

The Resurgent India

A Monthly National Review

March 2023



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

Year 13

Issue 12

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SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

(Full of Promise and Joyful Surprises)

Botanical name: Gaillardia Pulchella

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

Year 13

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CONTENTS

Highlights.....	6
Developments in Russia and Ukraine	6
Technology Update - Musk's Warning and the Unstoppable AI	10
Global Banking Failures	11
Rahul Gandhi's Disqualification	13
Elections in North-east.....	14
Tripura:	14
Meghalaya:	16
Nagaland:.....	16
The Truth About Modern Polity - 9.....	18
IV. The Future Prospects for the Human Race	18
1. The Ultimate Standards of Truth, Knowledge and Action for Human Beings	18
A. The Absolute	18
B. The Vedanta	19
C. Certitudes	20
D. The Pure Existent - The Brahman.....	21
E. The Divine Grace	25
2. Man on Earth.....	25
A. Aim.....	25
B. Possibilities.....	27
3. The Future.....	32

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, Vol. 13, pp. 124-25)

HIGHLIGHTS

DEVELOPMENTS IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

Even as the Russia-Ukraine war rages on, the International Criminal Court (ICC), passed a significant order indicting Russian President, Mr. Putin, for war crimes in Ukraine, thereby making him an international pariah and liable to arrest. Despite this, Putin continued to be defiant as he visited parts of occupied Ukraine. Further providing diplomatic cover to Putin was China's Xi Jinping, who became the first high-level leader to visit Putin in Russia, thereby indicating the Chinese disregard for the ICC order. Indeed, China publicly spoke out against the ICC order by saying that ICC should avoid politicization and double standards. Even though speculations are rife that China may help to broker peace between the two warring countries – especially in the context of China's 12-point peace plan for the conflict – yet the refusal by Jinping to publicly mention Ukraine, even as both Russia and China emphasized on their close ties, does not give much hope in this regard. Indeed, despite Zelensky's request, the much-anticipated phone call between Xi and Zelensky never happened.

That is, perhaps, why for the first time, a senior Ukrainian Minister is planning to visit New Delhi to convince the latter to be a part of resolution of the conflict and send a 'direct message' to Putin. China's mediating role in this regard continues to be under a cloud, as it is seen to shift more and more in the Russian corner, despite exhortations and attempts to the contrary by other western countries like Germany and France.

Indeed, Xi's visit to Russia carried forward the official cornerstone of Russia-China policy conceived in the Sino-

Russian Joint Statement of February 4th 2022, based on ‘no-limits partnership’ and ‘no forbidden areas of cooperation.’ This was reaffirmed by a clip which recorded Putin bidding adieu to Xi at the end of the present visit, where *Xi is heard saying to Putin, “Change is coming that hasn’t happened in a hundred years. And we are driving this change together.” To this, Putin replies, “I agree”* (Saran, 2023). Even the extent to which China is supposedly restraining Russia is debatable. Within a week of Xi’s visit, Putin announced plans to station nuclear weapons in Belarus, to which China gave no reaction.

Even the relations between Russia and China have expanded since the Ukraine invasion. With US sanctions firmly in place, Russia is relying heavily on Chinese imports of critical semiconductor products to sustain their power sector and economy, even as China is relying on an alternate Yamal gas pipeline through which supply from Russia to China can be made possible and building a railway project in Russia’s natural-resource-rich Sakha region in the Far East, which Moscow itself could not afford. Such projects will further strengthen Russia’s dependence on China and enable the latter to control the natural resources of the country.

China has also, significantly, signed an ‘all-weather’ comprehensive strategic partnership agreement with Belarus’s Lukashenko, who recently had a summit with China’s Xi Jinping. This makes Belarus the only country, other than Pakistan, to have such an understanding with China. These Chinese moves with respect to Russia and Belarus have further alarmed the West with respect to Chinese intent. Belarus’s Lukashenko’s recent Beijing visit was accompanied by consistent condemnation by the US and allegations by the West that China maybe planning to supply weapons to Russia. This is correct.

Presently, even though China is not openly supplying weapons to Russia, it has still been supplying drones and other strategic items.

This has raised questions about Russia increasingly becoming a Chinese vassal state. But it is not just China to which Russia is beholden. Moscow is increasingly becoming subservient to Iran as well. Up until now, Russia has been a superior trade partner and investor in Iran. Now roles are being reversed. Iranian investments in Russia are expected to hugely transcend Russian ones in Iran. More delicately, Iranian investments and direct infrastructural and security connections are increasing with Russia's predominantly Muslim-populated provinces. The security threat posed by potential Iranian radicalization in these provinces cannot be emphasized enough. For, Iran has had a history of cultivating radical religious alliances with domestic lobbies based on foreign soil to advance its security interests by the means of proxies. Further, the growing closeness between China-Iran-Russia axis and the attempts of this axis to accommodate other players across Central Asia and Middle-east are set to vastly change the security calculus in the entire non-Western world. This will further accelerate in what is perceived by many to be a sunset period of the US and Europe. In that sense, perhaps, Xi was not wrong in commenting to Putin that a 'major change is coming' which Russia-China axis is driving together.

In this context, India is a powerful dark horse which each side continues to attempt to sway. That is why it is hardly surprising that Russia's newly released national security outlook emphasizes on major foreign policy outreach towards India – a position that China immediately heartily endorsed.

Interestingly, not just China and Iran, but even Japan's

position is complex with regard to Russia. It has recently come to light that Japan is continuing to buy Russian crude at prices above the G7-imposed price cap of \$60 per barrel, thereby indicating that it is becoming difficult in adhering to the Western sanctions-regime. Incidentally, Japan had already secured a waiver for importing natural gas from Russia through the Sakhalin-2 pipeline prior to the start of the price cap sanctions.

Despite these diplomatic changes, Russia continues to struggle in the war. In terms of war offensive, Ukraine has been consistently receiving support from the West and is planning to mount a major offensive against Russia in May. It is believed that the goal of the Ukrainian planned offensive would be to either drive a wedge through Russian-occupied territory along the southern coasts of the Black and Azov Seas, or, to seek a humiliating Russian turnabout in the fighting in the eastern Donbas region — or both.

Russia is also facing a delicate internal situation. While discontent against Putin's regime is growing, latest reports suggest that nowhere is this more evident and precarious than amongst the Cossacks – a community that Russia, since the Soviet era, has regarded as being, both, an opportunity and a danger. It appears that in the wake of Russia's misadventure in Ukraine, Cossacks are rallying not only towards separatist regionalism, but towards full-fledged national consciousness. If the Cossacks succeed in breaking away from the Russian nation, it would mean that Russia will lose another seven million members and 5 percent of the country's population. Alarming for Russia, an increasing number of Cossacks believe that, in the wake of the war in Ukraine, the Cossacks will have the chance to form their own state in alliance with Kyiv and the West – thus achieving what they failed to do after 1917 and

1991. Some have even begun speaking of Cossackia as an “unrecognized” state rather than a long-term goal.

This will further strengthen regionalism in Russia and create instability. Already Moscow’s failed attempts to homogenize Cossacks are antagonizing other non-Russian speaking people as well.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE – MUSK’S WARNING AND THE UNSTOPPABLE AI

The march of automated technologies continues with leaps and bounds. Powerful chatbots like ChatGPT, Anthropic’s Claude, Google’s Bard and PaLM, and Microsoft’s Bing, besides thousands of other AI applications, are being deployed in everyday lives speedily. Already an advanced version of ChatGPT, namely ChatGPT-4, is available. It is a big move over the earlier ChatGPT. GPT-4 is more conversational and creative and can understand human emotions. It can write full exam papers and can do a lot of white-collar work, such as programming and writing. It can accept text and image inputs simultaneously, and, unlike the previous version, can take inputs of up to 25000 words. For example, if given a picture of food ingredients and asked what dishes can be made from these ingredients, the software will immediately furnish a list of recipes.

Such developments may not make it to the headlines, yet what is happening in this domain is, perhaps, more significant than all the political and economic developments we see around us. For, unbeknownst to us, technology is changing our lives in a subtle yet irreversible way.

A clear acknowledgement of this fact came in the form of

a joint statement by more than a thousand prominent technology leaders, developers and researchers across the world. Prominent leaders include Tesla and Space-X boss, Elon Musk, Apple co-founder, Steve Wozniak, Andrew Yang, Rachel Bronson, among others.

The statement urged artificial intelligence labs to ‘pause’ the development of most advanced AI systems, emphasizing that the current level of unchecked AI growth presents “profound risks to society and humanity.” The statement said that AI labs are “locked in an out-of-control race to develop and deploy ever more powerful digital minds that no one – not even their creators – can understand, predict or reliably control.” The warning comes at an opportune time.

GLOBAL BANKING FAILURES

The debates about the safety of the global banking systems have been raised yet again, as the banking contagion spreads from US to Europe. The genesis lay with the US’s Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) – a major lender to high-risk, high-growth technology start-ups. During 2020 and 2021, the bank’s deposit base rose by \$90 billion, thanks to deposits by well-performing technology start-ups in an era of low interest rates. SVB invested around \$88 billion – nearly all its major holdings – in mortgage-backed bonds in 2021. As the Fed increased interest rates, the value of these bonds collapsed, eroding SVB’s capital base and leading to inability to pay. This coincided with the drying up of tech start-up funding and demands to withdraw money, which SVB could not service. To honour the withdrawal requests of its clients, SVB was forced to sell some of its investments at a time when their value had declined, losing almost \$2 billion in the process.

SVB's collapse led to the failure of Signature Bank, worsening the banking turmoil in the US. However, the crisis was prevented from taking on the hues of something akin to the 2008 global financial crisis, as the US government had swung into early action. US's Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) decided to insure bank accounts containing more than \$250,000. Further, a bailout would have been extremely unpopular, therefore, the Fed announced it would make available additional loans to eligible depository institutions to help assure that banks have the ability to meet the needs of all their depositors.

A new entity called the Bank Term Funding Program (BTFP) will offer loans of up to one year to banks, savings associations, credit unions, and other eligible institutions. Those taking advantage of the facility will be asked to pledge high-quality collateral such as Treasuries, agency debt, and mortgage-backed securities.

However, the echoes of the banking crisis were felt across the Atlantic, as one of the world's premier and Switzerland's largest bank, Credit Suisse, saw its shares plunging 24% and requiring immediate intervention by the Swiss government in the form of a take-over by the country's National Bank. The global episodes, while not precipitating in a full-fledged financial crisis, have again raised questions over the nature and accountability of the present banking system, including the safety of depositors' money therein. Many have raised questions on the sustainability of fractional reserve banking that underpins the banking system by allowing institutions to hold some of depositors' money in liquid assets and lend out the rest.

RAHUL GANDHI'S DISQUALIFICATION

After the failure of the Bharat Jodo Yatra, Rahul Gandhi seems to be back in the news for the wrong reasons. This time he was indicted for defamation under IPC Sections 499 and 500, by a Surat Sessions Court, and granted bail for 30 days to allow him to appeal in a higher court. These sections of IPC conceive of defamation as being a criminal offence punishable by up to two years of jail. The case was filed by a BJP MLA, namely Purnesh Modi, based on Rahul Gandhi's 2019 speech in which he is seen to be targeting the 'Modi' community in general, calling them thieves.

Interestingly, this case of criminal defamation led to Gandhi's immediate disqualification as an MP. Despite the hue and cry raised by the Congress, this was in technical accordance with the prevailing law dealing with 'Article 102 (1)(e) of the Constitution of India read with Section 8 of the Representation of People Act, 1951.' Article 102 deals with disqualification of MPs from the Parliament, which includes a provision stating that an MP may be disqualified on the basis of a law made by the Parliament. The law under which he has been disqualified is the Representation of People Act, 1951, whose Section 8(3) stipulates that a person sentenced to at least a two-year imprisonment for any offence will be disqualified. The disqualification can be reversed if a higher court grants a stay on the conviction (and not merely suspension of sentence) or decides the appeal in favour of the convicted lawmaker.

Under controversy was whether Rahul Gandhi should have been 'immediately' disqualified as soon as the Surat court judgement came. While originally Section 8(4) of the Representation of People Act stated that the disqualification

takes effect only “after three months have elapsed” from the date of conviction, yet the Supreme Court in a 2013 ruling in ‘Lily Thomas VS. Union of India’ struck down Section 8(4) of the RPA as unconstitutional. This made Gandhi eligible for immediate disqualification.

Significantly, in 2013, the then Manmohan Singh government had attempted to bring an ordinance to nullify the effect of the 2013 judgement. However, as the public would recall, Rahul Gandhi famously tore that ordinance at a public event, in a great humiliation to the Manmohan Singh government. This action allowed the 2013 judgement to remain operative. Now it is under this that Gandhi stands disqualified.

Interestingly, instead of immediately appealing the Surat judgement in a higher court, Gandhi and the Congress party chose to play the politics of victimhood over it. They even organized a protest in Wayanad, Kerala (from where Gandhi was the MP). In an embarrassment, the protest turned out to be a failure, with barely any attendees.

ELECTIONS IN NORTH-EAST

Elections held in the states of Tripura, Nagaland and Meghalaya yielded unsurprising victories for the BJP and further erosion of the Congress party. While in Tripura and Nagaland, the BJP won directly, in Meghalaya Conrad Sangma’s NPP emerged as the single largest party and BJP pledged to give it support.

Tripura:

In Tripura, BJP and its alliance partner, Indigenous People’s Front of Tripura (IPFT) scored a decisive victory, despite the opportunistic alliance between the Congress and the Left.

Party	Seats Won	Change from 2018	Vote (%)	Change from 2018 (%)
BJP+IPFT	33	-11	40	-10.8
INC+Left	14	-2	36	-10.13
TIPRA Motha	13	13	19.6	+19.6
Others	0	0	4.1	+1.26

Source: CSDS-Lokniti

The results highlight that while the BJP-led alliance won comfortably and was ahead of its competitors in terms of, both, seat-share and vote-share, its performance relative to 2018 was dented. Relative to 2018, it lost 11 seats and its vote-share dipped by nearly 11 percent. Much of it may have gone to the newly formed TIPRA Motha, led by royal family scion, Mr. Debbarama, who campaigned on the basis of carving out an autonomous tribal state called the Greater Tipraland, and sought to amplify the divisions between the Hindu Bengalis and the tribals. In that respect, TIPRA Motha did manage to corner a significant chunk of the results pie and poses a threat to the BJP in the future.

	BJP+IPFT	Left+INC	TIPRA Motha	Others
Hindu upper caste	53	34	1	12
Hindu OBC	63	36	1	<1
Hindu Dalit	54	43	<1	3
Hindu ST	10	<1	90	<1
Muslims	12	81	2	5
Muslims	12	81	2	5

Source: Lokniti-CSDS

As can further be seen from the community-wise voting patterns, the main polarization was in two blocs viz. Muslims and Scheduled Tribes. While Muslims voted entirely for the Congress-Left alliance, STs voted fully for the TIPRA Motha, showing that the latter's polarization bid and appeal among the tribals has worked.

Meghalaya:

In Meghalaya, not BJP, but Conrad Sangma's NPP emerged as the single largest party. But due to BJP's support, even BJP is part of the government, although the party's tally of 2 seats in the past and present elections remained unimproved. Even United Democratic Party (UDP) eventually became a part of the government. Thus, INC, with 5 seats, is the only key Opposition in the state. Trinamool Congress (TMC) opened its account with 4 seats.

Party	Seats won (2023)	Seats won (2018)	Vote (%) (2023)	Vote (%) 2018
NPP+BJP	26	21	31.4	20.6
UDP	11	6	16.2	11.6
INC	5	21	13.1	28.5
Others	17	7	-	-

Source: Lokniti-CSDS

The results in Meghalaya indicate that BJP has a long way to go, but has managed its alliances well.

Nagaland:

In Nagaland, BJP scored a victory, thanks to its pre-poll

alliance with established Nagaland parties. The alliance won with a comfortable majority and a 51% vote-share. The BJP too increased its seat tally to 12 seats and its vote share to 19%. As a result, the NPF was reduced to 2 seats in the 2023 election. The Congress, which ruled the state for a decade between 1992 and 2003, could not win a single seat.

Party	Seats won (2023)	Seats won (2018)	Vote (%) (2023)	Vote (%) (2018)
NDPP+BJP	37	30	51	40.5
NPP	5	2	5.7	7.1
NPF	2	26	7.09	38.8
Others	16	2	-	-

Source: Lokniti-CSDS

The victory in Nagaland is significant, as it is prefaced by a delicate security situation and the even more delicate issue of deadlock over the Naga Framework Agreement with militant Naga nationalists [viz. NSCN (I-M)].

Overall, the results of the state elections in the north-east indicate that BJP is progressively gaining firmer ground. Its independent performance in states like Tripura and Nagaland has been noteworthy. The fact that Congress is staring at a complete wipe-out, especially immediately in the wake of the much-publicized and ostentatious Bharat Jodo Yatra, is also important, reflecting on Congress's failure among the people and the exposure of its anti-national politics.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MODERN POLITY – 9

(Continued from the February 2023 Issue)

IV. THE FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR THE HUMAN RACE

I. The Ultimate Standards of Truth, Knowledge and Action for Human Beings

A. *The Absolute*

“Because God is invincibly great, He can afford to be weak; because He is immutably pure, He can indulge with impunity in sin; He knows eternally all delight, therefore He tastes also the delight of pain; He is inalienably wise, therefore He has not debarred Himself from folly.”
(CWSA 12: 430)

“Parabrahman being the Absolute is indescribable by any name or definite conception. It is not Being or Non-Being, but something of which Being & Non-Being are primary symbols; not Atman or unAtman or Maya; not Personality or Impersonality; not Quality or Non-Quality; not Consciousness or Non-Consciousness; not Bliss or Non-Bliss; not Purusha or Prakriti; not god nor man nor animal; not release nor bondage; but something of which all these are primary or derivative, general or particular symbols. Still, when we say Parabrahman is not this or that, we mean that It cannot in its essentiality be limited to this or that symbol or any sum of symbols; in a sense Parabrahman is all this & all this is Parabrahman. There is nothing else which all this can be.

Parabrahman being Absolute is not subject to logic, for

logic applies only to the determinate. We talk confusion if we say that the Absolute cannot manifest the determinate & therefore the universe is false or non-existent. The very nature of the Absolute is that we do not know what it is or is not, what it can do or cannot do; we have no reason to suppose that there is anything it cannot do or that its Absoluteness is limited by any kind of impotency. We experience spiritually that when we go beyond everything else we come to something Absolute; we experience spiritually that the universe is in the nature of a manifestation proceeding, as it were, from the Absolute; but all these words & phrases are merely intellectual terms trying to express the inexpressible.” (CWSA 12: 104-05)

B. The Vedanta

“Vedanta’s final & single answer to all the questions of philosophy is contained in a single mighty & ever-memorable phrase, So ’ham. I am He or more explicitly or to the question of the inquirer अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, I am Brahman. Cutting through all tremors & hesitations, scorning all doubt or reserve it announces with a hardy & daring incisiveness the complete identity of man & God. This is its gospel that the individual Self who seems so limited, thwarted, befouled, shamed & obscured with the bonds & shackles, the mud & stains of earthly life and the pure, perfect and illimitable Being who possesses & supports all existence, to Whom this vast and majestic Universe is but an inconsiderable corner of His mind and infinite Time cannot end and infinite Space cannot confine and the infinite net of cause and effect is powerless to trammel are equal, are of one nature, power, splendour, bliss, are One. It seems the very madness of megalomania, the very delirium of egoism. And yet if it be true?”

And it is true. Reason can come to no other conclusion, Yoga ends in no less an experience, the voices of a hundred holy witnesses who have seen God face to face, bring to us no less wonderful a message.” (CWSA 18: 337)

“I can know nothing except what I myself am; if I know others, it is because they also are myself, because my self has assumed these apparently alien presentations as well as that which is nearest to my own mental centre. All sensation, all action of sense is thus the same in essence whether external or internal, physical or psychical.” (CWSA 18: 58)

C. Certitudes

“In the deep there is a greater deep, in the heights a greater height. Sooner shall man arrive at the borders of infinity than at the fulness of his own being. For that being is infinity, is God –

I aspire to infinite force, infinite knowledge, infinite bliss. Can I attain it? Yes, but the nature of infinity is that it has no end. Say not therefore that I attain it. I become it. Only so can man attain God by becoming God.

But before attaining he can enter into relations with him. To enter into relations with God is Yoga, the highest rapture & the noblest utility. There are relations within the compass of the humanity we have developed. These are called prayer, worship, adoration, sacrifice, thought, faith, science, philosophy. There are other relations beyond our developed capacity, but within the compass of the humanity we have yet to develop. Those are the relations that are attained by the various practices we usually call Yoga.

We may not know him as God, we may know him as Nature,

our Higher Self, Infinity, some ineffable goal. It was so that Buddha approached Him; so approaches him the rigid Adwaitin. He is accessible even to the Atheist. To the materialist He disguises Himself in matter. For the Nihilist he waits ambushed in the bosom of Annihilation.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम्।' (CWSA 12: 5)

D. The Pure Existent – The Brahman

“WHEN we withdraw our gaze from its egoistic preoccupation with limited and fleeting interests and look upon the world with dispassionate and curious eyes that search only for the Truth, our first result is the perception of a boundless energy of infinite existence, infinite movement, infinite activity pouring itself out in limitless Space, in eternal Time, an existence that surpasses infinitely our ego or any ego or any collectivity of egos, in whose balance the grandiose products of aeons are but the dust of a moment and in whose incalculable sum numberless myriads count only as a petty swarm. We instinctively act and feel and weave our life thoughts as if this stupendous world movement were at work around us as centre and for our benefit, for our help or harm, or as if the justification of our egoistic cravings, emotions, ideas, standards were its proper business even as they are our own chief concern. When we begin to see, we perceive that it exists for itself, not for us, has its own gigantic aims, its own complex and boundless idea, its own vast desire or delight that it seeks to fulfil, its own immense and formidable standards which look down as if with an indulgent and ironic smile at the pettiness of ours. And yet let us not swing over to the other extreme and form too positive an idea of our own insignificance. That too would be an act of ignorance and the shutting of our eyes to the great facts of the universe.

For this boundless Movement does not regard us as unimportant to it. Science reveals to us how minute is the care, how cunning the device, how intense the absorption it bestows upon the smallest of its works even as on the largest. This mighty energy is an equal and impartial mother, *samam* brahma, in the great term of the Gita, and its intensity and force of movement is the same in the formation and upholding of a system of suns and the organisation of the life of an ant-hill. It is the illusion of size, of quantity that induces us to look on the one as great, the other as petty. If we look, on the contrary, not at mass of quantity but force of quality, we shall say that the ant is greater than the solar system it inhabits and man greater than all inanimate Nature put together. But this again is the illusion of quality. When we go behind and examine only the intensity of the movement of which quality and quantity are aspects, we realise that this Brahman dwells equally in all existences. Equally partaken of by all in its being, we are tempted to say, equally distributed to all in its energy. But this too is an illusion of quantity. Brahman dwells in all, indivisible, yet as if divided and distributed. If we look again with an observing perception not dominated by intellectual concepts, but informed by intuition and culminating in knowledge by identity, we shall see that the consciousness of this infinite Energy is other than our mental consciousness, that it is indivisible and gives, not an equal part of itself, but its whole self at one and the same time to the solar system and to the ant-hill. To Brahman there are no whole and parts, but each thing is all itself and benefits by the whole of Brahman. Quality and quantity differ, the self is equal. The form and manner and result of the force of action vary infinitely, but the eternal, primal, infinite energy is the same in all. The force of strength that goes to make the strong man is no whit greater than the

force of weakness that goes to make the weak. The energy spent is as great in repression as in expression, in negation as in affirmation, in silence as in sound.

Therefore the first reckoning we have to mend is that between this infinite Movement, this energy of existence which is the world and ourselves. At present we keep a false account. We are infinitely important to the All, but to us the All is negligible; we alone are important to ourselves. This is the sign of the original ignorance which is the root of the ego, that it can only think with itself as centre as if it were the All, and of that which is not itself accepts only so much as it is mentally disposed to acknowledge or as it is forced to recognise by the shocks of its environment. Even when it begins to philosophise, does it not assert that the world only exists in and by its consciousness? Its own state of consciousness or mental standards are to it the test of reality; all outside its orbit or view tends to become false or non-existent. This mental self-sufficiency of man creates a system of false accountantship which prevents us from drawing the right and full value from life. There is a sense in which these pretensions of the human mind and ego repose on a truth, but this truth only emerges when the mind has learned its ignorance and the ego has submitted to the All and lost in it its separate self-assertion. To recognise that we, or rather the results and appearances we call ourselves, are only a partial movement of this infinite Movement and that it is that infinite which we have to know, to be consciously and to fulfil faithfully, is the commencement of true living. To recognise that in our true selves we are one with the total movement and not minor or subordinate is the other side of the account, and its expression in the manner of our being, thought, emotion and action is necessary to the culmination of a true or divine living.” (CWSA 21: 78-80)

“When we see with the inner vision and sense and not with the physical eye a tree or other object, what we become aware of is an infinite one Reality constituting the tree or object, pervading its every atom and molecule, forming them out of itself, building the whole nature, process of becoming, operation of indwelling energy; all of these are itself, are this infinite, this Reality: we see it extending indivisibly and uniting all objects so that none is really separate from it or quite separate from other objects. “It stands” says the Gita “undivided in beings and yet as if divided.” Thus each object is that Infinite and one in essential being with all other objects that are also forms and names – powers, numens – of the Infinite.

This incoercible unity in all divisions and diversities is the mathematics of the Infinite, indicated in a verse of the Upanishads – “This is the complete and That is the complete; subtract the complete from the complete, the complete is the remainder.” For so too it may be said of the infinite self-multiplication of the Reality that all things are that self-multiplication; the One becomes Many, but all these Many are That which was already and is always itself and in becoming the Many remains the One. There is no division of the One by the appearance of the finite, for it is the one Infinite that appears to us as the many finite: the creation adds nothing to the Infinite; it remains after creation what it was before. The Infinite is not a sum of things, it is That which is all things and more. If this logic of the Infinite contradicts the conceptions of our finite reason, it is because it exceeds it and does not base itself on the data of the limited phenomenon, but embraces the Reality and sees the truth of all phenomena in the truth of the Reality...” (CWSA 21: 353-54)

E. The Divine Grace

“There is a Power that no ruler can command; there is a Happiness that no earthly success can bring; there is a Light that no wisdom can possess; there is a Knowledge that no philosophy and no science can master; there is a Bliss of which no satisfaction of desire can give the enjoyment; there is a thirst for Love that no human relation can appease; there is a Peace that one finds nowhere, not even in death.

It is the Power, the Happiness, the Light, the Knowledge, the Bliss, the Love, the Peace that flow from the Divine Grace.”
(CWM 01: 380)

2. Man on Earth

A. Aim

*“A mutual debt binds man to the Supreme:
His nature we must put on as he put ours;
We are sons of God and must be even as he:
His human portion, we must grow divine.
Our life is a paradox with God for key.”* (CWSA 33: 67)

“Our aim must be to be perfect as God in His being and bliss is perfect, pure as He is pure, blissful as He is blissful, and, when we are ourselves siddha in the purna Yoga, to bring all mankind to the same divine perfection. It does not matter if for the present we fall short of our aim, so long as we give ourselves whole-heartedly to the attempt and by living constantly in it and for it move forward even two inches upon the road; even that will help to lead humanity out of the struggle and twilight in which it now dwells into the luminous joy which God intends for us. But whatever our immediate success, our unvarying aim must be to perform the whole

journey and not lie down content in any wayside stage or imperfect resting place.” (CWSA 12: 98)

“The ascent to the divine Life is the human journey, the Work of works, the acceptable Sacrifice. This alone is man’s real business in the world and the justification of his existence, without which he would be only an insect crawling among other ephemeral insects on a speck of surface mud and water which has managed to form itself amid the appalling immensities of the physical universe.” (CWSA 21: 48)

“The earliest preoccupation of man in his awakened thoughts and, as it seems, his inevitable and ultimate preoccupation, – for it survives the longest periods of scepticism and returns after every banishment, – is also the highest which his thought can envisage. It manifests itself in the divination of Godhead, the impulse towards perfection, the search after pure Truth and unmixed Bliss, the sense of a secret immortality. The ancient dawns of human knowledge have left us their witness to this constant aspiration; today we see a humanity satiated but not satisfied by victorious analysis of the externalities of Nature preparing to return to its primeval longings. The earliest formula of Wisdom promises to be its last, – God, Light, Freedom, Immortality.

These persistent ideals of the race are at once the contradiction of its normal experience and the affirmation of higher and deeper experiences which are abnormal to humanity and only to be attained, in their organised entirety, by a revolutionary individual effort or an evolutionary general progression. To know, possess and be the divine being in an animal and egoistic consciousness, to convert our twilit or obscure physical mentality into the plenary supramental

illumination, to build peace and a self-existent bliss where there is only a stress of transitory satisfactions besieged by physical pain and emotional suffering, to establish an infinite freedom in a world which presents itself as a group of mechanical necessities, to discover and realise the immortal life in a body subjected to death and constant mutation, – this is offered to us as the manifestation of God in Matter and the goal of Nature in her terrestrial evolution.” (CWSA 21: 3-4)

“There is an ascending evolution in nature which goes from the stone to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man. Because man is, for the moment, the last rung at the summit of the ascending evolution, he considers himself as the final stage in this ascension and believes there can be nothing on earth superior to him. In that he is mistaken. In his physical nature he is yet almost wholly an animal, a thinking and speaking animal, but still an animal in his material habits and instincts. Undoubtedly, nature cannot be satisfied with such an imperfect result; she endeavours to bring out a being who will be to man what man is to the animal, a being who will remain a man in its external form, and yet whose consciousness will rise far above the mental and its slavery to ignorance.

Sri Aurobindo came upon earth to teach this truth to men. He told them that man is only a transitional being living in a mental consciousness, but with the possibility of acquiring a new consciousness, the Truth-consciousness, and capable of living a life perfectly harmonious, good and beautiful, happy and fully conscious.” (CWM 12: 116)

B. Possibilities

“The animal is satisfied with a modicum of necessity; the gods are content with their splendours. But man cannot rest

permanently until he reaches some highest good. He is the greatest of living beings because he is the most discontented, because he feels most the pressure of limitations. He alone, perhaps, is capable of being seized by the divine frenzy for a remote ideal.” (CWSA 21: 51)

“What I cannot do now is the sign of what I shall do hereafter. The sense of impossibility is the beginning of all possibilities. Because this temporal universe was a paradox and an impossibility, therefore the Eternal created it out of His being.” (CWSA 13: 200)

“..fundamentally, all possible knowledge is knowledge within the power of humanity. And since in man there is the inalienable impulse of Nature towards self-realisation, no struggle of the intellect to limit the action of our capacities within a determined area can for ever prevail. When we have proved Matter and realised its secret capacities, the very knowledge which has found its convenience in that temporary limitation, must cry to us, like the Vedic Restrainers, “Forth now and push forward also in other fields.”^[1]

If modern Materialism were simply an unintelligent acquiescence in the material life, the advance might be indefinitely delayed. But since its very soul is the search for Knowledge, it will be unable to cry a halt; as it reaches the barriers of sense-knowledge and of the reasoning from sense-knowledge, its very rush will carry it beyond and the rapidity and sureness with which it has embraced the visible universe is only an earnest of the energy and success which we may hope to see repeated in the conquest of what lies beyond,

^[1] Rig Veda, I. 4. 5.

once the stride is taken that crosses the barrier. We see already that advance in its obscure beginnings.

Not only in the one final conception, but in the great line of its general results Knowledge, by whatever path it is followed, tends to become one. Nothing can be more remarkable and suggestive than the extent to which modern Science confirms in the domain of Matter the conceptions and even the very formulae of language which were arrived at, by a very different method, in the Vedanta, – the original Vedanta, not of the schools of metaphysical philosophy, but of the Upanishads. And these, on the other hand, often reveal their full significance, their richer contents only when they are viewed in the new light shed by the discoveries of modern Science, – for instance, that Vedantic expression which describes things in the Cosmos as one seed arranged by the universal Energy in multitudinous forms.^[2] Significant, especially, is the drive of Science towards a Monism which is consistent with multiplicity, towards the Vedic idea of the one essence with its many becomings. Even if the dualistic appearance of Matter and Force be insisted on, it does not really stand in the way of this Monism. For it will be evident that essential Matter is a thing non-existent to the senses and only, like the Pradhana of the Sankhyas, a conceptual form of substance; and in fact the point is increasingly reached where only an arbitrary distinction in thought divides form of substance from form of energy.

Matter expresses itself eventually as a formulation of some unknown Force. Life, too, that yet unfathomed mystery, begins

^[2] Swetaswatara Upanishad, VI. 12.

to reveal itself as an obscure energy of sensibility imprisoned in its material formulation; and when the dividing ignorance is cured which gives us the sense of a gulf between Life and Matter, it is difficult to suppose that Mind, Life and Matter will be found to be anything else than one Energy triply formulated, the triple world of the Vedic seers. Nor will the conception then be able to endure of a brute material Force as the mother of Mind. The Energy that creates the world can be nothing else than a Will, and Will is only consciousness applying itself to a work and a result.

What is that work and result, if not a self-involution of Consciousness in form and a self-evolution out of form so as to actualise some mighty possibility in the universe which it has created? And what is its will in Man if not a will to unending Life, to unbounded Knowledge, to unfettered Power? Science itself begins to dream of the physical conquest of death, expresses an insatiable thirst for knowledge, is working out something like a terrestrial omnipotence for humanity. Space and Time are contracting to the vanishing-point in its works, and it strives in a hundred ways to make man the master of circumstance and so lighten the fetters of causality. The idea of limit, of the impossible begins to grow a little shadowy and it appears instead that whatever man constantly wills, he must in the end be able to do; for the consciousness in the race eventually finds the means. It is not in the individual that this omnipotence expresses itself, but the collective Will of mankind that works out with the individual as a means. And yet when we look more deeply, it is not any conscious Will of the collectivity, but a superconscious Might that uses the individual as a centre and means, the collectivity as a condition and field. What is this but the God in man, the infinite Identity,

the multitudinous Unity, the Omniscient, the Omnipotent, who having made man in His own image, with the ego as a centre of working, with the race, the collective Narayana,^[3] the *viśvamānava*^[4] as the mould and circumscription, seeks to express in them some image of the unity, omniscience, omnipotence which are the self-conception of the Divine? “That which is immortal in mortals is a God and established inwardly as an energy working out in our divine powers.”^[5] It is this vast cosmic impulse which the modern world, without quite knowing its own aim, yet serves in all its activities and labours subconsciously to fulfil.

But there is always a limit and an encumbrance, – the limit of the material field in the Knowledge, the encumbrance of the material machinery in the Power. But here also the latest trend is highly significant of a freer future. As the outposts of scientific Knowledge come more and more to be set on the borders that divide the material from the immaterial, so also the highest achievements of practical Science are those which tend to simplify and reduce to the vanishing-point the machinery by which the greatest effects are produced. Wireless telegraphy is Nature’s exterior sign and pretext for a new orientation. The sensible physical means for the intermediate transmission of the physical force is removed; it is only preserved at the points of impulsion and reception. Eventually even these must disappear; for when the laws and forces of the supraphysical are studied with the right starting-point, the means will infallibly be found for Mind directly to seize on the physical energy and speed it accurately upon its errand. There, once we bring

^[3] A name of Vishnu, who, as the God in man, lives constantly associated in a dual unity with Nara, the human being.

^[4] The universal man.

^[5] Rig Veda, IV. 2. 1.

ourselves to recognise it, lie the gates that open upon the enormous vistas of the future.

Yet even if we had full knowledge and control of the worlds immediately above Matter, there would still be a limitation and still a beyond. The last knot of our bondage is at that point where the external draws into oneness with the internal, the machinery of ego itself becomes subtilised to the vanishing-point and the law of our action is at last unity embracing and possessing multiplicity and no longer, as now, multiplicity struggling towards some figure of unity. There is the central throne of cosmic Knowledge looking out on her widest dominion; there the empire of oneself with the empire of one's world;^[6] there the life^[7] in the eternally consummate Being and the realisation of His divine nature^[8] in our human existence.” (CWSA 21: 15-19)

3. The Future

In the light of the Nature of the Absolute as formulated above in the words of Sri Aurobindo, all human knowledge and attempts at knowing – of any kind whatsoever by anyone – can really amount to anything more than a way of looking at things; a way which always differs according to the place, time and person – the wise traditional Indian formula of Desha, Kala and Patra which must necessarily be applied to all expressions of knowledge and understanding if they are to escape the rigidity of a mental formula and its ensuing falsehood when applied to life without reference to it.

^[6] *Svārājya* and *sāmrajya*, the double aim proposed to itself by the positive Yoga of the ancients.

^[7] *Sālokya-mukti*, liberation by conscious existence in one world of being with the Divine.

^[8] *Sādharma-mukti*, liberation by assumption of the Divine Nature.

All that has been written and expressed here is just our way of looking at things which, fundamentally, is not necessarily better than any other sincere attempt to look at things in the light of one's consciousness and experience. It seems certain to us that the present phase of an unbridled human pursuit of knowledge and exploration in all the fields and walks of life is not going to stop short at any conceivable limit – even if it be the one conceived by the highest and most vast human intelligence. The resulting growth of our being may be divided into two very broad categories – the “inner” and the “outer”. What we call Science is concerned with the “outer” which by itself is always going to be limited to an increasingly efficient manipulation by the human consciousness of what it considers external to it and, as pointed out by Sri Aurobindo earlier, the result will be limited to achieving comfort and not the fullness of our being which alone can bring true fulfilment and happiness – primarily a psychological phenomenon. The inner approach is the province of that which is termed Spirituality and whose pursuit enables one to approach and live into ever deeper and higher layers of one's being. The traditional approach to it has been through religion, occultism, spiritual philosophy and spiritual experience. All these represent, essentially, Nature's attempt to open the inner being.

The past two hundred years which marked a period, especially in the West, of almost an exclusive concentration on the “outer” has been one of the most rapid and important phases in the evolution of Earth. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, “...advancing Knowledge should base herself on a clear, pure and disciplined intellect. It is necessary, too, that she should correct her errors sometimes by a return to the restraint of sensible fact, the concrete realities of the physical world. The touch of Earth is always reinvigorating to the son of Earth, even when he seeks a

supraphysical Knowledge. It may even be said that the supraphysical can only be really mastered in its fullness – to its heights we can always Reach – when we keep our feet firmly on the physical. “Earth is His footing,”^[9] says the Upanishad whenever it images the Self that manifests in the universe. And it is certainly the fact that the wider we extend and the surer we make our knowledge of the physical world, the wider and surer becomes our foundation for the higher knowledge, even for the highest, even for the Brahmaidya.

In emerging, therefore, out of the materialistic period of human Knowledge we must be careful that we do not rashly condemn what we are leaving or throw away even one tittle of its gains, before we can summon perceptions and powers that are well grasped and secure, to occupy their place. Rather we shall observe with respect and wonder the work that Atheism has done for the Divine and admire the services that Agnosticism has rendered in preparing the illimitable increase of knowledge. In our world error is continually the handmaid and pathfinder of Truth; for error is really a half-truth that stumbles because of its limitations; often it is Truth that wears a disguise in order to arrive unobserved near to its goal. Well, if it could always be, as it has been in the great period we are leaving, the faithful handmaid, severe, conscientious, clean-handed, luminous within its limits, a half-truth and not a reckless and presumptuous aberration.” (CWSA 21: 13-14)

With the spread of the work and the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and many other prominent Spiritual personalities during the

^[9] “*Padbhyām pṛthivī.*” – *Mundaka Upanishad, II. 1. 4.*

“*Pṛthivī pājasyam.*” – *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, I. 1. 1.*

last century, the “inner approach” was brought to the forefront of human consciousness but, nevertheless, remained – and still remains – confined to a small fraction of humanity in whom it has been effective in moulding, at least to some extent, their actions, life and thinking. The “outer approach” is still predominant and under the growing impetus of the new discoveries of science and their application, especially in the fields of IT, AI, and Outer Space, appears to be overshadowing and marginalising spirituality – though not religion and its ceremonial expressions – and all genuine inner efforts directed at changing human psychology and behaviour. A very serious environmental crisis – very grave for the Indian subcontinent – engendered by a deadly combination of materialistic science and a utilitarian spirit has brought things to such a pass that humanity is facing the danger of extinction if the present balance of forces continues to prevail even for a few more decades. Lest one take comfort even in this scenario – given the witnessed incurable propensity of modern man to do so – it needs to be pointed out that the growing militarization of the ever more potent and deadly discoveries in the various fields of science and technology is fraught with great danger and can bring about the extinction of life on earth any time in the near future.

In the light of the above, it seems instructive to look into the future prospects for humanity by considering it under the following four possible scenarios progressing from the Worst to the Best in our view:

(i) The balance between the two aforementioned approaches – the “inner” and the “outer” – remains practically unchanged from what it is at present. This means that there is practically nothing that enables humanity to change course and the present

ever growing trends in the Utilitarian Spirit and Science continues unabated leading to an extinction of human life on earth either through a catastrophic War or a very serious and irreversible (in the short-run) environmental crisis or a mixture of both. Because without a change in the present balance in the near future, for a humanity so heedless and disposed as the present, no advice to change course or any such warning as that of the materialistic scientist Stephen Hawking who advised it to look for another planet for human habitation before this becomes uninhabitable by the end of the century, can be expected to have any significant impact.

(ii) The balance between the “Inner” and the “Outer” changes, somewhat, in favour of the “Inner” just enough to save humanity from extinction but not from a very large scale suffering and destruction which may be looked upon as a means used by Nature to turn the scales further in favour of the “Inner” to enable it to arrive at and continue on a sustainable course of integral development leading it towards a transition from the human (mental) to the divine (supramental).

(iii) The balance between the two approaches gets altered sufficiently in favour of the “Inner” to enable humanity to chart a much safer course – though still not without much suffering and destruction – and arrive at an optimum balance between the two approaches to enable it to proceed on the path of integral development leading it towards a transition from the human to the divine.

(iv) By a special descent and action of the divine Force the optimum balance between the Inner and the Outer is achieved without much suffering and destruction and humanity is swiftly led towards the conditions necessary for the establishment of the divine Life upon earth.

Except for the first scenario, all the other three are consistent with Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's vision of a divine Life upon earth repeatedly expressed in their writings. The following lines from Sri Aurobindo's Epic Savitri are most inspiring and reassuring:

“All earth shall be the Spirit's manifest home,
Hidden no more by the body and the life,
Hidden no more by the mind's ignorance;
An unerring Hand shall shape event and act.
The Spirit's eyes shall look through Nature's eyes,
The Spirit's force shall occupy Nature's force.
This world shall be God's visible garden-house,
The earth shall be a field and camp of God,
Man shall forget consent to mortality
And his embodied frail impermanence.
This universe shall unseal its occult sense,
Creation's process change its antique front,
An ignorant evolution's hierarchy
Release the Wisdom chained below its base.
The Spirit shall be the master of his world
Lurking no more in form's obscurity
And Nature shall reverse her action's rule,
The outward world disclose the Truth it veils;
All things shall manifest the covert God,
All shall reveal the Spirit's light and might
And move to its destiny of felicity.
Even should a hostile force cling to its reign
And claim its right's perpetual sovereignty
And man refuse his high spiritual fate,
Yet shall the secret Truth in things prevail.
For in the march of all-fulfilling Time

The hour must come of the Transcendent's will:
All turns and winds towards his predestined ends
In Nature's fixed inevitable course
Decreed since the beginning of the worlds
In the deep essence of created things:
Even there shall come as a high crown of all
The end of Death, the death of Ignorance.

.....
Nature shall live to manifest secret God,
The Spirit shall take up the human play,
This earthly life become the life divine.” (CWSA 34: 707-10)

For those like us who have an unshakeable faith in Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, the first possibility is ruled out. We feel that the last is to be aspired for but the third seems most likely and even the second cannot be ruled out. Let it be as it may be but we cannot simply leave it here. We must aspire for the Best and join with all our heart and soul with the Mother in the following prayer of hers:

“The world is fighting for its spiritual life menaced by the rush of hostile and undivine forces.

Lord, we aspire to be Thy valiant warriors so that Thy glory may manifest upon the earth.” (CWM 15: 167)

“The future of the earth depends on a change of consciousness.

The only hope for the future is in a change of man's consciousness and the change is bound to come.

But it is left to men to decide if they will collaborate for this change or if it will have to be enforced upon them by the power of crashing circumstances.

So, wake up and collaborate!

Blessings.” (CWM 15: 66)” (The Truth About Modern Polity, pp. 177-198)

The Central Notion of the Veda

“Inspiration from the Truth purifies by getting rid of all falsehood, for all sin according to the Indian idea is merely falsehood, wrongly inspired emotion, wrongly directed will and action. The central idea of life and ourselves from which we start is a falsehood and all else is falsified by it. Truth comes to us as a light, a voice, compelling a change of thought, imposing a new discernment of ourselves and all around us. Truth of thought creates truth of vision and truth of vision forms in us truth of being, and out of truth of being (*satyam*) flows naturally truth of emotion, will and action. This is indeed the central notion of the Veda.”

– Sri Aurobindo

(CWSA 15: 100)