



ध्यान मूलं गुरोर्मूर्तिः पूजामूलं गुरोः पदम् ।
मंत्रमूलं गुरोर्वाक्यं मोक्ष मूलं गुरोः कृपा ॥

*The focal point of meditation is Guru's form, the core of worship are Guru's feet,
the soul of mantra is Guru's utterance, the source of salvation is Guru's grace.*

Realization

Vol. 5, No. 4

April 2016

An e-magazine of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥
But he who sees everywhere the Self in all existences and
all existences in the Self, shrinks not thereafter from aught.

– Isha Upanishad 1-6

Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch

Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016

Ongoing & Forthcoming Events

April 2016

Meditation & Satsang venue: Meditation Hall

Monday – Saturday

7 – 7:30 pm

Collective Meditation

Sunday Meditation & Discourses 10:00 – 11:30 am

April 03	<i>Sadhana ke Pahle Kadam</i> (Preliminary Steps on the Spiritual Quest)	Ms. Aparna Roy
April 10	Freedom : Real and Beautiful	Dr. Bharat Gupt
April 17	<i>The Life Divine</i> (Bk 2, Ch 10: Knowledge by Identity and Separative Knowledge)	Shri Prashant Khanna
April 24	Will the Superman have less Mental ability than Man (Based on <i>Words of Long Ago</i> , pp 115-126)	Dr. Ramesh Bijlani

Other Programs

April 02	6:30–7:30 pm	<i>Bhajan Sandhya</i>	Ms. Vijaya Verma
April 16-17	8:00 am–12:30 pm	Orientation to Integral Yoga	

Contact: 011-2656 7863; contact@aurobindoonline.in ; rambij@gmail.com

Ongoing Classes venue: Vidya Block Room 099

Wednesday	11:30 am–12:30 pm	Bhagvad Gita	Shri Prashant Khanna
Saturday	6:00 –7:00 pm	Bhagvad Gita	Shri Prashant Khanna
Sunday (Except 17th)	11:30 am–12:30 pm	Savitri	Shri Prashant Khanna

Contact: 011-2656 7863; 2651 7426

The Mother's Integral Health Centre Activities

(Phone 011-2685 8563 ; <tmihc2000@yahoo.co.in> ; Mrs. Bhatia (93122 65447)

General O.P.D.	Daily	8:30–9:30 am	2:30–3:30 pm
Speciality Clinics – By Appointment Only			

Tue/Thu/Sat	Accupressure	Tue/Thu/Sat	Ayurveda
Mon/Tue/Wed/Fri	Clinical Psychology	Daily (11am-1pm)	Physiotherapy
Tue/Thu	Gynaecology	Mon/Wed/Thu/Fri	Homeopathy
Daily	Mind Body Medicine	Tue	Orthopaedics
Thursday	Ophthalmology (Eye)	Tue/Thu/Sat	Naturopathy
Wed/Thu	General Surgery	Wed	Psychiatry
Wed/Fri	Dental		

Integrated Health Services : Tailor-made packages of 4 hrs./day (Tu/Th/Sa)

Includes: Ayurveda, Naturopathy, *Yogasana*, *Pranayama*, Accupressure, Eye Exercise, Integral Health Consultation

April 3 & 17	6–7 am	<i>Mahamrityunjaya Havan & Gita Paath</i>	
Tue/Thu/Sat	6:45-7:45 am	<i>Yogasana class</i>	Shri Debi Prasad
Mon/Wed/Fri	8–9 am	<i>Yogasana class</i>	Ms. Preeti Bhardwaj
Mon/Wed/Fri	9:45-10:45 am	<i>Yoga for Senior Citizens</i>	Ms. Monica Srivastava
Mon/Wed/Fri	11 am–12 noon	<i>Yogasana class</i>	Ms. Ritu Birla
Tue/Thu/Sat	5– 6 pm	<i>Yogasana class</i>	Shri Deepak Jhamb

April 9-10 6:30-9:30 am Ayurveda Camp Dr. Surinder Katoch

Contact: 011-2685 8563; 98111 99167; <tmihc2000@yahoo.co.in>

Prana as Medicine in 'The Eternal Guru Speaks' series

April 11-29 Mon/Thu/Fri 10 am–12 noon Dr. Shardha Batra MD

9 Session Package / Vedic background of Prana; Healing with Breath; Mind Control

011-2685 8563 / 98184 05040 ; <tmihc2000@yahoo.co.in>

April 23-28 8:00 am Integral Eye Exercise Camp
Contact: 011-2685 8563; Madhu 92683 84794

Ongoing Classes venue: The Mother's Integral Health Centre Rm 15J

Monday 3:30-4:30 pm *Vivekachoodamani* **Dr. Tarun Baveja**
Wed/Fri 3:30-4:30 pm *Chhandogya Upanishad* **Dr. Tarun Baveja**

Contact: 011-2656 8563; Aradhana <aradhana.archer@gmail.com>

Matri Kala Mandir CLASS SCHEDULE

Mon/Fri/Sat	3:00-6:00 pm	Hindusthani Classical Vocal	Shri Kshitij Mathur
Wed/Sat	3:30-6:30 pm	Hindusthani Classical Vocal	Smt. Vijaya Verma
Tue/Thu	4:00-5:00 pm	Hindusthani Classical Vocal	Smt. Preamsheela
Mon to Sat	4:00-6:30 pm	Music for The Soul	Km. Karunamayee
Wed/Fri	4:00-6:00 pm	Hindusthani Classical Vocal	Shri Shiv Prasad Rao
Wed/Sat	3:30-6:30 pm	Carnatic Vocal	Smt Jalaja Shankar
Wed/Thu	4:00-6:30 pm	Tabla	Shri Vijay Shankar Mishra
Wed/Fri	4:00-6:30 pm	Sitar	Shri Neel Ranjan Mukherjee
Mon/Fri	3:30-5:30 pm	Flute	Shri Himanshu Dutt
Mon/Fri	3:30-5:30 pm	Violin	Dr. Ranjan Srivastav
Mon/Wed/Fri	3:30-6:00 pm	Hawaian Guitar & Key Board	Shri Neel Ranjan Mukherjee
Tue/Thu	3:30-5:30 pm	Spanish Guitar	Shri Jagdish Kumar
Mon/Wed	4:00-6:00 pm	Bharata Natyam	Smt Rajeswari Natarajan
Tue/Thu	4:00-6:30 pm	Kathak Nritya	Smt. Raksha Singh
Wed/Sat	4:00-6:30 pm	Kathak Nritya	Km. Anjali Saini
Mon/Fri	3:30-5:00 pm	Odissi Nritya	Shri Dibakar Khuntia
Mon/Fri	4:00-5:30 pm	Painting	Smt. Tatini Sengupta Ray
Tue/Thu	4:00-6:00 pm	Painting	Shri Tapan Ch. Bhowmick
Tue/Thu/Sat	5:00-6:00 pm	Table Tennis	Shri Gulshan Rai Khera
Mon to Sat	5:00-6:00 pm	Taekwondo	Shri Arshad Hashish
Tue/Thu/Sat	5:00-6:15 pm	Basketball (M.I.S. students)	Shri Hridesh Rawal

Contact: 011-3242 5661; 2656 7863; <matrikalamandir67@gmail.com>

2016 Camps in the Kumaon Himalayas

Venue: Madhuban, Talla Ramgarh

Apr 01-05	Spiritual Retreat, Sivananda Yoga Centre, Gurgaon	English	Arun Pandala
Apr 08-15	Outdoor Activities, Indus World School, Gurgaon		Anju Khanna, Anuska
Apr 20-26	Spiritual Retreat, Life Positive	English	Tripti Salwani
Apr 27-May 03	Spiritual Retreat, SAS Baroda	Gujarati/ English	Sharad Joshi
Apr 10-15	Outdoor Activities, Indus World School, Gurgaon		Anju Khanna, Anuska

Venue: Van Niwas, Nainital

Apr 06-12	Study Camp	Marathi	
Apr 13-19	Study Camp	Marathi	
Apr 20-26	Study Camp	Marathi	
Apr 27-May 03	Study Camp	Marathi	
Apr 03-09	Youth Camp	Aaditya Vidyaashram, Puducherry	
Apr 10-16	Youth Camp	Vivekananda Vidya Vihar, Maral Sarovar, M.P.	
Apr 20-26	Youth Camp	Shikshantar School, Haryana	
Apr 27-May 03	Youth Camp	Shree KVO Seva Samaj, Mumbai	
		Alwar Public School, Rajasthan	

Contact: 011-2656 7863; 2652 4810; <contact@aurobindoonline.in>

Important Days in the Ashram 2016

4 April Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo's advent in Pondicherry

4 April Anniversary of *Tapasya Bhavan's* Inauguration Day

PROGRAMME

07:00 am	Invocation		Meditation Hall
06:30 pm	Reading by Tara didi		<i>Tapasya</i> courtyard
06:45 pm	Musical offering (Flute)	Shri Himanshu Dutt	<i>Tapasya</i> courtyard
07:40 pm	<i>Prasad</i>		

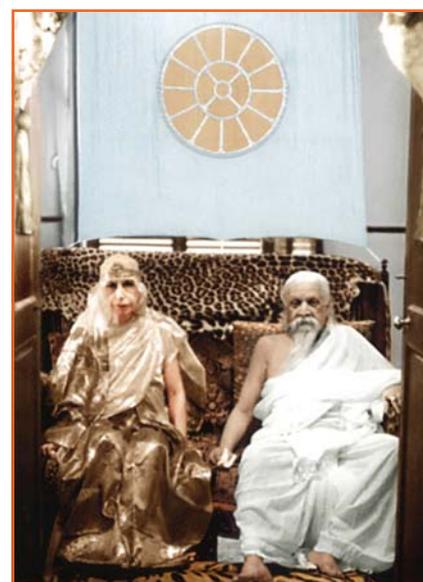
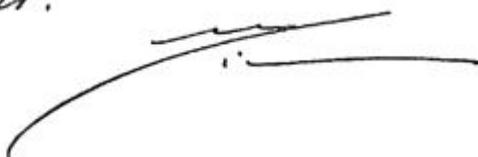
23 April Foundation-day Anniversary of The Mother's International School

24 April Anniversary of Mother's final arrival in Pondicherry-*Darshan Day*

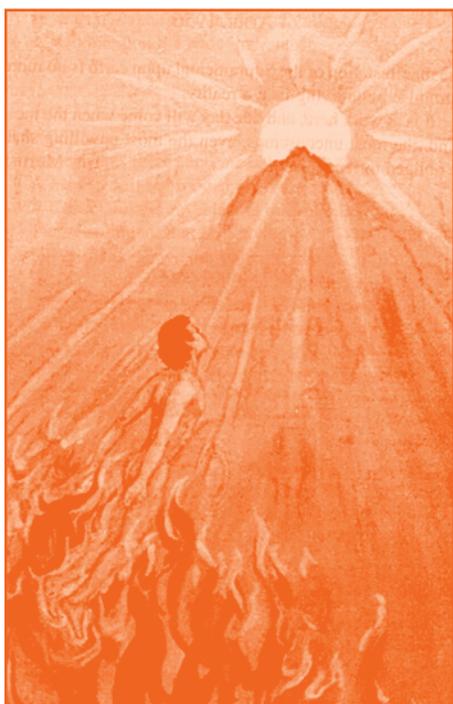
24th April 1956

The manifestation of the Supramental upon earth is no more a promise but a living fact, a reality.

It is at work here, and one day will come when the most blind, the most unconscious, even the most unwilling shall be obliged to recognise it.



Darshan April 24, 1950



24 APRIL 1956

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SUPRAMENTAL UPON EARTH IS NO MORE A PROMISE BUT A LIVING FACT, A REALITY.

IT IS AT WORK HERE, AND ONE DAY WILL COME WHEN THE MOST BLIND, THE MOST UNCONSCIOUS, EVEN THE MOST UNWILLING SHALL BE OBLIGED TO RECOGNISE IT.

— THE MOTHER

Next Cycle of Human Destiny (2)

The whole trend of modern thought and modern endeavour reveals itself to the observant eye as a large conscious effort of Nature in man to effect a general level of intellectual equipment, capacity and farther possibility by universalising the opportunities which modern civilisation affords for the mental life. Even the preoccupation of the European intellect, the protagonist of this tendency, with material Nature and the externalities of existence is a necessary part of the effort. It seeks to prepare a sufficient basis in man's physical being and vital energies and in his material environment for his full mental possibilities. By the spread of education, by the advance of the backward races, by the elevation of depressed classes, by the multiplication of labour-saving appliances, by the movement towards ideal social and economic conditions, by the labour of Science towards an improved health, longevity and sound physique in civilised humanity, the sense and drift of this vast movement translates itself in easily intelligible signs. The right or at least the ultimate means may not always be employed, but their aim is the right preliminary aim,—a sound individual and social body and the satisfaction of the legitimate needs and demands of the material mind, sufficient ease, leisure, equal opportunity, so that the whole of mankind and no longer only the favoured race, class or individual may be free to develop the emotional and intellectual being to its full capacity. At present the material and economic aim may predominate, but always, behind, there works or there waits in reserve the higher and major impulse.

And when the preliminary conditions are satisfied, when the great endeavour has found its base, what will be the nature of that farther possibility which the activities of the intellectual life must serve? If Mind is indeed Nature's highest term, then the entire development of the rational and imaginative intellect and the harmonious satisfaction of the emotions and sensibilities must be to themselves sufficient. But if, on the contrary, man is more than a reasoning and emotional animal, if beyond that which is being evolved, there is something that has to be evolved, then it may well be that the fullness of the mental life, the suppleness, flexibility and wide capacity of the intellect, the ordered richness of emotion and sensibility may be only a passage towards the development of a higher life and of more powerful faculties which are yet to manifest and to take possession of the lower instrument, just as mind itself has so taken possession of the body that the physical being no longer lives only for its own satisfaction but provides the foundation and the materials for a superior activity.

The assertion of a higher than the mental life is the whole foundation of Indian philosophy and its acquisition and organisation is the veritable object served by the methods of Yoga. Mind is not the last term of evolution, not an ultimate aim, but, like body, an instrument. It is even so termed in the language of Yoga, the inner instrument (*antahkarana*). And Indian tradition asserts that this which is to be manifested is not a new term in human experience, but has been developed before and has even governed humanity in certain periods of its development. In any case, in order to be known it must at one time have been partly developed. And if since then Nature has sunk back from her achievement,

the reason must always be found in some unrealised harmony, some insufficiency of the intellectual and material basis to which she has now returned, some over-specialisation of the higher to the detriment of the lower existence.

But what then constitutes this higher or highest existence to which our evolution is tending? In order to answer the question we have to deal with a class of supreme experiences, a class of unusual conceptions which it is difficult to represent accurately in any other language than the ancient Sanskrit tongue in which alone they have been to some extent systematised. The only approximate terms in the English language have other associations and their use may lead to many and even serious inaccuracies. The terminology of Yoga recognises besides the status of our physical and vital being, termed the gross body and doubly composed of the food sheath and the vital vehicle (*annakosha* and *pranakosha*), besides the status of our mental being, termed the subtle body and singly composed of the mind sheath or mental vehicle (*manah-kosha*), a third, supreme and divine status of supra-mental being, termed the causal body and composed of a fourth and a fifth vehicle (*vijnanakosha* and *anandakosha*) which are described as those of knowledge and bliss. But this knowledge is not a systematised result of mental questionings and reasonings, not a temporary arrangement of conclusions and opinions in the terms of the highest probability, but rather a pure self-existent and self-luminous Truth. And this bliss is not a supreme pleasure of the heart and sensations with the experience of pain and sorrow as its background, but a delight also self-existent and independent of objects and particular experiences, a self-delight which is the very nature, the very stuff, as it were, of a transcendent and infinite existence.

Do such psychological conceptions correspond to anything real and possible? All Yoga asserts them as its ultimate experience and supreme aim. They form the governing principles of our highest possible state of consciousness, our widest possible range of existence. There is, we say, a harmony of supreme faculties, corresponding roughly to the psychological faculties of revelation, inspiration and intuition, yet acting not in the intuitive reason or the divine mind, but on a still higher plane, which see Truth directly face to face, or rather live in the truth of things both universal and transcendent and are its formulation and luminous activity. And these faculties are the light of a conscious existence superseding the egoistic and itself both cosmic and transcendent, the nature of which is Bliss. These are obviously divine and, as man is at present apparently constituted, superhuman states of consciousness and activity. A trinity of transcendent existence, self-awareness and self-delight (*sacchidananda*) is, indeed, the metaphysical description of the supreme Atman, the self-formulation, to our awakened knowledge, of the Unknowable whether conceived as a pure Impersonality or as a cosmic Personality manifesting the universe. But in Yoga they are regarded also in their psychological aspects as states of subjective existence to which our waking consciousness is now alien, but which dwell in us in a superconscious plane and to which, therefore, we may always ascend.

– Sri Aurobindo

Activities during February 16, 2015 – March 15, 2016

In continuation of celebrations for the sixtieth anniversary of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch, Ms. Anisha Roy presented a vocal music program in the Meditation Hall on 16 February. She was accompanied by Shri Fateh Singh on the Tabla.



Fifty students of Mirambika school in the age group of 10-14 presented a varied program led by Pt. Barun Pal on the



afternoon of 17 February in the Meditation Hall. The program began with invocation for the divine Presence and *raaga* Lakshman, and continued with assorted items of vocal & instrumental music, Rabindra Sangeet, symphonies from Bach & Mozart,

and tabla, flute and violin recitals.

In the evening, in an instrumental music performance, Shri Neel Ranjan Mukherjee presented items on Hawaiian guitar and Dr. Ranjan Kumar Srivastava presented items on violin. Tabla accompaniment was given by Shri Subhash Kanti Das.



On February 18, an exhibition of paintings was set up in the Hall of Grace of The Mother's International School by Ms. Mridula Vichitra, an alumna of the New Delhi College of Arts and a teacher at Modern School for 30 years. Her forte is the use of natural plant pigments. Mridula was inspired in her artwork by the Mother's *Flowers and Their Spiritual Significance* and her adage, "Life must blossom like a flower, offering itself to the Divine."

In the evening, a program of kathak was presented in the Hall of Grace by two students of 2011 Sangeet Kala Academi awardee Smt. Manjushree Chatterjee.

Dancers infused creativity into their performance by blending elements of other dance forms as well. The climax of the evening was a number by Smt. Manjushree herself which was set to a Surdas *bhajan* on the sorrow of separation (*viraha*) felt by the gopis after Krishna left Vrindavan for Mathura.



Sri M (born a Muslim, Mumtaz Ali, Guru given name, Madhukar Nath), a



spiritual leader and founder of Satsang Foundation of Madanapalle, Andhra Pradesh, began a *padayatra* titled 'Walk of Hope' on January 12, 2016 (Swami Vivekananda's birthday) from Kanyakumari to Kashmir with a core group of 70 persons intending to cover a total of 7,500 kilometers on their way. While passing through Delhi the entire group stopped for a little time to interact with the students &

staff of The Mother's International School and the Ashram residents. Sri M. addressed the students and others on the need for national unity. He toured the Ashram, and paid his respect at Sri Aurobindo's Shrine. At the end of their visit all *padayatris* had a meal in the Ashram Dining Hall.

Two students of Ms. R. Vani Madhav presented a brilliant performance of Odissi dance in the Hall of Grace on 19 February in continuation of the 60th foundation anniversary of the Ashram as well as an adjunct to the Birth-anniversary celebrations of the Mother.



In the morning of February 20, senior students of The Mother's International School made an offering of devotional songs interspersed with well-chosen recitations from the

works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

Forty-ninth anniversary of the inception of Matri Kala Mandir (MKM), the Mother's Temple of Fine Arts was commemorated in the afternoon of February 20th. In addition to musical offerings, Karuna Didi recounted the history of MKM and elaborated on the significance of the word 'harmony' given by the Mother as the motto of MKM. Dr. Ramesh Bijlani spoke about the creative and spiritual aspects of fine arts and said that mind of man is only partially capable of evaluating these because they reflect the loftier attributes of the soul.

In the evening, there was a play 'The Virtues' enacted by the Ashram youngsters, most of them teachers at Mirambika. The play, based on a story by the Mother, depicts a glamorous gathering of prestigious virtues such as truth, sincerity, aspiration, humility, prudence, etc. Suddenly a guest in a rather simple white dress makes her appearance but nobody seems to recognize her. Whereas she is ignored by others, Prudence introduces herself and asks for the guest's name. The humble newcomer is Gratitude who



states that she is rarely invited to such gatherings, a truism articulating the cardinal fact that it is the one virtue often neglected by most of us.

Celebrations of the 138th birth-anniversary of the Mother began in the early dawn with *Prabhat Pheri*, followed by ‘Invocation’ for the divine Presence by Km. Karunamayee in the Meditation Hall.

In the Meditation Hall in the forenoon, a teacher of The Mother’s International School, Ms. Suparna Adhikary offered a bevy of devotional songs. Thereafter, Shri Prashant Khanna talked about ‘The Role of the Mother in Sri Aurobindo’s yoga.’ He began by stating that the Mother is the hub and the driving force behind Sri Aurobindo Ashram, whether in Pondicherry or in Delhi. While still quite young, the Mother had started dreaming of a place where ardent seekers would be able to pursue their spiritual quest without worrying about the basic necessities of life. The opportunity came when in 1926 after a major realization, Sri Aurobindo went in to seclusion after handing over to her the material and spiritual charge of the small number of disciples who formed the core of the Ashram. She gave the Ashram a practical shape and it was under her care that the Ashram grew to the extent that today it is one of the largest Ashrams in India. Yet another notable contribution of the Mother to Integral Yoga is a collection of her *Prayers and Meditations*. Having been written in states of flaming aspiration, extreme devotional ardor and ecstasy of intuitive revelations, they teach us how to articulate our aspiration, how to pray, and how to surrender, the keystone of the practice of Integral Yoga. Shri Khanna illustrated this by reading out a few prayers.

In the afternoon, youngsters enacted a dance-drama based on the life of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, pioneer of bhakti movements in Bengal and Odisha in 15th century. Legend says that even as an infant, he stopped crying as soon as he heard Krishna’s name. A few instances of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu healing the sick were enacted. There were also scenes of his being mocked at and being ill-treated, and his eventual vindication by the Lord’s intercession. Swami Shantatmananda of Sri Ramakrishna Mission was the honored chief guest for the event.



Ashram Choir led by Karuna didi in the Meditation Hall. At the close of the eventful day, *prasad* was distributed to all attendees.

In the evening, after the traditional March-past, lights or aspiration were kindled around Sri Aurobindo’s Shrine. Tara didi read ‘Four Aspects of the Mother’ interspersed at appropriate points by music by the



During this period several groups from abroad visited and stayed at the

Ashram. A group of 15 seekers including several yoga teachers and led by Ms. Karen Hamdon & Mr. Lawrence Dombro arrived on 21 February and stayed for a few days. Prof. Shyam Bhatnagar led a group of 14 persons from USA, Russia, Holland and France spent a few days from February 25. Fourteen students of psychology from La Salle University, Philadelphia, USA, with their professors, Dr. Melinda Ingersoll, Dr. Charles Desnoveks and Ms. Darshini Shah arrived on March 4 for a visit of several days. And one group of 25 from the USA led by renowned writer-spiritual leader Phillip Goldberg visited the Ashram on March 6. All individuals participated in the ongoing activities of the Ashram during their stay and visit. In addition, Dr. Ramesh Bijlani conducted special sessions to apprise the visitors about the life-affirming philosophy of the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Feedback from visitors was positive with words and phrases like “great experience”, “feeling of peace and well-being”, “refreshing and calming energy”, etc.

Nineteen class XI girl students accompanied by two teachers from Kanger Valley Academy of Raipur joined a value-added adventure camp conducted by

Auro-Mira Service Society (AMSS) from February 27 to March 2 at Kechla. Activities included

shramdan, day and night trekking, rappelling, swimming, boating, and community service work like teaching academic subjects such as English, Math, etc. to the children of Auro-Mira Vidya Mandir, the school run by AMSS. Appreciative comments include, “The

night trek was interesting, we got a chance to sit under the clear sky near the river it was like heaven on earth” (P.L.); “The student teacher relationship here more like a friend, everybody is equally treated; starting from the youngest to the oldest, everyone does their own work” (S.D); “Although I had been to a number of adventure camps, this one was a unique experience” (V.G.).



Former Chairman of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch, Late Shri Anil Jauhar’s

s e c o n d
p u n y a t i t h i on 28 February 2016 was commemorated in the Ashram with a *havan* at

Chacha ji’s Samadhi in the forenoon. In the evening,



Pt. Barun Pal presented a music program on Hansa-veena in the Meditation Hall.

The Mother declared that on 29 February 1956, Supermind was concretely established in the atmosphere of the Earth. Fifteenth cycle of this momentous event was celebrated in the Ashram with invocation of the divine Presence in the Meditation Hall in the morning of 29th February. In the forenoon, Sri Smriti, an exhibit of about 650 material objects used or at least touched by the Mother Herself, was inaugurated by Tara didi. The exhibition quenches, to some extent, the thirst of devotees for physical contact with the Mother by bringing them close to the objects imbued with her Consciousness. The exhibits in the Ashram Library complex remained open from 10 am – 12 noon through



the month of March 2016.

Lamps of aspiration were kindled in the evening in the Samadhi-lawn. The Ashram Choir then presented devotional music in the Meditation Hall and Tara didi read the announcement made by the Mother regarding the advent of the Supramental consciousness on Earth as well as subsequent leap year messages. Dr. Ramesh Bijlani elaborated on the significance of the Day in simple terms. Prasad and a card bearing the following message was distributed to all attendees:



The significance of the Day in simple terms. Prasad and a card bearing the following message was distributed to all attendees:

The step from man towards superman is the next approaching achievement in the earth's evolution. There lies our destiny and the liberating key to our aspiring, but troubled and limited human existence – inevitable because it is at once the intention of the inner Spirit and the logic of Nature's process.

– Sri Aurobindo

In the monthly program of *bhajan sandhya*, Ms. Sapna Mukherjee on 5th March made an offering of popular Meera Bhajans. Her melodious voice transported the audience into another world altogether. She was ably supported by Mr. Mohit Gangani and Mr. Saubhagya Gandharva on *tabla* and flute respectively.

Note: Pictures can be viewed up to 200% size for finer detail

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

CHAPTER XXVIII

DIVERSITY IN ONENESS

It is essential to keep constantly in view the fundamental powers and realities of life if we are not to be betrayed by the arbitrary rule of the logical reason and its attachment to the rigorous and limiting idea into experiments which, however convenient in practice and however captivating to a unitarian and symmetrical thought, may well destroy the vigour and impoverish the roots of life. For that which is perfect and satisfying to the system of the logical reason, may yet ignore the truth of life and the living needs of the race. Unity is an idea which is not at all arbitrary or unreal; for unity is the very basis of existence. The oneness that is secretly at the foundation of all things, the evolving spirit in Nature is moved to realise consciously at the top; the evolution moves through diversity from a simple to a complex oneness. Unity the race moves towards and must one day realise.

But uniformity is not the law of life. Life exists by diversity; it insists that every group, every being shall be, even while one with all the rest in its universality, yet by some principle or ordered detail of variation unique. The over-centralisation which is the condition of a working uniformity, is not the healthy method of life. Order is indeed the law of life, but not an artificial regulation. The sound order is that which comes from within as the result of a nature that has discovered itself and found its own law and the law of its relations with others. Therefore the truest order is that which is founded on the greatest possible liberty; for liberty is at once the condition of vigorous variation and the condition of self-finding. Nature secures variation by division into groups and insists on liberty by the force of individuality in the members of the group. Therefore the unity of the human race to be entirely sound and in consonance with the deepest laws of life must be founded on free groupings, and the groupings again must be the natural association of free individuals. This is an ideal which it is certainly impossible to realise under present conditions or perhaps in any near future of the human race; but it is an ideal which ought to be kept in view, for the more we can approximate to it, the more we can be sure of being on the right road. The artificiality of much in human life is the cause of its most deep-seated maladies; it is not faithful to itself or sincere with Nature and therefore it stumbles and suffers.

The utility, the necessity of natural groupings may be seen if we consider the purpose and functioning of one great principle of division in Nature, her insistence on diversity of language. The seeking for a common language for all mankind was very strong at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century and gave rise to several experiments, none of which could get to any vital permanence. Now whatever may be the need of a common medium of communication for mankind and however it may be served by the general use either of an artificial and conventional language or of some natural tongue, as Latin, and later on to a slight extent French, was for some time the common cultural tongue of intercourse between the European nations or Sanskrit for the Indian peoples, no unification which destroyed or overshadowed, dwarfed and discouraged the large and free use of the varying natural languages of humanity,

could fail to be detrimental to human life and progress. The legend of the Tower of Babel speaks of the diversity of tongues as a curse laid on the race; but whatever its disadvantages, and they tend more and more to be minimised by the growth of civilisation and increasing intercourse, it has been rather a blessing than a curse, a gift to mankind rather than a disability laid upon it. The purposeless exaggeration of anything is always an evil, and an excessive pullulation of varying tongues that serve no purpose in the expression of a real diversity of spirit and culture is certainly a stumbling-block rather than a help: but this excess, though it existed in the past,¹ is hardly a possibility of the future. The tendency is rather in the opposite direction. In former times diversity of language helped to create a barrier to knowledge and sympathy, was often made the pretext even of an actual antipathy and tended to a too rigid division. The lack of sufficient interpenetration kept up both a passive want of understanding and a fruitful crop of active misunderstandings. But this was an inevitable evil of a particular stage of growth, an exaggeration of the necessity that then existed for the vigorous development of strongly individualised group-souls in the human race. These disadvantages have not yet been abolished, but with closer intercourse and the growing desire of men and nations for the knowledge of each other's thought and spirit and personality, they have diminished and tend to diminish more and more and there is no reason why in the end they should not become inoperative.

Diversity of language serves two important ends of the human spirit, a use of unification and a use of variation. A language helps to bring those who speak it into a certain large unity of growing thought, formed temperament, ripening spirit. It is an intellectual, aesthetic and expressive bond which tempers division where division exists and strengthens unity where unity has been achieved. Especially it gives self-consciousness to national or racial unity and creates the bond of a common self expression and a common record of achievement. On the other hand, it is a means of national differentiation and perhaps the most powerful of all, not a barren principle of division merely, but a fruitful and helpful differentiation. For each language is the sign and power of the soul of the people which naturally speaks it. Each develops therefore its own peculiar spirit, thought-temperament, way of dealing with life and knowledge and experience. If it receives and welcomes the thought, the life-experience, the spiritual impact of other nations, still it transforms them into something new of its own and by that power of transmutation it enriches the life of humanity with its fruitful borrowings and does not merely repeat what had been gained elsewhere. Therefore it is of the utmost value to a nation, a human group-soul, to preserve its language and to make of it a strong and living cultural instrument. A nation, race or people which loses its language cannot live its whole life or its real life. And this advantage to the national life is at the same time an advantage to the general life of the human race.

How much a distinct human group loses by not possessing a separate tongue of its own or by exchanging its natural self-expression for an alien form of speech, can be seen by the examples of the British colonies, the United States of

¹ In India the pedants enumerate I know not how many hundred languages. This is a stupid misstatement; there are about a dozen great tongues; the rest are either dialects or aboriginal survivals of tribal speech that are bound to disappear.

America and Ireland. The colonies are really separate peoples in the psychological sense, although they are not as yet separate nations. English, for the most part or at the lowest in great part, in their origin and political and social sympathy, they are yet not replicas of England, but have already a different temperament, a bent of their own, a developing special character. But this new personality can only appear in the more outward and mechanical parts of their life and even there in no great, effective and fruitful fashion. The British colonies do not count in the culture of the world, because they have no native culture, because by the fact of their speech they are and must be mere provinces of England. Whatever peculiarities they may develop in their mental life tend to create a type of provincialism and not a central intellectual, aesthetic, spiritual life of their own with its distinct importance for mankind. For the same reason the whole of America, in spite of its powerfully independent political and economic being, has tended to be culturally a province of Europe, the south and centre by their dependence on the Spanish, and the north by its dependence on the English language. The life of the United States alone tends and strives to become a great and separate cultural existence, but its success is not commensurate with its power. Culturally, it is still to a great extent a province of England. Neither its literature, in spite of two or three great names, nor its art nor its thought, nor anything else on the higher levels of the mind, has been able to arrive at a vigorous maturity independent in its soul-type. And this because its instrument of self-expression, the language which the national mind ought to shape and be in turn shaped by it, was formed and must continue to be formed by another country with a different mentality and must there find its centre and its law of development. In old times, America would have evolved and changed the English language according to its own needs until it became a new speech, as the mediaeval nations dealt with Latin, and arrived in this way at a characteristic instrument of self-expression; but under modern conditions this is not easily possible.²

Ireland had its own tongue when it had its own free nationality and culture and its loss was a loss to humanity as well as to the Irish nation. For what might not this Celtic race with its fine psychic turn and quick intelligence and delicate imagination, which did so much in the beginning for European culture and religion, have given to the world through all these centuries under natural conditions? But the forcible imposition of a foreign tongue and the turning of a nation into a province left Ireland for so many centuries mute and culturally stagnant, a dead force in the life of Europe. Nor can we count as an adequate compensation for this loss the small indirect influence of the race upon English culture or the few direct contributions made by gifted Irishmen forced to pour their natural genius into a foreign mould of thought. Even when Ireland in her struggle for freedom was striving to recover her free soul and give it a voice, she has been hampered by having to use a tongue which does not naturally express her spirit and peculiar bent. In time she may conquer the obstacle, make this tongue her own, force it to express her, but it will be long, if ever, before she can do it with the same richness, force and unfettered individuality as she would have done in

² It is affirmed that now such an independent development is taking place in America; it has to be seen how far this becomes a truly vigorous reality: at present it has amounted only to a provincial turn, a sort of national slang or a racy oddity. Even in the farthest development it would only be a sort of dialect, not a national language.

her Gaelic speech. That speech she had tried to recover but the natural obstacles have been and are likely always to be too heavy and too strongly established for any complete success in that endeavour.

Modern India is another striking example. Nothing has stood more in the way of the rapid progress in India, nothing has more successfully prevented her self-finding and development under modern conditions than the long overshadowing of the Indian tongues as cultural instruments by the English language. It is significant that the one sub-nation in India which from the first refused to undergo this yoke, devoted itself to the development of its language, made that for long its principal preoccupation, gave to it its most original minds and most living energies, getting through everything else perfunctorily, neglecting commerce, doing politics as an intellectual and oratorical pastime,—that it is Bengal which first recovered its soul, respiritualised itself, forced the whole world to hear of its great spiritual personalities, gave it the first modern Indian poet and Indian scientist of world-wide fame and achievement, restored the moribund art of India to life and power, first made her count again in the culture of the world, first, as a reward in the outer life, arrived at a vital political consciousness and a living political movement not imitative and derivative in its spirit and its central ideal.³ For so much does language count in the life of a nation; for so much does it count to the advantage of humanity at large that its group-souls should preserve and develop and use with a vigorous group-individuality their natural instrument of expression.

A common language makes for unity and therefore it might be said that the unity of the human race demands unity of language; the advantages of diversity must be foregone for this greater good, however serious the temporary sacrifice. But it makes for a real, fruitful, living unity, only when it is the natural expression of the race or has been made natural by a long adaptation and development from within. The history of universal tongues spoken by peoples to whom they were not natural, is not encouraging. Always they have tended to become dead tongues, sterilising so long as they kept their hold, fruitful only when they were decomposed and broken up into new derivative languages or departed leaving the old speech, where that still persisted, to revive with this new stamp and influence upon it. Latin, after its first century of general domination in the West, became a dead thing, impotent for creation, and generated no new or living and evolving culture in the nations that spoke it; even so great a force as Christianity could not give it a new life. The times during which it was an instrument of European thought, were precisely those in which that thought was heaviest, most traditional and least fruitful. A rapid and vigorous new life only grew up when the languages which appeared out of the detritus of dying Latin or the old languages which had not been lost took its place as the complete instruments of national culture. For it is not enough that the natural language should be spoken by the people; it must be the expression of its higher life and thought. A language that survives only as a patois or a provincial tongue like Welsh after the English conquest or Breton or Provencal in France or as Czech survived once in Austria or Ruthenian and Lithuanian in imperial Russia, languishes, becomes sterile and does not serve all the true purpose of survival.

³ Now, of course, everything has changed and these remarks are no longer applicable to the actual state of things in India.

Language is the sign of the cultural life of a people, the index of its soul in thought and mind that stands behind and enriches its soul in action. Therefore it is here that the phenomena and utilities of diversity may be most readily seized, more than in mere outward things; but these truths are important because they apply equally to the thing which it expresses and symbolises and serves as an instrument. Diversity of language is worth keeping because diversity of cultures and differentiation of soul-groups are worth keeping and because without that diversity life cannot have full play; for in its absence there is a danger, almost an inevitability of decline and stagnation. The disappearance of national variation into a single uniform human unity, of which the systematic thinker dreams as an ideal and which we have seen to be a substantial possibility and even a likelihood if a certain tendency becomes dominant, might lead to political peace, economic well-being, perfect administration, the solution of a hundred material problems, as did on a lesser scale the Roman unity in old times; but to what eventual good if it leads also to an uncreative sterilisation of the mind and the stagnation of the soul of the race? In laying this stress on culture, on the things of the mind and the spirit there need be no intention of undervaluing the outward material side of life; it is not at all my purpose to belittle that to which Nature always attaches so insistent an importance. On the contrary, the inner and the outer depend upon each other. For we see that in the life of a nation a great period of national culture and vigorous mental and soul life is always part of a general stirring and movement which has its counterpart in the outward political, economic and practical life of the nation. The cultural brings about or increases the material progress but also it needs it that it may itself flourish with an entirely full and healthy vigour. The peace, well-being and settled order of the human world is a thing eminently to be desired as a basis for a great world culture in which all humanity must be united; but neither of these unities, the outward or inward, ought to be devoid of an element even more important than peace, order and well-being,—freedom and vigour of life, which can only be assured by variation and by the freedom of the group and of the individual. Not then a uniform unity, not a logically simple, a scientifically rigid, a beautifully neat and mechanical sameness, but a living oneness full of healthy freedom and variation is the ideal which we should keep in view and strive to get realised in man's future.

But how is this difficult end to be secured? For if an excessive uniformity and centralisation tends to the disappearance of necessary variations and indispensable liberties, a vigorous diversity and strong group-individualism may lead to an incurable persistence or constant return of the old separatism which will prevent human unity from reaching completeness or even will not allow it to take firm root. For it will not be enough for the constituent groups or divisions to have a certain formal administrative and legislative separateness like the States of the American union if, as there, there is liberty only in mechanical variations and all vivid departures from the general norm proceeding from a profounder inner variation are discouraged or forbidden. Nor will it be sufficient to found a unity plus local independence of the German type; for there the real overriding force was a unifying and disciplined Prussianism and independence survived only in form. Nor will even the English colonial system give us any useful suggestion; for there is there local independence and a separate vigour of life, but the brain, heart and central spirit are in the metropolitan country and the rest

are at the best only outlying posts of the Anglo-Saxon idea.⁴ The Swiss cantonal life offers no fruitful similitude; for apart from the exiguity of its proportions and frame, there is the phenomenon of a single Swiss life and practical spirit with a mental dependence on three foreign cultures sharply dividing the race; a common Swiss culture does not exist. The problem is rather, on a larger and more difficult scale and with greater complexities, that which offered itself for a moment to the British Empire, how, if it is at all possible, to unite Great Britain, Ireland, the Colonies, Egypt, India in a real oneness, throw their gains into a common stock, use their energies for a common end, help them to find the account of their national individuality in a supra-national life, yet preserve that individuality,—Ireland keeping the Irish soul and life and cultural principle, India the Indian soul and life and cultural principle, the other units developing theirs, not united by a common Anglicisation, which was the past empire-building ideal, but held together by a greater as yet unrealised principle of free union. Nothing was suggested at any time in the way of a solution except some sort of bunch or rather bouquet system, unifying its clusters not by the living stalk of a common origin or united past, for that does not exist, but by an artificial thread of administrative unity which might at any moment be snapped irretrievably by centrifugal forces.

But after all, it may be said, unity is the first need and should be achieved at any cost, just as national unity was achieved by crushing out the separate existence of the local units; afterwards a new principle of group-variation may be found other than the nation-unit. But the parallel here becomes illusory, because an important factor is lacking. For the history of the birth of the nation is a coalescence of small groups into a larger unit among many similar large units. The old richness of small units which gave such splendid cultural, but such unsatisfactory political results in Greece, Italy and India was lost, but the principle of life made vivid by variative diversity was preserved with nations for the diverse units and the cultural life of a continent for the common background. Here nothing of the kind is possible. There will be a sole unity, the world-nation; all outer source of diversity will disappear. Therefore the inner source has to be modified indeed, subordinated in some way, but preserved and encouraged to survive. It may be that this will not happen; the unitarian idea may forcefully prevail and turn the existing nations into mere geographical provinces or administrative departments of a single well-mechanised State. But in that case the outraged need of life will have its revenge, either by a stagnation, a collapse and a detrition fruitful of new separations or by some principle of revolt from within. A gospel of Anarchism might enforce itself, for example, and break down the world-order for a new creation. The question is whether there is not somewhere a principle of unity in diversity by which this method of action and reaction, creation and destruction, realisation and relapse cannot be, if not altogether avoided, yet mitigated in its action and led to a more serene and harmonious working.

— *Sri Aurobindo*

⁴ This may be less so than before, but the improvement does not go very far.

Our earth is a fragment and a residue;
 Her power is packed with the stuff of greater worlds
 And steeped in their colour-lustres dimmed by her drowse;
 An atavism of higher births is hers,
 Her sleep is stirred by their buried memories
 Recalling the lost spheres from which they fell.
 Unsatisfied forces in her bosom move;
 They are partners of her greater growing fate
 And her return to immortality;
 They consent to share her doom of birth and death;
 They kindle partial gleams of the All and drive
 Her blind laborious spirit to compose
 A meagre image of the mighty Whole.
 The calm and luminous Intimacy within
 Approves her work and guides the unseeing Power.
 His vast design accepts a puny start.
 An attempt, a drawing half-done is the world's life;
 Its lines doubt their concealed significance,
 Its curves join not their high intended close.
 Yet some first image of greatness trembles there,
 And when the ambiguous crowded parts have met
 The many-toned unity to which they moved,
 The Artist's joy shall laugh at reason's rules;
 The divine intention suddenly shall be seen,
 The end vindicate intuition's sure technique.
 A graph shall be of many meeting worlds,
 A cube and union-crystal of the gods;
 A Mind shall think behind Nature's mindless mask,
 A conscious Vast fill the old dumb brute Space.
 This faint and fluid sketch of soul called man
 Shall stand out on the background of long Time
 A glowing epitome of eternity,
 A little point reveal the infinitudes.
 A Mystery's process is the universe.

– From *Savitri* by Sri Aurobindo

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