

The Resurgent India

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“Let us all work for the Greatness of India.”
– The Mother

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SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

(Full of Promise and Joyful Surprises)

Botanical name: Gaillardia Pulchella

Common name: Indian blanket, Blanket flower, Fire-wheels

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A Declaration

We do not fight against any creed, any religion.

We do not fight against any form of government.

We do not fight against any social class.

We do not fight against any nation or civilisation.

We are fighting division, unconsciousness, ignorance, inertia and falsehood.

We are endeavouring to establish upon earth union, knowledge, consciousness, Truth, and we fight whatever opposes the advent of this new creation of Light, Peace, Truth and Love.

- The Mother

(Collected works of the Mother 13, p. 124-25)

THE FIRST TWENTY-ONE DAYS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

As the new Modi Government formally took up the reins of the government on 26th May – ten days after its decisive victory in the national elections – it found itself showered with such affection and high hopes and expectations from the Indian people that its single most important concern must be to prove itself worthy of it all. During this first period, even while the government has been busy putting the new top administrative machinery in place and tightening the reins of the government, the spirit and order in which the whole thing has been conducted has been such as to keep the people's spirits and hopes up. **The unambiguous message that has been radiating from all that the new government has been saying and doing, so far, may be summed up in the following fourfold formula: Sincere Dedication to the Nation, Hard Work, Harmony and Goodwill for All.**

Now, a sincere dedication to the cause of the nation – the modern conception of nationalism is too narrow and limiting, especially in the case of an utterly tolerant and truly spiritual country like India, to convey the real spirit behind it – may be translated as dedication not only to India in its surface parts but also, and much more, to its soul manifest in the spirit of its eternal religion and tradition for the good of all creation. Even if it is partially manifest – as it seems to be in some members of Sri Narendra Modi's team – such a thing can prove to be an inexhaustible source of energy for the unceasing hard work that is likely to be required to put the country back on the right track (after almost a millennium of straying). Such a thing can and does happen by virtue of the fact that **a true spirit of love and dedication tends to minimise and even altogether dissolve the limiting and psychologically unpleasant side-effects of the enormous and sustained concentration of energies that this kind of work entails. Thus, sincere dedication and sustained hard work can always go together smoothly.**

A democratic government may be successfully run on the basis of a parliamentary majority but a country – especially a country like India with its rich linguistic, cultural and religious diversity – cannot be profitably run without the tacit support of its people at large and this may be ensured only by a spirit of harmony in the leadership. All this is not intended to suggest that the new government which has taken its stand on harmony can – even in its most earnest pursuits – be expected to be free from appearances of struggle, opposition and even open strife because – given the psychological condition of the present-day humanity – these things have become the unavoidable accompaniments of the functioning of modern parliamentary democracies. Even so, a persistent spirit of harmony can be expected to smoothen the whole course of governance by bringing about adjustment and accommodation among diverse interests and claims much oftener than would be possible otherwise. Thus **a sincere spirit of dedication and harmony may enable the present leadership of the country to arrive at a psychological condition where it spontaneously feels and works for the true well being of the country.**

With the hope that this will actually come to pass, we wish all possible success to the new government not only in substantially fulfilling the high hopes that Indian people at large have come to focus on it but also in paving the long road towards the fulfilment of even those dreams which have always been latent in the soul of eternal India and have found their most complete expression in the writings and statements of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on the future of India – the subject of the next article in this issue.

THE FUTURE OF INDIA

“The sun of India’s destiny would rise and fill all India with its light and overflow India and overflow Asia and overflow the world. Every hour, every moment could only bring them nearer to the brightness of the day that God had decreed.”¹

Few would have felt the truth and the inevitability behind this utterance at the time when, almost a hundred years ago, it was uttered by Sri Aurobindo during a Swadeshi meeting held at Beadon Square, Calcutta, on 13-06-1909. Even today when we are on the threshold of an era which will witness an increasing fulfilment of this divine decree in the coming decades, few may be able to see the inevitability or understand the deeper import of Sri Aurobindo’s vision of India’s future. Although an increasing number of people, both in India and outside, are beginning to realize the inevitability of India’s forthcoming resurgence, their vision is mostly limited to economic resurgence. They are eager to see India join the league of the developed industrialised countries of the world and be like them except for some cultural differences – a thing of minor significance for an economic creature. Although most such people are conscious of (and even troubled by) the present degenerate moral state and the resulting condition of our government and society, they have no perception of the deeper causes underlying it and do not seem to realize that it is impossible to found any sound economic state on such a base. In fact, an economic resurgence, such as the one envisioned by our present intellectual, political, and business professional leaders – the so called “Macaulay’s Children”^{*} who

^{*}On 10-12-1836 Lord Macaulay wrote to his father claiming that if the course of education in India continued on the lines designed by him, there will not be a single Hindu left in Bengal after 30 years, all would either become Christians or would remain Hindu only in name. They would not have any faith in the Veda or in their religion. Macaulay’s system of education continued even after Independence and has been growing stronger and more pervasive ever since.

have undergone such a thoroughly Western system of education that they are Indians only in blood and colour* and have become in their surface nature – but not in their inner being and nature (the real basis of India’s forthcoming resurgence) – entirely Western in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellects – will lead us to a state even worse than the present state. The whole scenario on this front is very dismal. But even so, encouraging signs are not missing. An increasing number of discerning people, around the world, are beginning to realize that the present hedonistic material culture which is increasingly leading humanity towards a widespread moral and ecological disaster can no longer be sustained by the present human capacity without an inner change. The root cause of our problems are the inner constraints on our vision and values and yet we contemplate changing almost anything on this earth except ourselves. A change in ourselves – an inner change – can be brought about only by the development of that “...which society has most neglected, the spiritual element, the soul in man which is his true being. Even to have a healthy body, a strong vitality and an active and clarified mind and a field for their action and enjoyment, carries man no more than a certain distance; afterwards he flags and tires for want of a real self-finding, a satisfying aim for his action and progress. These three things do not make the sum of a complete manhood; they are means to an ulterior end and cannot be made for ever an aim in themselves. Add a rich emotional life governed by a well-ordered ethical standard, and still there is the savour of something left out, some supreme good which these things mean, but do not in themselves arrive at, do not discover till they go beyond themselves. Add a religious system and a wide-spread spirit of belief and piety, and still you have not found the means of social salvation. All these things human society has developed, but none of them has saved it from disillusionment, weariness and decay.”²

We firmly believe that now, under the crushing pressure of a

*Francois Gautier, *India’s Self-Denial*, page 43.

looming moral and ecological disaster, **the conditions are going to be increasingly ripe to lead humanity – specially India – to undertake a fundamental re-evaluation of the value of Science and the modern gospel of Economic Growth for its true fulfillment. The lead in the direction of this inner change is going to be provided by India because, as the Mother declared, “India has become the symbolic representation of all the difficulties of modern mankind. India will be the land of its resurrection – the resurrection to a higher and truer life.”**³

India has always laid the utmost stress on the soul or the spiritual element in men but this stress has never been exclusive but only the most important element in the integral fulfilment of the being. “The ancient Indian culture attached quite as much value to the soundness, growth and strength of the mind, life and body as the old Hellenic or the modern scientific thought, although for a different end and a greater motive. Therefore to everything that serves and belongs to the healthy fullness of these things, it gave free play, to the activity of the reason, to science and philosophy, to the satisfaction of the aesthetic being and to all the many arts great or small, to the health and strength of the body, to the physical and economical well-being, ease, opulence of the race, – there was never a national ideal of poverty in India as some would have us believe, nor was bareness or squalor the essential setting of her spirituality, – and to its general military, political and social strength and efficiency. Their aim was high, but firm and wide too was the base they sought to establish and great the care bestowed on these first instruments.”⁴

Even after undergoing a yoke of more than six hundred years of foreign rule India was even materially the most developed country until the mid 1800’s. “Samuel Huntington of Harvard university writes that in 1750, India had 25 per cent of the world’s manufacturing output while Europe and America combined had less than 18 percent. But by 1900, after a hundred years of British rule, India’s manufacturing output had collapsed to less than 2 percent whereas America and the West combined had 84 percent of the

world's share. He writes:– 'The Industrial revolution of the West was done at the expense of de-industrialisation of the colonies'.⁵ During the first 82 years of British rule more than 30 million Indians (more than 10 percent of the total population) died of starvation. During the same period the export of wheat and rice from India to Great Britain increased by about 25 times. Still we did not perish because, "India cannot perish, our race cannot become extinct, because among all the divisions of mankind it is to India that is reserved the highest and the most splendid destiny, the most essential to the future of the human race. It is she who must send forth from herself the future religion of the entire world, the Eternal Religion which is to harmonise all religion, science and philosophies and make mankind one soul."⁶

Even in the face of such cruel physical subjugation, the achievement of the Indian culture on the planes of mind and spirit has been so colossal that in spite of the highly motivated attempts of the Western intellectuals, educationists and missionaries who have been trying very hard to undermine Indian religion and culture, it has not only survived but even thrived and has been increasingly penetrating and winning hearts and minds in the West. The same thing is beginning to happen among the modern educated elite in India as was foreseen by Sri Aurobindo at the beginning of the last century when he wrote: "A revival of Hindu intellectual faith in the totality of the spiritual aspects of our religion, whether Vedic, Vedantic, Tantric or Puranic, I believe to be an inevitable movement of the near future."⁷ Although India's strong economic resurgence has practically become apparent only since the beginning of this century, the spiritual gift of India to the world – the fourth dream of Sri Aurobindo* – had begun even before India's freedom in 1947 and has been growing ever since. Indian religious and spiritual literature has been translated in almost all the important languages of the world and is having its profound impact in moulding the psychology of the modern man. For as Sri Aurobindo declared, "India of the ages

*Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo 36, page 480

is not dead nor has she spoken her last creative word; she lives and has still something to do for herself and the human peoples. And that which must seek now to awake is not an anglicised oriental people, docile pupil of the West and doomed to repeat the cycle of the Occident's success and failure, but still the ancient immemorable Shakti recovering her deepest self, lifting her head higher towards the supreme source of light and strength and turning to discover the complete meaning and a vaster form of her Dharma."⁸

THE SECRET OF THE GREAT TENACITY AND INVINCIBILITY OF INDIAN CULTURE

"The Hindu has been always decried as a dreamer & mystic. There is truth in the charge but also a singular inaccuracy. The Hindu mind is in one sense the most concrete in the world; it seeks after abstractions, but is not satisfied with them so long as they remain abstractions. But to make the objects of this world concrete, to realise the things that are visited by sun & rain or are, at their most ethereal, sublimated figures of fine matter, that is comparatively easy, but the Hindu is not contented till he has seized things *behind* the sunlight also as concrete realities. He is passionate for the infinite, the unseen, the spiritual, but he will not rest satisfied with conceiving them, he insists on mapping the infinite, on seeing the unseen, on visualising the spiritual. The Celt throws his imagination into the infinite and is rewarded with beautiful phantoms out of which he evolves a pale, mystic and intangible poetry; the Hindu sends his heart & his intellect & eventually his whole being after his imagination and for his reward he has seen God and interpreted existence. It is this double aspect of Hindu temperament, extreme spirituality successfully attempting to work in harmony with extreme materialism, which is the secret of our religion, our life & our literature, our civilisation. On the one side we spiritualise the material out of all but a phenomenal & illusory existence, on the other we materialise the spiritual in the most definite & realistic forms; this is the secret of the high philosophic idealism which to the less capable European

mind seems so impossible an intellectual atmosphere and of the prolific idolatry which to the dogmatic & formalising Christian reason seems so gross.

In any other race-temperament this mental division would have split into two broadly disparate & opposing types whose action, reaction & attempts at compromise would have comprised the history of thought. In the myriad minded & undogmatic Hindu it worked not towards mental division but as the first discord which prepares for a consistent harmony; the best & most characteristic Hindu thought regards either tendency as essential to the perfect & subtle comprehension of existence; they are considered the positive & negative sides of one truth, & must both be grasped if we are not to rest in a half light. Hence the entire tolerance of the Hindu religion to all intellectual attitudes except sheer libertinism; hence also the marvellous perfection of graded thought-attitudes in which the Hindu mind travels between the sheer negative & the sheer positive and yet sees in them only a ladder of progressive & closely related steps rising through relative conceptions to one final & absolute knowledge.”⁹

“Let us suppose that all historical documents, archives, records were destroyed or disappeared in the process of Time and the catastrophies of civilisation, and only the pure literature survived. Of how many nations should we have the very life, heart and mind, the whole picture of its life and civilisation and the history of its development adequately revealed in its best writing? Three European nations would survive immortally before the eyes of posterity, the ancient Greeks, the modern English and French, and two Asiatic nations, the Chinese and the Hindus, – no others.

Of all these **the Hindus have revealed themselves the most perfectly, continuously and on the most colossal scale, precisely because they have been the most indomitably original in the form and matter of their literature.** The Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas are unique in their kind; the great Epics in their form and type of art stand apart in the epic literature of the world, the old

Sanskrit drama has its affinities with a dramatic species which developed itself in Europe more than a thousand years later, and the literary epic follows laws of form and canons of art which are purely indigenous. And this immense body of first-rate work has left us so intimate and complete a revelation of national life and history, that the absence of pure historical writings becomes a subject of merely conventional regret. The same intense originality and depth of self-expression are continued after the decline of the classical language in the national literatures of Maharashtra, Bengal and the Hindi-speaking North.”¹⁰

In the light of all this and given the past record of its greatness and glory a seemingly unanswerable question that must inevitably arise in the mind of all thinking Indians is:

WHY WE SUFFERED SO MUCH?

In October 7, 1907 issue of *Bande Mataram* Sri Aurobindo wrote: “This great and ancient nation was once the fountain of human light, the apex of human civilisation, the exemplar of courage and humanity, the perfection of good government and settled society, the mother of all religions, the teacher of all wisdom and philosophy. It has suffered much at the hands of inferior civilisations and more savage peoples; it has gone down into the shadow of night and tasted often of the bitterness of death. Its pride has been trampled into the dust and its glory has departed. Hunger and misery and despair have become the masters of this fair soil, these noble hills, these ancient rivers, these cities whose life-story goes back into prehistoric night. But do you think that therefore God has utterly abandoned us and given us up for ever to be a mere convenience for the West, the helots of its commerce, and the feeders of its luxury and pride? We are still God’s chosen people and all our calamities have been but a discipline of suffering, because for the great mission before us prosperity was not sufficient, adversity had also its training; to taste the glory of power and beneficence and joy was not sufficient, the knowledge of weakness and torture and humiliation was also needed; it was not enough that

we should be able to fill the role of the merciful sage and the beneficent king, we had also to experience in our own persons the feelings of the outcaste and the slave. But now that lesson is learned, and the time for our resurgence is come. And no power shall stay that uprising and no opposing interest shall deny us the right to live, to be ourselves, to set our seal once more upon the world.”¹¹

Now we are at an hour when this prophetic declaration, which must have seemed like a daydream at the time it was expressed, is on its way to fulfilment.

THE FLOWERING OF THE TRUE SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM IN INDIA

During the forthcoming resurgence of India, after a millennium of cruel subjugation to a foreign yoke, Indians will witness a growing spirit of nationalism fed by the increasingly glowing achievements of their country and their countrymen around the world in all fields of endeavour. For the first time, after a very difficult millennium, Indians will have something to take pride in and this true pride and, based on it, the growing spirit of nationalism will tend to dissolve all the problems of our collective life which have become so very acute due to a blind and mechanical following of the western spirit and forms in this field. We all know that the problem had become so critical in the political field that it was threatening the integrity and even the very existence of the country. Love of power, money and progeny had become the common denominator of all the participants in the political arena. Now, with coming of the new Modi government, the flowering of the spirit of true – true, because consecrated to the divine as India has always been – nationalism will increasingly transmute all these lower loves into an all-consuming love for the Motherland.

“Love has a place in politics, but it is the love for one’s country, for one’s countrymen, for the glory, greatness and happiness of the race, the divine ananda of self-immolation for one’s fellows, the ecstasy of relieving their sufferings, the joy of seeing

one's blood flow for country and freedom, the bliss of union in death with the fathers of the race. The feeling of almost physical delight in the touch of the mother soil, of the winds that blow from Indian seas, of the rivers that stream from Indian hills, in the sight of Indian surroundings, Indian men, Indian women, Indian children, in the hearing of Indian speech, music, poetry, in the familiar sights, sounds, habits, dress, manners of our Indian life, this is the physical root of that love. The pride in our past, the pain of our present, the passion for the future are its trunk and branches. Self-sacrifice, self-forgetfulness, great service and high endurance for the country are its fruit. And the sap which keeps it alive is the realisation of the Motherhood of God in the country, the vision of the Mother, the knowledge of the Mother, the perpetual contemplation, adoration and service of the Mother."¹²

And this awakened and strong India will pose no threat to any people within or outside its physical boundaries – for India has never done this anytime in its history. Whenever the divine providence has brought the country into prominence it has used it only to serve its purpose in humanity.

THE FUTURE

"The future of India is very clear. India is the Guru of the world. The future structure of the world depends on India. India is the living soul. India is incarnating the spiritual knowledge in the world."¹³

As was willed by Sri Aurobindo, the spiritually awakened India will fulfill his final dream* and enable the terrestrial nature to take "...a step in evolution which would raise man to a higher and larger consciousness and begin the solution of the problems which have perplexed and vexed him since he first began to think and to dream of individual perfection and a perfect society.... Here too, if this evolution is to take place, since it must proceed through a growth of

*Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo 36, page 480

the spirit and the inner consciousness, the initiative can come from India and, although the scope must be universal, the central movement may be hers.”¹⁴

References:

1. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* 08, Page 17
2. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* 25, Page 224
3. *Collected Works of The Mother* 13, Page 376
4. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* 20, Page 34
5. M. Nadkarni, *India's Spiritual Destiny, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry, Page 32*
6. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* 06, Page 84
7. *Sri Aurobindo Archives and Research, December 1984, Page 135*
8. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* 20, Page 444
9. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* 01, Pages 212-13
10. *Sri Aurobindo Archives and Research, April 1977, Page 8*
11. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* 06, Pages 707-08
12. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* 07, Pages 1118-119
13. *Collected Works of The Mother* 13, Page 361
14. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* 36, Page 480

SHALL INDIA DIE?

“Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct, all moral perfection will be extinct, all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct, all ideality will be extinct; and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest, fraud, force, and competition its ceremonies, and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be.”

– Swami Vivekananda

(Collected works of Swami Vivekananda 04, p. 347-48)

THE GREATNESS OF INDIA AND ITS CULTURE

“We are no ordinary race. We are a people ancient as our hills and rivers and we have behind us a history of manifold greatness, not surpassed by any other race. We are the descendants of those who performed tapasya and underwent unheard-of austerities for the sake of spiritual gain and of their own will submitted to all the sufferings of which humanity is capable. We are the children of those mothers who ascended with a smile the funeral pyre that they might follow their husbands to another world. We are a people to whom suffering is welcome and who have a spiritual strength within them, greater than any physical force. We are a people in whom God has chosen to manifest Himself more than any other at many great moments of our history.”¹

* * *

“India is the only place in the world which is still aware that something else than Matter exists. The other countries have quite forgotten it: Europe, America and elsewhere.... That is why she still has a message to preserve and deliver to the world. But at present she is splashing and floundering in the muddle.

Sri Aurobindo has shown that the truth does not lie in running away from earthly life but in remaining *in it*, to *transform it*, *divinise it*, so that the Divine can manifest HERE, in this PHYSICAL WORLD.”²

* * *

“The spirit of ancient India was aristocratic; its thought & life moulded in the cast of a high & proud nobility, an extreme & lofty strenuousness. The very best in thought, the very best in action, the very best in character, the very best in literature & art, the very best in religion and all the world well lost if only this very best might be attained, such was the spirit of ancient India.”³

* * *

“If anyone thinks that we are merely intellectual beings, he is

not a Hindu. Hinduism leaves the glorification of intellectuality to those who have never seen God. She is commissioned by Him to speak only of His greatness and majesty and she has so spoken for thousands of years. When we first received a European education, we allowed ourselves to be misled by the light of science. Science is a light within a limited room, not the sun which illumines the world. The Apra Vidya is the sum of science but there is a higher Vidya, a mightier knowledge.”⁴

* * *

“It will be well when every Indian, instead of taking a waxlike stamp from his foreign surroundings, is able to carry India with him wherever he goes. For that will mean that India is destined to conquer and place her stamp upon the whole world.”⁵

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“The world waits for the rising of India to receive the divine flood in its fullness.”⁶

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1. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo 08, Pages 38-39*
2. *Collected Works of The Mother 12, Page 211*
3. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo 07, Pages 1095-096*
4. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo 07, Page 891*
5. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo 01, Page 550*
6. *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo 13, Page 11*

THE MISSION OF INDIA

“India has in herself a faith of superhuman virtue to accomplish miracles, to deliver herself out of irrefragable bondage, to bring God down upon earth. She has a secret of will power which no other nation possesses. All she needs to rouse in her that faith, that will, is an ideal which will induce her to make the effort.... The ideal is that of humanity in God, of God in humanity, the ancient ideal of the *sanatana dharma* but applied as it has never been applied before to the problem of politics and the work of national revival. To realise that ideal, to impart it to the world is the mission of India.”

- Sri Aurobindo

(Complete works of Sri Aurobindo 07, p. 1017)