All India Magazine — August 2014

Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face. — Sri Aurobindo

Special Number on the Journal "ARYA"

Introductory Note

A hundred years ago, on 15 August 1914, on Sri Aurobindo's 42nd Birthday, the first issue of the " Arya" and its French counter part the "Revue de Grande Synthèse" (A Review of the Great Synthesis) rolled out from Pondicherry. It was a monthly Journal meant to provide to its readers a synthetic philosophical review based on an integral spiritual experience.

While the articles were mainly written by Sri Aurobindo, the Mother took charge of the French translation as well as the managerial side of the Journal, keeping list of subscribers, maintaining the accounts etc. The *Arya* was printed at Modern Press, Pondicherry and published from 7, Rue Dupleix, the ground floor of the Richards' residence. The ground floor of Sri Aurobindo's residence in Rue Francois Martin housed the editorial office of the two Journals.

The *Arya* came out regularly, every month, for six and a half years, from August 1914 to January 1921. It contained serial exposition on several themes at a time. Most of the major Works of Sri Aurobindo, his *magnum opus,* The Life Divine, The Secret of the Veda, The Synthesis of Yoga, Essays on the Gita, etc., which we see now in book form were all serialised in this Journal.

This month we observe with gratitude the Centenary of the launching of the *Arya*, a gift of Sri Aurobindo to the earth and mankind — "the intellectual side of my work for the world," in his own words.

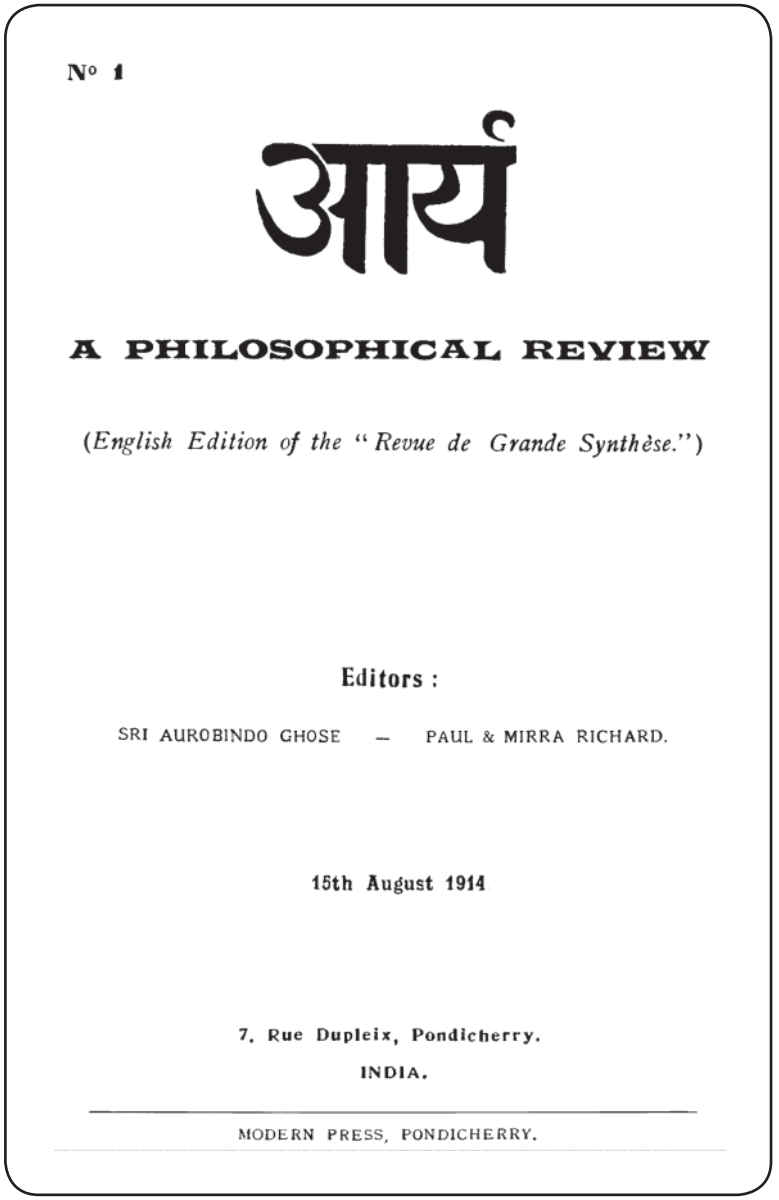
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> The "latent" philosopher failed to come out at the first shot (when I was in Calcutta) — after some years of incubation (?) it burst out like a volcano as soon as I started writing the Arya.
>
> Sri Aurobindo
>
> CWSA 35: 63



Nº 1

आर्य

A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

(*English Edition of the "Revue de Grande Synthèse."*)

Editors :

SRI AUROBINDO GHOSE — PAUL & MIRRA RICHARD.

15th August 1914

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MODERN PRESS, PONDICHERRY.

Cover Page of the First Issue of Arya (Photo-copy)
(Original Size: 7.25"X10")

The Object the *Arya* Set Before Itself

The "ARYA" is a Review of pure philosophy.

The object which it has set before itself is twofold :—

1. A systematic study of the highest problems of existence ;

2. The formation of a vast Synthesis of knowledge, harmonising the diverse religious traditions of humanity occidental as well as oriental. Its method will be that of a realism, at once rational and transcendental,—a realism consisting in the unification of intellectual and scientific discipline with those of intuitive experience.

This Review will also serve as an organ for the various groups and societies founded on its inspiration.

The Review will publish :—

Synthetic studies in speculative Philosophy.
Translations and commentaries of ancient texts.
Studies in Comparative Religion.
Practical methods of inner culture and self development.

* * *

The Contents of the First Issue of the *Arya*

THE LIFE DIVINE.....Aurobindo Ghose.
THE WHEREFORE OF THE WORLDS .....Paul Richard.
THE SECRET OF THE VEDA..... A. G.
a.) The Problem and its Solution.
b.) Selected Hymns.
ANNOTATED TEXTS : Isha Upanishad..... A. G.
THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA..... A. G.
THE ETERNAL WISDOM:..... P. R.
VARIETIES: The Soul of a Plant.
THE QUESTION OF THE MONTH.
THE NEWS OF THE MONTH.

(Photo-copy)

Contents of the *Arya*

Its object is to feel out for the thought of the future, to help in shaping its foundations and to link it to the best and most vital thought of the past.

CWSA 13: 103

The earth is a world of Life and Matter, but man is not a vegetable nor an animal; he is a spiritual and a thinking being who is set here to shape and use the animal mould for higher purposes, by higher motives, with a more divine instrumentation.

CWSA 13: 140

The problem of thought therefore is to find out the right idea and the right way of harmony; to restate the ancient and eternal spiritual truth of the Self so that it shall re-embrace, permeate, dominate, transfigure the mental and physical life; to develop the most profound and vital methods of psychological self-discipline and self-development so that the mental and psychical life of man may express the spiritual life through the utmost possible expansion of its own richness, power and complexity; and to seek for the means and motives by which his external life, his society and his institutions may remould themselves progressively in the truth of the spirit and develop towards the utmost possible harmony of individual freedom and social unity.

CWSA 13: 145-46

Our first preoccupation in the "Arya" has therefore been with the deepest thought that we could command on the philosophical foundations of the problem; and we have been so profoundly convinced that without this basis

nothing we could say would have any real, solid and permanent value that we have perhaps given too great a space to difficult and abstruse thought...

CWSA 13: 103

[In *Arya*] Our idea was the thinking out of a synthetic philosophy which might be a contribution to the thought of the new age that is coming upon us. We start from the idea that humanity is moving to a great change of its life which will even lead to a new life of the race, — in all countries where men think, there is now in various forms that idea and that hope, — and our aim has been to search for the spiritual, religious and other truth which can enlighten and guide the race in this movement and endeavour. The spiritual experience and the general truths on which such an attempt could be based, were already present to us, otherwise we should have had no right to make the endeavour at all ....

CWSA 13: 105

To grow into the fullness of the divine is the true law of human life and to shape his earthly existence into its image is the meaning of his evolution. This is the fundamental tenet of the philosophy of the "Arya".

This truth had to be worked out first of all from the metaphysical point of view; for in philosophy metaphysical truth is the nucleus of the rest, it is the statement of the last and most general truths on which all the others depend or in which they are gathered up. Therefore we gave the first place to the "Life Divine". Here we start from the Vedantic position, its ideas of the Self and mind and life, of Sachchidananda and the world, of Knowledge and Ignorance, of rebirth and the Spirit. But Vedanta is popularly supposed to be a denial of life, and this is no doubt a dominant trend it has

taken. Though starting from the original truth that all is the Brahman, the Self, it has insisted in the end that the world is simply not-Brahman, not-Self; it has ended in a paradox. We have attempted on the contrary to establish from its data a comprehensive Adwaita. We have shown that mind and life and matter are derivations from the Self through a spiritual mind or supermind which is the real support of cosmic existence and by developing mind into that, man can arrive at the real truth of the spirit in the world and the real truth and highest law of life. The Self is Sachchidananda and there is no incurable antinomy between that and the world; only we see the world through the eyes of the Ignorance and we have to see it through the eyes of the Knowledge. Our ignorance itself is only knowledge developing out of its involution in the apparent nescience of Matter and on its way to a return to its conscious integrality. To accomplish that return and manifest the spiritual life in the human existence is the opportunity given by the successions of rebirth. We accept the truth of evolution, not so much in the physical form given to it by the West as in its philosophical truth, the involution of life and mind and spirit here in matter and their progressive manifestation. At the summit of this evolution is the spiritual life, the life divine.

It was necessary to show that these truths were not inconsistent with the old Vedantic truth, therefore we included explanations from this point of view of the Veda, two of the Upanishads and the Gita. But the Veda has been obscured by the ritualists and the scholiasts. Therefore we showed in a series of articles, initially only as yet, the way of writing of the Vedic mystics, their system of symbols and the truths they figure. Among the Upanishads we took the Isha and the Kena; to be full we should have added the Taittiriya, but it is a long one and for it we had no space.

The Gita we are treating as a powerful application of truth of spirit to the largest and most difficult part of the truth of life, to action, and a way by which action can lead us to birth into the Spirit and can be harmonised with the spiritual life. Truth of philosophy is of a merely theoretical value unless it can be lived, and we have therefore tried in the "Synthesis of Yoga" to arrive at a synthetical view of the principles and methods of the various lines of spiritual self-discipline and the way in which they can lead to an integral divine life in the human existence. But this is an individual self-development, and therefore it was necessary to show too how our ideal can work out in the social life of mankind. In the "Psychology of Social Development" we have indicated how these truths affect the evolution of human society. In the "Ideal of Human Unity" we have taken the present trend of mankind towards a closer unification and tried to appreciate its tendencies and show what is wanting to them in order that real human unity may be achieved.

CWSA 13: 107-08

Not "Man-making" But "Divine Man-making"

Soon after the *Arya* began, I got a letter from some graduates saying that what they wanted was "man-making". I have done my share of man-making and it is a thing which now anybody can do; Nature herself is looking after it all over the world, though more slowly in India than elsewhere. My business is now not man-making, but divine man-making. My present teaching is that the world is preparing for a new progress, a new evolution. Whatever race, whatever country seizes on the lines of that new evolution and fulfils it, will be the leader of humanity. In the *Arya* I state the thought upon which this new evolution will be based as I see it, and the method of Yoga by which it can be accomplished. Of course, I cannot speak plainly yet my whole message, for obvious reasons, I have to put it in a severe, colourless fashion which cannot be pleasing to the emotional and excitement-seeking Bengali mind. But the message is there, for those who care to understand. It has really three parts (1) for each man as an individual to change himself into the future type of divine humanity, the men of the new Satyayuga which is striving to be born; (2) to evolve a race of such men to lead humanity and (3) to call all humanity to the path under the lead of these pioneers and this chosen race. India and especially Bengal have the best chance and the best right to create that race and become the leaders of the future — to do in the right way what Germany thought of doing in the wrong way. But first they must learn to think, to cast away old ideas, and turn their faces resolutely to the future. But they cannot do this, if they merely copy European politics or go on eternally reproducing Buddhistic asceticism. I am afraid the Ramakrishna Mission with all its good intentions is only going to give us Shankaracharya & Buddhistic humanitarianism. But that is not the goal to which the world is moving. Meanwhile remember that these are very difficult times and careful walking is necessary. It is just possible that the war may come to an end in a few months, for the old immobility is beginning to break down and the forces at work behind the veil are straining towards a solution. While the war continues, nothing great can be done, we are fettered on every side. Afterwards things will change and we must wait for the development.

CWSA 36: 225-26

No Theology or Religion

But a Many-sided Spiritual Thought & Integral Experience

Let me say that he [a correspondent] makes an initial mistake — quite natural for him, since he has not read the *Arya*, — when he describes the extract sent to him as a "theological fragment". I must insist that there is no theology in the *Arya*. Nothing there is written to support or to develop any kind of religious belief or dogma or to confirm or enunciate the credo of any old or new religion. No less does he miss the mark when he describes as a scholastic distinction the substance of the passage. The teaching there is not taken from books, nor, although put in philosophic language, is it based upon abstract thought or any formal logic. It expresses a fundamental spiritual experience, dynamic for the growth of the being, confirmed and enlarged and filled with detail by almost thirty years of continuous sadhana, and, as such, it cannot be seriously challenged or invalidated by mere intellectual question or reasoning, but, if at all, then only by a greater and wider spiritual experience. Moreover, it coincides (not in expression, it may be, but in substance) with the experience of hundreds of spiritual seekers in many paths and in all parts of the world since the days of the Upanishads — and of Plotinus and the Gnostics and Sufis — to the present time. It is hardly admissible then to put it aside as the thought of a tyro or beginner in spiritual knowledge making his first clumsy potshots at a solution of the crossword enigma of the universe. That description seems to show that he has missed the point of the passage altogether and that also makes it difficult to reply; for where there is no meeting point of minds, discussion is likely to be sterile.

CWSA 28: 375-76 **Sri Aurobindo**

Plan for the *Arya's* Second Year of Publication

The "Arya", born by a coincidence which might well have been entirely disastrous to its existence in the very month when there broke out the greatest catastrophe that has overtaken the modern world [the first world war], has yet, though carried on under serious difficulties, completed its first year. We have been obliged unfortunately to discontinue the French edition from February last [1915] as our director M. Paul Richard was then recalled to join his class of the Reserve Army in France. We have to thank the indulgence of our French subscribers who have consented to receive the English edition in its stead.

We have been obliged in our first year ... to devote the Review almost entirely to high philosophy and severe and difficult thinking. But the object we had in view is now fulfilled and we recognise that we have no right to continue to subject our readers to the severe strain of almost 64 pages of such strenuous intellectual labour. We shall therefore in the next year devote a greater part of our space to articles on less profound subjects written in a more popular style. Needless to say, our matter will always fall within the definition of a philosophical Review and centre around the fundamental thought which the "Arya" represents.

We shall continue the *Life Divine*, the *Synthesis of Yoga* and the *Secret of the Veda*; but we intend to replace the *Selected Hymns* by a translation of the Hymns of the Atris (the fifth Mandala of the Rig Veda) so conceived as to make the sense of the Vedic chants at once and easily intelligible without the aid of a commentary to the general reader. The same circumstance which obliged us to discontinue the French edition, will also prevent us from continuing the *Wherefore of the Worlds*. Happily, we have been able to bring it to a point

where the writer's central idea appears, the new creation of our world by redeeming Love, — a fitting point for the faith and reason of man to pause upon at the moment of the terrible ordeal which that world is now undergoing.

Without the divine Will which knows best what to use and what to throw aside, no human work can come to the completion hoped for by our limited vision. To that Will we entrust the continuance and the result of our labours and we conclude the first year of the "Arya" with the aspiration that the second may see the speedy and fortunate issue of the great world-convulsion which still pursues us and that by the Power which brings always the greatest possible good out of apparent evil there may emerge from this disastrous but long-foreseen collapse of the old order a new and better marked by the triumph of higher principles of love, wisdom and unity and a sensible advance of the race towards our ultimate goal, — the conscious oneness of the Soul in humanity and the divinity of man.

Sri Aurobindo

CWSA 13: 101-02

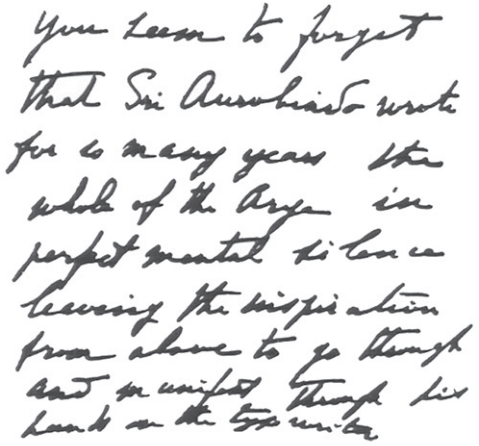
Oft inspiration with her lightning feet,
A sudden messenger from the all-seeing tops,
Traversed the soundless corridors of his mind
Bringing her rhythmic sense of hidden things.
A music spoke transcending mortal speech.
As if from a golden phial of the All-Bliss,
A joy of light, a joy of sudden sight,
A rapture of the thrilled undying Word
Poured into his heart as into an empty cup ...

Savitri, p. 38 Sri Aurobindo

Sri Aurobindo's Typewriter



The typewriter used by Sri Aurobindo during his early years in Pondicherry when he was writing for the *Arya.* The Mother wrote about this typewriter to a sadhak:



" You seem to forget that Sri Aurobindo wrote for so many years the whole of the Arya in perfect mental silence leaving the inspiration from above to go through and manifest through his hands on the typewriter."



Seer deep-hearted, divine king of the secrecies,
Occult fountain of love sprung from the heart of God,
Ways thou knewest no feet ever in Time had trod.
Words leaped flashing, the flame-billows of wisdom's seas.
Vast thy soul was a tide washing the coasts of heaven.
Thoughts broke burning and bare crossing the human night,
White star-scripts of the gods born from the presses of Light
Page by page to the dim children of earth were given.

Sri Aurobindo

SABCL 5: 603

The Method of Writing the *Arya*

I have made no endeavour in writing. I have simply left the higher Power to work and when it did not work, I made no efforts at all. It was in the old intellectual days that I sometimes tried to force things and not after I started the development of poetry and prose by Yoga. Let me remind you also that when I was writing the *Arya* and also since whenever I write these letters or replies, I never think or seek for expressions or try to write in good style; it is out of a silent mind that I write whatever comes ready-shaped from above. Even when I correct, it is because the correction comes in the same way. Where then is the place for even a slight endeavour or any room at all for "my great endeavours"? Well?

By the way, please try to understand that the supra-intellectual (not the supramental only) is the field of a spontaneous automatic action.

CWSA 27: 216-17

A calm or silence which can support or produce action — that I know and that is what I have had — the proof is that out of an absolute silence of the mind I edited the *Bande Mataram* for four months and wrote six and half volumes of the *Arya*, not to speak of all the letters and messages etc. etc. I have written since.

CWSA 28: 150

When I wrote in the *Arya*, I was setting forth an overmind view of things to the mind and putting it in mental terms, that was why I had sometimes to use logic. For in such a work — mediating between the intellect and the supra-intellectual — logic has a place, though it cannot have the

chief place it occupies in purely mental philosophies. The Mayavadin himself labours to establish his point of view or his experience by a rigorous logical reasoning. Only, when it comes to an explanation of Maya he, like the scientist dealing with Nature, can do no more than arrange and organise his ideas of the process of this universal mystification; he cannot explain how or why his illusionary mystifying Maya came into existence. He can only say, "Well, but it is there."

Of course, it is there. But the question is, first, "What is it? is it really an illusionary Power and nothing else, or is the Mayavadin's idea of it a mistaken first view, a mental imperfect reading, even perhaps itself an illusion?" And next, "Is illusion the sole or the highest Power which the Divine Consciousness or Superconsciousness possesses?"

CWSA 35: 248

> *Q: You wrote to X that though people call you a philosopher you have never learnt philosophy. Well, what you have written in the* Arya *is so philosophical that the greatest philosopher of the world can never expect to write it. I don't mean here the bringing down of the new Truth, but the power of expression, the art of reasoning and arguing with intellect and logic.*

There is very little argument in my philosophy — the elaborate metaphysical reasoning full of abstract words with which the metaphysician tries to establish his conclusions is not there. What is there is a harmonising of the different parts of a many-sided knowledge so that all unites logically together. But it is not by force of logical argument that it is done, but by a clear vision of the relations and sequences of the knowledge.

CWSA 35: 65-66 **Sri Aurobindo**

About the Journal "Arya" Sri Aurobindo wrote to a disciple, Dilip Kumar Roy:

And philosophy! Let me tell you in confidence that I never, never, never was a philosopher — although I have written philosophy which is another story altogether. I knew precious little about philosophy before I did the Yoga and came to Pondicherry — I was a poet and a politician, not a philosopher! How I managed to do it? First, because Richard proposed to me to cooperate in a philosophical review — and as my theory was that a Yogi ought to be able to turn his hand to anything, I could not very well refuse: and then he had to go to the War and left me in the lurch with 64 pages a month of philosophy all to write by my lonely self. Secondly, I had only to write down in the terms of the intellect all that I had observed and come to know in practising Yoga daily and the philosophy was there, automatically. But that is not being a philosopher!

CWSA 35: 70 **Sri Aurobindo**

Cause of the Difficulty in Understanding the *Arya*

There is the same complaint about the *Arya*; people can't understand it. Who wants to give so much thought and consideration to his reading...

In this connection let me tell you briefly one or two things I have been observing for a long time. It is my belief that the main cause of India's weakness is not subjection, nor poverty, nor a lack of spirituality or religion, but a diminution of the power of thought, the spread of ignorance in the birthplace of knowledge. Everywhere I see an inability or unwillingness to think — incapacity of thought or "thought-phobia". This may have been all right in the mediaeval period, but now this attitude is the sign of a great decline. The mediaeval period was a night, the day of victory for the man of ignorance; in the modern world it is the time of victory for the man of knowledge. He who can delve into and learn the truth about the world by thinking more, searching more, labouring more, gains more power. ...

Our civilisation has become a stagnant backwater, our religion a bigotry of externals, our spirituality a faint glimmer of light or a momentary wave of intoxication. So long as this state of things lasts, any permanent resurgence of India is impossible. (*Bengali Writings*, p. 369-71)

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

It does not matter very much just now, so long as the people who practise the Yoga, read and profit. The *Arya* presents a new philosophy and a new method of Yoga and everything that is new takes time to get a hearing. Of course, in reality it is only the old brought back again, but so old that it has been forgotten. It is only those who practise and experience that can at first understand it. In a way, this is good, because it is meant to change the life of people and not merely satisfy the intellect. CWSA 36: 224

The *Arya* is a work of spiritual philosophy founded on personal realisation; it is obviously not meant for minds that do not think out spiritual things in all their aspects.

*

For understanding *Arya* one must have a sufficiently trained and developed intellect or else a basis of experience along with a capacity of mentalising experience. CWSA 35: 86

His aspiration may be satisfied if he makes himself fit. Let him continue to read the Arya *and practise daily meditation. In the meditation he should concentrate first in an aspiration that the central truths of which he reads should be made real to him in conscious experience and his mind opened to the calm, wideness, strength, peace, light and Ananda of the spiritual consciousness.*

CWSA 35: 539 **Sri Aurobindo**

Sri Aurobindo's Guidance to Amrita

Amrita was then only a teenager preparing for the Matriculation examination, but when he chanced upon the "first sublime article in the *Arya*" — the magnificent exordium to The Life Divine — he started reading it half-aloud to himself:

> "I read it over and over again. Great thoughts clothed in great words — I could not at all comprehend! However, it was sweet to read and re-read it. It was as if someone else in me was comprehending all that was read!"

Sri Aurobindo surprised Amrita in the act when he sheepishly remarked that "the reading was delightful but nothing could be grasped". Sri Aurobindo's reply was: "It is not necessary to understand it all at once. Go on reading. If you find a joy in reading, you need not stop it." After all, that is the way of the mantra, or of all writing charged with a mantric potency, for its meaning somehow irresistibly filters to the profundities of the soul:

> The hearer understands a form of words
> And, musing on the index thought it holds,
> He strives to read it with the labouring mind,
> But finds bright hints, not the embodied truth:
> Then, falling silent in himself to know
> He meets the deeper listening of his soul:
> The Word repeats itself in rhythmic strains:
> Thought, vision, feeling, sense, the body's self
> Are seized unutterably and he endures
> An ecstasy and an immortal change.[1]

K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar (*On the Mother*, p. 119)

1. *Savitri*, p. 375

The Needed Synthesis

(Question of the Month in the First Issue of Arya *)*

Q: What is the Synthesis needed at the present time?

Undoubtedly, that of man himself. The harmony of his faculties is the condition of his peace, their mutual understanding and helpfulness the means of his perfection. At war, they distract the kingdom of his being; the victory of one at the expense of another maims his self-fulfilment.

The peculiar character of our age is the divorce that has been pronounced between reason and faith, the logical mind and the intuitive heart. At first, the declaration of war between them was attended by painful struggles, a faith disturbed or a scepticism dissatisfied. But now their divorce has created exaggerated tendencies which impoverish human life by their mutual exclusiveness, on the one side a negative and destructive critical spirit, on the other an imaginative sentiment which opposes pure instinct and a faith founded on dreams to the sterile fanaticism of the intellect.

Yet a real divorce is impossible. Science could not move a step without faith and intuition and today it is growing full of dreams. Religion could not stand for a moment if it did not support itself by the intellectual presentation, however inadequate, of profound truths. Today we see it borrowing many of its weapons from the armoury of its opponent. But a right synthesis in virtue of a higher and reconciling truth can alone dissipate their mutual misunderstandings and restore to the race its integral self-development.

The synthesis then of religious aspiration and scientific faculty, as a beginning; and in the resultant progress an integrality also of the inner existence. Love and knowledge, the delight of the Bhakta and the divine science of the knower

of Brahman, have to effect their unity; and both have to recover the fullness of Life which they tend to banish from them in the austerity of their search or the rapture of their ecstasy.

The heart and the mind are one universal Deity and neither a mind without a heart nor a heart without a mind is the human ideal. Nor is any perfection sound and real unless it is also fruitful. The integral divine harmony within, but as its result a changed earth and a nobler and happier humanity.

CWSA 13: 439-40

Meditation

(An excerpt from the answer to the Question of the Month in the third issue of the Arya*)*

By meditation we correct the restless wandering of the mind and train it like an athlete to economise all its energies and fix them on the attainment of some desirable knowledge or self-discipline. This is done normally by men in ordinary life, but Yoga takes this higher working of Nature and carries it to its full possibilities. It takes note of the fact that by fixing the mind luminously on a single object of thought, we awaken a response in general Consciousness which proceeds to satisfy the mind by pouring into it knowledge about that object or even reveals to us its central or its essential truth. We awaken also a response of Power which gives us in various ways an increasing mastery over the workings of that on which we meditate or enables us to create it and make it active in ourselves. Thus by fixing the mind on the idea of Divine Love, we can come to the knowledge of that principle and its workings, put ourselves into communion with it, create it in ourselves and impose its law on the heart and the senses.

CWSA 13: 445-46 **Sri Aurobindo**

Significance of the Word "Arya"

(Question of the Month from the Second Issue of Arya)

Q: What is the significance of the name, "Arya"?

The question has been put from more than one point of view. To most European readers the name figuring on our cover[1] is likely to be a hieroglyph which attracts or repels according to the temperament. Indians know the word, but it has lost for them the significance which it bore to their forefathers. Western Philology has converted it into a racial term, an unknown ethnological quantity on which different speculations fix different values. Now, even among the philologists, some are beginning to recognise that the word in its original use expressed not a difference of race, but a difference of culture. For in the Veda the Aryan peoples are those who had accepted a particular type of self-culture, of inward and outward practice, of ideality, of aspiration. The Aryan gods were the supraphysical powers who assisted the mortal in his struggle towards the nature of the godhead. All the highest aspirations of the early human race, its noblest religious temper, its most idealistic velleities of thought are summed up in this single vocable.

In later times, the word Arya expressed a particular ethical and social ideal, an ideal of well-governed life, candour, courtesy, nobility, straight dealing, courage, gentleness, purity, humanity, compassion, protection of the weak, liberality, observance of social duty, eagerness for knowledge, respect for the wise and learned, the social accomplishments. It was the combined ideal of the Brahmana and the Kshatriya. Everything that departed from this ideal, every-

1. आर्य — the word "ārya" printed in Devanagari script on the cover of the review. See page 5.—Ed.

thing that tended towards the ignoble, mean, obscure, rude, cruel or false, was termed un-Aryan. There is no word in human speech that has a nobler history.

In the early days of comparative Philology, when the scholars sought in the history of words for the prehistoric history of peoples, it was supposed that the word Arya came from the root *ar*, to plough, and that the Vedic Aryans were so called when they separated from their kin in the north-west who despised the pursuits of agriculture and remained shepherds and hunters. This ingenious speculation has little or nothing to support it. But in a sense we may accept the derivation. Whoever cultivates the field that the Supreme Spirit has made for him, his earth of plenty within and without, does not leave it barren or allow it to run to seed, but labours to exact from it its full yield, is by that effort an Aryan.

If Arya were a purely racial term, a more probable derivation would be *ar*, meaning strength or valour, from *ar*, to fight, whence we have the name of the Greek war-god Ares, *areios*, brave or warlike, perhaps even *aretē*, virtue, signifying, like the Latin *virtus*, first, physical strength and courage and then moral force and elevation. This sense of the word also we may accept. "We fight to win sublime Wisdom, therefore men call us warriors." For Wisdom implies the choice as well as the knowledge of that which is best, noblest, most luminous, most divine. Certainly, it means also the knowledge of all things and charity and reverence for all things, even the most apparently mean, ugly or dark, for the sake of the universal Deity who chooses to dwell equally in all. But, also, the law of right action is a choice, the preference of that which expresses the godhead to that which conceals it. And the choice entails a battle, a struggle. It is not easily made, it is not easily enforced.

Whoever makes that choice, whoever seeks to climb from level to level up the hill of the divine, fearing nothing, deterred by no retardation or defeat, shrinking from no vastness because it is too vast for his intelligence, no height because it is too high for his spirit, no greatness because it is too great for his force and courage, he is the Aryan, the divine fighter and victor, the noble man, *aristos*, best, the *Śreṣṭha* of the Gita.

Intrinsically, in its most fundamental sense, Arya means an effort or an uprising and overcoming. The Aryan is he who strives and overcomes all outside him and within him that stands opposed to the human advance. Self-conquest is the first law of his nature. He overcomes earth and the body and does not consent like ordinary men to their dullness, inertia, dead routine and tamasic limitations. He overcomes life and its energies and refuses to be dominated by their hungers and cravings or enslaved by their rajasic passions. He overcomes the mind and its habits, he does not live in a shell of ignorance, inherited prejudices, customary ideas, pleasant opinions, but knows how to seek and choose, to be large and flexible in intelligence even as he is firm and strong in his will. For in everything he seeks truth, in everything right, in everything height and freedom.

Self-perfection is the aim of his self-conquest. Therefore what he conquers he does not destroy, but ennobles and fulfils. He knows that the body, life and mind are given him in order to attain to something higher than they; therefore they must be transcended and overcome, their limitations denied, the absorption of their gratifications rejected. But he knows also that the Highest is something which is no nullity in the world, but increasingly expresses itself here,—a divine Will, Consciousness, Love, Beatitude which pours itself out, when found, through the terms of the lower life

on the finder and on all in his environment that is capable of receiving it. Of that he is the servant, lover and seeker. When it is attained, he pours it forth in work, love, joy and knowledge upon mankind. For always the Aryan is a worker and warrior. He spares himself no labour of mind or body whether to seek the Highest or to serve it. He avoids no difficulty, he accepts no cessation from fatigue. Always he fights for the coming of that kingdom within himself and in the world.

CWSA 13 : 441-44 **Sri Aurobindo**

... the indications in the Veda on which this theory of a recent Aryan invasion is built, are very scanty in quantity and uncertain in their significance. There is no actual mention of any such invasion. The distinction between Aryan and un-Aryan on which so much has been built, seems on the mass of the evidence to indicate a cultural rather than a racial difference. The language of the hymns clearly points to a particular worship or spiritual culture as the distinguishing sign of the Aryan, — a worship of Light and of the powers of Light and a self-discipline based on the culture of the "Truth" and the aspiration to Immortality,— Ritam and Amritam. There is no reliable indication of any racial difference.

CWSA 15: 26 **Sri Aurobindo**

Sri Aurobindo's Notes on Some Works in the *Arya*

The Secret of the Veda

A new view of the Rigveda is being published in the 'Arya' under the caption of 'The Secret of the Veda'. The translations here have been done according to that view which maintains that the real meaning of the Veda is spiritual and, being extremely profound and secret, is wrapped in symbolic words, various images, and expressions used in the performance of sacrifice. Though impenetrable to the ordinary person, this covering was, to the initiate in the Veda, only a transparent object which revealed all the limbs of the Truth. We have to look for the spiritual significance behind the images. If we can discover the 'secret name' of the gods and their respective functions, the sense of the code words, go, aśva, somarasa etc., the works of the *daityas* the demons, and their inner meaning, the import of the Vedic metaphors and legends, then the significance of the Veda will become more or less clear. Of course, the true and subtle comprehension of its meaning comes only by a special knowledge and as the result of sadhana, and not by mere study of the Veda without any sadhana. *Bengali Writings, p.42*

The Life Divine

There is possible a realistic as well as an illusionist Adwaita. The philosophy of *The Life Divine* is such a realistic Adwaita. The world is a manifestation of the Real and therefore is itself real. The reality is the infinite and eternal Divine, infinite and eternal Being, Consciousness-Force and Bliss. This Divine by his power has created the world or rather manifested it in his own infinite Being. But here in the material world or at its basis he has hidden himself in what seem to be his opposites, Non-Being, Inconscience

and Insentience. This is what we nowadays call the Inconscient which seems to have created the material universe by its inconscient Energy; but this is only an appearance, for we find in the end that all the dispositions of the world can only have been arranged by the working of a supreme secret intelligence. The Being which is hidden in what seems to be an inconscient void emerges in the world first in Matter, then in Life, then in Mind and finally as the Spirit. The apparently inconscient Energy which creates is in fact the Consciousness-Force of the Divine and its aspect of consciousness, secret in Matter, begins to emerge in Life, finds something more of itself in Mind and finds its true self in a spiritual consciousness and finally a supramental consciousness through which we become aware of the Reality, enter into it and unite ourselves with it. This is what we call evolution which is an evolution of consciousness and an evolution of the Spirit in things and only outwardly an evolution of species. Thus also, the delight of existence emerges from the original insentience first in the contrary forms of pleasure and pain and then has to find itself in the bliss of the Spirit or as it is called in the Upanishads, the bliss of the Brahman. That is the central idea in the explanation of the universe put forward in *The Life Divine.* CWSA 35: 91

The Synthesis of Yoga

The *Synthesis of Yoga* was not meant to give a method for all to follow. Each side of the Yoga was dealt with separately with all its possibilities, and an indication as to how they meet so that one starting from knowledge could realise karma and bhakti also and so with each path. It was intended when the Self-Perfection was finished, to suggest a way in which all could be combined, but this was never written. CWSA 35: 96

Sri Aurobindo

Appendix:

The Doctrine of Taoism

(Published in the ARYA, of 15 June 1915 under the title "Varieties")

The ancient, eternal teaching of unity has been cherished from the earliest times in India and in spite of all obscurations of ignorance, all diminutions and deformations, all trials, challenges, and invading influences she has up to the present day clung faithfully to this supreme and central truth of all which other nations have thrown away in the struggle of existence or put aside into the study and the cloister. We are therefore apt in India to look upon it as a peculiarity of this country or, if professed by others, then learnt from us. But the Truth has had its witnesses in all lands and in all ages; if it were not so, it would not be the eternal Truth, but a temporary doctrine or an individual or national idiosyncracy of thought. We translate from a brief, but interesting volume[1] by a French writer on the schools and teachers of the doctrine of unity from the earliest times to the present days some passages expressing the doctrines of Lao-tse, the great Chinese thinker who lived and taught about six centuries before the Christian era. This account of the Taoism of Lao-tse is taken from a book by another French writer, Wu-Wei (Non-Resistance),[2] which is written in the form of an imaginary dialogue between a Chinese sage and a foreign seeker of truth.

TAO

"TAO is nothing else in reality, than what you foreigners call God. TAO is the One, the Beginning and the End, — he

1. *The Doctrine of Unity, by A.L. Caillet. Paris, Ferdinand Drubay.*
2. *Wu-Wei, a Fiction based on the philosophy of Lao-tse, by Henri Borel: translated into French by Pierre Bernard.*

contains all things and to him all things return.

TAO can have no name, precisely because it is the one. Wu, that is to say, *Nothing*, — behold TAO. Thou understandest not? Listen then. There exists an absolute Reality, without beginning, without end, beyond our comprehension, which therefore appears to us as if it were Nothing. That which we can understand, that which has for us a relative reality, is in truth only an appearance. It is indeed a product of the absolute Reality, since everything emanates from that Reality and returns to it, but the things which are real to our eyes are not real in themselves. What we call Being, is in fact Non-Being, and what we call Non-Being is Being in the true sense. Thus we live in a great darkness. What we imagine to be real, is not real, yet emanates from the reality; for the Real is all. Therefore both Being and Non-Being are TAO; but forget not that this Word is a sound articulated by a human being and that the idea is inexpressible. All things that the senses perceive and all the desires of thy heart are unreal. TAO is the source of Heaven and of Earth. One engendered Two, Two engendered Three, Three engendered the Myriads and the Myriads return into the One ...

Thou knowest that TAO is the origin of all, of the trees, the flowers, the birds, the sea, the deserts, the rocks, the light, the darkness, heat and cold, day and night, summer and winter and thy own life. The worlds and the oceans melt away into Eternity. Man emerges from the darkness, laughs for a moment in the clarity of the light and disappears; but in all these changings it is the One which manifests itself. TAO is in all, thy soul in its deepest self is TAO ...

Make no mistake — TAO is *in* what thou seest but it is not in the *thing* thou seest. Think not that TAO can be visible to thy eyes. TAO will not awake joy in thy heart; TAO will not extract from thy eyes tears for that which thou sufferest:

for all emotions are relative and unreal.

WU WEI

I will speak to thee of Wu Wei, of Non-Resistance, of the spontaneous movement directed by the impulsion in thee such as it was born from TAO. Men would be truly men if they allowed their life to flow of itself as the sea swells, as the flower blooms in the simple beauty of TAO. In every man there is the tendency towards the movement which proceeds from TAO and leads him back to TAO; but men are blinded by their senses and by their lusts ... They cling to all that is unreal. They desire too many things to desire the One. Sometimes they desire to be wise and good and that is the worst of all.

The sole remedy is to return to the source whence they come. TAO is in us; TAO is repose; and it is solely by renouncing desire — even the desire of goodness and wisdom — that we can attain to the Repose. Those who know what TAO is, do not tell; those who tell, do not know. I will not tell thee what TAO is; it is for thee to discover it by liberating thyself from all passion and all craving, by living with an absolute spontaneity, exempt from all effort that is not natural. One must approach TAO without shock or effort, with a movement as calm as the flowing of the vast ocean ... It is so that thou shalt return to TAO, and when thou shalt have returned to It, thou shalt not know It, for thou shalt have thyself become TAO.

* * *

No man can annihilate TAO and the imperishable light of the soul shines out in each of us. Think not that the perversity of man can be so great or so powerful. The eternal TAO inhabits in all of us, in the murderer and the harlot no less than in the thinker and the poet. They are all as alike in

their essence as two grains of sand upon this rock, and none shall be banished from TAO for eternity, for all bear TAO in themselves.

Their sins are illusory, unreal as a mist ... They cannot be bad; no more can they be good; irresistibly they are drawn towards TAO as this drop of water towards the vast sea. It may take more time for some than for others, but that is all ... TAO is neither good nor bad; TAO is Real.

TAO alone is and the life of unreal things is a life of false contrasts, false relations which have no independent existence and which lead into great error. So, above all, desire not to be good and call not thyself evil. Wu Wei — exempt from effort, carried on by the inherent Force in thee, that is what thou shouldest be. Not good nor bad, not little nor great, not low nor high; then alone thou shalt really be although in the ordinary sense of the word, thou shalt have ceased to be. When thou shalt be delivered from all appearances, from all lusts and all desires, thou shalt be carried by thy own impulsion without being aware that thou movest, and this — the sole true principle of life, which is to move of one self, free and unhampered towards TAO — will be as easy and as inconscient as the dissolution of this little cloud above us.

* * *

Speak not of this thirst of for wisdom. Desire not to know too much; for so alone canst thou little by little become capable of knowing by intuition; the knowledge acquired by effort that is not natural only leads farther away from TAO ... Especially desire not happiness too eagerly, nor have any fear of ill-fortune, for neither of them are real... TAO would not be TAO if thou couldst represent It as joy or suffering, good fortune or ill-fortune; for TAO is a whole and there can be no contrasts in It ....

Then for the first time, when thou shalt have become Wu Wei — non-existent in the vulgar sense of the word — all will go well for thee and thou shalt traverse life with a movement as calm and natural as that of the vast sea before us. Nothing will trouble thy peace. Thy sleep shall be dreamless and thy waking will bring thee no cares. Thou shalt see TAO in all things, thou shalt be one with all that exists; thou shalt feel thyself as intimate with all Nature as with thy own self; and traversing with a calm submission the alternations of day and night, summer and winter, life and death, thou shalt enter one day into TAO in which there are no alternations and from which once thou hast issued utterly pure as pure thou shalt return to It.

LOVE

Thou knowest not what is love, nor what it is to love. I will tell thee; Love is nothing other than the Rhythm of TAO.

I have said it to thee; it is from TAO that thou comest, it is to TAO that thou shalt return ... Woman reveals herself to thy eyes and thou thinkest that she is the end towards which the Rhythm leads thee, but even when this woman is thine and thou hast thrilled with her touch, thou feelest still the Rhythm within thee unappeased and thou learnest that to appease it thou must go beyond. Call it Love, if thou wilt; what matters a name? I call it TAO ...

The beauty of woman is only a vague reflection of the formless beauty of TAO. The emotion she awakens in thee, the desire to blot thyself out in her beauty ... believe me, it is nothing else than the rhythm of TAO, only thou knowest it not ... Seek not thy happiness in a woman. She is the revelation of TAO offering itself to thee, she is the purest form in Nature by which TAO manifests, she is the Force which awakens in thee the Rhythm of TAO — but by herself she

is only a poor creature like thyself. And thou art for her the same revelation as she is for thee. It is the expression of TAO who has no limit nor form, and what thy soul desires in the rapture which the vision of it causes thee, this strange and ineffable sentiment, is nought else than union with that Beauty and with the source of that Beauty — with TAO.

Thy soul has lost its beloved — TAO — with whom it was formerly united and it desires reunion with the Beloved. An absolute reunion with TAO — is it not boundless Love! To be so absolutely one with the Beloved that thou art entirely hers and she entirely thine, — a union so complete and so eternal that neither life nor death can ever separate you, so peaceful and pure that Desire can no longer awake in thee, because the supreme happiness is attained and there is only peace, peace sacred, calm and luminous. For TAO is the Infinite of the soul, one, eternal and all-pure.

We publish below excerpts from the two talks of the Mother to the Ashram inmates in which she refers to the little book Wu Vei (A novel based upon the philosophy of Lao Tse on Taoism).

15 August 1956

Man has always been faced with two possible attitudes when he has wanted to find a solution to the problem of the existence of the universe. It could be said from the practical point of view, that since the universe exists and exists as it does, the wisest thing is to take it as it is, and if one is not satisfied with it, well, to try to make it better. But even if one takes this very practical attitude, the problem remains: How to make it better? And once again one is facing the same fact which it seems impossible to resolve. Here you are, then:

The divine Will — and the Grace which manifests it — is all-powerful and nothing can exist which is not the expression of this divine Will and this Grace which manifests it.... The logical attitude — precisely the one described in the little book I read to you on Fridays now, *Wu Wei* — a perfect peace, a total surrender, putting aside all effort and all personal will, giving oneself up to the divine Will and letting it act through oneself.

Mind you, this is not at all easy, it is not as simple as it looks. But still, if one sincerely takes up this attitude, it is certain that immediately there comes a perfect inner peace, an unmixed bliss, and whatever may be the events of your life, they leave you totally indifferent. This has always been recommended for individual salvation; and I may remark in passing that in this little book, which is also very beautiful and very well written, the sage compares the state of surrender of which he speaks to a sea which is calm, blue, peaceful, vast, moved by a deep force, swelling up at the right moment, subsiding at the right moment — indeed, it is an ideal description. But a practical and somewhat objective mind immediately tells you, "Well, yes, but there are also tempests at sea, there are also terrible storms, tidal waves, engulfed islands. And so that is perhaps another aspect of the Divine, but it does not bring peace, at least not in the way described by the sage. One would have to be in another state of consciousness to be at peace in such circumstances, one must not compare oneself with the sea!" So the problem presents itself again.

Sri Aurobindo has made a study of all this in *The Life Divine*, and he tells us that there are sure signs of a progressive evolution. An evolution naturally tends towards a goal, and if it is a progressive evolution one may continue to think that all is the expression of the divine Grace and Will, but that

at the same time all is not as it ought to be. Everything is in accordance with the divine Will, but everything is not as it ought to be, otherwise things would not move.

29 August 1956

I suppose most of you come on Fridays to listen to the reading of *Wu Wei*. If you have listened, you will remember that something's said there about being "spontaneous", and that the true way of living the true life is to live spontaneously.

What Lao Tse calls spontaneous is this: instead of being moved by a personal will — mental, vital or physical — one ought to stop all outer effort and let oneself be guided and moved by what the Chinese call *Tao,* which they identify with the Godhead — or God or the Supreme Principle or the Origin of all things or the creative Truth, indeed all possible human notions of the Divine and the goal to be attained.

To be spontaneous means not to think out, organise, decide and make an effort to realise with the personal will.

I am going to give you two examples to make you understand what true spontaneity is. One — you all know about it undoubtedly — is of the time Sri Aurobindo began writing the *Arya*, in 1914. It was neither a mental knowledge nor even a mental creation which he transcribed: he silenced his mind and sat at the typewriter, and from above, from the higher planes, all that had to be written came down, all ready, and he had only to move his fingers on the typewriter and it was transcribed. It was in this state of mental silence which allows the knowledge— and even the expression — from above to pass through that he wrote the whole *Arya*, with its sixty-four printed pages a month. This is why, besides, he could do it, for if it had been a mental work of construction it would have been quite impossible. ...

Naturally, this is not very easy, it asks for preparation.

And if one comes down to the sphere of action, it is still more difficult; for normally, if one wants to act with some kind of logic, one usually has to think out beforehand what one wants to do and plan it before doing it, otherwise one may be tossed about by all sorts of desires and impulses which would be very far from the inspiration spoken about in *Wu Wei*; it would simply be movements of the lower nature driving you to act. Therefore, unless one has reached the state of wisdom and detachment of the Chinese sage mentioned in this story, it is better not to be spontaneous in one's daily actions, for one would risk being the plaything of all the most disorderly impulses and influences. ...

And surely, to be in harmony with what is said in *Wu Wei*, after having seen very clearly what is necessary and what ought to be done, it is recommended not to put either violence or too much zest into the realisation of this programme, for an excess of zest is detrimental to the peace and tranquillity and calm necessary for the divine Consciousness to express itself through the individual. And it comes to this:

Balance is indispensable, the path that carefully avoids opposite extremes is indispensable, too much haste is dangerous, impatience prevents you from advancing; and at the same time, inertia puts a drag on your feet.

CWM 8: 265-66, 281-85 **The Mother**

Nirvana cannot be at once the ending of the Path with nothing beyond to explore and yet only a rest house or rather the beginning of the Higher Path with everything still to explore.

*

In our yoga the Nirvana is the beginning of the higher Truth, as it is the passage from the Ignorance to the higher Truth.

CWSA 35: 314; SABCL 23: 59 **Sri Aurobindo**

A Note on the Name "Sri Aurobindo"

Regarding the significance of the word 'Sri' in the name of Sri Aurobindo Ghose appearing for the first time in relation to the *Arya,* Nolini Kanta Gupta wrote to a devotee in a letter dated 30 November 1961:

Mother has shown me the letter you wrote to her about the problem of "Sri" that is troubling you. She wishes me to communicate to you my view of the matter. Well, I shall be frank and forthright. It is an error to think that Sri is only an honorific prefix to Aurobindo which is the real name. It is not so. Sri does not mean Mr. or Monsieur or Sir, etc. It is part of the name. Sri Aurobindo forms one indivisible word. This is the final form Sri Aurobindo himself gave to his name. And I may tell you that **the mantric effect resides in that form**.

Sri is no more difficult to pronounce than many other Indian or Euro-American syllables. And I think it is not always healthy either to come down to the level of the average European or American under the plea that that is the best way to approach and convert the many. I am afraid it is a vain illusion; better rather to oblige the average to make an effort to rise up and grapple with the truth as it is.

Mother has seen this admonition of mine to you and fully approves of it.

Nolini Kanta Gupta

Srinvantu, Feb. 1981, p. 2

With best compliments of:

DEORAH SEVA NIDHI

(Founder Trustee: Late Shri S.L. Deorah)

25, Ballygunge Park, Kolkata - 700019

Upcoming Workshop on "Conscious Social Responsibility" 9th to 11th October 2014

A 3-day open workshop that provides a deeper perspective on Corporate Social Responsibility that helps thought leaders to integrate their organisations more relevantly with the community. SAFIM invites everyone connected with CSR seeking to understand its true meaning and thereby to make its implementation more effective to attend the workshop.

For registration and further details, please contact:

Email: safim@aurosociety.org, Ph: 0413 2330256

Website: www.safim.aurosociety.org



SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY

Notice for the Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the members of Sri Aurobindo Society will be held on Saturday, the 6th September 2014, at 4.00 p.m. at its registered office, Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, 8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071, to transact the following business:

1. To confirm the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 21st September 2013.
2. To consider and approve the audited Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Account of the Society for the year ended 31.03.2014.
3. To consider and adopt the Executive Committee's Annual Report of Activities for the year 2013 – 2014.
4. To appoint an auditor for the Society for the year 2014-2015.
5. To consider any other matter with the permission of the chair.

Sd/-

09th June 2014 (Pradeep Narang)

Puducherry Chairman

Note: The members are entitled to appoint proxy. Proxies must be deposited at the Registered Office of the Society, No.8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071, during office hours, in advance but not less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting. The proxy should be a member of the Society. Proxy form is printed below.

PROXY

SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY,
Regd. Office: 8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071.

I, ……. being a member of Sri Aurobindo Society, having membership No. …….. valid upto ……... do hereby appoint …… having Society's membership No. …… valid upto …… as my proxy in my absence to attend and vote for me and on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, to be held on Saturday, the 6th September 2014, at 4.00 p.m. and at any adjournment thereof.

In witness whereof, I have set my hand this
…….... day of .....……. 2014.

Revenue Stamp

(Signature of the member across the stamp)

Note: The proxy must be deposited at the Registered Office of the Society, No.8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkatta – 700 071, not less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting.