All India Magazine – April 2012

Reminiscences and Reflections of the Mother

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This compilation was earlier published in *All India Magazine* in the February 1990 and also in the February 1997 issues. Due to the importance of the text, we reproduce it in this issue again.

Section I: Her Mission

I

(On Her 90th Birthday)
21-2-1968

The reminiscences will be short.

I came to India to meet Sri Aurobindo. I remained in India to live with Sri Aurobindo. When he left his body, I continued to live here in order to do his work which is, by serving the Truth and enlightening mankind, to hasten the rule of the Divine's Love upon earth.

II

How I Became Conscious of My Mission*

When and how did I become conscious of a mission which I was to fulfil on earth? And when and how I met Sri Aurobindo?

These two questions you have asked me and I promised a short reply.

For the knowledge of the mission, it is difficult to say when it came to me. It is as though I were born with it, and following the growth of the mind and brain, the precision and completeness of this consciousness grew also.

Between 11 and 13 a series of psychic and spiritual experiences revealed to me not only the existence of God but man's possibility of uniting with Him, of realising Him integrally in consciousness and action, of manifesting Him upon earth in a life divine. This, along with a practical discipline for its fulfilment, was given to me during my body's sleep by several teachers, some of whom I met afterwards on the physical plane.

Later on, as the interior and exterior development proceeded, the spiritual and psychic relation with one of these beings became more and more clear and frequent; and al-

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* Towards the end of 1920, in response to a request, the Mother wrote a letter which was published in a magazine from Chandernagore under this title.

though I knew little of the Indian philosophies and religions at that time I was led to call him Krishna, and henceforth I was aware that it was with him (whom I knew I should meet on earth one day) that the divine work was to be done.

In the year 1910 my husband came alone to Pondicherry where, under very interesting and peculiar circumstances, he made the acquaintance of Sri Aurobindo. Since then we both strongly wished to return to India — the country which I had always cherished as my true mother-country. And in 1914 this joy was granted to us.

As soon as I saw Sri Aurobindo I recognised in him the well-known being whom I used to call Krishna.... And this is enough to explain why I am fully convinced that my place and my work are near him, in India.

III

A Declaration: 15 August 1954

I want to mark this day by the expression of a long cherished wish; that of becoming an Indian citizen. From the first time I came to India — in 1914 — I felt that India is my true country, the country of my soul and spirit. I had decided to realise this wish as soon as India would be free. But I had to wait still longer because of my heavy responsibilities for the Ashram here in Pondicherry. Now the time has come when I can declare myself.

But, in accordance with Sri Aurobindo's ideal, my purpose is to show that truth lies in union rather than in division. To reject one nationality in order to obtain another is not an ideal solution. So I hope I shall be allowed to adopt a double nationality, that is to say, to remain French while I become an Indian.

I am French by birth and early education, I am Indian by choice and predilection. In my consciousness there is no antagonism between the two, on the contrary, they combine very well and complete one another. I know also that I can be of service to both equally, for my only aim in life is to give a concrete form to Sri Aurobindo's great teaching and in his teaching

he reveals that all the nations are essentially one and meant to express the Divine Unity upon earth through an organised and harmonious diversity.

IV

There is a Supreme Divine Consciousness. We want to manifest this Divine Consciousness in the physical life.

*

We want the divine conquest of this world, the conquest of all its movements and the realisation of the Divine here.

*

... it is the first time that a yoga aims at transformation and divinisation of physical life instead of escape from it.

*

We want an integral transformation, the transformation of the body and all its activities. But there is an absolutely indispensable first step that must be accomplished before anything else can be undertaken: the transformation of the consciousness.... I am not speaking here of a mere change in mental outlook, but of a change in the consciousness itself.

V

While looking at the Samadhi:

I do not want to be worshipped. I have come to work, not to be worshipped; let them worship Thee to their heart's content and leave me, silent and hidden, to do my work undisturbed — and of all veils the body is the best.

VI

I have never left the earth since its formation.

The Mother

Section II: On Herself

I

Without him, I exist not;
without me, he is unmanifest.

6.5.1957

II

Since the beginning of the earth, wherever and whenever there was the possibility of manifesting a ray of the Consciousness, I was there.

III

Myself and My Creed

I belong to no nation, no civilisation, no society, no race, but to the Divine.

I obey no master, no ruler, no law, no social convention, but the Divine.

To Him I have surrendered all, will, life, self; for Him I am ready to give all my blood, drop by drop, if such is His Will, with complete joy; and nothing in His service can be sacrifice, for all is perfect delight.

Japan, *Feb. 1920*

IV

There is only one thing of which I am absolutely sure, and that is *who I am*. Sri Aurobindo also knew it and declared it. Even the doubts of the whole of humanity would change nothing to this fact.

But another fact is not so certain — it is the usefulness of my being here in a body, doing the work I am doing. It is not out of any personal urge that I am doing it. Sri Aurobindo told me to do it and that is why I do it as a sacred duty in obedience to the dictates of the Supreme.

Time will reveal how far earth has benefited through it.

24.5.1951

V

Q: When the Supreme Lord told you to make the world, how did you know what had to be done?

I had nothing to learn for that, because the Supreme Lord contains everything in Himself: the whole world, the knowledge of the world and the power to make it. When He decided that there should be a world, He first brought forth the knowledge of the world and the power to make it and that is me, and then He commanded me to make the world.

25.9.1957

Q: Why did you come like us? Why did you not come as you truly are?

Because if I did not come like you, I could never be close to you and I would not be able to tell you: "Become what I am."

27 .9. 1957

Q: Mother, what is your answer to the question: "Are you God?"

This question can be asked of any human being. And the answer is: Yes, potentially.

And the task of each one is to make it a real fact.

August 1966

VI

Lord, I lament my limitations... but it is through them, by virtue of them, that men can approach Thee. Without them, Thou wouldst be as remote, as inaccessible to men as if Thou hadst not put on a body of flesh.

This is why each progress they make represents a true liberation for me, for each step they take towards Thee gives me the right to cast away one of these limitations and to manifest Thee more truly, more perfectly.

And yet these limitations could have been dispensed with. But then it would have been necessary to keep near us only those who have experienced the Divine, who have identified themselves with Thee, Lord, even if only once, either within themselves or in the universe. For this identification is the indispensable basis of our Yoga; it is its starting-point.

17.7.1932

VII

It is their own mental and vital formation of me that they love, not myself. More and more I am confronted with this fact. Each one has made his own image of me for himself in conformity with his needs and desires, and it is with this image that he is in relation, through that he receives the little amount of universal forces and the still smaller amount of supramental forces that manage to filter through all these formations. Unfortunately, they cling to my physical presence, otherwise I could withdraw into my inner solitude and do my work quietly and freely from there; but this physical presence is a symbol for them and that is why they cling to it, for in fact they have very little real contact with what my body truly is or with the tremendous accumulation of conscious energy that it represents.

11.6.1954

VIII

Since I love only You, O Lord, it is You alone whom I love in all and in each one; and by dint of loving You in them, I shall end up by making them a little conscious of You.

For them, the real thing is to know how to let themselves be loved without any preference and obstruction. But, not only do they not want to be loved except in their own way, they do not want even to open themselves to love unless it comes to them through the intermediary of their choice... and what could be done in a few hours, a few months or a few years takes centuries to be accomplished.

The Mother



In France, Age about 7

Section III: The Advent

I

You see how it is, now I am nearing a hundred, it's only five years away now. I started making an effort to become conscious at five years old, my child. This is to let you know.... And I go on, and it goes on. Only... Of course, I have come to the point where I am doing the work for the cells of the body, but still, the work began a long time ago.

This is not to discourage you, but... it is to let you know that it does not happen just like that!

8.2.1973

II

The most important thing for an individual is to unify himself around his divine centre; in that way he becomes a true individual, master of himself and his destiny. Otherwise, he is a plaything of forces that toss him about like a piece of cork on a river. He goes where he does not want to go, he is made to do things he does not want to do, and finally he falls into a hole without having the strength to hold on. But if you are consciously organised, unified around the divine centre, ruled and directed by it, you are master of your destiny. That is worth the trouble of attempting.... In any case, I find it preferable to be the master rather than the slave. It is a rather unpleasant sensation to feel yourself pulled by the strings and made to do things whether you want to or not — it makes no difference — but to be compelled to act because something pulls you by the strings, something which you do not even see — that is exasperating. However, I do not know, but I found it very annoying, even when I was a little child. At five, it began to seem to me quite intolerable and I sought for a way so that it might be otherwise — without people getting a chance to scold me. For I knew nobody who could help me and I did not have the chance that you have, someone who can tell you: "This is what you have to do!" There was nobody to tell me that. I had to find it out all by

myself. And I found it. I started at five.

1.7.1953

III

It has never seemed to you unbearable that a will from outside should have an action upon your will? No?...

Oh! I am putting very difficult problems! But, my children, I was preoccupied with that when I was a child of five!... So I thought you must have been preoccupied with it since a long time.

A Sadhak: In oneself, there are contradictory wills.

Yes, many. That is one of the very first discoveries. There is one part which wants things this way; and then at another moment, another way, and a third time, one wants still another thing! Besides, there is even this: something that wants and another which says no. So? But it is exactly that which has to be found if you wish in the least to organise yourself. Why not project yourself upon a screen, as in the cinema, and then look at yourself moving on it? How interesting it is!

This is the first step.

You project yourself on the screen and then observe and see all that is moving there and how it moves and what happens. You make a little diagram, it becomes so interesting then. And then, after a while, when you are quite accustomed to seeing, you can go one step further and take a decision. Or even a still greater step: you organise — arrange, take up all that, put each thing in its place, organise in such a way that you begin to have a straight movement with an inner meaning. And then you become conscious of your direction and are able to say: "Very well, it will be thus; my life will develop in that way, because that is the logic of my being. Now, I have arranged all that within me, each thing has been put in its place, and so naturally a central orientation is forming. I am following this orientation. One step more and I know what will happen to me for I myself am deciding it...." I do not know, I am telling

you this; to me it seemed terribly interesting, the most interesting thing in the world. There was nothing, no other thing that interested me more than that.

This happened to me.... I was five or six or seven years old (at seven the thing became quite serious) and I had a father who loved the circus, and he came and told me: "Come with me, I am going to the circus on Sunday." I said: "No, I am doing something much more interesting than going to the circus!" Or again, young friends invited me to attend a meeting where we were to play together, enjoy together: "No, I enjoy here much more...." And it was quite sincere. It was not a pose: for me, it was like this, it was true. There was nothing in the world more enjoyable than that.

And I am so convinced that anybody who does it in that way, with the same freshness and sincerity, will obtain most interesting results.... To put all that on a screen in front of yourself and look at what is happening. And the first step is to know all that is happening and then you must not try to shut your eyes when something does not appear pleasant to you! You must keep them wide open and put each thing in that way before the screen. Then you make quite an interesting discovery. And then the next step is to start telling yourself: "Since all that is happening within me, why should I not put this thing in this way and then that thing in that way and then this other in this way and thus wouldn't I be doing something logical that has a meaning? Why should I not remove that thing which stands obstructing the way, these conflicting wills? Why? And what does that represent in the being? Why is it there? If it were put there, would it not help instead of harming me?" And so on. ...

I think that is what the sages of the past meant when they said: "Know thyself." Not anything else. But then, instead of going in there as if with a bandage on your eyes, and knocking your nose or forehead against something hard to find out that it is hard or that it is a wall or a closed door or an obstruction or some bad will; instead of all that, there is no need of years of experience and all kinds of misfortune and more or less unpleasant circumstances, in order to learn to know oneself: you

do the work quietly, as I said.

When I did that, there was no cinema, so I could not compare what I was doing with the cinema — it was not yet there, but it is exactly like projecting on the screen what is inside, objectifying it. And a screen that's all white, quite smooth, that does not deform. ...

You can try. Try for five minutes every day — looking at yourself, seeing what happens there, within.

29.7.1953

IV

This is something I have heard from my very childhood, and I believe our great grand-parents heard the same thing, and from all time it has been preached that if you want to succeed in something you must do only that. And as for me, I was scolded all the time because I did many different things! And I was always told I would never be good at anything. I studied, I did painting, I did music, and besides was busy with other things still. And I was told my music wouldn't be up to much, my painting wouldn't be worthwhile, and my studies would be quite incomplete. Probably it is quite true, but still I have found that this had its advantages — those very advantages I am speaking about, of widening, making supple one's mind and understanding. It is true that if I had wanted to be a first-class player and to play in concerts, it would have been necessary to do what they said. And as for painting, if I had wanted to be among the great artists of the time, it would have been necessary to do that. That's quite understandable. But still, that is just one point of view. I don't see any necessity of being the greatest artist, the greatest musician. That has always seemed to me a vanity. And besides, it is a question of opinion....

10.2.1954

V

You see, my child, the unfortunate thing is that you are too busy with yourself. At your age I was exclusively occupied with my

studies — informing myself, learning, understanding, knowing. That was my interest, even my passion. My mother, who loved us — my brother and myself — very much, never allowed us to be bad-tempered or dissatisfied or lazy. If we went and complained to her about something or other and told her that we were not satisfied, she would laugh at us and scold us and say to us, "What is this foolishness? Don't be ridiculous, off you go and work, and don't take any notice of your good or bad moods! That is not interesting at all."

My mother was perfectly right and I have always been very grateful to her for having taught me discipline and the necessity of self-forgetfulness in concentration on what one is doing.

I have told you this because the anxiety you speak of comes from the fact that you are far too busy with yourself. It would be far better for you to attend more to what you are doing (painting or music), to develop your mind which is still very uncultivated and to learn the elements of knowledge which are indispensable to a man if he does not want to be ignorant and uncultured.

If you worked regularly eight to nine hours a day, you would be hungry and you would eat well and sleep peacefully, and you would have no time to wonder whether you are in a good or a bad mood.

I am telling you these things with all my affection, and I hope that you will understand them.

Your mother who loves you.

15.5.1934

VI

When, as a child, I used to complain to my mother about food or any such small matter she would always tell me to go and do my work or pursue my studies instead of bothering about trifles. She would ask me if I had the complacent idea that I was born for comfort. "You are born to realise the highest Ideal," she would say and send me packing. She was quite right, though of course her notion of the highest Ideal was rather poor by our standards.

1930-31

VII

All this happened between the age of three and seven. ... I was serious! I remember when I was being dressed to go and have my photograph taken. The dress was arranged, the hat, and I was told how to pose for the photo. I would look at the older people and tell myself, "But how childish all this is!"

I remember the first time I heard my mother tell a lie! Oh, it was indeed a let down! I looked at her.... I found it ridiculous. She had just told the servant, "Say that I am not there." It was ridiculous, I couldn't understand, for *she was* there!

They had never explained to me what a lie was but the psychic was there, and that knew. Once... there was a small wall-cupboard, very small, where medicines were kept, and one day my brother told me, "Climb up on the stool and take a packet." It was a packet containing marshmallows or something like that. I was very docile. I used to do everything my brother asked me. So I climbed up on the stool and took the packet. When I gave it to him he told me, "You won't say anything, you mustn't say anything." I looked at him and I felt here *(Mother points at her heart)*, I felt a terrible uneasiness. I said nothing. When my mother came back she asked where the packet was. I said nothing, but for years I felt that uneasiness, and I used to tell myself, "This must be it — falsehood!"

VIII

When I was a child of about thirteen, for nearly a year every night as soon as I had gone to bed it seemed to me that I went out of my body and rose straight up above the house, then above the city, very high above. Then I used to see myself clad in a magnificent golden robe, much longer than myself; and as I rose higher, the robe would stretch, spreading out in a circle around me to form a kind of immense roof over the city. Then I would see men, women, children, old men, the sick, the unfortunate coming out from every side; they would gather under the outspread robe, begging for help, telling of their miseries,

their suffering, their hardships. In reply, the robe, supple and alive, would extend towards each one of them individually, and as soon as they had touched it, they were comforted or healed, and went back into their bodies happier and stronger than they had come out of them. Nothing seemed more beautiful to me, nothing could make me happier; and all the activities of the day seemed dull and colourless and without any real life, beside this activity of the night which was the true life for me. Often while I was rising up in this way, I used to see at my left an old man, silent and still, who looked at me with kindly affection and encouraged me by his presence. This old man, dressed in a long dark purple robe, was the personification — as I came to know later—of him who is called the Man of Sorrows.

Now that deep experience, that almost inexpressible reality, is translated in my mind by other ideas which I may describe in this way:

Many a time in the day and night it seems to me that I am, or rather my consciousness is, concentrated entirely in my heart which is no longer an organ, not even a feeling, but the divine Love, impersonal, eternal; and being this Love I feel myself living at the centre of each thing upon the entire earth, and at the same time I seem to stretch out immense, infinite arms and envelop with a boundless tenderness all beings, clasped, gathered, nestled on my breast that is vaster than the universe. . . . Words are poor and clumsy, O divine Master, and mental transcriptions are always childish. . . . But my aspiration to Thee is constant, and truly speaking, it is very often Thou and Thou alone who livest in this body, this imperfect means of manifesting Thee.

May all beings be happy in the peace of Thy illumination!

22.2.1914

The Mother



In Japan, Age about 39

Section IV: More Reminiscences

I

...Between the age of eighteen and twenty I had attained a conscious and constant union with the divine Presence and that I had done it *all alone*, with, *absolutely nobody* to help me, not even books, you understand! When I found one—there came to my hands a little later Vivekananda's *Raja Yoga* — it seemed to me so wonderful a thing, you see, that someone could explain something to me. This made me gain in a few months what would have perhaps taken me years to do.

I met a man. I was perhaps twenty-one then, I think, either twenty or twenty-one. I met a man who was an Indian, who came from here, and he spoke to me about the Gita. There was a translation, which, by the way, was quite bad, and he advised me to read it and gave me the key — his key, it was his key— he told me: "Read the Gita, this translation of the Gita which is not up to much, but still that's the only one in French." At that time I wouldn't have been able to understand anything in any other language. Besides, the English translations were as bad and I did not have... Sri Aurobindo had not yet written his.

He said, "Read the Gita, and take Krishna as the symbol of the immanent God, the inner Godhead." This was all that he told me. He said to me, "Read it with that—the knowledge that Krishna represents the immanent God in the Gita, the God who is within you." Well, in one month the whole work was done!

Now you, just see, you have been here since your very childhood, some of you, everything has been explained to you, the whole work has almost been chewed up for you, you have been — not only with words but with psychic aids, with all kinds of... in all possible ways—you have been put on the path to this inner discovery, and still you let yourselves live, like that... *(gesture)* it will come when it comes... if you think about it at all!...

I am even astonished that you don't feel an intense need for it: "How can one know?" For you know — you have been told, told repeatedly, it has been dinned into your ears — you know

that you have a divine consciousness within you, and you can sleep night after night and play day after day and learn day after day, and not have the enthusiasm and intense will to enter into contact with yourself, yes, with yourself, here within!... *(Mother points to the centre of her chest.)* This, this indeed, is beyond me!

The first time I knew—and nobody told me this, I knew it by experience—the first time I knew that there was a discovery to make within me, well, that was *the most important* thing. This had to be put before everything. And when I found, as I said, a book, a man, just to give me a little indication, to tell me, "Here you are. If you do this the path will open before you", why, I rushed headlong like a... like a cyclone, and nothing could have stopped me. ...

Who asked me just now what you should do? Well, this is what you should do, my child. I have just told you.

25.8.1954

II

The only way of being truly free is to make your surrender to the Divine entire, without reservation, because then all that binds you, ties you down, chains you, falls away naturally from you and has no longer any importance. If someone comes and blames you, you may say, "On what authority does he blame me, does he know the supreme will?" And the same thing when you are congratulated. This is not to advise you not to profit by what comes to you from others—I have learnt throughout my life that even a little child can give you a lesson. Not that he is less ignorant than you but he is like a mirror which reflects the image of what you are; he may tell you something which is not true but also may show you something that you did not know. You can hence profit a great deal by it if you receive the lesson without any undesirable reaction.

Every hour of my life I have learnt that one can learn something; but I have never felt bound by the opinion of others, for I consider that there is only one truth in the world which can know something, and this is the Supreme Truth. Then one is

quite free. And it is this freedom that I want of you — free from all attachment, all ignorance, all reaction; free from everything except a total surrender to the Divine.

10.2.1951

III

...once, very long ago, when I was still in Paris and used to see Mme. David-Neel almost every day, she, you see, was full of her own idea and told me, "You should not think of an action, it means attachment for the action; when you want to do something, it means that you are still tied to the things of this world." Then I told her, "No, there is nothing easier. You have only to imagine *everything* that has been done before and all that will be done later and all that is happening now, and you will then realise that your action is a breath, like this, one second in eternity, and you can no longer be attached to it." At that time I didn't know the text of the Gita. I had not read it completely yet, you see... *(some words inaudible here)*... not this verse which I translate in my own way: "And detached from all fruit of action, act." It is not like this, but still that's what it means. This I did not know, but I said exactly what is said in the Gita.

But it is not because you believe in your action that you ought to act; you act because you must act, that's all.

30.11.1955

IV

Of course, laziness is a kind of tamas, but in laziness there is an ill-will, a refusal to make an effort—while tamas is inertia: one wants to do something, but one can't.

I remember, a long time ago, having been among some young people, and they remarked that when I decided to get up I used to get up with a jump, without any difficulty. They asked me, "How do you do it? We, when we want to get up, have to make an effort of will to be able to do it." They were so surprised! And *I* was surprised by the opposite. I used to tell myself, "How does it happen? When one has decided to get up,

one gets up." No, the body was there, like that, and it was necessary to put a will into it, to push this body for it to get up and act. It is like that, this is tamas. Tamas is a purely material thing; it is very rare to have a vital or mental tamas (it may occur but through contagion), I believe it is more a tamas of the nerves or the brain than vital or mental tamas. But laziness is everywhere, in the physical, the vital, the mind. Generally lazy people are not always lazy, not in all things. If you propose something that pleases them, amuses them, they are quite ready to make an effort. There is much ill-will in laziness.

28.4.1951

V

It is true that for a long time I have not slept in the usual sense of the word.* That is to say, at no time do I fall into the inconscience which is the sign of ordinary sleep. But I do give my body the rest it needs, that is, two or three hours of lying down in a condition of absolute immobility in which the whole being, mental, psychic, vital and physical, enters into a complete state of rest made of perfect peace, absolute silence and total immobility, while the consciousness remains perfectly awake; or else I enter into an internal activity of one or more states of being, an activity which constitutes the occult work and which, needless to say, is also perfectly conscious. So I can say, in all truth, that I never lose consciousness throughout the twenty-four hours, which thus form an unbroken sequence, and that I no longer experience ordinary sleep, while still giving my body the rest that it needs.

3 July 1927

VI

Q: Has the mind need of rest apart from the physical body and the physical brain?

Yes, an absolute need. And it is only in silence that the mind can

* Written in connection with a newspaper article in which it was stated that the Mother had not slept for several months.

receive the true light from above. I do not think that the mental being is liable to fatigue; if it feels tired, that is rather a reaction of the brain. It is only in silence that it can rise above itself. But from the point of view of sleep and dreams of which we were speaking, there is a very remarkable phenomenon. I have tried it out. If you are able to establish not only silence in your head but also repose in your vital, the stoppage of all the activities of your being, and if coming out of the domain of forms you enter into what is called Sachchidananda, the supreme consciousness, then with three minutes of that state you can have more rest than in eight hours of sleep. It is not very easy, no.... It is the consciousness absolutely conscious but completely still, in the full original Light. If you get that, if you are able to immobilise everything in you, then your whole being participates in this supreme consciousness and I have well observed that as regards rest (and I mean by rest bodily rest, the repose of the muscles) three minutes of that state were equivalent to eight hours of ordinary sleep.

27.1.1951

VII

... people of little sensitivity who may pass through this place [the Ashram], even live here, without feeling that the atmosphere is different from elsewhere — who among you feels it in such a precise way as to be able to affirm it?...You may feel in your heart, in your thought that it is not the same, but it is rather vague, isn't it? But to have this precise perception... Listen, as I had when I came from Japan: I was on the boat, at sea, not expecting anything (I was of course busy with the inner life, but I was living physically on the boat), when all of a sudden, abruptly, about two nautical miles from Pondicherry, the quality, I may even say the physical quality of the atmosphere, of the air, changed so much that I knew we were entering the aura of Sri Aurobindo. It was a *physical* experience and I guarantee that whoever has a sufficiently awakened consciousness can feel the same thing.

I had the contrary experience also, the first time that I went out in a car after many, many years here. When I reached a little beyond the lake, I felt all of a sudden that the atmosphere was changing; where there had been plenitude, energy, light and force, all that diminished, diminished... and then... nothing. I was not in a mental or vital consciousness, I was in an absolutely physical consciousness. Well, those who are sensitive in their physical consciousness ought to feel that quite concretely. And I can assure you that the area we call "the Ashram" has a condensation of force which is not at all the same as that of the town, and still less that of the countryside.

VIII

... And so, when I saw all this, I remembered something that had happened.... I think I remember rightly, in 1926.

Sri Aurobindo had given me charge of the outer work because he wanted to withdraw into concentration in order to hasten the manifestation of the supramental consciousness and he had announced to the few people who were there that he was entrusting to me the work of helping and guiding them, that I would remain in contact with him, naturally, and that through me he would do the work. Suddenly, immediately, things took a certain shape: a very brilliant creation was worked out in extraordinary detail, with marvellous experiences, contacts with divine beings, and all kinds of manifestations which are considered miraculous. Experiences followed one upon another, and, well, things were unfolding altogether brilliantly and... I must say, in an extremely interesting way.

One day, I went as usual to relate to Sri Aurobindo what had been happening—we had come to something really very interesting, and perhaps I showed a little enthusiasm in my account of what had taken place—then Sri Aurobindo looked at me... and said: "Yes, this is an Overmind creation. It is very interesting, very well done. You will perform miracles which will make you famous throughout the world, you will be able to turn all events on earth topsy-turvy, indeed,..." and then he

smiled and said: "It will be a *great* success. But it is an Overmind creation. And it is not success that we want; we want to establish the Supermind on earth. One must know how to renounce immediate success in order to create the new world, the supramental world in its integrality."

With my inner consciousness I understood immediately: a few hours later the creation was gone... and from that moment we started anew on other bases.

10.7.1957

IX

...I cannot satisfy the human desire for wonders and miracles. There was a time when I could and did do it. But for that one must live in the vital consciousness and use vital forces, which is not very recommendable.

23.1.1952

X

I do not remember exactly when it happened; it must have been some time in the year 1920 probably (perhaps earlier, perhaps in 1914-1915, but I don't think so, it was some time in the year 1920). One day — every day I used to meditate with Sri Aurobindo: he used to sit on one side of a table and I on the other, on the veranda—and one day in this way, in meditation, I entered (how to put it?...), I went up very high, entered very deep or came out of myself (well, whatever one may say does not express what happened, these are merely ways of speaking), I reached a place or a state of consciousness from which I told Sri Aurobindo just casually and quite simply: "India is free." It was in 1920. Then he put to me a question: "How?" And I answered him: "Without any fight, without a battle, without a revolution. The English themselves will leave, for the condition of the world will be such that they won't be able to do anything else except go away."

It was *done*. I spoke in the future when he asked me the question, but there where I had seen, I said, India *is* free, it was a fact. Now, India was not free at that time: it was 1920. Yet it

was there, it had been done. And it happened in 1947. That is to say, from the external physical point of view I saw it twenty-seven years in advance. But it had been done.

29.7.1953

Q: You said to Sri Aurobindo: "India is free." Was India free as one whole or cut into two as it is at present?

I meant specially what happened in 1947, that is, the withdrawal of foreign domination, that's all. Nothing but that, not her moral or spiritual freedom, I did not speak of that at all. I simply said she was free from foreign domination. ...

18.1.1956

XI

(Speaking on Thought Control:)

There is the whole range, you see, from total lack of control, which for most people comes to this: it is their thoughts which rule them and not they their thoughts. The vast majority of people are troubled by thoughts they cannot get rid of, which literally possess them, and they don't have the power to close the door of their active consciousness to these thoughts. Their thoughts govern them, rule them. You hear people saying every day, "Oh! That thought, all the time it comes back to me, again and again, and I can't get rid of it!" So they are assailed by all kinds of things, from anxiety to ill-will and fear. Thoughts which express dread are extremely troublesome; you try to send them away, they return like a rubber band and fall back on you. Who has control? It requires years of labour and such a long practice. And so, to come to something which is not complete control but anyway already represents a stage: to have the ability to do this in your head *(Mother moves her hand across her brow),* to annul all the movements, to stop the vibrations. And the mental surface becomes smooth. Everything stops, as when you open a book at a blank page—but almost materially, you understand... blank!

Try a little when you are at home, you will see, it is very interesting.

And so, one follows the place in one's head where the little point is dancing. I have seen—I have seen Sri Aurobindo doing this in somebody's head, somebody who used to complain of being troubled by thoughts. It was as if his hand reached out and took hold of the little black dancing point and then did this *(gesture with the finger-tips)*, as when one picks up an insect, and he threw it far away. And that was all. All still, quiet, luminous.... It was clearly visible like this, you know, he took it out without saying anything—and it was over.

And things are very closely interdependent: I also saw the case when someone came to him with an acute pain somewhere: "Oh, it hurts here! Oh, it hurts! Oh!..." He said nothing, he remained calm, he looked at the person, and I saw, I saw something like a subtle physical hand which came and took hold of the little point dancing about in disorder and confusion, and he took it like this *(same gesture)* and there, everything had gone.

"Oh, oh! Look my pain has gone."

8.1.1958

XII

... when I began with Sri Aurobindo to descend for the yoga, to descend from the mind into the vital, when we brought down our yoga from the mind into the vital, within one month—I was forty at that time, I didn't look old, I looked younger than forty, but still I was forty—and after a month's yoga I looked exactly eighteen. And someone who had seen me before, who had lived with me in Japan and came here, found it difficult to recognise me. He asked me, "But really, is it you?" I said, "Obviously!"

Only when we descended from the vital into the physical, then it was gone, for in the physical the work is much harder. It was because there were many more things to change.

25.8.1954

(From A.B.Purani's Diary:)

...the greatest surprise of my visit in 1921 was the 'darshan' of Sri Aurobindo. During the interval of two years his body had undergone a transformation which could only be described as miraculous. In 1918 the colour of the body was like that of an ordinary Bengali — rather dark — though there was a lustre on the face and the gaze was penetrating. On going upstairs to see him I found his cheeks wore an apple-pink colour and the whole body glowed with a soft creamy white light. So great and unexpected was the change that I could not help exclaiming: "What has happened to you?" ...

Afterwards in course of talk he explained to me that when the Higher Consciousness, after descending to the mental level, comes down to the vital and even below the vital, then a great transformation takes place in the nervous and even in the physical being....

This time I saw the Mother for the first time. She was standing near the staircase when Sri Aurobindo was going upstairs after lunch. Such an earthly beauty I had never seen — she appeared to be about 20 whereas she was more than 37 years old.

XIII

It was shortly after the supramental experience of the third of February [1958], and I was still in the state in which things of the physical world seemed so far off, so absurd. A group of visitors had asked permission to come to me and one evening they came to the Playground. They were rich people, that is, they had more money than they needed to live on. Among them there was a woman in a sari; she was very fat, her sari was arranged so as to hide her body. As she was bending down to receive my blessings, one corner of the sari came open, uncovering a part of her body, a naked belly — an enormous one. I felt a real shock.... There are corpulent people who have nothing repugnant about them, but I suddenly saw the perversion, the rottenness that this belly concealed, it was like a huge abscess, expressing greed, vice, depraved taste, sordid desire, which

finds its satisfaction as no animal would, in grossness and especially in perversity. I saw the perversion of a depraved mind at the service of the lowest appetites. Then, all of a sudden, something sprang up from me, a prayer, like a Veda: "O Lord, this is what must disappear!"

19.3.1958

XIV

These surface things have nothing dramatic about them. They seem to me more and more like soap-bubbles, especially since the third of February [1958].

There are people who come to me in despair, in tears, in what they call terrible psychological suffering; when I see them like this, I slightly shift the needle in my consciousness which contains you all, and when they go away they are completely comforted. It is just like a compass needle; one shifts the needle a little in the consciousness and it is all over. Of course, it comes back later, out of habit. They are nothing but soap-bubbles.

I have known suffering also, but there was always a part of myself which knew how to stand behind, apart.

The only thing in the world which still seems intolerable to me now, is all the physical deterioration, the physical suffering, the ugliness, the inability to express that capacity for beauty which is in every being. But that too will be conquered one day. There too the power will come one day to shift the needle a little. Only, we must rise higher in consciousness: the deeper one wants to go down into matter, the higher is it necessary to rise in consciousness. That will take time. Sri Aurobindo was surely right when he spoke of a few centuries.

19.2.1958

XV

One thing — I must insist on this — seems to me at the moment to be the most essential difference between our world and the supramental world — and it is only after having gone there consciously, with the consciousness which normally operates here, that this difference has become apparent to me in all its

enormity, so to say — everything here, except what goes on within, very deep within, seemed to me absolutely artificial. None of the values of the ordinary physical life are based on truth. And just as to clothe ourselves we have to obtain some cloth and sew clothes to put on when we want to wear them, so too to feed ourselves we need to take things from outside and put them inside our bodies in order to be nourished. In everything our life is artificial. A true, sincere, spontaneous life like the one in the supramental world, is a springing forth of things from the action of the conscious will, a power over substance which makes it harmonise with what we decide should be. And one who has the power and the knowledge can obtain what he wants, whereas one who does not have them has no artificial means of getting what he desires.

In ordinary life, *everything* is artificial. According to the chance of birth or circumstance, you have a higher or lower position or a more or less comfortable life, not because it is the spontaneous, natural, sincere expression of your way of being and your inner need, but because chance circumstances in life have brought you in contact with these things. An absolutely worthless man may be in a very high position and a man with a marvellous ability to create and organise may find himself toiling in an absolutely limited and inferior situation, whereas he would be a completely useful person if the world were sincere.

This artificiality, this insincerity, this complete lack of truth became so shockingly apparent to me that... one wonders how, in so false a world, we can have any true evaluations.

But instead of making you sad, morose, rebellious, dissatisfied, there is rather the feeling of what I was saying at the end, of something so laughably ridiculous that for several days I was seized with uncontrollable laughter when I saw things and people!—an uncontrollable laughter, absolutely inexplicable except to myself, at the ridiculousness of things.

19.2.1958

The Mother

Section V: Supramental Manifestation

I

25 September 1914:
O divine and adorable Mother, with Thy help what is there that is impossible? The hour of realisations is near and Thou hast assured us of Thy aid that we may perform integrally the supreme Will.

Thou hast accepted us as fit intermediaries between the unthinkable realities and the relativities of the physical world, and Thy constant presence in our midst is a token of Thy active collaboration.

The Lord has willed and Thou dost execute:
A new Light shall break upon the earth.
A new world shall be born,
And the things that were promised shall be fulfilled.

II

A Message distributed on 29 February 1960:

29 February 1956

During the common meditation on Wednesday

This evening the Divine Presence, concrete and material, was there present amongst you. I had a form of living gold, bigger than the universe, and I was facing a huge and massive golden door which separated the world from the Divine.

As I looked at the door, I knew and willed, in a single movement of consciousness, that *"the time has come"*, and lifting with both hands a mighty golden hammer I struck one blow, one single blow on the door and the door was shattered to pieces.

Then the supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow.

(Written in 1956)

III

What happened on February 29, 1956, is not so much a vision

or an experience as something done. During the Evening Meditation in the Playground, I went up into the Supermind, and saw that something needed to be done, and did it.

It is interesting to note that the words — "The time has come" — which express what I simultaneously knew and willed when I found myself in front of the massive door on whose other side was the world, were heard by me in English and not in French. It was as if Sri Aurobindo had spoken them.

(From Amal Kiran's Diary)

IV

1956

29 February — 29 March

Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute:
A new light breaks upon the earth,
A new world is born.
The things that were promised are fulfilled.

V

The atmosohere of the earth is too contrary to the magnificence of the Supreme Consciousness and veils it almost constantly. From time to time It can show and express Itself, but then again, this Inconscient atmosphere veils it.

It was like that when in 1956 the Supramental Power came down upon earth. It was coming in torrents of Light, wonderful Light and Force and Power, and from the earth b-i-g w-a-v-e-s of deep blue Inconscience came and swallowed It up. All the Force that was coming down was swallowed up and it is again from inside the Inconscient that It had to work Itself through. That is why things take so much time here. It is too much unconsciousness in the response that veils what earth has absorbed. Otherwise, it is long since the Light has poured down and things ought to have changed.

VI

The Supermind had descended long ago — very long ago—into

the mind and even into the vital: it was working in the physical also but indirectly through those intermediaries. The question was about the direct action of the Supermind in the physical. Sri Aurobindo said it could be possible only if the physical mind received the supramental light: the physical mind was the instrument for direct action upon the most material. This physical mind receiving the supramental light Sri Aurobindo called the Mind of Light.

29 June 1953

VII

We could say that the difference between the supramental world and our present world will be this: what you don't know, you will know, what you can't do, you will be able to do, and what you don't understand, you will understand, and of what you are unconscious, you will become conscious. But fundamentally this is the basis of the new creation: to replace ignorance by knowledge and unconsciousness by consciousness, and weakness by strength. But this does not necessarily mean that everything is going to be so mixed up that it is scarcely recognisable!

Sri Aurobindo has told us that in the Supermind itself there are different planes of realisation and that these planes will manifest successively, with the same progressive movement that has always presided over the universal development.

VIII

Now that the supramental is there — for of that I am *absolutely certain* even if I am the only one upon earth to be aware of it — is it that the mission of this form is ended and that another form is to take up the work in its place? I am putting the question to Thee and ask for an answer — a sign by which I shall know for certain that it is still my work and I must continue in spite of all the contradictions, of all the denials.

The Mother



In Pondicherry, Age about 78

Section VI: Yoga of the Body-Cells

I

... I am here because my body has been given for the first attempt at transformation. Sri Aurobindo told me so. Well, I am doing it.

II

There is a consciousness in the cells: it is what we call the "body consciousness" and it is wholly bound up with the body. This consciousness has much difficulty in changing, because it is under the influence of the collective suggestion which is absolutely opposed to the transformation. So one has to struggle with this collective suggestion, not only with the collective suggestion of the present, but with the collective suggestion which belongs to the earth-consciousness as a whole, the terrestrial human consciousness which goes back to the earliest formation of man. That has to be overcome before the cells can be spontaneously aware of the Truth, of the Eternity of matter.

III

The body repeats constantly and with a poignant sincerity: "What am I to demand anything whatsoever from anyone at all? Left to myself I am nothing, I know nothing, I can do nothing. Unless the truth penetrates into me and directs me, I am incapable of taking even the minutest decision and of knowing what is the best thing to do and to live even in the most insignificant circumstance. Shall I ever be capable of being transformed to the point of becoming What I ought to be and of manifesting What wants to manifest upon earth?" But why does this answer always come from the depths, from You, Lord, with an indisputable certitude: "If you cannot do it, no other body upon earth can do it." There is but one conclusion: I shall persist in my effort, without giving in, I shall persist until death or until victory.

8.9.1954

IV

The big difficulty in Matter is that the material consciousness (that is to say, the mind in Matter) has been formed under the pressure of difficulties—difficulties, obstacles, sufferings, struggles. It has been, so to say, "worked out" by these things and that has left upon it a stamp, almost of pessimism, defeatism, which is certainly the greatest obstacle.

It is of this that I am conscious in my own work. 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 or 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 a Grace, behind all its failures there is the Victory, behind all its pains, its sufferings, its 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 to remove, to convert a pessimism, a doubt or an imagination altogether defeatist.

I am speaking exclusively of the material consciousness.

Naturally, when something comes down from above, that makes, well... a crash, like that *(Mother makes a gesture of flattening),* then all is silent, all stops and waits. But... I understand well why the Truth, the Truth-Consciousness does not 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, annulled—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 the 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 this consciousness has the obstinacy of the imbecile. How many times during a suffering, for example, when a suffering is there, acute, and one has the impression that it is going to become unbearable, there is the 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; but the very first reaction of this imbecile material consciousness is: "Ah! We shall see how long that is going to last", and naturally, by this movement it demolishes everything — one must begin all over again.

I believe that for the effect to be lasting — not a miraculous effect that comes, dazzles and goes away — it must really be the effect of a *transformation*. One must be very, very patient — we have to deal with a consciousness very slow, very heavy, very obstinate, which is not able to advance rapidly, which clings to what it has, to what has appeared to it as truth; even if it is quite a tiny truth, it clings to that and does not want to move. Then to cure that, one must have very much patience — much patience.

7.10.1964

V

After the perfect immobility comes the movement of inner aspiration (I always speak of the aspiration of the cells — I use words for what has no word, but there is no other way of expressing it), the surrender, that is to say, the *spontaneous and total* acceptance of the supreme Will (which one does not know).

... at every second all the cells must be *(gesture of motionless offering upward)* in an adoration, in an aspiration — an adoration, an aspiration, an adoration... and nothing else. Then after a time there is also delight, then that ends in blissful trust. When this trust is established all will be well. But... it is easy to say, it is much more difficult to do. Only, for the moment I am convinced that this is the only means, there is no other.

24.3.1965

VI

I am going to tell you my old mantra; it keeps the outer being very quiet:

OM—NAMO—BHAGAVATE.

These three words. For me they meant:

OM—I implore the Supreme Lord.

NAMO—Obeisance to Him.

BHAGAVATE—Make me divine.

This is a translation of it, I mean...

For me that has the power to calm everything.

14 March 1973

VII

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 at any moment one may... one may die — not "die", but the body may be dissolved. And so the two at the same time form a consciousness *(Mother shakes her head)*... all the old things seem puerile, childish, unconscious—within there... it is tremendous and wonderful.

So, the body, the body has one prayer — and it is always the same:

Make me worthy of knowing Thee,
Make me worthy of serving Thee,
Make me worthy of being Thee.

I feel in myself a growing force... but it is of a new quality... in silence and in contemplation.

30 December 1972

VIII

I am repeating always: "What Thou willest, what Thou willest, what Thou willest... let it be what Thou willest, may I do what Thou willest, may I be conscious of what Thou willest."

And also: "Without Thee it is death; with Thee it is life." By "death" I do not mean physical death — it may be so; it may be that now if I lost the contact, that would be the end, but it is

impossible! I have the feeling that it is... that I *am That* — with all the obstructions that the present consciousness may still have, that's all. And then, when I see someone *(Mother opens her hands as though to offer the person to the Light*), whoever he may be: like that (*same gesture*). ...

All the while (it is amusing), all the while I have the feeling that I am a little baby who nestles — nestles within... (what to call it?) a Divine Consciousness... *all-embracing.*

10 March 1973 **The Mother**

Sources of the Passages Published Here

All references are to the "Collected Works of the Mother – First Edition", Volume 1 to 17. The number before the bar (stroke) represents the Volume Number; the figure/figures after the bar give the page number/numbers of that volume from which the passage is taken.

Section I: Her Mission
I: 13/45; II: 13/45-46; III: 13/43; IV: 15/91, 14/34, 14/34-35, 12/80, V: 13/45-46, VI: *Breath of Grace*, ed. 2002, p. 218.

Section II: On Herself
I: 13/32; II: 13/37; III :13/37-38; IV: 13/47; V: 13/52-53; VI: 13/83; VII: 13/83-84; VIII: 13/84.

Section III: The Advent
I: 12/433; II: 5/139-40; III: 5/198-204; IV: 6/19; V: 12/130; VI: 3/131; VII: Love and Devotion (1972 Exhibition), p. 4; Original: *La Drôle Petite Fille* by Poorna Prem, 1982 ed., p. 12; VIII: 1/81-82.

Section IV: More Reminiscences
I: 6/298-300; II: 4/91; III: 7/397-98; IV: 4/367; V: 16/3-4; VI: 4/62-63; VII: 4/223-24; VIII: 9/147-48; IX: 13/49; X: 5/189-90, 8/30-31; XI: 9/253-254; XII: 6/303; *Evening Talks with Sri Aurobindo,* 1st Series, A.B. Purani, 2nd ed., (July 1970), Chapter II, pp. 24-25; XIII: 9/299-300; XIV: 9/282-83; XV: 9/277-78.

Section V: Supramental Manifestation
I: 1/249; II: 15/202; III: *Mother India*, March 1960, p.2. IV: 15/204; V: *About Savitri*, ed. 1972, p. 20 © Huta; VI: 13/63-64; VII: 9/188-189; VIII: 13/57-58.

Section VI: Yoga of the Body-Cells
I: 11/308; II: 15/315; III: 13/57; IV: 11/2-3; V: 11/14-15; VI: 12/449; VII: 11/330; VIII: 11/332.

(This compilation was first published in A.I.M, Feb. 1990 and Feb. 1997)

A New Publication

Anandamath: Reprint of translation of the Bengali novel written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.

Translation in English was partly done by Sri Aurobindo and the rest by his brother Barindra Kumar Ghosh.

Pages 204, price Rs.200/-, postage charges extra. Published by Ashir Prakashan, Ramjiwan Nagar, Chilkana Road, Saharanpur, 247 001. Also available at SABDA, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 605 002.

Anandamath (in Bengali) was first published in 1883 and contained the great song "Bande Mataram" which has now become the national anthem of India. It is a sacred mantra revealed to us by the inspired Rishi Bankim, states Sri Aurobindo. Though the novel is on patriotism, it gives ample guidance in one's sadhana on the divine path.

We reproduce a small portion from its "prologue":

A wide interminable forest... In the solid darkness, in that unimaginable silence... the voice of man rang forth: "Shall the desire of my heart ever be fulfilled?"... Three times the wide sea of darkness was thus shaken. Then the answer came: "What is the stake put down?" The first voice replied, "I have staked my life and all its riches." The echo answered, "Life! it is a small thing which all can sacrifice." The first voice: "What else is there? What more can I give?" This was the answer: "Thy soul's worship."

This publication in English is a great boon to people who can not read original in Bengali.

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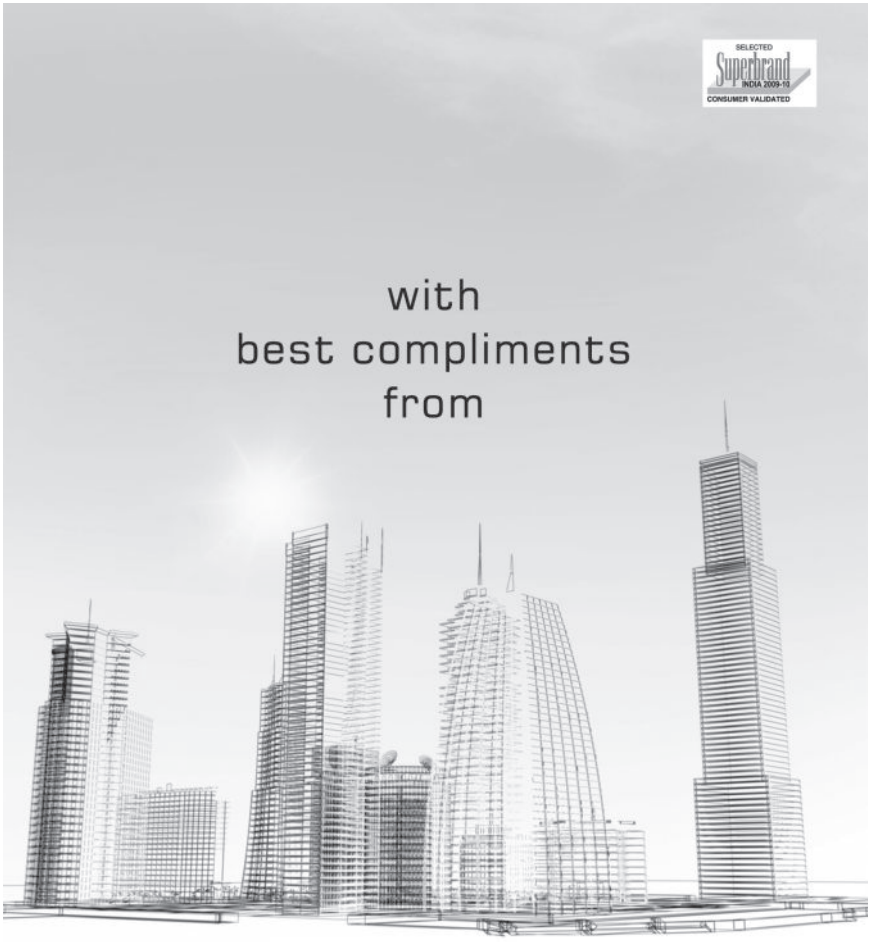
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