

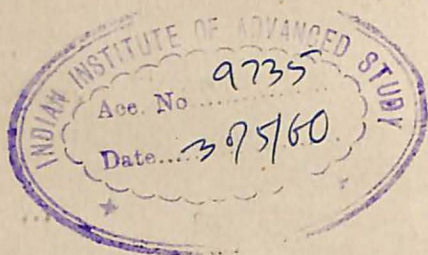
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THE DIARY  
OF A  
WESTWARD VOYAGE

by

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

*Translated by* INDU DUTT

*from the original Bengali*

PASHCHIM YATRIR DIARY



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To  
My little grandson  
SUNITH  
I dedicate this translation

By the ocean-edge of creation  
I woke up.  
I found that the world  
Was not a dream.  
In letters of blood  
I saw my own frame.  
I came to know myself  
With every hurt, with every pain.  
Truth is hard,  
I came to love that truth . . .  
It never cheats one.  
A sorrowful penance is this life  
Till the very end.  
To receive the hard reward of truth  
The debt has to be paid in full  
By the way of death.

S. S. HARUNA MARU

24th September, 1924

IT IS 8 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING. THERE ARE DARK clouds in the sky, the horizon is dim with pouring rain, and the moist wind like a peevish child refuses to be pacified. The unruly sea is sweeping across over the concrete wharf of the harbour with its roar, as if wanting to catch somebody by the hair and then falling back in despair. As the mind, when tormented by a dream, finds difficult to break through the barricade of some intense, repressed feelings, and the speech getting choked at the constrained throat bursts into a soul-agonising cry, so the foaming, frothing roar of the dumb sea, pale in the drenching rain, seems like the helpless anguish of a fathomless nightmare.

Such a stormy weather at the time of departure makes one depressed as it is supposed to be a bad omen. Our intellect is hardened, it does not recognise omens as good or bad in these modern days; our blood is raw, it is in its pristine age—all its fears and anxieties surmounting every logical conclusion show themselves up like those unreasonable waves across the concrete barrier. Intellect fortifies itself within its own reasoning by isolating itself from any contact with all the wordless gestures and indications of the nature of the universe. Blood exists outside the binding of its own reasoning; the shadow of the clouds falls upon it, the touch of the waves makes it heave; the flute of the wind makes it dance, it draws so many nuances from every shade of light and darkness; under a sky that is unpropitious, it has no peace.

I have been abroad many a time; at the time of departure I never found it very hard to pull out the anchor of my mind. This time it seems to be clinging to the land with undue force. From this it can be easily surmised that I must be at last approaching old age. Not to want to move is the sign of

a miserly heart. When the capital is little, there is reluctance to spend.

And yet I know, once we sail away from land, the tie that holds me back will dissolve of itself. The young traveller will come out on the royal path. This young man had once sung, ' Restless am I, I am wistful for the far beyond ! ' Has that song already been obliterated in the ebbing wind? Isn't there any eagerness to know the distant stranger, who sits veiled across the ocean?

Sometime ago I had had an invitation from China. The people there wanted that I should speak to them on some profound matter. In other words, it was an invitation for the learned.

This time I have an invitation from South America asking me to join them in their centenary celebrations. So that I am travelling light-hearted. I do not have to pose as a scholar. The more I lecture, the more I am lost within a covering fog. That is not how I can introduce myself as a poet.

The butterfly comes out of the cocoon because of its inherent nature. The silk-yarn is produced from the cocoon at the insistence of the ontologists. This creates a condition that is sorrowful for the butterfly. I visited the United States of America when I had well passed the prime of my youth. I was forced to give lectures, or they would leave me in no peace. Since then there has been no end to my frequenting platforms in order to fulfil my good-will mission. The poet in me took on a lesser note. For fifty years now I had spent in the world in its non-utility department on an unofficial basis. When, according to Manu I should have retired into the forests, I had to present myself at utility's hall of audience. Meetings and Committees came to expect from me duties of the official kind. This only indicates how I had been under the evil influence of Saturn.

Whether poets or men of merit, they all draw orders from people—orders from the king, orders from the master,

and orders from many masters collectively in the form of the public. They can never escape from the assault of orders. This happens chiefly because they inwardly obey the Goddess Saraswati but outwardly they are forced to acknowledge the Goddess Lakshmi. The call of Saraswati is towards the nectar-store, Lakshmi leads one to the provision-store. The white lotus of the abode of Indra and the golden lotus of the palace of Kuvera somehow do not exist simultaneously. Those who have to pay taxes to both, to one with pleasure, and to the other being compelled, have to face difficulties. When the time is taken up in earning one's livelihood one cannot attend to the inner life. It is useless to hope for a flower-garden where the tram-lines have to run. That is why there has been a compromise between a flower-garden and the road to the office, in this way, that the gardener supplies one with flowers whereas the tram-line authorities help one towards procuring food. Unfortunately, the man who keeps up the supply of food weilds more power in this temporal world. For, when it is a question of compulsion, love for flowers can stand no chance against a hungry stomach.

The securing of food, clothes and shelter is not the main factor. The wealth that the rich possess they can safeguard in their own homes locking it up in their iron safe, but the deeds of the meritorious, whatever their sources may be, cannot be held in the receptacle of their mind. These deeds of glory belong to all times, to all men. Therefore, a place is needed from where they can be recognizable to all countries, to all times. In the Court of Vikramaditya, the poet who was placed on a high dais, could stand before the select men of taste of the then contemporary India; what he revealed did not get shrouded from the very beginning. In the very olden days there were yet worthier poems which, by some adverse fate, having failed to secure such high land, were washed away in the flood-tide of time, one knows that for certain.



One must bear in mind that those who are truly meritorious come into the world wearing a natural talisman. Orders come within reach of their hands, but these cannot penetrate their soul. That is why they do not ever perish, they survive for all future days. Solely out of greed, when they carry out orders indiscriminately, they can but last for the time being, later on they perish. To-day the majority of the 'Nine Jewels' of Vikramaditya's Court cannot possibly be picked out from amongst the refuse-heaps of time. They had conformed to the king's orders without any reservation because they received ready largesse in a measure greater than anybody else at the time could claim.

But Kalidas, who was no expert in carrying out such orders had to suffer torments at the dense hands of the contemporary world. There were times when even he, out of necessity, had to carry out the commands of the king, the proof of which we find in his drama, *Malavika-Agnimitra*. In a few other epic-dramas he had outwardly shown obedience by saying, 'Your Majesty, it shall be as you wish—your orders will be obeyed', and then he had gone forward to produce something quite different, on the strength of which his works of glory did not meet with the rituals of the final obsequies even after the court had ceased to reign. . . . The connoisseurs of all times have given him at their assemblies a free place that remains unquestioned.

Man's activities are in two fields—the one is of necessity, and the other of creative pastime. All the demands of necessity come from the outside, from wants; the urge for creative play is from within, from imagination. The stage set by necessity becomes highly pregnant with orders from the outside, the stage for the creative pastime is alive from within. To-day there is an awakening amongst the ordinary crowd; its hunger is great, its demands are plenty. That many-tongued creature with its unending demands has kept the world of men stirring day and night; it must have such a paraphernalia of materials, preparations, footmen and

matchlock men, not to speak of the tumultuous uproar it has raised by all sizes of assorted drums. With the thunder-raising cry of 'I want, I want', it has filled the very heaven and earth with an unholy despair. This uproar entering the sportive field of creation is making its own demand, 'Let your lute, your drum, joining in the march of victory, intensify this clamour of ours.' For this, it is even willing to pay fat wages and fantastic rewards. No former court in the past history had ever made such an aggressive bid, or offered wages that it is so ready to pay. Evidently this is a time that is favourable for the drummers, but not for the lute-player. The master player is making his apologies with folded hands saying, 'I have no place in this noise-raising activity of yours, hence I would prefer to remain silent, or failing this I am even willing to commit suicide tying my lute round my neck and throwing myself into the water, but do not ever call me to join you in the procession of your band in full view on the main road. For, I have already signed a contract with the Master above, whereby I am engaged to sing for him at his audience hall.' On hearing this the general crowd accosts him with angry abusive words. It says, 'You do not believe in the service of the country, you believe only in your personal whims.' The lute-player tries to explain, 'I do not believe even in my own whims, I do not know what your interest is, I acknowledge the Master above!' The one with the thousand tongues shouts out with thunder in its voice, 'Be silent.'

The enormous creature that we understand by the word "masses" has its natural demands of necessity which are powerful and diverse. So that, it naturally places more value in the accomplishment of this necessity, it disregards the creative diversion. During the time of hunger a brinjal has more value than a jasmine. For that, one cannot blame the hungry man. But when the order comes that the jasmine has to take the place of a brinjal, one has to condemn the order. Providence has sent the jasmine even into a poverty-stricken

country, you cannot hold the jasmine responsible for this. The only responsibility of the jasmine is to blossom out as a jasmine, no matter what is happening near and far, and whether it has its use or not; if it must shed its petals, it must; if it must be strung into a garland that is also to be accepted. This is what the Gita has emphasized, 'It is better to die believing in one's religion—to accept another's religion for oneself is disaster.' It has been seen that many great people in this world have met disaster trying to live up to their religion, but that disaster is only an outward disaster, their own religion has saved them from within. Moreover, it also has been seen that many insignificant people have suddenly become great accepting a religion that is not theirs, but their death has been a death within, what the Upanishads describe, as, 'the greatness that is lost'.

Even the most ordinary person has a proud possession which is his own religion. It is by treasuring this religion within his small frame that he meets his salvation. History does not mention his name, perhaps he has the reputation of being even bad, but he leaves behind his name at the private hearing in the audience-hall where the All-Knowing resides in his heart. If, out of greed, he sells his own religion giving its place to a different religion and keeps blowing its trumpet, he may then make a name in the open market of the outward world, but in the hall of his great Master he will forfeit his name.

In this preface lies my own confession. I cannot say I have ever been free of this guilt. But because I had suffered acute sorrow for what I had lost, and had repented for such guilt that I try to be on my guard. In stormy weather when the lodestar is hidden from view one loses one's sense of direction. At times getting confused by the outside hubbub one cannot hear the clear call of one's own religion. It is then that the mind becomes overwhelmed by the deafening sound of that one word 'duty' coming out from so many mouths; one forgets that there is no such thing as duty, as separated

from the whole; it is my duty that is the only duty for me. The main purpose of a carriage is to move, but even in time of emergency if the horse declares, 'I shall take charge of the driver', or the wheels proclaim, 'We will take over the duty of the horse', then this idea of a duty becomes dangerous. One comes across this heaven-dropped and chance-received idea of duty everywhere and all around in this age of democracy. The world of men must keep moving, it is expected to move; but the chariot that takes the world along is composed of different components—the workers are moving it in one way, the meritorious also in their own way; it is this worthy following of one's particular way that brings about help to the general, which in its turn causes the moving speed of the whole chariot; when the functioning of either is not an integral part of the whole, the entire work is crippled.

I seem to remember a certain instance in connection with this. Lokamanya Tilak was then alive. He once sent me through a messenger some Rs. 50,000 requesting me that I should go to Europe. The non-cooperation movement had not then started, but the country was in the grip of stormy political agitation. My answer was 'I cannot join the political movement and then with that purpose proceed to Europe.' He again sent word to me that it was not his wish that I should engage myself in politics. The message of India which I could spread by carrying it there would be my true work, and through that real work I should be doing service to India. I knew that people looked up to Tilak as their political leader, and the money was given to him as a contribution to his work. I could not therefore accept the Rs. 50,000. Later on I met him in Bombay. He requested me again and said, 'It is by isolating yourself from all political matters that you will be accomplishing your own work, and that will be your way of serving the country. I could not expect anything more from you.' I realised this fact that Tilak was able to write a commentary on the Gita,

as he was the person who could claim that right; and such a right is a noble right.

There are many wealthy people who spend and also waste their money solely for their own enjoyment. If there can be any lessening in the expenditure of their indulgence at the demand of the public, that is nothing to complain about. Leisure is a thing that has its time-value. A householder uses up this wealth in the interest and activities of his domestic life, and one who is lazy does not use it at all. When anybody, in the cause of service to the people, does intrude on their leisure—the leisure of the householder and of the indolent person—he cannot be blamed for it. I spend much of my own leisure in being lazy, at least that is what I have been suspected of by some people. They do not understand one thing that this laziness is the privileged part of my work. The china clay that goes into the making of a cup is not its essential part, in fact it is very subsidiary; the importance is in the extent of its hollow. It is this hollow that gets filled with essence, the burnt clay is merely a means to it. The wooden post of a house is not what you expect a tree to be. In other words, the tree does not get its support only from the bit of immediate earth that it stands upon. But because its invisible roots spread out much farther into the subterranean soil than what its visible trunk stands upon, that the tree is supplied with its sap. Our work is similar to that of the tree; from underlying gaps of leisure our work also realizes its own essence. When ten people meet together and decide to put a tax on this god-sent leisure that is free of all rent, they reduce the whole work depriving it of its richness. That is why in no other country as seen from their contemporary news, a poet is so tossed and flung about like scattered coins in the name of God, left to be picked up by the common masses, as happens in our country.

I have taken this opportunity to state in a few words why I have had no inclination to lie on a hard piercing bed of arrows under the threat of orders. I have also offered excuses

why when there was work amongst people, by selling all the resources of my leisure at the urgency of paying my taxes, I have often followed the line of either civil or uncivil disobedience. It is not always that I have been able to escape all requests and appeals, the reason is that I am by nature weak. The great-minded on this earth are severe, hardened people; in pursuing their path to realize vast achievements their chief sustenance is the power they possess to say 'no' at the opportune moment and with sufficient firmness. In order to safeguard their noble possessions these weighty people can mark the magic cordon of a 'no' around them at the specific place with an emphasized line. I cannot claim that greatness, I could not reach out to it. Placing my feet on the two boats of 'yes' and 'no' as I swing I suddenly find I am in deep waters. That is why I pray with my whole heart today, 'O Steersman of the boat of NO, pull me up forcibly on to your boat, take me across the deep ocean—a summons has come for me from the shores of inaction. Do not let me while away my time in the pull of two directions.'

S. S. HARUNA MARU

25th September, 1924

THE WHOLE OF YESTERDAY THE SHIP WAS BEING loaded with goods. When it left at night the wind's whimpering had quietened down a little. But the clouds still strengthening themselves into groups, paraded with an ostentatious swell. Today a moist darkness has shrouded the morning sky. There are no greetings from light to welcome me this time. My mind and body also seem tired.

It seems that the ship has torn off a slice of the domestic world as it sailed away from the shore. On land people have the chance of preserving distance between one another; but the space here is limited, people live in close proximity. And yet it is hard to know them. Everytime before boarding the ship this thought oppresses my mind—this distance of the nearness, this association without companionship.

In the primitive state when man started to build his home, the walls were thin; there used to be definite gaps in the bamboo walls, one could easily push back the mat-door to enter the room. In course of time as he got more and more skilled in building his home, he also reinforced the walls with brick, wood, iron and stone, he made the doors more secure. The mind formed habits inside the room surrounded by the walls. One needed a screen for whatever one did whether it was to eat, to dress, to sit or to lie down. This necessity for privacy is the foremost part of civilization. For its invention and preservation an enormous amount is spent. Even walking the space between the home and the outside, man's natural movement is prevented at every step.

Every man has an inherent need for a screen, otherwise in the pull of the crowd if he merges within the many, the wealth of his own individuality loses meaning. Without

isolating oneself, one cannot give expression to oneself. The seed seeks isolation within the soil in order that it may express itself; the fruit for its own transformation wraps round itself the veil of an outer skin. In a barbaric state man lacks the force of his own personality, his activities are reduced. That is why with the excelling of civilization an exclusive individual privacy is built up surrounding each personality.

But this individual barrier gradually begins to take an exaggerated importance. Then the fact that man has a definite need to unite with each other appears strange having become shackled among many obstacles. The danger lies in this exaggerated importance.

What are the circumstances that lead to such a fatal situation? When the aim of enjoyment surpasses all limits and forces man to accept endless appurtenances as a necessity, when compelled to spend his leisure and resources for other people he finds it inevitable to procrastinate unduly, when he goes through elaborate arrangements to produce the needs of elementary living, then his ordinary world with the immensity of these paraphernalia of civilization takes on a monstrous shape. The harmony of relationship is possible only within the size of a moderate crowd. That is why the inhabitants of a village not only unite together, there is unity in them. The vast assembly of men in a town can never build up an appropriate heart-centre from which the bloodstream of relationship can flow out infusing every part, whether large or small, of its massive body. A large body of men is suitable for work, but it is not suitable for relationship. In a workshop the labour of a thousand workmen is necessary, but if a thousand people crowd a family, it will no longer be a home. For the consolidation of a machine there may be many people, for the unity of the heart, only a very few. So, it follows that the town may draw people together outwardly, but it creates gaps within, by isolating the people.



All our life we remain civilized beings, separated within the isolated cells of our rooms. Suddenly we come jostling and knocking against a crowd of people whom we are forced to meet as they are now on the boat. Their minds are not accustomed to the idea of mixing. When people in crowds go to a pilgrimage on foot, they get acquainted with each other in no time; they are the village-people, the habit of mixing is inherent in them. Even the merchants who traverse the deserts on camel-backs do not move about with their minds closed in the veils of silence. Their civilization is not the building up of dissimilarities within a fortified building of brick and mortar. But the passengers on a voyage or the passengers travelling by train, when they leave their homes, seem to take along with them their wall-enclosed subtler personalities.

It is seen sometimes that when, urged by a sudden nationalistic feeling, the University boys from a town rush to the villages to do some welfare work, they cannot come close to the villagers in spite of the nearness. They talk through the barrier of a language that sounds more like some intricate foreign jargon to the village people.

However, as we see, we in India also are very much drawn into the swirl of this urban civilization, but our minds are not yet able to shake off their rural habits. We have started to say that time is valuable, but there are no directions laid down how to ward off those people who have no sense of time. Like Abhimanyu our visitors can with ease enter our house, but from their behaviour one does not know if they are aware of the way out. Even to a person on a fool's errand, if you say you are busy, you will be told, 'How rude, such a prig of a man!' In other words, the fact that I can ever think my work is of greater importance to me than his visit, is presumptuous!

Once, as I was not feeling well, I had retired into my room on the third floor of the building, and was engaged upon some writing. Because of my inherent mild temperament this

remote room of mine never appeared inaccessible to any of my friends, acquaintances or strangers. The only advantage was that not many of the city-dwellers knew the way up there. The message came that there was a man who wished to see me. Knowing so well that few of our fellow-beings would take ill health or pressure of work as a worthy excuse, I closed my writing with a deep sigh, and then came downstairs. A young man, still in his adolescent years, was waiting to see me. Swiftly from out of the hidden depth of his shawl, he produced a thickish exercise book. I understood he was of my set. The poet-youth said to me with a smile, 'I have composed an opera.' Perhaps he saw a palish shadow descending on my face, so by way of encouragement he blurted out, 'It's a very small favour I came to ask you—would you kindly set my poems to tune, there are 25 in all.' Quite distressed I replied, 'Where can I find time?' The youth said, 'It won't take much time, it is just a question of half an hour for each poem.' At this generosity of his mind about time, I felt helpless, and said, 'I am not well.' The composer of the opera replied, 'As you are not well, I can hardly press you further. But if—' I realised that even if I had produced a certificate from an aged wise doctor it would not have convinced this young poet. I shudder to think what the final scene in a court of law would be if such a drama dared to intrude upon the privacy of an English author!

A man's house with 'a shut door' is a bitter truth; on the other hand it is also barbaric when a house dispenses with all its curtains. The happy medium is not always easy to achieve. Creation is in the intermingling of these two opposing forces; in their dissention lies devastation. Men keep forgetting this rule in their ethical field, and hence they must suffer.

Today the sunrise and the sunset both remained shrouded in the shadows of rain. The miserly sky stuffed all its golden light into its cloudy bag shutting it tight.

How distant a man can be from his own fellow-beings, is realized when one visits America and Europe. Their society comes under the category of islands—surrounding each small kindred-group reigns the vast unfamiliar salty ocean; it is not like a huge continent with a connecting link. I have used the word 'kindred' in a radical sense. What I mean is that they move only amongst those few with whom they are introduced and are expected to mix with. In our country we do not need an introduction to have mutual contact. Certainly, we live in an open exposed space at the junction of several streets. First of all, we have very meagre means and moreover, in order to fulfil our endlessly unrestricted social obligations we have not the slightest scruple to waste other people's time, or to intrude upon others at work.

On the other hand, when pleasure-aim involves heavy expenditure so that man has to measure time according to its mercenary value, then there is bound to be impediment in the way of harmony between man and man, and the more this harmony is thwarted and treated with indifference, the more imminent will be man's day of disaster. One day it will be seen that man has accumulated endless materials, has written endless books, has built up endless walls, but that he has lost himself. It is because all congruity between man and his achievements is lost that man has set out today to dig his own grave with such a pompous show.

S. S. HARUNA MARU

26th September, 1924

TODAY THE SUN HAS BEEN PEEPING OUT AT intervals, but it is as though from behind the bars of a prison. It seems it has not as yet got rid of all its qualms. The clouds wearing the black uniform of the regime of rain are moving around keeping watch in all directions.

There seems to be an ebb tide in the rivulet of my consciousness in this drowsy sunlight. The full tide will come, but only with the rising of the sun.

In the West, mostly in America, I have noticed that the pull-cord between most parents and their grown-up children is severed. In our country the pull is obvious till the end. Similarly I have also seen that in their country they do not have the same kindred feeling for the sun's vital link with man's life. In a country where the sunlight is sparse, when they draw down the blinds fully or half-way to obstruct the sunlight from pouring in, it is to my mind a form of arrogance.

That the sun is a vital link, nobody can doubt. The streaming sunlight flows into the very artery of our being. Our life, our mind, our sense of beauty, the essence of our existence have their fountain-head within this great luminary. All the future days of the Solar world were one day transmitted from the radius of its fiery streaming vapour. Its energy is embodied in my each and every cell, its light flows into each and every wave of my thought. Outwardly, it is this light with its radiance of colour upon each leaf and each flower that has made the earth so variedly beautiful; inwardly, its energy taking purposeful form has entered our mind giving colour to our every thought, to our every concern, to our every ache, to our passion and attachments. Such varieties of colour, such varied forms, such effusion

of expression and such immeasurable essence are all in the possession of this same, one luminary. The sparks of light that are stored within each clustering grape turning it into a draught of wine, are the same identical sparks that gather in my songs forming themselves into tunes. Even at this moment, isn't this flow of language carrying these thoughts of mine that had issued forth from my own innermost depth, the soul's expression of the same restive luminous sparks? . . . the sparks that like the hushed incantation of the mystic syllable assemble on the branches of each towering tree!

O Sun, it is the earth's deep-inward prayer before the fountain of your energy that has risen in the form of grass, into trees shooting forth into the skies saying 'Let there be glory.' It says 'O Concealed One, undo your covering.' In this uncovering there is His play of life, there is the display of flowers and fruit. O Hidden One, the overflowing surge of this prayer has continued on its journey, springing forth into the minutest creature since the primordial days; and now it has appeared in man, crossing the river of life from the shores of heart to the soul. I raise my hands in prayer to you, 'O Sun, O Overflowing, Hidden One, uncover the lid of your golden vessel, let me see the truth in the liminosity that is freed within you but is darkly hidden in me. Let my revelation be from light to light.'

I have with me a picture painted by one of the modern Japanese artists. Everytime I look at it I am filled with wonder. There is the fiery-red sun in the far horizon—the snow oppressed winter has just relaxed its punishment, the leafless branches of a plum tree spread out towards the sun like hand-wavings in a victory celebration; the tree is covered with white blossoming spikes. Standing in the shade of the plum tree is a blind man who, raising his two light-thirsty eyes towards the sun, is intent praying.

Our sages have prayed, 'Lead us from darkness into light.' They have described the fulness of consciousness as

'The luminous light.' In their prayer-incantation they have chanted to the sun 'It is you who have poured into our hearts the stream of understanding and knowledge.'

It is said in the Isha upanishads, 'O Sun, remove your covering, let us see the face of truth; the One who is within me is the same being who is in you.'

In this rain-filled darkness a shadow of depression has come over me which is but another expression of the same restive spark. It also says 'O Sun, remove your covering, let me see my soul's shining in your splendour. Let all weariness pass. Let your light breathe into my heart's flute. Let the whole sky be alive with songs of joy. My life is but an expression of your light, so is my body. With your luminous touch on my heart, the entire existence is transformed into radiance.'

When our whole being is tired we say, let alone all these struggles over joys and sorrows, it is no use contending in the ups and downs of the wave-play of creation; no, it is not enough that the lid should be taken off the pot, let the pot be wholly destroyed. Instead of reigning in the heart of the One, in that same One let us become wholly extinct. This prayer is heard in India much too often.

And yet, what I pray is, 'O Hidden One, uncover the face of Truth . . . let me view the One well within me and outside, only then I shall understand the rest.' Unless I come to see that joyous oneness which is the making of a song from beginning to end, I cannot get pleasure from the clashing of striving tunes, it torments me. But for that reason I shall not wish, 'let the song disappear into nothingness.' Instead I shall say, 'Let me realize with my heart the whole fulness of the song, it is then that the parts of the striving tunes will no longer hurt me from the outside; what is more, I shall even look at them as the undismissible part of the one unbroken joy.'

S. S. HARUNA MARU

27th September, 1924

THE SKY IS COMPLETELY FREE OF CLOUDS TODAY. The generosity of light extends over the whole sky. Wave after wave the hint of a call comes from the sun-startled ocean. Today I do not feel I would like to be cheated of the hospitality that pours down from the heavens.

On a day like this, can one have the heart to write a diary? The writing of a diary is a miser's job. What it expresses is that nothing, big or small, is to be omitted from each day, so that whatever is picked up is to be preserved. The miser does not want to advance, he hoards.

Providence has blessed me with one boon, it is my extraordinary faculty for forgetting. He did not leave the control of the press room in my charge. The job of a sentry is not mine. The privilege to forget as I go on my rounds has been a gift to me from my Master.

If to let one forget allowed one to lose oneself, then Providence would not be committing so great an error. Over and over again Spring, forgetting all the magnificence of its flowers, takes up in its hand an empty basket, disappearing absent-mindedly towards the north. Through the empty road of this forgetfulness, heaped fruits find their lion-door wide open to the new birth. On the upper storey of my consciousness I keep forgetting so much that I find it most inconvenient in the struggle of my daily life. But all the forgotten articles of my mind come and collect themselves in the lower story just behind the scenes. There, one has the chance to change into different dresses. It is the will of Providence to turn my mind into a repertory stage, and not to build it as a museum. Consequently, what I acquire by accumulating is my loss, what I acquire in the process of losing is my gain. Through this losing of oneself, if one turns

up wearing another's garment, the scientist with his scrutinizing intellect may shower him with such cross questions, which may be embarrassing. Under this close analysis he may be forced to answer, 'What you see as new is but old, what I accept as mine must be other's also.' But the play of creation is like this, that is why it is called an illusion. Under scorching surveillance when a dew-drop is shaken out of its form, it will emerge in two strange vapours which have harsh sounding names, with temperament as hot. And yet, the dew is the same soft dew; it still has the sweetness of a tear-drop of an union.

I seem to be piling up words on what I started originally. What I am driving at is that writing a diary is not consistent with my nature. I am a disciple of the absent-minded Shiva. I do not collect facts for storing them in my bag. The water that I let evaporate from my reservoir absent-mindedly forms into a cloud in the sky drifting along the path of the invisible void. Or else, how will all the productive rain of my being, be freed.

Besides, my whole life's truth belongs to me as an individual, which I would not like to be weighed only in the official standard scales. And yet, it must take time to produce special scales for the evaluation of a special matter. This may not be available at the moment the event is taking shape. So that what weighs heavy in the model Governmental scales may seem light, and what is known as light may be truly heavy. It is through a process of forgetting all the concomitants of unnecessary rubbish that we come to discover the specific weight of a special happening.

Those who are biographers collect their most valuable materials from the various contemporary books and written documents. The unchanging facts that are found in them can neither stretch nor minimize themselves. And yet the vital soul in us keeps moving forward only by surrendering to and stretching this fact. With these piled-up, very authentic facts it is possible for one to build a monument



to memory, but how can one write a life story with them? If the very quality of the straying soul is omitted from one's life history, then what use have we with the grave of the dead personality? If out of foolishness I had ever written down my everyday diary then I would be leaving behind with my own signature a contradiction to my own living. So that the testimony of my daily life would destroy the truth of my entire being.

In the age when there were no reporters, when man had not invented newspapers, man's natural aptitude for forgetting was not hampered by any artificial means. That is why although living within the bounds of that period, they were able to capture and ever remember the greatness of their men. What we find now-a-days is that the critics through their fact-finding sharp intellects show the everyday man to us, the man of all times we do not easily find. Those who occupy a seat on the firm, set-up throne of vast forgetfulness, will never find a place amongst the jostling and hurrying crowd. We have now amongst us the camera man, the diary writer and the man taking down notes who, building scaffolds all over, sits on them with a weary look.

When I was a child, I would see from the garden in our inner court, the universe-nature arranging each sunrise on its blue-green platter and then she would hold it up before my delighted heart as a special everyday treat fixing her look on my face with a gracious smile. What I fear is that perhaps, one day, a future writer of my life story will enter this garden with a camera in hand to take a picture of it. It would not strike his insensitive heart that the garden exists only there where existed the original, first Garden of Eden. The artist with his indifference to acceptable facts may claim an access to that paradise, but it is not in the power of the camera man to have an entry into it—there stands at the entrance God's messenger with a luminous sword in his hand.

If I have so much intelligence, and so much fear, why I then ask, must I sit down to write a diary? That answer I shall give tomorrow.

When I was young there were many happenings that stirred my mind. If I want to appraise the intrinsic importance of these events I shall find two major witnesses standing before me with their two different measuring-scales; they do not conform to the same weight. According to the principles of scientific truths the standard that is accepted as most genuine, which may be termed the general standard, rules out all discriminations. But because man is not entirely scientific, the events that take place in the world of man, and if these are not quite hollow, cannot be subjected to the standard measure. In their case an extraordinary measuring scale, deriding all science appears from nowhere, and establishes itself. The scientists, trying to fit this new measure into their already accepted standards start creating a lot of noise. Let us take a good example, the example of Buddha, the Great. In his life-time if there had been the vogue of newspaper reporters and film directors we would have got a general picture of him. We would have found out all about the similarities that he had with others, from what they said about his looks, his ways and manners, his temperament, his small characteristic habits, his illnesses, his turmoils, his fatigues, his doubts. If these very ordinary facets of his character are considered the final proof of Buddha's worth, we would be making the gravest mistake. A mistake that is created from lacking a complete view—what the English call, 'Perspective'.

Those masses and masses of people whom we know as the general crowd cast a momentary shadow on the mind of man as they keep fading away with the passing moment. And yet, there have been individuals who through centuries have held people's hearts. The merit by which they have accomplished this cannot be caught within the mesh of a short period. What is discovered within this momentary

mesh, is the ordinary man; when by cutting him up into segments like fish on dry land, scientists take delight in reducing him to generality, then their intention is to cheat man of the significance of something specially valuable. For a long time now man has paid his tribute to this rare value in the exceptional man. When common facts, heading towards the lotus-seat of outstanding truth, tramples it under foot, can one be tolerant? That Buddha who could be found in a film version, or in the sound of a gramophone record, would be the Buddha of a short moment, but the Buddha who for centuries sits enthroned in the hearts of the awakened people, ornamented with the offerings of love and devotion from countless men and women, is the Buddha of all times. His portrait is being painted on the rolled canvas stretching from age to age. His truth is not what surrounds him alone, his truth is the immense truth embracing many centuries, many countries and many recipients. Within this encircling vastness the small domestic routine of his day, the fitting nuances of his own temporary moods become lost to view. When we occupy ourselves in scrutinizing facts under a microscope, we are sure to lose sight of the greater form. The man who exists from birth to death never breaking the bounds of his own ordinariness, cannot ever be a Buddha. Man in his history has recognized the greater Buddha by virtue of his own forgetting, when he has forgotten everyday trivialities of the smaller Buddha. If the memory of man were as immutable as the print on a photographic plate, he would be then gleaning a poor subsistence from his own life story, he would be depriving himself of a greater history.

It is because these greater things may have the chance to last that man can never remain inactive about them. By instilling life into them by his own creative force and imaginative strength he has to proceed in a way that he may himself be enlivened. For, the link that he has with these greater things is the link of the heart, it is not the link of

facts. Through this path of union man replenishes himself through men who are dear to him, just as they are replenished with life through him.

In connection with this I happen to remember a relatively small instance. Maxim Gorky wrote the biography of Tolstoy. The keen intellectual readers of the present day have glorified him saying that it is the work of a worthy artist. It means that he has drawn a picture of Tolstoy taking in all his faults and virtues which have come out in sharp and vivid lines; there is not the faintest mist of indulgence in sympathy, emotion, respect or reverence anywhere in it. Reading it makes one feel that Tolstoy was after all, not so much greater than the average man but on the other hand he was even inferior to many. Herein comes the same line of my argument. Nobody will dispute the fact that Tolstoy was not without blemishes. One will even acknowledge the fact, if one indulges in petty scrutiny, that he had a great many failings of the ordinary man, and had also suffered from greater weaknesses. But, when the great truth which makes Tolstoy belong to all peoples, to all times is withheld from us overshadowed by the transitory nature of his faults, how then can such a brilliantly drawn version by an artist be of any use to us at all? When I first went up to the hill station in Darjeeling, I came across fog and clouds for days and days, but I accepted this as temporary, and though they had in them the power to cast a shadow on the Himalayas, I knew they were dark vapours only. They could never surmount the unchanging, noble whiteness of Mount Everest. In any case it would have been foolish of me to come away believing that the Himalayas were always censored by the fog. I do not accept that an artist is entitled to include in his vision the transitory illusions when they disguise the eternal form. Besides, even in the scientific sense the artist heart of Gorky was challengable. The picture of Tolstoy which he had assimilated in his mind might be one version of Tolstoy, but could it be said that it bore the

truth of scientific research? Is Gorky's portrayal of Tolstoy that of the real Tolstoy? If only Gorky could assemble into his heart the hearts of countless peoples over a vast period, it would have been then possible to have through him a painted portrait of that Tolstoy who is of many peoples and of many periods. This would have come from the quality of a forgetting soul that could forget things that should be forgotten. Moreover, what was not to be forgotten would have come out in the greater way, in a complete shape.

28th September, 1924

WHEN WE ARRIVED IN COLOMBO THE WHOLE horizon stood in a flood of gripping rain. . . When a household is in tears of grief, when it is threatened with a loss, the guests lose the right of welcome to that house. That day the ruffled sky of Colombo failed to extend its hospitality towards us. The mind could reach out to no place where it could find comfort by spreading out. When I saw that no generous welcome was forthcoming at this very first gate to the outer world, I wondered what evil star it was which poured out such gloom at the outset of my journey. It is true that the door was opened to one, but where was the host with the smile on his face?

Just at this time, in the hostile grimness of the day, I received a letter from a girl whose home is in Bengal. She was the girl who had once made insistent demands for a descriptive poem from me about my stay in Shillong not a very long time ago. I had not overlooked this request. This time she sent me her good wishes on my travelling abroad. I felt that these good wishes were like a good omen that would change the angry atmosphere of the day into graciousness.

A man has valour, and a woman has sweetness, this is a saying prevalent in every country. To this we have added one other thing, that in woman there is prosperity. We have in our country entrusted woman with all the primary rites at every festivity, have marked her with all the signs of goodness. We experience the mingling of sweetness with goodness in the strength of woman. When we leave home for the distant land we realize the force of our mother's blessings far more than our father's. We feel as if from the inside of the household the prayers of our women are ever reaching

out to their Gods, like the fragrant incense-smoke rising from its urn. That prayer is in their vermilion box, in the bangles round their wrist, in the blowing of the auspicious conch-shell, in the symbolized 'ulu' shout that they give out during the performance of every joyous ceremony, in their desires both expressed and unexpressed. It is the sister who marks her brother's forehead with sandal paste on a special day of the year. We know so well that it was Savitri who brought her husband back from the door of the God of Death. A woman's love is not only a joy to man, in it there is also his prosperity.

This means that we somehow know that what is meant by love is not only a feeling of the heart, it is a force, like the force of the gravitational pull in the universe. It is everywhere. Woman's love has a greater pull than this force of the universe. The strength of love that is in the nature of Vishnu and which nourishes the universe is the same strength that is in Lakshmi, His beloved. All the imagination and feelings with which we regard Lakshmi, have taken their perceptible form in our ideal of woman.

The beauty of Lakshmi is the symbol of complete fulness. You cannot see beauty in creation so long as there is conflict. Where there is complete harmony, there is the manifestation of beauty.

Man through the path of his activities has still to come to the end of his search. But that search will never come to an end. He has been consistently digging away into the unknown, he has not touched the threshold of the ultimate to earn his leisure yet. The Creator left off His brush before putting on the finishing strokes on man's nature. Man remains uncompleted.

Woman is established on the stability of her own nature. She does not have to rush ahead in search of achievements through formidable paths. The innate purpose of living nature has taken its final expression within her. She bears life, she rears life; nature has no conflict about her. Her body and mind are endowed with the fulness of that rare richness

which lies in giving birth to life, nourishing life and bringing comfort to life. In this act of creation the need for man is nominal, that is why man has been left free from the most pressing demand of nature. Because he has been given leave from this life-producing field of creation he has been able to lay the foundation of his creative work in the field of the mind. What we call civilization in its diverse combinations of literature, the arts, science, philosophy, religion, edicts and principles, is the creation of man, the absconder-son of the life-begetting nature.

As, at the time when a song restive upon its speeding tune, carries the full flow of melody keeping an inward watch all the while over the stability of the time-beat for its own prosperity, so man in the intoxicating urge of an impetus through his ever-moving creative force keeps his awareness alert to the stability of the main theme. As he proceeds carrying the weight of his unrealized aspiration, he longs to be inspired by beauty. This flowering of stability is the sweetness of woman, the fruit of this stability is the prosperity of woman, the main theme of this stability is the grace and beauty of woman.

If man's efforts become hindered because of the absence of the rare, soul-inspiring quality of woman, then the machine comes to occupy a prominent place among his works of creation. It is then that with this machine of his own creation man causes continual suffering, and he also brings suffering upon himself.

I have expressed this idea in my play called *The Red Oleander*. The people of the country of Kuvera are engaged in digging out with all their might precious gold, tearing it out from the underground world. Driven by the covetous urge for cruel hoarding the people have banished all the sweetness of life from the place. There Man, ensnaring himself within his own complexities, has severed himself from the rest of the universe. That is why he has forgotten that the value of joy is greater than the value of gold; he



has forgotten that there is no fulfilment in might, that there is fulfilment only in love. There, in the tremendous preparations for keeping man in bondage, man surrenders himself as a willing victim.

Into this state of affairs the woman enters; the surge of life begins to exert its influence on the force of the machine; love's sentiment starts its attack on the devices of rapacious misdeeds. It is then that man in the inspiration received from the deep incentive force of woman engages himself in freeing the flow of life from its shackles, breaking away from the prison cell of his own creation—this has been the theme of the play.

What I have been wanting to point out is that there can be no end to man's perseverance. That is why all through his efforts man expresses his great hankering to taste the essence of the rewarding nectar. Woman with the sweetness of her heart holds this essence out for him to drink. Man's world is full of continual and struggling thoughts, full of oscillating doubts, clashing opinions, the whirlpools of dissolution and creation . . . in the midst of these never-ceasing strifes, his distressed and wavering heart longs for the simple fulfilment of the inward life. Women have in them this inward play of life. Like the swinging of a creeper in the wind, like the flower blossoming in the bower of spring, this play is as simple as spontaneously self-assertive. To the care-inflicted heart this image of pulsating life appears extremely enchanting. The fulfilling nature of this beauty, the easy flowering of the heart not only brings gratification to man but it gives him strength, it helps him to reveal himself to an inconceivable measure in his work of creation. In our country, for this reason, woman is accepted as the symbol of strength in every aspiration of man. We do not notice this strength outwardly in the field of man's work; we see the flower everyday, but the deep inward strength that makes the flower blossom, we can neither see nor touch with our hand. In the deeds of man, woman's strength is deep, inward.

S. S. HARUNA MARU

29th September, 1924

THE GIRL WHO SENT ME HER GOOD WISHES HAD also previously made me a request, 'Please will you keep a diary?' I had immediately answered, 'No, I won't keep a diary.' But because these words had come out of my lips they must attain to eternal glory, such conceit I do not have.

Later on, on the 25th I boarded the ship. The fury of the rain became more and more violent. Every now and then like a huge invisible serpent it kept snapping at the boat with its great hissing sound. Under the stress of such misfortune, when I was about to own defeat, I made a sudden, threatening decision, 'No, I will write a diary!' And yet, what is there to write? There seems nothing! I suppose I will have to write whatever comes to my mind. The best writing is the writing that comes as it will. Self-will is the prerogative of a king!

If only I could find before me a secret avenue reaching out to a special individual to whom I could write, then by following its quiet, shady path I would direct my aimless words by sending them off on their way to the tryst. But that avenue does not exist for me today. So that in the burning light of this strange cabin I have sat down with the idea of having a chat with myself. This form of conversation like the theory of monism does not appeal to me much. When a man in his life finds that the idea of the 'two' is to his taste but hard to attain, he then deludes his mind by the hard practice of monism. For, the worst calamity is a duality that is not affable to mind.

S. S. HARUNA MARU

30th September, 1924

A QUESTION HAS BEEN RAISED AGAINST THE statement I made in my diary about man and woman, 'Granted it is true that a woman is caught in the pull of her heart, and a man is driven by the urge of his mind—but then, when they both unite in love, is their love of the same kind?'

It is better to realise at the outset that when we speak of the heart and the mind, neither a man nor a woman has the exclusive monopoly over either. Immaterial of sex, and due to the trend of different circumstances one takes a more predominant position and the other a subordinate one.

The mind grows up with the heart in the same dwelling place, it takes nourishment from the heart; that is why, it suffers deep down from a sense of ingratitude. Often enough it breaks out in open revolt to assert its supremacy overlooking the claims of the heart. It is this revolt that shows up in all men in a greater or lesser degree. In the war waged against the heart, it indulges in all kinds of manoeuvrings and strategies. Man is greedily desirous to see the heart afflicted and tormented by difficulties. It holds a particular fascination for him to be docile in the house, yet to indulge in all unworthy outward activities; the only reason for this is that in the house he has to conform to the rules of the heart, but outside he feels he has the opportunity to prove that he is very little affected by the love-allegiance that he shows to the authority at home—he thinks this is the mark of manly strength. It is not always that man, out of necessity, has waged wars, but he has also out of arrogance, to impress on the others his indifference to the demands of the heart. That is why man, knowing well the brutal perversity of war, yet has all along exaggerated its importance. It is not

because he upholds jealousy; but he feels a particular pride in going out of his way to defy the vast preparations that are continually in progress to trap him with the various forms of greed and fear. My nephew has a small son, and I see everyday that he invariably seeks a spot that is the least secure in the whole household, and then climbs to the top of it, for no other reason than this complete disregard for the earth's gravitational pull. Nor did this gravitational pull spare him on many occasions but he was undaunted! Through this defiance he was but gaining specialised training.

I remember, as a child, I used to consider it a deed of great skill to walk over the narrow ledge that jutted out of the third floor of our building. It was not because I was brave, but because the fear was there in me. The idea was to have fun by ridiculing that fear which intruded on the heart like a watchman lurking with his ominous presence at the turn of the road.

All these that occur in man are the devices of the mind. The mind says, 'The more I practise non-cooperation with the heart, the easier will be my freedom.' But I would like to question, 'Why this accusation against the heart? Besides, of what use is this freedom away from the heart?' The mind says, 'I shall go searching for the infinite world, I shall accomplish the impossible, I shall remove all the formidable, rescuing the rare; when Misrule tries to fasten me by throwing a noose over me from behind, I shall humble him before me before I release him.' It is with the same reasoning the ascetic asserts, 'Why shouldn't a man survive if he does not eat? To be able to control one's breath does not mean he must die!' What is more he comes out with the most difficult saying, 'I shall not see a woman's face. . . Women are nature's spies, in the heart's kingdom they are the agents for acquiring slaves.' On hearing this, men who are not hermits glorify him saying, 'Bravo'!

Under normal conditions no woman of any type is heard to say that to exclude man from everything is her life's

ambition, or ever her highest ideal. Only lately, one does hear the hint of such a saying, but that is only in the form of bragging. It is possible that there are a handful of women who say that they would raise, from the kingdom of their hearts where their reign is supreme, their anchors to disappear into the detachment of their minds; but in such cases one is aware that at the moment of parcelling out the resources which Providence allots to man and woman at the start of their life's journey, mistakes do sometimes occur!

The main fact is that nature has so ordained that a woman has a place that is of permanence, the man is deprived of it. The man has to search for this place everlastingly. In his search he has been ever making new discoveries, but the call of the ultimate does not allow him to rest, it urges him on saying, 'You have yet to proceed.'

There are arrangements to be made when one has already arrived at a place, there are also arrangements made in advance when one is about to leave, but they are of different types. This is but expected. One who has reached a state of stability tries to make the relationship with the others all around true and fulfilling. It is through the truth of a relationship that one enjoys one's freedom. In sharing one's life with another, if there is constant squabbling it creates a hindrance to one's life. Only when there is love, there is a relationship that leads to freedom. Every want and every suffering of the world is conquered by this feeling of freedom. That is why a woman finds the greatest fulfilment of her life in love. In this love the imprisoning nature of her stability no longer exists. She can transcend the threats of all outside forces.

Activities can go on without freedom, but not creation. The highest faculty in man is his power to create. The true refuge of man is in his creation. When, lacking in richness he is cheated of this power, he has to resort to other people's charity. Woman has also to create, only thus she can have her home. Her creation is possible only through love. The

ascetic who obsessed by his hard penance has the conceit to think that women engrossed in their domestic world can never attain salvation, is no finder of truth. A true woman, by acknowledging her own bondage, transcends it through love. The realization of this freedom is a greater thing than the denial of her bondage. It will be wrong to assume that every woman has the capacity for true love, nor do we come across in every man the true force of asceticism.

Men who are devotees—in our country particularly—regard the domestic world as the place of bondage; to them the faster they can run away from it, the surer is their way to freedom. The reason is, what we mean by 'domestic life', is not a place where man finds his natural scope for creation. There he does not feel his mind is free. But women, as soon as they attain the right of motherhood, develop the faculty of a strong emotion which makes it easy for them to establish bonds all around in their domestic world. That is why the woman who possesses the pure excellence of an emotional feeling becomes creative in the management of her home and family. This creation is like the creation of a poem, like the creation of music, like the creation of kingdoms and empires; so much right thinking, so much skill, so much self-restraint enter into this creation to take full expression, and in the fusion, it achieves a rare competence. In the mingling of variedness, an absolute unity of form is reached; this is what is called 'creation'. It is for this reason that domestic life is a great necessity for women; not as a security, not for comfort, not for the experience of pleasure—but for their salvation. For, it is in the fulness of self-expression that one finds one's salvation.

I have already said that the woman's creative source has a luminous centre that is love. This love, because of its own blossoming, because of its own fulfilment needs the support of human company. Love's creation cannot take place in solitude and by itself, its field is in the heart of the

world. Bramha's creative ground may be the void, but Vishnu's strength is in the world of men. Woman is that strength of Vishnu; in her creation a particular person is supreme; even the insignificance of that person is valuable to love. Love blossoms out through many outlets by surrendering itself to this special being through all the petty details of his whimsical demands. This special person with his many hungers and many wants keeps the effort of woman's love continually alive. The man who dwarfs his demands may thrive on his many good qualities, but to a woman he brings suffering, she remains incomplete. That is why, it is seen, that the more demanding and domineering a man is, the more he is loved by a woman.

When a woman wants a man as the object of her love, she wants him in a very positive way. She is eager to surround him with her constant and anxious care. She is impatient of any intervening void separating them. Women are indeed the true seducers. No matter how impossible is the way and how difficult the road, they are filled with a restless anguish until they can fill this gap of separation. That is why man, evading all the close bonds of companionship, wants to escape into the far regions for safety.

I have just mentioned that love, for its fulness, has the need for a particular person. This particular person is a reality. To have him, the woman has to include all the petty trivialities about him, she has even to accept all his faults and short-comings. To draw a veil of emotion over his individuality, to transform it into a wondrous rarity, this love does not find necessary. What is lacking in him, what is incomplete in him, is desired by love or how else can it achieve its own completeness?

I do not boast that I know fully well the feelings of our Gods, but I have a firm belief that the Goddess Durga favoured her son Ganesh more than her son Kartik. Moreover, she had a definite dislike for Kartik's well turned out vehicle, the peacock, notwithstanding the exquisite beauty

of its tail, for the reason that it would frequently cast its greedy eye on the small, unworthy conveyance of the wide-bellied Ganesh, which was a rat. If this mean-souled rat entered her provision stores and created havoc, she would smile and be ready with her forgiveness. Nanda, that excellent man, versed in the law codes said, 'Mother, you do not ever control the rat, you are spoiling it.' The Goddess with her benign smile answered, 'Poor thing! it steals and eats because that is its nature, can one blame it? It is born with the teeth of a thief, what can it do but use them?'

The way a song fills the incompleteness of a word with its own essence, so love, likewise, never falters before any unworthiness; through the gap of inadequacy it finds an opportunity to pour itself out.

Just as the creative light in woman is love, so the creative light in man is his imaginative power. Man sees with the vision of his contemplative mind, he builds through the force of his contemplation. 'We are the dreamers of dreams', these are the words of man. It is through the contemplation of man that all the deeds of glory in man's history are continually changing shape. This contemplation wants to grasp the complete whole, that is why it rejects the redundancy of the particular. All the petty details that go to make the particular, is to him an accumulation that acts as a hindrance in the path of attaining the whole. Woman's creation is in the home, so that she is able to preserve the smallest thing with great care, she has more patience because the reservoir of her intentness is great. Man's creation is by the wayside, that is why, by lessening the weight of burdens he wants to accomplish and capture the whole. It is this thirst for the whole, this vision of the whole that has goaded many a cruel man to establish his deed of glory at the cost of immense wealth, on immense sacrifice, on immense torture. Man is extravagant, he does not hesitate to realize his aim through daring losses. For, in his aspiration he has a



clear and complete view of the objective gain, and disregards the losses. He considers these losses small and of no value. It is because man has been given so little time to sit down in leisure and entwine the varied and countless details with clinging sentiments that he has come to believe so much in his own contemplative force. He feels no conflict in bringing about devastation in the cause of his own creation.

The main thing is that man, by leaving out the superfluities of the particular from the substance, is seeking for the one integral whole. That is why, man is an ascetic in the spiritual world; that is why, man is so eager to renounce the world and practise austerities. And this is the reason why he has gained such excellence in the sphere of his imagination, and he has earned such wealth in the realm of knowledge.

This desire for the whole, man also expresses in his love. When he loves a woman, he wants to see her in the complete form of her individuality with the vision of his soul, with the vision of his imaginative mind. We have seen this in the poems of men over and over again. Shelly's 'Epipsy-chidion' is a good example. Women themselves are aware of this. Man, with such a prayer, creates woman from day to day. For, the force of a prayer, the warmth of a prayer are the two incentives in man's world of creation. If we know the significance of what we want, then there is no worry over what we get. According to the particular longing in a man, the particular woman is created. Woman puts up screens at so many places in her life for this reason. She has to deduct so much from herself. We talk about woman's shame as her ornament, which only means that her shame is of that quality which enables her to put aside the multiplicity of her reality. That is why there is so much preparation for mystery in woman's world. There is so much of herself which is kept back that man can only fill with his imagination. Over the every-day realities of eating and sleeping,

over her gait and manners, her desires and aspirations, she draws a veil in such a way that in his thoughts man may complete a picture of her.

There is another side to man's behaviour towards women which also is evident. Sometimes man acts in a way as though there was not a trace of the indescribable in woman, as if in her earthen lamp she had never kindled a light; it is then that he with his greedy teeth chews the very fibre of her being drawing out her essence like the juice out of a sugarcane that is thrown finally in the waste heap. Evil exists on the reverse side of the good; the full moon is the darkest moon on the other side. The truth that exists on one side of the road harbours a different truth on the opposite side. The jackal's call is the testimony of the tiger's presence. It is in the same way that a woman is the goddess presiding over domestic prosperity, and at the same time unrivalled in the way she brings devastation to her domestic world.

One thing however is true that woman, at all times and everywhere has built around herself a distant hedge that is varied and picturesque. In man, she has kept alive to the best of her ability his natural perseverance to attain the unconquerable. Even the most valuable thing, if it is given just for the asking does not satisfy man; he believes that what he gets by conquering is the thing worth having; because what he gets by winning has the approval of his whole heart and mind. This is why woman has to resort to subterfuge to keep up the pretence of fight.

The moralists will say, 'This deluding play is not right.' But, it is man who has all along made a demand for this delusion; it is he who provides woman with the varied materials of delusion from the realm of his own phantasy; the poets, the artists out of their own volition, have built up a many-coloured illusive orb around woman—consequently the honest and the good anticipating defeat in their struggle against delusion are condemning the entire sect

of women as sorceresses; they have been now for a long time attacking woman's magic stronghold with the explosives of their dry, pious verbosity, but have failed to leave any mark on it.

Those who are the worshippers of solid realism say, that women have hidden themselves in a fog of illusion, it is important that the woman in her pure reality should be rescued from it. In their opinion, literature, art and almost everything is over-ridden by the disturbing ghost of this unreal woman. They think that once the woman is freed of illusion, solid truth will be found.

But, is there anything that can be called solid truth in creation? Or, if there is, can one find that pure unwavering mind that can reflect its pure print? The whole creation is based on illusion. If that creation is said to be unsubstantial, then where on earth is the place for the uncreated? Can any learned man reach out to that place?

I do not agree that one can see woman's true self by denuding her of all the colourful mystery that she has created around herself with coquetry, with loving gestures and dalliance, with clothes and jewellery. It is like removing the illusory curtain of a rose, and seeing it in its chemical composition. The realist thinkers will contradict, 'The illusion of a rose is natural, but the illusion of a woman is artificial.' This is entirely wrong. When a woman prepares a dye to colour her sari, it is nature, that, through her hands, does its secretive work, which is the same nature that paints the wings of a butterfly with an invisible brush without anyone's knowledge. In the kingdom of the heart, this play of illusion reveals itself with so much colour, fragrance, and essence, and through so many subterfuges, hints and preambles day and night! In this restlessness of nature, transitory or everlasting, and in these meaningless gestures and dalliance lies the beauty of the universe. Without this play of the ever-fugitive and the ever-changeable, what remains in the form of the very weighty,

substantial dead heaps of dust, earth, iron and stone, are these to be called the solid truth? Through dresses and ornament, through screens and covering, through doubts and conflicts, through trickery and wiles, women are indeed sorceresses. In her world of illusion she has spread out a magic web—the sort of illusion, the kind of magic-web that exists also on land and water, in fruit and flowers, in the sea and the mountains, in the flood and the tempest.

Nevertheless, it is this sorceress who collaborating with the moon, the flower, the new-gathering rain cloud, the soft-gurgling and swift-dancing river came to take her stand before man. This woman is not a mere solid heap, there is within her the essence of a creative truth. She is a composition of movement through rhythm within the bounds of a hidden rule. She is the image of an indescribable completeness. She redeems many a redundance and triviality with her sweet dexterity. With subtleties in her dress and accessories, deportment and behaviour, she is the dweller of an enchanted place bordering on the world of substance. Man has his hands bare announcing the fact that he has to work; but woman on her hands wears the bangle, saying, 'I do not work, I serve.' Service is the product of the heart, it is not the assertion of strength. Man has kept his eyes cautiously open ever watching the path to his goal, and this he very gravely terms "his power of vision". But woman draws a collyrium line across her eyelids saying, 'There are things to be seen with the eyes, but that is not the final truth—within the eyes there are yet other things to be seen—the rare qualities of the heart.'

Woman has appeared in man's world as the Goddess incarnate of all the fine arts, with the vivid play of her emotional heart both within and outwardly. When emotion takes form, it is the virtue of the created image not to be rigidly tied within itself. In a newspaper article, there is no rhythm, no emotion, that is why it is downright solid, it is exactly what it means. The mind feels no freedom in it.

A good poem has a form that is suggestive, and yet not fixed; it does not rudely dismiss the individuality of the reader. I remember, a long time ago, when I was laid down with illness, I read the entire poetical works of Kalidas. The joy I got from it was not the joy one gets in reciting, but the joy of creating. In these poems I had no difficulty in realizing the individual in me. I was well aware that the way I had enjoyed going through these works could hardly be repeated.

Man's imagination also finds its freedom, in the same manner, in woman. The orb that surrounds a woman is made up with all the suggestivities of the indescribable; a man can enter there without difficulty with his imagination coloured by the hue of his own emotion and taking the form of his own thought. In other words, he finds there a scope for his own creation, which gives him a special pleasure. A man who is totally devoid of illusion may laugh at this, but then a man without illusion never knows the calamity of the creative urge; he lives in the midst of calamity.

I have said before that woman's love wants a particular person in all his reality including his trivialities, faults and shortcomings. She needs company. Man also does not hide himself, or keep himself shrouded; in his ordinary everyday plainness, in an almost careless manner, without affectation he abandons himself completely to the woman he loves; it is this that gives woman the sense of real companionship, that gives her joy.

But, woman brings along her distantness with her when she comes to man; she has within her a certain amount of reserve, something that is shrouded. A photographic print includes everything, but the artist's painting leaves out much, for this reason that the void left is for the discerning man of taste to complete with his own imagining. Woman's wealth is this void in her. This should not be entirely dispensed with. Where the imaginative love of Dante for

Beatrice has reached the most ecstatic waves, there is in fact an infinite separation. Dante's heart received the full moon of the far sky across the void. Perhaps there was outwardly no separation between Chandidas and Ramu the washerwoman, but when the poet rhapsodised, addressing her, ' You, who are versed in the Vedas, the wife of a God, the pupil of his eye ', Ramu the washerwoman had already disappeared into the distant regions. She might have been the pupil of Chandidas's eye, but she as the woman versed in the Vedas, as the wife of a God had already separated into a world far from his love. There she has no companion, she is alone in her emotion. Woman's love sings the song of union, but man's love sings of mournful separation.

S. S. HARUNA MARU

2nd October, 1924

I WAS SAYING THAT WOMEN LIVE BEHIND THE purdah. I am not speaking of that barbaric purdah devised by the miserly man to keep women out of view. I am speaking of those covering veils which women have turned into an adornment with such easy skill in order to give full expression to themselves. The reason why they have been able to bring such a decorative air into the enclosed sphere of their lives, by colouring in so many hues their body, their habits, their home, with gestures, with restraints and with concentrated activities, is because they have the leisure of a stability. The value of stability is in the wealth of woman's covering, in her encompassing bounties, in her hints and suggestivities, in the leisure she has in her hand filled with a variedness that is captivating. There is reward in leisureliness—this reward is the reward of the heart. This is not a thing that can be machine-handled into perfection overnight. In every stability the value of waiting is a household necessity. When this waiting is lacking in essence, lacking in fruit, the tragedy is immense.

The desert has no covering, it has limitless leisure, and yet that leisure is empty; its bare hardness is tormenting. But when a wasteland ceases to be wasteland it is filled with harvest, vivid with flowers; it has a green veil that sways in the wind. The traveller who follows his road, finds water to quench his thirst, food for his hunger, a shade for his comfort, a refuge for his tiredness. This fulfilled stability is an aid to his movement. The desert is a hindrance with its stark nudity. Woman being endowed with natural stability has found time to sit quietly, and colour her leisure steadily and slowly dipping it in her heart's emotion, and in this urge she has covered her breast and has made her veil.

With these coverings she has expressed her richness, like the creeper that has its wealth in its own leaves and foliage.

But now, in our anglicized society, we have been lately hearing the woman say, 'I do not believe in any illusive covering. I shall wipe out all the differences between man and woman. I shall be the scientist's moon; the moon with no atmospheric aura, with no cloud, no colour, no restive variety of the soft green, with no covering on her staring black wounds,—this is what I shall be. What we have known all along as shame, what we have known as beautiful has humiliated us. I shall reject all these barriers. After the fashion of man, with the same measuring tread of man I shall walk with him on the same road on equal terms.' How is it possible for a group of women to utter such words? It shows plainly that a change has taken place in man's nature. He does not want woman. It is not because he has all of a sudden turned an ascetic; on the contrary, he has become worldly; he wants to measure woman by the weight of money. If she does not conform to his idea to the last penny, he considers her worthless, he thinks he is cheated. He says, 'I shall keep my eyes open, and evaluate her minutely.' In other words, he thinks the contemplative vision that fills the mind is false. But, where man is concerned the truth of a woman is not as she is seen, she is also the study for inward contemplation. She is both the body and the bodiless, like the earth which is not only the solid soil and dust, but is also of the infinite sky and the air that surrounds it. The bodiless in woman surrounds her body; it has no weight, but it has colour, it has movement; with it she is hidden, and yet she is expressed.

Those who are always flaunting the advance of Western civilization, will say, this impatience towards femininity reveals a progressive movement. I consider it is the preliminary sign of coming to a deadly stop. Movement sacrifices its rhythm when it has no agreement with stability. When the horses of a carriage start moving, and the driver also



moves, the passengers move, and the carriage coming disjoined in all its parts also start moving, then this cannot be called movement; it is the last delirious movement towards death, a prelude to the final disaster. The movement of a society is given its stable rhythm by women and this is beautiful.

There is another set of women who have started to say, 'There is no glory in being a woman, to be a woman is detrimental. For this reason that in expressing ourselves the gap between men and us is tormenting.' It appears from this that man who was once a worshipper, has now become a trader. The trader may be fortunate enough to have some outward movement, but within he remains fixed, being ever watchful of his accumulated riches. This stability may have substance, but it holds no beauty. This stability does not aspire to build a true and fulfilling human relationship with the sweetness of the heart; its whole tendency is to squash and flatten out this relationship under the hoarding of wealth. So that it is not only that he lacks inner movement, but he makes his stability burdensome, indifferent, pitiless and deformed. And what he cannot hold within his mathematical calculation, he rejects as rubbish.

Man once was mystic, he was the diver of the fathomless essence, he was a devotee. But now he has become as worldly as the woman, with this difference that in his world there is no light, no air, no sky; his world is congealed. He is very busy. He is so occupied that he never finds the empty space where he can set free his imagination in forms and essence.

In these days, the poets in their poems, the artists in their creations are beginning to show their contempt for what is indescribable, what is beautiful. Isn't this quite contrary to their manhood? Hasn't man himself always desired his rewarding garland from the hand of the beautiful as homage to his strength? The mystic man through the force of his meditation and through self-abnegation, the more he has been able to remove the veils of materiality one by one,

the more he has been able to realize in the heart-world, in the spiritual world, the supreme being. That man today is interested only in filling his money bags, in locking up his many safes; he no longer has the freedom, the freedom on which the beautiful composes its throne. This is why, his women are saying, 'We shall be like men.' That is why, his *muse* says, 'The clanging sound that comes from the lute-strings which have not been attuned with care, is the music of realism; and the perversity, the havoc that is created in the callous and defiant rowdyism of form, is art.'

Days have gone by. I forgot that we were crossing the ocean. My mind had been following its own path, from one thought to another. To say it had been following its own path, perhaps is an exaggeration. This was not a road on which a camel moves with its load on its back, sensing its way through the desert; it is, as it were, a sort of drifting without the thought of the road, a sudden decision to launch out without being equipped with the obligatory passport for any particular port; it is to permit words to proceed without caring to guide them, without thinking of a direction, allowing them to move on their own momentum. This has one advantage, the words become the speaker, and the mind only a listener; the mind has then no obligation to contribute anything; whatever it acquires it acquires from itself. In the mind's geography there are innumerable undiscovered spots. The roads leading up to them are like rivers, or in other words, they are the moving roads which help others to move; when the mind is set afloat on that current, one comes to know the stranger within oneself. The river Ganges that flows down the heart of Northern India was easily the means for bringing the unknown North face to face with the unknown South. In the same way the man who has this river moving within him has access to a great deal of knowledge within himself. I feel this river is within me. At the moving call of this river I had run away from school. The result is that the

knowledge I should have had by learning I have missed considerably, and yet on the other hand I have been amply recompensed. For this I pay my tribute to the river Ganges in my heart.

I came out and stood on the deck. The sun had just set. There was the calm sea; the gentle breeze appeared almost shamefaced. The water sparkled. On the western end of the horizon one or two stray clouds, bathed in golden rays, lay motionless. Just above, there was the three nights' crescent moon. The sky surrounding it had not yet been caught in the evening haze; though the day's meetings were over, the white spread-out cloth still covered the platform. One had the impression that the moon appeared at an inopportune moment, and was out of place. It was, as if, the prince of a country came to pay a sudden visit to the king of another land; there were no suitable preparations to welcome him, his own followers like the stars have been left behind. On the other side all the golden flambeaux and the gathered magnificence were engaged in the sun's send-off to its westward journey; the slight moon was not even noticed.

At this confluence where the sky met the vast lonely ocean, I saw a picture in the western sky. Only a few lines, a few suggestions. . . . It seemed as if the last light of the fading day was eager to emerge from the deeply mingled blues of the sky and ocean looking for a place where it could leave behind its last words; not finding the slightest encouragement from the vast insouciant void, it was overwhelmed with sadness—this is the impression that the picture gave.

Standing in the silence of the deck, losing myself at the bottom of a deep quietness I saw what I have called a picture in a special sense, it is not what one calls a view. In other words, whatever was assembled there, must have been by someone who chose the ingredients with special care, and blending them with one another held up an arrangement

that was a complete whole. Such a simple, profound, and noble picture of completeness I do not suppose I could ever see in the sky of Calcutta within the short duration of a moment. In the immenseness of such vast nudity the picture appeared to me in the rare intensity of a form. To see such completeness of a picture, one needs the background of a deep silence and the infinite sky.

It reminded me of Japan. In their rooms they keep no furniture. Just one picture hangs on a wall. The picture monopolizes one's whole attention. There is nothing else near about to distract one's mind. Against the surrounding emptiness the picture has a significance that stands out in glowing vividness. In a room crowded with many articles, this picture would be one of the many items, its glory would be diminished, it would fail to convey what it had to say.

Music, poetry or any other artistic creation looks for this emptiness that is bare of all superfluity. Without the surrounding empty space it cannot be seen in its fullest expression. We have no such empty space in our days, that is why people today do not have that sense of fulness either from literature or from any other creative art. They do not look for the essence of a sentiment, it is wine that they want; they do not seek joy, they want pleasure. The awareness of the heart means nothing to them, they prefer the glitter of excitement. If, in the jostling crowd the distracted mind is ever to find music or poetry, there has to be pompous preparations for it. But, such ostentatiousness can only engage the listener's ears, the significant inner essence remains all the more hidden. For, simplicity and lucidness are the two chief ornaments of art. Where the noise is much, the crowd is large, there are many distractions, art is tempted to show off its skill, it forgets to reveal itself. Pompousness is a kind of loud shriek. Where there is unending confusion, one has to scream to be heard; the common crowd thinks that this scream is a mark of strength, and this makes it happy. But art is not a pompous cry, it is

to be recognised in its self-restraint. Art, when it is pushed about, would rather keep quiet, but to push itself through and grapple with people it feels embarrassed. Alas! how unaccountable is the mind of the people! The great king Rama had once banished Sita to please his people; and today it is also to please people that art has sacrificed its sense of beauty, its humility, and forgetting its joy of dance has taken to the beating of drums.

S. S. HARUNA MARU

3rd October, 1924

THE SUN IS NOT UP YET. THERE IS A PRELUDE TO light in the Eastern sky. The sea is calm, as calm as the tamed lion under the feet of the Goddess on which she rides. Enchanted with the approaching air of the sunrise, in sudden inspiration I burst forth into these rhythmic lines:

O Earth,  
Why do you each day,  
Never sated,  
Write the same script  
Over and over again!

I realized that these lines were but the preliminary lines of a poem, the full form of which was yet to visit my mind. Such indications have often come to me like wind-drifted seeds, but it is not always that I see them clearly.

It was as if in a picture I saw that the earth, spreading out her many-coloured garment, sat alone by the sea-shore facing the East, when a letter slipped into her lap loosened from somewhere above. Holding it to her breast she began to read it like one enrapt. Behind her, the shadowy forest-line of the palm and palmyra trees lay abandoned like the spread-out hair from a lowered head.

This precursor of my poem says there is the same script every day. There is no need for another script, this is more than adequate. It is so pregnant, that is why it is so simple. With that one bigness the whole sky is filled.

The earth has been reading this letter from time immemorial. With my mind's eye I have tried to visualize this reading. The message from the heavenly abode became vivid taking exquisite forms through the heart of the earth,

through the voice of the earth. Trees came to abound in forests, the flowers were filled with fragrance, breathing became life. That one letter had but one message to give and that is the message of 'light', light that is beautiful, that is formidable. It shines in the sparkle of laughter, it is wide-eyed in the trembling tears.

In this reading of the letter there is the flow of creation; the words of the two, the one who sends and the one who receives, meet in union; in this union there is a wave of beauty. The place for union is in separation. For, no current can flow without the separation of the far and near, letters cannot circulate. Who knows what activities are at the fountain-source of creation so that its current always gets divided into two. The seed is one integral whole. It has to split itself to allow two green leaves to come out and it is in this precise moment that the seed has its expression. Otherwise it remains dumb, it is miserly, it does not know how to enjoy its own wealth. Life was single—being severed in two, it became man and woman. And at once a postal system was established at the isolation of the two. There was the posting of letters without end. This isolation has wealth of its own, without it everything is silent, everything is closed. In the very heart of this void there is the ache of waiting, the pull of desire that becomes vibrant. The desire to give and the desire to receive send out their responses and answers circulating from shore to shore. That is how the waves of creation arise, and there is the agitation in the succession of the seasons—summer with its hard penance, the rains with its floods, the diffidence of winter, and also the bounties of Spring-time. If these are called illusions, it cannot be wrong; because, the written words in a letter are fleeting shadows, the language is a hint, the full significance of their appearance and disappearance cannot always be known! The heat that the eye cannot detect, coming down from some unknown path of the sky disappears into the depths of the earth; it strikes me that it must disappear

totally. Sometime passes by, I find one day that a seed, pulling apart the curtain of the earth, has appeared above in search of a familiar face that it had known in some previous birth. This heat that was accused of having stolen away had entered the deep darkness of the soil knocking incessantly on the door of a seed that was overwhelmed with sleep. It is in the same way that the hint of an invisible flame from a heart fills the void in another heart reaching to a secret recess where it holds a whispered conversation with someone unknown, and then sometime passes when a new message comes out of the curtained earth announcing, 'I am here.'

A traveller friend of mine read my diary and said, 'By mixing up the letter-reading of the earth with the letter-reading of man you have made the matter rather complex. In Kalidas's *Cloud Messenger* the pain of separation between the lover and the beloved is easy to understand. But in your writing it is difficult to make out which part is rhetoric and which part is plain fact.' I answered, 'Kalidas's *Cloud Messenger* is a poem that is also a reality in the universe. Otherwise the "Yaksha" would not have remained exiled in the abode of Heaven. This separation between heaven and earth is in every creation. In his seventeen-metre poem Kalidas sang the song of the universe. The exchange of invisible messages that are carried on between the atoms and molecules across the gaps of their isolation are letters bearing the speech of creation. Also, the letters which are circulated between man and woman, whether through glances, through whispers, from heart to heart, or written down on paper, are a particular expression of the same universal letter.'



S. S. HARUNA MARU

5th October, 1924

WHEN ONE'S LIFE-SPAN TOUCHES THE SIXTIES, IT inclines towards the horizon of the setting sun. In other words, the horizon of the dawning sun at such a moment is nearer towards one—there is the facing of the East and the West.

The middle part of my life which is generally described as one's mature years, was filled with a great many determinations, many severe aspirations, vast gains and great losses that came crowding together. Involved though I was with all these, I thought that I had at last come to the edge of profundity. If at that time anybody had asked me, 'How old are you?', I would have pointed out the latter years of my life omitting the first 36 years. In other words, my age would have been the last 27 years of my horoscope. The serious-minded people were happy at my behaviour during these 27 years of my later life. Some of them said, 'Be a teacher', some others said, 'Be our chairman', and some said, 'Give us advice.' Some, on the other hand, complained, 'You are letting down the country'—in other words, to have admitted this, was to acknowledge that I had the power to let down my country.

I was then sixty. One afternoon I saw on the roof of the opposite house a boy, about 10 or 12 years old, with hardly anything on, playing about quite oblivious of his surroundings. I was at the time having tea and my mind was engaged on an urgent matter.

Abruptly my mind shifted to a different line of thought. Quite an irrelevant and sudden idea struck me that this boy was in absolute harmony with the afternoon sky; no intruding absent-mindedness could break the tie between him and the earth. Like the naked Shiva, this boy had absorbed within his body the very atmosphere of the

unending horizon and the interspaces of the whole universe. Something hit me hard reminding me that I also had appeared once in this world's courtyard naked and merged with the all. I felt that this was no small matter. I would not have felt so cheated now if I still felt the touch of the universe on me in such a perceptible form, so that all the preparations that were made for the middle age of my life as prelude to my unknown future would have been the responsibility of a much worthier person than I, and I could have occupied the permanent throne of an idle emperor. The wealth of this idleness would have been not only enjoyed by me, but the door to its storehouse would have been also opened wide to those who were drinkers of the same essence, as the saying goes. . . 'Drink, eat, be joyful.'

I forgot my tea as I tried to think how I could possibly communicate to anybody the thrill of joy that now came over me. Till I was about 36 years of age, I had thought my job was to speak, I did not care to explain. For, it was the period when I was rushing fast on my horse through the vast trackless space, and those determined to pursue me, could not find my address. Today I find myself in the midst of a jostling crowd of experienced people of all ages—fifteen—sixteen, twenty—twenty-five, eighty—eighty-five. How to explain to them is a matter I find very difficult. The problem is that the earth suffers famine, is infested with mosquitoes, with police force, there is anxiety over self-rule, foreign rule, diarchy and anarchy, and yet in the midst of all these there was this naked boy, who in the last closing hours of the day wandered about idly on the roof of his home! Linked in an embrace with the sky this self-forgetful boy knew a speech that is of all times, which I now heard myself, and yet I did not know how to express it clearly in any language.

Today it struck me that what this boy was trying to express was a thing of my inner being; in the confusion I had long-forgotten to pay any attention to it. That other boy of 12, that truant who was perpetually forgetful, and

ran away from school, that me—where had he been really playing, in what shadows of intense gravity? The question is now, which side of my life introduces me truly? Is it the part of my earlier 25 years or is it the period of my later years?

With a load of responsibility on my head I once went to America, when I was in my early sixties. The war in Europe had just ended, but in the intoxication of it the eyes of America were still red, redder than Europe's. To make it worse England was then busy playing her pipe in varied ways to catch the entire gamut of America's hearing. A characteristic of democracy is that it has neither the initiative nor the capacity to think. A person who is clever enough to be a master in the art of initiating others into his own tactics, can make them see his own difficulties. I do not know what is happening of late, but in those days England caught the ear of America's vast democracy so that America had to think of England's problems. The ways and means by which all these incantations were spread about were used to influence me. They were afraid that I might broadcast rumours derogatory to England. The massacre of Jallianwallabagh had just then taken place.

Consequently, there was quite an antagonistic pressure in the atmosphere during the few months that I spent in America. Wherever there is a thinking man, it is the country of humanity; if a country lacks in the flow of thought there appears at every step some kind of obstacle that can be very harassing to the foreign traveller. That day when I saw America destitute of this generosity of thought, I found it alarmingly rich, formidably busy, and its eyes blood-red and intoxicated with the fruits of its achievements. Standing close to it, I saw myself, very green, bred on poverty, and impractical to the very marrow and bones. I also realised that in this world there was an immovable place that gave firm security to the very green people. I had to reach my sixtieth year to find out, that I had left that place far behind!

The more I understand the more I realise that the firm

brick-built walls are all illusion, stone fortresses are prisons. My heart cried out just to play one last childish game in the world of the naked boys, the game of irresponsibility! Moreover, my gratitude rushed forth towards those who in my adolescence made me cry, made me laugh and plundered my songs from my throat to scatter them about. They did not boast of any bigness; some had appeared in the shadow of the forest, some by the edge of the river, some in the domesticity of the house, and some in the turn of the road. They were not the kind to leave behind everlasting fame, they did not in the least worry over the increase or decrease of power; as they walked on, they had spoken one or two words, they had no time to say all they could say; they did not attempt to erect a dam across the flow of time, but had danced on its waves as they had passed by, mingling their own tune with the rumbling of the waves; they laughed as they disappeared, like the glitter in their own laughter. I turned my face towards them and said, 'You are the messengers of that light, that heat, which has brought about the true harvest in my life. I bow before you. Many of you came to me for a moment's duration like the half-awake, half-slumberous evening star at dawn disappearing even before the morning breaks.' At mid-day I thought they were trivial; I thought I had forgotten them altogether. And then, when in the evening's haze the world of stars looked at my face from across the sky I knew that what I had thought to be momentary was not of the moment, they were of time everlasting. In the dream of dawn, in the dream-haze of the evening they leave behind a tiny spot of light on the forehead of only those who are the fortunates. That is why my mind says may I have the privilege to come in humility close to those who came to me once in all their insignificance! Could they not, who once before came feigning they were shortlived, come and say to me before I take my farewell, 'Yes, we have known you'; and I may reply, 'I too have recognised you!'

S. S. HARUNA MARU

7th October, 1924

ONCE, ON THE WAY TO ATTEND A MEETING WHERE I was invited, I was accompanied by a young man in the same car. In the course of the conversation, he made me understand that people at that time did not quite approve of the form I adopted in the composition of my poems. As the source of authority he mentioned the name of some of his own disapproving relatives, who also were themselves poets. Moreover, he held up my songs and my latest book of poems called *The Crescent Moon* as examples of the prose-like form that was disliked by the critics. He added that his friends were also much concerned that the merit of my poems was gradually deteriorating.

This is the tendency of time. Spring is not everlasting in this world of mortals. The power in man diminishes, it also ends. If it were ever possible for me to give anything, then my reward should be according to the measure of my gift. If a dying lamp towards the end of the night fans itself out to a few more brighter flickers while fading out, one hardly has the right then to bring any complaints against the light, on the plea that it had failed to fulfil one's hopes. When demands are unreasonable, to say that one's demands have not been fulfilled would also be a mistake on one's part. If a man, at the age of 95, meets with sudden death, it would be mere verbiage to condemn the science of medicine. In the same way if anyone should say that my life-span is getting smaller because I am getting older it would not be a malicious remark, but at the utmost I should say that the man talked nonsense as though he were an oracle. Instead of arguing with anybody, be he young or old, poet or layman, about this inevitable fact ordained by Providence that my merit was fading with the passage of time, I should

continue to write poems whether they were appreciated or not. More so, if taking advantage of that opportunity I could write a book of poems like *The Crescent Moon*, it would but gladden my heart. I had better give my reason why I say this.

I have been writing songs continuously for the last 15 to 16 years. It is not with the idea of pleasing people, for what the reader looks for in a writing is the display of skill. In small fragmentary poems there is not much scope to display this power. If poetry is to meet systematic challenge, then it must need face a vast combat field. Besides, a song is not able to carry a lot of weight; people who assess goods by their weight, do not frequent a place of poetry, the market value of which is no more than ten or twelve light lines. And yet, the output of my songs during these past years has been such that from the standpoint of numerical worth, competing in a straightforward race, I perhaps could be awarded the first prize.

I must also mention that the intense joy I feel when writing a poem, I have hardly found in anything else. I feel so intoxicated by it that all the seriousness of a heavy job instantly disappears, the gravitational pull of the great responsibilities ceases to exist, and the demands of obligation are wholly eradicated from my mind.

The reason is that when one is suddenly caught in the current of the creative diversion of the Great artisan, one forgets all about dry land. Under the autumnal trees the 'Seuli' flowers are scattered in wasteful extravagance, yet nobody ever says that an account should be taken. That it could happen in the way it happens, we find that quite appropriate. In extreme drought the grass dries up taking on a yellow hue; at the first shower of the rains one suddenly discovers in the blades of grass the wild ecstasy of purple and yellow flowers. The flowers care little whether they are seen or not. This is the play of beauty in creation, this is the joy of becoming. Plucking one blossom from the flowering

meadow-grass as I hold it in my hand I say to myself, 'Bravo!' What need have I to say this? This is not a thing to be eaten or to be sold, or to be kept locked up in a safe. And yet, what is it that I discover in it that makes me say, 'Bravo!' Is it then its substance? But there is so much more substance in a clod of earth! Then? It is the beauty that I see. But what does the word mean? Except 'beauty', the word has no other meaning. There is one thing that beauty says, 'Look at me, I have become!' If my mind responds to it and says, 'Yes, indeed, you have become, you are', and it has nothing more to add, it must then see beauty; it must know that the ultimate is in this becoming. On the other hand, if the 'drumstick' flower appears from out of a formless sea on a wave of beauty, and proclaims 'Look at me, I am',—and I, not understanding its meaning answer back very rudely, 'Why do you happen to be?'—if I then demand a wrong answer from it and force it to say, 'I am because I am your food', then I shall fail to see the ultimate mystery of beauty. There is a little girl who quite unexpectedly came to be with me on my journey. She is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years of age. In her, the joy of life is perpetual with her sweet, incoherent utterances, and her so many heart-enchanting gestures; my heart says, 'I have been given a great gift!' What I received could not be grasped through mathematical measures. It only means that I saw in her the culmination of her special being. This gradual becoming of the little girl is for me a supreme gain. She cannot sweep my room, she cannot cook my food, but these facts do not take away from her gradual becoming. Perhaps the scientist will provide with a more solid explanation, saying, 'In the living world the most important thing is to continue the family lineage; if little girls do not appear sweet, they will hinder this purpose.' I cannot always disregard solid reasonings, but transcending them there is yet a subtler truth that is beyond all explanations. A basket of fruit makes a very pleasing sight, and a savoury dish of fish also delights people

who are not vegetarians; the food as a need exists in both; therefore in both we have the solid explanation of the cause of happiness. But in spite of this, there is a particular happiness in a basketful of fruit that does not call for any explanation. There is only one fact in it, and that is, the fruit says, 'I am', and my mind answers 'That is where my gain is.' This minutest companion of my daily life, who is but  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years old, after yielding to the demands that life imposes on her for the preservation of the family line, has yet something left over that is the key-note of the solemn sacred sound of the syllable "OM" that has risen from the deep core of the universe-heart. The universe proclaims, 'OM', it says 'Yes', it says, 'Here I am'. That little girl also is that 'OM', that 'Yes', and that 'Here I am.' Whenever I revere existence as existence I see a happiness in that existence, a happiness that also has an ultimate form in me. We do not see this happiness in a slave, that is why slavery is so terrible a falsehood, and because of its falsehood its torments are monstrous.

This play at the root of creation has its manifestation in continual forms. When I am able to join in this selfless joy of manifestation, my mind touches the very basic joy of creation. This root-joy is sufficient within itself, it is not answerable to anybody.

A small boy tries the whole day to build up something out of earth, clay and bits of sticks and straws. The scientists have given their explanation for this that this capacity to build helps him in his life-journey, and that this capacity needs practice. I do accept this explanation, and yet other facts are omitted which are yet more fundamental. The primary reason is that the creator-mind of the child says, 'Let there be', and carrying that message the dust, the clay and bits of straws all start clamouring, 'Just look, it has happened!'

Much of this happening has its place in the child's imagination. When he sees a clay heap before him, he



imagines, ' This is the fortress of the prince of my fairy-tale. Through the suggestivity of this clay heap the child realizes the presence of a fortress; the experience of this realization is his joy. It is not the joy he feels in manifesting his creative ability, for as yet he hardly has any ability to express himself! The joy is because he sees in his heart the particular form so clearly! To see it in its ultimate shape is to see creation; in its joy is the joy that is at the root of creation.

Songs are entirely the play of creation. As the rainbow appears, like the magic creation of rain and sun, a built-up archway of two whimsical temperaments in the sky, an exquisite moment proceeds on its triumphal journey through this very archway. In an instant the play is over, the moment passes by waving its coloured garment; there is nothing more! Song-poems are nothing but this temperamental play of colour. If the poet of the rainbow were accosted and asked, ' What is one to make out from all this? ', the reply one would meet with would be, ' Nothing! ' ' Then? ' ' It just pleases me! '—the pleasure in the pure form, to every challenge, to creation, this is the last answer.

When, in this leisure's playground we see the moving display of forms, our minds are set free from the illusion of matter. They reach out into a state of joy, and into something that is weightless, measureless and inexhaustible.

The other day in the midst of the ocean I saw in the western sky a rare manifestation of sunset formed of ' fume, light, water and sand '. That experienced side of my mind that knows the profit of a gold mine kept stupidly silent. But the side that was still green, said, ' Yes, I have seen! ', and at once realized that the profit of the mines is but a mirage, and moreover, what appeared as mere moments in the traceless ocean, in the name-devoid sky, had in them the inexhaustible wealth of all times, and that these were but the eternal forms in the vast playground of the formless.

When the mind is eager to experience the innermost essence of this selfless play of creation, one sits down

immediately like a carefree monarch to compose poems. Like a small jasmine with four petals, a song when it is completed, finds its place on the floor of that great playhouse where the planets and stars have been sporting round for centuries. There, a century is the same as the moment, there the soul of the sun and the soul of the sunflower are bound in unity, there the clouds in the evening and in the morning have a melody that is in accord with the tune of my songs.

For the last 15 or 16 years, a sense of duty has dragged me into many a pre-occupation and anxiety, and extracted a lot of work out of me. All work due to a sense of duty has a good reason, it always pricks you with questions such as 'What benefit is there in this?' That is why, the one who asserts his baseless demands against the reasonableness of all other demands keeps questioning within me all the time, 'You are a poet, you have come on this earth carrying the passport of the eternal holiday, what have you done about it? By meddling in other work, see that you do not lose caste.' I am sure I write songs because of this urgency; it is to preserve my identity in the din of the market, and not to please people. Sense of duty flourishing in its own glory says in a solemn voice, 'I am the most weighty thing in the world!' In answer, my God-gifted leisure strikes up its wayward flute, saying 'The lightest thing in the world am I!' Light of course it is! That is why on every waft of breeze it moves on its wings—its wings that are variegated. Its job is not to utilize time within the secure walls of an edifice; it is the truant who roams on an aimless path, a path where over-flowing essence in fountains of coloured sprays streams forth in all directions, like vast incidental extravagance.

The 'unuseful' side of me, envying and disparaging the useful side, whenever possible, forces me into writing poems thus asserting its legal right. When on the one side a weighty argument appears, the other side immediately puts in a greater claim. So that as my work-a-day register gets

continually larger, so also the claims of my holiday produce an increasingly larger file. This constant quarrel between the two takes place in my innermost secret chamber. To find out to which side I really belong, I have brought a case against myself, where I am myself to be the judge.

And then, there is this question why I had to write at all poems like those in the *The Crescent Moon*? This was also not with the idea of pleasing people, this was entirely in my own interest.

I mentioned before, that for a while when I was in America, I had felt like one imprisoned in the stone fortress of its extreme efficiency, of its bleak maturity. That day I saw clearly that there was nothing so deplorable as the business of accumulation. The business magnate thinks he can defy the ever-moving quality of the universe, but nothing can last, if not to-day, tomorrow everything will be swept away. The current that has in a whirlpool caused solid heaps to accumulate in places, is the same current, which in its incessant flow will finally set them afloat and draw them into the blue ocean; the heart of the earth will become healthy. The creative strength that is at play on earth is greedless, it is detached, and is not miserly; it does not allow accumulation, its path to creation is obstructed by hoarding; it wants to keep its leisure free of all impurities to express eternally the ever new. The greedy man turns up with his paraphernalia, and in order to guard them he engages millions of fettered slaves to build up colossal store houses. Dwelling in the dark cave of lifeless materiality within the prison walls of these storehouses which are doomed to perish, this miser of a man in the utter arrogance of his possessions is determined to ridicule the forces of the Greater Time. The Greater Time will not tolerate this indefinitely. Just as the dust-laden haze across the evening sky temporarily overshadows the sun, only to disappear leaving behind no trace of its tyranny, so will all these vanish merging into nothingness.

Imprisoned within these blind material hoardings, and faced with the colossal belchings of the machine, I spent some time, feeling suffocated in the poison-ridden atmosphere of suspicion that lacked hospitality. It was then that I heard on the path outside these dark, dense walls, the footsteps of the eternal traveller. The rhythmic beat of these footsteps struck a chord in my blood, it echoed in my meditation. I knew clearly that day, that I was a comrade of that traveller.

When I left America and escaped from this stark materiality I started to write *The Crescent Moon*. I rushed into it in the way a prisoner would rush to the seaside to breathe its air as soon as he was freed. When one is confined for some time within four walls, one realizes that one needs for one's soul the spaciousness of the vast sky. So that, having been shut within the fortress of the experienced, I discovered that the child who is in every man's heart has his playground spread out from world to world. That is why I set free my imagination to dive deep into the child's sportive play; I swam on its waves in order to soothe my mind, to wash it clean and to liberate it.

I have been discussing this matter at length, because for sometime now I have been filled with a wistful hankering to sum up my life in the same world of play where I first began my life's journey, in the same playground where the early part of my life was mostly spent. Those who once were my companions at the riverside, at the edge of the sky, on the worldly path seem to tell me that the privileges of those days are not over yet, and that in the twilight hour of my farewell the words of promise of my earlier days are yet to be fulfilled. That is why, the morning jasmine takes the place of the evening tuberose sending out its message in perfume. It says, 'Let not your fame hinder you, let not your glory bind you, but let your song making you into the wayfaring traveller send you off on your last journey. Sitting by the window of your early years, you smelt in the

breathing air the perfume that your distant beloved wore on her clothes. Coming out into the path of your latter years in the crimson twilight air may you now go forward in search of the same beloved. Pay no heed to people's outcry. Raise your ears towards the direction from where the music comes forth—and speed your wings along the skyline towards the world of play that is beyond the oceans. Before you leave you may confess that you are no active worker of the world, you belong to the group of drifters.'

S. S. HARUNA MARU

7th February, 1925

WE GOT OFF AT MARSEILLES, AND BOARDED THE train. I saw one side of Western Europe through my familiarity with its restaurant. Like the rotary movements of the planets in the sky, tray after tray was whizzed round the place, and then there were enormous quantities of all kinds of food.

The demands you make in your own home are not possible on a journey. In the home you have more leisure, there is the convenience of more space. There is no obstacle in the way to accentuate the necessities of daily life. But, while moving on a journey, it is more befitting that people should travel equipped as lightly as possible. If the antlers of a deer were as extensive, as large and as heavy as the branches and twigs of a banyan tree, they would be rather cumbersome for the creature who has to move about.

Throughout the ages, especially in the earlier times, when our kings and sovereigns, noblemen and aristocrats had to travel, no matter in what circumstances, they carried with them the whole paraphernalia of their ostentation and wealth. Their whimsical demands on the world had been high. The world had bowed down to these demands because they were very few in number. In the restaurant of a railway station the number of trays, the quantity and varieties of food, the arrangements for service consist of such elaborate extravagance which once upon a time could only be demanded during their travels by the princely class of olden times. Today such arrangements are for the benefit of the general public.

Every man has the right to such lavish indulgence, this idea has an attraction that is highly dangerous. In this attraction the whole populace of a country is prepared to

sneak through the walls of the universal treasure house with the use of their own tools; this tyrannical greed of civilization is terrifying.

During the last war, England, France, Germany and the other countries that were also engaged in the war, had to own for a considerable period that no man great or small, was entitled to have a surplus. They had then put a restraint on their own needs. They realized that the items of man's requirements need not be necessarily heavy. After the war it did not take them long to forget this.

When the constant aim of the entire population of each country is to turn unessentials into urgent necessities, a wholesale robbery must inevitably take place, all over the world. Most of the Western countries systematically express their concern about the problem of overpopulation. The problem has become difficult due to one main reason that the public is demanding more and more the multiplicities of self-indulgence. To try to meet such a wide-scaled demand, man finds it impossible to maintain his sense of religion, man becomes a tormentor of man. This task of tormenting must inevitably be accomplished through the alien races of far-off countries. The trouble is that when once the fire of destruction is set to one's religious sense, no matter where exactly in one's life-span, it does not remain within that sphere. The cruelty that the self-indulgent practices for his own aim has no end, because there is no stage at which his arrogance can come forward to tell him, 'That's enough, you should stop now!' If this improper over-abundance of material goods is considered the chief element of a civilization, then that civilization definitely becomes man-destroying. This worldwide cultivation of the steady draining of the human blood will surely lead man one day to a suicidal end, nobody can doubt this.

In this railway restaurant, as I saw on the one side the extravagance of indulgence, on the other side I could not help noticing the swift speed with which the work was

carried out. Time was short, passengers were many, the food was abundant and in great varieties, the implements for eating were varied—and the extraordinary swiftness of service had become a habit with those who served. The serving machine was wound up to its utmost limit. What I saw was this smoothness of quick motion with which people were attended to, and which is so evident in all the activities of the West.

The machine for any outward use has its own rhythmic movement which can be accelerated to a faster and faster speed. But our life, our heart, has inherent pauses in its tempo; no highhanded demand can be made on it, because of the need of a hurried speed. Moving faster means moving ahead, this may be true of an automatic machine, but not of man. With man's movement there is the movement of the atmospheric air; man in his walk creates harmony with the movement of the air, the machine has no such problem. In the hurry of getting to office one may swallow four helpings instead of one in a short moment, but whether one will be able to digest these helpings will not depend on the machine-like dictates of one's superior. The wound-up gramophone can give out in half a minute a song that originally took 4 minutes to sing, but in that case the song will not be a song but a scream. To indulge in the flavour of an essence the tongue takes its own required time; if one swallows sweetmeat as one would a quinine tablet, one would no doubt get the substance, but would be deprived of the flavour of the sweetmeat. If by driving my cycle fast I catch with my friend and touch his garment, the flag of victory placed in my hand will be my bicycle's but it is not the way to embrace my friend if I were to reach his heart! Mechanical speed is useful for outward purposes, but when it comes to the question of fulfilling the inner demand, one has to recognise the nature of the inner rhythm.

When is it that this outward speed oversteps the inner rhythm? It is when there is an exaggeration of the outward



necessities. It is then that man lags behind, he cannot keep pace with the mechanical machine. In Europe the human-individual is left behind more and more every day; the machine has gone forward; and this is what the people term 'progress'.

What the English call 'success' has its fast-moving vehicle, and the faster it runs the greater is its achievement. In all the countries of Europe an intense racing is steadily going on in politics, in armament and in commerce, everywhere on land, water and in the sky. The interest in outward necessities has grown so extensive, that no call from man's true humanness has been able to put a restraint on any party. Politics is ever busy to provide for an all-devouring savage greed. Its pickpocket policy covers a circumference that has turned worldwide. In the olden days a religious sense often put a restraint on the methods of high military warfare, today in its place diplomacy shows off its feat in the high jump tactics of the hurdle race. There is no holding back. When one side hurls its poisoned arrow using it for a military weapon, the other side comes out with moral condemnation. But today there is not one party which is not going all-out in search of this poison. During the war when the first bomb was dropped from the sky on the unarmed, helpless inhabitants, there was no end to the pious censure that was heard on every side. But today it is seen that the pious sides themselves are seeking this unholy weapon to apply it on villagers at the slightest provocation. In the last war all kinds of satanic weapons were prodigiously used on the enemies, suppressing truth and spreading falsehood in various forms by deliberate planning and active propaganda. The war has ended, but satanism still continues. Even India, helpless as she is, has not been spared the attacks of powerful propaganda. All these methods are the methods of impatience; these are the speedy moves that sin adopts; they are winning at every step in the outward race, but that winning is always at the cost of the inner

man. Man today, taking the garland of victory from his own neck, has decorated the machine. From the netherlands the voice of Satan comes, "Bravo!"

The Householder said to the Charioteer,  
Aloud, with anxiety :

' Stop, Stop . . .  
Where are you going  
In such frenzied speed  
Agitating your chariot?  
There is my house in front! '

The Charioteer said :

' There is my path  
I shall be delayed if I turn.  
The chariot must run straight ahead  
Knocking down the barriers.'

The Householder said :

' Such unrelenting haste makes me feel afraid,  
Tell me whither are you bound?'

The Charioteer said :

' Nowhere,  
I must proceed ahead.'

' To what pilgrimage, to what temple? '  
Asked the Householder.

' No, not anywhere, just ahead! '

' Who is this friend you want to see? '

' None I want to meet,  
I must hurry, alone, ahead of the others.'

On sped the Charioteer with a rumbling noise,  
Razing the house to the ground ;  
In consternation, with a curse,

The wind left behind its grief  
In the haze of dust, in the evening sky ;  
At the turn to the glowing lion-door of darkness,  
Along the bloodshot path of sunset,  
The chariot rushed on in haste,  
Aimless but ahead.

The body, the mind and the heart within man are the three things that carry out his work ; these three, by mutually agreeing, build up a rhythm in the flow of his activity. In a cold climate the tendency of the body is to move fast ; to keep the same pace with it the mind also has to think quickly. In a tropical climate we move slowly and leisurely, think also slowly and without hurry, we take a long time to arrive at a decision. In a cold country the heat is kept stirred within the body, but in a tropical place the heat is kept off from the body ; the all-enveloping heat of the sky is much more than what the body needs ; so the whole object of the body is to see that this internal energy is not in any way heightened. The pressure of movement has to be kept always rather low ; that is why the pace of our active thought has a modified tempo.

When the body, to carry out its work, does not have to wait anticipating the dictate and the thinking of the mind, it is called habit. This habit calls for skill ; the faster the rhythm of an action, the greater the need of the body to be unhesitant. The hesitation comes when one waits for the time that is taken up in thinking. If, what is to be the outward success, cannot allow this time for thinking then confusion arises. A car has its own specific speed ; the decision to steer its wheel either to the right or to the left, has to be taken in conjunction with the speed of the machine, otherwise there will be danger. That swiftness in action becomes easy through continued practice. If a new condition suddenly arises outside this habit, it causes accidents ; in other words, where the mind has to be prompt and is not found ready, problems arise.

It is not difficult to wind up a machine to a speed that is twice or even four times as fast; to conform to it the reaction of habit has also to be quicker. But it is possible for habit to succeed in its dexterity and skill where only mechanical objects are concerned. In other words, instead of one package, two packages can be packed. But whatever concerns the heart, whatever concerns the emotions, does not follow the regulated motion of the machine.

Those who are of the robust type are always happy with the fast, quick notes of a musical mode; but those who are entranced with the beauty of the Goddess playing her lute in the wave-swung lotus-bed in the lake, become alarmingly upset with the proposal of a motor journey at a speed of 60 miles an hour.

The rhythm of living amongst people of the Western countries is growing faster and faster, not only doubly so but even as much as four times! It is because the need for material goods has far exceeded the need for a fulfilled life. On a demolished house a market is built, a din arises: Time is money. To measure this urge is easy; that is why one thing which is always seen there, which is always lucidly clear to everybody, to understand which one does not lose a minute, is the drummer's two hands frantically beating out the dance tune of Death. Even before wasting time to understand such music, one feels one's temper rise. But the man in the crowd encores, 'Bravo! this is indeed a great show!'

This time I had the opportunity of seeing a few films on the ship. I observed that the chief characteristic of these films was their fast tempo. I was struck again and again by the rapidity with which the incidents followed one another. I know that the cinema has become a source of great attraction for the public. It is like an everyday intoxicant for people both young and old. This only means that in all spheres of modern life skill has superseded art. To charm the eye through efficient production needs skilful manoeuvring.

The chief vehicle of success is its swift efficiency. Even a sinful activity when displayed with polished smoothness is appealing to people today. The peace, the leisure needed to realize what is exquisite in beauty, exquisite in bliss, is now repelled at every step day by day. This excitability in the frantic race for success is continually raising whirlwinds on the Western horizon.

On the dark, political canvas of the Western continent, the whirlpool of its activities appears to me like the gigantic moving pictures of the cinema. The entire business is a rivalry between different tempos of speed. Success or defeat is dependent upon how much one has stepped ahead or lagged behind another on land, water or in the sky. The speed is ever increasing, but it has no connection with peace. In the path of religion patience is needed, self-control is needed. In the path of success cleverness has no patience, it knows no restraint; the faster it moves by distorting its arms and legs, the more wonderful the jugglery appears to us, so that the tempo in this wizard-civilization is so hastened in every direction that the mind of man has no time to feel ashamed of its untruth, or to fear the danger of a suicidal death.

S. S. KRUKOVIA

9th February, 1925

I

THE WORLDLY-MINDED MAN TEARING OFF A hundred-petalled lotus, counts each petal as he collects them, saying, 'I have got them.' His hoarding is an illusion. The doubting man tears the lotus petal by petal cutting the pieces into fragments, twisting and squeezing them as he says, 'I did not get them.' In other words, he looks in the opposite direction as he says, 'There is nothing.' The connoisseur sees the same lotus with a look of wonderment. This wonderment means that both facts—getting and not getting—are equally true. The lover says, 'Millions and millions of ages are stored within my heart, and yet my heart is not appeased.' In other words, he says, 'what could be received in a million years I received within a short time and yet much of what I could have received in those millions of years, I have missed.' Time is relative, this is what has been expressed for a long time in the heart's language; today it has a place in the language of the scientist.

When I was young, I remember how the whole universe appeared to me as newly born every day from out of the dark womb of the night. What is known and what is unknown had mingled with the same oneness in my mind. My childhood's days were the time of my wayfaring. I did not then seek my journey's end, I walked on my road, gazing at the wayside scenes with a feeling that something like 'who knows' or a 'perhaps' may come out from behind the fleeting shadows and take me by surprise; in the corner of our verandah, gathering a bit of earth I had planted in it some custard-apple seeds and had regularly

watered them. What was a seed today, may be a tree tomorrow, this was among the group of uncertainties, 'Who knows.' The real seeing is the seeing into this 'who knows.' Looking at truth whoever says, 'I know' makes as great a mistake as the one who says, 'I do not know.' This has been said by our Rishis. One who says, 'I know very well' must be ignorant enough to think that 'getting' lies in touching the bag, and not the gold contained therein; and the one who declares 'I do not know' misses even the bag. This is what I understood from the 'Isho-Upanishad.' When this 'knowing' is tied in a sacred bond with the 'unknowing' and thus appears to us, the mind bursts forth saying, 'Blessed am I!' Our greatest loss is when we are sure that we possess.

## II

This is the reason why England lost India in a way that was not possible for any other country in Europe. The eternal mystery that is in India slipped out of England's reach. What she had forcibly tied as solid possession within the hold of her army, she mistook for India as a whole, and in this assertion she had sat back securely in the seat of a banker. She had no sensitive wonderment about India, what she had was plenty of contempt. Apart from their own political interest the English people seldom discussed India, which never even happened in France or Germany. The fact that the English people are hardly conscious of India's existence except through the eyes of their politicians becomes all the more emphatic if one picks up any of their newspapers whether daily, weekly or monthly.

The only reason for this is that England's need for India is entirely utilitarian. To view anything from the standpoint of utility is to view with the idea of 'getting'. In this 'getting' there is not a suspicion of 'non-getting'; that is why it cannot be said that there is truth in this seeing.

Because the essential truth is lacking in this seeing there is no feeling of wonder, no reverence.

A relationship of necessity is totally a relationship of taking; the greed is there, but there is no joy. The relationship that is real is a mingling of both receiving and giving; for, it is joy that sets the mind free. This is why one is so aware of the extraordinary lack of generosity in the individual Englishman towards an Indian. This is not said as a complaint, for this is inevitable under the circumstances. The India that England's greed possessed is what the soul of England has lost. That is why England's greed is in India, England's glory is in India, England's difficulties are in India. That is why, it is impossible for England to renounce anything in order to offer health, education and freedom to India. And yet, England's temper is easily roused when it is a question of punishment. The wealthy Englishman who, in spite of the 400 or 500 per cent profit which he makes in the blood-squeezing jute-trade in Bengal, yet never thinks of offering a penny from it towards, the smallest need or comfort of the country, who remains supremely unperturbed even when India is overridden by famine, flood or pestilence, is the kind of person who justifies the drastic actions of red-cyed authorities who through the machinery of their police-force torture the very heart of a Bengal without education, without health and emaciated with hunger, and glorifies them from the cushioned-seat of his inflated profit saying, 'This is but the efficient rule in India!'

This is indeed to be expected! For, this wealthy man never truly sees Bengal; Bengal lies hidden on the far side of his colossal profiteering. It is where the hungry and the thirsty are crying out in anguish in the heart of Bengal, and where happiness and sorrow have their own dwelling-place in Bengal, that there lies the wide road for man to be friendly with man, there the religious sense makes a greater demand than the instinct for business, to understand this



or even to think about it, he has neither the time nor the patience. On the other hand, the more severe vigilance is made the more delighted are the profit-lovers. The tactics of watchfulness is to maintain 'law and order', it is the code of a wrestler; the code of religion is sympathy and respect, it is the ethics of man.

I do not want to be unjust; to rule over a country means upholding law and order. Even in the case of extreme love and affection, boxing one's ears is allowed. I do not complain when the measures of punishment become irregular and unjustified in times of growing restlessness in the country. When one side is being mischievous, and the other side retaliates by being tyrannical it may not be a glorious act on the part of the powerful, but that also can easily be accepted as not very unnatural. The main point is that in order to criticize a ruling principle, one must scrutinize the whole structure of the governmental system. If it is seen that all the departments of the government are overrun by a retinue of watchmen, and yet not a soul stirs when one is dying of thirst and cannot get a drop of water, or any help when one is attacked with malaria and suddenly collapses and that on the other hand it is seen that there is unfailing generosity regarding the constables' outfit, buttons, turbans, awards and ostentations, and no one belonging to any of the departments of the police, the civil service or the law is ever without a sympathetic hearing, or ever has his whimsical demand questioned, yet when one's child is breathing his last breath nothing is forthcoming except advice on self-reliance—in other words, when the noose hangs round one's neck no other aid comes to one except the advice to chant one's Goddess's name—it is then that in this measureless incongruity one comes to see the constable as the messenger-incarnate of the God of Death. The brick-built house where there is the greater prevalence of watchmen than of friends, of helpers or relatives, it is called in our current language a prison. We know that people have the

need to build a thorny hedge round their garden. But if the thorny hedge is the sole object of their love and attention, then how is the garden to grow? If then we fail to show enthusiasm for this garden, why should the gardener accuse us of inconsideration? If our rulers ask us, 'Don't you want law and order in your country?' My reply is, 'Of course, we do want it, but life and mind are in no way less valuable.' On a measuring scale it is not wrong to place on one side a weight of 20 or 25 maunds if among the stuff on the balancing side there are some things to call our own. But instead, if I discover that stones and rubble make our heavy load while the best of the stuff are for the others, then this measuring scale becomes the punishing rod that deals out cruel insults to us through the combined efforts of the army and police. Our complaint is not against the police, our complaint is against the burdensome weight we have to bear; the complaint is not because the fire is blazing, but because there is no food to cook on it. Especially when it is we who provide for the expenses of the fire. The cost of fuel, for the purpose of lighting the fire rises so drastically high that there is not a penny left with which we can buy our daily rice. In this condition, oppressed by hunger, with tears swimming in our eyes, when we are taken to task by our master, 'Don't you want that any fire should be lit?'—we can only reply with meekness, 'Of course, the fire should be lit, but isn't this fire like the fire of the funeral pyre?'

This is a sad story that I have just told, a story that spreads all over the world today; the luminous truth in man is eclipsed by the forces of profiteering. For this reason it has been so easy for man to be cruel to man, to cheat man. That is why, in the West politics occupies the highest peak of men's efforts. In other words, the heart of man lies crushed in despair under the pressure of man's inflated purse. Never in man's history have such prodigious preparations for an all-devouring greed appeared in such an ugly form.

## III

Our enemy passions cast a shadow over the perfect image of truth. In our lust we see only the flesh, we do not see the soul; in our greed we see only the matter, we do not see the man; in our conceit we see only ourselves, we do not see others. There is one enemy-passion which is not so violent, and not so dense. It is called delusion. It is inert, impassive. By dimming the light of our consciousness it obscures the truth—it is not an obstacle, it is a covering. Habits, very often, in the form of delusion enswathe our mind.

The mist cannot destroy the earth's substance, it effaces the sky. The infinite is hidden from view. Deluding habit is the mist of the mind. It draws a veil over the indescribable, in it the feeling of wonderment dries up. In it the truth of an object does not lessen in importance, but its glory is diminished. We then refrain from welcoming the truth. The welcoming ceremony of truth takes place in our wonderment.

The doctors say, the same habitual food served everyday is not conducive to one's digestion. If an element of surprise is absent from the taste of one's palate, the body is reluctant to absorb the food. If the same lessons are repeated again and again at the same hour in the same class amongst small children, it is the surest way to rob them of their enthusiasm for knowledge.

The tendency of life is to be ever eager. Nature keeps life restive by the occasional touch of the unexpected. What is more, if the unexpected appears in the form of sorrow, it also brings about a great awakening in the heart. The unexpected is the messenger of what is beyond the barrier of limits. It brings the message of the inconceivable, it frees consciousness from apathy.

In our country, to go on a pilgrimage has always been a chief factor in our religious practice. When God is screened behind our habits, it is to the screen that we pay our homage of worship. Those who are inclined to be worldly-minded,

who value goods more even in their religious practices undoubtedly show their reverence more to the screen than to God.

On a pilgrimage, by pushing away this screen one sets the mind moving on the open path, so that one has the opportunity of seeing the everyday circumscribed knowledge in the context of the ever-unknown eternal. The temple of truth stands at the confluence where each day meets the everlasting.

That is why I started on this journey being fully conscious of both its sides. The mind was awake and aware of the one whom in the world of habits I see and yet I do not see, and said, 'Perhaps I shall meet that ever-unknown who with the unknown garland round his neck is waiting somewhere under an unknown starry night.' Habit asserts itself, 'You must not think He exists, He is a mirage.' The world from beyond the enclosure steps forward and proclaims, 'He does exist, open your eyes and see. Because you think you have done with seeing in all its implication that you stop seeing, that is why you do not see!' And then, at intervals, something tells me, 'I may perhaps see Him now.' The awakening is in the traveller's mind towards this quest. It is in the quest of this unknown that I have written my songs. Transcending all despair, all mockery, and all the wearisome trivialities of life it is the unexpected which throws out the hints of its splendour in every shadow and light . . . the traveller is now on his path to partake of its glowing spark, for which he has left behind the curtained corner of his familiar home.

S. S. KRUKOVIA

11th February, 1925

A WOMAN WORSHIPPER OF VISHNU ONCE TOLD ME, 'One never can tell when and at whose house a Bairagi may be offered food, he can neither claim this food nor has he a right to it. So that to him it is always something that is sent by God.' This is what I was trying to express yesterday. When the rationing is fixed, the truth of receiving is somewhat dimmed. The enchanting uncertainty of 'Not getting' is not entwined with it. When 'getting' is the aim of self-indulgence, it becomes animal-like. And when getting and 'Non-getting' both mingle in one's enjoyment, that is for human-beings.

Since my childhood I was destined to leave the strongholds of learning, and to take up a lonely road. Like the indigent ascetic travelling all alone within my heart's path I have often received in sudden and unexpected measure food for my mind. I have carried on incessant talks with myself, as a vagabond does. While chatting to myself I would hear things that I had never heard before. When this flow of talk was visited by a flood-tide, many unknown objects from the dark cavities within would come up floating, trying to find a landing; they did not appear to me as part of the ration to which I had a right. They glowed in the sudden vividness of an unexpected 'getting', like the emergence of a meteor that bursts forth into splendour as it shoots down into the earth's orbit.

The youngest of all my beloveds on this earth is a three year old. She chatters on incoherently her sweet nothings without a moment's pause. People who listen to her are just an excuse, she herself is the audience to her own speech; just as whirling vapour solidifies into the form of a star or a planet, so thoughts crystallise into forms in the active

mind through the momentum of one's speech. When the teacher with his own talkativeness puts a stop to this flow he deadens the child's own initiative in expressing thoughts. For a child excessive book-learning is ruinous to the natural flow of his thinking. The universe-nature is eloquent day and night; when its speech enters the child's mind making him speak, it is by way of speech that the child can best learn. The teacher babbles on, and tells the child to shut up. Those words come down on the child's silenced mind as an oppressive weight, but not as nourishment. In any educational system for children, if the stress is on the eloquence of the teachers, while the child has to remain silent, I know then it is like the pelting hail-storm beating down on the desert-sand.

However, as I was not long in the hands of a teacher, whatever I learnt was through the chance talks that I had within myself. It is not that I did not hear what other people said, or that I read no books, but what I knew from them was not a knowledge to be stored, what I read was not with the idea of learning by heart. In order to learn something special I have not erected dams to hold back the natural flow of mind. So that whatever happens to be in that flowing stream is free in its movements; In shifting its place from here to there it has mingled and mixed, taking on exquisite forms. When the whirlwind of a composition rises on the horizon of my mind, I never know what words will come floating up, in what incidental form of a subject.

Perhaps there are many who think that I can write or speak in a particular way on a particular subject on the spur of the moment. This is no doubt possible for those who are experienced writers and orators, but not for me. People who own cows, can bring out at a moment's notice one particular cow that is needed to be milked. But when one's abode is in the forest, one has to depend for one's immediate need on any stray cow that may happen to wander about. Ashutosh Mukherjee once asked me to give a talk at the

University. I was rather timid, but I said 'yes'. And later when he asked me on what subject I was going to speak, I said without thinking that it would be on literature. But what I would say on that vast subject I had not given a thought. I had a blind belief that when once I started, and proceeded with my lecture, the subject matter would also take shape. I lectured on three consecutive days. I gathered that many of the professors did not like my talk. . . I could not uphold the prestige of either the subject matter or the university. I could not blame them either. When I arrived at the meeting hall, I still had no plans whatsoever on the subject. Those whose daily business it was to deal with subjects of all kinds, had no difficulty in detecting the lack of material in my talk.

Lately I was asked to go to Italy, and deliver a speech in Milan. Professor Formichi asked me repeatedly what the subject matter was on which I intended to speak. How could I tell him that the One who is All-Knowing only knew about it, and that when I asked Him, He would give me no answer! The professor's idea was that if he knew the gist of the subject, he could have it translated and printed in good time. This was drastic, I thought. A gist can only be possible after the matter had made its appearance. How could one search for the stone before the fruit came into existence? I have no polite behaviour where lectures are concerned, my behaviour is that of a vagabond tramp. I cannot think ahead and plan; I think as I speak, like the bee which while on its wings makes its humming sound. Therefore, I have no hope of becoming a professor; what is more, I doubt if I have the capacity to be even a student.

This is how I had the good fortune to know the significant truth that was in the "Bairagi's" mind. People who are of this world leave out the universe in seeking the special, but Bairagis, while tramping the road, discover the special along with the universe. What they get as special favour they accept, and expect no fixed ration. The universe-

nature itself is a vagrant mendicant having no aim—what it receives, is in its movement. In traversing the path of the inert it suddenly came across life, traversing the path of the animate, it miraculously came across man; if it stops moving and starts hoarding, then creation must become cluttered with rubbish. It is then that ‘annihilation’ is called upon to come with its broom-stick.

There is one side to the universe other than its immovable substance, in other words, not the side that consists of possessions and worldly goods. It is the side that is ever-expressing the restlessness of its heart. It is there where light is, with shadow and refrain, where music is with dance, colour and perfume, where there is gesture and the indicating finger. It is there, where the universal minstrel plays on his one-stringed instrument filling every bend in the road with vibrating notes, where from the saffron-cloth of the Bairagi, colour breaks forth upon every waft of wind disappearing in waves. Likewise, the vagrant ascetic who is in the heart of man, proceeds on his way leaving his own answer in his poems, songs and portrayals, like the indicating gestures of the universe through its own songs, dance, form and essence. When the worldly man sitting behind his account-book hears of this, he is surprised and asks, ‘What is it all about, what profit does it fetch, what security does it assure one?’ To hold the unholdable, he searches for it a place within his tightened purse, within his leather-bound account-book. When one’s mind has not donned the saffron-cloth, the message of the universe-medicant is of no use to him. That is why the music that rises from the flute on the open road wafted by the sudden wind mingling in the heart of the rustling forest, and in the murmuring sound of the river—the music that disappears behind the morning-star along the path of the closely following sunlight, never finds a place, I have noticed in the town’s meeting hall under the light of its chandeliers. The master musicians proclaim, ‘It is of no consequence.’ The experienced ones



say, 'It makes no sense.' Perhaps it is of no consequence; perhaps it makes no sense; they may be quite right; perhaps it cannot be tested like gold on the touchstone, also like jute sacks it cannot be weighed by the machine, but what it is, only the Bairagi knows! There is a flavour he finds in things he cannot hold. How often have I wondered when songs come to fill my throat, why can I not also create the auspicious hour when they can be heard? One may find the willing listener, but where is one to find the vagrant mind—mind that is able to come out on the open road leaving behind its secure seat, that will hear what is beyond all utterance, that will understand what is beyond all knowing.

S. S. KRUKOVIA

12th February, 1925

SINCE MY BIRTH I HAVE BEEN, AS IT WERE, LEFT adrift on a lonesome and solitary raft. I see on the shore the lights of habitation, the crowd with its uproar; at times I am also forced to land at one place or another but I cannot settle down anywhere with enthusiasm. My friends think that I avoid them, my enemies have the idea that I keep aloof because of my conceit. The God of my destiny, who has been steadily letting me drift, who does not allow me the time to take down my sail, and who, whenever I try to tie the landing rope to a post, tears it asunder by force, has never come forward with any explanation.

One can gain nothing by quarrelling with fate, in the settlement of one's sorrow or happiness. What happens has a reason; to be angry with that reason is to be angry with what has happened. If a jar with all empty sound says in great indignation, 'Why have you made me hollow within?' The answer will inevitably be, 'You were not made to be hollow, but the hollow was made to be you.' The voidness of the jar lives in the expectation of its fulness; I shall have to fill the void of my solitary sky—this expectation has always been a very part of me. The demand of destiny honours me. To maintain that honour, I have to pay the fullest price.

That is why, while I sit alone in my lonely sky I try to carry out my destined duty. Through that I come to know the meaning of becoming, which is also the realization of joy. When the hollow of the flute is filled with tune, the flute has no more complaints.

When the south wind of life blows swiftly in my body and mind, I am more than rewarded by this very manifestation of its bounty. But when there is tiredness, when the

road decreases and one's sustenance is cut short and yet the path before one seems ever-stretching, then my mind starts questioning about the house which, since by childhood I have been meaning to build, but never did. Immediately my eyes turn away from the light of the stars and are drawn towards the lamplight. In the darkness descending on the eyelids deprived of the light above, the small enchanting scenes of the human-world which are seen on the shore flitting away, appear defined in their vividness; it is then that I understand that these momentary glimpses leave their call behind in the heart of each individual in greater or lesser degree. I feel then that the most worthy thing is not to accomplish great deeds, and that if I have been invited to this earth to take part at Life's supreme ceremony, I have also to fill up the small incidental cups with juice and flavour which may sound simple, but is hard to accomplish.

I have come out on this journey this time with a feeling of tiredness in my body. That is why the woman's side in me which moves in the seclusion of the inner dwelling, has been frequently able to assert its claim. I have given in to this demand not only because I have desired comfort, but because I also have hopes of a fulfilment. Towards the end of a life-journey, one's weary heart longs for the munificence of the Goddess Bountiful, so that it may recuperate its lost energy, replenish its sustenance of life. The command for work still hangs over me, but the enthusiasm is on the wane; so that the mind seeks for the great Provider of Life-force. It is not surely for dry asceticism that Annapurna, the Goddess of the universe stores her eternal largesse!

When daylight begins to wane, and the evening star is visible through the approaching darkness, when the mind discharging the burdens of one's life-journey starts preparing for the few essentials leaving out so much, I have noticed what a lot of anxiety the mind has to go through to sort things out. Whatever it manages to gather with

utmost effort from day to day, whatever the things it builds up, if they have any value in this world of markets, let them have their places; let those who want to keep them for themselves watch over them. There is money, there is fame, there are glorious deeds, let them all occupy their outward places. With the twilight dusk getting deeper, they also become like shadows; they disappear behind the clouds like the splendour of colours at sunset. But the dark eternity from whose heart I happened to emerge one day on this earth . . . that hidden source with its streaming overflow has so often with its sweet-sounding ripples, quenched my thirst, soothed me in my afflictions, cleaned me of dust appearing on my wayfaring path and like the sacred water of a pilgrimage filled the bowl of my memory. How often from the deep core of the unfathomable darkness the sound of the flute has come to penetrate my soul . . . in union, in separation, in tears and in laughter; in autumnal dawns, in Spring evenings, in the dark night of the rains; in the peace of meditation, in the self-surrender of worship, in the deepness of sorrow; in so much giving, in so much receiving, in so much renunciation and so much service . . . on my day's path it was these who played their tune, and today it is they who shine like lamps on my night's path; in the fountain of that darkness I received my life's consecration, in the silence of that darkness there is the invitation to my death; today I am able to say, 'O Everhidden One! Whatever there is in me it is you who have expressed out of your deep self as you have expressed the star giving it form and speech, and this is the immortal nectar; the triumphant monument of deeds that I may have built up searching out each granite, has a foundation on the shifting tide of time. So that sitting all alone in this gray twilight I have been thinking that those words which you had sent me from time to time in letters of coloured hues I had not always read properly, I was too busy. They were invitations you sent out to me. Where to? . . . Not to the workshop,

not to the counting-house, but to small corners and nooks where the smaller pleasures of the earth are hidden. That is why looking backwards as I take stock today I realize how often I have been cheated of them! At the triumphant beckoning of the cheering crowds how often in my absent-mindedness I passed by the deeply hidden; in chasing after the illusive deer, the beauty of the simple and the natural has escaped my eye. I have, while travelling on my way, overlooked on the roadside the fruit filled with juicy granules unclaimed and hidden under the turn of a leaf, and because I have turned away from it, in that abstinence, there is so much apathy, so much fatigue. Darkness from whose cavity dawn fills her cup with light, in whose courtyard night sits mending over and over again the broken threads of life, is the same darkness from whose vast mystery those small hidden fruits draw their juice ripening into form . . . a darkness that has nectar in its shadows, and also death.'

S. S. KRUKOVIA, Aden

12th February, 1925

THE HOME SAYS, 'I HAVE'; THE ROAD SAYS, 'I HAVE not'. This 'I have' has a certain call for man, just as 'I have not', with equally dominant force. Man is, because of his home and his road. As a home without the road becomes a bondage for man, so the road without a home is a punishment for him. 'To have' only is like the imprisoning cave, and only 'Not to have' is the endless desert.

We experience truth very vividly only through those whom we love. But in this realization of truth it is indicative that along with what we have, we also have a feeling of what we have not. It is because there is a uniting link between these contradictory facts, that any written deposition of what one has realized as truth takes a form that a court of justice cannot accept. At the sight of something beautiful when we sigh, 'How exquisite! it takes my breath away!', it may sound an exaggeration from the conventional point of view; but the all-knowing within us believes it. When I touch the infinite in the beautiful, the finite in me says, 'I exist no more, only the other thing exists'. In other words, the one whom I have in an excessive measure ceases to exist, but the one whom I have and yet I do not possess, is acutely present.

Bound by the clock, the unbeliever refuses to accept time as relative or as an illusion; he does not realize that whether it is a moment or a million years, the infinite exists equally in both, except that their duration of realization differs. That is why the poet has said in his language of love, or in other words, in the words of extreme realization, 'It is losing a hundred eras of living, in one moment.' Those who consider that size is the only authentic truth of a thing, shut their ears when they hear of the infinite within a limit.

Whether it is time or place, whichever decides the demarcating line of creation, both are relative and an illusion. In the cinema by altering the pace of a picture when athletic activities are shown, we realize that what appears in clock-time will appear different when that time is slowed down. In other words, what is seen as fast-moving within a few rapid moments becomes still when spread over a long drawn-out period. This applies not only to time, but to space as well. Within the ken of our vision the rose is a rose, has its particular size which changes when seen under a microscope. When the space under the microscope is further magnified, we see in the rose the intermingling of clustering atoms in the dance-play of union. In that space the rose ceases to be a rose. And yet the space is identically the same space, it is not isolated, or distant. That is why the Upanishads describe the Supreme Truth as 'He does not move, yet He moves, both simultaneously'.

In the Sanskrit language the word 'rhythm' means the poetic metre, and at the same time it also means volition. Conforming to the rules of a metre the poet through his creative urge gives varied forms to his composition. The variedness in the created universe is also within the measure of time and place. In changing the measure of time and place, the form and expression of what is created is also changed. It is possible for us to look at this measure of the universal rhythm in a deeper sense; we shall then come very close to the motive-urge of the Supreme universe-Poet. The metre is where the metre transcends beyond itself; the vividness of the finite is where the play of the Infinite takes on a meaningful expression.

When within time and space we realize what is beyond time and place, we are able to say, 'How exquisite!' Without joy in the exquisite death cannot be easy. When the notes of the scale with their measured beat keep striking on my ears, on my mind, with their outward theory, I feel impatient and want to run away, but when through this

very measured beat and this very gamut of scales the music comes to me, I then know what this immeasurable within the measurable is, this boundless within the bound, and this 'not having' within what I have; then in that joy I feel I could give up everything. But for what? Is it for those notes of the scales? Is it for the measured beats, or is it for the dexterity of performance in the details of a movement; it is for none of these; it is for something that is indescribable, that is the mingling of both 'having' and 'not having'; it is not the tune, it is not the measured rhythm, but it is what, encompassing tune, encompassing rhythm, rises beyond tune and rhythm, which is song.

What is known from the point of view of utility is bounded within the limits of knowledge, but surrounding it there is a vast encircling sphere which being ignored remains concealed from us. That is why such knowing is not knowing in its true form, that is why there is in it no real joy, or wonder or any respect. That is why to renounce anything in its cause is not possible. This is the reason why an Englishman is so strongly lacking in generosity in his behaviour towards an Indian. And at the same time he has so small a sense of propriety that in drawing up a list of all the items of his renunciation he never forgets to boast what endless sufferings Englishmen in the civil service, and in the defence forces go through, living in a foreign land, accepting the sorrows, the torturing heat, the distortion of the liver in the service of India! To name the concomitants of worldly problems as sorrows of renunciation, the difficult tasks of accomplishing what is but the preservation of law and order according to Governmental codes as the practice of truth, as the practice of religion, indicates either a suppressed humour, or false arrogance.

When we see people through the eyes of greed, of hatred, or of arrogance our seeing is distorted; so that our behaviour under the circumstances can never be true, and must cause untold sufferings. The truth in man has never been so



overshadowed as it is today throughout the world because of the greed for profit and an excessive hunger for power. The ambitious conquerors of the world today are deprived of the full privileges of the universe in a way that has never been before because of this joylessness, because of this injustice that comes from overlooking the truth in man. So that man, in this scientific age, does not feel ashamed to say that the right to rule over man is the highest right; in other words, the greatest policy is the policy of keeping men apart.

The Government has agreed to spend a comparatively large sum of money for the education of a great many European children who are a minority, and against this our countrymen have brought forward their complaints. I heard that our rulers in their reply had said that owing to the many missionary schools which have been established in the sole interests of Indians, such complaints were unreasonable. I myself do not complain, I also have no objection against any amount of money being spent in the interest of any society. If the European children grow up without education it may do us more harm than good. But it is not right to drown one's conscience by just quoting the missionary schools as an excuse. It is admitted that only about 10 per cent of the 35 crores of population in India are educated. This could happen because the British rule in India for the past 100 years has made no arrangements of any kind for education. The main cause is the lack of regard for human beings. But there is no lack of regard for European children. If 5 per cent of our people get educated, that seems quite sufficient, but when there are arrangements for education for 99 per cent of the European children, they feel uneasy about the remaining 1 per cent. A country like Japan has never expressed such views about their Japanese children, though they also have missionary schools. The reason why the rich English nourished on Indian wealth cannot spare even a fractional part of their profit

for the redress of India's sorrows and needs, is the same reason that makes the Indian Government unable to meet the expenses for any education that can alleviate the insults and ignorance of India—this is nothing but extreme indifference. The relationship between India and England is unnatural, that is why we see that our rajahs and maharajahs have given considerable donations for organizations in England, but one never hears of any worthwhile donation given in the cause of India by any wealthy Englishman. And yet, India is poor, England is rich.

It will be argued that England has invested money in these missionary schools. But is that money only from England? It is the money spent for the cause of Christianity. It is the money of entire Europe spent in the desire to reap the benefits of religion. A religious gift is not a gift for relationship, most of the time it is a materialistic gift made in the interest of the next world. People know only too well the relationship that exists between the Indian Christian and the Christian in England. In a certain hill station in India there lived a certain pious Indian Christian belonging to the Church of England. When he died his wife approached the clergyman of the same religious sect to conduct the last funeral services for her husband. The clergyman refused as he feared he would lose prestige. Perhaps it would have been a loss of political prestige for him! Eventually the widow sought the help of a Presbyterian clergyman; he felt that it would be wrong of him to conduct any funeral services other than that of his own religious group. I do not say that there is not a single pious English missionary in India. But I refuse to admit that there is any respect given with the money that the pious English public have contributed to these missionary establishments. There should be respect in 'giving,' there should not be any giving where there is no respect. We also know well, how this money is collected—partly through falsehood and partly through truth by rousing disrespect for the Indian character, Indian

religion and India's social ethics. In other words, the English missionaries have always gone ahead making preliminary preparations for laying the foundation of contempt that England has for India, and have sown the seed of bad feeling in the minds of their children in the name of Christ. And when they grow up to be the rulers of India, they look upon the inhuman massacres of Jallianwalla bagh as perfectly justified, and to declare this from their seat of judgement they do not feel the slightest compunction. This is as much irreverence, as extreme niggardliness of spirit.

As for us, the first and the most common cause of our shrouded spirit is our blind habits. Because of the apathy that enters our consciousness through these blind habits, we cannot see truth in its limitless and joyful expression. This vital point we have altogether overlooked in the system of our education. Nothing can bring so much dull deterioration in the mind as when students are made to recite the same lessons over and over again sitting in the same room at the same fixed hours. It is not always true that students develop a distaste for learning because the standard is difficult, but because the system of education is monotonously lifeless. The heart of man can use a machine, but it cannot form a relationship with machine; it cannot be said that one does not get any outward benefit by turning one's learning into a useful machine, but such a learning would have to face the most severe obstacles if it is to become a part of one's very being.

The unexpected is a messenger from beyond the barriers of limits, it brings the message of the indescribable. It is through this that our inert mind is liberated and finds joy. To experience the indescribable is to feel free. This unexpected is spread all over the universe. One has to be vitally alive to receive it into one's consciousness, in other words, the heart must be in a state of eager sensibility; it is this eager sensibility that is able to take one away from the

confining limitedness towards an expanding limitlessness. And yet, there are many who take pride in a discipline which crushes this eager sensibility of the mind by forcibly tying it to a repetitive process like blindly going round and round the same enshrined deity. In other words, they want to turn the life that Providence gave to man into a machine. This can only happen because of extreme greed for success. Machine is the vehicle of the Goddess of Success, it becomes dominant by crushing the spirit. Its objective is to provide fruits of a limited nature. That in the truth of the universe the boundless indefinite surrounds the definite—this it cannot see, because life is continually breaking away from its boundaries in response to the call beyond. God's flute sounds from beyond boundaries. The one greedy for fruit builds up walls smothering its sound.

In my opinion the system of education should be along the path that the Bairagi takes in life. One should go out into the open with the students like the wandering mendicant freed of all shackles. To continue to learn while on the move and know through the unknown in ever-new wonder, is an education that is vital to life. This method of learning flows in harmony with the rhythm of life. A confined class is a great barrier for the life-seeking soul to the attaining of natural knowledge.

A bird can be brought up on scheduled food in a cage, but it cannot be taught how to become fully a bird. The forest bird is happy, because the food it procures is in conformity with the needs of its flying. What nature meant was to teach man how to fulfil his own requirements keeping in step with his growth. But the child of man is very unfortunate, for, a method of teaching which undermines his movement has been recognized as suitable. So much frustration, so much suffering have resulted from this—who has kept that record? So often have I suggested that preparations for education should be along the lines of this open path, but I have met with no response. People who

have been brought up on a civilized form of education have come to believe in systematized learning. I was fortunate that my education left me an unattached vagrant, so that I am able to pay my highest homage to a method of learning that takes along one out into the open path.

S. S. KRUKOVIA

13th February, 1925

IN THE BENGALI LANGUAGE, IN EXPRESSING LOVE there is in current use two different phrases. One is ' I like,' the other ' I love '. These two phrases lead to two different addresses on the opposite shores of the ocean of love. To say ' I like ' has the stress more on the one who likes, to say ' I love ' is to stress that one loves the other. When the urge of emotion inclines more towards oneself it is ' liking ', when it is towards the other it is ' loving '. In ' liking ' there is the gratification of indulgence, in ' loving ' there is the aspiration of self-surrender.

What we understand by ' feeling ' in Sanskrit had once upon a time its synonym in the Bengali language. It is not quite known how and through what misadventure, in the everyday use of the word, the importance of its meaning was lost. There was a time when words like ' dwelling in shame ', ' dwelling in fear ' meant the same as ' feeling of shame ' and ' feeling of fear.' But now-a-days we say ' getting shame ', ' getting fear ', which are but distortions of the language like saying ' eating a beating ' ' eating an abuse '.

When our feeling for anybody turns completely wholesome, our mind overflows with worthy sentiments and good-will, we then say it is love. The rounded excellence of a sentiment may be termed as goodness. As health is in the fulness of life, as beauty is the completeness of form, as truth is the perfection of knowledge, so love is the complete fulness of feeling. It is not the English ' good feeling ', the nearest word that could describe it is ' perfect feeling '.

A Good wish when fulfilled is ethical, it is expressed in codes of behaviour. Love's fulfilment comes from the soul, it is the supreme expression of one's own personality; good wishes are the support in the dark, love is like the

moon in the darkness—not the mother's affection, mother's good will only, but the full splendour of motherhood itself. It is not just a nourishment, it is the nectar. This excellence of sentiment is a force. It has the capacity of feeling the infinite beyond, through the objects of love. It is the force that sees and admits the immeasurable in the particular individual and hence is capable of awakening that immeasurable in the shrine of the limited.

A man who underestimates his worth, suffers from a self-distrust that does not allow him to reveal the wealth of his own personality. The universe with all its strength accepts and sustains each and every individual. The realization of this great truth can only come through love. The universe calls upon each individual and says, 'You are not inferior to anybody, there is a value in you to which Life is dedicated.' Where man, drawing a boundary line round himself sits smug and accepts himself as ordinary, love refuses to acknowledge the limits of the ordinary, and with the gesture of worship says, 'I have marked your forehead with the sandal-paste; you are extraordinary.' As the sunlight and the rain's downpour show no discernment between soils, refusing to see either their poverty or misery, and with their repeated touch make the heart of the desert rejoice with greenness, waiting continually for even the barren land to become fruitful and expect it equally to fulfil their demand, so love also is what keeps awake an infinite hope in every aspect of man's society. The value it gives to the individual is the value of special distinction. Assured of this glory deep within him, man's creative ability is fulfilled in all directions, the weariness of work vanishes.

The woman is the vehicle of every individual love. If, what remain unexpressed in history could be revealed, we would have then been aware of the extent of woman's love that influenced men in society. We see strength in the manifest restlessness of active efforts, but we completely

ignore the action of an all-pervading stimulus that is hidden within. What is surprising is that it is this female-nature that India has worshipped as strength-incarnate.

Everybody knows that nothing can be more fatally dangerous than when there is a distortion of this strength. In the battle of *Kurukshetra* Draupadi hiding in the heart of Bhima had supplied him with strength. Cleopatra, on the other hand, occupying the heart of brave Anthony had plundered his strength. Savitri saved Satyaban from the jaws of death, but there are numberless women who, destroying the truth of man, have led their husbands to a disastrous end.

That is why I said in the beginning that there were two opposite shores to love. On one shore there is the quicksand, on the other the harvest land. On one side there is the tyranny of liking, on the other the warm welcoming of love. These two types sometimes exist even in a mother's love. The one, in its attachment, seeks for self-satisfaction; this type of blind motherly love is evident in our country to a great extent. Instead of making a child grow up in stature, it dulls the senses of the child. This is not good for either side. Love becomes an enemy-passion when it does not know how to sacrifice to allow man his freedom; on the other hand without the least sacrifice it is eager to possess him. It burns up the one with the flame of hunger, and enfeebles the other in the yearning of smothering affection. Those who are shut in within the ensnaring bond of their mother's constant attention are great in number in our country; their childhood never leaves them. These grown up minors who abound in plenty in our homes get so used to carrying out the stupid demands of their self-centred mothers that they go through life unable to raise their heads above insults and wants; our mothers, trying to establish a love reign over their children, have sapped them of their manhood in a way that no foreign rulers have been able to accomplish with their drastic use of handcuffs.



It is the same thing with love between man and woman. A woman's love can awaken man to his fullest strength. But if that love, instead of being of the brighter moon inclines towards the dark moon of the other side, then its sordidness is incomparable. Man's highest manifestation is in his contemplation; woman's love with its sense of renunciation and service moves in tune with man's contemplation; when these two are in harmony, there is a splendour through which they mutually shine forth. In woman's love, there is also the playing of another tune, it is the twanging sound of cupid's bow . . . it is not the tune of freedom, it is the song of bondage. It is disturbing to meditation, it inflames Shiva to fiery wrath.

Why do I say it is man's nature to contemplate? Because in the worldly activities of life, nature has endowed him with much more leisure than it has woman. To waste this leisure is to cheat himself the most. It is because man has turned his leisure into his own field of realization, that in this excellence he has transcended his animal nature. By freeing himself from the demands of nature, he has proceeded with knowledge, meditation and strength in the path of the infinite. That is why man in his aspirations has to contend eternally with nature. When woman's love brings accord in his conflicting thoughts, when in the erudite courtyard of austere knowledge she prepares a seat with the sweet loveliness of her worship—when she does not annihilate man's freedom, but makes it beautiful—does not obstruct his path, but provides him with the sustenance of the road—does not let him sink into the depth of indulgence, but cleanses him in the waters of the heavens—then the marriage between asceticism and attachment, between Shiva and Parvati takes its auspicious meaning.

Strength finds its activity in the field of separation. It is because of the void between the moon and the earth that the moon induces the earth's oceans to speak. Between man and woman Providence has assigned a certain distance.

This intervening distance is continually filled with bliss through service, forbearance, valour and beauty—this is where the finite and infinite exchange their look of recognition. Within the field of nature, on the level of subsistence man has been the creator of many things, but within his heart's ground his creation is infinite. Creative work becomes simple only when the vast space of the heart does not get cluttered up with gross attachments. The drunkard, who clings with both hands to a burning lamp so that he may possess more light, not only burns himself but also extinguishes the lamp.

In the midst of the infinite sky, in his contemplations of so many years, man in the realization of his freedom has built up a shrine, where woman the worshipper has been given the right of lighting her lamp of love. If she forgets this fact, if she feels no compunction in selling the offerings of her worship like meat in the common market, then the abode of paradise that is in the heart-core of this earth has to own defeat; men then will sink deep into reckless disaster, and the urn of woman's heart will be shattered, allowing the flow of its essence to defile the earth.

S. S. KRUKOVIA

14th February, 1925

THE JOY IN A FLOWER IS MAINLY THE JOY OF expectation in the fruit, this is a very basic fact. We see in the created universe that joy is in the act of creation; 'to be' is the ultimate fact. This 'to be' is in the flower, this 'to be' also is in the fruit. The flower is the means and the fruit is the aim . . . but for this reason I do not see any difference in their value.

I have a dear little friend who is three years old, whom I call Nandini, and it never occurs to me ever to question what the purpose of her being is. To say that she is the bridge in the family lineage, that she is the reason of her ancestors' survival, or that she is part of a vast intent for some future procreation is no doubt a valuable piece of truth in accordance with science and the edicts of the Shastras. To select a flower for the value of the fruit is for trade-people. But God's creation is not a business transaction. His creation is of extreme extravagance. In other words, He does not spend to accumulate profit, so that there are no conflicting differences between His expenditure and His motive of creation. This is why the child who is still inadequate in fulfilling the demands of the material world . . . this three-year old child with all her insufficiency, is full with a joy that is the glory of creation. I see so well that in the creation of the universe, the indirect is always greater than the directly apparent. The colour of a flower is to draw the attraction of an insect and this may be its primary reason; the secondary reason is beauty. When a man desires a garden, he looks for the wealth of this secondary nature. In fact, man has built up his whole civilization on these indirect secondaries. When a poetic man loses his heart over a mole on the beloved's face he is

ready to stake his very life and the world, he does not then see her as the progenitor of a great future life. It is this irrelevant joy in this irrelevant creation that he accepts as the Supreme in God's creation.

In this moving world, the animal nature in man had from the beginning erected walls, had spread out carpets, had lighted lamps and from the treasure-troves of the earth had gathered all kinds of weapons and tools, goods and chattels for its own use, thus settling down in domestic surroundings. In these morning hours it had occupied the primary place. The dictum it knew was this, 'She is the wife who bears a son' . . . in other words, one was valuable for utility's sake.

The nature of the heart took sometime to make its appearance. Because of this it had had to own defeat by residing under the shelter of the animal nature. On the old trodden path, on the old shores, with the goods and materials of the old times, it decided to carry on its own business. Moving away from the fundamentals of the earlier reign it now engaged itself in making the secondaries fruitful in the ensuing reign. Food became feast, words became speech, weeping became poetry. What was 'injury' before became 'petition'. What was imprisoning chains, became the beloved's bangles; what was fear became a form of devotion; what was slavery became self-surrender. When those interested in the lower layer more than in the upper, dig up earth, the 'copper tablet' of the old royal grant turns up. Seen through the glasses of the scientist the inscription on it says that the owner of the field is the animal force; so that when the right to the harvest is determined according to the scientist the demand of the soul-force has no validity. The more it says in the appeal, 'The methods are mine, the plans are mine, the ploughshares are mine, the cultivation is mine', the more boldly the words on the tablet assert the right of the 'animal-nature'; a judge cannot overlook the solidity of words. So that when judgement is

delivered, accompanied with all the valid proofs, it becomes obvious that it is the ghost of former days that has appeared in the garb of a God in the present age.

There is significance in an infant's animal nature. If we consider that significance as the child's total significance, then we are admitting that there is no difference between an infant fish and a man's child. In other words, the propagation of the race becomes the only real meaning.

But, when the heart-force accepts this meaning turning it into something sublimely personal, and because of this we bring accusations against it for stealing, accepting the original form of the fundamentals as the only true master, then even Shakespeare we must put under arrest for the materials that he has used. Materials and goods are not the same thing; as the owner of the soil is the king, so surely the potter is also the owner of the vessels!

We see in the child a joy that is as without reason as the joy in creation. Grown-ups amongst us have diverse problems because of their many aims and acquisitions; some are active, some are idle; some are wealthy, some are not. But when one sees a child, one does not see him through the haze of expectation. The fact that the child exists, this pure truth in itself attracts our mind. In the immature child we see a complete picture of him. The fully alive man in the child stands out vividly against the transparent sky of the child's mind. His natural self-expressions are not hampered by the conspiracy of artificial dogmas. The way Nandini, in her natural exuberance for life, dances around, wheeling on her heels, creating commotion, if I tried to copy this, I should be faced with an impossible situation, for it would mean the complete shake-up of all the various conventions which bind me so tightly. A child will play with anything in any way that he chooses, that is how one sees the pure form of play. It is not mixed with the artificial value of the playing equipments or the artificial excitement of the player's aim. When Nandini devours an orange

greedily, that unconscious act appears beautiful. The appetite of the appreciative heart is so spontaneous that its natural reaction to the orange is not hampered in any way by any superimposed sense of respectability. The bond of friendship between Nandini and the bearer 'Jagroo' is good to see, because true relationship between two people should be allowed its freedom. But, as soon as we fall in with the idea of separatism through the accepted conventions imposed by society we find it impossible to establish a friendly relationship with a servant; and yet we can accept any person in a respectable garb on equal terms without difficulty, although his intrinsic worth may not be as high as the servant's. On the boat there are many European children of her age with whom Nandini quarrels and equally makes friends with, exchanging her possessions with them. At the European travellers, I nod my head in recognition most of the time, and we pass even futile remarks on health and weather; but we do not proceed any further stepping beyond the boundary line of conventions. The truth of the innate man gets obscured in the fog of the social man. In other words, we live among the hazy realities of irrelevant matters. In a child's life truth is not mixed up with any irrelevancies. That is why when I watch a child at leisure, I see life's very play in its intrinsic form; in this the convention-oppressed and the care-stricken mind finds deep satisfaction.

In the child we see the natural picture of freedom. What is meant by freedom? It is the fulness of expression. In answering a query about God, what a sage once said has significant truth. Where is it that God has established Himself? His answer was, 'In His own splendour', which means that He is self-manifest. The same applies to the child. The child is fully expressed within himself. We derive so much pleasure because we see the naturalness with which he expresses himself. Today in Europe we see a certain revolutionary tendency in the history of their

painting. For a long time now the technique of painting has been, so to speak, like the skilful turn and twist of our Hindustani vocal music. A colossal masterly knowledge has congregated, 75 per cent of which, people realise today, is quite irrelevant. It may be well formed, or it may be for some reason or other even captivating, or may display a certain richness of strength through superficial ostentation, in other words, like the stormy clouds it may hold a rare splendour of colour, but the principal thing that remains hidden is the sun of simple truth, which with its pure grandeur in the unclouded sky brings delight to the heart of the universe.

Whether it is in a song, in a painting or in a poem, masterly skill is in the beginning, like the East India Company that stood at the Moghul Court in all humility at a distance. But because the attendant has a more ostensibly colourful turban than the master, and his buttons produce a more dazzling effect, he keeps coming more and more to the fore as the crowd presses him on: It is then that true art must own defeat and its freedom is lost. True art has the spontaneity of life, so that it has growth, it has movement; but since artistic dexterity is for embellishment, and since it does not possess the life-inducing quality, if it is allowed to have the upper hand, then what is ornament becomes shackles; it is then that there is obstruction in the natural growth of art, and its movement is hampered, and what takes credit is not the work of the spirit but of worldly concern; in other words, in it there is no stimulating growth of life, there is only an augmentation of matter. That is why we find so little development in our Hindustani songs. The music that had once spread with its sacred flow from the imperishable offering-urn of Tansen and others has been swallowed up by the 'Ostads' of today, as efficiently as King Janhu once swallowed up the entire Ganges when he found it in his way. In short, the work of art that must express the essence and flavour of a truth in simple beauty,

has to contend with all the bothersome irrelevancies which are its greatest enemy . . . Wild overgrowth suffocates a great forest.

The art-connoisseurs of today have been saying that unless Art, which has become laborously overladen, can go back to the original form of painting, when primitive man with his untrained skill produced pictures in a few simple strokes, there is very little chance of its survival. Because man is born over and over again as child, ideal truth which is of a simple nature and unencumbered with outside impositions has continued to prevail from time immemorial; in the same way Art also has to return to its infancy again and again to escape from the binding snare of over-decoration. Today, is it art only that may expect deliverance by rejecting superficialities? Our present-day overburdened civilization has also to find its salvation in the same way. Man must be reminded over and over again that one's deliverance is not in the multiplicity of hoarding, it is not in ever growing self-indulgence, it is in the truth of self-expression. For, man never before in life has been so trapped in an ensnaring net as he is today.

There was never a time in man's history when man was free from the bondage of greed and delusion. And yet, it is also true that along with it there was in man a conscious aspiration towards freedom. There were interspaces within his worldly aims. Through these gaps the light of truth did filter through so that he never lost sight of its rays. Today man has lost the courage to own within his heart the simple and eternal, transcending the complexities of his acquisition.

So many scholars today in search of truth, are penetrating deeply into dark wells, picking out facts in fragments to systematically add to their collection. When the European sky became turbid and defiled with hatred, the hearts of these scholarly people turned poisonous. They did not hear the call of detached magnanimity of heart that is required for the realization of truth which saves man from



smallness and antagonistic prejudices. The main reason was that man, who had one day stood with his head held high looking towards the universe in his search for truth, now has his head lowered day and night to pick up his fragments of facts.

In India during the middle ages, when Kabir, Dadu and many other sages made their appearance, India was not in a happy state. Under the abrupt changes due to the rise and fall of governments, the country was in a constant state of upheaval. There was not only rivalry over wealth, but a strong rivalry between religions was also present in an outer form. During a time of insecurity the heart of man generally becomes petty under the pressures of inner and outward sufferings; then passion being roused violence breaks out. Also the shadows of the moment deepen, blotting out the eternal light, the weeping that is close at hand drowns all other sounds of the universe. And yet during the great misery of those days, the sages saw that the truth of men lay in their unity, and not in their division. This was possible because they were not scholars, they were poets. Their minds never got entangled in the wizardry of words. They refused to glean truth by means of trivial scrutinizing. That is why, though they lived in the midst of an open breach between the Hindus and Moslems and the active antagonism between them, by rising above all hindrances they were able to see the One who was manifest in their innate manhood. To be able to see this is to know the freedom of seeing.

This only shows that even at that time man could go back into a new child-form to maintain his right and leisure, to wander with ease in the kingdom of freedom. That is why the advent of an emperor like Akbar was possible, that is why when Aurangzeb was busy spreading his cruel and fanatic rule over a blood-ridden path and assassinating his brothers, Darashikoh one of his own brothers achieved his own truth, defying all authoritative injunctions

and spurning communalism. Even in his extreme sufferings man had then traversed a simpler path. The knowledgeable people of today counting each pebble on their path, magnify them into colossal obstacles; the unconquerable force of the imperishable soul in man they hold in contempt on the strength of some small segregated evidences that seem to contradict it at the moment. That is why they are so miserly, so suspicious, so ruthless, and so arrogant. Those who have no trust cannot create, they can only hoard; finally, it is over this hoarding there is war, and there is massacre.

In the joyless, faithless present age, the poet is forced to say his prayer, 'Self-seeking is enslaving, freedom is in self-expression; self-seeking causes complexities through the hoarding of matter, in self-expression truth emerges in simplicity without any ornament.'

We got off from our boat to stay in Paris for a few days when we were able to enjoy the care and comfort of mother earth. We were informed that in order to reach Peru in proper time we should catch our boat immediately. We left in haste for the port of Cherbourg and boarded the ship called the 'Andes'. It was big in dimensions, both in length and width, but in my present state of health I needed some comforts and conveniences which I found lacking. Also, we were rather spoilt in our habits on the Japanese boat, due to the extreme hospitality that was shown to us. So that I did not feel happy when I entered my cabin. But when a thing is inevitable, the mind in its own interest, soon comes to terms with it. When the stomach is laden with indigestible food, the digestive organs do not suddenly stop functioning and secreting the juices. In the same way the mind also has its digestive juices. By assimilating a sudden sorrow it can seek relief only by bringing it under the control of the accustomed work. I have now somehow got used to my inconveniences; and the days move on like the spinning wheel which keeps producing the same yarn in one long continuity.

As we were crossing the equator, I became suddenly ill. I had no alternative but to stay in bed. The cabin in itself is a kind of incurable malady. On top of it if one's senses also join hands with it and become oppressive, then one feels helpless, as helpless as the man who under sudden arrest is shut out from appearing before a higher court of appeal. Tortured days and sleepless nights concentrated their iron-grip on my writhing body. Any rebellion on my part would have meant an aggravation of the punishment. The imprisoning malady left me with a weakness that weighed heavily on my chest. Sometimes I would imagine it was the very tread of the God of Death that was upon me. When the excruciating pain became unbearable I felt powerless against it, except that I had the choice to ignore it and this nobody could deprive me of. I had one remedy in hand and that was to write poetry. It was immaterial what I wrote about. Writing itself is sedition against sorrow. Sedition cannot harm the most powerful, but it helps the sick mind to keep up its self-respect.

I started on my work, reclining on my bed I began to compose poems. What my illness is I do not know; I only know it is an indescribable malady. This illness is not only in every part of my body, it seems to have extended all over the cabin including each article and every furniture in it. . . the cabin and me seem to be one continuity of the same ailment.

During such illness it is natural that one is irresistably drawn towards one's country. As I became weaker and weaker in the confined cell of my cabin, my heart also became thirsty for the Indian sky. But as blind heat continuing to spread becomes light, so sorrow too according to its degree of intensity comes to its own enlightenment. In the beginning, suffering keeps to itself as it were in a prison isolating the mind from every touch of the universe, and as it keeps growing the barrier gets broken letting into its heart the tidal-flow of the universe's ocean of grief. It is then that

one's sorrow stands hushed before the greatness of man's eternal grief—it ceases to turn and toss. Then the punishing rod of sorrow glows joyfully like a flaming flambeau. It is when one is no longer afraid of annihilation that sorrow also finishes tuning its lute. It is when the lute is being tuned that its sound appears very harsh, because the conflicts are still there. With such experience on my side, I felt that I could imagine the soldier's state of mind on the battle field. Perhaps, in the earliest stage when torn between fear and hope, his distress is immense. As long as we cannot face the terrible in its ultimate reality, so long as in overcoming it we are still aware of the accustomed sphere of our life, we cannot pull ourselves out of the duality of feeling that causes fear. Eventually, when the aching intensity reaches its culminating point, the terrible shows up in its absolute form, and the thunder of destruction becomes the sound of music; then there comes the desperate effort to muster one's will, so that without hesitation, without questioning it may fall in with it with all eagerness. We then accept death as we realize its vivid truth. When we see death in all the fulness of its significance, the aching emptiness of death can no longer frighten us.

During these past few days as I lay on my narrow bed in the restricted cabin I came face to face with death. I felt that I was drained of all the strength which one needs to carry on with life. In this state of mind the first desire that stirred me was to see my soul freed under the open sky of my country. Gradually this gripping desire began to weaken its hold on me. I remembered the custom that we have in our country to take the dying person outside the house a few minutes before death. All the well known and familiar articles in the room are an ensnaring bond for the soul; together they send out their violent protests against death. If during these last moments of one's life, the mind gets distraught with the turmoil of doubt, then the discordance is very harsh. We cannot hear the perfect song of

death. That is why in facing the reality of death we find no joy.

A long time ago when I first visited Banares I saw a beautiful sight of death which I shall never forget. I cannot be definite, but I seem to remember vaguely that it was then autumn; from the clear sky the morning sun annointed mother earth, holder of life, with its pouring rays. Varied activities of the restive world were on this side, there was on the other side a far-stretching silence of the vast meadow, and in between the water flowed. God's touchstone was over the whole scene. In the middle of the river I saw a small open boat that moved along sharply with the current. The dying man lay in it with his face towards the sky, and just near his head people were loudly singing devotional 'Kirtans' to the accompaniment of cymbals. This supreme response to death rising from the heart of the universe appeared to me filling the entire sky with its deep note. When death takes its own place appearing in such peace, we realise how beautiful it can be in its pure, perceptible form. Inside the room it receives a loud protestation from every side, that is why when death pushes aside all the furniture—beds, chests, chairs, the enclosing walls and beams—and overriding all domestic preoccupations with the small daily necessities of hunger, thirst, work and leisure, appears carrying the eternal writ in his hand, we mistake him for a robber; man finds no joy in surrendering himself into his hands. Death will sever all bond, this thought is ugly; but to loosen the bond out of one's own free will and take him by the hand with complete trust, this is beautiful.

The Hindus believe that Banares is a place outside the earth. To them the geographical boundary of Banares is a mere illusion. The Supreme Being exists there, in the symbol of the whole universe; it is where God Shiva resides; so that the force with which particular people are attracted to particular countries and which binds their hearts in one patterned weave with the very air, water and soil of those

countries does not hold good in the case of Banares which has no earthly ties with any country. That is why in Banares death with its pure note can reach the ears of a devout Hindu bringing its message of deliverance.

In this present age a natural worldliness spreading all over, has become dominant with an exaggerated sense of conceit about one's own country. It is my firm belief that the reason for all the sufferings and the ensnaring fetters of modern life is due to this extraordinary passion for group dependency. That is why the other day, as I lay in bed I prayed that I too may die in the freedom of a sacred pilgrimage; that till the last minute I may be able to say that all countries are my own country, that the temple of Shiva abides in every place, that the sacred flow of the human heart proceeds from all countries moving eternally towards the Great Ocean.

S. S. KRUKOVIA

15th February, 1925

I HAVE MENTIONED BEFORE THAT NANDINI IS HER name, she is three years old. She is like the three-nights crescent moon. It is not time for her yet to read the latest novels. People must be there to tell her stories before she goes to bed. So that, I, the person who has been providing people readily with lullaby songs, was now forcibly raised to this elevated post. These days I have to answer the summons of this small queen to be present at her bedside.

Last night I had just returned to my cabin after my dinner, when the order came, 'Grandfather, you must tell me the story of a tiger.' With the modesty of the poet Bhababhuti I tried to explain to her that there might be one or two amongst the passengers who could take my place, as the boat was large and people were many, but I could not get away with my excuses.

So I started. . . .

Once there was a tiger,  
His body had spots all over,  
He saw himself in the mirror  
That made him very furious.  
He called the *Jhagru-bearer*  
and gave him an order,  
'Go at once, leave this place  
Buzz off to Prague,  
If you find no soap there  
You may go to Hazaribagh.'

At this stage the Goddess Binapani failed me in her graciousness, and my poem collapsed. So avoiding the complicated barrier of a poetic metre I plunged into prose. The reader must now surely guess that the main theme of

this story is that Jhagru-bearer had to depart for the unknown search of a soap to wash off the blemish-spots of the tiger's body.

The question may arise why should Jhagru feel the urgency to go? It cannot be because of kindness, or for friendship, it must be because of the urgency of fear. The threat implicit in the tiger's words is that Jhagru's ears and nose will be torn off in pieces if he fails in his mission. At this, those who are happy lovers of realism will feel relieved, and may accept the story as not quite groundless.

To start with, I had to describe how Jhagru solved the most difficult problem of finding the money—not merely a pice or two but quite a lot for his travelling expenses and the cost of a soap. Having made sure that it was secure in the fold of his dhoti, he then boarded a bullock cart at a very inauspicious hour on a Thursday and left for Czechoslovakia. As he approached the washerman's area in Shantiniketan, a brown-coloured donkey went up quite unnecessarily to a white cow and gave her a lick. In fear of losing caste the white cow, much higher up in the colour hierarchy turned over the whole cart, and in disgust, as she flew unchecked lifting her four legs and detaching herself from every touch of earthly bond brought about an accident, and Jhagru was thrown out on the wayside with a broken leg. The day wore on; from the distance one could hear the roar of a tiger. Now, how was the wretched man going to save his ears and nose? Just then Mokshada from Jorashako was passing that way with a basket on her shoulder to sell spinach and pumpkin leaves in the market. Jhagru cried out to her, 'Mokshada, will you take me in your basket and drop me at the railway station?' If I said here that Mokshada spontaneously agreed to do so, it would not be believed by the lovers of realism. So I had to say that when Jhagru actually took out two pice out of the fold of his dhoti and promised to pay her in cash, she agreed to carry him to the station. I was hoping that before I reached this



critical point of my story my listener would be fast asleep—and then if again I were pressed the following day I would point out at the conclusion of my story that good as Jhagru was, he was able to save his ears and nose. In fact instead of getting them mutilated at all, they grew enormously, both in size and power, and the only thing that suffered mutilation was the wicked tiger's tail. I also thought I would bring a healthy atmosphere in the corrupt Bengali literature with the help of a moral teaching that says—virtue is ever rewarded, and it is the wicked who face censure.

If there had been the slightest trace of sleep in Nandini's eyes before, it now vanished completely, her eyes began to sparkle like the sky in autumn. Even the tiger could have been induced to let go of Jhagru's ears, either through love or threat, but nothing could make Nandini let go of the story at that particular point. Eventually, with the intervention of one or two relatives I was allowed respite that evening.

The artist says that many pictures come drifting on the flow of a story, which keep knocking at the child's mind, and this was what kept Nandini awake. Consequently, the question then arises what is this particular quality in a picture that keeps one's enthusiasm alive? When a particular scene captures our eyes in some special way, why do we say, 'How like a picture!'

The value of a picture is essentially in its visuality. We cannot eat it, we cannot wear it, there is no other aim for us except that we should see it. Consequently, it may be said that when we see a person in his fulness, we are then in a position to like him. If we look at him with indifference we cannot see him fully; this also applies to one with whom we have merely a business connection; when we look at a person with the idea of seeing him, it is then that we see him. What value could there be in the picture of a Shantinetan with its scenes of a road, a cow, a donkey, an overturned bullock cart and Jhagru incapacitated with a broken

leg—it is really not a picture in the sense that we use the word everyday, meaning beautiful! And yet, in the urgency of the story it all appeared in the forefront of our mind holding our attention. Nandini's child mind felt no hesitation in accepting each and every picture saying, 'they are there!' And immediately annointed their foreheads with the marks that proclaimed their individuality. All the various scenes became a unity within the compass of the story-telling. Separating themselves from the haziness of all the isolated and separate truths of the universe they gave to themselves a definite shape; and on this strength only they kept demanding, 'You may look at me!'—so that sleep vanished from Nandini's eyes!

Whether a poet, or an artist—what is it that he desires in his composition? It is the particular that he desires. The carbon dioxide that is found naturally in the air, the tree appropriates and then uses in its own system, turning out its branches and leaves, fruits and flowers in a particular rhythm and colour, which is but the manifested play of creation. In a nebula the heat vapour is in one uniform mass, but in the formation of a star it achieves a characteristic glory. Similarly there is also an attempt in man's creations to awaken the particular distinctivity from out of the indistinctiveness of generality. We have varied emotions that wander through our minds. When they become definite with rhythm, tune and words, they form songs and poems. The joy is not in the expressing of the emotional urge, the joy is because the emotional urge takes the expression of a distinctive individuality. The excellence lies in the excelling of this individuality. Any creation of man that has achieved this excellence we look upon as a work of art; in this supreme vision is our joy.

In the English language one meaning of the word 'character' is 'behaviour', the ethical conduct; it also has another meaning, it is 'personality'. In other words, it is a combination of qualities mingled in such a way that it

becomes specially noticeable. As I said before, the religion of art is to bring art significantly into one's awareness. In a drama, a poem or a picture, the character is of greater worth than the ethical value.

While character is the individualistic quality in the created form, the individuality of the creator is in his talent. That individuality is his vision, his feeling and the way he composes. A devotee sees visions of the Creator-God on the mountains, on the sea and in the forests, and these visions become specifically an integral part of him. In the same way in a work of art the creator-artist holds up before the spectator a definite picture by giving it its own form with the aid of his genius. The joy in this does not derive from a sense of beauty, or from a matter of personal interest or from a feeling of good will, it is the joy of seeing the particular expressed. The inner man sees in this creation a greater manifestation of himself. In physics all matter is the same, this is what science says, whereas form is a thing of the individual, and that is art. The fulfilment of science is when it can, by steadily breaking down the barriers of the particular, arrive at a far-embracing generality, whereas by lifting the veil of this generality, when art finds the particular, it is its joy.

If within the sphere of that 'particular', beauty appears, that is to be welcome, but otherwise the 'particular' is not keen to boast about beauty. In the jurisdiction of art there is no place for a public garden of the artificial type, but there is, for a place like 'Chitpore Road'. A public garden has many good points, one may even call it beautiful without committing any statistical error; it may serve the purpose of a general need, but there is no particular flavour in it. Chitpore Road has a flavour, though it cannot be said to serve any utilitarian purpose. The Eden Gardens of Calcutta may take the bottom rank in the hierarchy of photography, but Chitpore Road will be in the aristocratic rank of art. Even though Chitpore Road may have to wait

eternally for the recognition of the artist's paint brush, yet like the 'Kulin' Brahmin lady it will never lose its significant caste mark.

The headmaster may with his authoritative finger point out the quietest, the most obedient, the most studious student as the best boy in the school bringing him to our special notice, but even his authoritative finger will not induce us to see him vividly. The one who takes up all our attention is not, by any means, the principal's ideal boy, or because it happens that he can boast of winning scholarships. It is usually a boy who is a downright truant always running away from school, who is manifest in the full force of his own personality. People may have contempt for him from the point of view of his outward uselessness, but on the strength of his own expression, outside all purpose, he is no doubt the best boy. He is rejected by the headmaster, but he is chosen by the Artist-God. The historian who is a lover of ethical characters has endowed Yuthistir with the epithet of 'Dharma raj' in his great epic *Mahabharata*, by placing him high on the pinnacle of all good virtues and holding him as an example before us; and yet Yuthistir does not fully attract our eyes; but the poet indulging in his character sketches has made Bhim a distinct personality in spite of the insults that have been showered upon him for his lack of discrimination and self-control. Those who are not afraid to tell the truth will admit that they love this Bhim who was a mixture of faults and virtues better than Yuthistir who had all the virtues. The only reason is that Bhimsen was vividly real. Shakespeare's Falstaff also is not a healthy character of whom society can approve, but in literature he is loved because of his definite personality. I am really frightened of all the devotees of Rama, so that I bring my voice down almost to a whisper as I say that in literature Lakshman supersedes Rama. If Valmiki was asked his own opinion, he would have been sure to say that Rama was good, but that it was Lakshman whom he loved.

We can show thousands of examples to emphasize this; in art we do not seek the perfect 'Good', we seek the perfect 'Form'. By perfect form I do not mean a beautiful form, but a form that is perfected in all the lucidness of its own character. Bharu Datta presents a more distinctive picture than the merchant Shrimant. In *Bish Brikhya* there are several outstanding heroes and heroines, and many noble writers have given their ardent criticisms of them; I do not want, at this stage, to add further comments, but this I can say, in *Bish Brikhya* Hira is a perfected expression. Hira rouses us from sleep, not because she is beautiful, not because she is virtuous, but because she is herself, fully personified. And because, from the midst of a general haziness she stands out as unique, and as adequately manifest.

However, it must also be admitted that what is termed beautiful in our current language has been amply utilized by poets and artists in their own compositions. The reason is that beauty has its own distinctivity. As we go through our life's journey we are unmindful of the countless objects that we happen to pass by. The beautiful, all of a sudden, draws our attention saying, 'Look at me.' What we cannot say everyday to thousands of things, we then say to it, 'I see, you do exist.' This is the main fact. That its existence is certain, this message in all its beauty is brought before our presence. It has an entirety which we are able to realize in a way which brings us much joy. A child's toys are precious to him not because of their beauty, but because he looks at them with all his imagination and in his imagination they appear real before him although they are made of mere rags. And because they hold out a reality to him, they offer joy. For, the essence of reality is joy.

There is a kind of ostentatious beauty which mingling with the pleasures of the senses and by virtue of its own extreme pleasantness can easily allure our mind, like the thief, who bribing the door-keeper, sneaks into the house. That is why art which believes in its own aristocracy,

refuses to recognize it in any way. There are some music halls where there is a vogue for popular light songs which, with their cheap exciting technique and music, infatuate the ordinary minds. The great masters strongly object to this enticing and misleading form of cheating. In disapproving thus if they fail to earn cheap popularity, they accept it as great honour conferred upon them. The distinctivity that they know as the rich possession of art, is the distinctivity of excellence, which is against all methods of enticement. Hard penance is needed to be able to display it, just as hard penance is necessary to possess it. That is why it has a value. It is not afraid to be unadorned. The lack of simplicity, and ostentatiousness, are both despised by it as forms of inferior technique. It feels ashamed to flaunt its pleasantness—to be a perfected whole is its glorious aim.

The *Gita* says, activity has free and pure expression only when it takes a detached form. In other words it is not by renouncement but by detachment that activity becomes free. Similarly, in indulgence also there is a pure form; in order to achieve it one needs detachment. One has to say to oneself, 'Do not have greed.' In the enjoyment of beauty there should be the awakening of the mind, that is its innate religion. If instead of this it tries to entice the mind then it forfeits its privileges, it comes down in status. The art of a higher nature is most careful not to head towards this downfall. In order to repulse the greed of the crowd, it very often adopts hard measures for guarding the door, and even goes to the extent of mixing something ugly and something quite discordant into its composition. For, it has the courage. It knows that the distinctivity that is the life of art has no need to be ostensibly diluted with any sweetness. Lord Shiva did not adorn himself like Kandarpa, the God of love, to win over Uma's heart.

There is another device through which we are made to see the 'particular', and that is, novelty. The particular is sometimes overshadowed by a long-standing familiarity, so

that many artists in their weaker moments may find that they are tempted to make the unfamiliar stand in the place of the particular. Such a temptation causes the artists to fall from their aspiration. The artist who, from the dimness of familiarity, can bring out the particular in a glowing form is truly a meritorious artist. It is the work of an artist to show to us the essential in things that we are familiar with in everyday life, and yet which we do not see. This is the reason why great artists choose the ever ancient themes in their compositions. Art transforms the old into the ever new. It finds the 'particular' within reach of its hand, close by its side. Creation is not the product of a mine to be exhausted in the process of constant digging—it is the overflowing fountain head. To prove that its ancient stream is becoming ever new in its flow, it does not have to make extraordinary gesticulations. The clustering Asoka blossom that once in Kalidas's time reddened the green carpet of Spring, does not now feel the necessity of changing into another shade pretending that it is new. Undaunted, and year after year, it unveils the new in the promise of a union with the old. Over and over again our eyes have been freed of their hazy stupor, and we are able to see the particular that is ever present. But the outstanding question is why do we see the Asoka clusters in this more particular way than a heap of bricks? The answer is that because the Asoka flower in the assemblage of all its parts and particles expresses within itself such a congruity of harmony that our mind in seeing it sees it in its completeness. In a heap of bricks there is no perfected entity before us. In a steam engine there is the smooth perfection of harmony in the cause of utility. But it is a harmony that is entirely subservient to a cause. It does not manifest itself with the ultimate expression of its own self, it expresses something else. The joy in that engine is because of its usefulness, it may also contain much to rouse our curiosity. But in the pure seeing, there is no rationality of purpose.

That existence is this more than anything else, I feel most immediately within me. Something within me tells me all the while, 'I am.' If it could say with the same force 'I am here' through my songs, through my paintings, it is then that there can be the unity of perfect harmony between it and myself. This is what is known as 'the auspicious exchanging of glances'; in order to realize the oneness of a thing what is important is that it must attract the eye.

The artist asks the question, what is the aspiration of art? My answer is 'see, and you will know.' Existence is overflowing in all directions; let the current of its water anoint our minds. It dances, keeping in step with everything around whether big or small, beautiful or ugly. If this flow of manifestation touches the heart, the heart is inspired with the urge of expressing itself. All around us is the play of creation. If the artist does not discover this simple truth, but delves into the ancient books of great tales and old Rajputana scrolls in search of objects for visual representation, then it is obvious that in his heart the lotus-seat of the Goddess Saraswati has not yet taken form. That is why he goes out hunting in second hand furniture shops with the hope of possessing a lifeless wooden chair.



S. S. KRUKOVIA, Indian Ocean  
15th February, 1925

THE CHILD MOVES IN A WORLD WHERE HE SEES everything with intensity. What he sees is not shrouded with extraneous matters that accumulate through the years. When I was a child I used to watch from across our roof the everyday scenes in the milkmen's quarter. Everyday they rose up before me so distinctly, and everyday they seemed as vivid as a picture. No thought or narrowness of habit came in between my seeing and what I saw, blurring my view. Today to see the cowherds' dwellings in the same way one must visit Switzerland. There, the mind does not hesitate to emphasize, 'Yes, I see they exist.'

The universe is very much present to the child. We grown-ups often forget this. When in order to shape him in the mould of a certain discipline, we snatch him away from his contact with the universe and shut him up within some mechanical existence invented by us, we do not realize that due to our own deplorable habits how much we deprive him of. That the child's training should be through the natural channel of his own intense curiosity for the universe, we refuse to acknowledge with all the blind stubbornness that we possess. To hand him over to the superintendent of a prison like education, by dimming his enthusiasm and darkening his mind, seems to be the only method that we can approve of. With such a method and with such severe discipline, right from the beginning of a child's life we spoil and distort in him the significant fact that man has a natural relationship with the universe.

What I understand by a picture I shall try here and explain fully to the artist.

We do not find either the leisure or strength to welcome the world as it exists with all our heart, because our minds

are hazy with delusion and clouded by habits. That is why we spend most of our life side-tracking the essentials. Our death is because we are deprived of this pure joy of existence.

A picture stops us from side-tracking. When it can say with emphasis, 'Look at me', our mind is awakened from haziness to reality. For, whatever exists, is: whenever we can feel this with our whole heart and soul, we come to touch reality.

I hope nobody will conclude from this that what the eye detects is always true. Truth is much beyond it, encompassing the past, the future, the seen, the unseen, the within and the without. According to the measure of fulness with which an artist is able to hold up a truth, to say that it exists, the measure of our response becomes as strong, as also its duration—our enthusiasm as undimmed, and our joy relatively as deep.

The main thing is, in the full realization of a truth, there also comes a spontaneity of feeling, in this feeling we have the perception of beauty. We describe the rose as beautiful for this reason that the rose inspires our mind to look at it in a way that is not possible in the case of bricks. The rose with its natural rhythm and its form acquaints us with the deeper significance of the mystery of existence. It does not put up a frontier. What we cannot say to thousands of other things throughout the day we say to it, 'You are!'

One day our gardener came to remove some faded flowers from my table, and was about to throw them away, when a "Baishnavi" turned to me and said, 'You read and write the whole time, but can you not see?' That came as a shock, and I thought that was really so! Behind the word 'faded', the habitual word, I did not see the whole truth of the flower clearly. It still had an existence but it no longer existed for me. So that I was deprived of a truth, a joy, for my thoughtlessness; the Baishnavi collected those

flowers in the fold of her clothes, caressed them as she left the room.

Let the artist rouse our mind with the same startling gesture. Let his picture point out the universe to us with the indicative finger, saying, 'see, it exists!' It exists not because it is beautiful but it is beautiful because it exists.

This 'to be' I experience most immediately and unmistakably within myself. 'I exist'... its resounding sound is continually within me. Whenever we are able to say with the same emphasis about anything that 'it is', we not only establish a surface concord in our behaviour with it, we also form our soul's deepest bond. The joy I have in the feeling that 'I exist' does not depend on the fact that I earn thousands by the month, or that people shower me with credit. But it means that the truth of my existence is no longer questionable to myself, neither through argument nor through analysis, but through the fulness of my unequivocal realization. Wherever in the universe I feel the existence 'It is' completely, I feel my own existence spreading out in joy. I then experience truth as the 'oneness' that encompasses all.

A certain French philosopher has defined the 'infinite' in its three aspects—the true, the good, the beautiful. Amongst the Brahma community they have a similar expression translated from Sanskrit—Satyam (truth), Shivam (bliss), Sundaram (the beautiful). Some of them even think that these are actually the words of the Upanishads. What the Upanishads say in defining the aspects of the Infinite is, Shantam, Shivam and Advaitam. 'Shantam' is that concord by means of which the whole universe with all the planets and stars is balanced in peace, by means of which the moving time is regulated within the hold of eternity; 'Shivam' is that harmony that is continually flowering through prosperity and wellbeing in the society of man, and towards which the prayer of man's heart is ever rising mysteriously and consciously throughout the

ages overriding all obstacles . . . 'Lead us from untruth to truth, lead us from darkness to light, lead us from death to immortality.' And lastly 'Advaitam' means the realization of that oneness in the soul which through all disruption and dissension continues to establish relationships in joy and love.

There are some whose minds have been so nurtured in the atmosphere of Christian theology that they live in perpetual fear over the Upanishad-teachings. To conform to the principles of the Christian philosophers by changing the messages of the Upanishads here and there, they express their deep desire to make the Upanishads acceptable to the public. But if they could only give proper thought to this mystical formula of 'Shantam, Shivam and Advaitam', they would, I am sure be relieved to realize that 'Advaitam' does not mean there is an absence of duality in the Infinite, but that what is significant is that there is harmony in duality. For, peace would mean nothing if there were no conflict, the word 'good' would be just a word if side by side there is nothing bad, and an absence of duality would mean nothing without the word 'discord'. When they, in their meditational prayer chant the three attributional words, 'Satyam (the truth), Shivam (the bliss) and Sundaram (the beautiful)', they must understand that to define truth as truth is rather redundant, and that the beautiful is not an element of truth, only a qualification of feelings brought about within us; the essence of truth is the concord in duality. I can find no other words more befitting than this mystical formula of the three words, Shantam, Shivam and Advaitam, in the contemplation of the Infinite which encompasses the whole of the universe-nature, the entire world of mankind, and the souls of men. In the society of mankind when we aspire for Shivam (the bliss), in our realization of that bliss we give it a place between Shantam and Advaitam; in other words, borrowing the English thought, it means that the welfare of society is balanced between the fulfilment of law and the fulfilment of love.

There is a dark side to our soul, that is why we face obstacles in seeing the universe. But man will never sit idle accepting barriers. Through those very barriers he must continually find a way that moves him onwards to his vision. Man, since the minute he was born, has been carving out his path; has been securing his food, his clothes, he has been building his dwelling place; and alongside in the deep urge of his existence, through the vision of his soul, he is accepting the universe as his own—it is not by acquiring knowledge, it is not by serving any purpose, but it is by achieving the fulness of his vision; not through self-indulgence but through harmony.

The artist once asked me what was the one aspiration of art? There is an outer side to art which is technique, I cannot say much about it. But I know of the inner side. If you want to occupy a seat there, you must see with all your heart—just see, and see and see.

In other words, if your mind can surrender itself to the ever-moving current and the creative play with which the universe manifests itself, you will be stirred with an urge for expression—light is kindled from light. To be able to see is to be able to receive what is manifest. To receive news is one thing, but to receive what is revealed is another. The aspiration of an artist is to receive with all his heart what the universe offers him in its manifestation. Only in this way, can the urge for expressing take an active form; the technical side to it will automatically follow to a large extent and much also will be added later to one's dexterity through training and practice. There should be one guiding aim and that is to watch out that one's hand is not guided by the unnecessary tyranny of implements, and that the hard conceived method may not appear too eager to take all the credit by damming the natural flow. Immersing yourself right up to your neck into the streaming current of the universe, listening to its low rippling sound, be initiated directly by it into its mystic method of expression; its

rhythmic flow mingling with your blood will strike out the same beat—this is the fundamental fact. This is like a cloud burst, and if you have the receptacle it will be filled; this is like fire, if you can bring forth your lamp, have no fear that the lamp will not be lighted.

## THE PICTURE OF AN ARTIST

How well you knew, Shah-Jehan, Lord of India,  
That life, youth, wealth and honour must wash away  
With the tide of time.  
If only the ache of your heart  
Could remain immortal  
That was what you aspired to, O Emperor.  
The king's power, hard-infallible like the thunderbolt  
Could fade away as it would  
Like the rose-tinted evening that ushers in sleep;  
But one deep sigh  
With its sorrow swelled,  
Might fill the skies with its pathos,  
That must have been the dream of your Emperor's heart.  
The splendour of diamonds, rubies and pearls  
All could vanish for ever  
Like the glow of the illusory rainbow  
In the empty distant horizon,  
If in its place  
There remained only,  
On the shadowy check of the ages,  
One single tear drop, white and shining...  
The Tajmahal.  
The heart of man, Alas!  
Has no time  
To cast a backward glance at anything twice,  
There is no time, there is so little time.  
On the hard swift current of Life it floats  
Turning from one edge to the other of the world's shore...  
Laden with goods at one market place  
It empties them out at the next.  
In the bower of your heart  
Spring comes  
At the whispering chant of the south wind,  
To fill the garden's spread-out restless garment  
With sweet-scented Madhavi clusters,  
But not for long.  
For twilight is already there to bid its farewell  
Scattering their petals in the dust.  
There is so little time!

Then again on a dew-moist night  
Jasmine breaks in your harbour  
So that Autumn may bring its tear-melted joy  
On the decorated basket.  
Alas! What you gather, O heart,  
You have to leave behind by the wayside  
At the close of the day, at the night's end.  
There is no time, so little time!  
Is that why, O Emperor, your fearful heart  
Was anxious to woo the heart of the centuries  
Captivating it with beauty?  
What flowers were there in the garland  
That you put round its neck,  
Giving shapeless death the deathless form  
Of an exquisite grace!  
Grief has no leisure  
For twelve months at a stretch.  
Is that why,  
Your uncontrollable lament  
You wanted to hold restrained  
Within the mesh of an everlasting silence?  
On a moonlight night,  
In the quiet of your sanctuary,  
The name that you murmured softly whispering to your beloved...  
That inaudible call  
You left behind in Eternity's cars.  
The delicate tenderness of a love  
Found expression  
In the beauty of the flower bunches  
On calm stone.

O poet-Emperor,  
This is the portrait of your heart,  
This is the new cloud-messenger of your sorrow.  
With a sway and song, so exquisite and miraculous,  
It sails towards an indefinable journey  
Where lies your pining lover  
Merged  
With the sun-tinted dawn,  
With the sad sigh of the drooping twilight sky,  
With the lush loveliness of flowers  
Bodiless in the full moon  
Outside the shores of all languages,



From where the miserly eye returns again and again  
 Finding no entry.  
 From century to century  
 This beautiful messenger of yours  
 Avoiding time's sentry  
 Has brought one wordless message,  
 ' I have not forgotten, I have not forgotten, beloved! '

Today you are gone, O king!  
 Your kingdom like a dream has passed away,  
 Shattered is your throne.  
 Your soldiers,  
 Who once shook the earth with heavy tread  
 Are memories today  
 Which wafted by breeze  
 Lie crumbling in the dusty pathway of Delhi.  
 There are no bards to sing at the court.  
 The pipers' music no longer raises its melody  
 Keeping time with the rippling Jumna.  
 The tinkling anklets of the palace beauties  
 Echo no more.  
 Crickets chirp in the niches of the ruins  
 Making the night sky weep.  
 But your messenger stands untarnished,  
 Vivid and unwearied.  
 Through the culminating years of the centuries,  
 Defying all vicissitudes of life and death,  
 With one steadfast strain it voices  
 The words of the lover ever pining for his beloved,  
 ' I have not forgotten, I have not forgotten, beloved! '

Untrue are these words. . .  
 Who says you have not passed all remembering?  
 Who says you have not let open the prison-door of memory?  
 And that the past with its ever-set darkness  
 Has kept your heart bound still?  
 Have you not come out in freedom  
 Choosing oblivion's deliverance-exit?  
 A monument of memory  
 Remains at one place ever-fixed.  
 Lying in the dust of the earth  
 It covers death carefully with the shroud of memory.  
 Can one arrest life?

Every star in the sky beckons it,  
It has its invitation from world to world,  
From light to light  
In every new region of the East.  
Tearing memory's knot  
It rushes out on the universe-path  
Freeing itself of bondage.

Emperor,  
There was no emperor  
Who could conquer you.  
This ocean-nourished earth, O Great One,  
Could not suffice you.  
That is why  
With the life-festivities over,  
You were able to push away with your feet  
The world  
Considering it no more than an earthen vessel.  
You are great, even greater than your fame.  
That is why your life-chariot  
Rushes forward leaving the imprints  
Of your deeds behind  
Many a time.  
That is why  
Your signature you have left behind, you are not present.

The love  
That neither moves nor drives forwards,  
The love  
That sets itself on a throne  
In the midst of a thoroughfare,  
Its dalliance of luxury  
You must have found clinging  
Like earth to your feet,  
Which you have shaken out into the dust again.

In this wayfaring dust from your feet,  
At some moment  
Carried off by a sudden wind  
Loosened from your life's garland  
Your heart-seed came to lodge itself.  
You have gone far away,  
But the seed sprouting into an immortal seedling

Has risen heavenwards  
Announcing in a solemn song. . .  
' However far I may see,  
He is not there, I cannot see the traveller.'  
The beloved could not hold him back,  
His kingdom made way for his path,  
Neither ocean nor mountains could repress him.  
Today  
His chariot proceeds  
At the summons of the night,  
With the song of the stars,  
Towards the lion-guarded entrance of Dawn.  
So that,  
The ' I ' loiters burdened with memories,  
The one freed of burden is gone.

THE DIARY  
OF A  
WESTWARD VOYAGE