

LONGINGS
FOR
THE MOTHER

Indra Sen

LONGINGS FOR THE MOTHER

by
Indra Sen

Sri Aurobindo Ashram
Pondicherry

THE MOTHER AS SAVITRI

*A friend and yet too great wholly to know,
She walked in their front towards a greater light,
Their leader and queen over their hearts and souls,
One close to their bosoms, yet divine and far.
Admiring and amazed they saw her stride
Attempting with a godlike rush and leap
Heights for their human stature too remote
Or with a slow great many-sided toil
Pushing towards aims they hardly could conceive;
Yet forced to be the satellites of her sun
They moved unable to forego her light,
Desiring they clutched at her with outstretched hands
Or followed stumbling in the paths she made.
Or longing with their self of life and flesh
They clung to her for heart's nourishment and support:
The rest they could not see in visible light;
Vaguely they bore her inner mightiness.
Or bound by the senses and the longing heart,
Adoring with a turbid human love,
They could not grasp the mighty spirit she was
Or change by closeness to be even as she.
Some felt her with their souls and thrilled with her,
A greatness felt near yet beyond mind's grasp;
To see her was a summons to adore,
To be near her drew a high communion's force.*

THE HIGHEST PRIVILEGE

To be alone with the Divine is the highest of all privileged states for the sadhak, for it is that in which inwardly he comes nearest to the Divine and can make all existence a communion in the chamber of the heart as well as in the temple of the universe.

— Sri Aurobindo

A PREFATORY NOTE

I learned of the Mother's passing on the morning of the 18th November, 1973 at Sri Aurobindo Yoga Mandir, Jwalapur (Hardwar), where my normal work lies as given by the Mother in 1958. The impulse that arose within me was to go deep within and be with the Mother to the best of my capacity. I reduced my external preoccupations to the minimum and began to live in that manner and it was profoundly satisfying. In this experience, there were occasional moments of shock and grief too but, on the whole, there was a feeling of inner assurance and a sense of contact and conversation with the Mother. On the morning of the 27th November, as I sat in this contemplation, a move arose to concretise the inner thought and feeling and I wrote out "Our Mother, who is no more, who is ever more." Soon all the ten topics ending with "Mother, we read again Your 'Notes on the Way'" came along. And I read these again and again and enjoyed doing so. I began to do this day after day. I felt that this tended to deepen my inner contact. The next three pieces were written on the following three days, a piece per day. Then I had to go on a short journey and, for about a fortnight, there was no writing. About the middle of December, the writing was resumed and the remaining six pieces were written out. The entire writing was done, on the whole, with ease and simplicity.

To me, all this served to clarify and strengthen an inner contact with the Mother. Many friends, who have read these pieces in typescript, have felt deeply moved and found in varying degrees a greater inner contact.

Indra Sen

CONTENTS

1 Our Mother, Who is No More, Who is Ever More	1
2 As Thou Willst, As Thou Willst, Mother	3
3 Mother, I Long for Thee	4
4 How Do You Do, Mother?	6
5 Mother Dear! Mother Sweet!.....	8
6 Mother, We are Sorry, Very Sorry, Indeed!	10
7 Mother, You were Mother, but we were not Children.....	14
8 Mother, Why did You leave Your Body?.....	17
9 Mother, Will You come again in a New Body?.....	20
10 Mother, We read again Your ‘Notes on the Way’	23
1	23
2	26
3	29
4	32
5	33
6	35

1

Our Mother, Who is No More, Who is Ever More

Our Mother loved us all immensely. Her love overwhelmed us, possessed us. And we too loved Her deeply and cherished Her heartily. And we sought to do Her will, we aimed at Her pleasure.

We seek to do Her will now even more, in fact entirely, because She is so silent and would expressly say nothing to us.

Our Mother knew so much, all life and existence, past, present and future, with such clarity and certitude. She permitted us to ask any questions and we asked all sorts of things, past lives, occult powers, other worlds, accidents and what not. And so ready, so clear, so illuminating were Her answers.

But Her thrilling love we remember most. Her sweetness we cherish deeply. And we wish to live and act as would please Her. Her pleasure is our goal.

Our Mother was very powerful. Her realising power was very great. She aimed at high and great things and imperceptibly, as it were, they would assume momentous shape. An International Centre of Education, true to its name, became a simple affair in quite a short time. And a new township based on a high ideal was not at all too big for Her.

She, in fact, strove for total annihilation of ignorance and unconsciousness and hoped for a continued physical existence, but, it appears, She changed Her strategy to achieve Her purpose, for defeat did not belong to Her will as it did not to Sri Aurobindo's. And as Sri Aurobindo's work advanced after His passing, our Mother's work — which is the same — will, we feel confident, advance ever more after Her passing.

Transformation of nature, end of death and death of ignorance are even in spiritual history inconceivable ideals. But Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

conceived them, willed them, knew well the pros and cons, and were sure of ultimate victory. But inconceivable too are the hazards of the undertaking.

The Mother could will it all, pursue it and never feel any diffidence about it. So mightily powerful was She within. We are stunned to conceive of it all. Yet when we are calm and peaceful, we remember the Mother's love and sweetness most. It fills our being and we feel we are for the Mother, we seek Her pleasure, we shall do Her will, now and ever hereafter, and more and more.

We think of the Mother, who is no more and who, we are sure, will be ever more with us and we think of Sri Aurobindo's deep tender regard for Her. We feel transported to contemplate the least casual reference of Sri Aurobindo to the Mother. And how sweet are the Mother's references to Sri Aurobindo!

The Mother is inconceivably powerful and effective. She is illuminating on all issues of life and existence. But for our normal nature, She is marvellously loving, marvellously sweet. We cherish Her heartily and find all the joy of our life in doing so. We pray:

O Mother, Mother Dear, Mother Sweet, we love Thee with all our heart. We seek Thy Pleasure. We shall do Thy will.

May we ever enjoy Thy pleasure and Thy love.

As Thou Willst, As Thou Willst, Mother

‘As Thou willst, As Thou willst’ is the refrain. And it is so rewarding, Mother. It gives a contact with Thee. I feel so peaceful and assured and equal to every call of action. I am clear and sure and move on in life in utter confidence.

‘As Thou willst, As Thou willst’ is as sweet as a song and I sing it again and again. And as I sing it, the heart throbs more joyously and I feel free from all care and anxiety. All calculations, all pros and cons, all this and that, all manipulations of particulars drop and I live in the unconditioned, the limitless, the infinite and the absolute. I am free and large and wide and above all this finite multiplicity and, as it were, a master of it.

‘As Thou willst, As Thou willst’ is a wonderful theme. I contemplate it, I meditate on it and feel transported into another realm, a new horizon high and vast, and feel myself the same. All smallness, all narrowness, all littleness drops off. All competitiveness, all fear disappears. And for the time being, I find myself thrilled and exhilarated.

‘As Thou Willst, As Thou Willst’, Mother, is indeed a will for the Supreme, the Highest and the Uttermost. It is a will for what Sri Aurobindo wills and what the Divine wills. In seeking Thy will, I find I seek Sri Aurobindo’s will as well as the Divine’s will. ‘As Thou willst, as Thou willst’ is a refrain that utterly unifies all higher willing and leaves no disparity or division.

‘As Thou Willst, As Thou Willst’, Mother, is a disciple’s refrain, who knows the Divine in Thee and the human parts do not distract him. The Divine is the Guru and the Guru is the Divine and thus we approach the Guru and the Divine and grow in Divine consciousness.

Mother, grant that we surrender ourselves to Thee utterly, find Thee utterly and live by Thy will utterly.

Mother, I Long for Thee

I long for Thee as I do for nothing else. I desire lots of things, strive and struggle for them, am happy when I get them, am disappointed when I don't. But I long for Thee from deep within and the more I long the happier I feel. The longing itself is completely satisfying. There is no question of getting or not getting anything.

I long for Thee, Mother, and it is so sweet to do so. The longing, which arises from deep down the heart and fills the whole being with peace, is wonderfully sweet. I seek to dwell in it more and more, longer and longer. This sweetness is incomparable. It is exquisitely sweet.

I long for Thee, Mother, and seek to do it more and more. It is a fine occupation superseding other calls and interests. It readily brings Thy Presence. And to be with Thee, to feel Thy nearness, closeness, a face-to-face talking relation with Thee, is indeed wonderful. Mother, Thou art so kind and gracious. Mother, Thou art so willing to come. I hope that I don't disturb Thee much.

Mother, I turn toward thee again and again and long for Thee. Whenever I get a little free from external preoccupations, I turn to Thee, long for Thee, cherish Thee and feel so happy. Do I inconvenience Thee by calling on Thee thus at odd hours for odd moments almost irreverently? I am sorry, Mother, but I can't help it. Thou art my rest, my repose, my refuge.

Mother, I long for Thee and the longing is its own reward. But I know also that it pleases Thee and Thou respondest. Thou respondest with Thy Presence, which is all peace, all joy, all hope, all fulfilment. Some times dost Thou answer in words, many times Thou indicatest Thy will otherwise. But I am not yet well attuned to Thy ways of silence and am not able to appreciate Thy

responses in detail. However, I believe, Thou respondest to every seeking and Thy Presence seems to include all Thy responses.

Mother, I pray:

‘Let my longing for Thee grow ever more, let it grow deeper and wider and intenser and cover up all vagrant seekings for petty satisfactions.’

How Do You Do, Mother?

Mother, You are no longer visible, we feel curious and anxious and ask, How do You do? We never asked You, ‘How do You do?’ when You were physically present to us. We wished You, ‘Bonjour, Douce Mere’ and You replied so sweetly, ‘Bonjour, mon enfant’ and, when we were many together, ‘Bonjour, mes enfants.’

But now we feel curious and anxious also and ask, ‘How do You do, Mother?’ and also wish to inquire, ‘Where are You?’ and ‘What are You doing?’ ‘How are You occupied?’ ‘How do You find Your Ashram?’ ‘Is it going on to Your satisfaction?’ ‘Are you pleased with Your disciples?’ ‘What are Your instructions for us?’ — and so on and so forth.

Mother, You once said, ‘I can tell you where Sri Aurobindo is, I can give you His address, you can go and meet Him if you like.’ More precisely, You said, ‘His abode is in the subtle physical.’ Is Your abode too now the same, the subtle physical, from where the work on the gross physical is proceeding? The penetration and possession of the gross physical by the Supramental Power is, after all, now the work and that has to be achieved. May we take Your address to be the same as Sri Aurobindo’s?

But how shall we reach You there? We neither have the necessary discrimination of the different planes of being nor the power of the traveller of the worlds. We, on the other hand, find it much easier to meet You in the heart and occasionally get a visitation from You and Sri Aurobindo as a Presence within or without and feel assured, uplifted and thrilled. We ask and ask and we remain rather puzzled. You once spoke our language, though with lots of subtle overtones, we understood rightly or wrongly, but in any case we took it rather lightly. Now we ask and ask and wait for a response. Surely, you

know what we ask, You, in fact, know our hearts without our asking and surely You do respond, but we are gross and Your language is now all subtle and we miss Your reciprocations. Or, our grosser parts insist on their own ways of action and reaction and our subtle parts are yet not good enough and we feel lost. Though, in part, lost yet also inwardly assured that our Mother is there, here with us, She loves us, guides us, protects us. We discover this feeling deep within us and feel thrilled, cherish our Mother all the more and seek to do Her will.

‘Mother, how do You do?’ thrills as a question. We accost You, we find You almost in front of us. And, when we find You in front of us, we ask again, ‘How do You do, Mother?’ We find You, as it were, smiling back to us and we are thrilled and feel it is nice to ask, ‘Mother, how do You do?’

Your smiling back, Mother, is a wonderful response, but turning towards You and asking, ‘How do you do, Mother?’ is itself so delightful and we wish to ask deep within our hearts again and again, ‘Mother, how do You do? How do You do? How do You do?’

Mother, grant us the will and capacity to turn to You again and again to know about You more and more in the varying situations of life and existence, offer our heart’s love to You and seek Your pleasure in all that we do.

Mother Dear! Mother Sweet!

Mother Dear, Mother Sweet! How much we cherish You, long for You, remember You and enjoy doing so, off and on, on and on, in the day, in the night, during work, in leisure, Mother, You are so lovable, adorable, an attraction by itself.

There was a time when, Mother, I respected You, revered You, admired Your messages and books. I felt You as high and great but did not then confidently open out my heart to You. I respected You, read You, wanted to offer to You something for Your pleasure, also render some service to You but I stood apart, by myself, independently. There was a distance and I cherished adoring and admiring You from a distance, a good safe distance. I wanted to be myself, hold my own, reserved my right to be myself.

Mother, You did not mind it, You approved of it, helped me to grow in my own way and yet helped me more and more.

And then a time came when I began to love too and felt myself getting close and near to You. And this closeness, this nearness was a wonderful feeling! I began to cherish it more and more until being far from You became a positive unhappiness, a discomfort, requiring an immediate attempt at recovering closeness and nearness. Thus I began to cherish an abiding inner oneness with You and to look upon it as indispensable.

Mother Dear, Mother Sweet, that inner oneness, even as an aim, was a Wonderful thing. It became central to life as all the varied experiences tended to arrange themselves in a new formation and got filled with the aroma of this marvellous closeness and contact and identification with You. Life then became a pleasure, a joyous adventure, a pursuit of deep discoveries.

But the elements of separation persist and at times turn up rather obtrusively. Then I live as though out of joint, in imbalance, ill-at-ease and

must immediately struggle to get into the balance of wide ease, inner solace and Your deep and felt Presence.

Mother Dear, Mother Sweet, how I wish such occasions did not occur, that I never got into that separation and isolation! But this too is true that after every separation, the attempt at re-union is intenser and more whole-hearted and the re-union itself fuller, deeper and heartily more satisfying.

Mother Dear, Mother Sweet, grant that Your closeness, Your nearness, Your presence, Your love now come as a realisation, a settled fact of consciousness as an essential element of its nature.

Mother Dear, Mother Sweet, I cherish it as the central fact of life, as its aim itself, as the supreme influence for the entire experience of life. Let it now come, come effectively and make my life full of the sweetness and love and light that emanate from You, Your Being and Your Existence.

Mother, We are Sorry, Very Sorry, Indeed!

Mother, as we think of You, longingly remember You, a long past and Your varied dealings with us begin to play up in our mind. We heartily enjoy all those dealings over again, are grateful for them, but are weighed down by a regret, feel awfully sorry that we did not behave and respond to You and Your dealings as we should have. We feel very sorry, indeed.

We enjoyed so much going to You for blessings and there was a time when we went to You three times a day. You received each one of us with great joy, showered on us the Divine's Peace and Love and Force and we felt so thrilled, elevated, reinforced! But we had a queer silly attitude — a demanding, a comparing and a critical attitude. We felt, 'Oh, Mother smiled more to him, concentrated longer on so-and-so, did not pay much attention to somebody, I was just passed over or ignored!' and so forth. How silly it all was!

We just failed to appreciate one simple truth that to the Mother we were all Her children, She had accepted us, She looked after us and wished us all to grow in Divine Consciousness. Her love was for us all a patent fact. Compassion is native to the Divine Consciousness.

But this simple and obvious truth we could never get and, in fact, found fault with the Mother's dealings, thought they were discriminatory. We are miserable, Mother, we apologise, we are sorry for all that.

Sri Aurobindo explained to us time and again that the Mother was concentrating on so-and-so, was putting a special Force on some point in him and, therefore, could not smile to him. She was not at all displeased with him. Or sometimes the Mother was in a trance and, therefore, the smile could not be there. But we did not care to understand the trance and its deeper working and insisted on having the apparent smile and there too we insisted on a fuller

and a broader smile and had not much appreciation for a deeper and quieter pleasure.

How stupid was it all, Mother! Your abiding joy in us, in spite of our mistakes, wrong attitudes, gross misbehaviours, we did not recognise, but the absence of smile on a particular occasion, whether due to an act of concentration or a trance, was harboured long. And Sri Aurobindo's repeated explanations we did not accept. How funny! How unintelligent! How unworthy of a seeker after Soul and God, who had come and made his total surrender to the Guru!

We recall it all, feel terribly sad. We apologise. Never shall such a feeling cross our mind again. We have all the reasons to be grateful to You, grateful to You for Your love and joy, for Your marvellous help in difficulty and even more grateful for Your rebuke, usually very incidental and suggestive, since that shook us up in our self-complacency and opened a truer and a larger vision. We are grateful, only grateful, for all Your marvellous and varied dealings with us.

Our past failures were very many and we feel very very sorry for them. Mother, forgive us. They shall never be repeated.

Sri Aurobindo's advice now comes to us with a special force. He said, 'Open and receive'. That was the only thing that mattered, He said, and this He said time and again in many ways. He said, 'Open yourself and receive what the Mother is giving to you, is pressing upon you at meditations and otherwise'.

But this one thing that mattered was the one thing we did not heartily accept and follow. If we had done that, our progress in finding our soul and discovering the Supreme would have been immense and immense would have been the Mother's pleasure in us. How happy we would have felt then!

The daily 'blessings' were a great thing and we ran to those occasions. But our birthdays were a festival to each one of us. The Mother had seen that on a

birthday a sadhak was usually more open and She sought to put into him a great deal of Divine Peace and Force and Love and Knowledge. She welcomed each one of us with a special warmth, the Ashram community rejoiced over it and we were happy the whole day, thinking of the Mother and Her great love.

A similar great occasion in collective form was the New Year's day. There was a time when the Mother received us all at 5 a.m. and wished each one of us 'Bonne Annee' ('Happy New Year') and we thrilled with the experience.

The Darshan Days were days by themselves of exceptional giving and large collective and individual receiving and they were welcomed and celebrated jointly by the Ashram community, the disciples living outside and the admirers and seekers all over the world. On these days, the Mother was in a form that reflected the great occasion.

There used to be for a time 'a vegetable Darshan' too. At about midday, the Mother would come down to the courtyard of the Ashram to receive the offering of the vegetables of the Ashram gardens. At that time, a relatively small number of sadhaks would come round to see the Mother. The Mother would look at the vegetables of the day and then have a little fun with us. That Darshan had an evident quality of amusement and we would laugh a great deal. The Mother would give us some fruit or the like, but this She would throw out to us and ask us to catch. Some did it very neatly and some clumsily and some failed and we would all have great fun.

Christmas was also a special occasion and at one time the Mother Herself gave each one of us a Christmas gift.

There were quite a few other special occasions of joy and celebration.

We remember all that and it is such a joy to live them over again inwardly. But as we do so, we do also remember that we went to the Mother, met Her and had a lot of joy. But this joy was a variable fact. At times very keen, very vivid and long-staying. But at times, it would not be so. And then there would be occasions when at home itself, in our room, quietly sitting by ourselves, we

would have a nice meeting with the Mother. It would be thrilling and we would long dwell over it.

Latterly when the Mother withdrew and the occasions of going to Her for blessings became fewer, many of us reported that this situation necessitated the cultivation of the capacity of inner spiritual contact independently of the physical meeting. And we also heard that many felt they could then have freer contacts. They said that, there being no necessity of physically running for ‘blessings’, they learned to rely more on their inner turning to the Mother and off and on get the contact. This experience was heard of as being a very very happy thing.

Mother, You are now all a spiritual Reality, presumably more free, more active, more dynamic. And since Your passing, Your Presence and Contact have been more widely felt. We pray that we develop this capacity more fully, more perfectly and enjoy Your Presence and Contact more abidingly. You can thus be to us a constant companion, guide, friend and helper. You will then be to us more living than ever before. This is what you demanded of us when You withdrew latterly and this is what Sri Aurobindo also advised — an inner contact, not the physical meeting. Now You would desire it all the more.

Mother, grant that this may become a complete reality of life, for Your pleasure and satisfaction and our fulfilment.

But for our past failures, failures to recognise that You are always compassionate and loving, failure to follow Sri Aurobindo’s advice ‘Open and receive’ and indulging in a childish demanding, claiming, blaming attitude we are very very sorry indeed.

Mother, You were Mother, but we were not Children

Mother, You were really a Mother, always solicitous about our welfare, so kind, so gracious, so full of love, always forgiving, You were truly a Mother.

In You, we saw what spiritual motherhood is like — enlightened, illumined, concentrated on the goal, the true aim of life, cognizant of the means and the methods of attaining to the goal, ever helpful, ever forgiving, never harbouring anger or regret, always warm and encouraging, displeased only when we obstinately resisted what should be welcomed. A spiritual mother is a marvellous person! She knows us inside out, our past, present and future and is ever intent on promoting our good, much more than we can do it ourselves.

Our human mother, who gave us birth and brought us up with such tender care, is no doubt a very dear person. But she does not know much about us, about the aim of life and renders us no help in realising it. She can also be very angry and long retain a resentment. She can be very demanding, claiming, complaining too. A mother is a marvellous individual in nature, representing as she does a striking measure of selflessness. But a spiritual mother helps our soul to be born, raises us to the spiritual status and shapes our destiny. Our relation with her is eternal, that of an immortal soul to an immortal soul. Our human mother is cherished for one life. She gave us, under nature's law, this body and this mind. The spiritual mother operates under divine law and takes us across the rule and dominion of the ordinary unconscious nature.

Mother, you are marvellous, miraculous, a Divine Mother for a divine birth and a divine immortal life!

But were we, could we be children to You, conscious, loving, relying, happy, contented? Were we, could we be children feeling ever more safe in the Mother's lap, always playing about Her, always running to Her in danger, ever full of Her, ever mindful of Her? Were we, could we be little children aware

of ourselves as very very small or not at all aware of ourselves, but always full of the Mother, Mother as everything, all-knowing and all-powerful, an absolute resort and refuge for all our needs?

No, Mother, we were not. Obviously not. We were conscious of ourselves as important, capable of much, knowing a great deal and yet You were so gracious and kind. We approached You not very much in humility, in a true dependence and reliance and yet You helped us so large-heartedly, so effectively.

You did not mind our conceit and pride, our pretension and ostentation, because You knew we would one day be like little children to You, simple, spontaneous, transparent, trustful, reliant and cheerful.

And the day did come when Your long working on us brought about within us, in our heart, the birth, the emergence of a sweet little thing, which just eagerly looked at You and wanted ever to look at You and which disowned all that we knew or could do or had been. It felt as knowing nothing, capable of nothing, just looking up to the Mother for everything. Mother, then we had the true experience of being a child, a sweet simple little thing. How wonderful it was!

The first experience of being a child was a marvellous thing. Ah, to get over being a grown-up, responsible, anxious, apprehensive, calculating, important, 'wise', was a relief — a real relief. And to be a simple little child, sure and safe in the Mother's lap, an entire comfort.

Then we really discovered You as the true eternal mother, whom we could never lose in life.

How sad we then felt about our earlier impudence, self-conceit, self-importance, condescension in our dealings with You! We had called ourselves Your children, but we had not been.

We could not be children. Childlikeness was not our quality.

You were, Mother, always a mother, always, but we were not children, never.

But we did get reborn as children and then, Mother, You revealed Yourself to us as the eternal Divine Mother that You truly are and we Your eternal divine children, ever happy to live in You, with You, for You.

8

Mother, Why did You leave Your Body?

Mother, I wish to ask, in all confidence, ‘Why did You leave Your body? Had it become necessary? Absolutely unavoidable? Why so? How so?’ My heart longs to know all this, yearns for clarity and satisfaction.

No doubt the heart is rather selfish. The Mother was nice, so sweet, so lovable, the Mother was my world and She is now not there! Why has the Mother gone away, Why did She leave Her body, we are sad, we are forlorn. The heart, therefore, insistently asks, ‘Mother, why did You leave Your body?’

Mother, You were determined to achieve supramentalisation of the physical, the task confidently entrusted to you by Sri Aurobindo. You yearned for an indefinite prolongation of life to achieve this.

You did explain to us that the transformation of the physical, was a tremendous thing, it meant carrying Light to the deepest subconscious and the inconscient, of making the mechanical conscious and intelligent, of eliminating all obscurity and unconsciousness, of becoming all conscious, of fighting the past habits of nature, the so-called established laws of cosmic existence, of conquest over Death. Ah! tremendous!

You also explained that the physical, being inert, is full of subjection, defeatism, sense of impossibility and suffering and that the process of spiritualising it entailed evoking all that suffering, defeat, impossibility, etc. in a heightened form.

You also told us that the body must suitably respond to the Supramental Force You were pulling down on it for its transformation and that if it did not, then it could collapse.

You were also filled with a sense of urgency, as Sri Aurobindo was before his passing, that things needed to be hastened.

But your will, Mother, was indomitable. You were resolved to face all contingencies and achieve the high task, the mission of Your very birth, the assignment from on high.

How did it then happen, Mother, that You left the body or found it necessary to do so, or that it had become contingent to the progress of the work of transformation?

We know full well that You never submitted to suffering, however acute and terrible. Your will for victory was firm and clear in the worst of situations. Your pressure on the inconscient was constant and unflinching and perhaps the body unconsciously submitted to it in its own traditional way through disintegration because it found it impossible to respond to it by way of conscious assimilation of the descending Force.

Was it like that, Mother? How can we know, Mother, unless we know it from You?

Surely all that must have been a deep dent in the inconscient and that means a great gain for farther penetration in the future and the ultimate complete conquest.

We rejoice over it in that way, that a real strong impact on the inconscient has been made which can be a promise and an assurance of farther penetration. But we cannot help thinking that it would have been so nice if the body had responded in a conscious and intelligent manner, assimilated the High Immortal Force and become divinised and rejuvenated.

But Sri Aurobindo and You have taught us a philosophy of spiritual realism and a Yoga which is a systematic procedure of concentrated evolution. A play of possibilities is also a trend ingrained in existence.

Supermind is something inherent in the evolutionary process. But it has to be pursued and achieved and the achievement is a high task with all resistance involved in the material conditions of existence.

Your will for this achievement, Mother, was always clear, firm and full and it is bound to prevail whatever the vicissitudes it may have to face on the way.

Your will and Sri Aurobindo's will in this connection are our complete assurance and we take your passing as we did Sri Aurobindo's, under Your guidance, as an incident, a contingency somehow connected with it.

Mother, is it correct? Do You think this orientation is right?

Our query is very keen, insistent and persistent, 'Mother, why did You leave Your body?'

However, one thing is sure — You are still present around us, within us and we do not feel that You are no more. We turn to You as we used to for the joy of contact and communion, for advice and guidance, for help in difficulty and we find You as ready for contact, guidance and help as ever before. And this is a marvellous experience. But our externalist posture of mind spoils this dealing and intercourse by insisting on the physical form of things.

Mother, let this interference of the physical mind disappear from us and let us enjoy with You a true and an abiding and a full spiritual relationship. And let this query be effectively pacified. Our Mother is there as ever, body or no body makes no difference.

Mother, You are so sweet, so nice. We cherish You always, live for You, do Your will and feel fulfilled.

Mother, Will You come again in a New Body?

Mother, we hear You will come again in a new body. That will be grand, wonderful! But will it be really so? Is that needed for the prosecution and completion of Your work?

A first supramental body is all the problem for the integral transformation of life. The first body which will no longer be subject to death and disease and deterioration in this wide world where death rules and has always ruled. No doubt the first emergence would mean at one point throwing off the sway of death and a complete self-assertion of the immortality of the spirit. How difficult is such a self-assertion and how difficult will it be to subsist in complete defiance and rejection of the sovereignty of death all around!

But that is what is inherent in the nature of the evolutionary process, a supermind coming as the necessary culmination of mind, an integral consciousness as the consummation of the divided consciousness.

But the achievement of the first supramental body has been, Mother, a very serious problem. Hasn't it?

Sri Aurobindo's earnest concern was the supramental descent. That descent presented tremendous difficulties. The human consciousness being self-complacent, un-aspiring, un-open, repulsed the descending power and Sri Aurobindo's concentrated effort was, on the one hand, to create some openness below and, on the other hand, through personal identification with the supermind to seek to bring that power down into the matrix of earth-life. And the attempt to do so meant persistent battle with the universal inconscient, the hard and dark abysmal base of life.

However, after his passing, the passing being evidently an incident connected with the struggle against the inconscient, the Supramental Manifestation came off six years later in 1956 and You declared with great joy that the Supramental descent was no longer a promise but a living reality.

His passing was then perhaps instrumental too in that long-hoped-for, worked-for Manifestation and descent.

After that the deeper and deeper penetration of supramental consciousness into earth nature became the problem and was represented in Yourself by the progressive descent of the same power into the cells of Your body. This was Your yoga of the body or the physical yoga as we understand it, Mother. This presented awful difficulties in the form of the arousal of the latent incapacities, sufferings and deficiencies of the physical nature. The cells of the body and their unconsciousness resisted the action of the Higher Power rather than welcoming It. The body could not cope with the task. The realisation of the supramental body thus got put off.

But if Sri Aurobindo's passing proved to be instrumental to the supramental manifestation, coming as it did soon in the wake of his passing, will it be wrong for us, Mother, to think that Your passing too is going to be instrumental to the realisation of the first supramental body? If Your passing will prove so, that would be wonderful. And as the physical transformation was Your problem, may be this will occur as an accomplished fact too in You.

That being probable, we ask, 'Mother, are You coming in a new body, a supramental body which will be the completion of the mission of the integral transformation of life and the beginning of the supramental age?'

We rejoice over it, Mother, heartily and long, for Your coming and your Supramental Darshan.

But we must ourselves grow supermind-ward in some measure, acquire some sympathy and equivalence with Your supramental nature to be able to

get a contact with You, to enjoy your Presence and Your Pleasure, to have any dealings with You.

Even previously when we approached You with our vital nature, demanding-complaining-blaming, we missed You. But when we approached You with self-giving and love, psychically, you were marvellous. So a spiritual approach was necessary for a spiritual contact and a spiritual enjoyment of the relation.

When You come to us in Your full supramental form, we must needs approach You in some little supramental way.

So we rejoice, Mother, that You are likely to come again in a supramental form, but, Mother, help us to develop some little supramental sensibility to see You, to feel You, to serve You, to be tolerably worthy disciples of You.

Mother, We read again Your ‘Notes on the Way’

1

Mother, you have left us a testament, a large and an intimate testament and we now read it with a keen desire. You have spoken there of Yourself, of the deepest mystery of Your inner aspirations and longings, of marvellous contacts and communions, of great transformations and transmutations, of enormous risks and hazards and a great deal more. And we read all this, feel high elations, get terribly startled and are extremely sad that we never realised what all that meant when we previously read it. We did not take all that seriously. We felt we did not understand that well. Your ‘Notes on the Way’ document is indeed a great testament, an eye-opener to us today.

In 1965, when you started speaking to us of these profound yogic mysteries of your inner working, you said under the date of October 7, 1964, “Things have clearly taken a turn for the better, not from the ordinary point of view but from the higher. But the material consequences are still there — all the difficulties are as though aggravated. Only, the power of the consciousness is greater — clearer, more precise; and also the action upon those that are of good will; they make quite considerable progress. But the material difficulties are as though aggravated, that is to say, it is ... to see if we can stand the test!”¹ Further you said, “Not long ago (since yesterday), something has cleared in the atmosphere. But the way is still long — long, long. I feel it is very long. One must last — hold on, above all that is the impression — one must have endurance. These are the two absolutely indispensable things: endurance, and a faith that nothing can shake, even an apparently complete negation, even if

¹ *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1965, p. 77.

you suffer, even if you are miserable (I mean to say in the body), even if you are tired — must endure, must last. That is it.”²

Thus we were told of ‘the yoga of the body’, also called ‘the yoga of the cells’ or ‘the physical yoga,’ and we began to visualise what it might possibly be. Not having any experience of it ourselves, we could hardly appreciate it. ‘Endurance’ and ‘faith’ are always needed, but their place in ‘the yoga of the body’ we could hardly know. And that this yoga is a ‘long, long’ thing was yet more difficult to appreciate.

The note of the ‘material difficulties’ and ‘the test’, of the ‘suffering’ and the ‘misery’ of the body are already there in the first utterance itself, but we never took that seriously.

You explained also: “The most material consciousness, the most material mind is accustomed to act, to make an effort, to advance through whippings; otherwise, it is *tamas*. And then, so far as it imagines, it imagines always difficulty — always the obstacle, always the opposition, — and that slows down the movement terribly. Very concrete, very tangible and *often repeated* experiences are needed to convince it that behind all its difficulties there is Grace, behind all its failures there is the Victory, behind all its pains and sufferings, all these contradictions there is Ananda. Of all efforts it is this one which has to be repeated most often; all the while you are obliged to stop or remove, to convert a pessimism, a doubt, or an imagination altogether defeatist.”³

You further explained:

“Naturally, when something comes down from above, that makes, well... a crash, like that (*gesture of fleeting*), then all is silent, all stops and awaits. But... I understand well why the Truth, the Truth-Consciousness does not

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-81.

express itself more constantly, because the difference between its Power and the power of Matter is so great that the power of Matter is as it were cancelled — but then that does not mean Transformation, that means crushing. That is what they used to do in ancient times — they crushed all this material consciousness under the weight of a Power against which nothing can struggle, which nothing can oppose. And then one had the impression: ‘There you are! It has been done.’ But it has not been done, not at all! for, the rest, down below, remained as before, without changing.

“Now, it is being given its full possibility to change; well, for that, you must allow it full play and not interpose a Power that crushes it — this I understand very well. But that consciousness has the obstinacy of the imbecile. How many times during a suffering for example, when the suffering is there, acute and one has the impression that it is going to be unbearable, there is just a little inner movement (within the cells) of Call — the cells send their S.O.S. — everything stops, the suffering disappears and often (now more and more) it is replaced by a feeling of blissful well-being.”⁴

Here is, we now realise a little, ‘the material consciousness’ ‘the consciousness of the body and cells’, ‘the material mind,’ ‘the physical mind’, which is all subject to external pressures, come into being that way and is full of a sense of difficulties, fears and defeats, cannot now easily turn to the Divine, open itself to that influence and enjoy blissfulness. Tamas is its very constitution and it must through long endurance and patient action be transformed in its nature. It has not to be suppressed and crushed, but transformed, i.e., it should in its nature consciously now turn to the Divine and imbibe His influence and Force rather than remain unconscious, all subject to external pressures and always suffering whatever is imposed on it, having no power to be itself capable of throwing off external impacts whatever.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

You remind us also of Sri Aurobindo's word in this connection, viz., "Endure and you will conquer Bear, bear and you will vanquish."

We ponder over all this, try to feel what You were living through, what You were attempting and what possible benefits for all human nature were intended. All tremendous, original, most creative, most difficult, yet a perfectly possible and necessary development of spiritual life. A surely victorious move, however prolonged the action needed!

And we wish You, Mother, as we used to do at times before, but now with some understanding and appreciation:

"Victoire à la Douce Mere."

("Victory to our Sweet Mother.")

2

You have, Mother, while admitting us to Your experience, also tried to initiate us into this profound yoga of the body. You have evidently wished us to do it. We wish we did, but now we will.

You told us:

"...as you descend into that domain, the domain of cells, even the very constitution of the cells seems as if less heavy. This sort of heaviness of Matter disappears — it begins again to be fluid, vibrant. That would tend to prove that heaviness, thickness, inertia, immobility, is a thing *added*, it is not a quality essential to... it is the false Matter, that which we think and feel, but not Matter itself, as it is."⁵

"The best one can do is not to take sides, not to have preconceived ideas or principles — Oh! the moral principles, the set rules of conduct, what one must do and what one must not and the preconceived ideas from the moral point of

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 85

view, from the point of view of progress and all the social and mental conventions... no worse obstacle than that. There are people, I know people who lost decades in surmounting *one* such mental construction!... If one can be like that, open — truly open in simplicity, the simplicity that knows that it is ignorant — like that (*gesture upward of self-abandon*), ready to receive whatever comes. Then something can happen.

“And naturally the thirst for progress, the thirst for knowledge, the thirst for transformation and, above all, the thirst for Love and Truth if one keeps that, one goes quicker. Truly a thirst, a need, a need.

“All the rest has no importance, it is *that* one has need of.

“To stick to something one believed that one knows, to stick to something that one feels, to stick to something that one loves, to stick to one’s habits, to stick to one’s so-called needs, to stick to the world as it is, it is that which binds you. You must undo all that, one thing after another. Undo all the ties. And it has been told thousands of times and people continue to do the same thing.... Even they who are most eloquent and preach that to others do s-t-i-c-k. They stick to their way of seeing, their way of feeling, their habit of progress, which seems for them the only one.

“No more bonds — free, free, free. Always ready to change everything, except one thing: to aspire, this thirst.”⁶

Further You told us:

“...every second all the cells must be (*gesture of offering upwards*) in adoration, in aspiration — adoration, aspiration ... nothing else. Then after a time there is also delight, then that ends by blissful trust. When this trust is established all will be well. But... it is easy to say, it is much more difficult to

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

do. Only for the moment I am convinced that this is the only means, there is no other.⁷

In this connection, we recall what You have called the A B C of the transformation of the body. You have said: "...would you be able to tell exactly, at every meal, the amount of food and the kind of food your body needed? — simply that, nothing more than that: how much should be taken and when it should be taken.... You know nothing about it, there's just a vague idea like that, a sort of imagination or guesswork or deduction or... all sorts of things which have nothing to do with knowledge. But that exact knowledge: 'It is this I must take, I must take so much of it', — and then it is finished. 'It is this my body needs.' Well, that can be done. There's a time when one knows it very well. But it asks for years of labour, and above all years of work.

...And to know also how to determine for one's body, exactly, the amount of physical effort, of material activity, the amount of expenditure of energy, the amount of recuperation of energy, the proportion between what is received and what is given, the utilisation of energies to re-establish a state of equilibrium which has been broken, to make the cells which are lagging behind progress, to build the conditions for a possibility of higher progress, etc....It is a formidable task⁸ ...are you conscious of your physical cells and their different characteristics, their activity, the degree of their receptivity, of what is in a healthy condition and what is not? Can you say with certainty when you are tired, why you are tired? Can you, when there's something wrong somewhere, can you say: 'It is because of this I am suffering'?...Well, this is the A B C of the transformation of the body."⁹ Surely, we haven't a clear awareness of the body and its needs. We do not even know when we are really hungry and when we need to eat, much less know precisely what we need to

⁷ *Ibid.*, August 1965. p. 103.

⁸ *Ibid.*, November 1973, pp. 73-75.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

eat, how much we need to eat and when we need to eat. Or when we are tired or what exactly the cause of a suffering is.

We wish and we aspire that we may become clearly aware of our body and its vicissitudes. It will be splendid to know one's body so well and use it rightly, properly and effectively and over a long vista of life.

Mother, grant that this happens.

And then we should become aware of our cells themselves and then be able to deal with them yogically in aspiration, rejection, surrender, self-opening and so on as we do at the levels of the vital and the mind. Then surely a descent into the cells would be a possible venture and they could enjoy adoration of the Divine and exercise a real aspiration and a real self-opening.

When we read these 'Notes on the Way' earlier, we did try to put ourselves into our best sympathetic contact with You and Your inner work. But now we feel seriously called to it. We are sure You are promoting it most energetically and this is the work that is to be carried forward to its completion. We are poor Adhars, but we aspire, we seek to serve You, will do Your will.

Mother, make us fit instruments of Your sublime work and we look forward to its progress and final success.

We are, Mother, Your little children, very ignorant, very weak.

3

Your 'Notes on the Way', as they proceed, show us clearly an alternation of two states. One is of the 'material consciousness' open and full of the Higher Consciousness. Then all is bliss, and immortality is a vivid reality. And the other is of the material consciousness closed within itself. Then all is doubt, difficulty, defeatism, suffering and dissolution.

You have said:

“This morning (August 21, 1965), for example, several times, for some time (I do not know how long, but not very short, a quarter of an hour, half an hour, I do not know), the cells of the body, that is to say, the form of the body, had the experience that to remain together or to dissolve depended on a certain attitude — an attitude or a will; something of both will and attitude. And with the perception (sometimes double, at the same time, one being rather a memory and the other a thing lived) of what makes you move, act, know; the old way as a memory and the new in which evidently there is no reason for dissolving unless one chooses it — that has no meaning, it is a meaningless thing: why to dissolve?..”¹⁰

“But this change of initiating power, if one might say, this transfer of power, that had upon me the effect of a unique experience, of something that had never taken place before. Unhappily that did not last long. But the expression has left a kind of certitude in the body — it is less uncertain of the future. It came to it, as if to tell it: it will be like that.

“If that remains, it is evident immortality”¹¹

This experience of the transfer of power, of a new attitude and will in the cells was obviously a marvellous thing. It was an experience of eternity and immortality for the cells, which made dissolution and death an unreality, no necessity of existence, or just a matter of choice. The experience showed that the transformed consciousness of the cells “will be like this”. But it was an initial experience clearly showing that immortality was to the body a practical proposition. It was a wonderful promise and an assurance, which must naturally have its sequel of a realisation, final and settled whenever that might come about.

In the experience of the 21st August 1965, the alternation is marked by a transfer of initiating power to the cells, but the alternation between two states

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, November 1965, pp. 83-85.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

of the new consciousness of the cells and the old one continues in the instalments of the ‘Notes on the Way’ that follow.

Here is a statement, Mother, where You tell us that suffering is the method of pulling Matter out of its inertia. You say on September 28, 1966:

“For a long time, quite recently, that is to say, for days together, there was a very acute, very intense, very clear perception that the action of the Force translated itself externally by what we call suffering, because that is the only kind of vibration which can pull Matter out of its inertia.”¹²

“But then, all on a sudden when there comes this true Compassion of the Divine Love and when one sees all these things that appear so horrible, so abnormal, so absurd, this great pain which is upon all beings and even upon all things...then there takes birth in this physical being the aspiration to soothe, to cure, to remove the thing.”¹³

Obviously, the transformation of the body, constituted of Tamas as it is, must entail a passage through great suffering. Thus alone it could come out of its Tamas and discover as cure the Divine Love and with it its eternity and immortality. And, Mother, what a suffering You have had in recent years! And all because You undertook transformation of the physical and this in the interest of an integral transformation of life, of raising general human living to the high supramental level.

You have also in Your ‘Notes’ revealed the details and intricacies of the working of transformation. In the April issue of 1967, You have explained three approaches to the problem of transformation. And in the next issue, You state the problem as a whole in these words:

“The movements of the body almost in its totality are habitual movements. Behind, there is the consciousness of the physical mind (what I call cellular

¹² *Ibid.*, November 1966, p. 75.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

mind) which is itself constantly conscious of the divine Presence and is keen on accepting nothing but That; so a whole work is going on for changing, shifting the origin of the movements. I mean to say that instead of just being automatically the habit, it should be automatically the divine Presence and Consciousness that causes the movement.”¹⁴

And here is a statement of great joy, ‘a *hosanna* of all the cells’. You say:

“When the Contact all on a sudden becomes conscious and the sense of Identity comes, as I say for a few seconds, but when it comes... it is a *hosanna* of all the cells, that say: Oh yes, yes, it is true! so it is true...”

“That comes perhaps a hundred times in a day, but it does not stay.”¹⁵

Mother, how much we wish such a Contact could stay, for the completion of Your and Sri Aurobindo’s great work and for a new destiny for all mankind. But that abiding contact is bound to be realised sooner rather than later through the large and the wide action of both of You in your present status of existence.

4

Mother, You have emphasised the enormity of the work of physical transformation again and again in Your ‘Notes’ and we do visualise that to rid this unconscious body of its habitudes and to make it a supple conscious instrument of the Divine must be truly a tremendous job. The myriad activities of the numerous organs are all mechanical, unconscious movements ingrained in the body’s nature. To make all this a conscious divine inspired behaviour and action is truly an enormous task.

Even in 1969, in the February issue of the *Bulletin*, You say:

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, August 1967, p. 63.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

“The feeling of being on the point of touching something and then...it escapes. Something is missing.

“Still a long long long way to go.”¹⁶

You have, Mother, stated again the problem, the task in hand. You have said: “The problem seems to have been to create a physical capable of bearing the Power that wants to manifest itself.”¹⁷

5

In April, 1972, Mother, You talk of things getting ‘terrible, terrible’ and of ‘a frightful Pressure’ and of ‘perpetual danger’ and it all shakes us up. You say:

“It is becoming terrible, terrible. It is like a Pressure, a frightful Pressure — to bring about the desired progress. I feel it in myself for the body. But my body is not afraid, it says (*Mother opens her hands*): Very well, if I am to end, it is the end. Every minute it is like that: the true thing (*Mother brings down her fist*) or the end.”¹⁸

And further:

“The body knows that this is the way for the supramental body to be formed: It must be *wholly* under the influence of the Divine — no compromise, no approximation, no ‘it will come’, not so: it is like this (*Mother brings down her fist*), a formidable Will.”¹⁹

“But it is that, it is a kind of... no half-measure, no compromise, no approximation, no... not that. It is this (*Mother brings down her fist*).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, February 1969, p. 102.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, November 1971, p. 99.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, April 1972, p. 73.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

“And it is so for the body, at every minute there is an imperative: it is life or it is death. It is not the approximation which has lasted indefinitely. For centuries it was neither altogether bad, nor altogether good — it is no longer so.

“But...it is the only way for things to go fast.”²⁰

And then comes the mention of perpetual danger:

“It is as though all the while you had the feeling that you were hovering between life and death, and the moment you take the right attitude — when the part concerned takes the right attitude — it goes all right.”²¹

“It is as though by a kind of compulsion the body was being taught eternity.”²²

The note of danger is further emphasised in many issues that follow. You say:

“...there are a thousand experiences of the physical body which say: ‘Ooh! this beatific state is an impossibility’ — it is this stupidity which delays everything. It is as though it were the cells — the cells of the body that are accustomed to fight and suffer and unable to accept that things could be like that (*same gesture of self-giving, hands opened out*). But when it is like that...it is wonderful.”²³

Again: “My body is beginning — just beginning to know that the Divine side means a life... (*Mother stretches out her arms into an immensity*) a life progressive and luminous: but the accumulation of past experiences say: Oh! it is not possible!’ There you are, and so it is this idiotic ‘not possible’ which delays and spoils things.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, November 1972, p. 83.

“This is based upon the fact that as soon as the body gives up the true attitude, it becomes painful, everything hurts, everything is suffering — the impression is there as of death and dissolution everywhere.”²⁴

Further again:

“Things have taken an extreme form, so there is as it were an uplift of the atmosphere towards a splendour...almost inconceivable and at the same time the feeling that any moment one may...one may die — not ‘die’ but the body may be dissolved.”²⁵

At the time these statements appeared in the ‘Notes’, we were naturally inclined to ignore the dangers and cherished the happier experiences. But now we realise that the dangers were equally serious. However, we feel that Your passing is an incident connected with the progress of the work and, as worthy disciples, see Your going in its spiritual bearings and learn to cultivate and strengthen spiritual connections and enjoy the true abiding relations.

6

You have given us, Mother, a most heartening and illuminating insight regarding Sri Aurobindo’s passing too in Your ‘Notes’.

You have said:

“He (Sri Aurobindo) himself — possesses more action, more power for action now than when in his body. Besides, it is for that that he left, because it was necessary to act in that way.”²⁶

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, February 1973, p. 93.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

And You have also left us a command, a direction regarding our work in the future. You have said:

“For centuries and centuries humanity has waited for this time. It is come. But it is difficult.

“I don’t simply tell you we are here upon earth to rest and enjoy ourselves, now is not the time for that. We are here...to prepare the way for the new creation.

“The body has some difficulty, so I can’t be active, alas. It is not because I am old, I am not old. I am not old, I am younger than most of you. If I am here inactive, it is because the body has given itself definitely to prepare the transformation. But the consciousness is clear and we are here to work — rest and enjoyment will come afterwards. Let us do our work here.

“So I have called you to tell you that. Take what you can, do what you can, my help will be with you. All sincere effort will be helped to the maximum”²⁷

“You are here at this moment, that is to say, upon earth because you chose it at one time — you do not remember it any more but I know it — that is why you are here. Well, you must rise to the height of the task, you must strive, you must conquer all weaknesses and limitations: above all you must tell your ego: your hour is gone. We want a race that has no ego, that has in the place of the ego the Divine Consciousness.”²⁸

This is, Mother, an inspiring message for us, clear and full as to what is to be done and what You expect of us. Mother, we are grateful for this direction. We are determined to follow it and do Your will.

Mother, if Sri Aurobindo’s power of action is now greater and his passing was an incident leading to such larger action, is Your own passing not of a

²⁷ *Ibid.*, August 1972, p. 82

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

similar character and would Your action too be not more powerful now? It seems to be already evident that it is so.

Mother, grant that we be thoroughly faithful to You and to Sri Aurobindo and enjoy more and more the pleasure of both of You.