheeded.

The seventy and odd crore people of India remained however, to atone for the sin of division and to suffer unimaginably from its dark and dire consequences.

Shree Aurobindo's voice and call for a United India has also remained unfulfilled but still waiting to be fulfilled—even step by step—through long suffering and bitter experience as time passes and history unrolls its hidden scroll of destiny under the inscrutable law of Providence.

What is that "Something"—that hidden purpose, imperative idea, spiritual truth and principle, pouring itself out into living form — which Shree Aurobindo 'knew to be true', though from which he had to turn his mind away under a spiritual compulsion and leave it to evolve by itself—necessarily "in its own strength and by its inherent power of self-development and the divine force within it"?

Vivekananda, Bankim, Aurobindo—along with a host of other Guru-prophets of the nation—have always declared in unerring voice and ringing tone that India can and must rise in and through her inherent strength

—her essential divine light, life-will and love—her spirituality. This is her pith and cream of existence. It is also the eternal, secret source and key-spring of her ever-renewing vitality or immortality.

The birth-determination of the Samgha is to realise and work out this inmost faith and urge of our national being, whose preliminary spiritual formation has been laid, solid and strong— like Himalayan rock-ranges of its geographical foundation—by those great saints and sages of our history from times immemorial in an unbroken line of succession and consolidated from age to age with their contributions of genius, soul and life. The latest to take up this super-responsible task of tasks was the Samgha-Guru who initiated by Maha-Guru Shree Aurobindo himself, held this seed of seeds in his soul-consciousness and reared it with his heart's blood to make it the nucleus of the future divine nation.

In Free India, the Prabartak Samgha, is to live and fulfil this deeksha of nation-building on the basis of Poorna-Yoga, the integral yoga of yogas visualised and revealed by the Yogin among yogins—the Master of Masters Shree Aurobindo, the gnostic man, who in his turn had received this Maha-yoga from Shreemat Vishnu Bhaskara Lele, the chosen, gifted devotee of Yogavatara Shree-Shree Dattareya on this spiritual line and divinely led, had been destined to transmit same at the end of the old cycle to this Son of Destiny to hold it in his pure body and with his accomplished gnostic mind for the coming race. The initial source-centre of this Poorna-Yoga has been the Supreme Guru, God Himself. It has flowed down in successive spiritual waves age after age through the sage-kings of India such as Manu, Ikshvaku etc, some time in rapid currents or some times in languid streams as described in the Geeta by Shree Krishna, the Soul of India, when he delivered same to Partha Arjuna, the representative man of his age and epic hero of that ancient World-War, on the holy battle-ground of Kurukshetra.

Shree Aurobindo, the chosen leader of the age, under divine guidance, in a supreme trance at his God-created yogashrama in Alipore Jail—at the God-given time—had been blessed with the mystic vision—the rarest supreme vision of Shree Vasudeva. This supreme realisation was followed soon after his release, by a divine command, which led him to Chandernagore, where in the secrecy of his stay, as also after departure

from the house of Shree Motilal Roy, he delivered to him the triple *trimarga yoga-mantras*—of Brahma-mantra, Kali-mantra and Vasudeva-mantra, preparatory to transmission of the final *poorna maha-yoga* laid down in the Geeta—the Yoga of *Atmasamarpana*— —Self-Consecration—culminating in *Siddha Adhyatama or Swaroopo Yoga*—its supreme synthesis as well as crowning super-fulfilment.

It is this *siddha swaroopo-yoga*, that holds in its hidden bosom the secret of secrets—the divine matrix or creative power of a new regenerated nation or race. Deep down our *mooladhara* and *swadhisthaha*—the material and vital being—moving upwards through the *manipur, anahata* and *vishuddha chakras*—the astral, psychic and mental centres—rising above into the *dwidala*, the two-petalled *agnachakra* or intellectual brain-centre and finally united with the *sahasra-dala* or thousand-petalled genius-soul or gnostic consciousness, one-d—with the omnipotent, omnipresent, universal and supreme self—here awaits the divine *kundalinee*—birth-determination of a new nationhood as well as race-type.

The impregnated seed unfolds itself into life-lotus—a glorious out-flowering from that centipetalled source of creativity, centred and focussed in and as the Prabartak Samgha—where have met and mingled together the triple descending streams of Jnana, Shakti and Prema—Knowledge, Power and Love— rendered in the three practical formulae of *Satya, Samantha* and *Samyama*—also intrinsically identical with the 'only one kind of work or propaganda as regards India, the endeavour to reconstitute her cultural, social and economic life within larger and free lines than the past on a spiritual basis'—as he himself so clearly, succinctly and scrupulously put it and having thus given it 'a right spirit, basis and form', also ordained his disciple and co-progenitor Shree Roy—to have it 'kept in tact in spirit, kept in tact in basis and kept in tact in form'.

This hallowed responsibility has been faithfully borne and uninterruptedly continued by Shree Motilal Roy as Founder-President of the Prabartak Samgha even after the inevitable 'split'—ignorantly mis-interpreted as a fall from the Yoga. On the very contrary, it was essentially the crowning stage of a long course of spiritual sadhana—its culmina-

tion, having reached the meridian in *aropa* or spiritual objectivities to fallback, re-born and re-constituted—into that of *Swaroopā*— spiritual self-status—the Guru or Ishta merging into the spiritual indweller—to be full-poised as the *antaryamin*, *swarat* in his own self-contained, self-ruler ship. The 'split' or wrenching was inevitable, in-as-much-as this transition from *aropa* to *swaroopā* —in the course of spiritual fulfilment as in every course of true and genuine spiritual self-discovery it is destined, irresistible and inevitable. It had been inevitable in the case of Shree Aurobindo himself; it was so, in the case of Shree Motilalji—in his spiritual and historic emergence as the Samgha-guru and the evolution of his full-fledged samgha hood or samgha-entity.

The Samgha feels within its triple self-entity the birth-urge of a new and rising nation. Not one God-man, but a united race of godly men and women will inevitably rise from the common people of Bengal, the common people of India.

The Sadhana of the Samgha therefore, is not a mere discipline of mind, life and body of an individual person, but at the same time a collective discipline—mental, vital and physical—all rising to, harmonised, integrated and fulfilled in a supra-mental gnostic and spiritual self-attainment and self-perfection.

The message of the Samgha is the cardinal message of India—the message of Yoga—*devaya janmane*—a message of birth and life divine. Its central word is the mantra of faith—faith in God and His Divine Power—"शफ़्त्यां भगवति च श्रद्धा"

Its holy birth-teertha—is Bharatvarsha—United India—above all physical or political divisions—a vast, indivisible, geographical as well as spiritual entity.

Behind and above the Samgha's life and works, its growth, history and future mission, rains down in ceaseless torrents the blessings of Shree Aurobindo and Shree Motilal—Mahaguru and Samgha-guru, themselves fully inundated by the blessings and inspirations of the—*Siddha-Gurumandal*—the galaxy of perfected master-beings—who are the pristine guardian-angels of Mother India, our Motherland and also of the

great Mother-Earth with five continents, the common motherland of all the nations and peoples who constitute our present universal humanity.

The Samgha has got the integral vision of the Divine Mother, revealing with her five-fold powers—Savitree—Saraswatee, Radha and Lakshmee, and Durga—in an evolving process of life-realisation. In the spiritual plane—Savitree, the presiding shakti of spirituality and eternal religion—the all-embracing, all-fulfilling *sanatoria dharma-Shakti*.

In the psycho-astral plane—the triple unity of Saraswatee, Radha and Lakshmee—regulating and integrating the nation's cultural, social and economic forces into a self-contained communal harmony, perfected in the knowledge of the real science and art of life, reconstituting its family and community structure in the sense and essence of love and organic unity and evolving a happy life, based on and characterised by self-created wealth and spontaneously welling up from within—an all-round, abounding prosperity for one and all.

And finally on the physico-material plane—the actual body-politics—Maha-Shakti Durga, the presiding deity of our sovereign political status and life, revealing and fulfilling the will of the Supreme Lord through the step-by-step assertion and administration of a reign of law through co-ordination, combination, confederation of all the independent, sovereign states—first on this Indian sub-continental peninsula, then in Asia, Africa-Asia and also Europe-Asia and ultimately spreading over both the old and new hemispheres, embracing the North and South Americas—leading to the eventual establishment of the universal *Dharma-samrajya*—the kingdom of Heaven on Earth—inevitable though still distant—'the one far-off divine event towards which all creation moves.'

The Prabartak Samgha is the newest, the youngest amongst India's standard-bearers. Its voice is the voice of united, future India. Its call is a call of faith and hope on behalf of India—as the Mother of Nations. It is also a call of light—the Light Divine. The Samgha upholds and lives as a chosen inheritor of that immortal heritage of Manu—the Spirit of Man and Mankind—of Krishna, Buddha, Christ, Mohammad, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, Gandhi and Aurobindo—for that rule of righteousness that

shall and must come in every heart and in every hearth and home as intended by the divine in man.

## EPISTLES OF THE MASTER

[At the close of our introductory commentary, we are now presenting the letter-series in the chronological order that we have found to fit in with the life-revelation unfolded to us in the process of communion through the Grace of the Mahaguru. The Epistles of the Master will now tell their own story—revealing his living message to the nation—to rise from light to Super-light and to re-create its history and future in that light higher and divine.]

### Letter No. 1

Dear M.

Your money (by letter & wire) & clothes reached safely. The French post office here has got into the habit (not yet explained) of not delivering your letters till Friday. That was the reason why we wired to you thinking you had not sent the money that week. I do not know whether this means anything—formerly we used to get your letters on Tuesday, afterwards it came to Wednesday, then Thursday & finally Friday. It may be a natural evolution of French Republicanism. Or it may be something else. I see no signs of the seals having been tampered with, but that is not an absolutely sure indication of security. The postman may be paid by the police. Personally, however, I am inclined to believe in the Republican administration theory—the Republic always likes to have time in its hands. Still, if you like, you can send important communications to any other address here you may know of, for the present (of course, by French post & a Madrasi address). All others should come by the old address,—you may be sure, I think, no letter will be actually intercepted, on this side. By the way please let us know whether Mr Bonomali Pal received a letter by Fr. Post from Achari enclosing another to Partha Sarathi.

I have not written all this merely because I was not allowed to put pen to paper for some time—that is all. I send enclosed a letter to our Marathi friend. If he can give you anything for me, please send it without the least delay. If not, I must ask you to procure for me by will-

power or any other power in heaven or on earth Rs 50 at least as a loan. If you cannot get it else-where, why not apply to Band Babu? Also, if Nagen is in Calcutta, ask him whether the Noakhali gentleman can let me have anything. I was told he had Rs 300 put aside for me, if I wanted it; but I did not wish to apply to him except in case of necessity. The situation just now is that we have Rs.1½ or so in hand. Srinivasa is also without money. As to Bharati living on nothing means an uncertain quantity. The only other man in by (Pondicherry) whom T could at present ask for help absent *sine die* and my messenger to the South not returned. The last time he came, he brought a promise of Rs.1000 in a month and some permanent provision afterwards, but the promise like certain predecessors has not yet been fulfilled & we sent him for cash. But though he should have been here three days ago, he has not returned, & even when he returns, I am not quite sure about the cash & still less sure about the sufficiency of the amount. No doubt, God will provide, but He has contracted a bad habit of waiting till the last moment. I only hope He does not wish us to learn how to live on a minus quantity, like Bharati.

Other difficulties are disappearing. The case brought against the Swadeshis (no one in this household was included in it although we had a very charmingly polite visit from the Parquet & Juge d'Instruction) has collapsed into the nether region and the complainant & his son have fled from by (Pondicherry) and become, like ourselves "Political refugees" in Cuddalore. I hear he has been sentenced by default to five years imprisonment on false accusation, but I don't know yet whether the report is true. The police were to have left at the end of Pondicherry but a young lunatic (one of Bharati's old disciples in patriotism & atheism) got involved in a sedition search (for the Indian Sociologist of all rubbish in the world!) and came running here in the nick of time for the Police to claim another two months' holiday in Pondicherry. However, I think their fangs have been drawn. I may possibly send you the facts of the case for publication in the Nayak or any other paper, but I am not yet certain.

I shall write to you about Sadhan etc another time.

*Kali*

## Letter No. 2

Dear Anandrao,

My Bengal correspondent writes to me that you have sent one the following message, "the Baroda friend has left service and therefore there is difficulty in finding money. He asks, now you have become a Sannyasin, on what ground he can collect money? Still, if you let him know clearly your future, the time it will take to effect your siddhi and the amount of money you need, he will try to collect from Rs 600/- to 1000/-."

I cannot understand why on earth people should make up their minds that I have become a Sannyasin! I have even made it clear enough in the public Press that I have not taken Sannyasa but am practising Yoga as a householder, not even a Brahmacharin. The Yoga I am practising has not the ghost of a connection with Sannyasa. It is a Yoga meant for life & life only. Its object is perfection of the moral condition & mental & physical being along with the possession of certain powers the truth of which I have been establishing by continuous practical experiment,— with the object of carrying out a certain mission in life which God has given me. Therefore there is or ought to be no difficulty on that score. If I were a Sannyasin, there would indeed be no money difficulty to solve.

The question about the siddhi is a little difficult to answer precisely. There are four parts of the siddhi, roughly, moral, mental, physical & practical. Starting from December 1908, the moral has taken three years and a half and may now be considered complete. The mental has taken two years of regular sadhana and for the present purpose may be considered complete; the physical is backward and nearing completion only in the immunity from disease— which I am now attempting successfully to perfect and test by exposure to abnormal conditions. The physical also does not matter so much for practical purposes, as the moral, mental and a certain number of practical siddhis are sufficient. It is these practical siddhis that alone cause delay. I have had first to prove to myself their existence and utility; secondly, to develop these in myself so as to be working forces; thirdly, to make them actually effective for life & impart them to others. The development will, I think, be complete in another

two months, but the application to life & the formation of my helpers will take some time—for the reason that I shall then have a greater force of opposition to surmount than in the purely educative exercises I have hitherto practised. The full application to life will, I think, take three years more, but it is only for a year of that time (if so long) that I expect to need outside assistance. I believe that I may have to stay in French India for another year. I presume that is what the question about my future means. But on this point also I cannot speak with certainty. If, however, it refers to my future work, that is a big question & does not yet admit of a full answer. I may say briefly that I have been given a religious & philosophical mission, to re-explain the Veda & Vedanta (Upanishads) in the ancient sense which I have recovered by actual experience in Yoga and to popularise the new system of Yoga (new in arrangement & object) which has been revealed to me & which, as I progress, I am imparting to the young men staying with me & to others in Pondicherry. I have also to spread certain ideas about God & life by literary work, speech & practice, to try to bring about certain social changes & finally, to do a certain work for my country in particular, as soon as the means are put in my hands. All this to be done by God's help only & not to be begun till things & myself are ready.

The amount of money I shall need for the year in question are Rs 300/- to clear up the liabilities I have contracted during the last nine or ten months (in which I have had only fortuitous help) and some Rs 1200/- (or 1500/- reckoning up to August 1913) to maintain myself & those I am training. I had hoped to get the money from a certain gentleman who had promised me Rs 2000/- a year for the purpose & given it for the first year from October 1910 to October 1911. But there are great difficulties in the way and I can no longer reckon merely on this support which would render it unnecessary for me to tax my friends. Please ask my friend if, with this explanation, he can manage the money to the amount suggested. If I get other help from this side, I shall let him know so that the same be lightened.

At present I am at the height (?) of my difficulties, in debt, with no money for the morrow, besieged in Pondicherry & all who could help me in temporary or permanent difficulties or else absent & beyond communication. I take it, from my past experiences as a sign that I am nearing

the end of the period of trial. I would ask you if you can do no more, at least to send me some help to tide over the next month or two. After that period for certain reasons, it will be easier to create means, if they are not created for me.

A. G.

### Letter No. 3

Dear M.

We have received from you in December Rs 60 & Rs 20, and in this month Rs 10. According to N's account Rs 10 belongs to November account, Rs 50 to December; Rs 20 we suppose to have been sent in advance for the January account. If so, we still expect from you Rs 20 this month. I should be glad to know if there is any prospect of your being able to increase the amount now or shortly. Up till now we have somehow or other managed to fill in the deficit of Rs 35 monthly; but, now that all our regular sources here are stopped, we have to look to mere luck for going on. Of course if we were bhaktas of the old type, this would be the regular course, but as our sadhan stands upon karma yoga with jñana & bhakti, this inactive nirbhara can only continue so long as it is enjoined on us as a temporary movement of the sadhana. It cannot be permanent. I think there will have to be a change before long, but I cannot see clearly whether the regular & sufficient arrangement which must be instituted some time, is to come from you or from an unexpected quarter or whether I have myself to move in the matter. It is a question of providing some Rs 450 a year in addition to what you send—unless, of course, God provides us with some new sources for the *Sharirajatra* as He did two years ago.

All these matters as well as the pursuance of my work to which you allude in your last (commercial) letter, depends on the success of the struggle which is the crowning movement of my sadhana— viz the attempt to apply knowledge & power to the events and happenings of the world without the necessary instrumentality of physical action. What I am attempting is to establish the normal working of the siddhis in life i.e. the perception of thoughts, feelings & happenings of other beings & in

other places, throughout the world without any use of information by speech or any other data; 2d, the communication of the ideas & feelings I select to other (individuals, groups, nations) by mere transmission of will-power; 3d, the silent compulsion on them to act according to these communicated ideas & feelings; 4th, the determining of events, actions & results of action throughout the world by pure silent will-power. When I wrote to you last, I had begun the general application of these powers which God has been developing in me for the last two or three years, but, as I told you, I was getting badly beaten. This is no longer the case, for in the 1st, 2d & even in the 3d I am now largely successful, although the action of these powers is not yet perfectly organized. It is only in the 4th that I feel a serious resistance. I can produce single result with perfect accuracy. I can produce general results with difficulty & after a more or less prolonged struggle; but I can neither be sure of producing the final decisive result I am aiming at nor of securing that orderly arrangement of events which prevents the results from being isolated & only partially effective. In some directions I seem to succeed, in others partly to fail & partly to succeed; while in some fields, e.g., this matter of financial equipment both for my personal life & for my work I have hitherto entirely failed. When I shall succeed even partially in that, then I shall know that my hour of success is at hand & that I have got rid of the past karma, in myself & others, which stands in our way and helps the forces of Kaliyuga to baffle our efforts.

About Tantric yoga, your experiment in the *smashana* was a daring one,—but it seems to have been efficiently and skilfully carried out, & the success is highly gratifying. In these kriyas there are three considerations to be held in view; 1st, the object of the kriya. Of course there is the general object of mukti-bhukti which Tantriks in all ages have pursued, but to bring it about certain subjective results & conditions are necessary in ourselves and our surroundings & each separate kriya should be so managed as to bring about an important result of the kind. Big kriyas or numerous kriyas are not always necessary; the main thing is that they should be faultlessly effective like your last kriya or the small one with which you opened your practices. That is the second consideration viz. the success of the kriya itself that depends on the selection & proper use of the right mantra & tantra,—mantra, the mental part, &

tantra, the practical part. These must be arranged with the greatest scrupulousness. All rashness, pride, ostentation etc,—the rajasic defects, —also, all negligence, omission, slipshod ritual,—the tamasic defects, must be avoided. Success must not elate your minds, nor failure discourage. 3dly, angarakshana is as important as siddhi. There are many Tantriks in this Kaliyuga who are eager about siddhi, careless in angarakshana. They get some siddhi, but become the prey of the devils & bhutas they raise. Now what is the use of the particular siddhi, if the sadhakas are destroyed? The general & real object—mukti & bhukti—remains unfulfilled. Angarakshana is managed, first by the selection & arrangement of the right siddha-mantra & kriya; secondly, by the presence behind the sadhaka of one who repeats what is called an angarakshaka. mantra, destructive of the pretas & Rakshasas or prohibitive of their attacks. The last function I have taken on myself; it is your business so to arrange the kriya that the bhutas get no chances for প্রবেশ (Prabesha) or for the seizure & destruction of the sadhaka. I have found that my mantra has been more & more successful in protection, but it is not yet strong enough to prevent all উপদ্রব (Upadraba) of a dangerous character. It will take some more আবৃত্তি (Avrittī) to increase its power. It is. for this reason that I do not yet tell you to go on swiftly in your course of practices. Still there is no harm in quickening. the pace in comparison with the past. Remember always the supreme necessity of mauna in Tantric practices. In Vedantic & Puranic exercises, expression is not dangerous, but the goddess of the Tantra does not look with a favourable eye on those who from pride, ostentation or looseness blab about the mantra or the kriya. In Tantric-sadhana secrecy is necessary for its own sake. Those who reveal mantra or kriya to the unfit, suffer almost inevitably; even those who reveal them unnecessarily to the fit, impair somewhat the force of their Tantric action.

*Kali.*

P.S. Please send the rest of this month's money at once, if you have not already sent it, & next month's as early as you can.

## Letter No. 4

Dear M.

I write only about 3 points today.

1. Your R. S. Sharma I hold to be a police spy. I have refused to see him because originally when he tried to force his way into my house & win my confidence by his extravagances I received a warning against him from within which has always been repeated. This was confirmed afterwards by two facts,—first, that the Madras Police betrayed a very benevolent interest in the success of his mission; secondly, that he came to Pondicherry afterwards as sub-editor of a new Pondicherry paper, the Independent, subsequently defunct and replaced by another the Argus, belonging to the same proprietor who has been openly acting in concert with the British Police against us in Pondicherry. In this paper he wrote a very enervating & depreciatory paragraph about me, (not by name but by allusion) in which he vented his spite at his failure. Failing even so to get any footing here, for the Swadeshis were warned against him, he returned to Madras. He seems now to have tried his hand with you at Calcutta & succeeded, probably, beyond his expectations! I wonder when you people will stop trusting the first stranger with a glib tongue who professes Nationalist fervour & devotion. Whether you accept my estimate of him or not, you may be sure that his bhakti for me is humbug—as shown by the above newspaper incident & you must accept at least the facts I have given you and draw any conclusions that common sense may suggest to you.

2. Do not print "Yoga & its Objects" unless & until I give you positive directions. It cannot be printed in its present form, & I may decide to complete the work before it is printed. In any case part of it would have to be omitted or modified.

3. Next, money matters. I could not understand your arithmetic about the Rs 40 and how we should gain by not getting it. The only reason why we wrote constantly for it, was that it was necessary to us in our present financial position, in which we have to provide anxiously for every need and the failure of any expected sum reduces us to difficulties. I had reckoned on the remainder of Madgodkar's money to pay the sum still due

for the rent of our last house. Fortunately, the litigation connected with the house has kept the matter hanging; but it may be demanded from us any day & we shall have to pay at once, or face the prospect of being dragged into court & losing our prestige here entirely. In future, let me ask you, never to undertake any payment to us which you are not sure of being able to fulfil because of the great disorder in our arrangements which results.

Our position here now is at its worst,—since all efforts to get some help from here have been temporarily fruitless & we have to depend on your Rs 50 which is insufficient. We have to pay Rs 15 for rent, other expenses come to not less, & the remaining Rs 20 cannot suffice for the food expenses of five people. Even any delay in your money arriving makes our Manager "see darkness". That is why we had to telegraph. We did not know then that your last remittance of Rs 20 had arrived; & our available money was exhausted. Our correspondence agent has turned merchant & walked off to Madras indefinitely; in his absence we had great difficulty in getting hold of your letter & indeed it is only today that it reached our hands. Narayana will give you a new address to which please address all letters in future.

There is no "reason" for my not writing to you. I never nowadays act on reasons, but only as an automaton in the hands of Another; sometimes He lets me know the reasons of my action, sometimes He does not, but I have to act—or refrain from action—all the same, according as He wills.

I shall write nothing about sadhan etc until I am out of my present struggle to make the spirit prevail over matter & circumstances, in which for the present I have been getting badly the worst of it. Till then you must expect nothing but mere business letters,—if any.

*Kali.*

## Letter No. 5

February 1913 (?)

Dear M.

I have received Rs 60/- by wire & Rs 20/- by letter. It was a great relief to us that you are able to send Rs 80/- this time & Rs 85/- for March. Owing to the cutting off of all other means of supply, we were getting into a very difficult position. I welcome it as a sign of some preliminary effectiveness, through you, in this direction, in which hitherto everything has gone against us; also as one proof of several that the quality of your power & work is greatly improving in effectiveness and success. I need not refer to the other proofs, you will know what I mean. But just now I find every forward step to be made is violently combated & obstinately obstructed. Our progress is like the advance of a modern regiment under fire in which we have to steal a few yards at a run & then lie down under cover & let the storm of bullets sweep by. I neither hope for nor see yet any prospect of a more successful rapidity.

I have been lying down under cover ever since the middle of February after a very brilliant advance in January and the early part of February. I keep the previous ground, but can make as yet no sure progress further. There is only a slow preparation for further progress. The real difficulty is to bring force, sureness & rapidity into the application of power & knowledge to life,—specially sureness, for it is possible to bring the force & rapidity, but if not attended by unflinching sureness of working, they may lead to great errors in knowledge & great stumbles & disasters in action which counteract the successes. On the other hand, if sureness has to be gained only by not stepping except where everything is sure (which is the first stage of action & knowledge necessary to get rid of rajasic rashness), progress is likely to be slow. I am trying to solve the dilemma.

I have not kept your last letter & I only remember that you asked me to write something about your sadhan. I cannot just now, but I shall try to do it in my next as I expect by then to be clear of some of my present difficulties.

There is the pressing cry for clothes in this quarter as these articles seem to be with us to remind us now constantly of the paucity of matter. I have received Bepin Pal's "Soul of India". Can you add another (?) by getting from Hiranyagarbha, Sister Nivedita's "My Master as I saw Him?" I am also in need,—as I wrote to you once before, of R. C. Dutt's Bengali translation of the Vedas. Neither of these books is urgently required but please keep these in mind & send them when you can.

*Kali.*

## Letter No. 6

Dear M.

Your letter, money etc. have reached me without delay or mishap. Please make it a task, in future, not to be anxious or troubled when you get no answer; when I do not reply, it is not because I have not received your letters, but because silence was necessary, for my siddhi, for yours or for the work that has to be done. At such times, keep calm, repel any suggestions of perplexity or anxiety and do not allow any disturbing mental waves to interfere between..... still wanted a clear mind and untroubled nerves as the very first necessity for the perfection of our Yoga.

I enclose a letter for C. R. Das. Please transmit it & get a reply written or verbal. You will see, I did not authorise Bhaga to ask him for money; at the same time, in doing so, he obeyed an unspoken general *vyapti* from myself which his mind seems to have got hold of & mixed up with its own desires & anxieties. I am drawing now towards the close of my internal Yogic tapasya and the time is not very distant when I shall have to use its results for the work God has sent me to do in the world. For that work I shall need larger sums of money. So long as I was only perfecting myself and sending out Shakti to others, all I needed, was enough for the maintenance of myself & those who are with me. This charge I gave to you and the charge is not withdrawn; but, as you know, it covers only the bare physical necessities of our life in Pondicherry. More than that, you are not likely to be able to afford; and certainly you could not provide me with the sums I shall need even in the earlier part

of my work. To limit myself to the Rs 85/- a month you can send us, would be denying myself the material means for doing what I have to do and to accept stagnation and quiescence. It is true I am not beginning that work immediately, but, before it begins, I have to bend circumstances to my will in this very particular so that the obstacle of paucity of means which has been my chief stumbling block for the beginning may be got rid of once for all. My will has to become effective on this point above all & the impediments both subjective and objective for its mastery have to be eliminated. Therefore I have sent out the general vyapti I spoke of. Biren's action was one of the first responses, but, as it was impure response, it has created more golmal than effect. As to confining the appeal for pecuniary assistance to those who are entirely of one way of thinking with ourselves, it was a good rule for you to observe; but it cannot bind me when I begin my larger movement. From whatever quarter money or help comes to me, it comes from God.

With regard to the Tantric books, the Psalmist was here, & wrote to you and went away expecting to return in a fortnight, but more than a fortnight has passed..... He has written to me to say he has received money from you and we have written to him to come here. He is expected daily, but he does not arrive. He will, no doubt, be a good karmabira in time; but at present he is too rajasic, with intervals of tamas, has too much faith in European religions & the arms of the flesh & too little faith in Yoga & the arms of the spirit. He went northward on his own initiative; I could have told him his efforts there would be fruitless, but it is always well for a man to get experience for himself when he will not take the benefit of superior experience. Your scheme about the books is impracticable under present conditions of which you are ignorant. When he comes, we will consult together & see if any blameless way can be found. But there is a time for all things & the time for free publication of Tantric books has not arrived. Still, your particular order may be met. Your letter to him, if addressed to M. Rd. (Martin Road) did not reach us; whether he got it in Madras or not, I do not know.

Your working, remember, is not yet definitive working, it is still in the nature of experiment, with some minor results. When your working becomes(?) more perfect, more proper & necessary spiritual force can be sent from here—then real Tantra can begin. Meanwhile, don't be over-ea-

ger; let nothing disconcert, discourage or perplex you. Eagerness, endeavour & discouragement are all different faces of one defect. I shall write to you on all matters connected with the Tantra after the Psalmist arrives. Also about Vedanta. If he does not come, I shall write all the same.

Bejoy was to have seen Ramchandra in Calcutta & given you news of us, on his way to Khulna; but from your not sending the June money & from Suxlhirls letter, it seems the interview did not take place or else no report was given to you. Please send the money. I am going on somehow, but the money I am doing with, would have to be replaced.

*Kali.*

P.S. The Psalmist has written announcing his immediate arrival here but he has so often disappointed us that I end off this letter, without further waiting. If he comes, I shall write to you as soon as anything is settled.

## **Letter No. 7**

Dear M.

I enclose a letter to C. R. Das. Please let me know as soon as possible whether he has received the MSS. Also let me have the address of your West Indian friend in that connection which you omitted to give in your last letter,—of course in the usual formula. Please explain how you expect him to befriend you if there is any difficulty in the final stage of the publication. I am too exhausted to write anything at length this time—we shall see afterwards when I have recovered my physical equilibrium. I expect Rs 40 for July & the money for August (current) which will complete our regular account for the present if, C. R. Das sends in the rest of his money as proposed. By the way, his agents Grindlay & Co. sent me Rs 300 with a note saying that I shall get Rs 1000 for the translations. Is the Rs 300 part of the Rs 1000 or separate. I ask this for information only, because you wrote that he intended to give me one year's expenses & Rs 300 extra. I need some extra money badly now for materials for the work I have now seriously entered on in connection with the Veda and the Sanskrit language. In that same connection will you please make a

serious effort this time to get hold of Dutt's Bengali translation of the Rigveda & send it to me—or any translation for the matter which gives the European version?

*Kali.*

## Letter No. 8

Dear M

I send the proofs. Your Rs 50 for Narayan etc's travelling expenses reached duly and were by him duly spent. He has promised to repay the sum, but I don't know when he will be able to do so. He will see you, he told me, when he first goes to Calcutta from his place, as his mother was ill, he would not stop to see you on the way. But perhaps other reasons prevented him just then, for I believe he did stop a day or two in Calcutta.

Biren is all right, I believe; he said nothing to anybody about that matter. There were some legitimate doubts in some quarters, owing to his unsteady nature & other defects of character. I thought it right to give them as much value for practical purposes as was reasonable; therefore I wrote to you.

I do not write to you this time about the despatch of the books, because that is a long matter & would delay the proofs which have already been too long delayed. But I shall write a separate letter on that subject. I have also to write about your Tantric Yoga, but I think I shall await what else you have to tell me on that subject before doing so.

*Kali.*

P.S. Don't delay long in sending the money.

## Letter No. 9

Dear M—

I subjoin certain explanations about the matter of the-Tantric books. I put them in cipher because there are certain things, as you can understand, not *comme il faut* according to the ideas of modern social decorum which ought not to fall under unfit eyes. It appears that you did not understand my last letter. However, from henceforth please leave this matter entirely in my hands. You will see from the explanations given how highly undesirable is the kind of correspondence you have been carrying on hitherto in another quarter. I have taken Rs 50 from S, but this sum or part of it (at least Rs 30) ought to be replaced for expenses attached to that particular transaction. Meanwhile I await Rs 85 for June & all the July money. I delay other matters in consideration of the urgency of the accompanying note.

*Kali.*

P.S. I received information of your Tantric kriyas. It is clear that you are far from perfect yet. All the more reason why you should not be in a hurry to progress physically. Get rid of the remnants of sattwic ahankara and rajoguna, for that which we are within, our karma and kriya will be without. Kali demands a pure adhara for her works & if you try to hurry her by rajosic impatience, you will delay the success instead of hastening it, I will write to you fully about it later.

## Letter No. 10

Dear M

I send you today the electoral declaration of M. Paul Richard, one of the candidates at the approaching election for the French Chamber. This election is of some importance to us, for there are two of the candidates who represent our views to a great extent, Laporte & Richard. Richard is not only a personal friend of mine and a brother in the Yoga; but he wishes, like myself, & in his own way works for a general renovation of the world by which the present European civilisation shall be replaced by a spiritual civilisation. In that change the resurrection of the Asiatic

ances & especially of India is an essential point. He & Madame Richard are rare examples of European Yogins who have not been led away by Theosophical and other aberrations. I have been in material and spiritual correspondence with them for the last four years. Of course, they know nothing of Tantric Yoga. It is only in the Vedantic that we meet. If Richard were to become deputy for French India, that would practically mean the same thing as myself being deputy for French India. Laporte is a Swadeshi with personal ambitions; his success would not mean the same but at any rate it would mean a strong and, I believe, a faithful ally in power in this country and holding a voice in France.

Of course, there is no chance, humanly speaking, of their being elected this time. Laporte is not strong enough to change the situation single-handed. Richard has come too late; otherwise so great is the disgust of the people with Bluysen & Lemaire, Gaebelle & Pierre that I think we could have managed an electoral revolution. Still, it is necessary, if it can at all be done, to stir things a little at the present moment and form a nucleus of tendency &, if possible, of (active?) result which would be a foundation for the future & enable us at the next election to present one or other of these candidates with a fair chance of success.

I want to know whether it is possible without your exposing yourself to have the idea spread in Chandernagore, especially among the younger men, of the desirability of these candidatures & the abandonment of the old parochial & rotten politics of French India, with its following of interested local Europeans & subservience to their petty ambitions in favour of a politics of principles which will support one of our own men or a European like Richard who is practically an Indian in belief, in personal culture, in sympathies & aspirations, one of the Nivedita type. If also a certain number of votes can be recorded for Richard in Chandernagore so much the better; for that will mean a practical beginning, a tendency from the sukshma world materialised initially in the sthula. If you think this can be done, please get it done,—always taking care not to expose yourself. For your main work is not political but spiritual. If there can be a Bengali translation of Richard's manifesto or much better, a statement of the situation & the desirability of the candidature succeeding,—always steering clear of extremism and British Indian politics,—it should be done & distributed. I lay stress on these things because it is

necessary that the conditions of Chandernagore & Pondicherry should be changed, the repetitions of recent events rendered impossible and the cession of French territory put out of the question. There would be other & more positive gains by the change, but these I need not emphasise now.

I have just received your letter & the money. I shall delay answering it for the present, as this letter must go immediately. I shall answer soon, however I am only waiting till this election is over to give some shape to the decision I have arrived at to resume personally my work on the material plane and it is necessary that there should be some arrangement by which the Vedantic work can go on unhampered by the effects of errors in Tantric Kriya. For Tantric Kriya carried in the old style, to which your people seem to be so undivorcably attached, can only help so far as to keep up the Yogic flame in the hearts of a few, while on the other hand it is full of danger to the spirit & the body. It is only by a wider Vedantic movement leading later on to a greater Tantra that the work of regeneration can be done; & of that movement neither you nor Sourin can be the head. It needs a wider knowledge & a greater spiritual force in the Adhara through which it is engineered; it needs, in fact, the greatest which India contains & which is at the same time willing to take it up. I see only Devavrata & myself who have the idea—for the Dayanandas & others are a negligible quantity, & Devavrata seems to me to have gone off for the moment on a wrong route & through egoism has even allowed his spiritual force to be used against us by secret forces in the sukshma world which he is not yet advanced enough to understand. Therefore, if God wills, I will take the field.

*K.*

P.S. Gaebele has given me strenuous assurances that Bluysen is not working for the cession of Chandernagore & has sworn that he (Gaebele) will ever be a stern and furious opponent of any such cession as well as a staunch defender of the Swadeshi refugees! Such is the fervour of electoral promises. He has given a number of the Journal des Deputes in which there is a full account of Bluysen's interpellations, from which it appears that both Bluysen & Doumergue were agreed that there can be no question of cession but only of "rectification of Pondicherry boundaries". But only then did Bluysen tell us solemnly that the cession was a

"settled fact" & any refugee in Ch. (Chandernagore) must run to Pondicherry at once. However, I am trying to send you or get sent to Banamali Pal the copy of the Journal, so that Bluysen may have the benefit of his public declarations. They are in a sense binding, if anything can bind a French politician. If you don't get the Journal, at any rate whatever that the substance of it as given by me here should be known in Ch. (Chandernagore), if it is not known already. For you must remember that Lemaire has made no such declaration & is not bound at all by any past professions, but has not been an advocate of the cession.

## Letter No. 11

17th April 1914

Dear M.

The political situation here is as follows. In appearances Bluysen and Lemaire face each other in the old lines and the real fight is between them. Bluysen has the support of the whole administration, except a certain number of Lemairists who are quiescent and in favour of it. The Governor Martineau, Gaebele, the Police Lieutenant and the Commissioners form his political committee. By threats and bribes the Maires of all the Communes except two have been forced or induced to declare on his side. He has bought or got over most of the Hindu traders in Pondicherry. He has brought over 50,000 Rupees for his election & is prepared to purchase the whole populace, if necessary. Is it British rupees, I wonder? The British Govt is also said to be interfering in his behalf and it is certain that a Mahomedan Collector of Cuddalore has asked his coreligionists to vote for this master of corruption. A violent administrative pressure is being brought to bear upon both at Pondicherry and Karikal & the Maires being on his side the electoral colleges will be in his hands with all their possibilities of fraud & violence.

Lemaire has for him most of the Christian and renoncants (except the young men who are for Richard) and Pierre. But the Pierre party is entirely divided. Kosia(?) refuses to declare himself, most of the others are Bluysenites, the Comite Radical has thrice met without Pierre being able to overcome the opposition against him. Lemaire had two chances, one that if the people could be got to vote, Pierre's influence over the mass

might carry the day for him; the other that Nandagopalu might intimidate the enemy & counteract the administration. But Nandagopalu instead of intimidating is himself intimidated; he is hiding in his house & sending obsequious messages to Gaebele & Martineau. So great at one time was the despair of the Lemairists, that Pierre offered through Richard to withdraw Lemaire, if Gaebele withdraws Bluysen, the two enemies then to shake hands & unite in support of Richard or another candidate. Gaebele would have been glad to accept the offer, but he cannot, he has taken huge sums from Bluysen. The leaders are almost all bought over by Bluysen & those who remain on Lemaire's side dare not act. The only weapon now in Lemaire's hands is vague threat & rumour, that the Cabinet has fallen, that Martineau is suspended, that the new Police Captain is his man etc. There are also rumours of a sudden coup d'etat by Lemaire on the election day, of Appaswami being carried off or killed, of the Election Committee being in his hands and it is true that the President is a Lemairiste. But I do not see how these things are going to be done. There may, of course, be a sudden Lemairiste rally, but at present it seems as if Bluysen by the help of the administration money, the British Government and the devil were likely to win an easy victory.

Laporte had some chance of strong backing at the beginning, but his own indolence & mistakes have destroyed it. He is now waiting on God & Lemaire into whose shoes he dreams of stepping,—for Lemaire has promised him that if he gets no favourable answer from France he will desist in Laporte's favour and Laporte being a man of faith is sitting quiet in that glorious expectation.

Then there is Richard. He has neither agent, nor committee nor the backing of a single influential man. What he has is the sympathy & good wishes of all the Hindus & Mahomedans in Pondicherry & Karikal with the exception of the Vaniyas who are for Bluysen. The people are sick to death of the old candidates, they hate Bluysen, they abhor Lemaire & if only they could be got to vote according to their feelings, Richard would come in by an overwhelming majority. But they are overawed by the Govt and wait for some influential man among the Hindus to declare for him. No such man is forthcoming. All are either bought by Bluysen or wish to be on the winning side. Under these circumstances the danger is that the people will not vote at all and the electoral committees will be

forced to manufacture in their names bogus votes for Bluysen. On the other hand an impression has been made at Karikal, where the young men are working zealously for Richard; some of its communes are going to support him; some of the leaders who are themselves pledged to Bluysen have promised to tell their followers that they are free to vote for Richard if they wish; the Mahomedan leaders of Karikal are for Bluysen or rather for his money, but the mass have resolved to vote neither for B. (Bluysen) nor Lemaire, & either not to vote at all or for Richard. At Pondicherry, Villenour has promised to declare for Richard, the day before the election so as to avoid prolonged administrative pressure. Certain sections of the community eg. the young men among the Christians and number of the Mahomedans—Richard is to speak at the mosque and a great number may possibly come over and a certain nucleus of the Hindus are certain to vote for him. We count also on the impression that can be given during the next few days. If in addition Chandernagore can give a large vote for Richard, there is a chance not of carrying Richard but of preventing a decisive vote at the first election, so that there may be a second ballot. If that is done, great numbers who hesitate to vote for Richard in the idea that Bluysen must carry all before him, may pick up courage & turn the whole situation—to say nothing of the chances of Lemaire retiring & his whole vote coming over or a great part of it. Therefore, I say, throw aside all other considerations and let the young men of Chandernagore at least put all their strength on Richard's side & against the two unspeakable representatives of Evil who dispute the election between them. For if they do not, humanly speaking, Chandernagore seems to be doomed.

I wrote to you in my last doubtfully about Bluysen's or rather Gaebele's professions about Ch. (Chandernagore) & the Swadeshis. Since then, even Martineau has condescended to let us know that he is trying to get the British police sent away from Pondicherry. But all this is either sheer falsehood or late repentance for the convenience of the moment. The damning facts are that Bluysen saw the Viceroy on his last visit, that it is known on this occasion the whole talk was about this cession of Chandernagore, that on his return he told Bharati the cession of Ch. (Chandernagore) was a settled fact & while *before* his trip northward, he was gushing over to the Swadeshis, *afterwards* he roundly declared that

he could not help us openly because the Cabinet was pro-English & he must follow the Cabinet, that he went to Karikal & declared to a number of people (this has only yesterday come to my knowledge) that Chandernagore was going to be ceded to the British with Bluysen's consent; that, on his second & present visit, he was entertained by the Collector of Cuddalore on his way & that that Collector has condescended to act as an electoral agent for him with his co-religionists. It is perfectly clear now that the man has sold himself to England —selling & buying himself & others seem to be his only profession in the world. Therefore every vote given for Bluysen in Ch. (Chandernagore) is a vote for the cession of Chandernagore to the British.

On the other hand, if you vote for Lemaire, it means the same thing at a later date. For he was the first to broach the question in the public press in France, he has advised the suppression of the vote in French India, he has English connection & is an Anglo-phil. Not only so, but although asked by the Hindus to recant his former views if he wanted their vote, he has refused to do it, & this refusal has contributed largely to the failure of Pierre to carry the Hindus with him. Let these facts be widely known in Chandernagore both about Bluysen & Lemaire, let it be known that Richard is a Hindu in faith, a Hindu in heart & a man whose whole life is devoted to the ideal of lifting up humanity & specially Asia & India & supporting the oppressed against the strong, the cause of the future which is our cause against all that hampers and resists it. If after that, Chandernagore still votes for Bluysen or Lemaire, it is its own choice & it will have itself to thank for anything that may follow.

I have more to write of these things from the spiritual point of view, but I shall leave it till tomorrow or the day after as this letter must go at once. Put faith in God and act. You have seen that when He wills He can bring about impossibilities. Do not look too much at the chances of success & failures in this matter. কৰ্মণ্যেবাধিকারচহস্ত (Karmanyebadhikaraste)

*Kali*

## Letter No. 12

5th May 1914

Dear M.

The election is over or what they call an election—with the result that the man who had the fewer real votes has got the majority. As for M. Richard's votes, they got rid of them in Pondicherry & Karikal by the simple process of reading Paul Bluysen wherever Paul Richard was printed. Even where he brought his voters in Karikal to the poll himself, the results were published "Richard—0". At Villenour people were simply prevented from voting for him or any one else. As for the results they had been arranged on the evening before the election by M. Gaebele & were made to fit in with his figures. The extent to which this was done you can imagine from the fact that Nandagopalu's village where there is no single Bluysenites, there were only 13 votes for Lemaire and all the rest for Bluysen. The same result in Madanapalli which is strong for Pierre, except in one college where Sude (President of the.....) was interpreter & did not allow such humbug knowing whom they had to deal with, they did not dare to falsify the results. There Bluysen got only 33 votes against 200 & more for Lemaire. In most places, this would have been the normal result if there had been any election at all. As for Richard, he would probably have got a thousand votes beside the Chandernagore total, as in some five colleges of Pondicherry alone he had about 200 which were transmuted into zero & we know of one village in which he had 91 who were prevented forcibly from voting. Bluysen normally would hardly have got 3000 in the whole of French India. Of course protests are being prepared from every side & if Bluysen is not supported by the Cabinet which is likely to come in after the election in France, the election may be invalidated. Otherwise for sometime he may reign inspite of the hatred & contempt of the whole population by the terror of the administration & the police. This Madrasi population is so deficient in even the rudiments of moral courage that one cannot hope very much from it.

Meanwhile Richard intends to remain in India for 2 years & work for the people. He is trying to start an Association of the young men of Pondicherry & Karikal as a sort of training ground from which men can be chosen for the Vedantic Yoga. Everything is a little nebulous as yet. I shall write to you about it when things are more definite.

Since writing the above I have received your last letter. As for the election, we must wait to see whether Bluysen is validated or not. Even if he is not, I do not think Richard can stand again until the new party in Pondicherry is increased & organised & that will have to be done quietly at first. There is, however, just one possibility, that if something happens which it is just now needless to mention, it might be feasible' to unite Gaebele & Pierre in a candidature of reconciliation. The idea was raised by Pierre himself & very reluctantly rejected by Gaebele before the election. Another time it might succeed & even if Richard were not the candidate chosen, he would get a great influence by engineering the settlement. Otherwise we shall have to await a more favourable opportunity. As for Bluysen he has made himself a byword for every kind of rascality & oppression & is now the enemy much rather than Lamaire. These things we shall see too afterwards. The young men of Pondicherry & Karikal are sending a protest with signed declarations of facts observed in the election & two hundred signatures to the Minister, the Chambre & the Temps newspaper. It has also been read aloud by the President in the Commission of Recessment & produced a great impression—moral only, of course. In France, the opinion of the "Jeunesse" is much valued and joined with the Lemairiste protests it may possibly have some effect unless either Bluysen buys the Validation Committee or is supported by the French "homme d'etat". There is an ugly rumour that Poincare supports Bluysen; there are always corrupt financial dealings underlying French politics which the outside world does not see. If so, we must put spiritual force against the banded forces of evil & see the result.

Next as to money matters. My present position is that I have exhausted all my money along with Rs 60 Richard forced on me & am still in debt for the Rs 130 due for the old rent. I do not like to take more money from Richard, for he has sold one fourth of his wife's fortune (a very small one) in order to be able to come & work for India, & the money he has can only carry him through the 2 years he thinks of staying

here. I should therefore be impoverishing them by taking anything from them. Of course, they believe that money will come whenever it is necessary but then God's idea of necessity & ours do not always agree. As for Rangaswamy, there is a fatality about his money,—it is intercepted by all sorts of people & very little reaches me even on the rare occasions when he sends anything. I have no hope therefore, of any regular help from that quarter. Even in the fact of your being unable to meet him, fate has been against us. On the other hand, Sourin writes that he has been able to "fix" Rs 1000 a year for me in Bengal. Is this merely the refixing of Das' promise or something else? As for fixing anything may be fixed orally or on paper, the difficulty is to realise what has been fixed. He says also there is Rs 500 awaiting me, my share of the garden money. He wants it for his "commerce", but when I have no money to live on, I can hardly comply. He does not tell me what I am to do to get the money, but only that I can get it whenever I want it. I am writing to him to Meherpur, but if you see him in Calcutta, ask him to get it & send it to me at once. With this money I may be able to go on for a few months till something definite & regular can be settled & worked out. As for the sum I need monthly, so long as Sourin & the others do not return, I need Rs 50 monthly for my own expenses & Rs 10 not for myself, but still absolutely indispensable. When S & the others return, that will no longer be sufficient. I am writing to S to try & make some real bundobasta about money before coming back. Please also press Shyam Babu & the others for the money due to me. This habit of defalcation of money for noble & philanthropic purposes in which usually the ego is largely the beneficiary is one of the curses of our movement & so long as it is continued Lukshmee will not return to this country. I have sharply discontinued all looseness of this kind myself & it must be discouraged henceforth wherever we meet it. It is much better & more honest to be a thief for our own personal benefit, than under these holy masks. And always, if one must plunder, it is best to do it as kshatriya, not with the corruption of the Vaisya spirit of gain which is the chief enemy in our present struggle. What you have to do, is to try to make some real arrangement, not a theoretical arrangement by which the burden of my expenses may be shifted off your shoulders until I am able to make my own provision. Meanwhile get me Rs 150 & the Rs 500 due to me (garden money) & if afterwards we can make no other arrangement, we shall then have to

consider the question again. It is this point of equipment, not only for myself but for my work in which the opposition of the Kaliyuga forces is just now the most obstinate. It has somehow to be overcome.

Richard has paid the Rs 51. I am keeping the sum as the Rs 50 for last month plus 1. Please cut it off from the sum you would otherwise have sent—(not, however, from the Rs 130 for the payment of the rent). Please also get us some cloths sent from Calcutta, as they are very urgently needed, specially as I may now have to go out from time to time breaking my old rule of seclusion. I am also in need of a pair of shoes as Bharati has bagged the pair I had.

Then for more important subjects. You write about Biren being here. I do not hold the same opinion about Biren, as Sourin etc do, who are inclined towards a very black interpretation of his character & action. It seems to me that events have corroborated all he said about his relations with certain undesirable persons. Moreover I see that he has taken yoga earnestly & has made for him a rapid progress. I am also unaware of anything he has said to others which would help any evil-minded person in establishing wrong interpretation of your philosophic & social activities. I fail to find in him, looking at him spiritually, those ineffable blacknesses which were supposed to dwell in him, only flightiness, weakness, indiscretion, childishness, erratic impulsiveness & self-will a certain undesirable *possibilities* present in many young Bengalis, in a certain type indeed, which has done much harm in the past. All these have recently much diminished & I hope even to eradicate them by the yoga. In fact, the view of his presence here forced in me by that which guides us, is that he was sent here as the representative of this type & that I have to change & purify it. If I can do this in the representative, it is possible in the future to do so in the class, & unless I can do it, the task I have set for myself for India will remain almost too difficult for solution. For as long as that element remains strong, Bengal can never become what it is intended to be.

You will say, supposing I am wrong & Sourin right, or supposing I fail. In any case he cannot strike your work except by first striking at me, since he does not know anything about you directly or independently of his stay here. Still, there is the possibility (intellectually) of even that

happening. That raises a whole question which it is necessary to settle—the entire separation of Vedantic Yoga from other activities. You must realise that my work is a very vast one & that I must in doing it, come in close contact with all sorts of people including Europeans, perhaps even officials, perhaps even spies & officials. For instance, there is Biren. There is a French man, named Shair Sidd here now in Chandernagore, who came to me & whom I had to see & sound. He is a queer sort of fool with something of the knave but he had possibilities which I had to sound. There is Richard who is to know nothing about Tantricism. There are a host of *possible* young men whom I must meet & handle, but who may not turn out well. It is obviously impossible for me to do this work, if the close connection with Tantrics remains & everyone whom I meet & receive is supposed by people there to be a mighty & venerable person who is to be taken at once into perfect confidence by reason of having been for a time in my august shadow. It won't do at all. The whole thing must be rearranged on a reasonable basis.

First, it might be known among our friends that my whole action is about to be such as I have described, so that they may not again repeat that kind of mistake.

Secondly, those immediately connected with me, must be aloof physically from Tantricism—because of the discredit it brings, & intangible by evil minded persons.

Thirdly, Biren & others of that kind must be made to understand that Tantra for us is discontinued until further notice which can be only in the far future.

Fourthly, the written basis of Vedantic Yoga has now become impossible & must be entirely changed & as far as possible, withdrawn from circulation.

These are details, but important details. There is one matter, however, which has to be settled, that of the Brahmin. The Brahmin, it appears, has made himself impossible as an agent or, at least, he is so considered. Then as for your direct communication with Sarathi, it is looked upon with dislike by Sarathi's people & I do not know what S's (Sarathi's) own sentiment in the matter may be. Of course, the reason they allege is obvi-

ous enough. There is one of my own people here who might do it, but he is so useful in other important matters that I hesitate to use him as an agent in this. That is why I am in a difficulty & I get no light on the question from above, only the intellect stumbles about between possibilities against all of which there is an objection, especially from the new point of view—which demands for the present a spotless peace & irreproachable reputation in these matters for the centre of yogic activity here. Nevertheless, the things must be done, although as the last legacy of the old state of things. I shall write to you in the old lines about it in a few days, as also about the future of the Tantric yoga. Judging from what I have heard of the facts, I do not think the difficulty about S. is likely to materialise—unless there are facts behind of which I do not know. Unfortunately the manner in which the Tantric Yoga has been carried on is so full of the old faults of the former Tantric sadhana that a catastrophe was inevitable. The new Yoga cannot be used as a sort of sauce for old dishes—it must occupy the whole place, on peril of serious difficulties in the Siddhi & even disasters. I shall write to you about what I propose to do about Vedantic Yoga & publication—as yet it has not been sufficiently formulated to write. At present we have only started a new society here called a *L'Idée Nouvelle* (the New Idea) & are trying to get an authorisation.

K.

Dear Moti Babu

We are in absolute want of cloths. Will you please take a little attention on that point and relieve us from this absolute want. K is going out now-a-days and at least see that we want some cloths.

Do not send in login's name—they are going back to Bengal. Send it to David.

Yours A.  
(Amrita)

## Letter No. 13

Dear M

I have received from Grindlays Rs 400/-. That leaves Rs 200/- out of the Rs 1000/- which I hope will be received by next August, we have also the cloth & shoes but for myself only the slippers are useful as the shoes are too large. I have written to Sourin about the garden money & he says he has asked Sukumar (Sukumar Mitra) to send it. But I have received nothing as yet. If I get this money and the remaining Rs 200/- from Das that will be Rs 1100 in hand. With 100/- more and 130/- on account of the old rent, say Rs 250/- altogether, we shall be provided for bare necessities for a year during which other conditions may arise. That Rs 250/- ought to come from Sham babu and Sharma, but there is little hope of money once swallowed by a patriot being disgorged again. His philanthropic stomach digests sovereignly. I must seek it elsewhere. If this can be done, the only burden which will fall on you is to refurnish us with apparel and footwear from time to time. At the same time our attempt should be made to keep up the arrangement with Das if possible, for we do not know whether our attempt to provide otherwise will succeed.

That attempt takes the form of a new philosophical Review with Richard & myself as editors—the Arya which is to be brought out in French & English, two separate editions—one for France, one for India, England & America. In this Review my new theory of the Veda will appear, as also translation and explanation of the Upanishads, a series of essays giving my system of yoga & a book of Vedantic philosophy (not Shankar's but Vedic Vedanta) giving the Upanishadic foundations of my theory of the ideal life towards which humanity must move. You will see so far as my share is concerned, it will be the intellectual side of my work for the world. The Review will be of 64 pages to start with & the subscription Rs 6/- annually. Of the French edition 600 copies will be issued, and it will cost about Rs 750 a year minus postage. Richard reckoned 200 subscribers in France at the start, i.e. Rs 1200 in the year. For the English edition we are thinking of an issue of 1000 copies, at the cost of about Rs 1200 annually. We shall need therefore at least 200 hundred subscribers to meet this expense & some more so that the English edition

may pay all its own expenses. Let us try 250 subscribers to start, with the ideal of having 800 to 1000 in the first year. If these subscribers can be got before the Review starts, we shall have a sound financial foundation to start with. The question is, can they be got? We are printing a prospectus with specimens of the writings from my translation & commentary on a Vedic hymn, & an extract from Richard's collections of the central sayings of great sages of all times called the Eternal Wisdom to show the nature of the Review. This is supposed to come out in the middle of this month, and the Review on the 15th August, so there will be nearly two months for collecting subscribers. How far can you help us in this work? There is always one thing about which great care has to be taken, that is, there should be no entanglement of this Review in Indian politics or a false association created by the police finding it in the house of some political suspects they search for, in that case people will be afraid to subscribe. My idea is that young men should be got as agents who would canvas for the Review all over Bengal, but there so many young men are now political suspects that it may not be easy to find any who will be free and active and yet above suspicion. In that case some other method must be tried. I should like to know from you as soon as possible how far you can help us and how many copies of the prospectus we should send to you. If the Review succeeds, if, that is to say we get in India 850 regular subscribers, and 250 in France etc. we shall be able to meet the expense of the establishment, translation-staff etc and yet have enough for each of the editors to live on with their various kinds of families, say Rs 100 a month for each. In that case the money-question will practically be solved. There will of course, be other expenses besides mere living and there may be from time to time exceptional expenses, such as publication of books etc, but these may be met otherwise or as the Review increases its subscribers. Therefore use your best endeavour towards this end.

The second part of my work is the practical, consisting in the practice of yoga, by an ever increasing number of young men all over the country. We have started here a society called the New Idea with that object, and a good many young men are taking up Vedantic Yoga and some progressing much. You say it has spread in the North all over. But in what way? I am not at all enamoured of the way in which it seems to be practised outside Bengal. It seems there to be mixed up with the old kind

of Tantra, sometimes of the most *paisachic* and undesirable kind and to be kept merely as a sauce for that fiery (?) and gruesome dish. Better no vyapti at all outside Bengal, if it is not to be purified and divine yoga. In Bengal itself, there are faults which cannot but have undesirable consequences. In the first place, there is the misplacement of values. Vedanta is practised, or so seems to be in some quarters, for the sake of Tantra, and in order to give a force to Tantra. That is not right at all. Tantra is only valuable so far as it enables us to give effect to Vedanta and in itself has no value or necessity at all. Then the two are mixed up in a most undesirable fashion, so that the Vedanta is likely to be affected by the same disrepute and difficulties on the way of profession as hamper the recognition of the truth in Tantra i.e. in its real sense, value and effectivity.

There are difficulties enough already, let us not willfully increase them. You have seen, for instance, that in recent political trials yoga pamphlets and books seem to have been kept together everywhere with the queerest incongruity. That is a thing we could not control, we can only hope that it will not happen again. But meanwhile the work of publicity and spreading our yoga has got an unnecessary difficulty thrown in its way. Do not let any add to it by associating Vedanta and Tantra together in an inexpressible fashion. The Tantric yogins are few and should be comparatively reticent—for Vedanta is a wider thing and men may then help to fulfil it in all kinds of ways. Let the Tantriks then practise Vedanta silently, not trumpeting abroad its connection with their own particular school but with self-restraint and the spirit of self-sacrifice, knowing that they are only one small corps in a march that is vast and so meant to be world-embracing. The more they isolate themselves from the rest of the host that is in formation, the more they will be free for their own work and the more they will help without hampering the wider march.

Then as to the work of the Tantric discipline and kriya itself. Remember that Tantra is not like Vedanta, it is a yoga for material gains, that has always been its nature. Only now not for personal gains, but for effectivity in certain directions of the general yoga of mankind. The question I wish you to ask yourself, is whether you think that with its present imperfect basis it can really do the work for which it was intended. I see that it cannot. There have been two stages: first, the old

Tantra which has broken down and exists only in a scattered way ineffectual for any great aid of humanity; secondly, our new Tantra which succeeded at first because it was comparatively pure in spite of the difficulties created by the remnants of egoism. But since then two things have happened. It has tried to extend itself with the result of bringing in undesirable elements; secondly, it has tried to attempt larger result from a basis which was no longer sufficient and had begun to be unsound. A third stage is now necessary that of a preparation in full knowledge no longer resting on a blind faith in God's power and will, but receiving consciously that will, the illumination that guides its workings and the power that determines its results. If the thing is to be done it must be done no longer as by a troop stumbling on courageously in the dark and losing its best strength by failures and the results of unhappy blunders, but with the full divine power working out its will in its instruments.

What is necessary for that action? First, that the divine knowledge and power should manifest perfectly in at least one man in India. In myself it is trying so to manifest as rapidly as the deficiencies of my mind and body will permit, and also—this is important—as rapidly as the defects of my chief friends and helpers will permit. For all those have to be taken on myself spiritually and may retard my own development. I advance, but at every fresh stage have to go back to receive some fresh load of imperfection that comes from outside. I want now some breathing time however brief which will enable me to accomplish the present stage which is the central of my advance. This once accomplished, all the rest is inevitable. This not accomplished, the seed of our yogic movement is externally a failure or a pitiful small result. That is the first reason why I call a halt.

The second necessity is that others should receive the same power and light. In the measure that mine grows, theirs also will increase in power provided always they do not separate themselves from me by the ahankara. A sufficient Vedantic basis provided, a long, slow and obscure Tantra will no longer be necessary. The power that I am developing if it reaches consummation, will be able to accomplish its effects automatically by any method chosen. If it uses Tantrik kriyas, it will then be because God has chosen that means, because He wishes to put the Shakta part of it to go forward first & not the Vedantic and that kriya will then

be irresistible in its effect, perhaps even strange and new in its means and forms. I have then to effect that power and communicate it to others. But at present the forces of the material Prakriti strive all their remaining energy against the spiritual mastery that is being sought to impose on them. And it is especially in the field to which your kriyas have belonged and kindred fields that they are still too strong for me. You will remember what has been written, that the Sadhana shall first be applied in things that do not matter and only afterwards used for life. This is not an absolute rule, but it is the rule of necessity to apply for sometime now in this particular matter. I see that I have the necessary powers; I shall communicate them next to you & some others, so that there may be a centre of irresistible spiritual light & effective force wherever needed. Then a rapid and successful kriya can be attempted. This is the second reason why I have called a halt.

The first and supreme object you must have now is to put forward in yourself and in others the Vedantic yoga in the sense I have described. The spread of the idea is not sufficient, you must have real yogins, not merely men moved intellectually and emotionally by one or two of the central ideas of the yoga. Spreading of the idea is the second necessity, for that the Review at present offers itself among other means. The other means is to form brotherhood, not formal but real, (not societies of the European kind but informal groups of people united by one effort and one feeling) for the practice of the Vedantic Yoga (without any necessary thought of the Tantric). But of this I shall write to you hereafter.

Finally as to commercial matters. I had arranged things according to the last idea, but at the last moment an objection was made, that the arrangement was not a very reasonable one—an objection which my reason was forced to admit. It was then proposed to send the Brahmin as a commercial agent and I so wrote to you. But afterwards when I asked for him to be sent I was informed that the Brahmin was no longer possible as a commercial agent as he was now an object of suspicion to the third party. Another man I had fixed on is so circumstanced that he cannot go now. There the matter stands. As for your suggestion, these people here never objected to dealing direct with you, the objection was mine due to the terms & the accidents of your correspondence. On the other hand every attempt I have made personally to get the matter settled has been

frustrated by Krishna. I have made these attempts contrary to the inner instructions received & by the light of the reason. That always fails with me, if it succeeds momentarily, brings some coarse result afterwards. The point now is that if you do as you suggest, it must be so done that there shall not be the least chance of the transaction interfering with our business here—I mean not any commercial business, but the enterprises (Society, Review etc.) we are starting. The question is not one of direct communication, but of right handling and specially of the right person (?) not only from the point of view of the buyer & seller but with regard to the third party who is indirectly interested in the transaction. In any case you must write to me what you propose to do, before you act.

By the way there was a very shocking and अश्लील<sup>1</sup> (Ashil) word in your last letter to me with regard to my past activities Bandemataram, Karmoyogin etc. I do not wish to repeat it here. Please do not use such indecorous expression in writing in future. In personal talk it does not matter, but not, if you please in correspondence. As to your request for details of my life about which you wrote to Bejoy it is a very difficult matter for there is very little one can write without offending people, as for example S. Mullick, B. Pal, S. S. Chakraborty and revealing party secret. However we shall see what can be done. But let me know what you ate writing about me and how and where you mean to publish it.

A. G.

## Letter No. 14

Dear M.

I write to-day only about two business matters. As to the Review, I do not think we can dispense with the 200 subscribers whom you promise. The only difficulty is that, if there are political suspects among them, it will give the police a handle for connecting politics & the Review & thus frightening the public. But this is not a sufficient reason for the Review refusing so many subscribers or for so large a number being deprived of the enlightenment it may bring them. Therefore, some arrangement should be made. I should suggest that you should make those sub-

---

[1] Indecorous.

scribers who are mainly interested in Yoga and as for those who decline to give up political opinions of a vehement nature or to conceal them so as not to fall into police snares, they may without becoming subscribers on our list receive the Review from trustworthy agents appointed by you as our representative. The agent must let us or you know the number of copies wanted, send in the money and receive the Review from us or you in a packet, as a declared agent commissioned to sell a certain number of copies, receiving (nominally) a discount on each copy sold. I suggest this arrangement but if another would be more convenient, please let us know. You must organise the subscription matter before starting for your pilgrimage so that we may have a fair start in August. I shall write a longer letter to you about Yoga & other matters as soon as I have a little time.

The Psalmist was here. He asked for the Calcutta address and I gave it to him. It appears he is sending it to Calcutta in connection with a business he wants to wind up. It is difficult to understand because he says it is a commercial secret, but he tells me you will understand if I send you the accompanying cabalistic figures—God save us from all mysteries except those of Tantric Yoga.

*Kali.*

## **Letter No. 15**

Dear M.

Again a business letter. Enclosed you will find two samples of paper, taken from a sample book of the Titaghur Mills which we want made to order, of a certain size, for our Review. Will you please see *at once* the agent in Calcutta, whose address is given, and ask him for all the particulars, the price, whether the paper of that sample, of the size required, is available or can be made to order by them, in what minimum amount, within what time etc. and let the Manager know immediately by the British post.

What about the commercial transaction and my last letter? The Psalmist brother is asking for reply.

K.

P.S. Received your letter. Please let us know how many copies of the Arya you want sent to you for sale, since you cannot get subscribers. I shall write later. The divorce from Tantricism is necessary if you are to do the work of the Review or the other work I wish you to undertake. You must surely see that. Neither will march if there are any occurrences of the old kind mixing them up together.

## Letter No. 16

Dear M.

I have not written for a long time for several reasons.

Our position here since the war has become increasingly difficult and delicate, as the administration is run for the moment by certain subordinates who are actively hostile to the Swadeshis. I have therefore adopted a policy of entire reserve including abstention from correspondence with Bengal even with officially unobjectionable people. Our correspondence now is chiefly limited to Arya business.

Your internal struggle in the yoga has naturally its causes. I shall help you as much as possible spiritually, but you must get rid of everything that gives a handle to the enemy in ourselves. Your letters for a long time showed a considerable revival of rajasic egoism, contracted, I suppose, by association with the old Tantrics and that always brings in our yoga disagreeable consequences. If you could make yourselves entirely pure instruments, things would go much better. But there is always something in the prana and intellect which kicks against the pricks and resists the purifier. Specially get rid of the *Ahang Karta* element, which usually disguises itself under the idea "I am the chosen yantra." Despise no one, try to see God in all and Self in all. The Shakti in you will then act better on your materials and environment.

There is another point. You sent a message about an "Aurobinda Math" which seemed to show you had caught the contagion which rages in Bengal. You must understand that my mission is not to create maths, ascetics and Sannyasis, but to call back the souls of the strong to the Lila of Krishna & Kali. That is my teaching, as you can see from the Review

and my name must never be connected with monastic forms or the monastic ideal. Every ascetic movement since the time of Buddha has left India weaker and for a very obvious reason. Renunciation of life is one thing, to make life itself, national, individual, world-life greater & more divine is another. You cannot enforce one ideal on the country without weakening the other. You cannot take away the best souls from life & yet leave life stronger & greater. Renunciation of ego, acceptance of God in life is the yoga I teach—no other renunciation.

Sourin has written to you about Bejoy's detention. M. Richard wrote to the Madras Government, but with the usual result.

Here one of the Swadeshis, a certain V. V. S. Aiyar has been hauled up for circulating unauthorised pamphlets from America. It appears the Govt of Pondicherry has established a censorship in the French P. O. and open letters etc from abroad. They have intercepted some wonderful pamphlets of the usual sanguinary order asking India to rise & help Germany which some fool had sent to his address from New York. On the strength of this a case has been trumped up against Aiyar who knew nothing about either the New York idiot or his pamphlets. The funny thing is that all the time Aiyar seems to be fervently anti-German in his sentiments & pro-Belgian & pro-Servian! So this wonderful French administration insists on making him a martyr for the cause he denounces. One thing I could never appreciate is the utility of this pamphleteering business, of which Indian revolutionists are so fond. Pamphlets won't liberate India, but they do seem to succeed in getting their distributors and non-distributors also into prison. My connection with Aiyar has been practically nil, as in normal times I only saw him once in two years. But here all the Swadeshis are lumped together, so we have to be careful not only that we give no handle to our enemies, but that other people don't give them a handle against us—which is just a little difficult.

You have decided, it seems, to carry on Tantra & Mantra, *anusthana* and pure Vedanta together! My objection to it was from the standpoint of the Review and Vedantic work generally. Anusthan & the Review do not go well together. Of course, a synthesis is always possible, but amalgamation is not synthesis.

A. G.

P.S. By the way, try to realise one thing. The work we wish to do cannot produce its effects on the objective world until my Ashta siddhi is strong enough to work upon that world organically and as a whole, & it has not yet reached that point. No amount of rajasic eagerness on my part or on yours or anybody else's will fill the place or can substitute itself as the divine instrument which will be definitely effective. In the matter of the Review Bejoy has found that out by this time! I have found it out myself by constant experience & warning. You also, if you wish to profit by my teaching, should learn it also without the necessity of experience.

### Letter No. 17

29 August, 1914

Dear M.

Before your letter came i.e. yesterday, the news was published that the Government had drawn back from its proposal, and today the Amrita Bazar with its comment arrived. I presume, therefore, no immediate answer from me is needed. But in case anything of the kind is raised again, I shall give you my opinion in the matter.

We gain nothing by preaching an unconditional loyalty to the Government, such as is the fashion now-a-days, or doing anything which even in appearance strengthens the discursion towards an abject and unmanly tone in politics. Gandhi's loyalism is not a pattern for India which is not South Africa, & even Gandhi's loyalism is corrected by passive resistance. An abject love of servility in politics is not "diplomacy" & is not good politics. It does not deceive or disarm the opponent; it does encourage nervelessness, fear & a cringing cunning in the subject people. What Gandhi has been attempting in S. Africa is to secure for Indians the position of kindly treated serfs,—as a stepping-stone to something better. Loyalty & Ambulance Corps mean the same thing in India. But the conditions of India are not those of S. Africa; our position is different & our aim is different, not to secure a few privileges, but to create a nation of men fit for independence & able to secure & keep it. We have been beaten in the first attempt, like every other nation similarly circumstanced. That is no reason why the whole people should go back to a

condition of abject fear, grovelling loyalty & whining complaint. The public Nationalist policy has always been

1. Eventual independence.
2. No co-operation without control.
3. A masculine courage in speech & action. Let us add a fourth,
4. Readiness to accept real concessions & pay their just price, but no more.

Beyond that, I do not see the necessity of any change. We recognise that immediate independence is not practicable & we are ready to defend the British rule against any foreign nation, for that means defending our own future independence.

Therefore, if the Government accepts volunteers or favours the institution of Boy-Scouts, we give our aid, but not to be mere stretcher-bearers. That is the side of principle; now let us look at that of policy.

(1) I don't appreciate Sarat Maharaja's position. If self-sacrifice is the object, every human being has the whole of life as a field for self-sacrifice & does not depend on any Government for that. We can show our sacrificing activities every moment, if we want. It is not a question of sacrifice at all, it is a question of military training. If the young men wish to organise for charitable work, the Government is not going to stop it, even though they may watch and suspect. I put that aside altogether

(2) The leaders suggested co-operation in return for some substantial self-government. They are now offering co-operation without any return at all. Very self-sacrificing, but not political. If indeed, Government were willing to train "thousands of young men" in military service as volunteers, territorials or boy-scouts, whether for keeping the peace or as a reserve in case of invasion, then we need not boggle about the return. But, after so much experience, do these addle-headed politicians think the Government is going to do that except in case of absolute necessity and as a choice between two evils? When will that absolute necessity come? Only if the war goes against them seriously & they have to withdraw their troops from India. I shall discuss that point later on.

(3) Meanwhile what have the Government done? After testing the temper of the people &, you may be sure, watching closely what young men came forward as volunteers & who did not, they have removed an

offer which had already been whittled down to a mere harmless Ambulance Corps in which the young men have plenty of chances of getting killed, but none of learning real warfare. Mere common sense warns us not to trust such an administration & to think ten times before accepting its offers. We know Lord Hardinge's policy: (1) sweet words, (2) quiet systematic coercion, (3) concession where obstinacy would mean too great a row & too much creation of deep-seated hostility.

Having prefaced so much, let us look at the utility of the things offered us or offered by us.

### 1. Ambulance Corps.

The only possible utilities would be two, (1) to train two thousand young men to be steady under fire (2) to train them to act together under discipline in an easy but dangerous service. Now it is quite possible for us to create courage in our young men without these means, & I hope our best men, or let me say, our men generally do not need to become stretcher-bearers in a European war in order to have the necessary nerve, courage, steadiness & discipline. If therefore an Ambulance Corps is again suggested & accepted, either refuse or let only those young men go who are enthusiastic, but still lightheaded, self-indulgent or undisciplined. Possibly, the experience may steady & discipline them. It may be necessary to let this be done, if the circumstances are such that to refuse entirely would reflect on our national courage or be interpreted as a backing out from a national engagement.

2. Boy-Scouts—Volunteer Corps—Territorials. All these are-entirely good, provided the police are kept at a distance, & provided officers as well as men are trained & the Govt control is limited to the giving of military discipline in the first two cases. Even without the second proviso, any of these things would be worth accepting.

Only in the case of volunteers going to the scene of war, you must see that we are not crippled by all our best men or even a majority being sent; only enough to bring in an element among us who have seen actual warfare.

I think any of these things may one day become possible. Since the last year new forces have come into the world and are now strong enough to act, which are likely to alter the whole face of the world. The

present war is only a beginning, not the end. We have to consider what are our chances & what we ought to do in these circumstances.

The war is open to a certain number of broad chances:

I. Those bringing about the destruction of the two Teutonic empires, German & Austrian.

This may happen either by an immediate German defeat, its armies being broken & chased back from Belgium & Alsace-Lorraine to Berlin, which is not probable, or by the Russian arrival at Berlin & a successful French stand near Rheims or Compiègne; or by the entry of Italy & the remaining Balkan States into the War & the invasion of Austro-Hungary from two sides.

II. Those bringing about the weakening or isolation of the British Power.

This may be done by the Germans destroying the British expeditionary force &, entering Paris & dictating terms to France, while Russia is checked in its march to Berlin by a strong Austro-German force opening in the German quadrilateral between the forts of Danzig, Thorn, Posen and Königsberg. If this happens Russia may possibly enter into a compact with Germany based on a reconciliation of the three Empires and a reversion to the old idea of a simultaneous attack on England and a division of her Empire between Germany & Russia.

III. Those bringing about the destruction of British Power. This may happen by the shattering of the British fleet and a German landing in England.

In either of these two last cases the invasion of India by Germany, Russia or Japan is only a question of time, and England will be unable to resist except by one of three means:

1. universal conscription in England & the colonies.
2. the aid of Japan or some other foreign power.
3. the aid of the Indian people.

The first is useless for the defence of India, in case III, & can only be applied in case II, if England is still mistress of the seas. The second is dangerous to England herself, since the ally who helps, may also covet. The third means the concession of self-government to India.

In case I, there will only remain four considerable Powers in Europe & Asia, Russia, France, England, Japan—with perhaps a Balkan Confederacy or Empire as a fifth. That means as the next stage a struggle between England & Russia in Asia. There again England is reduced to one of the three alternatives or a combination of them.

Of course, the War may take different turns from the above, with slightly altered circumstances & result; the one thing that is impossible is that it should leave the world as it was before. In any case, the question of India must rise at no very long date.

If England adopts more or less grudgingly the third alternative, our opportunity arrives and we must be ready to take it—on this basis, continuance of British rule & co-operation until we are strong enough to stand by ourselves. If not, we must still decide how we are to prepare ourselves, so as not to pass from one foreign domination to a worse.

I want those of you who have the capacity to consider the situation as I have described it, to think over it, enlarging our old views which are no longer sufficient, and accustom yourselves to act always with these new & larger conceptions in your minds. I shall write nothing myself about my views, just as yet, as that might prevent you from thinking yourselves.

Only, two things you will see obviously from it, first, the necessity of seizing on any opportunity that arises of organisation or military training (not self-sacrificing charity, that has already been done); secondly, the necessity of creating an organisation & finding the means, if no opportunity presents itself. It will be necessary for some one from Bengal to come & see me before long, but that will probably not be till October or later.

I shall write to you before long further on the subject, as also on other matters.

*K.*

## Letter No. 18

Dear M.

Recently in the papers there has appeared a case of one Rashbehary Bose, against whom a warrant of extradition has been granted by the Chandernagore Administrator *in a political case*. Although ordinarily we do not concern ourselves with political matters, this concerns me & my friends, because it is an attack on the security of our position. If this kind of thing is allowed to go unchallenged, then any of us may at any moment be extradited on a trumped up charge by the British police. I must therefore, ask you to interest yourself in the matter, even though it interferes with your Yoga. The case is clearly a political one; for the main charges in the Delhi case seem to be (1) a charge of conspiracy on a clause relating to State (i.e. political) offences (2) a charge of murder under sec. 302(?) read in connection with this State offences section; therefore an assassination with a political intention; (3) a charge under the Explosives Act which is an extraordinary measure passed in view of certain political conditions.

Moreover, all these cases are tried together & form part of the same transaction, i.e. a political conspiracy directed against the existing form of Govt & having for its object the change or overthrow of that Govt. Under the Extradition Treaty between France & England—unless that has been altered by the latest Treaty to which I have not had access, there can be no Extradition for (1) a political offence, (2) an offence of a political character or tendency, (3) on a charge which, though preferred as for an ordinary offence is really an excuse or device for laying hands on a political offender. Rashbehary Bose is reported to be in hiding either in Chandernagore or the Punjab. If anybody moves therefore, it can only be a relative or friend on his behalf,—a relative would be much better. What you have to do is to get hold of someone entitled to act for him, consult the text of the latest Extradition Treaty between France & England and, if it is as I have stated, then let it be put in the hands of a lawyer of the French court who must move in the matter according to the French procedure about which I know nothing. I presume he would have to move the Govt in France or failing there, the Court of Cassation in Paris, but

the latter would be an expensive affair. So long as Bose is not handed over to the British (if he is in Chandernagore), the Court of Cassation has, I should suppose, the power of canceling the warrant. I do not know whether it is necessary first to appeal to the Procureur-General in Pondicherry before going to the Higher Court. On these points of procedure Bose's representative will have to consult a French lawyer. In case he is handed over, the Hague decision with regard to Savarkar will come in the way & make the thing almost hopeless. The French Govt might still move on the ground that Bose is a French subject, but it could only succeed by strong diplomatic pressure which the present Fr. Govt might be unwilling to employ. In any case it might be worthwhile to get a decree of the Court of Cassation so as to establish the principle. There is always, however, the danger in these political cases, where justice & law are so seldom observed, of an opposite decision making the position worse than before. It would be worthwhile finding out what exactly was done & on what grounds in Charu Chander Ray's case and seeing whether these grounds can be made to apply. If you will give me the exact facts of the warrant, the charges etc., I may be able to get a letter written to France so that Jaures or others may move in this matter.

As to your Tantric Yoga, the reasons of your failures are so obvious that I am surprised you should attribute it all to the Goddess and not to the unpardonable blunders we have all been making in our Yogic kriya. Kali of the Tantras is not a goddess who is satisfied with mere tamasic faith & adoration. Perfection in Kriya is indispensable or at least a conscientious and diligent attempt at perfection. This has not been made; on the contrary all the defects that have made Tantra ineffective throughout the Kaliyuga abound in your *anusthana*. All this must be changed, for the warning has been given & it will be wise to give heed to it. If not, well, you know what the Gita says about those who from ahankara hear not.

The root of the whole evil is that we have been attempting an extension of Tantric Kriya without any sufficient Vedantic basis. You specially were going on the basis that if a man had faith, enthusiasm, intellectual & emotional sincerity & proffered self-surrender, all that was necessary was there & he could go on straight to difficult Tantric anusthana. This basis is condemned. A much stronger & greater foundation is necessary.

It was the basis of the sattwic ahankara, which said to itself, "I am the chosen of Kali, I am her bhakta, I have every claim on her, I can afford to be negligent about other things, she is bound to help & guard me." It is this sattwic ahankara which I have long felt to be the great obstacle in our Yoga; some have it in the sattwa-rajasic form, others in the sattwa-tamasic, but it is there in you all, blinding your vision, limiting your strength, frustrating your progress. And its worst quality that it is unwilling to admit its own defects, or if it admits one, it takes refuge in another. Open your eyes to this enemy within you and expel it. Without that purification you can have no success. "To do rajasic kriya in a sattwic spirit" is merely to go on in the old way while pretending to oneself that there is a change. Going on in the old way is out of the question. That path can only lead to the pit. I speak strongly because I see clearly, if not yet with absolute vision, yet without that misleading false light which marred all my seeing till now & allowed me to be swept in the flood of confused sattwa-rajasic impure Shakti which came with you from Bengal.

My first instruction to you therefore is to pause, stand on the defence against your spiritual enemies & go on with your Vedantic Yoga. God is arranging things for me in my knowledge, but the process is not yet finished. I shall send you (it will take two or three letters) the lines on which I wish the Vedantic & Tantric lines to be altered & developed; afterwards we shall see when we have recovered these from Shastras that is Upanishadic elements to work them out in practice.

Please send me the Rs 50/- with you, as I am again in the position of having to replace money diverted to current expenses & have very little of any other use to me. Also try to get the rest of the money from Das. If not, you will have to find me an additional 20 for the last month & another 20 for next in addition to the monthly Rs 50 & deduct the sum of Rs 20 from Das's payment when you get it.

*Kali.*

P.S. I have a sum of Rs 10 to pay monthly for a purpose unconnected with our own expenses & in addition certain additional expenses of my own which I cannot dispense with; for this reason Rs 50 is insufficient. I hope Das will be in a position to send the balance of the money this time.

## Letter No. 19

Dear M.

Your letter and enclosure (50) reached us all right. We have not received the Rs 200 due from Das. As for the Rs 500, that has nothing to do with the garden money of my uncle, it is a sum promised to me which Sourin was to have brought, but it was not paid in time. He tells me he told you about it before he came and he wrote also from here. Our actual expenses here are Rs 115 a month; this can be reduced if we get another house, but you know that is not easy in Pondicherry. I note that we are to get Rs 50 from you in the latter part of this month.

So much for money matters. It is regrettable that the Government should think you are mixed up in political matters and that you are in the list of suspects. But once they get that idea into their heads, it is impossible to change it; once a suspect, always a suspect is their rule. They are particularly good at purchasing trouble for themselves and others in this way and just now they are all fear and suspicion and see revolutions in every bush. The only thing is to be extremely careful. You should not on any account move out of Chandernagore so long as the war measures are in force; for in these times innocence is no defence.

It is regrettable that Bengal should be unable to find anything in the Arya, but not surprising. The intellect of Bengal has been so much fed on chemical tablets of thought and hot-spiced foods that anything strong and substantial is indigestible to it. Moreover people in India are accustomed only to second hand thoughts—the old familiar ideas of the six philosophies. Patanjali etc, etc. Any new presentation of life and thought and Yoga upsets their expectations and is unintelligible to them. The thought of the Arya demands close thinking from the reader; it does not spare him the trouble of thinking and understanding and the minds of the people have long been accustomed to have the trouble of thought spared them. They know how to indulge their minds, they have forgotten how to exercise them.

It does not matter very much just now, so long as the people who practise the Yoga, read and profit. The Arya presents a new philosophy and a new method of Yoga and everything that is new takes time to get a

hearing. Of course, in reality it is only the old brought back again, but so old that it has been forgotten. It is only those who practise and experience that can at first understand it. In a way, this is good, because it is meant to change the life of people and not merely satisfy the intellect. In France it has been very much appreciated by those who are seeking the truth, because these people are not shut up in old and received ideas, they are on the look-out for something which will change the inner and outer life. When the same state of mind can be brought about here, the Arya will begin to be appreciated. At present, Bengal only understands and appreciates politics and asceticism. The central ideas of the Arya are Greek to it.

Soon after Arya began, I got a letter from some graduates saying that what they wanted was "man-making". I have done my share of man-making and it is a thing which now anybody can do; Nature herself is looking after it all over the world, though more slowly in India than elsewhere. My business is now not man-making, but divine man-making. My present teaching is that the world is preparing for a new progress, a new evolution. Whatever race, whatever country seizes on the lines of that new evolution and fulfils it, will be the leader of humanity. In the Arya I state the thought upon which this new evolution will be based as I see it, and the method of Yoga by which it can be accomplished. Of course, I cannot speak plainly yet my whole message, for obvious reasons, I have to put it in a severe, colorless fashion which cannot be pleasing to the emotional and excitement-seeking Bengali mind. But the message is there, for those who care to understand. It has really three parts (1) for each man as an individual to change himself into the future type of divine humanity, the men of the new Satyayuga which is striving to be born; (2) to evolve a race of such men to lead humanity and (3) to call all humanity to the path under the lead of these pioneers and this chosen race. India and especially Bengal have the best chance and the best right to create that race and become the leaders of the future, to do in the right way, what Germany thought of doing in the wrong way. But first they must learn to think, to cast away old ideas, and turn their faces resolutely to the future. But they cannot do this, if they merely copy European politics or go on eternally reproducing Buddhistic asceticism. I am afraid the Rama Krishna mission with all its good intentions is only going to give

us Shankaracharya & Buddhistic humanitarianism. But that is not the goal to which the world is moving. Meanwhile remember that these are very difficult times and careful walking is necessary. It is just possible that the war may come to an end in a few months, for the old immobility is beginning to break down and the forces at work behind the veil are straining towards a solution. While the war continues, nothing great can be done, we are fettered on every side. Afterwards things will change and we must wait for the development.

K.

### Letter No. 20

Dear M.

I have not written for a long time because nothing definite came to me to be written. We are in a state of things in which every movement fails to come to a decisive result, because everywhere and in every thing the forces are balanced by contrary forces. At the present moment the world is passing through an upheaval in which all forces possible have been let loose and none therefore has a triumphant action. Ordinarily, there are certain puissances, certain ideas which are given a dominant impulsion and conquest, those opposing them being easily broken after a first severe struggle. Now every thing is different. Where ever a force or an idea tries to assert itself in action, all that can oppose rushes to stop it and there follows a "struggle of exhaustion". You see that in Europe now, no one can succeed; nothing is accomplished, only that which already was, maintains itself with difficulty. At such a time one has to act as little as possible and prepare and fortify as much as possible—that is to say, that is the rule for those who are not compelled to be in in the battle of the present and whose action tends more towards the future.

I had hoped that we should be much more "forward" at this period, but the obstacles have been too great. I have not been able to get anything active into shape. Consequently, we have to go on as before for some time longer. Our action depends on developing sufficient spiritual power to overcome the enormous material obstacles opposed to us, to

shape minds, men, events, means, things. This we have got as yet in very insufficient quantity.

You have done well in confining yourself to Vedantic Yoga; you can see for yourself that the Tantric bears no secure and sufficient fruit without a very strong and faultless Vedantic basis. Otherwise you have a medley of good and bad sadhakas associating together and the bad spoil the kriya of the good; for a collective yoga is not like a solitary one, it is not free from collective influences; it has a collective soul which cannot afford to be in some parts either raw or rotten. It is this which modern Tantrics do not understand, their aspiration is not governed by old Shashtra founded on the experience of centuries. A *chakra* for instance, must either be perfectly composed or immediately governed and protected by the spiritual force of some powerful guru. But our modern minds are too impatient to see to these things.

As for your external difficulties, I mean with regard to the bad ideas the government or the police have about you and the consequent obstacles and pressure, that is a result of past Karma and probably of some present associations and can hardly be cured. I see people are interned who have no connection at all with politics or have long cut off whatever connection they had. Owing to the war, the authorities are uneasy & suspicious and being ill-served by their police act on prejudgments and often on false report. You have to sit tight, spiritually defend yourself and physically avoid putting yourself where the police can do you any harm, and so far as possible, avoid also doing anything which would give any colour or appearance of a foundation for their prejudices. More can hardly be done. One cannot throw aside friends because they are suspects; in that case, we should have to begin with ourselves. If on the ground of such associations we are ourselves more suspected,—as, for instance, the officials make it a grievance against me that although I am doing nothing political myself yet I associate with my Madrasi friends against whom they have chosen to launch warrants for sedition, etc, it cannot be helped. We cannot suffer political or police dictation in our private friendships. What has become of the "Prabartak"?

The last number was very good, but for a long time we have had no other. Is the administration withholding visa or are there other reasons

for the irregularity? I hope it is not a discontinuance. We have the Arya here visaed without delay or difficulties.

If you have difficulties of any kind it is well to let me know at once; for I can then concentrate what force I have more particularly to help you. The help may not be always or immediately effective, but it will count and may be more powerful than a general will, not instructed in the particular necessity. You must not mind if you do not get always a written answer; the unwritten will always be there.

I leave it to the Manager of the Arya to write to you about business matters.

K.

## Letter No. 21

Dear M.

If you want discipline, the first thing of that kind I would impose on you or ask you to impose on yourselves is self-discipline, *atma-samyama*, and the first element in that is obedience to the law of the Yoga—I have given to you. If you bring in things which do not belong to it at all and are quite foreign to it, such as "hunger-strikes" and vehement emotional revolt against the divine Will, it is idle to expect any rapid progress. That means that you insist on going on your own bypath and yet demand of me that I shall bring you to my goal. All difficulties can be conquered, but only on condition of fidelity to the Way that you have taken. There is no obligation on any one to take it,— it is a difficult and trying one, a way for heroes, not for weaklings,—but once taken, it must be followed, or you will not arrive.

Remember what is the whole basis of the Yoga. It is not founded upon the vehement emotionalism of the Bhaktimarga to which the temperament of Bengal is most prone, though it has a different kind of Bhakti, but on *samata* and *atma-samarpana*. Obedience to the divine Will, not assertion of self-will, is the very first *mantra*. But what can be a more violent assertion of self-will than to demand the result you desire, whether external or internal, at once, এই মুহূর্তে, এই ঋনে (Ei Muhurte,

Ei Kshane) and not in God's muhurta, God's moment? You say that there is complete utsarga, but it cannot be complete, if there is any kind of revolt or vehement impatience. The revolt and impatience mean always that there is a part of the being or something in the being which does not submit, has not given itself to God, but insists on God going out of his way to obey it. That may be very well in the Bhakti marga, but it will not do in this Way. The revolt and impatience may come and will come in the heart or the prana when these are still subject to imperfection and impurity; but it is then for the will and the faith in your buddhi to reject them, not act upon them. If the will consents, approves and supports them, it means that you are siding with the inner enemy. If you want rapid progress, the first condition is that you should not do this; for every time you do it, the enemy is strengthened and the shuddhi postponed. This is a difficult lesson to learn, but you must learn it. I do not find fault with you for taking long over it. I myself took full twelve years to learn it thoroughly, and even after I knew the principle well enough, it took me quite four years and more to master my lower nature in this respect. But you have the advantage of my experience and my help; you will be able to do it more rapidly, if you consciously and fully assist me, by not associating yourself with the enemy Desire; Jahi Kamam durasadam, remember that utterance of the Gita, it is a keyword of our Yoga.

As for Haradhan, he should show the way in calm, patience and endurance. He has been a soldier. How does he think the nations of Europe could have carried this war to an end, if they had grown so impatient of the fatigue of the trenches, suffering, disturbance, scarcity, continual postponement of the result, and declared that either they must have victory in a given time or throw up the struggle? Does he expect the inner war with our lower selves, the personal habit of thousands of lives and the human inheritance of ages, to be less arduous or to be carried out by a rapid and easy miracle? Hunger-striking to force God or to force any body or anything else is not the true spiritual means. I do not object to Mr Gandhi or any one else following it, for quite other than spiritual purposes, but here it is out of place; these things, I repeat, are foreign to the fundamental principle of our Yoga.

Shuddhi is the most difficult part of the whole Yoga, it is the condition of all the rest, and if that is once conquered, the real conquest is ac-

complished. The rest becomes a comparatively easy building on an assured basis,—it may take longer or shorter, but it can be done tranquilly and steadily. To prevent the shuddhi the lower nature in you and around you will exhaust all its efforts, and even when it cannot prevent, it will try to retard. And its strongest weapon then is, when you think you have got it, suddenly to break in on you and convince you that you have not got it, that it is far away, and so arouse disappointment, grief, loss of faith, discouragement, depression and revolt, the whole army of troubles that wait upon impure Desire. When you have once found calm, peace of mind, firm faith, equality and been able to live in it for sometime, then and only then you may be sure that shuddhi is founded; but you must not think it will not be disturbed. It will be, so long as your heart and prana are still capable of responding to the old movements, have still any memory and habit of vibrating to the old chords. The one thing necessary when the renewed trouble comes, is to stand back in your mind and will from it, refuse it the sanction of your higher being, even when it is raging in the lower nature. As that habit of refusal fixes itself,—at first you may not be able to do it, the buddhi may be lost in the storm,—you will find that the ashuddhi, even though it still returns, becomes less violent, more and more external, until it ceases to be anything more than a faint and short-lived touch from outside and finally comes no more. That is the course it has followed with me, not only with regard to this kind of disturbance, but with regard to all imperfections. You, since you have chosen to share my Yoga for mankind, must follow the same way, undergo the same disturbances.

This is a thing which it is necessary for you to understand clearly. I myself have had for these fourteen years, and it is not yet finished, to bear all the possible typical difficulties, troubles, downfalls and backslidings that can rise in this great effort to change the whole normal human being. How else could I have been able to help or guide others on the same way? Those who join me at the present stage, must share in my burden, especially those who are themselves chosen in any degree to lead, help and guide. It may be that when I have the complete siddhi,—which I have not yet, I am only on the way to it,—then, if it be God's will to extend very largely and rapidly my work in this body, those who come after may have the way made very easy for them. But we are the

pioneers hewing our way through the jungle of the lower prakriti. It will not do for us to be cowards and shirkers and refuse the burden, to clamour for everything to be made quick and easy for us. Above all things I demand from you endurance, firmness, heroism,—the true spiritual heroism. I want strong men. I do not want emotional children. Manhood first, দেবত্ব (devatva) can only be built upon that. If I do not get it in those who accept my Yoga, then I shall have to understand that it is not God's will that I should succeed. If that be so, I shall accept his will calmly. But meanwhile I go on bearing whatever burden he lays on me, meeting whatever difficulties he puts in the way of my siddhi. Personally, I am now sure of success in everything except in the kaya-siddhi, which is still doubtful, and in my work. The work can only succeed if I find noble and worthy helpers, fitted for it by the same struggles and the same endurance. I expect them in you.

Again you must not expect the shuddhi or any part of the siddhi to be simultaneous and complete at once in all whom you associate with you. One may attain, others progress, others linger. You must not expect a sudden collective miracle. I have not come here to accomplish miracles, but to show, lead the way, help, in the road to a great inner change of our human nature,—the outer change in the world is only possible if and when that inner transmutation is effected and extends itself. You must not expect to establish a perfect sangha all at once and by a single leap. If you make such demands on me, I can only say that I cannot do what is not God's will. Go forward calmly and firmly, not attached to success, not disturbed by unsuccess; my help will then not fail you.

As to your idea of work, it seems to me a little crude in form; but I have no objection to your beginning it, since you feel the pressing necessity. I shall write to you later on about it at more length. The only reason why I do not lay great stress on outer work, is that it must always be kachha, much embarrassed by difficulties, at best only a preparatory thing, until we are inwardly and spiritually ready. That is no reason why it shall not be done. Work done in the right spirit will itself become a means of the inner siddhi.

*Kali.*

## Letter No. 22

Dear M.

About your scheme of weekly paper—as for the name it is not difficult to find—it could be called the "Standard Bearer". But are you quite sure you will be able to live up to the name and carry the thing on in the requisite manner? Nalini (Gupta) and Suresh (Chakraborty) are not likely to be able to write; one does not write at all in English, the other can do it if he likes, but is even more 'মন্থর-গতি' (Manthara-gati) than in Bengali. To write for an English weekly would be beyond his present energies. As for myself, I am at present unable to write or do anything substantial, because of the extreme pressure of my Yoga, which has entirely occupied my time,—except for what I am obliged to give to the Arya and even that I have cut short as much as possible,—for the last few months. This state of things is likely to go on for the rest of the (English) year;—whether it will be changed in the beginning of the next is more than I can tell with any certainty. The whole work might fall on your two Chandernagore writers. An English weekly cannot be conducted like a Bengali monthly or fortnightly. And it is not going to be a political paper of the ordinary kind which can be filled up anyhow. It will have to maintain a high reputation to be at all successful. These things however are for you to consider; you know your own strength and how far the field in Bengal is ready. As to the symbol, none has come to me. I am not altogether favourably inclined to the Uttar Yogi idea nor any one else here. It sounds too like the old style of spiritual pretension, and, when it is put in a current English production, suggests bujruki. Plain colours and as few symbols as may be are what we want at the beginning. Indian spirituality has lost itself in a jungle of symbols and shlokas and we have to get out of them on to the plain and straight ways and the open heights, where we can see the "much work that has still to be done". Why any editors? Let the Shakti herself be the editor.

As to articles for the Prabartak, Nalini used to be your mainstay and he is now in another atmosphere, mainly hitherto of marriage and football, and complains of an inability to write. As for the other he has produced nothing since he left here, except a drama for the Bijoli and the answer to his Prabasi articles which was written and sent before he left

for Bengal. Moni's inspiration flows in channels hardly suitable for the Prabartak. As for myself it was only as a result of a solitary inspiration and with much trouble of rewriting that I got one thing done for you. Since then I have been too much occupied by my Yoga and not at all visited by any prerana or at least none which lasted long enough to produce more than a few lines. In this matter I am entirely dependent on the **थथानियुत्लोऽस्मि** as I have no natural control of the language and I have no time at present for exercising it by constant practice. It seems to me that Prabartak is getting on well enough as it is, though, if Nalini could write, it could produce an element of greater variety. You should be able to develop more writers with the necessary spiritual experience, grasp of the thought and literary ability,—these things the inner Shakti can bring to the surface if it is called upon for them,—so that Prabartak will not have to depend on three or four people only for its sustenance.

There is nothing more, I think, to add immediately,—if there is, I will keep it for later memory, so that this letter may not be further delayed. By the way, with regard to your design for the paper, the only thing that now suggests itself to me is the Hansa in the sun, that is the free soul lodged in the vijnana and the legend "In this sign thou shalt conquer", which is appropriate, but has the disadvantage of being borrowed from Christianity and Constantine. It would perhaps be better if you could find a Sanskrit equivalent or substitute.

K.

## Letter No. 23

Jan 2. 1920

Dear M—

I write to-day only for your question about Munindranath and the others. We have been imprisoned in the inferno of rain for the last few days and I have only just been able to get a reliable answer. They have only to get a sauf-conduit from the Chandernagore Administrator and then, as they are called here by the French Government for government work, nobody can interfere with their going and coming. This is what I am told and it ought obviously to be so. How are your people going to

vote? Martineau and Flandin are the two candidates at present and Martineau is impossible.

I note with some amusement the Secretary's letter to Bejoy Chatterjee. The logic of the Bengal Government's attitude is a little difficult to follow. However, I suppose the King's proclamation will make some difference, but I fancy the Govt of India is the chief obstacle in these matters and they will perhaps try to limit the scope of this qualified warrant. Still I hope that the restriction on your own movements will be removed before long. We have received a postcard from Bejoy notifying to the Arya a change of address which shows that after five long years he has been released from his quite causeless imprisonment, but he is now interned in or near Ramnagar in Birbhum. As for me, I do not see, if Lajpatrai is coming to India, how they can object to my going to Bengal. But allowed or not allowed, I have not the least intention of doing that at present or for another year at the earliest. When I do go, this or that circumstance will make no difference. Mr Gandhi, like the man in Macedonia with St. Paul, sent me a message to "come over and help", but I had to say that I was not ready to join in the old politics and had no new programme formed for a more spiritual line of work, and it would be no use my going out till I see my way.

As to the Standard bearer, I cannot write now, as it would take too long and delay this letter. I shall write afterwards or send word. Your insured packet reached us yesterday. The increase comes in a good moment, as with Sourin in Bengal the Arya Stores is simply marking time and the Arya is in a new economic phase which means for the moment some diminution of income.

A.G.

In a few days you will be getting 50 copies of "War & S. D" (War & Self-Determination)

K. Amrita.

## Letter No. 24

Pondicherry May 1920

Dear M.

It is only now for the first time since Suresh left that I get some time to write. It is not possible for me to write all I have to say, much must wait till you come here; I will confine myself to what is of pressing importance for the work.

The circumstances under which you have to work have now changed a great deal and you will have in order to meet it to enlarge your view and inner attitude on many sides; this I think you are preparing to do, but it will be as well for me to make it as precise as possible. Up till now you were working alone in a Bengal which was in a state, first, of the last fragmentary and chaotic agitations of the old violent spirit of rajasic politics, and then of torpor and inaction; and the thing that had to be done was to get rid of the errors of the past (errors once necessary for the development, but likely if persisted in to ruin and frustrate the future), to get at a firm spiritual basis and found a centre of spiritual unity and action, a samgha, on a small scale but sure of its principle and capable of a large development. This has now been done, but at the moment of its firm effectuation, new conditions have come in which create a new and larger problem. First, many imprisoned forces have been set loose and, secondly, the chaos of incertitude, confused agitation and unseeing unrest which has followed upon the war and is felt all over the world, is now at work in Bengal. The nature of this unrest is a haste to get something done without knowing what has to be done, a sense of and vague response to large forces without any vision of or hold on the real possibilities of the future of humanity and the nation. The old things are broken up in their assured mould and are yet persisting and trying to form themselves anew, the new exists for the most part only in vague idea without a body or clear action and without any power as yet to form what is lacking to them. The old politics in India persist in a chaos of parties and programmes centred round the Congress quarrel and the Reforms, and in Bengal we have a rush of the commercial and industrial spirit which follows the western principle and, if it succeeds on these lines, is likely to create a very disastrous reproduction or imitation of the European situation with its corrupt capitalism and the labour struggle and the war of classes. And all that is the very reverse of our own ideal. The one advantage for us is that it is a chaos and not a new order; and it is essential that we should throw our spirit and idea upon this fermenta-

tion, and draw what is best among its personalities and forces to the side and service of our ideal so as to get a hold and a greater mass of effectuation for it in the near future.

This, as I conceive it, has to be done on two lines. First, what has already been created by us and given a right spirit, basis and form, must be kept intact in spirit, intact in basis and intact in form and must strengthen and enlarge itself in its own strength and by its inherent power of self-development and the divine force within it. This is the line of work on which you have to proceed. We have to confront the confusion around us with a thing that is sure of itself and illumined by self-knowledge and a work that by its clear form and firm growth will present more and more the aspect of an assured solution of the problem of the present and the future. The mind of the outside world may be too shallow, restless and impatient to understand a great, profound and difficult truth like ours on the side of the idea, but a visible accomplishment, a body of things done has always the power to compel and to attract the world to follow it. The only danger then is that when this body of things becomes prominent and attractive, numbers may rush into it and try to follow the externals without realising and reproducing in themselves the truth and the power of the real thing that made it possible. It was that against which I warned you when there came the first possibility of a considerable expansion. It is your business to enlarge your field of work and the work itself but not at the cost of any lowering or adulteration of its spirit. The first condition you have to assure is that all who have the work in hand or share in its direction must be of the spirit and work from the self outward; they must be men of the yoga; but, secondly, all who enter in, must have this imposed on them as the thing to be developed, must learn to develop this self-realisation first and foremost and the work only as its expression. The safety of the work lies in a strict adherence to this principle. The majority of the educated people of Bengal care only to get something done and are not troubled by the fact that really nothing sure and lasting does get done or else only something that is likely to do as much harm as good; they care nothing about the spiritual basis of life which is India's real mission and the only possible source of her greatness, or give to it only a slight, secondary or incidental value, a something that has to be stuck on as a sentiment or a bit of colouring matter. Our whole principle

is different and you have to insist on our principle in all that you say and do. Moreover, you have got a clear form for your work in association and that form as well as the spirit you must maintain; any loosening of it or compromise would mean confusion and an impairing of the force that is working in your samgha.

But on the other hand there is another line of work which is also necessary at the present moment, because the Shakti is moving in that direction also and the Shakti is the doer of the work,—and that is for others, like Barin to enter into the fermenting mass and draw out of it elements that are fit but not yet ready to take our whole idea and first to get into and then occupy existing or newly created means and activities, as he is doing with the Narayan,—which can be increasingly made instruments of our purpose. This work will be attended with all the difficulties and uncertainties and obstacles which go with a mixed and yet unformed working,—such as you had at the beginning, but have now got over,—but we must trust to the divine Shakti to overcome them. The one difficulty that it is in our power to avoid is that of the relations between those who are working on these different lines. There the first necessity is that there should be no clash or spirit of rivalry, sense of division or monopolising personal or corporate egoism to bring discord among those who receive their inspiration from the same source and have the same ideal. A spiritual unity and a readiness for co-operation must be the guiding principle of their relations.

I have already answered to Shirish the first very natural question that arose in your mind at the inception of these new conditions, why Barin and others should cast themselves separately into the अरूप (Arupa) to create a रूप (Rupa) out of it, when there is already a form and a body of associated communal work in the spirit of our ideal and why all should not unite in that form and create a greater power of associated driving force to bring about a rapid enlargement and victory of the ideal. The first thing is that the particular form given is the right thing for those who are already associated together, because it has risen naturally out of themselves and by the Will that guides, but it may well be that the same precise form may not be applicable or extended everywhere. The spirit, the truth must be the same, but the formations may be different with ad-

vantage to the spirit. To insist on one form only might well bring in that rigidity which grew upon Indian society and its civilisation in the past and brought about an imprisonment and decline of the spirit. India was strongest and most alive when she had many variations of form but one spirit. And I think,—that at least was the pre-vision that came on me in the Alipur jail and I do not yet see a different prospect,—that this will be the case also in the future. Then, secondly, there is a psychological necessity which we cannot at the present moment leave out of consideration. The samgha at Chandernagore is a thing that has grown up with my power behind and yours at the centre and it has assumed a body and temperament which is the result of this origination. But there are others, people of strong personality and full of shakti, who receive their spiritual force direct from me and are made themselves to be central spirits and direct radiators of the shakti, and for these to subordinate themselves to the existing body and temperament would not be easy for any and in most cases impossible,—such a subordination would not have grown out of themselves and would only be imposed by nigraha, a thing contrary to the prakriti,—and it would besides clog up the natural action of the power in them. And on the other hand to bring them in as coordinated central figures into the existing form would not be feasible; for it would mean a disturbing change and new fermentation of forces in the work that is already being well done on established lines. It would mean, even if at all successful, a sort of conducting by spiritual committee and that is not the line on which the Shakti has proceeded at Chandernagore. The more perfect co-ordination of all who are at work can only come, as far as I can see, after I myself go to Bengal and can act by my direct presence. Thirdly, there are a considerable number of people in the country who are not yet of us, yet can be given the necessary turn, but owing to temperamental and other causes they would not be drawn to the existing centre, but could be easily drawn by Barin, Sourin, Bejoy and others. And in all these and similar cases we must leave freedom to the guiding Shakti to use her own means and instruments. Finally, there are things to be done which need to be done, but which I would not like to impose on your samgha as it now stands; first, because it would disturb the characteristic frame and ideal temperament of your work, a thing which it is important to keep; and secondly, because it would impose on you unnecessary complications; and these things can best be done by Barin and

others while seeming to work independently for their own hands. And there are needs also to be met for which these other activities are required. Of that I can better speak to you in person than by letter. This being the situation, the need that remains is to keep a right relation between those who are working, and that means to extend the spirit of unity which is our basis so as to embrace all the work and workers, undeterred by differences of mentality and divergences of action.

In our work we have to fix our relations with three different kinds of people; first, those who are working for the country but without any greater idea or spiritual motive; secondly, those who have the spiritual motive but not the same ideal and inspiration as ourselves; thirdly, those who have the same ideal and inspiration, but are working in different bodies and at first on different lines. Our relation to the first class of people and their work must be based on the fundamental principle of our Yoga to see God in all and the one Self in all acting through different natures and all energies, even those which are hostile as workings of the Divine Shakti, although behind the veil of the ahankara and the ignorant mentality. There are movements at work new and old which are not the definite reality of the future but are needed at the present moment as part of the transition. It is in this light for example that I regard many things that are in process in Europe and I am even moved to give a temporary spiritual support to efforts and movements which are not in consonance with our own and must eventually fail or cease by exhaustion of their utility but are needed as transitional powers. This too is how I regard the work of men like Tilak and Gandhi. We work in the faith that it is our vision of the future that is the central divine will, the highest actual sable possibility and therefore the one thing that must be made the object of our action; but that does not mean that the Shakti is not working in her own covert way and for her own ends through others. No-doubt, these movements are of a western and materialistic inspiration or else an imperfect mixture, and some day it may be we shall have to give battle to them as certainly we shall have to overcome the spirit that informs them. But that time has not come yet, and meanwhile what we have to do is to develop and spread our own vision and idea and give it body so as eventually to confront the things that are in possession of the present with a realisation of the things that belong to the future. I think that at this junc-

ture we should avoid a too direct attack or criticism of them as that only creates avoidable opposition to our own work. The positive rather than the negative method is the one we should adopt until we are strong enough to convince by our visible strength and work the minds that are now attracted by the present power and activity of other movements,—to assert our own ideal as the true and the right way but not to invite conflict by a destructive frontal attack on the others.

As for the second class, such as the other spiritual movements in Bengal, our attitude to most should be that of a benevolent neutrality and a sympathy for such of their elements as are at all in consonance with our own ideal. The one thing which we have to get rid of is the idea of Maya and ascetic abandonment of the life and effort of humanity, and also though that is social and religious rather than directly spiritual, the clinging to old forms and refusal to admit new development. The movements that admit life and Ananda and are ready to break away from the old narrowness of social and other forms, are so much to the good even though they have not the full largeness of the integral spiritual idea and realisation. These we must leave to go on their way and run themselves out or else enlarge themselves till they are ready to coalesce with us. I do not mean that with regard to either of these classes we should refrain from all criticism of the insufficiency of ideal or method, but this should be as far as possible quite general, a discussion and the enforcement of a greater principle and truer method distinguishing truth from error but not too pointedly aggressive against particular things or so expressed as to seem to hit straight at this or that person or body. To insist on our own propaganda and work is always necessary and sometimes though not always to meet any attack on it; but we need not go out of our way to invite conflict. To this rule there may be particular exceptions; I only indicate what seems to me for the present the right general attitude.

This once understood, the really important thing becomes at once our own work and the relation between different workers, and here, as I have said, what we need is the growth of spiritual unity and a readiness to take the work of others as supplementing one's own and, wherever it is called for and possible, to cooperate. There is a danger here from the subtler forms of egoism. It is not enough to realise unity among those who are already working with one mind as one soul in many bodies; there must

be unity of spirit with others who are following different ways or working separately for the present and complete samata with regard to their action, even if it seems to one wrong or imperfect, and patience with regard to mental and moral divergences. This should be easy for you, as it means only getting rid of the remnants of your sattwic ahankara; it may not be so easy for others who have still a rajasic ahankara to trouble them. But if people like you and Barin give the example, that difficulty can eventually be got over; if on the contrary you also allow misunderstandings among yourselves, the work is likely to be very unnecessarily hampered. I may give as an instance, the matter about the Prabartak. Certain casual utterances of Saurin's made in answer to queries and not volunteered, have come to you quite misreported as a sort of intentional campaign to belittle the paper and the other half of what he said, namely, that the Prabartak was inspired, though not actually written by me and the spirit and substance were that of my ideal, never reached your ears. I may add also that the alleged incident to which you took exception, as to his method of raising money, never actually happened. Again the advertisement or rather paragraph about Narayana in the Amrita Bazar was not inserted by Barin, but by someone else according to that other person's idea after a conversation with him. Barin was not responsible for the form nor had he any intention of claiming the Narayana as the sole and direct mouthpiece of my ideas. It is these misunderstandings which I want to see all of you avoid and it can be easily done if those who are among the principle channels of Shakti preserve the spiritual unity which ought to prevail among those who derive their inspiration from the same source and follow the same ideal. Others less developed may give cause for offence owing to their inability to control the rajasic ego still working in them, but calm, patience, prema and samata are the spirit in which we should meet such causes of offence; otherwise where is the perfection we seek by our Yoga? Let me add, while I am on this subject, that Haradhan seems to have been misinformed about Nalini. As a matter of fact he has mixed with no **ডাল** (dala) nor engaged in any kind of associated activity while in Bengal. And if he had, it would have been with no other purpose than to draw others to our Yoga and our way of thinking; but as a matter of fact he remained inactive.

As for the other matter of the different lines of work, there is one instance which illustrates the difficulties that may arise. Barin has taken up the Narayana with the idea of gradually and eventually making it another instrument of propaganda for our ideas, and if he succeeds, that will be so much the more strength for us. It will not be a mere doubling of the work of the Prabartak, as it will present our ideas in a different way and so as to catch minds of a different type from those who are naturally attracted by the Prabartak which demands from its readers a mind already tuned to spiritual things or at least naturally able to enter into that atmosphere. To others who are of a less spiritual and intuitive, a more intellectual or literary and artistic temperament, the articles of the Prabartak written out of an experience to which they are strangers, are not easily assimilable, and it is these minds which it may be possible to approach through the Narayana. But if there is not a right understanding, the attitude of the two to each other may be that of separation and competition rather than of activities supplementary to each other in the same work. In addition he has now the chance of getting hold of a strong publishing agency in Calcutta, as Shirish must already have told you, but he hesitates to take it up from fear that it may be regarded as a rival agency to the Prabartak Publishing House. He is not afraid of any misunderstanding between you and him, but of others connected with other work taking things in the wrong light and bringing in an unwholesome spirit of competition. This is a thing which might easily happen, but must not be allowed to happen. I have told him that I would write to you and ask you to see that there is no misunderstanding in the matter, before giving him sanction to take up the possibility. Afterwards, it will be for you and him to see that things on both sides are managed in the right spirit. This agency, if it comes into Barin's control, will be conducted with the same idea and method as the "Narayan" and all the profits except what is necessary for the maintenance and extension of the agency, will come to us and our work. These two things are the first fields the Shakti has offered to his energy and they are of a kind for which he is well fitted; their success means for us a great advantage. A time is now coming in which the Shakti is pressing to break down the barriers in which we have had hitherto to move and we must be ready to follow her indications without allowing our personal preferences and limitations to attempt to dictate to her any mind-made limits.

As for the extension of the work you are doing, I have spoken in general terms to Shirish and it is not necessary to add anything in this letter. When you come, I shall perhaps have more to say about it. It is regrettable that at this moment the physical strain should take an effect on your body; I trust it is only a part of a temporary invasion of Roga, of which many of us including myself have recently felt some touch. But you must be careful not to throw too much strain on the physical system. A timely sparing of the physical system when there is an indication of overstrain is often necessary before the Shakti has taken perfect possession of the more external parts of the adhara or the vijnana-will is strong enough to set right at once weakening and disturbances. There remains the question of your visit to Pondicherry. I had thought to delay it for a short time until I saw my way more clearly on certain important matters; but I now believe this is not necessary and it will be as well for you to come as soon as may be. I hardly suppose that Nelson's curious reservation about your visit means anything serious; otherwise he would have been more positive about it. I take it that they do not like the idea and would be suspicious about its motive and watch your actions more narrowly after it; but as they are obstinately determined to be suspicious about anything we do in any case, this by itself cannot be allowed to be an obstacle. I should suggest therefore, that you might come over after making arrangements for work in your absence in such a way that the visit may be a fairly long one.

The work of the Arya has fallen into arrears and I have to spend just now the greater part of my energy in catching up, and the rest of my time, in the evening, is taken up by the daily visit of the Richards. I hope to get over the worst part of this necessity by the middle of June, so that by the time you come I may have a freer atmosphere to attend to the currents of the work and the world about me. There is now the beginning of a pressure from many sides inviting my spiritual attention to the future कर्म (Karma) and this means the need of a greater out flowing of energy than when I had nothing to do but support a concentrated nucleus of the Shakti. I doubt however, whether I shall be in a fit condition for meeting the demand till August, especially as I have not been able to get the physical basis yet put right by the power of the vijnana. After that we shall see what and how much can actually be done under the new cir-

cumstances. Meanwhile your visit may help to get things into preparatory line both in the inward motor-power and the outward determination.

A.G.

## Letter No. 25

Pondicherry  
Sept. 2. 1920

Dear M.

My impression about your marriage idea is that you are going too fast. What you say about the commune and the married couple is quite right as our ideal or rather as one side of our ideal, but there is here a question of time and tactics. In our work, especially in the preparatory and experimental part of it, there must be not only spiritual hardihood, साहस, (sahasah), but skill and prudence, कौशलम् (Kaushalam). The question is whether it is necessary or wise and advisable to engage in a battle with society at the moment on a point which it considers to be vital but which is to us subordinate. Our first business is to establish our communal system on a firm spiritual, secondly on a firm economical foundation, and to spread it wide, but the complete social change can only come as a result of the other two. It must come first in spirit, afterwards in form. If a man enters into the commune by spiritual unity, if he gives to it his life and labour and considers all he has as belonging to all, the first necessity is secured. The next thing is to make the movement economically self-sufficient, and to do that requires at the present moment all the energy you can command. These two things are, the one a constant, the other an immediate necessity. The institution of a communal ceremony of marriage can only be a future necessity, it involves nothing essential at the moment. The idea is that the family in future is not to be a separate unit, but a sub-unit of the communal whole. It is too early to decide exactly what form the family life will take, it may take many forms, not always the same. The principle is the important thing. But this principle can be observed whatever the form of the marriage ceremony they may have gone through at the time of personal union, whether recognised or not by the present social system. An external necessity does not arise in the present case, as Khagen is not marrying outside his caste.

It remains to be seen whether this step, though not necessary, is advisable. In the first place by your action you declare your commune to be an entirely separate thing from the rest of Hindu society; you will be following in the way of the Brahma Samaj or more exactly in that of Thakur Dayananda. That means a violent scission and a long struggle, which is likely greatly to complicate your other work and put difficulties in the way which need not have been there. My own idea was for our system to grow up in the society, not out of it, though different from it, first bringing in a new spiritual idea, a field in which opposition and intolerance cannot now long endure,—secondly, justifying itself in the outward plane by becoming a centre of economical regeneration and new power for the country, a work in which we shall have sympathy more than opposition, and getting forward with other matters according to need and opportunity and with a considerable freedom and latitude, meeting social orthodoxy with the plea of re-embodiment of the old free Hindu idea in new forms rather than with the profession of a violent rejection both of the past and the present. In this process a clash will be inevitable sooner or later, but a deliberate precipitation of the conflict in so extreme a form as you suggest was not within my intentions. That was to come, but only when we were strong and had already a hold on the country, so that we might have a strong support as well as enemies.

Your point is that the commune should not depend either on Government or society for the validity of the union. It seems to me sufficient if that is spiritually insisted on or at most given an outward indication. I would suggest that the exchange of garlands should be done before the commune, as it was done in the old Swayamvara before the assembly. The conventional marriage can then be added as a concession to the present society, as in old times the *sampraddya* by the father was added to the *swayamvara* although in fact the *swayamvara* itself would have been quite valid without it. If a case should arise in future where the mutual giving would be necessary by itself, we might then go to the more extreme course. This would, it seems to me, satisfy everything immediately necessary or advisable,—first, the assertion of free choice as the principle of marriage, secondly, the formal inclusion of the couple in their united life in the commune, apart from any conventional marriage ceremony; thirdly, the justification of a continuity between our move-

ment and the great past of India. The movement of course, is not to stop with the forms of the past or a modernisation of them, but this sort of preliminary advance under cover will prepare more easily its future advance into the open, which we can afterwards make as rapid as we choose. At the same time it will have the advantage of awaking a less vehement opposition at a moment when it seems to me we are not yet ready for a frontal attack in the social field and a decisive battle. If a battle becomes necessary, of course we must not flinch from it, but I should myself prefer to have it after I have reached the proper stage in my Yoga and after I return to Bengal. At present I have so many calls upon an energy which is still largely occupied with pushing forward to its own perfection that I do not quite like the idea of the heavy drain on it such a struggle would entail. This at least is my present view on the matter.

The Standard Bearer is, I am afraid, subject to the criticism passed on it; the criticism is general and I felt it myself. It is a sort of weekly Arya; but the Arya style and method are not what is wanted for a weekly paper. What you need to do is to make the ideas easy to the people and give them a practical direction. At present you give only a difficult philosophy and abstract principles. I shall write more about this matter hereafter as soon as I find time.

A. G.

## Letter No. 26

Pondicherry  
Nov. 11. 1920

Dear M

It has become necessary for me to give a categorical denial to all the rumours and ascriptions of opinion which irresponsible people are publishing from time to time about me. The Janmabhumi nonsense is especially idiotic and I do not understand how anyone with brains in his head could have accepted such childish rubbish as mine. Please write an article in the next issue of the Standard bearer saying that in view of the conflicting rumours that have been set abroad, some representing me as for the Reforms and others as for Non-Cooperation, you (that is the St.

B.) have written to me and received the following reply which you are authorised to publish:

"All these assertions are without foundation. I have made no pronouncement of my political views. I have authorised nobody whether publicly or privately to be the spokesman of my opinions. The rumour suggesting that I support the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and am opposed to Non-Cooperation is without basis. I have nothing to do personally with the manifesto of Sir Ashutosh Chaudhuri and others citing a passage from my past writings. The recorded opinions of a public man are public property and I do not disclaim what I have written, but the responsibility for its application to the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and the present situation rests entirely with the signatories to the manifesto. The summary of my opinions in the Janmabhumi representing me as an enthusiastic follower of Mahatma Gandhi, of which I only came to know the other day, is wholly unauthorised and does not 'render justice to my views' either in form or in substance. Things are attributed to me in it which I would never have dreamed of saying. It is especially adding insult to injury to make me say that I am ready to sacrifice my conscience to a Congress mandate and recommend all to go and do likewise. I have not stated to anyone that 'full responsible self-government completely independent of British control' or any other purely political object is the goal to the attainment of which I intend to devote my efforts and I have not made any rhetorical prophecy of a colossal success for the Non-Cooperation movement. As you well know, I am identifying myself with only one kind of work or propaganda as regards India, the endeavour to reconstitute her cultural, social and economic life within larger and freer lines than the past on a spiritual basis. As regards political questions, I would request my friends and the public not to attach credence to anything purporting to be a statement of my opinions which is not expressly authorised by me or issued over my signature."

I shall write to you about other matters in another letter.

A. G.

P.S. Please ask Mani Naiek to see my sister before he comes here. She wants to send with him certain utensils for our use.

## APPENDIX—A

### Shree Aurobindo to Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das

Arya Office  
Pondicherry.  
the 18th November, 1922

Dear Chitta,

It is a long time, almost two years, I think, since I have written a letter to any one. I have been so much retired and absorbed in my sadhana, that contact with the outside world has till lately been reduced to a minimum. Now that I am looking outward again, I find that circumstances lead me to write first to you—I say circumstances because it is a need that makes me take up the pen after so long a disuse.

The need is in connection with the first outward work that I am undertaking after this long inner retirement. Barin has gone to Bengal and will see you in connection with it, but a word from me is perhaps necessary and therefore I send you through Barin this letter. I am also giving a letter of authority from which you will understand the immediate nature of the need for which I have sent him to raise funds. But I may add something to make it more definite.

I think you know my present ideas and attitude towards life and work to which it has brought me. I have become confirmed in a perception which I had always, less clearly and dynamically then, but which has now become more and more evident to me, that the true basis of work and life is the spiritual, that is to say, a new consciousness to be developed only by Yoga. I see more and more manifestly that man can never get out of the futile circle the race is always treading until he has raised himself on to the new foundation. I believe also that it is the mission of India to make this great victory for the world. But what precisely was the nature of the dynamic power of this greater consciousness? What was the condition of its effective truth? How could it be brought down, mobilised, organised, turned upon life? How could our present instruments, intellect, mind, life, body be made true and perfect channels for this great transformation?

This was the problem I have been trying to work out in my own experience and I have now a sure basis, a wide knowledge and some mastery of this secret. Not yet its fullness and complete imperative presence—therefore, I have still to remain in retirement. For I am determined not to work in the external field till I have got sure and complete possession of this new power of action, not to build except on a perfect foundation. But still I have gone far enough to be able to undertake one work on a larger scale than before—the training of others to receive this sadhana and prepare themselves as I have done, for without that my future work cannot even be begun. There are many who desire to come here and whom I can admit for the purpose, there are a greater number who can be trained at a distance; but I am unable to carry on unless I have sufficient funds to be able to maintain a centre and one or two at least outside. I need therefore much larger resources than I at present command. I have thought that by your recommendation and influence you may help Barin to gather them for me. May I hope that you will do this for me?

One word to avoid a possible misunderstanding. Long ago I gave to Motilal Roy of Chandernagore the ideas and some principles and lines of a new social and economic organisation and education and this with my spiritual force behind him he has been trying to work out in his Samgha. This is quite a separate thing from what I am now writing about—my own work which I must do myself and no one else can do for me.

I have been following with interest your political activities, specially, your present attempt to give more flexible and practically effective turn to the non-co-operation movement. I doubt whether you will succeed against such contrary forces, but I wish you success in your endeavour. I am most interested however, in your indications about Swaraj; for I have been developing my own ideas about the organisation of a true Indian Swaraj and I shall look forward to see how far yours will fall in with mine.

Yours  
Aurobindo.

## APPENDIX—B

### Sri Aurobindo

[From 'Standard Bearer' Volume I, No. 8, 3rd October, 1920]

Mr B.C. Chatterjee, Mr A. Chaudhury and several other respectable gentlemen in their joint appeal to the people on Sept. 29 quote a long passage from Sri Aurobindo's "Political Will and Testament" published in the 'Karmo yogin' on the eve of his departure for Pondicherry. A short time before, Dr Munzee, of the Congree Reception Committee notified to the different provincial committees recommending the name of Sri Aurobindo for the presidentship of the ensuing congress. Almost simultaneously, Nagpur, Bengal, the Punjab join their voices in horus acclaiming his name at the top of the gamut. Other provinces are expected to follow suit. There is a voluminous ring of public opinion which seeks to draw out 'Aurobindo-Yogi' (we take these remarks here almost verbatim from the Janma-bhumi, last week's issue) from his 'cave' of sadhana and points him as the right man who shall be able to 'straight-course' the political current of the country, which already shows signs of running out in wayward directions. Bewildered India, in her day of trial, wistfully looks up to her dedicated son for lead and direction.

The call of the country on Sri Aurobindo is indeed a new and remarkable feature in recent Indian politics. Mahatma Gandhi, the man of the hour himself anticipated it as early back as December last, when he had launched himself in his Satyagraha campaign and like the man in Macedonia with St. Paul, sent him a message 'to come over and help'. In reply, (so far as we can recall now) Sri Aurobindo had to say that he was not ready to join in the old politics and had no new programme formed till then for a more spiritual line of work and that there would be no use of his going out till he saw his way. Since then no doubt the situation had changed a great deal, the period of his spiritual preparation too seems to be drawing towards its close and all recent political hints referred to above must be regarded as but so much external reflex of a direct spiritual call to more hurried inner completion and a new outward determination.

Sri Aurobindo's Yoga is for the three hundred millions of his own people first, last and ever more and eventually for all humanity. The new spiritual message which he has been given to utter is clearly and unequivocally delivered through his various organs, the 'Arya', the 'Parbartak' and latterly through our own humble instrumentality of the 'Standard Bearer'. Of recent times the 'Narayan' too under the able guardianship of our beloved brother-in-arms, Srijut Barindra Kumar Ghosh has been coming out with the same inspiration behind. The word is there for the country, daily growing clearer and clearer as we have ever and anon announced in unmistakable language, it is not merely a message of the spirit but also of life and work. The new work of Sri Aurobindo is already firmly rooted in the fine soil of Bengal, the heart and soul of New India.

We do not know what exactly Sri Aurobindo's countrymen think of his new Gospel. Perhaps it is only as the whilom political leader of vast scholarship and inimitable self-sacrifice, with a strong spiritual bent of mind, that they have known him all along and still remember, and as the political captain and political guru, they long to have him once more in their midst in their visible field of action. The country is awake, her immense heart teems with an infinite content of rolling emotions and she seeks with all the tremendous zeal of her renascent mother-soul her rightful atma-pratistha as the queen of the world. But arisen from her sleep even before the full break of dawn, she is still groping amidst the chequered gloom of the misty twilight. She pours her heart's lava-flood now over here, now over there; she turns her volcanic desire-energy in this direction and that, and thus she expends and exhausts herself in stupendous fruitless toil. Who, amongst her innumerable children has done the mighty tapasya so as to be fit to realise intimately her inner will and lead her faultlessly and triumphantly to her desired goal?

The path which Mahatma Gandhi shows today is not wholly new to Bengal. It was shown by Sri Aurobindo fourteen years and a half ago. Aurobindo was still then the man of the mind and heart, the man of the prophetic reason and intuition, and to his countrymen he was the recognized head of Nationalist Young India, the man of inspired politics. But the voice that spoke to him in Boroda before the Surat Congress, made itself felt more and more as the years advanced. In the Jail, during his pe-

riod of confinement it grew clearer and he realised the message and sadhana of the Geeta and in his subsequent speeches and writings in the "Dharma" and the "Karmo yogin", Sri Aurobindo declared to his fellow countrymen in electrifying accents the new move of his life-sadhana.

Ten years ago, when rumour was afloat that the authorities were thinking of laying their hands even on Aurobindo, he had heard of it but cared not. Sister Nivedita who was still alive and worked by his side, warned him more than once and urged him again and again to shift from Calcutta into safer retreat. Aurobindo all along turned a deaf ear both to the threats of his opponents and to the entreaties of his friends, for the call had not come and he waited calm and cool wrapt in single-minded meditation to hear the Mother's voice in his soul. It was not until only a month before his departure that he did feel that the first chapter of his national duty was over and that this time was ripe to close it up and dive deep into the ocean of India's spiritual Sadhana. The call in him to remove to another sphere took shape in the month's space but neither the Government nor the people could grow ready with him nor would heed to his note but they just as before went on with their ill-starred policies of action. This was what he last wrote on the then political situation "Revolution paralyses our efforts to deal peacefully but effectually with Repression. Repression refuses to allow us to cut the ground from under the feet of Revolution. Both demand a clear field for their conflict. Let us therefore stand aside....." And the Mother decided that he do stand aside. So Sri Aurobindo, obedient to the Mother's direction, had no option left, but to return into the solitude of Sadhana.

Since then another Yuga has rolled away. All the details of his great Sadhana is inexpressible in so many words. Language is too poor, too external to reveal its rich contents to any greater extent than giving the mere dry outline. We shall not attempt that impossible feat. Those, inspired from within to give themselves up to the spiritual Sadhana, feel in their heart of hearts the irresistible flow of the new tide, the universal Shakti descends like the rains of heaven on such souls of consecrated Sadhaks and fills them with new illumination and might from day to day, they already are on the path and travelling with joy and they know as doubtlessly as the existence of yourself and myself, as the truth of the planets and the suns, that they are driving through the straight and

unerring path to the sure and immortal goal. To others it is necessary and it may be useful to indicate through the columns of the 'Standard Bearer' the new direction and turn of Sri Aurobindo's life-Sadhana—that will silence the voice of doubt in many who are quite in the dark as regards his motive and doings, as well as serve to extend his helpful reach of love to those who are eager to grasp our arm of spiritual fellowship.

The Gospel of Aurobindo is the gospel of "New Construction". The Self expresses itself by creating itself spiritually as well as materially. On the one hand, we have to stand on a solid bedrock of economic foundation, we have to build mainly and entirely a self-reliant life-structure. For that we need only self-help and self-support. We have to till our own fields, manufacture our own clothes, we have to earn a free national livelihood through trade and commerce, through industry and agriculture, through a re-organisation of the indigenous arts and crafts, but a re-organisation of all on the communal basis of economic solution, avoiding as we have repeatedly warned the poisonous principle of European industrialism.

On the other hand, we have to incarnate in our soul the great life-message of Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo is no longer the man of the mind or the intellect or the prana or the body, he has long left the half-ripe sattwa-rajasic man in him far behind him in Bengal. The shadow Aurobindo is no more. The Mother has made him forget his ego so completely, that it is no longer A-u-r-o-b-i-n-d-o, but his only last vestige, the faintest echo, of his 'Auro' alone, that remains of the old being in his new consciousness. The old is no more. He is altogether a changed being, a new man. The new is born even in the marrows of his soul. This new 'Auro' will return to Bengal, return to his field of work in his visible form. The silent leader of the new seed-commune, will come and take the field once more as the visible captain of the larger Commune of People. But before he returns, the country has to prepare herself. The flesh and bone of Aurobindo is nothing, it is his mighty spirit, his yoga, his mission, faith and work, which the nation must know, understand, and realise in their soul of souls. That preparation is not politics, but spiritual consecration. 'Auro' is the Mother's child, lost in Her, one with Her and to receive him, they must consecrate to Her, in the full spirit of Divine "Utsarga". It is high time that the nation be spiritually ready, to get 'Auro'

back to work; he-will be back, yet none but the Mother knows when or where. But meanwhile, is India really ready?

## APPENDIX—C

### Sreejut Aravinda Ghose

[From "Swaraj", Edited by Bipin Chandra Pal.  
Reprinted from 'Karmayogin', Volume I, Nos. 7 & 8,  
22nd & 29th Shravan 1316 B.S.—August 1909]

The youngest in age among those who stand in the forefront of the nationalist propaganda in India but in endowment, education and character, perhaps, superior to them all—Aravinda seems distinctly marked out by Providence to play in the future of this movement a part not given to any of his colleagues and contemporaries. The other leaders of the movement have left their life behind them: Aravinda has his before him. Nationalism is their last love: it is Aravinda's first passion. They are burdened with the cares and responsibilities of large families or complex relations: Aravinda has a small family and practically no cumulative obligations. His only care is for his country—the Mother, as he always calls her. His only recognised obligations are to her. Nationalism, at the best, a concern of the intellect with some, at the lowest a political cry and aspiration with, others, is with Aravinda the supreme passion of his soul. Few, indeed, have grasped the full force and meaning of the Nationalist ideal as Aravinda has done. But even of these very few—though their vision may be clear, their action is weak. Man cannot, by a fiat of his will, at once recreate his life, Our Karma follows us with relentless insistence from day to day and from death to death. To see the vision of truth and yet not to be possessed by that supreme passion for it which burns up all other desires and snaps asunder, like aspen bands, all other ties and obligations—this is the divine tragedy of most finer natures. They have to cry out with St. Paul at every turn of life's tortuous path—"The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak". But blessed are they for whom this tragic antithesis between the ideal and the real has been cancelled: for whom to know the truth is to love it, to love the truth is to strive after it, and to strive after the truth is to attain it: in whom there is no disparity, either in time or degree, between the idea and its realisation—in whom the vision

of the ideal, by its own intrinsic strength at once attunes every craving of the flesh, every movement of the mind, every emotion of the heart, and every impulse of the will—to itself: who have to strive for its realisation, not within, but without: who have to struggle not with their own Self but with the Not-Self, who have to fight and conquer not themselves but others, in order to establish the Kingdom of God realised by them in the relations of their own inner life, in the outer actualities and appointments of the life of their own people or of humanity at large. These are, so to say, the chosen of God. They are born leaders of men. Commissioned to serve special ends affecting the life and happiness of large masses of men, they bear a charmed life. They may be hit, but cannot be hurt. They may be struck, but are never stricken. Their towering optimism, and the Grace of God, turn every evil into good, every opposition into a help, every loss into a gain. By the general verdict of his countrymen, Aravinda stands today among these favoured sons of God.

Birth is not an accident. "Accident of birth"—is the language of infidel empiricism. Nature has no room for accidents in her schemes. It is only man's inability to trace her secrets that has coined this word to cover his ignorance. Man's birth is no more an accident than the rise and fall of tides. There can really be no accidents in evolution, the law of natural selection has killed their chance altogether. But does the operation of natural selection start only after the birth of the organism or does it precede it? Is it only a biological, or also a psychological law? Like the problems of biology, those of psychology also are inexplicable, except on this theory. The inference is irresistible that there is such a thing as natural selection even in the psychic plane. The spirit, by the impulse of its own needs, must choose and order the conditions of its own life even as the physical organism does. This is the psychic significance of heredity. Life from this point of view is not a lottery, but a matter really of determined choice. The needs of the organism supply the organs in the lower kingdom: the desires of the heart collect and create their necessary equipment and environment for the human being. On no other hypothesis can the riddle of the human life be explained more satisfactorily.

It may not explain everything, but it explains many things absolutely un-understandable and inexplicable on any other hypothesis. This at least has been the Hindu view from time immemorial. A crude intuition at

first, it became a settled conviction with the people subsequently, with a fundamental philosophy of causation behind it. And this theory stands curiously verified in Aravinda Ghose.

Two strong currents of thoughts, ideals, and aspirations met together and strove for supremacy in Bengal, among the generation to which Aravidada's parents belonged. One was the current of Hindu Nationalism—of the revived life, culture and ideals of the nation that had lain dormant for centuries and had been discarded as lower and primitive by the first batch of English-educated Hindus, especially in Bengal. The other was the current of Indo-Anglicism—the onrushing life, culture and ideals of the foreign rulers of the land which, expressing themselves through British law and administration on the one side, and the new schools and universities on the other, threatened to swamp and drown the original culture and character of the people. The two stocks from which Aravinda sprang represented these two conflicting forces in the country. His maternal grandfather, Raj Narayan Bose was one of the makers of modern Bengal. A student of David Hare, a pupil of De Rozario, an alumnus of the Hindu College, the first English college that had the support of both the Hindu community and the British rulers of the Province, Raj Narayan Bose started life as a social and religious reformer. But while he caught as fully as any one else among his contemporaries, the impulse of the new illumination, he did not lose so completely as many of them did, his hold on the fundamental spirit of the culture and civilisation of his race. He joined the Brahma-Samaj, under Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, but felt repelled by the denational spirit of the later developments in that movement under Keshub Chandra Sen. In fact, it is difficult to say, to which of its two leaders—Devendra Nath or Raj Narayan, the Adi or the older Brahma Samaj, as it came to be called after Keshub Chandra Sen seceded from it and established the Brahma-Samaj of India—was more indebted for its intense and conservative nationalism. But it may be safely asserted that while Devendra Nath's nationalism had a dominating theological note, Raj Narayan's had both a theological and social, as well as a political emphasis. In him, it was not merely the spirit of Hinduism that rose up in arms against the onslaught of European Christianity but, the whole spirit of Indian culture and manhood stood up to defend and assert itself against every form of undue foreign influence and alien

domination. While Keshub Chandra Sen pleaded for the recognition of the truths in the Hindu scriptures side by side with those in the Bible, Raj Narayan Bose proclaimed the superiority of Hinduism to Christianity. While Keshub Chandra was seeking to reconstruct Indian, and specially Hindu, social life, more or less after the British model, Raj Narayan's sturdy patriotism and national self-respect rebelled against the enormity, and came forward to establish the superiority of Hindu social economy to the Christian social institutions and ideals. He saw the onrush of European goods into Indian markets, and tried to stem the tide by quickening what we would now call the Swadeshi spirit, long before any one else had thought of it. It was under his inspiration that a Hindu Mela, or National Exhibition, was started a full quarter of a century before the Indian National Congress thought of an Indian Industrial Exhibition. The founder of this Hindu Mela was also the first Bengalee who organised gymnasia for the physical training of the youths of the nation. Stick and sword plays, and other ancient but decadent sports and pastimes of the people that have come into vogue recently, were originally revived at the Hindu Mela, under Raj Narayan Bose's inspiration and instruction. Raj Narayan Bose did not openly take any part in politics, but his writings and speeches did a good deal to create that spirit of self-respect and self-assertion in the educated classes that have since found such strong expression in our recent political activities.

A strong conservatism, based upon a reasoned appreciation of the lofty spirituality of the ancient culture and civilisation of the country, a sensitive patriotism, born of a healthy and dignified pride of race; and a deep piety expressing itself through all the varied practical relations of life—these were the characteristics of the life and thought of Raj Narayan Bose. He represented the high-water-mark of the composite culture of his country—Vedantic, Islamic, and European. When he discoursed on Brahma-Jnana or Knowledge of the God, brought to mind the ancient Hindu Gnostics of the Upanishads. When he cited verses from the Persian poets, filling the ear with their rich cadence with his eyes melting in love and his mobile features aglow with a supreme spiritual passion—he reminded one of the old Moslem devotees. And when he spoke on the corruptions of current religion, or the soulless selfishness of modern politics, he appeared as a nineteenth century rationalist and icon-

oclast of Europe. In his mind and life he was at once a Hindu Maharishi, a Moslem Sufi, and a Christian theist of the Unitarian type; and like Ram Mohan Roy, the founder of the Brahma-Samaj, of which Raj Narayan Bose was for many years the honoured president, he also seems to have worked out a synthesis in his own spiritual life between the three dominant world cultures that have come face to face in modern India. Like Ram Mohan, Raj Narayan also seems to have realised in himself, intellectually and spiritually, that ideal of composite nationhood in India, which the present generation has been called upon to actualise in the social, economic, and political relations of their country. Raj Narayan Bose was also an acknowledged leader in Bengalee literature. A writer in the "Modern Review" (Calcutta) calls Raj Narayan Bose the "Grandfather of Indian Nationalism." He was Aravinda's maternal grandfather; and Aravinda owes not only his rich spiritual nature, but even his very superior literary capacity to his inherited endowments from his mother's line.

If his maternal grandfather represented the ancient spiritual forces of his nation, Aravinda's father, Dr Krishnadhan Ghose, represented to a very large extent the spirit of the new illumination in his country. Dr Ghose was essentially a product of English education and European culture. A man of exceptional parts, he finished his education in England, and taking his degree in medicine, entered the medical service of the Indian Government. He was one of the most successful Civil Surgeons of his day, and, had his life been spared, he would have assuredly risen to the highest position in his service open to any native of India. Like the general body of Indian young men who came to finish their education in England in his time, Krishnadhan Ghose was steeped in the prevailing spirit of Anglicism. Like all of them, he was a thoroughly Anglicised Bengalee, in his ways of life. But unlike many of them, underneath his foreign clothing and ways he had a genuine Hindu heart and soul. Anglicism distorts Hindu character, cripples, where it cannot kill, the inherited altruism of the man, and makes him more or less neglectful of the numerous family and social obligations under which every Hindu is born. Like the original Anglo-Saxon, his Indian imitation also lives first and foremost for himself, his wife and children, and though he may recognise the claims of his relations to his charity, he scarcely places his purse at their service as an obligation. But Krishnadhan Ghose was an excep-

tion. Though he affected the European's way of living, he never neglected the social obligations of the Hindu. His purse was always open for his needy relations. The poor of the town, where he served and lived, had in him a true friend and a ready help. In fact, his regard for the poor frequently led him to sacrifice to their present needs the future prospects of his own family and children. He had his sons educated in England; and so great was his admiration for English life and English culture that he sent them out here even before they had received any schooling in their own country. But his charities made such constant and heavy inroad into his tolerably large income, that he could not always keep his own children living in England, provided with sufficient funds for their board and schooling. Sons of comparatively rich parents they were brought up almost in abject poverty in a friendless country where wealth counts so much, not only physically, but also intellectually and morally. Keen of intellect, tender of heart, impulsive and generous almost to recklessness, regardless of his own wants, but sensitive to the suffering of others—this was the inventory of the character of Dr Krishnadhan Ghosh. The rich blamed him for his recklessness, the man of the world condemned him for his absolute lack of prudence, the highest virtue in his estimation. But the poor, the widow and the orphan loved him for his selfless piety, and his soulful benevolence.

When death overtook him, in the very prime of life, there was desolation in many a poor home in his district. It not only left his own children in absolute poverty, but destroyed the source of ready relief to many helpless families among his relations and neighbours. His quick intellectual perceptions, his large sympathies, his selflessness, characterised by an almost absolute lack of what man of world, always working with an eye to the main chance, calls prudence, as a matter of personal calculation—these are Aravinda's inheritance in his father's line.

As a boy, Aravinda received his early education in a public school in England. The old head-master of this school is reported to have said, when Aravinda's name came prominently before the British public in connection with the State trial of which he was made the principal accused, this time last year—that of all the boys who passed through his hands during the last twenty-five or thirty years, Aravinda was by far and above the most richly endowed in intellectual capacity.

From this school he went to Cambridge, where he distinguished himself as a student of European classics, and passed the Indian Civil Service Examination with great credit. Failing, however, to stand the required test in horsemanship he was not allowed to enter the Covenanted Service of the Indian Government. But returning to India, he found employment in the Native State of Baroda, where his endowments and scholarship soon attracted the notice of the authorities, leading to his appointment to the post of Vice-Principal of the State College. Had Aravinda cared for earthly honours or wealth, he had a very splendid opening for both in Baroda. He was held in great respect by the Maharaja. He was loved by the educated classes in the State. He was exceedingly popular with the general public. All these opened very large possibilities of preferment before him in the service of this premier Native State in India.

But there was a new awakening in the country. A new school of thought had arisen, demanding a thorough reconsideration of the old and popular political, economic, and educational ideas and ideals of the people. It abjured the old mendicant methods of prayer, protest and petition. It proclaimed a new gospel of self-help and self-reliance. It called out to the spirit of India to come to its own, to stand upon its own inner strength, and put forth its own native efforts, for the realisation of its true native life. It called aloud for leaders and workers—for the poet, the prophet, the philosopher, the statesman, the organiser and man of action, to help the sacred cause. It laid on all who would accept the call, the heaviest self-sacrifice yet demanded of any public man in modern India. It wanted men who would not only, as hitherto, give to their country their leisure moments and their idle pennies, but who would consecrate all their working hours and their hard earnings to the service of the Motherland. The call went home to the heart of Aravinda. His own native Province called for him. It laid on him the vow of poverty. It offered him the yoke of the saviours of their people and the uplifters of humanity—the yoke of calumny, persecution, imprisonment and exile. Aravinda obeyed the Mother's call, accepted her stern conditions, and cheerfully took up her chastening yoke. He gave up his place in Baroda worth £560 a year, to take up the duties of Principal in the College started at Calcutta

under the new National Council of Education on a bare subsistence of £10 a month.

This movement of National Education owed its origin to the latest education-policy of the Indian Government, who sought to turn the institutions of public instruction in the country to distinctly political ends. The old education had given birth to wide-spread disaffection. It had called into being "the discontented B.A.'s." The new educational policy initiated by Lord Curzon was directed towards curing this evil. Its aim was to manufacture citizens—men who would be eternally content to remain loyal to the autocratic government in their country, without any desire for free citizenship. The movement of National Education was the people's reply to this official policy. It took definite shape and form as a result of the persecution of school-boys, by the Executive in Bengal, for their participation in the new political movements in the country. But it had a more fundamental need. The officially-controlled education had been condemned by both friends and foes alike. It was shallow and rootless. It imparted the shadow, but not the substance, of modern culture to the youths of the nation. It was artificial, because foreign in both its spirit and form. It led to a fearful waste of youthful time and energy by imposing the necessity of learning a foreign language, to receive instructions through its medium in all the higher branches of study. It was controlled by an alien Bureaucracy, in the interests, mainly, of their own political position, and only secondarily in those of the real intellectual life of the pupils. It was excessively literary, and detrimental to the industrial and economic life of the country. The movement of National Education was started to counteract these evils of the officially-controlled system of public instruction. It proposed to promote—"Education, scientific, literary, and technical, on National lines, and under National control." But though owing its initiation to the threats of the Government to close the doors of the official schools and colleges and universities against those who would take any part—even to the extent of simply attending—in any political meeting or demonstration—the National Education Movement in Bengal sought to avoid all open causes of friction with the authorities, and professed to work independent of but not in opposition to the Government. Political in its origin, it tried to avoid all conflicts with the authorities by assuming an absolutely non-political attitude.

The school of thought to which Aravinda belonged did not support this declaration of the National Council of Education, and could not appreciate this needless dread, as they thought, of offending official susceptibilities. But they had to accept the verdict of the majority. One of the most unfortunate things in modern public life is the dependence of all large public movements on the help and support of the wealthy classes in the community. Large and organised movements in our times cannot be carried on without large and substantial financial support; and the rich are not willing, as they were in the more primitive times, to lend their support to any institution without seeking to control it. This unfortunate condition lowers the intellectual and moral tone of many a public institution, which, though financed with the monies of the richer classes, would have been able, without their personal intervention or control, to keep up a very superior intellectual or moral standard. This is particularly injurious in comparatively primitive communities, where realised wealth has not yet had time to ally itself with high culture, and where, owing to the absence of a vigorous and free national life, it has but little incentive and lesser opportunities for cultivating such an alliance.

The Nationalists are a poor party in India, and the National Council of Education, though it owed its initiation to their efforts, passed, almost from the very beginning, beyond their sphere of influence, and Aravinda's position as the nominal head of the National College, practically controlled by men of different views and opinions, became almost from the very beginning more or less anomalous.

This was, from some point of view, very unfortunate. Aravinda had received the best modern education that any man of his country and generation could expect to have. He had for some years been a teacher of youth in Baroda, and had acquired considerable practical experience in his art. He had clearly realised the spirit and actualities of the life of his nation, and knew how the most advanced principles of modern pedagogy could be successfully worked into a thoroughly national system of education in India. He went to Calcutta as an educationist. He knew that the foundations of national independence and national greatness must be laid in a strong and advanced system of national education. He had a political ideal, no doubt; but politics meant to him much more than is ordinarily understood by the term. It was not a game of expediency but a school of

human character, and, in its turn, reacting upon it, should develop and strengthen the manhood and womanhood of the nation. Education could no more be divorced from politics than it could be divorced from religion or morals. Any system of education that helps such isolation and division between the various organic relations of life, is mediaeval, and not modern. It is the education of the cloister—abstract and unreal; not the education of the modern man, eager to realise his fullest manhood in and through every relation of life. Aravinda is an apostle of modern education. Indeed, his ideal of modern education is even higher than what is understood by modern education ordinarily in Europe. It is a supremely spiritual ideal. Its aim is to actualise the highest and deepest God-consciousness of the human soul, in the outer life and appointments of human society. It was the temptation of having an open field for the realisation of this lofty educational ideal which brought Aravinda to Calcutta. Had he been given a free hand in the new National College there, that institution would have opened an altogether new chapter not only in the history of modern education in India, but perhaps in the whole world. To work the realism of the spirit of modern culture into the mould of the idealism of ancient theosophy, would not only secure for India her lost position as teacher of humanity, but would, perchance, even save modern civilisation from total collapse and destruction under the pressure of a gross and greedy industrialism.

But, unfortunately, neither individuals nor communities can easily break away from their own past, Most of the members of the new National Council of Education in Bengal were products of the old university. Some of the leading men in the new organisation had been closely associated, for many years, with the actual working out of the old vicious system. Steeped in the traditions of this old education, they could hardly be expected to thoroughly enter into the spirit of modern pedagogy. They were willing to give fair room to the new principles, as an experiment; but could hardly give them their absolute and wholehearted support, as truths. It seemed to them like jumping into the unknown. While accepting the principle of National Education as education "on national lines" and "under national control" and, consequently, pledged not to accept any official aid, they were not free from the fear of possible official opposition, which, if once aroused, would make their work, they thought,

absolutely impossible. They had a real dread of the Bureaucracy, and no strong confidence, really, in their own people. The dominating and declared ideal of the new Council, consequently, came to be not in any way to *supplant*, but only to *supplement*, the existing Government-and-University-system of education in the country. A timid, temporising spirit, so galling to the reformer and the man with new visions and large ideas, generally guided the work of the National Council, and it made it almost impossible for Aravinda to throw himself heart and soul into his educational work in Calcutta. His place in the National College, though he was its nominal Principal, was not really that of organiser and initiator, but simply of a teacher of language and history, even as it had been in the Maharajah's College at Baroda. He had left Baroda in the hope of finding a wider scope of beneficent and patriotic activity in the new college in Calcutta. That hope was not realised. Almost from the very beginning he saw the hopelessness of working out a truly modern and thoroughly national system of education, through the organisation at whose service he had so enthusiastically placed himself.

But the man possessed by pure passion creates, where he cannot find them ready-made for him, his own instruments for the realisation of his supreme end in life. And wider fields of public usefulness were soon opened before Aravinda. The National School in Bengal was without a daily English organ. A new paper was started. Aravinda was invited to join its staff. A joint stock company was shortly floated to run it, and Aravinda became one of the directors. This paper—"Bande Mataram"—at once secured for itself a recognised position in Indian journalism. The hand of the master was in it from the very beginning. Its bold attitude, its vigorous thinking, its clear ideas, its chaste and powerful diction, its scorching sarcasm and refined witticism were unsurpassed by any journal in the country, either Indian or Anglo-Indian. It at once raised the tone of every Bengalee paper, and compelled the admiration of even hostile Anglo-Indian editors. Morning after morning not only Calcutta, but the educated community almost in every part of the country, eagerly awaited its vigorous pronouncements on the stirring questions of the day. It even forced itself upon the notice of the callous and self-centred British press. Long extracts from it commenced to be reproduced week after week, even in the exclusive columns of the "Times" in London. It

was a force in the country which none dared to ignore, however much they might fear or hate it, and Aravinda was the leading spirit, the central figure, in the new journal. The opportunities that were denied him in the National College he found in the pages of the "Bande Mataram," and from a tutor of a few youths he thus became the teacher of a whole nation.

## APPENDIX—D

### The Car of Jagannath

[Translated from the Bengali magazine 'Prabartak' 30th Chaitra 1325 B.S. (1918 A.D.). Published in Weekly English 'Standard-Bearer'—Vol 1, issue No. 37, the 1st May 1921.]

The ideal society is the vehicular instrument of God, the soul of collective humanity—the chariot of the Lord of the world. Unity, freedom, knowledge and power are the four wheels of this chariot.

But the society that the human intellect has formed or the impure vital play of nature has given birth to, is otherwise. It is not the chariot of God who rules the collective humanity, but it is the vehicle of that collective ego which over-shadows the free soul and misinterprets the divine working in man. It treads aimlessly along a path of action, full of diverse enjoyments—driven by the unfulfilled determination of the intellect and the old or new incentive of the unregenerate lower nature. So long as the ego is the master, to find the goal is impossible; even when the goal is known it is very hard to drive the chariot straight towards it. For the ego is a great bar to the attainment of divine perfection of the individual as well as the collective self.

There are three principal divisions in an ordinary society. The first is the chariot of an expert skilled machine, beautiful, bright, pure and happy. It is conveyed by strong well-trained horses. It proceeds along the easy path carefully, slowly and steady. Sattwic Ego is its passenger. The chariot is moving round and round that high region, on which is situated the temple of God but always keeping at a considerable distance and so he finds it difficult to reach the nearest proximity of that high eminence. If he is to reach it at all, he must alight from the chariot and walk on

foot. The society of the old Aryans of the post-vedic times is a chariot of this type.

The second is the motor-car of a dexterous pleasure-loving fashion-monger. In a sandy hurricane, breaking the royal route with stupendous impetuosity and thunder-peals it hurries on in turbulent and unexhausted motion and deafening the ears of the passers-by with the trumpet-voices and trampling under the wheels whosoever comes across its path, it sweeps on and on. The life of the passenger is liable to be in peril at every step, mishaps and accidents grow and thicken; the car breaks down and after laborious mending it wends its way with vaunted speed. It has no fixed end in view but to every new sight that comes across the reach of its vision. Rajasik Ahankara, the owner of the car, turns its course and cries out with a thrill shout, "Here is the goal, here is the goal." The drive in this chariot involves plenty of enjoyment and felicity though not unaccompanied with chances of unavoidable dangers at times, but it cannot lead us to God. The modern occidental society is a motor-car of this description.

The third is a dirty, time-worn and half-broken bullock-cart slow-moving like a tortoise, driven by a pair of emaciated, starving, half-dead oxen passing on its journey over the narrow rural path. Inside the cart is a blind old man, lazy and slothful, in dirty tatters, belly-in-all, smoking his mud-coated "chukka" in the exuberance of his mental felicity and listening to the shrill jarring sounds of the cart, he feels himself plunged in the dim and shadowy recollections of the past. The owner of this cart is Tamasik Ahankara and the name of the carter is book-lore. He determines the hour of starting and ascertains the direction of his route by consulting the almanac and keeps muttering to himself, "What is extant or what was existent is good enough but the attempt at anything new is bad." Though it cannot take us to God Himself, this car has the immediate possibility of leading to Impersonal Formless Brahman or the Eternal Void.

So long as the cart of the Tamasik Ego (Ahankara) moves along the uncouth village-path, it is safe. But when it makes its appearance on the highway of the world where quite a number of speedy motor-cars run hither and thither, the vital being shudders to think what its end will be;

for the danger is that at the time of changing the route of the car, the Tamasik Ego (Ahankara) might be quite at a loss to see and accept the new situation with an unerring instinct. It has not even the desire to recognise it because by so doing it happens to be deprived of profession and ownership. When the problem thus presents itself, some of the passengers say, "Let it remain so, it is better, for it is ours" —these are conservative and emotional patriots. Some say, "Let us mend it by tinkering reforms here and there." This easy process, they say, will transform the cart at once into a blameless invaluable motor-car—these men are called reformers. Some say, "Let the beautiful car of old come back." They are often busy to find the means of performing this impossible task. But there is no sign anywhere of their undertaking being successful.

If it be binding and imperative on us to choose among the three and in the event of our shirking still higher pursuits and endeavours it is preferable for us to build the new car of the Sattwic Ahankara. But not till the car of Jagannath (the Lord of the Universe) makes its appearance in the world, the organisation of an ideal society is indeed a veritable impossibility. For that is the long-looked for ideal, the ultimate goal—the manifestation and reflection of the deepest and profoundest truth. Impelled by the inspiration of the hidden pervading Deity of the universe (The All-Purusha), mankind is ever busy in creating the ideal society; but under the influence of the inherent ignorance of the blind Prakriti or Nature-soul it produces a quite different image or complexion either disfigured, unfinished and ugly or commonplace, half-beautiful and imperfect in spite of its appearance of beauty. Instead of Shiva, it creates either a pigmy, or a titan or a demi-god of the mediocre type of humanity.

The real shape or model of the car of Jagannath is not known to anybody and no architect of life is able to design it. The Lord of the universe depicts this picture in the kingdom of His own heart and invests it with manifold appendages. The intention of the divine seer is to unfold it and establish it in the material world through varied and constant efforts of His divine Incarnations as observer and worker.

The real denomination of the car of Jagannath is not society but commune. It is not a many-sided collective body or a group of persons loosely held together, but a divine commune is a commune of free and

liberated souls—free and liberated from all bondages and divisions and which is organised and shaped into being out of the sheer intensity of delight and by the force of a concerted power of the heaven-born knowledge of the divine self.

The collective body or group which does united work in and through a combination of several individuals goes under the name of society. The meanings of words can be traced back to their derivations. The affix "Sam" means unitedly and the meaning of the verb 'Aja' is to go, to run or to fight.

The primeval worldly form of society consists in the association of thousands of men with a view to accomplish the varied functions of their mutual destinies, for the gratification of their various self-regarding desires. In one particular line of action they seek and pursue after different objectives and as a result of this venture a hot competition grows amongst them as to who is to go ahead or who is to be the greatest of them all.

And amidst this confusion and chaos which are a prelude to a new system of order, co-operation and fruition of their mental psychology, various relations are established, different ideals are introduced and as a result of which something imperfect and transient comes into being.

The primordial society is based on division and that division is established on a partial, uncertain and ephemeral unity. But the building of an ideal society is just the contrary to it. Unity is its base and the play of diversity exists not to create walls of division but for multifarious expressions of Anandam. In society we catch the glimpse of an unity and harmony of body, mind and work but the life of the commune consists in soul-unity.

Though confined in a limited sphere many partial and futile attempts have been made for the organisation of communes either swayed by intellectual ideas and inspirations as in the western world or like the followers of the great Buddha for the free enjoyment of the cessation of work calculated to bring about Nirvana or through the impulse of divine love as was the case with the first Christian Church. But within a very short time it so happens that these social evils, imperfections and partial

tendencies of human nature gradually creep into the soul of the new commune and then reduce it into an ordinary commonplace society.

The thoughts of the restless intellect are short-lived and life whether old or new is carried away by the irresistible surge of nature's instincts. The success of this sort of endeavour is impossible by sheer emotional outbursts, for emotions get exhausted through their very intensity. It is better to seek after Nirvana alone, for to evolve a commune out of love for Nirvana is a very strange affair. The commune is ordinarily the fostering field for work and association.

The day when soul-unity will manifest itself out of the synthesis and harmony of knowledge, feeling and action, that day will witness the birth of a new age and by the inspired will of the great communal Soul, the car of Jagannath will be exposed to public view in the great highway of the world and dazzle and illumine all parts of its route. And then indeed will the Golden Age be ushered into the bosom of the universe and the world of mortal men will then be turned into a divine play-house, the temple city of God—the abode of Anandam.

## **APPENDIX—E**

### **OURSELVES**

By Shree Aurobindo Ghosh

[Standard Bearer, Vol. 1—First issue, the 15th August, 1920]

"The Standard-Bearer" comes into the field to-day entrusted with a special mission and as the bearer of an ideal and a message. The standard it carries is not that of an outward battle, but the ensign of a spiritual ideal and of a life that must be its expression and the growing body of its reality. Our endeavour shall be to prepare the paths and to accomplish the beginning of a great and high change, which we believe to be, and aim at making, the future of the race and the future of India. Our ideal is a new birth of humanity into the spirit; our life must be a spiritually inspired effort to create a body of action for that great new birth and creation.

A spiritual ideal has always been the characteristic idea and aspiration of India. But the progress of Time and the need of humanity demand a new orientation and another form of that ideal. The old forms and methods are no longer sufficient for the purpose of the Time-spirit. India can no longer fulfil herself on lines that are too narrow for the great steps she has to take in the future. Nor is ours the spirituality of a life that is aged and world-weary and burdened with the sense of the illusion and miserable inutility of all God's mighty creation. Our ideal is not the spirituality that withdraws from life, but the conquest of life by the power of the spirit. It is to accept the world as an effort of manifestation of the Divine, but also to transform humanity by a greater effort of manifestation than has yet been accomplished—one in which the veil between man and God shall be removed, the divine manhood of which we are capable, shall come to birth and our life shall be remoulded in the truth and light and power of the spirit. It is to make of all our action a sacrifice to the Master of our action and an expression of the greater self in man and of all life a Yoga.

The West has made the growth of the intellectual, emotional, vital and material being of man its ideal, but it has left aside the greater possibilities of his spiritual existence. Its highest standards are ideals of progress, of liberty, equality and fraternity, of reason and science, of efficiency of all kinds, of a better political, social and economical state, of the unity and earthly happiness of the race. These are great endeavours, but experiment after experiment has shown that they cannot be realised in their truth by the power of the idea and the sentiment alone; their real truth and practice can only be founded in the spirit. The West has put its faith in its science and machinery and it is being destroyed by its science and crushed under its mechanical burden. It has not understood that a spiritual change is necessary for the accomplishment of its ideals. The East has the secret of that spiritual change, but it has too long turned its eyes away from the earth. The time has now come to heal the division and to unite life and the spirit.

This secret too has been possessed but not sufficiently practised by India. It is summarised in the rule of the Geeta—' Yoga sthah Kuru Karmani.' Its principle is to do all actions in Yoga, in union with God, on the foundation of the highest self and through the rule of all our members by

the power of the spirit. And this we believe to be not only possible for man, but the true solution of all his problems and difficulties.

That then is the message we shall constantly utter and this the ideal that we shall put before the young and rising India, a spiritual life that shall take up all human activities and avail to transfigure the world for the great age that is coming. India, she that has carried in herself from of old the secret, can alone lead the way in this great transformation, of which the present Sandhya of the old yuga is the fore-runner. This must be her mission and service to humanity—as she discovered the inner spiritual life for the individual, so now to discover for the race its integral collective expression and found for mankind its new spiritual and communal order.

Our first object shall be to declare this ideal; insist on the spiritual change as the first necessity and group together all who accept it and are ready to strive sincerely to fulfil it; our second shall be to build up not only an individual but a communal life on this principle. An outer activity as well as an inner change is needed and it must be at once a spiritual, cultural, educational, social and economical action. Its scope, too, will be at once individual and communal, regional and national, and eventually a work not only for the nation but for the whole human people. The immediate (result) of this action will be a new creation, a spiritual education and culture, an enlarged social spirit founded not on division but on unity, on the perfect growth and freedom of the individual, but also on his unity with others and his dedication to a larger self in the people and in humanity and the beginning of an endeavour towards the solution of the economic problem founded not on any western model but on the communal principle native to India.

Our call is to Young India. It is the young who must be the builders of the new world—not those who accept the competitive individualism, the capitalism or the materialistic communism of the West as India's future ideal nor those who are enslaved to old religious formulas and cannot believe in the acceptance and transformation of life by the spirit, but all who are free in mind and heart to accept a completer truth and labour for a greater ideal. They must be men who will dedicate themselves not to the past or the present but to the future. They will need to consecrate

their lives to an exceeding of their lower self, to the realisation of God in themselves and in all human beings and to a whole-minded and indefatigable labour for the nation and for humanity. This ideal can be as yet only a little seed and the life that embodies it a small nucleus, but it is our fixed hope that the seed will grow into a great tree and the nucleus be the heart of an ever-extending formation. It is with a confident trust in the spirit that inspires us that we take our place among the standard-bearers of the new humanity that is struggling to be born amidst the chaos of a world in dissolution and of the future India, the greater India of the re-birth that is to rejuvenate the mighty outworn body of the ancient Mother.

## APPENDIX—F

### Sapta-chatustaya

[[Digital Editor's note: The Sanskrit terms used in this appendix are phrased in the author's Bengali tongue and are not exactly as Sri Aurobindo would have phrased them.]]

[Revealed to Shree Aurobindo as index to his "Synthesis of Yoga"]

I had heard from Mahaguru Shree Aurobindo that during his silent tapasya in Alipore Prison, a series of mantras was revealed in his spiritual experience, which were felt by him as signals or landmarks of his new yogic consciousness. These were recorded by him as we believe—just after he came out of jail—and this record in several pages of his own hand-writing—an invaluable document, is still in our possession.

This original document along with some other original writings of Shree Aurobindo—essays, epistles, historical impressions and poems—also in his own hand-writing had been received by our revered Gurudeva Shreemat Motilal Roy in February 1910, when Shree Aurobindo came to Chandernagore and stayed in his house in secret seclusion. The writings were copied out by me in my then teen age curiosity as well as under an intuitive urge and intention to keep them with me as a precious possession for later study and deeper contemplation in future. The originals

were—so far as I am aware—sent in a bundle by Shree Samgha-gurudeva to Pondicherry after Shree Aurobindo's retreat to that place.

But it so happened that the original of these "Saptachatustaya" note-records of Shree Aurobindo were some-how left behind with us here in Chandernagore, and continued to be preserved in my personal custody—as I feel now—as an actual legacy of my latent sub-conscious urge or intuitive intention. They have been subsequently Photostatted for more lasting conservation.

Shree Aurobindo, however, never called for it, perhaps having taken it for granted as being lost during the period of frequent police-raids and house-searches and other transitional disturbances or uncertainties of the time.

I was however, astonished beyond measure, when ever since the publication of the Arya from August 1914, I began to read and study the series of articles appearing in its pages—along with the 'Life Divine' series—under the heading of "Synthesis of Yoga"—a serial presentation of Shree Aurobindo's new thought on Yoga—of equal, nay, as we feel—of even more practical importance—for a follower of his Yoga. This continued feature—month after month—it was amazing enough to be found by me—to be following on exactly same lines just as outlined in his note-record of his spiritual experiences in jail, we have mentioned above—but without those written records actually with him to help his mind or memory.

It was indeed, a wonder of wonders to me to observe and realise how his elaborate exposition of the new yoga was proceeding with almost verbatim precision as a faithful expansion of those pre-attained experiences, so much deeply and accurately they must have been imprinted in his inner consciousness as not to lose any the least either in content or sequence of thought-matter, and arrangement also in its consequent methodical presentation.

A page of the original document of "Sapta-Chatustaya" has been found to be missing through the carelessness of one of my fellow-associates. It is a matter of sorrow and regret that this cannot be now at this distance of time actually recovered and replaced.

An article in Bengali Prabartak,—from the pen of my Samgha-Gurudeva, containing the gist and purport of Shree Aurobindo's note-record, centering round the four revealed mantras quoted verbatim in that article, is here reproduced in English translation along with those four mantras that will at least help a little towards the filling up of that missing gap or link.

"The Sapta-Chatustaya" is therefore, felt and termed by me as the index of the Master's "Synthesis of Yoga" volume.

Arun Chandra Dutt

## I—Shanti-Chatustaya

समता-शान्तिःसुखं हास्यमिति शान्तिचतुष्टवम् ॥

*Samata*—The basis of internal peace is samata, the capacity of receiving with a calm and equal mind all the attacks and appearances of outward things, whether pleasant or unpleasant, ill-fortune and good-fortune, pleasure and pain, honour and ill-repute, praise and blame, friendship and enmity, sinner and saint, or, physically, heat and cold etc. There are two forms of samata, passive and active, samata in reception of the things of the outward world and samata in reaction to them.

(1) *Passive*—Passive samata consists of three things:

*Titiksha*—Titiksha is the bearing firmly of all contacts, pleasant or unpleasant, not being overpowered by that which is painful, not being carried away by that which is pleasant. Calmly and firmly to receive both and hold and bear them as one who is stronger, greater, vaster than any attack of the world, is the attitude of titiksha.

*Udasinata*—Udasinata is indifference to the dwandwas or dualities, it means literally being seated above, superior to all physical and mental touches. The udasinata, free from desire, either does not feel the touch of joy and grief, pleasure and pain, liking and disliking, or he feels them as touching his mind and body, but not himself, he being different from mind and body and seated above them.

*Nati*—Nati is the submission of the soul to the will of God, its acceptance of all touches as His touches, of all experience as His play with the soul of man. Nati may be with titiksha, feeling the sorrow but accepting it as God's will, or with udasinata, rising superior to it and regarding joy and sorrow equally as God's working in the lower instruments, or with ananda, receiving everything as the play of Krishna, and therefore, in itself delightful. The last is the state of the complete yogin, for by this continual joyous or anandamaya namaskara to God, constantly practised, we arrive eventually at the entire elimination of grief, pain &c, the entire freedom from the dwandwas, and find the Brahmananda in every smallest, most trivial, most apparently discordant detail and experience in this human body. We get rid entirely of fear and suffering—*Anandam Brahmano vidvan na vibheti kutaschana*. We may have to begin with titiksha and udasinata, but it is in this ananda that we must consummate the siddhi of samata. The yogin receives victory and defeat, success and ill-success, pleasure and pain, honour and disgrace with an equal, a sama ananda, first by buddhi-yoga, separating himself from his habitual mental and nervous re-actions and insisting by vichara on the true nature of the experience itself and of his own soul, which is secretly anandamaya,—full of sama ananda in all things. He comes to change all the ordinary values of experience; amangala reveals itself to him as mangala, defeat and ill-success as the fulfilment of God's immediate purpose and a step towards ultimate victory, grief and pain as concealed and perverse forms of pleasure. A stage arrives even, when physical pain itself, the hardest thing for material man to bear, changes its nature in experience and becomes physical ananda; but this is only at the end, when this human being, imprisoned in matter, subjected to mind, emerges from his subjection, conquers his mind and delivers himself utterly in his body, realising his true anandamaya self in every part of the adhara.

(2) *Active*—It is this universal or sama ananda in all experiences which constitutes active samata, and it has three parts or stages—

रसः प्रोतिरानन्द ईति सर्बानन्दः ॥

*Rasa*—is the appreciative perception of that guna, that aswada, taste and quality, which the Iswara of the lila perceives in each different object of experience (vishaya) and for the enjoyment of which He creates it in the lila. Pritih is the pleasure of the mind in all rasa, pleasant or unpleasant, sweet or bitter. Ananda is the divine bhoga, superior to all mental pleasure, with which God enjoys the rasa; in ananda, the opposition of the dualities entirely ceases.

*Shanti*—Only when samata is accomplished, can Shanti be perfect in the system. If there is the least disturbance or trouble in the mentality, we may be perfectly sure that there is a disturbance, or defect in the samata. For the mind of man is complex and even when in the buddhi, we have fixed ourselves entirely in udasinata or nati, there may be revolts, uneasiness, repining in other parts. The buddhi, the manas, the heart, the nerves (prana), the very bodily case must be subjected to the law of samata.

Shanti may be either a vast passive calm based on udasinata or a vast joyous calm based on nati. The former is apt to associate itself with a tendency to inaction and it is therefore, in the latter that our Yoga must culminate.

*Sukha*—Sukham is the complete relief and release from dukha, from vishada, which comes by the fulfilment of samata and shanti. The perfected yogin has never in himself any touch of sorrow, any tendency of depression, cloud or internal repining and weariness, but is always full of a sattwic light and ease.

*Hasya*—Hasyam is the active side of sukham; it consists in an active internal state of gladness and cheerfulness, which no adverse experience, mental or physical, can trouble. Its perfection is God's stamp and seal on the siddhi of the samata. It is in our internal being the image of Srikrishna playing, *balavat* as the eternal *balaka* and *ku-mara* in the garden of the world.

## II—Shakti-chatustaya

बीर्यं शक्तिश्चण्डीभावः श्रद्धाचेति शक्तिचतुष्टयम् ॥

*Veeryam*-[Adapted from 'Varnashrama'—an article published in Bengali 'Prabartak', Vol-1, Number-(2), Aswin 1322 B.S., from the pen of Shree Motilal Roy dwelling on the gist of this 'veerya' chapter of Shree Aurobindo's note record.] God is at once above quality and full of qualities. It is through His will that innumerable universes lapse into laya or annihilation in a single moment and through His will again innumerable new universes in air, fire, sky, nay in all the twenty-four tattwas or fundamental elements are lashed into creation. This Will is Prakriti or Nature-power. Prakriti is constituted with qualities. Though it has manifold qualities, one of such qualities is Veerya. It is this veerya which has manifested as the institution of *Varnashram* in Hindu society.

*Veerya* is in held in the body of every living creature. Every living body again is constituted with five sheaths—annamaya (physical), pranamaya (vital), monomaya (mental), vijnanamaya (gnostic) and anandamaya (spiritual).

The quality of veerya has its hold on the first four koshas or sheaths. Man generally plays his part in the world through these four-sheath instruments. The play through the anandamaya or spiritual happens in the lives of rare persons alone. The swabhava-shakti or self-nature of Prakriti indwelling as veerya in the four-fold sheaths causes man to live and work as its play-instruments. Man has no hand in this working—he is a mere instrument. This veerya-quality inhering ever in the four-fold koshas, displays a divergence in its active manifestation in life. So, when Shakti presses upon a particular sheath of a living man with a special stress, special characteristics and activities, peculiar to that sheath find expression in that man's life and character.

This veerya-shakti manifesting with special stress in the vijnanamaya kosha outflows as the following qualitative characteristics displayed in his life-character:

ज्ञानलिप्सा-ज्ञानप्रकाशः ब्रह्मबर्चः-स्थैर्यमिति ब्रह्मण्यबीर्यम् ॥

—thirst for knowledge, revelation of knowledge, light-energy known as brahma varchas and steadiness of being. The Arya seers have denominated a man of such qualities in his life-vessel as the Brahmin.

A Brahmin has no passionate desire; he has no craving, no avarice, no propensity to enjoy. He has the passion to know. Purifying his desire-seed, he uplifts its urge. With such illumined upward urge, he endeavours to reach up and enter anandamaya kosha. This passion for knowledge is the principal quality in a Brahmin. Knowledge is of two kinds: para and apara—Para is Brahmagyana; apara is secular knowledge. A Brahmin would dissociate himself as much as possible from the gravitation of earthly nature and incessantly pursue the light of Brahma-knowledge. Involved within Brahmagyana, will reveal in him also all the learnings of the world. To a Brahmin the knowledge of the physical sciences or any other branches of terrestrial learning become an achieved possession. Brahma-knowledge—attainable through hardest tapasya is possible only to the Brahmin. Undeterred by the alluring temptation of all mundane learning and fired with a unique aspiration and determination to know Brahma-gyana alone, he gives himself up to such sadhana alone.

Ordinarily man first acquires external knowledge of particular things, and afterwards dives deeper for its interior truth. A Brahmin sees first the inner essence of a thing, understands its inner nature and in that light judges and ascertains its outer manifestation. The expressive power of a Brahmin's knowledge wells up from within.

Brahma-varcha is a sort of light-energy. The divine knowledge of Brahmin inhering as a mighty power in his body-vessel, inspires him to manifest its light and power in the world. It is this brahma-varcha in a brahminic body that appears as the reflection of godly nature in him. Brahma and brahmin then become one. Therefore in Hindu society, to adore a brahmin is to worship the Parabrahma or the Supreme Brahma—through such worship is accomplished the adoration of the entire universe. A Brahmin is firm-footed in knowledge—no darkness of the ego can land a Brahmin in utter despair or dismay. Whatever heavenly treasure is earned by a Brahmin through his tapasya, he is not overwhelmed by it, but makes proper use of same. The steadfastness of a Brahmin is extra-ordinary; so a brahminic adhar or body-vessel is perfectly fit for expression of all the divine qualities.

Just below the vijñanamaya kosha is the place of the monomaya or mental sheath. Its manifestation in the human body leads to development of Kshatriya qualities.

"अभयं साहसः यशोलिप्सात्मश्लाघेति क्षत्रियबीर्यम् ॥"

Fearlessness, courage, aspiration for fame and self-estimation are the ornamental qualities of a Kshatriya. A Kshatriya is fearless and undaunted. Not a jot or tittle of fear shakes his mind. A Kshatriya calmly and patiently faces a thousand difficulties and dangers. No predicament or critical situation can over-whelm or overpower a Kshatriya. Such is the quality of abhoya in a Kshatriya.

The courage of a Kshatriya is uncommon. He is ever ready to do his duty. However thousand-fold a tirade of opposition may be raised by opponents in the way of a Kshatriya out to execute a determination, the latter is sure to trample such opposition under his foot by dint of his boundless courage and immeasurable dash of energy. There is nothing impossible to a Kshatriya. A Kshatriya is indomitable, unconquerable.

Whatever the cartload of dangers that a Kshatriya may carry over his head as a fearless hero, and however patiently he bears all troubles and difficulties with a smile on his face, his aim is to achieve his purpose. Victory, attainment and mastery are the signs of his bid for fame. He rushes forward to the battle-field to unfurl the flag of victory. He knows no defeat. The goddess of success anoints a Kshatriya with the crown of victory. No Kshatriya would accept defeat in the field of battle so long as the last drop of blood flows in his veins, even if beset with the heaviest afflictions. It is such impassionate desire for fame that adorns the Kshatriya character. In a Kshatriya, indwells the knowledge and steadfastness of the Brahmin, where-through he visualises the play of his divine qualities. It is through such an adhara that God manifests his Kshatriya-veerya.

Self-praise or self-estimation is an impure Kshatriya quality. When with the touch of knowledge, such estimation rises above the self into the Paramatma or Supreme Self, then the pride of the Kshatriya is transmuted into a divine power and it is through such a Kshatriya that God does great and noble deeds in the field of work.

Now, to the third sheath—the pranamaya kosha. With the manifestation of Veeryam in this prana-kosha, these qualities come into play:

"दानं-ग्रहणं-कौशलम् भोगलिप्साचेति वैश्यबीर्यम् ॥"

These are qualities of the Vaishya-Shakti. Give and take, skill in earning, urge for enjoyment—are its characteristic traits. To give and to take constitute the two principal functionings of a Vaishya. Like a lover, he no doubt reaches out his gifts of life to all, but he also awaits to get back their value in return. If the Vaishya pours out his self-earnings for the benefit of others, in drawing back returns he would not hesitate to realise the same hundred-fold. He would give without let or hindrance, but has the skill to get in return its more than full value. A Vaishya's management, skill and productivity are all for the benefit of the people. His urge for conservation and distribution is no less joyous and sincere than his urge for acquisition. The Vaishya feels his delight in creation and its preservation. He is endowed with an uncommon power for enjoyment. Vishnu-Shakti,—the preservative power manifests it-self in the Vaishya personality, while Rudra-Shakti resides in the Kshatriya and Shiva-Shakti in the Brahmin.

The last to deal with is the annamaya kosha.

"कामं-प्रेम-दास्यलिप्सात्मसमर्पणमिति शूद्रबीर्यम् ॥"

Desire, love, urge to serve and self-giving—are qualities, characteristic to the annamaya or physical sheath in man. It is God, who having descended step by step from the realm of subtle abstractions, has through His conscious powers created the annamaya kosha and displays His qualities as a Shudra in human life. In one sense therefore, it is the Shudra-Shakti which is the highest among the four powers—for it is the Shudra who has to sacrifice the most for the exercise of the divine play in man mostly and through his physical body.

But in the impure state, the Shudra has estranged himself from the triple sources of knowledge, puissance and skill and so he stands, mute and dumb, in life of society. He has to eliminate this dross of impurity. He has to re-awaken knowledge, puissance and skill in his inner being and then lay out all these in the service of God, of man and all creatures,

Purifying his impure desire-seed, he has to raise it from the level of narrow selfish pursuit of happiness, and wake up the divine fervour of service in his annamaya human body. His innate spirit of love united with this divine fervour of self-less service will turn him into a consecrated instrument, self-devoted in the service of God and mankind.

In the Kali-yuga, the Shudra-Shakti is ahead of the four. The trend of this age has rendered us all Shudras in habit and thought. We have to follow and fulfil the law of love and service, so characteristic of the Shudra—after having purified ourselves from its dross of imperfection. The Brahmanya-shakti predominant in the Satya Yuga, the Kshatriya Shakti of the Treta Yuga and the Vaishya Shakti of the Dwapara, have all one by one dropped down from their high places—these have all broken down in the fabric of society. Empty pride and persistence in the old sense and ego-samskara would serve no purpose any longer. All have gone down into wreckage and ruin, but it is the Will of God that society has to be reborn in the new cycle. We are under world-circumstances and the law of evolution, all reduced to the actual state of Shudra hood. God has descended from the vijnanamaya down the staircase to the annamaya level of universal Chaitanya or life-status. From this state of decline, we have to rise again to the state of re-ascension, awaiting for the new satya-yuga.

So let us now be up and doing—purifying and converting our lust or desire-passion through consecration to the Lord Shree Krishna, into the pure passion of love and selfless service. Let our self-bigotted love, through the process of patriotic and altruistic self-purification, be perfected into a mighty tide of universal brotherhood and divine unity. Let our urge for service extend and express itself to all the nations and peoples of the world through re-orientation of our cultural, social, economic and political life into a real international forum of spiritual life and relationship.

The four-fold veeryam or social qualities—revived in a reborn Varnashrama, according to the inner being, and its law—the swabhava and swadharma—of our being and becoming—will usher a new age—with its new, freed and perfected human life and society.

*Shakti—*

Shakti is the perfection of the different parts of the system which enables them to do their work freely and perfectly.

### *Deha-Shakti*

"मइत्त्वबोधोबलश्लाघा -लघुता-धारणसामर्थ्यमिति देहशक्तिः ॥"

Mahatwa-bodhah, bala-slagha, laghuta, dharana-samarthyam, iti deha-shaktih.

—The body is the pratistha in this material universe; for the working out of the divine lila on earth, it is necessary that it should have specially the dharana-samarthyam or power of sustaining the full stream of force, of ananda, of widening knowledge and being which descends into mind and prana and the vital and bodily functions with the progress of the siddhi. If the body is unfit, the system is unable to hold these things perfectly. In extreme cases, the physical brain is so disturbed by the shock from above as to lead to madness, but this is only in entirely unfit and impure adharas or when Kali descends angrily and violently, avenging the attempt of the Asura to seize on her and force her to serve his foul and impure desires. Ordinarily, the incapacity of the body, the nervous system and the physical brain shows itself in slowness of progress, in slight derangements and ailments, in unsteady hold of the siddhi which comes and slips away, works and is spilled out. Dharana-samarthyam—comes by purification of the mind, prana and body; full siddhi depends upon full shuddhi.

### *Prana-shakti*

पूर्णता-प्रसन्नता-समता- भोगसामर्थ्यमिति प्राणशक्तिः ॥

—Purnata, prasannata, samata, bhoga-samarthyam, iti prana-shaktih. When in the physical sensations, we are conscious of a full and steady vital force which is clear and glad and bright and undisturbed by any mental or physical shock, then there is the siddhi of the prana, the vital or nervous system. Then we become fit for whatever Bhoga God imposes on the mind and body.

### *Chitta-shakti—*

स्निग्धता-तेजःश्लाघा- कल्याणश्रद्धा-प्रेमसामर्थ्यमिति चित्तशक्तिः ॥

Snigdghata, tejashlagha, kalyana-sraddha, prema-samarthyam; iti Chitta-shaktih.

These are all the signs of Chitta-shuddhi and shakti of the chitta or emotional parts of the antah-karana. The wider and more universal the capacity for love, a love self-sufficient and undisturbed by want or craving or disappointment and the more fixed the faith in God and the joy in all things as mangalam, the greater becomes the divine force in the chitta.

### *Buddhi-shakti*

बिशुद्धता-प्रकाशोबिचित्रबोधः-ज्ञानधारणसामर्थ्यमिति बुदिशक्तिः ॥

Visuddhata, prakasha, vichitra-bodhah, jnanadharana-amarthyam, ieti buddhishaktih.

Manas and buddhi need not be considered separately as the elements of power apply both to the six-fold indriya and the thought-power in the mind. Their meaning is clear. For the full sense of visuddhata, refer to the explanation of shuddhi in the seventh chaturstaya.

### *Chandibhawa—*

Chandibhava is the force of Kali manifest in the temperament (Daivi Prakriti).

(The detailed description of this power is deferred.)

### *Shraddha—*

Shraddha is necessary in two things:

शक्त्यां भगवति चेति श्रद्धा ॥

Shaktyam, Bhagawati, Cha, iti Shraddha.

There must be faith in the love and wisdom of God fulfilling Himself through us, fulfilling the Yoga-siddhi, fulfilling our life-

work, working out all for our good even when it is apparently veiled in evil; and there must be faith in the power of the Shakti manifested by Him in this adhara, to sustain, work out and fulfil the divine knowledge, power and joy in the Yoga and in the life. Without shraddha, there is no shakti; imperfect shraddha means imperfect shakti. Imperfection may be either in the force of the faith or in its illumination. It is sufficient at first to have full force of the faith, for we cannot from the beginning of the Yoga, have full illumination. Then, however, we err or stumble, our force of faith will sustain us. When we cannot see, we shall know that God withholds the light, imposing on us error as a step towards knowledge, just as He imposes on us defeat as a step towards victory.

### **III—Vijnana-chatustaya**

*Siddhis—*

*their justification, dangers and uses:*

The two first chatustaya of the adhara have references mainly to the central principle of man's existence, the antahkarana; but there is one superior faculty and one inferior instrument, which have each its peculiar siddhi, the vijnana or supra-intellectual faculty and the body. The siddhi of the vijnana and the siddhi of the body belong both of them to that range of experiences and of divine fulfilment which are abnormal to the present state of humanity. They are called specially siddhis, because of their abnormal nature, rarity and difficulty; they are denied by the sceptic and discouraged by the saint. The sceptic disbelieves in them and holds them to be impostures, fables or hallucinations, as a clever animal may disbelieve in the reasoning powers of man. The saint discourages them, because they seem to him to lead away from God; he shuns them just as he shuns the riches, powers and attainments of this world, and for the same reason. We need not shun them, and cannot shun them, because God is sought by us in His world-fulfilment as well as apart from the world, and in the world, there are the riches of His power and knowledge which we cannot avoid, once we dwell in Him, perceiving and sharing His nature. Indeed, there is a stage reached by the Yogin, when, unless he avoids all attraction in the world, he can no more avoid the use of the siddhis of power and knowledge than an ordinary man can avoid eating

and breathing, unless he wishes to leave his body; for these things are the natural action of the vijnana, the plane of ideal consciousness to which he is rising, just as mental activity and physical motion are the natural action of man's ordinary life.

All the ancient Rishis used these powers, all great Avatars and Yogins and Vibhutis from Christ to Ramakrishna have used them; not is there any great man with the divine power at all manifest in him, who does not use them continually in an imperfect form, without knowing clearly what are these faculties that he is employing. If nothing else, he uses the powers of intuition and inspiration, the power of ishita which brings him the opportunities he needs and the means which make these opportunities fruitful, and the power of vyapti, by which his thoughts go darting and flashing through the world and creating unexpected waves of tendency both around him and at a distance. We need no more avoid the use of these things than a poet should avoid the use of his poetical genius which is a siddhi unattainable by ordinary men or an artist renounce the use of his pencil. At the same time there is a justification for the denial of the sceptic and the renunciation by the saint, and of this justification we must take note.

The saint renounces, because when these siddhis show themselves fragmentarily in a weak adhara, dominated by egoism, the egoism becomes enormously enhanced, the ignorant sadhaka thinking that he is the possessor and creator of these abnormal powers and a very great man indeed, (just as we find an abnormal egoism very frequent in the small poet and the half-artist; for those who have a really great power, know well enough that the power is not theirs but a gift from God, and feel that the power of God is using them and not they the power). So the sadhaka misled by Ahankara, goes running after these powers for their own sake and leaves following after God. The denial of the sceptic is justified by the credulity of ordinary men, who regard these things as miracles and invent them where they do not exist, and by the weakness and egoism of the sadhakas themselves and of many who are not sadhakas; for if they catch even a glimpse of these things in themselves or others, they exaggerate, puff, distort and build around some petty and imperfect experiences all sorts of jargon, mysticism, charlatanism and bujruki of all kinds which are an offence and stumbling block to the world.

We must therefore, keep in view very strictly certain fixed principles:

1. That these powers are not miraculous, but powers of Nature, which manifest of themselves as soon as the vijnana-padma in us begins to open, and are no more a cause for bragging and vanity than the power of eating and breathing or anything else that is Nature's.
2. That these can manifest fully only when we leave ego and offer up our petty separate beings in the vastness of God's being.
3. That when they manifest in the unpurified state, they are a dangerous ordeal to which God subjects us, and we can only pass through it safely by keeping our minds clear of vanity, pride, selfishness and by remembering continually that they are His gifts and not our acquirements.
4. That the powers are not to be pursued for their own sake, but developed or allowed to develop as part of the flower of divine perfection which is by God's grace blossoming out in us.

Subject to these cautions, we have not to reject these powers when they come but accept them, to be used in us by God for His own purposes and not by us for ours, to be poured out by vyapti on humanity and not kept for our own use and pride.

*Vijnana*—

ज्ञानं त्रिकालदृष्टिरष्टसिद्धिः समाधिरिति बिज्ञानचतुष्टयम् ॥

Jnanam, trikaldrishtir, astasiddhih, samadhi, iti vijnana-chatustayam.

*Jnana*—By jnana is meant that power of direct and divine knowledge which works independently of the intellect and senses or uses them only as subordinate assistants. It perceives the things that are hidden from the ordinary man, helps us to cease seeing the world in the terms of our sense-experience and enables us to become sensitive to the great unseen forces, powers, impulses and tendencies which stand behind our material life and determine and govern it. To jnana, the whole machinery of the world reveals itself in its hidden principles; the nature of Purusha, the workings of Prakriti, the principles of our being, God's purpose in His world-workings, the harmony of His gunas, Brahman, Iswara, Atman, man and beast and object, idea and name and form, reality and relation,

all these show themselves to the eye that God has illuminated with the sun of His knowledge,—jnanadeepena bhaswata.

सत्यसदृष्टिः श्रुतिः- स्मृतिः प्रतिबोध इति ज्ञानम् ॥  
बृत्तैतु कर्मणि च सत्यधर्म एव ज्ञानम् ॥

Jnana is of three kinds,—jnana of thought, jnana of experience, (realisation or prati bodha) and jnana of action or satyadharmā.

Jnana of thought consists of three powers,

- (1) Drishti, revelation or swayamprakasha.
- (2) Shruti, inspiration.
- (3) Smriti, consisting of — 1. Intuition 2. Viveka.

*Drishti*—Drishti is the faculty by which the ancient Rishis saw the truth of Veda, the direct vision of the truth without need of observation of the object, reasoning, evidence, imagination, memory or any other of the faculties of the intellect. It is as when a man sees an object and knows what it is, even if sometimes, he cannot put a name on it, it is pratyaksha-darshana of the satyam.

*Shruti*—Shruti is the faculty by which we perceive as in a flash, the truth hidden in a form of thought or an object presented to our knowledge or in the word by which the thing is revealed. It is that faculty by which the meaning of the mantra, dawns on the mind or on the being of the sadhaka, although when he first heard it, he did not know its meaning nor was it explained to him. It is as when a man hears the name of a thing and by the name itself, without seeing the thing, comes to know its nature. A special power of smriti is the revelation of truth through the right and perfect vak in the thought.

*Smriti*—Smriti is the faculty by which true knowledge hidden in the mind reveals itself to the judgement and is recognized at once as the truth. It is as when a man has forgotten something he knew to be the fact, but remembers it, the moment it is mentioned to him.

*Intuition & Viveka*—Intuition is the power which distinguishes the truth and suggests at once the right reasons for its being the truth; viveka is the power which makes at once the necessary limitations and distinctions

and prevents intellectual errors from creeping in or an imperfect truth from being taken for the whole satyam.

The important of viveka for the purpose of man's progress in his present stage is supreme. At present, in the greatest men, the powers of the vijnana act not in their own power, place and nature, but in the intellect, as helpers of the intellect and occasional guides. Directly we get an intuition or revelation, the intellect, memory, imagination, logical faculty seize hold of it and begin to disguise it in a garb of mingled truth and error, bringing down truth to the level of the nature, samskaras and preferences of a man instead of purifying and elevating his nature and judgments to the level of the truth. Without viveka, these powers are as dangerous to man as they are helpful. The light they give, is brighter than the light of the intellect, but the shadow the intellect creates around them is often murkier than the mist of ignorance, which surrounds ordinary intellectual knowledge. Thus men who use these powers ignorantly, often stumble much more than those who walk by the clear though limited light of the intellect. When these powers begin to work in us, we must be *dhira* and *sthira* and not be led away by our enthusiasm; we must give time for the viveka to seize on our thought and intuitions, arrange them, separate their intellectual from their vijnanamaya elements, correct their false extensions, false limitations, misapplications, make, in the image of the Upanishads, the vyuha or just marshalling of the rays of the sun of knowledge, *suryasya rashmayah*. Knowledge is not for the hasty mind; but only for the dhira, who can sit long accumulating and arranging his stores and does not rush away with fragments like a crow darting off with the first morsel of food on which it can seize.

*Realisation*—Realisation or jnana of experience is the perception of things through bhava—bhava of being or Sat, realising the truths of being;—bhava of Chit or knowledge, realising the truths of thought; bhava of Tapas or force, realising the truths of force and action—bhava of love or Ananda, realising the truths of emotion and sensation and bliss.

*Satyadharmā*—Satyadharmā is the carrying out of the jnana in bhava and action.

*Trikala-drishti*—Trikala-drishti is a special faculty of jnana by which that general power is applied to the actuality of things, their details of

events, tendencies etc in the past, present and future of the world as it exists, has existed and will exist in time. It deals with particular fact, just as jnana deals with general truth. Trikala-drishti works in several ways:

(1) Directly, without a means or excuse, by drishti, Shruti and smriti

(2) By dwelling in concentration on the object—that process which calls sanyama on the object—until the mind in observer and observed becoming one, we know what the object contains, whether past, present or future, just as we can know the contents of our own being.

(3) By using as a means some external sign or some indicative science such as *samudrika*, astrology, angury &c. These sciences are worth little, if not used by the higher vijnanamaya faculties; for the signs they use are mostly indicative of tendencies and to distinguish perfectly tendencies of possibility from actual eventualities cannot be done by following written shastra or by rule of thumb.

(4) By the two powers of vyapti and prakamya which are what the Europeans call telepathy.

*Astasiddhi:*

व्यप्ति -प्राकाम्यैश्वर्यमीशिता-वशिता-महिमा-लघिहिमानिमेत्यष्टसिद्धिः ॥

Vyapti, prakamya, aishwaryam, ishita, vashita, mahima, laghima, anima, iti ashta-siddhi.

Asta-siddhi is of three orders:

(1) Two siddhis of knowledge,—vyapti and prakamya.

(2) Three siddhis of power,—aishwarya, ishita, vashita.

(3) Three siddhis of the body,—mahima, laghima, anima.

*Prakamya*—By prakamya is meant the full prakasha of the senses and the manas, by which they surpass the ordinary limits of the body and become aware by sight, hearing, touch or more usually and more easily by mental sensation and awareness:

(1) of objects, scenes and events at a distance or hidden from the normal operation of the mind and senses.

(2) of objects, scenes and events belonging to other planes of existence.

(3) of objects &c belonging to the past or future, the images of which are contained in the object of our study.

(4) of the present states of mind, feeling, sensations &c. of others or of their particular thoughts, feelings and sensations; of such states or particular thoughts &c which they have had in the past and of which the impression remains in the chitta-record or which they will have in the future of which the image is already prepared in the prescient part of the chitta.

*Vyapti*—To each form of Prakamya, there is a corresponding form of vyapti, i.e. reception or communication. By prakamya, for instance, we can have the perception of another's feelings; by vyapti, those feelings are felt striking in our own consciousness or ours are thrown into another. Prakamya is the sight of one looking from a distance and seeing an object; vyapti is the sensation of that object coming towards us or into contact with us. It is possible by vyapti to communicate anything we have in our system—thought, feeling, power &c to another, and if he is able to seize and hold it, he can make it his own and use it. This can be done either by a sort of physical throwing of the thing in us into the other or by a will upon the swabhava compelling it to effect the transfer. The teacher and the guru habitually use this power of vyapti which is far more effective than speech or writing; but all men use or suffer it unconsciously. For every thought, feeling, sensation or other movement of consciousness in us creates a wave or current which carries it out into the world-consciousness around, and there it enters into any adhara which is able and allowed to receive it. Half at least of our habitual thoughts and feelings are such unconscious borrowings.

*Aishwarya*—Aiswarya is effectiveness of the Will acting on object or event without the aid of physical means.

It may work:

(1) by pressure or tapas of the chaitanya straight on the object that has to be affected.

(2) by pressure or tapas of chaitanya on Prakriti (either the general world-Prakriti or Prakriti in the object itself) to bring about directly the result intended.

(3) by pressure on the Prakriti to bring about circumstances which will compel indirectly the result intended.

(4) without pressure, by mere thought that is will, the ajna or ajnanam of the Iswara which Prakriti automatically obeys.

The last is the highest power of Aishwarya and its supreme siddhi; for here chit and tapas become one as in the will of God Himself.

*Ishita*—Ishita is the same effectiveness of the will acting not as a command or through thought, by ajnanam, but through the heart or temperament (chitta) in a perception of need or pure lipsa. Whatever the lipsa reaches out towards or even needs without conscious knowledge of the need, comes of itself to the man who possesses Ishita. Ishita also expresses itself either by pressure on the object or Prakriti or by simple perception automatically effective of its aim. The last is again the highest power of Ishita and its supreme siddhi.

*Vashita*—Vashita is the control of the object in its nature so that it is submissive to the spoken word, receptive of the thought conveyed or sensitive and effective of the action suggested. Vashita acts automatically through established control of one nature by another, or by the pouring of natural force into the word, thought or suggestion of action so as to produce an effect on the nature of others. The latter is the lower and ordinary siddhi; the former the supreme or entirely divine siddhi. Vyapti is one of the chief agents of Vashita.

*The Conditions of Powers*—It should be noted that none of the siddhis of power can act perfectly or freely so long as there is impurity of the chitta, egoism in the thought and temperament or domination of desire in the use of the siddhi. Under such circumstance there may be occasional use or irregular effectivity of the power—a thing not worth having in itself, but useful only as training the mind to give up its own samskaras and habitual processes and accept the activity of the vijñanamaya shakti; or there may be a regular and effective use of limited powers by fixed Tantric processes (kriyas). The latter should be shunned by the sadhakas of the Purna Yoga.

*The Conditions of Jnana*—It should also be noted that perfect jnana and trikaladrishti are only possible by complete shuddhi of the antahkarana, especially the exclusion of desire and vishudhi of the buddhi, absolute passivity of the manas, and finally, perfected action of the powers of the

vijnana. An imperfect and irregular action of the higher powers is always possible and is possessed obscurely by many who are not yogins or sadhakas. Physical Siddhis—The physical powers, Mahima, Laghima, Anima, need not be considered at present, as, although belonging to the dharma of the vijnana, they act in the body and are strictly part of the physical siddhi.

*Samadhi*—Samadhi is the power by dwelling fixedly of the chaitanya on its object to extend the range of knowledge and consciousness through all the three states of waking, sleeping and dream, to the realisation of those tattvas of the Brahman, to which the ordinary waking consciousness is blind and to the experience either in reflected images or in the things themselves, of other worlds and planes of consciousness than the material earth or this waking physical consciousness. The consideration of samadhi may also be postponed for the present.

#### IV—Sharira-chatustaya

*Sharira-siddhi*—The sharira-chatustaya, likewise, need not be at present explained. Its four constituents are named below:

आरोग्यमुत्थापना- सौन्दर्यबिबिधान्द ईति शरीरचतुष्टयम् ॥

Arogyam, Utthapana, Saundaryam, Vividhanandam, iti sharira-chatustayam.

#### The three general chatustayas—

These are the four chatustayas of the adhara-siddhi. In addition, there are three general chatustayas.

#### V—Karmachatustaya or Lila-chatustaya

कृष्णः काली-कामः कम्मेति कर्मचतुष्टयम् ॥

Krishna, Kali, Kamah, Karma iti Karma-chatustayam.

#### VI—Brahma-chatustaya

सर्व्वमनन्तं ज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रजेति ब्रह्मचतुष्टयम् ॥

Sarvam, Anantam, Jnanam, Anandam, Brahma, iti Brahma-chatus-tayam.

## VII—Yoga-chatushtaya or Sansiddhi-chatushtaya

शुद्धिर्मुक्तिर्भुक्तिः-सिद्धिरिति योगचतुष्टयम् ॥

Shuddhir, Mukti, Bhukti, Siddhir, iti yoga-chatushtayam.

The last or seventh is at once the means, the sum and completion of all the rest. Its explanation is essential to the full understanding of the others and will be separately treated.

## GLOSSARY

- AHANG. AHANGKAR—Ego, Egoism  
AMRITA BAZAR—(Patrika) Daily newspaper in English  
ANGARAKSHANA, ANGARAKSHAKA—Body-protection, Body protector  
ANUSTHAN—Action—here tantric or terroristic action  
ARYA—Monthly magazine, edited by Shree Aurobindo from Pondicherry (1914)  
ARUPA—Formless  
ASTASIDDHI—Eight-fold perfections attainable by yoga-sadhana  
A. CHAUDHURI—Justice Ashutosh Chaudhuri, famous Barrister-at-law and a leader of Moderate Party  
BANDEMATARA—Nationalist daily paper in English edited by Shree Aurobindo  
BARIN—Barindra Kumar Ghosh, a famous revolutionary and youngest brother of Shree Aurobindo  
B.C. CHATTERJEE—Renowned Barrister-at-law, associated with Shree Aurobindo in the editorial staff of Bandemataram paper  
BHUKTI—Enjoyment  
BHUTAS—Ghosts  
BRAHMA-SAMAJ—Brahma-Society—founded by Raja Rammohan Roy and developed by Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, Brahmananda Keshab Chandra, Shivanath Shastri etc for revival of worship of One-God and social reforms  
BUJRUKI—Humbug  
CHAKRA—Spiritual circle  
DALA—Organisation, group, circle  
DAYANANDA—Thakur Dayananda—Spiritual leader and founder of Arunachal Mission, Silchar (Assam)  
DEVAVRATA—Formerly member of 'Yugantar'-party, subsequently joined Ramakrishna Mission  
DEVATVA—Divine nature and quality  
EI MUHURTE—At this moment  
EI KHANE—At this point of time

GITA —Shreemat Bhagabat Gita—Well-known gospel of India containing Shreekrishna's message to Arjuna at the battle-field of Kurukshetra.

JAHI KAMAM DURASADAM—Conquer passions so hard to control

JANMABHUMI—Weekly journal from S. India

KARMA—Work or action as part of universal movement of life

KARMA YOGA—Yoga of Karma or action.

KARMAYOGIN—Weekly periodical in English, edited by Shree Aurobindo Karmaneybadhikaraste (Ma Falesu Kadachana)—Your mission is to work without any hankering for the result (from Gita)

KARTA—Master

KALI—Universal Mother-Energy who creates, preserves and destroys the world

KALI-YUGA—Iron age

KHASTRIYA—Warrior class in Hindu Society

KARIKAL—One of the erstwhile five French possessions in India, southeast of Pondicherry

KACHHA—Unripe, not pucca i.e. not ripe or developed to perfection

KAYA-SIDDHI—Physical perfection attained by yoga-sadhana making the body a fit adhara or vehicle for the play of God in life

KRISHNA—Shreekrishna—Supreme Soul, visioned by Shree Aurobindo at Alipore (Calcutta) Jail and regarded by him as Master of the Yoga

KAUSALAM—Scientific or technical skill

MADGODKAR—A Marhathi merchant

MANTRA—Sound-formula revealing an aspect of Divine Consciousness

MANTHARA-GATI—Slow pace

MANTREE DEEKSHA—Spiritual initiation through reception, repetition and practice of word-sounds, pregnant with deep spiritual power and meaning

MANI NAIK—Manindra Nath Naiek—follower and disciple of Samgha-guru Motilal Roy. He took major part in the revolutionary work at the Chandemagore circle taking charge of bomb-making. The historical bomb thrown on Lord Hardmge, former British Viceroy of India on 23rd December 1912 at Delhi by Basanta Biswas under the lead of Rash Behari Bose, was made by Naiek

MATH—Monastery

MUKTI—Salvation or liberation (spiritual or national)

NAGEN—Nagendra Kumar Guha Roy of Noakhali—associated with Shree Aurobindo, specially in connection with his departure to Pondicherry

NALINI—Kanta Gupta—now secretary of Shree Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry

NARAYAN—Bengali monthly magazine started by Chittaranjan Das (Deshbandhu) and edited for some time by Barindra Kumar Ghosh

NAYAK—A newspaper in Bengali edited by Panchkowri Bandopadhyaya

PRADESH—Entrance

PAISACHIK—Diabolical

PRERANA—Inspiration or impulsion

PREMA—Love

PRABARTAK—Monthly magazine in Bengali, founded by Shree Motilal Roy at Chandemagore in the year 1915

PURANIC—Other than Vedantic or Tantric Shastras for regulation of social and political life

R. C. DUTT—Ramesh Ch. Dutt, I.C.S., eminent Bengali novelist, writer of economic treatise in English and translator of Rigveda in Bengali

RAJAS—Of kinetic attribute

RAJASIC AHANKARA —Egoism dominated by the rajasic quality Rajoguna—The kinetic quality

RAJOGUNA—Paul and Mirra Richard, European Yogins who came to Pondicherry about 1914. Madame Richard found in Shree Aurobindo the fulfilment of her spiritual aspirations and dreams. Monsieur Richard left and Madame Richard dedicated herself entirely to fulfil Shree Aurobindo's mission and work as the Mother of the Ashram ever since 1921

ROGA—Disease

RUPA—Form

RASH BEHARI BOSE—Born in the village Subaldaha, Burdwan district (West Bengal), educated in Chandernagore, became a revolutionary yogin and leader, initiated by Shree Motilal Roy. He escaped to Japan in May 1915

SADHAN—Spiritual practice  
 SAMGHA—Commune, community of individuals interested with a spiritual ideal  
 SAMATA—Equanimity of mind  
 SAHASH—Courage  
 SANDHYA—Twilight  
 SANNYASIN—One who has renounced the world  
 SANNYASA—Renunciation  
 SHANKAR—Shree Shankaracharya—A great philosopher and spiritual leader of India (8th Century A. D.). His Vedanta commentary, specially his gospel of 'Mayavada' has been vehemently opposed and criticised by Shree Aurobindo  
 SHAKTA—Worshipper of Shakti (Energy)  
 SHAKTI—Energy—Universal or divine  
 SIDDHI—Perfection  
 SISTER NIVEDITA—Disciple of Swami Vivekananda who dedicated her life to the service of India  
 SHYAM BABU—Shyam Sunder Chakraborty, associate of Shree Aurobindo in editorial staff of 'Bandemataram'  
 SMASHHANA—Cemetary ground  
 SAMPRADANA—Giving away in marriage—a social ceremony  
 SUDARSHANA CHATTERJEE—Emissary sent to Shree Aurobindo at Pondicherry from Chandernagore  
 SWAYAMVARA—Ancient social ceremony in Hindu Society when royal princesses chose their own husbands from a gathering of invited kings and princes.  
 TANTRA, TANTRIC YOGA, TANTRICISM—System of Shakti-upasana—here code words for revolutionary cult and practice.  
 TRIMARGA YOGA—The three-fold yogic paths of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma to attain divine communion  
 UPANISHADS—Ancient spiritual scriptures  
 UPADRABA—Troubles  
 UTSARGA—Dedication or Consecration  
 VAISYA—Social class having commercial or industrial skill  
 VEDA—Ancient record of spiritual knowledge and world knowledge  
 VIJOY KRISHNA GOSWAMI—A great spiritual leader and social reformer

VYAPTI—one of the Astasiddhis (Vide Appendix F, page 206—Sapta-  
chatustaya)

YOGA—Union, processes and practices for union with God

YOGASTHA KURU KARMANI—Do work in communion with the in-  
dwelling Lord

YUGA—A cycle of time.