



Generosity in SADHANA

Second Edition

A COMPILATION FROM THE WORKS OF
Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Compiled by Jamshed M Mavalwalla

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Sri Aurobindo and the Mother**



Sri Aurobindo Society

AUROPUBLICATIONS

POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

Generosity in Sadhana

Second Edition

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The photograph of the flower on the cover has been given
the spiritual significance 'Generosity' by the Mother.

The botanical name of the flower is *Impatiens balsamina*.
(The Spiritual Significance of Flowers, Part I, page 131)

Vijaybhai's Note on Comprehensive Compilation

All over the world, there is a growing interest in spirituality and Yoga. There is a search for the true meaning and purpose of life, for deeper solutions to the problems that confront us all, and for ways in which we can contribute to evolutionary change and progress.

In this search, more and more people are turning to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for guidance and enlightenment. But in their voluminous writings, they do not know where to find the answers they are looking for.

In this regard the Mother has said,

"It is not by books that Sri Aurobindo ought to be studied but by subjects—what he has said on the Divine, on Unity, on religion, on evolution, on education, on self-perfection, on supermind, etc., etc."

(CWM 12: 206)

On another occasion She said:

"If you want to know what Sri Aurobindo has said on a given subject, you must at least read all he has written on that subject. You will then see that he seems to have said the most contradictory things. But when one has read everything and understood a little, one sees that all the contradictions complement

one another and are organised and unified in an integral synthesis."

(CWM 16: 309–310)

While several compilations are now available, many sincere spiritual seekers have felt the need for Comprehensive Compilations from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on specific subjects, in which the contents are further organised into sub-topics, so that one can find everything one is looking for in one place.

This compilation is an effort to fulfil this need and thus help spiritual seekers in their journey and sadhana. We hope that this compilation will help us gain greater mental clarity about a subject so that we can channel our efforts in the right direction. For Sri Aurobindo has written:

"It is always better to make an effort in the right direction; even if one fails the effort bears some result and is never lost."

(CWSA 29: 87)

We will be glad to receive suggestions and feedback from the readers.

Vijay

Preface

The eighth book in this series of comprehensive compilations on the virtues and qualities necessary for the practice of Yoga, as emphasised by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, is *Generosity in Sadhana*.

The Mother emphasizes that, if one wishes always to progress, one must understand more completely what one already knows.

“For those who want always to progress, there are three major ways of progressing:

- (1) To widen the field of one’s consciousness.
- (2) To understand ever better and more completely what one knows.
- (3) To find the Divine and surrender more and more to His Will.” (CWM 16: 435–436)

The purpose of this comprehensive compilation is to help the reader gain an understanding of the virtue of generosity. The headings are intended to guide the reader towards a clearer and deeper understanding. However, it is important to read the quotations themselves, for the words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are infused with a consciousness infinitely higher than our own. Therefore, reading these quotations will also help the reader elevate their consciousness.

The quotations in this compilation are taken from the volumes of *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA) and the *Collected Works of the Mother* (CWM), Second Edition. Each quotation is followed by the title of the book, the volume number, and the page number from which it has been taken.

While the passages from Sri Aurobindo are in the original English, most of the passages from the Mother (selections from her talks and writings) are translations from the original French. We must also bear in mind that the excerpts have been taken out of their original context and that a compilation, by its very nature, is likely to have a personal and subjective approach. A sincere attempt, however, has been made to remain faithful to the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Those who would like to read the fuller text are advised to consult *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA) and the *Collected Works of the Mother* (CWM), Second Edition.

The section headings have been provided by the compiler to bring clarity to the selected topic.

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

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I—Generosity Is ...

1.

"Generosity is to find one's own satisfaction in the satisfaction of others." (CWM 10: 282)

2.

"AN IDEAL CHILD ...
IS GENEROUS

He appreciates the merits of others and is always ready to help another to succeed." (CWM 12: 151)

3.

[Mother comments upon some of the qualities enumerated in her article "What a Child Should Always Remember" (*On Education*).]

" 'To be generous'

I shall not speak here of material generosity which naturally consists in giving others what one has. But even this virtue is not very widespread, for as soon as one becomes rich one thinks more often of keeping one's wealth than of giving it away. The more men possess, the less are they generous.

I want to speak of moral generosity. To feel happy, for example, when a comrade is successful. An act of

courage, of unselfishness, a fine sacrifice have a beauty in them which gives you joy. It may be said that moral generosity consists in being able to recognise the true worth and superiority of others.” (CWM 4: 30)

4.

“Psychic generosity gives for the joy of giving.” (CWM 14: 338)

5.

“Generosity gives and gives itself without bargaining.” (CWM 15: 50)

6.

“A generous heart always forgets the past offences and is ready to re-establish harmony.

Let us all forget all that is dark and ugly in the past, in order to make us ready to receive the luminous future.” (CWM 17: 357)

7.

“One can see, when one studies oneself very attentively.... For example, if you observe yourself, you see that one day you are very generous. Let us take this, it is easy to understand. Very generous: generous in your feelings, generous in your sensations, generous in your thoughts and even in material things; that is, you understand the faults of others, their intentions, weaknesses, even nasty

movements. You see all this, and you are full of good feelings, of generosity. You tell yourself, 'Well... everyone does the best he can!'—like that.

Another day—or perhaps the very next minute—you will notice in yourself a kind of dryness, fixity, something that is bitter, that judges severely, that goes as far as bearing a grudge, has rancour, would like the evil-doer punished, that almost has feelings of vengeance; just the very opposite of the former! One day someone harms you and you say, 'Doesn't matter! He did not know'... or 'He couldn't do otherwise'... or 'That's his nature'... or 'He could not understand!' The next day—or perhaps an hour later—you say, 'He must be punished! He must pay for it! He must be made to feel that he has done wrong!'—with a kind of rage; and you want to take things, you want to keep them for yourself, you have all the feelings of jealousy, envy, narrowness, you see, just the very opposite of the other feeling." (CWM 6: 262–263)

8.

"No, it depends on the candour of the child.

And on the trust he has in what happens to him, on the absence of the mind's critical sense, and a simplicity of heart, and a youthful and active energy—it depends on all that—on a kind of inner vital generosity: one must not be too egoistic, one must not be too miserly, nor too practical, too utilitarian—indeed there are all sorts of things one

should not be... [one should be] like children." (CWM 8: 117)

9.

"Green light can signify various things according to the context—in the emotional vital it is the colour of a certain form of emotional generosity, in the vital proper an activity with vital abundance or vital generosity behind it—in the vital physical it signifies a force of health." (CWSA 30: 132)

10.

"As for the exact symbolism of colours, it is not always easy to define exactly, because it is not rigid and precise, but complex, the meaning varying with the field, the combinations, the character and shades of the colour, the play of forces. A certain kind of yellow, for instance, is supposed by many occultists to indicate the *buddhi*, the intellect, and it often has that sense, but occurring among a play of vital forces it could not always be so interpreted—that would be too rigid. Here all one can say is that the blue (the particular blue seen, not every blue) indicated the response to the Truth; the green—or *this* green—is very usually associated with Life and a generous emanation or action of forces—often of emotional life-force, and it is probably this that it would indicate here." (CWSA 30: 122)

II—The Psychic by Its Very Nature Is Generous

1.

“Communications from the psychic do not come in a mental form. They are not ideas or reasonings. They have their own character quite distinct from the mind, something like a feeling that comprehends itself and acts.

By its very nature, the psychic is calm, quiet and luminous, understanding and generous, wide and progressive. Its constant effort is to understand and progress.

The mind describes and explains.

The psychic sees and understands.” (CWM 16: 426)

2.

“How can one know whether the psychic being is in front or not?”

Who? Oneself?... It is not felt, no? You don’t feel it? I am not speaking of a small child, for it has no means of control and observation, it lacks the capacity of observation. But then, when one is no longer a baby, doesn’t one feel it? It doesn’t make a difference?... (*The child nods in assent.*) Ah!... There is not one of you who will dare to tell me that it makes no difference when the psychic is there, when one feels better within oneself, when one is full of light, hope,

goodwill, generosity, compassion for the world, and sees life as a field of action, progress, realisation.” (CWM 6: 6)

3.

“As I said, some people are quite beyond that, they have been able to control it [vital emotions] in such a way that it does not get mixed up with anything else; they have in themselves this psychic love which is full of self-forgetfulness, of self-giving, compassion, generosity, nobility of life, and is a great power of identification. So most of these people think they are cold or indifferent—they are very nice people, you see, but they do not love—and sometimes they themselves do not know. I have known people who thought they had no love because they didn’t have this vital vibration. Usually, when people speak of emotions, they are speaking of vital emotions. But there is another kind of emotion which is of an infinitely higher order and doesn’t express itself in the same way, which has just as much intensity, but an intensity that is under control, contained, condensed, concentrated, and is an extraordinary dynamic power.” (CWM 15: 324)

4.

“The psychic when it departs from the body, shedding even the mental and vital on its way to its resting place, carries with it the heart of its experiences,—not the physical events, not the vital movements, not the mental buildings, not the capacities or characters, but something essential

that it gathered from them, what might be called the divine element for the sake of which the rest existed. That is the permanent addition, it is that that helps in the growth towards the Divine. That is why there is usually no memory of the outward events and circumstances of past lives—for this memory there must be a strong development towards unbroken continuance of the mind, the vital, even the subtle physical; for though it all remains in a kind of seed memory, it does not ordinarily emerge. What was the divine element in the magnanimity of the warrior, that which expressed itself in his loyalty, nobility, high courage, what was the divine element behind the harmonious mentality and generous vitality of the poet and expressed itself in them, that remains and in a new harmony of character may find a new expression or, if the life is turned towards the Divine, be taken up as powers for the realisation or for the work that has to be done for the Divine.” (CWSA 28: 544)

5.

“To make this easier to understand, one can divide suffering into two distinct categories, although in practice they are very often mixed.

The first is purely egoistic and comes from a feeling that one’s rights have been violated, that one has been deprived of one’s needs, offended, despoiled, betrayed, injured, etc. ...

II—The Psychic by Its Very Nature Is Generous

The other category of suffering, whose initial *cause* is the pain of separation created by the adversary, is totally opposite in nature: it is the suffering that comes from divine compassion, the suffering of love that feels compassion for the world's misery, whatever its origin, cause or effect. But this suffering, which is of a purely psychic character, contains no egoism, no self-pity; it is full of peace and strength and power of action, of faith in the future and the will for victory; it does not pity but consoles, it does not identify itself with the ignorant movement in others but cures and illumines it.

It is obvious that in the purity of its essence, only that which is *perfectly divine* can feel that suffering; but partially, momentarily, like flashes of lightning behind the dark clouds of egoism, it appears in all who have a vast and generous heart. However, most often, in the individual consciousness it is mixed with that mean and petty self-pity which is the cause of depression and weakness. Nevertheless, when one is vigilant enough to refuse this mixture or at least to reduce it to a minimum, one soon realises that this divine compassion is based on a sublime and eternal joy which alone has the strength and the power to deliver the world from its ignorance and misery." (CWM 15: 338–339)

III—The Truth Behind Generosity

1.

"Is generosity a deformation of the truth?"

Yes, all human qualities are deformations of a truth which is behind them. All that you call either qualities or defects are always a deformation of something which is behind, and which is neither this nor that but something else. But I say, moreover, what truth is found behind generosity: it is the movement of the spreading forces. But in order that these forces may spread, they must first become concentrated. So there is a sort of movement of pulsation: the forces are concentrated, then they spread, and then they are again concentrated and again spread.... But if you always want to spread out without ever concentrating, after a certain time you have nothing left to spread. For the forces—all forces—it is the same thing. I have written, besides, (or rather I shall write some time) that money is a force, it is nothing but that. And that is why nobody has the right to own it personally, for it is only a force, just like all other forces of Nature and the universe. If you take light as a force, it would never occur to anyone to say: 'I possess the light', and to want to shut it up in his room and not give it to others! Well, with money people are so stupefied as to imagine that it is something they can possess and keep, as though it belonged to them, and make something personal of it. It is exactly the same thing. ... This is a force

III—The Truth Behind Generosity

which is behind all that, the power of exchange which is money. That does not belong to anybody. It belongs to everyone. It is something which is alive only if it circulates. If you want to heap it up, it decays. It is as though you wanted to enclose water in a vase and keep it always; after some time your water would be absolutely putrefied. ...

When there is avarice for material things...

Avarice for *all* things—there is an avarice for spiritual things also. There are misers who want to keep all the forces for themselves and never give them. But I have just told you the truth about it: one must have the power to accumulate in order to have the power of spreading. If you have only one of the two, that causes an imbalance. And it is then that it becomes avarice or wastage. One must have both in a balanced, rhythmic movement—the equilibrium we just spoke about. ... But the most generous man in the world could give nothing if he had nothing to begin with. Hence, if it is not he who has accumulated, it is someone else who has accumulated for him. But if he has nothing in his pocket, he cannot distribute anything! That is evident. And the power of accumulation is as important as the power of distribution. It is only when these two things become egoistic that they are deformed, altogether deformed, and lose all their value.” (CWM 5: 356–357)

2.

[This comment by The Mother is based on the following aphorisms :

- 113 – Hatred is the sign of a secret attraction that is eager to flee from itself and furious to deny its own existence. That too is God's play in His creature.
- 114 – Selfishness is the only sin, meanness the only vice, hatred the only criminality. All else can easily be turned into good, but these are obstinate resisters of deity.]

"This corresponds to a kind of vibration—the vibration received from people who hate. It is a vibration that is fundamentally the same, so to say, as the vibration of love. In its very depths there is the same sensation. Although on the surface it is the opposite, it is supported by the same vibration. And one could say that one is the slave of what one hates just as much as of what one loves, perhaps even more so. ...

All these 'feelings'—what to call them?—have a mode of vibration, with something very essential at the core, and covering layers, as it were. And the most central vibration is the same, and as it expands to express itself, it becomes distorted. With love, it is quite obvious; it becomes, outwardly, in the vast majority of cases, something whose nature is quite different from the inner vibration, because it is something that withdraws into itself, shrivels up and

III—The Truth Behind Generosity

wants to draw things towards itself in an egoistic movement of possession. You *want* to be loved. ...

It is only when the central vibration remains pure and expresses itself in its initial purity, which is an unfolding—what to call it?... it is something that radiates, a vibration that spreads out in splendour; and it is a blossoming, yes, a radiant blossoming—then it remains true. And materially, this is translated as self-giving, self-forgetfulness, generosity of soul. And that is the only true movement. But what is usually called 'love' is as far removed from the central vibration of true Love as hatred; only, one withdraws, shrivels up and hardens, and the other strikes. This is what makes all the difference. ...

If one pursues this experience further and deeper, if one concentrates on this vibration, one realises that it is the initial vibration of creation, the vibration which has been altered, distorted in all that exists. And then there is a kind of all-embracing warmth—one cannot call it exactly a 'sweetness', but it is a kind of strong sweetness—an all-embracing warmth in which there is as much smile as sadness—much more smile than sadness...." (CWM 10: 213–215)

IV—Generosity Is Present in the Vital

1.

“Why the Apollyon do you suppose that all vital things are impure? The vital has strength, ardour, enthusiasm, self-confidence, generosity, the victor spirit—a host of other very necessary things. The only difficulty is that they get mixed up with others that *are* impure. All the same they are there and much needed.” (CWSA 31: 112)

2.

“Generosity in the vital gives itself unstintingly.” (CWM 14: 354)

3.

“A strong vital is one that is full of life-force, has ambition, courage, great energy, a force for action or for creation, a large expansive movement whether for generosity in giving or for possession and lead and domination, a power to fulfil and materialise—many other forms of vital strength there are also. It is often difficult for such a vital to surrender itself because of this sense of its own powers—but if it can do so, it becomes an admirable instrument for the Divine Work.” (CWSA 28: 196)

4.

“It is a mistake to believe that if the vital loves, it must be

a love that demands and imposes the satisfaction of its desire; it is a mistake to think that it must be either that or else the vital, in order to escape from its 'attachment', must draw away altogether from the object of its love. The vital can be as absolute in its unquestioning self-giving as any other part of the nature; nothing can be more generous than its movement when it forgets self for the Beloved. The vital and physical should both give themselves in the true way—the way of true love, not of ego-desire." (CWSA 29: 339) (CWSA 32: 462)

5.

"It is this psychic love that is closest to the divine and it is therefore the right and best way of love and bhakti. But that does not mean that the other parts of the being, the vital and physical included, are not to be used as means of expression or that they are not to share in the full play and the whole meaning of love, even of divine love. On the contrary, they are a means and can be a great part of the complete expression of divine love,—provided they have the right and not the wrong movement. There are in the vital itself two kinds of love,—one full of joy and confidence and abandon, generous, unbargaining, ungrudging and very absolute in its dedication and this is akin to the psychic and well-fitted to be its complement and a means of expression of the divine love." (CWSA 29: 342)

6.

"If you recognise these things as suggestions—and of a Force adverse to you and your sadhana—it is easier to meet and answer than if you see it as something in yourself. ... take refuge in your better and higher self against that vital part which responds to these suggestions. You must not regard this part as all your nature, but only a part of your vital which has taken an exaggerated prominence. Even in the vital the larger part by far was that which had high ambitions, generous feelings, a large-heartedness which everybody was obliged to recognise. That is what you must regard as your real self and you must believe that the Divine has a use for that and for the faculties that have been given you—believe not in a rajasic or egoistic spirit but in the spirit of the instrument called and chosen to purify itself and be fit for its work and service—and because of that you have no right to throw it or yourself away, but have to persevere quietly till you are rid of the lower nature and the Asuric Maya." (CWSA 32: 100)

7.

"There is only one thing the vital abhors; it is a dull life, monotonous, grey, tasteless, worthless. Faced with that, it goes to sleep, falls into inertia. It likes extremely violent things, it is true; it can be extremely wicked, extremely cruel, extremely generous, extremely good and extremely

heroic. It always goes to extremes and can be on one side or the other, yes, as the current flows.

And this vital, if you place it in a bad environment, it will imitate the bad environment and do bad things with violence and to an extreme degree. If you place it in the presence of something wonderfully beautiful, generous, great, noble, divine, it can be carried away with that also, forget everything else and give itself wholly. It will give itself more completely than any other part of the being, for it does not calculate. It follows its passion and enthusiasm. ... It is a very precious instrument.” (CWM 5: 255)

8.

“It does not follow that this is all that the vital personality is in its native composition or that evil is its very nature. It is not primarily concerned with truth and good, but it can have the passion for truth and good as it has, more spontaneously, the passion for joy and beauty. In all that is developed by the life-force there is developed at the same time a secret delight somewhere in the being, a delight in good and a delight in evil, a delight in truth and a delight in falsehood, a delight in life and an attraction to death, a delight in pleasure and a delight in pain, in one’s own suffering and the suffering of others, but also in one’s own joy and happiness and good and the joy and happiness and good of others. For the force of life-affirmation affirms alike the good and the evil: it has its

impulses of help and association, of generosity, affection, loyalty, self-giving; it takes up altruism as it takes up egoism, sacrifices itself as well as destroys others; and in all its acts there is the same passion for life-affirmation, the same force of action and fulfilment." (CWSA 21: 645–646)

9.

"Sweet Mother,

What will be the result of changing the vital into something good; in other words, what will be the change?

The vital is the receptacle of all the bad impulses, all wickedness, cowardice, weakness and avarice.

When the vital is converted, the impulses are good instead of being bad; wickedness is replaced by kindness, avarice by generosity; weakness disappears and strength and endurance take its place; cowardice is replaced by courage and energy." (CWM 16: 412)

V—The Aim in Life Should Be Generous

1.

[*The Science of Living*]

“AN AIMLESS life is always a miserable life.

Every one of you should have an aim. But do not forget that on the quality of your aim will depend the quality of your life.

Your aim should be high and wide, generous and disinterested; this will make your life precious to yourself and to others.

But whatever your ideal, it cannot be perfectly realized unless you have realised perfection in yourself.”
(CWM 12: 3)

2.

‘Your aim should be high and wide, generous and disinterested.’

What does this mean?

You are asking what that means! High?... For instance, there are those whose aim is to make a fortune, and there are those whose aim is to find a cure for a disease. That of making one’s fortune is obviously more self-seeking and lower than the one of finding a remedy for an illness. There

are those who have for their aim in life a comfortable and quiet living, with a family and children, wanting the best in the best of possible worlds. That is a pretty low aim, in any case quite an ordinary one. There are those who seek the betterment of the whole of society or those who study to make new discoveries, like Mr. and Mrs. Curie, for example, who discovered radium. That is a higher aim. 'Disinterested', that means what is not for one's own small personal profit, for one's personal pleasure, but solely for helping others. Naturally, the highest aim is to unite with the Divine and fulfil His work, but that, that's right at the top of the ladder. In this first chapter I took good care not to say anything of this kind, for I wrote it intentionally for everybody, even for those who have no mystical conception. But still, it goes without saying that the discovery of the Divine in oneself and uniting with Him and accomplishing His work is the highest and most disinterested aim, and the least selfish.

What adjectives have I used?

High and wide, generous and disinterested.

Yes. Wide, it is something that's not limited to a small purely personal consciousness and its small purely selfish advantages, something embracing a whole—which may be a group, a nation, a continent or the entire earth. For man

an action working on the entire earth is surely a wide action.

After that you have said: 'This will make your life precious to yourself and to all.'

Yes. If you are useless, it is not precious, if you are useful, it becomes precious! There is nothing more disgusting than to be busy with all the little details of a narrow personal existence. One feels empty, hollow, useless. One has no interest in life. There are people all shut up in their little family, and if the baby coughs, they spend hours in fretting, if the dinner is not well cooked, they quarrel, or if the gentleman has lost his job and is looking for another, he laments: 'How shall I feed my family?'—That's existing like an earth-worm in a hole." (CWM 5: 391–393)

3.

"Why are no diplomas and certificates given to the students of the Centre of Education?"

For the last hundred years or so mankind has been suffering from a disease which seems to be spreading more and more and which has reached a climax in our times; it is what we may call 'utilitarianism'. People and things, circumstances and activities seem to be viewed and appreciated exclusively from this angle. Nothing has any

value unless it is useful. Certainly something that is useful is better than something that is not. But first we must agree on what we describe as useful—useful to whom, to what, for what?

For, more and more, the races who consider themselves civilised describe as useful whatever can attract, procure or produce money. Everything is judged and evaluated from a monetary angle. That is what I call utilitarianism. And this disease is highly contagious, for even children are not immune to it.

At an age when they should be dreaming of beauty, greatness and perfection, dreams that may be too sublime for ordinary common sense, but which are nevertheless far superior to this dull good sense, children now dream of money and worry about how to earn it.

So when they think of their studies, they think above all about what can be useful to them, so that later on when they grow up they can earn a lot of money.

And the thing that becomes most important for them is to prepare themselves to pass examinations with success, for with diplomas, certificates and titles they will be able to find good positions and earn a lot of money.

For them study has no other purpose, no other interest.

To learn for the sake of knowledge, to study in order to know the secrets of Nature and life, to educate oneself in order to grow in consciousness, to discipline oneself in

order to become master of oneself, to overcome one's weaknesses, incapacities and ignorance, to prepare oneself to advance in life towards a goal that is nobler and vaster, more generous and more true... they hardly give it a thought and consider it all very utopian. The only thing that matters is to be practical, to prepare themselves and learn how to earn money.

Children who are infected with this disease are out of place at the Centre of Education of the Ashram. And it is to make this quite clear to them that we do not prepare them for any official examination or competition and do not give them any diplomas or titles which they can use in the outside world.

We want here only those who aspire for a higher and better life, who thirst for knowledge and perfection, who look forward eagerly to a future that will be more totally true.

There is plenty of room in the world for all the others." (CWM 12: 351–352)

VI—Give Yourself Generously to the Divine

1.

“In your desire for progress and your aspiration for realisation, take great care not to attempt to pull the forces towards you. Give yourself, open yourself with as much disinterestedness as you can attain through a constant self-forgetfulness, increase your receptivity to the utmost, but *never* try to *pull* the Force towards you, for wanting to pull is already a dangerous egoism. You may aspire, you may open yourself, you may give yourself, but never seek to take. When things go wrong, people blame the Force, but it is not the Force that is responsible: it is ambition, egoism, ignorance and the weakness of the vessel.

Give yourself generously and with a perfect disinterestedness and from the deeper point of view nothing bad will ever happen to you. Try to take and you will be on the brink of the abyss.” (CWM 9: 241–242)

2.

“So I replied to him that he need not be unhappy, that each one is asked to give what he has, that is, all his possessions whatever they may be, and what he is, that is, all his potentialities—which corresponds to the consecration of one’s life and the giving of all one’s possessions—and that nothing more than this is asked. What you are, give that; what you have, give that, and your gift will be perfect; from

VI—Give Yourself Generously to the Divine

the spiritual point of view it will be perfect. This does not depend upon the amount of wealth you have or the number of capacities in your nature; it depends upon the perfection of your gift, that is to say, on the totality of your gift. I remember having read, in a book of Indian legends, a story like this. There was a very poor, very old woman who had nothing, who was quite destitute, who lived in a miserable little hut, and who had been given a fruit. It was a mango. She had eaten half of it and kept the other half for the next day, because it was something so marvellous that she did not often happen to get it—a mango. And then, when night fell, someone knocked at the rickety door and asked for hospitality. And this someone came in and told her he wanted shelter and was hungry. So she said to him, 'Well, I have no fire to warm you, I have no blanket to cover you, and I have half a mango left, that is all I have, if you want it; I have eaten half of it.' And it turned out that this someone was Shiva, and that she was filled with an inner glory, for she had made a perfect gift of herself and all she had.

I read that, I found it magnificent. Well, yes, this describes it vividly. It's exactly that.

The rich man, or even people who are quite well-off and have all sorts of things in life and give to the Divine what they have in surplus—for usually this is the gesture: one has a little more money than one needs, one has a few more things than one needs, and so, generously, one gives

that to the Divine. It is better than giving nothing. But even if this 'little more' than what they need represents lakhs of rupees, the gift is less perfect than the one of half the mango. For it is not by the quantity or the quality that it is measured: it is by the sincerity of the giving and the absoluteness of the giving." (CWM 8: 15)

3.

"Sweet Mother,

One day in class you said, with your hands wide open, that we should give you everything, even our defects and vices and all the dirt in us. Is this the only way to get rid of them, and how can one do it?

One keeps one's defects because one hangs on to them as if they were something precious; one clings to one's vices as one clings to a part of one's body, and pulling out a bad habit hurts as much as pulling out a tooth. That is why one does not progress.

Whereas if one generously makes an offering of one's defect, vice or bad habit, then one has the joy of making an offering and one receives in exchange the force to replace what has been given, by a better and truer vibration." (CWM 16: 244)

VII—In Yoga, How to Make Our Actions Generous

1.

“In any case, for me, my experience (which is sufficiently long, for it is now almost fifty-three years since I have been dealing with people, with their yoga, their inner efforts; I have seen much here and there, a little everywhere in the world); well, I do not believe that it is by meditation that you can transform yourself. I am absolutely convinced of the contrary.

If while doing what you have to do—whatever it may be, whatever work it is—if you do it and while doing it are careful not to forget the Divine, to offer to Him what you do and try so to give yourself to Him that He may change all your reactions—instead of their being selfish, petty, stupid and ignorant, making them luminous, generous—then in that way you will make progress. Not only will you have made some progress but you will have helped in the general progress. ... It is not by running away from the world that you will change it. It is by working there, modestly, humbly but with a fire in the heart, something that burns like an offering.” (CWM 5: 43–44)

2.

“But the mind is a big preacher, that is its nature: it gives speeches, sermons, as it is done in the churches. So the vital usually gets impatient and answers the mind, not very

politely: 'You are a nuisance! what you say is very good for you, but for me it won't do.' Or, at the best, when the mind is gifted with especially remarkable capacities and the vital is of a little higher kind, it may say: 'Oh! how beautiful it is, what you tell me (sometimes this happens), but you see, I, I am unable to do it; it is very beautiful, but it is beyond my capacity.'

But this vital is a strange creature. It is a being of passion, enthusiasm and naturally of desire; but, for example, it is quite capable of getting enthusiastic over something beautiful, of admiring, sensing anything greater and nobler than itself. And if really anything very beautiful occurs in the being, if there is a movement having an exceptional value, well, it [vital] may get enthusiastic and it is capable of giving itself with complete devotion—with a generosity that is not found, for example, in the mental domain nor in the physical. It has that fullness in action that comes precisely from its capacity to get enthused and throw itself wholly without reserve into what it does. Heroes are always people who have a strong vital, and when the vital becomes passionate about something, it is no longer a reasonable being but a warrior; it is wholly involved in its action and can perform exceptional things because it does not calculate, does not reason, does not say 'One must take precautions, one must not do this, must not do that.' It becomes reckless, it gets carried away, as people say, it gives itself totally. Therefore, it can do

magnificent things if it is guided in the right way.” (CWM 5: 254–255)

3.

“With our own perfection grows in us a generous understanding of others.” (CWM 14: 273)

4.

“The indispensable starting-point [to change one’s character] is a detailed and discerning observation of the character to be transformed. In most cases, that itself is a difficult and often a very baffling task. But there is one fact which the old traditions knew and which can serve as the clue in the labyrinth of inner discovery. It is that everyone possesses in a large measure, and the exceptional individual in an increasing degree of precision, two opposite tendencies of character, in almost equal proportions, which are like the light and the shadow of the same thing. Thus someone who has the capacity of being exceptionally generous will suddenly find an obstinate avarice rising up in his nature, the courageous man will be a coward in some part of his being and the good man will suddenly have wicked impulses. In this way life seems to endow everyone not only with the possibility of expressing an ideal, but also with contrary elements representing in a concrete manner the battle he has to wage and the victory

he has to win for the realisation to become possible.”
(CWM 12: 19)

5.

“Mother, you said that each one represents an impossibility. In this case, each one should concentrate on solving this impossibility, shouldn’t he?”

Not necessarily concentrate on that. But he has to face it, whether he knows it or not—an aspect of the problem.

I have already said this once. When you represent the possibility of a victory, you always have within you the thing contrary to this victory, which is your perpetual trouble.

Each one has his own difficulty. And I have given the example already once, I think. For instance, a being who must represent fearlessness, courage, you know, a capacity to hold on without giving way before all dangers and all fights, usually somewhere in his being he is a *terrible* coward, and he has to struggle against this almost constantly because this represents the victory he has to win in the world.

It is like a being who ought to be good, full of compassion and generosity; somewhere in his being he is sharp, sour and sometimes even bad; and he has to struggle against this in order to be the other thing. And so on. It goes into *all* the details. It’s like that.

And when you see a very black shadow somewhere, *very* black, something that's truly painful, you know, you can be sure that you have in you the possibility of the corresponding light.

Why does it increase instead of diminishing?

... Because this is the place of the Realisation. ...

It is only when you begin to walk on the path of Realisation that your possibilities become real, and your difficulties become much greater—quite naturally. Things become intensified.” (CWM 7: 414–415)

6.

“Mother, last time you said that often there is in us a dark element which... which suggests to us... which makes us commit stupidities. So you said that when one is conscious of this element, it must be pulled out. But does pulling it out mean...

...

Then, how to pull it out?

For that, first of all, you must become conscious of it, you see, put it right in front of you, and cut the links which attach it to your consciousness. It is a work of inner psychology, you know.

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One can see, when one studies oneself very attentively.... For example, if you observe yourself, you see that one day you are very generous. ... You tell yourself, 'Well... everyone does the best he can!'—like that.

Another day—or perhaps the very next minute—you will notice in yourself a kind of dryness, fixity, something that is bitter, that judges severely, ... you say, 'He must be punished! He must pay for it! He must be made to feel that he has done wrong!'—with a kind of rage; and you want to take things, you want to keep them for yourself, you have all the feelings of jealousy, envy, narrowness, you see, just the very opposite of the other feeling.

This is the dark side. And so, the moment one sees it, if one looks at it and doesn't say, 'It is I', if one says, 'No, it is my shadow, it is the being I must throw out of myself', one puts on it the light of the other part, one tries to bring them face to face; and with the knowledge and light of the other, one doesn't try so much to convince—because that is very difficult—but one compels it to remain quiet... first to stand farther away, then one flings it very far away so that it can no longer return—putting a great light on it. There are instances in which it is possible to change, but this is very rare. There are instances in which one can put upon this being—or this shadow—put upon it such an intense light that it transforms it, and it changes into what is the truth of your being.

But this is a rare thing.... It can be done, but it is rare. Usually, the best thing is to say, 'No, this is not I! I don't want it! I have nothing to do with this movement, it doesn't exist for me, it is something contrary to my nature!' And so, by dint of insisting and driving it away, finally one separates oneself from it.

But one must first be clear and sincere enough to see the conflict within oneself. Usually one doesn't pay any attention to these things. One goes from one extreme to the other. You see, you can say, to put it in very simple words: one day I am good, the next day I am bad. And this seems quite natural.... Or even, sometimes for one hour you are good and the next hour you are wicked; or else, sometimes the whole day through one is good and suddenly one becomes wicked, for a minute very wicked, all the more wicked as one was good! Only, one doesn't observe it, thoughts cross one's mind, violent, bad, hateful things, like that... Usually one pays no attention to it. But this is what must be caught! As soon as it manifests, you must catch it like this (*Mother makes a movement*) with a very firm grip, and then hold it, hold it up to the light and say, 'No! I don't want you! I—don't—want—you! I have nothing to do with this! You are going to get out of here, and you won't return!'

... One is quite accustomed to contradictions; one doesn't pay attention to this and that is why all these things live comfortably together as neighbours. One must first

discover them and prevent them from intermingling in one's consciousness: decide between them, separate the shadow from the light. Later one can get rid of the shadow." (CWM 6: 262–263)

7.

"The human individual is a very complex being: he is composed of innumerable elements, each one of which is an independent entity and has almost a personality. Not only so, the most contradictory elements are housed together. If there is a particular quality or capacity present, the very opposite of it, annulling it, as it were, will also be found along with it and embracing it. ... I have seen a most generous man giving things away largely, freely, not counting any expenditure or sacrifice, without the least care or reservation; the same person I have also found to be the vilest of misers with respect to certain other considerations.

The complexity arises not only in extension but also in depth. Man does not live on a single plane but on many planes at the same time. There is a scale of gradation in human consciousness: the higher one rises in the scale the greater the number of elements or personalities that one possesses. Whether one lives mostly or mainly on the physical or vital or mental plane or on any particular section of these planes or on the planes above and beyond them, there will be, accordingly, differences in the constitution or

psycho-physical make-up of the individual personality. The higher one stands, the richer the personality, because it lives not only on its own normal level but also on all the levels that are below it and which it has transcended. ...

What is the meaning of this self-contradiction, this division in man? To understand that, we must know and remember that each person represents a certain quality or capacity, a particular achievement to be embodied. How best can it be done? What is the way by which one can acquire a quality at its purest, highest and most perfect? It is by setting an opposition to it. That is how a power is increased and strengthened—by fighting against and overcoming all that weakens and contradicts it. The deficiencies with respect to a particular quality show you where you have to mend and reinforce it and in what way to improve it in order to make it perfectly perfect. It is the hammer that beats the weak and soft iron to transform it into hard steel. The preliminary discord is useful and needs to be utilised for a higher harmony. This is the secret of self-conflict in man. You are weakest precisely in that element which is destined to be your greatest asset.

Each man has then a mission to fulfil, a role to play in the universe, a part he has been given to learn and take up in the cosmic Purpose, a part which he alone is capable of executing and none other. This he has to learn and acquire through life-experiences, that is to say, not in one life but in life after life. In fact, that is the meaning of the

chain of lives that the individual has to pass through, namely, to acquire experiences and to gather from them the thread—the skein of qualities and attributes, powers and capacities—for the pattern of life he has to weave. ... It is the soul, however, that grows with experiences and it is the soul that builds and enriches the personality. Whatever portion of the outer life, whatever element in the mind or vital or body succeeds in coming into contact with the psychic consciousness—that is to say, is able to come under its influence—is taken up and lodged there: it remains in the psychic being as its living memory and permanent possession. It is such elements that form the basis, the groundwork upon which the structure of the integral and true personality is raised.” (CWM 15: 334–336)

8.

“... secret truth of being ... the true qualities of your being, the traits of your divine personality, what you really are and what you are meant to be.” (CWM 15: 337)

9.

“For there is a psychological health just as there is a physical health, a beauty and harmony of the sensations as of the body and its movements. As the capacity of understanding grows in the child, he should be taught, in the course of his education, to add artistic taste and refinement to power and precision. He should be shown,

led to appreciate, taught to love beautiful, lofty, healthy and noble things, whether in Nature or in human creation. This should be a true aesthetic culture, which will protect him from degrading influences. For, in the wake of the last wars and the terrible nervous tension which they provoked, as a sign, perhaps, of the decline of civilisation and social decay, a growing vulgarity seems to have taken possession of human life, individual as well as collective, particularly in what concerns aesthetic life and the life of the senses. A methodical and enlightened cultivation of the senses can, little by little, eliminate from the child whatever is by contagion vulgar, commonplace and crude. This education will have very happy effects even on his character. For one who has developed a truly refined taste will, because of this very refinement, feel incapable of acting in a crude, brutal or vulgar manner. This refinement, if it is sincere, brings to the being a nobility and generosity which will spontaneously find expression in his behaviour and will protect him from many base and perverse movements.

And this brings us quite naturally to the second aspect of vital education which concerns the character and its transformation.” (CWM 12: 21)

10.

The Examiners

“The integral yoga consists of an uninterrupted series of examinations that one has to undergo without any previous

warning, thus obliging you to be constantly on the alert and attentive.

Three groups of examiners set us these tests. They appear to have nothing to do with one another, and their methods are so different, sometimes even so apparently contradictory, that it seems as if they could not possibly be leading towards the same goal. Nevertheless, they complement one another, work towards the same end, and are all indispensable to the completeness of the result.

The three types of examination are: those set by the forces of Nature, those set by spiritual and divine forces, and those set by hostile forces. These last are the most deceptive in their appearance and to avoid being caught unawares and unprepared requires a state of constant watchfulness, sincerity and humility.

The most commonplace circumstances, the events of everyday life, the most apparently insignificant people and things all belong to one or other of these three kinds of examiners. In this vast and complex organisation of tests, those events that are generally considered the most important in life are the easiest examinations to undergo, because they find you ready and on your guard. It is easier to stumble over the little stones in your path, because they attract no attention.

Endurance and plasticity, cheerfulness and fearlessness are the qualities specially needed for the examinations of physical nature.

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Aspiration, trust, idealism, enthusiasm and generous self-giving, for spiritual examinations.

Vigilance, sincerity and humility for the examinations from hostile forces.

And do not imagine that there are on the one hand people who undergo the examinations and on the other people who set them. Depending on the circumstances and the moment we are all both examiners and examinees, and it may even happen that one is at the same time both examiner and examinee. And the benefit one derives from this depends, both in quality and in quantity, on the intensity of one's aspiration and the awakening of one's consciousness." (CWM 14: 4243)

11.

[*Prayer Given to the Children of Dortoir Boarding*]

"We all want to be the true children of our Divine Mother. But for that, sweet Mother, give us patience and courage, obedience, goodwill, generosity and unselfishness, and all the necessary virtues." (CWM 12: 127)

12.

"It is a kind of... it is a very poor deformation of a kind of need to protect something that's smaller than oneself. And this is one of the forms, one of the earliest forms of unegoistic manifestation of the ego! It feels so comfortable

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when it can protect something, busy itself with something much smaller, much weaker than itself, which is almost at its mercy, almost—even entirely—at its mercy, which has no power to resist. And so one feels good and generous because one doesn't crush it!

This is the first manifestation of generosity in the world. But all this, when one can see behind it and a little above, it cures you from being selfish, ..." (CWM 6: 255–256)

VIII—Beauty of Generosity

1.

"Can beauty exist outside any form?"

There is a beauty of feelings; unless you think that feelings also have a form. What you mean is: 'Is there a beauty outside any physical form?'

Yes.

Ah! Yes, there is a beauty of thought, a beauty of feeling. This is something we perceive very often; when someone has done a very noble deed, very generous, very unselfish, quite spontaneously we say, 'It is beautiful!' And it's true, it gives the sense of beauty." (CWM 7: 180)

2.

"Can those who have a sense of beauty also become cruel?"

That's a psychological problem. It depends on where their sense of beauty is located. One may have a physical sense of beauty, a vital sense of beauty, a mental sense of beauty. If one has a moral sense of beauty—a sense of moral beauty and nobility—one will never be cruel. One will always be generous and magnanimous in all circumstances. But as men are made of many different

pieces... For instance, I was thinking about all the artists I knew—I knew all the greatest artists of the last century or the beginning of this century, and they truly had a sense of beauty, but morally, some of them were very cruel. When the artist was seen at his work, he lived in a magnificent beauty but when you saw the gentleman at home, he had only a very limited contact with the artist in himself and usually he became someone very vulgar, very ordinary. Many of them did, I am sure of it. But those who were unified, in the sense that they truly lived their art—those, no; they were generous and good.” (CWM 6: 71–72)

3.

“For very often, when one touches certain parts of the mind which are under the psychic influence and full of light and the joy of that light, or when one touches certain very pure and very high parts of the emotive being which has the most generous, most unselfish emotions, one also has the impression of being in contact with one’s soul. But this is not the true soul, it is not the soul in its very essence. These are parts of the being under its influence and manifesting something of it. So, very often people enter into contact with these parts and this gives them illuminations, great joy, revelations, and they feel they have found their soul.” (CWM 7: 259)

4.

“And then there are those who have an innate faculty of gratitude, those who have an ardent need to respond, respond with warmth, devotion, joy, to something which they feel like a marvel hidden behind the whole of life, behind the tiniest little element, the least little event of life, who feel this sovereign beauty or infinite Grace which is behind all things.

I knew people who had no knowledge, so to say, of anything, who were hardly educated, whose minds were altogether of the ordinary kind, and who had in them this capacity of gratitude, of warmth, which gives itself, understands and is thankful.

Well, for them, the contact with the psychic was very frequent, almost constant and, to the extent that they were capable of it, conscious—not very conscious but a little—in the sense that they felt that they were carried, helped, uplifted above themselves.

These two things prepare people the most. They are born with one or the other; and if they take the trouble, it develops gradually, it increases.

We say: the capacity for enthusiasm, something which throws you out of your miserable and mean little ego; and the generous gratitude, the generosity of the gratitude which also flings itself in thanksgiving out of the little ego. These are the two most powerful levers to enter into contact with the Divine in one’s psychic being. This

serves as a link with the psychic being—the surest link.”
(CWM 7: 418–419)

5.

“But there is another movement which should constantly accompany devotion.... That kind of sense of gratitude that the Divine exists; that feeling of a marvelling thankfulness which truly fills you with a sublime joy at the fact that the Divine exists, that there is something in the universe which is the Divine, that it is not just the monstrosity we see, that there is the Divine, the Divine exists. And each time that the least thing puts you either directly or indirectly in contact with this sublime Reality of divine existence, the heart is filled with so intense, so marvellous a joy, such a gratitude as of all things has the most delightful taste.

There is nothing which gives you a joy equal to that of gratitude. One hears a bird sing, sees a lovely flower, looks at a little child, observes an act of generosity, reads a beautiful sentence, looks at the setting sun, no matter what, suddenly this comes upon you, this kind of emotion—indeed so deep, so intense—that the world manifests the Divine, that there is something behind the world which is the Divine.

So I find that devotion without gratitude is quite incomplete, gratitude must come with devotion.” (CWM 8: 40)

6.

"Some have this in dreams at night; some have it at any odd time: something one sees which awakens in one this new consciousness, something one hears, a beautiful landscape, beautiful music, or else simply a few words one reads, or else the intensity of concentration in some effort—anything at all, there are a thousand reasons and thousands of ways of having it. But, I repeat, all those who are destined to realise have had this at least once in their life. It may be very fleeting, it may have come when they were very young, but always at least once in one's life one has the experience of what true consciousness is. Well, that is the best indication of the path to be followed.

One may seek within oneself, one may remember, may observe; one must notice what is going on, one must pay attention, that's all. Sometimes, when one sees a generous act, hears of something exceptional, when one witnesses heroism or generosity or greatness of soul, meets someone who shows a special talent or acts in an exceptional and beautiful way, there is a kind of enthusiasm or admiration or gratitude which suddenly awakens in the being and opens the door to a state, a new state of consciousness, a light, a warmth, a joy one did not know before. That too is a way of catching the guiding thread." (CWM 8: 404–405)

7.

“As long as I was physically present among you all, my presence was helping you to achieve this mastery over the ego and so it was not necessary for me to speak to you about it individually very often.

But now this effort must become the basis of each individual’s existence, more especially for those of you who have a responsible position and have to take care of others. The leaders must always set the example, the leaders must always practise the virtues they demand from those who are in their care; they must be understanding, patient, enduring, full of sympathy and warm and friendly goodwill, not out of egoism to win friends for themselves, but out of generosity to be able to understand and help others.

To forget oneself, one’s own likings and preferences, is indispensable in order to be a true leader.” (CWM 13: 164) (CWM 12: 355–356)

IX—One Should Be Generous in Nature

1.

“Vindictiveness, with or without a real cause for it, is even worse than anger because it is more cold and deliberate in its action and less of an impulse. One should be generous in nature and free from all rancour [resentment, bitterness].” (CWSA 31: 276)

2.

“But when you are good, when you are generous, noble, disinterested, kind, you create in you, around you, a particular atmosphere and this atmosphere is a sort of luminous release. You breathe, you blossom like a flower in the sun; there is no painful recoil on yourself, no bitterness, no revolt, no miseries. Spontaneously, naturally, the atmosphere becomes luminous and the air you breathe is full of happiness. And this is the air that you breathe, in your body and out of your body, in the waking state and in the state of sleep, in life and in the passage beyond life, outside earthly life until your new life.

Every wrong action produces on the consciousness the effect of a wind that withers, of a cold that freezes or of burning flames that consume.

Every good and kind deed brings light, restfulness, joy—the sunshine in which flowers bloom.” (CWM 3: 199–200)

3.

"He has insulted me, he has beaten me, he has humiliated me, he has robbed me." Those who do not nourish thoughts such as these foster no hatred. [Quote from the Dhammapada]

This is the counterpart of what we read the other day. But note that this concerns only thoughts that generate resentment. It is because rancour, along with jealousy, is one of the most widespread causes of human misery.

But how to avoid having rancour [resentment/bitterness]? A large and generous heart is certainly the best means, but that is not within the reach of all. Controlling one's thought may be of more general use.

Thought-control is the third step of our mental discipline. Once the enlightened judge of our consciousness has distinguished between useful and harmful thoughts, the inner guard will come and allow to pass only approved thoughts, strictly refusing admission to all undesirable elements.

With a commanding gesture the guard will refuse entry to every bad thought and push it back as far as possible.

It is this movement of admission and refusal that we call thought-control and this will be the subject of our meditation tonight." (CWM 3: 186)

4.

“One has not to cure oneself of one’s sensitiveness, but only acquire the power to rise to a higher consciousness taking such disenchantments as a sort of jumping-board. One way is not to expect even square dealings from others, no matter who the others are. And besides, it is good to have such experiences of the real nature of some people to which a generous nature is often blind, for that helps the growth of one’s consciousness.” (CWSA 31: 212)

5.

[On the Dhammapada]

“It is quite evident that when you act in an ugly and mean way, naturally you are unhappy; but to be unhappy because you are conscious of the ugliness of your actions seems to me to be already a very advanced stage, for one needs to be very conscious in order to be aware of the evil that one does, and to be conscious of the evil that one does is already a first step towards not doing it any more.

Generally, people are altogether blind to the ugliness of their own actions. They do wrong through ignorance, through unconsciousness, through smallness, through that sort of doubling back on oneself which comes from unconsciousness and ignorance, that obscure instinct of self-preservation which makes one ready to sacrifice the whole world for the sake of one’s own well-being. And the

smaller one is, the more natural appears the sacrifice offered to one's smallness.

One must be very much higher on the scale to see that what one does is ugly. One must already have at the core of oneself a kind of foreknowledge of what beauty, nobility, generosity are, to be able to suffer from the fact that one doesn't carry them within oneself." (CWM 3: 197)

6.

Towards the Future [A play written by the Mother]

"And if you permit, I shall add some advice which is almost a request. Do not allow your union [marriage] to serve as an excuse for the satisfaction of animal appetites or sensual desires. On the contrary, make it a means of mutual support so that you may transcend yourselves in a constant aspiration and an effort for progress towards the growing perfection of your being. May your association be both noble and generous, noble in quality, generous in action. Be an example to the world and show all men of goodwill the true aim of human life." (CWM 12: 469–470)

7.

[On the Dhammapada—these Quotes are from the Dhammapada and are not the Mother's words.]

"Whosoever masters rising anger, as one who controls a moving chariot, that one indeed is worthy of being called a good charioteer. Others merely hold the reins.

Oppose anger with serenity, evil with good; conquer a miser by generosity and a liar by the truth.

Speak the truth; do not give way to anger; give the little you possess to one who asks of you; by these three attributes, men can approach the gods." (CWM 3: 258)

8.

"And this is why it is so important to choose the environment in which one lives, because there is constantly a kind of interchange between what you give and what you receive. People who throw themselves out a great deal in activity, receive more. But they receive on the same level, the level of their activity. Children, for example, who are younger, who always move about, always shout and romp and jump (very rarely do they keep quiet, except while asleep, and perhaps not even so), well, they spend much and they receive much, and generally it is the physical and vital energy that is spent and it is physical and vital energies that are received. They recuperate a good part of what they spend. So there, it is very important for them to be in surroundings where they can, after they have spent or while they are spending, recover something that is at least equal in quality to theirs, that is not of an inferior quality.

When you no longer have this generosity in your movements, you receive much less and this is one of the reasons—one of the chief reasons—why physical progress stops. It is because you become thrifty, you try not to

waste; the mind intervenes: 'Take care, don't tire yourself, don't do too much, etc.' The mind intervenes and physical receptivity diminishes a great deal. Finally, you do not grow any more—by growing reasonable, you stop growing altogether!" (CWM 5: 208)

9.

"Change...

1. Hatred into harmony
2. Jealousy into generosity
3. Ignorance into knowledge" (CWM 15: 223)

10.

"*Sweet Mother,*

Yesterday You mentioned rules of conduct.

What are the rules of conduct You consider indispensable in our community?

Patience, perseverance, generosity, broad-mindedness, insight, calm and understanding firmness, and control over the ego until it is completely mastered or even abolished."(CWM 12: 373–374)

11.

"You have answered the trustful welcome given to you by an arrogant and uncomprehending attitude, judging everything from the viewpoint of an ignorant and presumptuous morality which could only alienate from you

the sympathy so spontaneously extended to you as to all those who come here in quest of the spiritual life. But in order to profit by one's stay here, a minimum of mental humility and generosity of soul is indispensable." (CWM 13: 126)

12.

"I was intending to write to you that this neglected work must be carried out immediately.

I accept your explanation that it is not bad will but negligence. But I must tell you that for me negligence is the worst form of bad will, for it is the refusal to surrender to the divine inspiration and consciousness which demand a constant vigilance.

I hope that this new year will bring you all the breadth of mind and generosity of heart which will make such unfortunate incidents impossible.

Blessings." (CWM 14: 307)

X—Sri Aurobindo Has Generously Brought the Light, Knowledge and Force to the Earth

1.

1972

BONNE ANNEE

This year is consecrated to Sri Aurobindo.

To understand his teaching better and try to put it into practice, is certainly the best way of showing our gratitude to him for all the light, knowledge and force which he has so generously brought to the earth.

May his teaching enlighten and guide us, and what we cannot do today, we shall do tomorrow.

Let us take the right attitude in all sincerity, and it will truly be a BONNE ANNÉE." (CWM 13: 16)

2.

"How is the Supermind going to act? What should be done to receive it? In what form will it manifest?..."

I have answered as best I could. But it so happens that in Sri Aurobindo's book *On the Veda* there is a note on a certain page, and in this note he answers these questions. I always tell people: if you were to take a little trouble to read what Sri Aurobindo has written, many of your questions would become useless, for Sri Aurobindo has already answered them. However, people probably have

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neither the time nor the patience nor the will, nor all that is needed, and they don't read. The books are published, they are even, I believe, generously distributed, but few read them. Anyway, here is Sri Aurobindo's answer. Try to think, and if you have a special question to ask I shall answer it." (CWM 8: 203–204)

XI—The Generous Ideal for the Progressive Human Race

The Superman

The Ideal of the Superman has been brought recently into much notice, some not very fruitful discussion and a good deal of obloquy. It is apt to be resented by average humanity because men are told or have a lurking consciousness that here is a claim of the few to ascend to heights of which the many are not capable, to concentrate moral and spiritual privileges and enjoy a domination, powers and immunities hurtful to a diffused dignity and freedom in mankind. So considered, supermanhood is nothing more important than a deification of the rare or solitary ego that has out-topped others in the force of our common human qualities. But this presentation is narrow and a travesty. The gospel of true supermanhood gives us a generous ideal for the progressive human race and should not be turned into an arrogant claim for a class or individuals. It is a call to man to do what no species has yet done or aspired to do in terrestrial history, evolve itself consciously into the next superior type already half foreseen by the continual cyclic development of the world-idea in Nature's fruitful musings. And when we so envisage it, this conception ranks surely as one of the most potent seeds that can be cast by thought into the soil of our human growth." (CWSA 13: 151)

XII—The Generous Ideal of Indian Culture

“And if, as India believes, there is a higher spiritual consciousness towards which man can rise, that ascent must be kept throughout in view as the supreme goal of life. The system of Indian culture at once indulged and controlled man’s nature; it fitted him for his social role; it stamped on his mind the generous ideal of an accomplished humanity refined, harmonised in all its capacities, ennobled in all its members; but it placed before him too the theory and practice of a highest change, familiarized him with the conception of a spiritual existence and sowed in him a hunger for the divine and the infinite.”
(CWSA 20: 165)

XIII—The Divine's Generous Hand

1.

"The Divine's words comfort and bless, soothe and illumine, and the Divine's generous hand lifts a fold of the veil which hides the infinite knowledge." (CWM 14: 13)

2.

[Prayers and Meditations] November 17, 1914

...

O Divine Mother, always Thy word comforts and blesses, calms and illumines, and Thy generous hand lifts a fold of the veil hiding the infinite knowledge.

How calm, noble and pure is the splendour of Thy perfect contemplation!" (CWM 1: 276)

3.

[Prayers and Meditations] April 28, 1917

"O MY divine Master, who hast appeared to me this night in all Thy radiant splendour, Thou canst in an instant make this being perfectly pure, luminous, translucid, conscious. Thou canst liberate it from its last dark spots, free it from its last preferences. Thou canst . . . but hast Thou not done this tonight when it was penetrated with Thy divine effluence and Thy ineffable light? It may be . . . for in me is a superhuman strength made all of calm and immensity. Grant that from this summit I may not fall; grant that peace

may for ever reign as the master of my being, not only in my depths of which it has long been the sovereign but in the least of my external activities, in the smallest recesses of my heart and of my action.

I salute Thee, O Lord, deliverer of beings!

'Lo! here are flowers and benedictions! here is the smile of divine Love! It is without preferences and without repulsions. It streams out towards all in a generous flow and never takes back its marvellous gifts.'

Her arms outstretched in a gesture of ecstasy, the eternal Mother pours upon the world the unceasing dew of her purest love." (CWM 1: 367) (CWSA 32: 643)

4.

[Prayers and Meditations] June 28, 1914

"ALL Nature hails Thee, O Lord, and with arms lifted and hands outstretched she implores Thee. Not that she doubts Thy infinite generosity and thinks she must ask in order to have; but that is her way of bowing to Thee and giving herself to Thee, for is this giving anything else than being ready to receive? She delights in thus offering a prayer to Thee though she knows that this prayer is superfluous. But it is an ardent and happy adoration. And the feeling of devotion is thus satisfied without in any way hurting the intellectual consciousness which knows Thee to be one with everything and present in everything.

But all the veils must vanish and the light become complete in all hearts.

O Lord, in spite of the work, in it, give us that perfect calm of the spirit which makes possible the divine identification, the integral knowledge.

My love for Thee, O Lord, is Thyself and yet my love bows down before Thee in deep devotion." (CWM 1: 188)

5.

"Envelop this sorrowful earth with the strong arms of Thy mercy, permeate it with the beneficent outpourings of Thy infinite love.

I am the powerful arms of Thy mercy.

I am the vast bosom of Thy boundless love. . . . My arms have enfolded the sorrowful earth and press it tenderly to my generous heart; and slowly a kiss of supreme benediction is laid upon this struggling atom: the kiss of the Mother which soothes and heals. . . ." (CWM 1: 221)

6.

" 'Sinning' humanity is altogether a Christian idea, which falsifies our idea of the Divine—a Divine who punishes poor people because it is their misfortune to be born 'sinners' would not be very generous! However...

"...Philosophy has always failed to unveil the secret of things; it is because it has tried to fit the universe into the size of the human mind."

"To fit the universe into the size of the human mind', this is precisely what everybody does. And not only do they judge the universe, but they judge the divine principles which have made it and they imagine they are able to know something." (CWM 4: 176–177)

7.

"When you speak of 'giving peace' do you refer to a special gift or to something general?"

It is special, it is something put upon you, with insistence, and then, for some seconds or some minutes, or even some hours, you feel it. You feel suddenly filled with peace, force, light—sometimes even with yet more precious things: knowledge, consciousness, love. And then, it disappears. Then you say, 'Oh! Truly, these divine forces are not generous. They make you taste the thing to see how good it is, then take it away from you so that you may desire it all the more!' This is the usual conclusion." (CWM 4: 409)

8.

"In every religion there is a book —whether it be the Catechism, the Hindu texts, the Koran, in short, all the sacred books—you learn it by heart. You are told that this-is-the-truth, and you are sure it is the truth and remain comfortable. It is very convenient, you don't need to try to understand. Those who don't know the same thing as you, are in the falsehood, and you even pray for those who are outside the 'Truth'! This is a common fact in all religions. But in all religions there are people who know better and don't believe in these things. I had met one of these particularly, one belonging to the Catholic faith. He was a big man. I spoke to him about what I knew and asked him: 'Why do you use this method? Why do you perpetuate ignorance?' He answered: 'It is a policy of peace of mind. If we didn't do that, people wouldn't listen to us. This, indeed, is the secret of religions.' He told me: 'There are in our religion, as in the ancient initiations, people who know. There are schools where the old tradition is taught. But we are forbidden to speak about it. All these religious images are symbols representing something other than what is taught. But that is not taught outside.'

The reason for this is very generous and kind (according to them): 'People who have a tiny brain—and there are plenty—if we tell them something that's too high, too great, it troubles them, disturbs them, and they become unhappy. They will never be able to understand.

Why worry them uselessly? They don't have the capacity to find the truth. Whilst, if you tell them: 'If you have faith in this, you will go to heaven', they are quite happy.' There, you see. It is very convenient. That is why it is perpetuated, otherwise there would be no religions.

I am not telling you this to encourage one particular religion rather than another. But this is a procedure that *seems* generous.... Otherwise there would be no religions; there would be masters and disciples, people who have a higher teaching and an exceptional experience. That would be a very good thing. ...

Note that I am telling you this because I know that here you are all liberated from religions. If I had before me someone having a religion he believed in, I would tell him: 'It is very good, keep your religion, continue.' Happily for all of you, you don't have one. And I hope you will never have one, for it means a door shut upon all progress." (CWM 5: 30–31)

9.

"Evidently, the condition into which you have fallen is due to an upsurging of suppressed elements in the lower vital nature. It has been compelled by the mind and the higher vital part in you to give up the little 'joys and pleasures' to which it was habituated, but it—or at any rate the subconscious part of it which is often the most powerful—did that without entire conviction and probably with

'reservations' and 'safeguards' and in exchange for a promise of compensations, other and greater joys and pleasures to replace all it was losing. This is evident from what you write; your description of the nature of the depression, the return of what you call impure thoughts which are merely indices of the subconscious lower vital desire complex, the doubt thrown upon the generosity of the Divine, the demand for compensation for losses, something like striking a bargain with the Divine, a *quid pro quo pact*, are all unmistakable. Latterly, there has been a combination of circumstances (*X's* turning inwards, *Y's* emigration etc.) which have rather suddenly increased the deprivation of its former outlets; this attack is its way of non-cooperation or protest. There is only one way to deal with it,—to cast the whole thing away—depression, demands, doubts, sex-thoughts, the whole undesirable baggage,—and have in its place the one true movement, the call for the true consciousness and the presence of the Divine." (CWSA 31: 166)

XIV— All in Nature Is Spontaneously Generous

1.

“All in Nature is spontaneously generous.” (CWM 15: 10)

2.

“Abundance: Nature all at once gives to us generously and we have the joy of abundance.” (CWM 15: 10)

“Father Christmas,

I evoke you today!

Answer our call. Come bearing all your marvellous gifts.

You are the great dispenser of worldly possessions; you are the untiring friend who hears every request and grants it generously. Give each one the material object he desires, and as for me, give me enough, give me much so that I may give largely to all.” (CWM 15: 198)

XV—Generosity and Avarice as Instruments for Divine Work

1.

“All desires, whether good or bad, come within this description; for desire itself arises from an unilluminated vital being and its ignorance. On the other hand you must accept all movements that bring you into contact with the Divine. But you accept them, not because they are good in themselves, but because they bring you to the Divine. Accept then all that takes you to the Divine. Reject all that takes you away from it, but do not say that this is good and that is bad or try to impose your outlook on others; for, what you term bad may be the very thing that is good for your neighbour who is not trying to realise the Divine Life.

Let us take an illustration of the difference between the moral and the spiritual view of things. The ordinary social notions distinguish between two classes of men,—the generous, the avaricious. The avaricious man is despised and blamed, while the generous man is considered unselfish and useful to society and praised for his virtue. But to the spiritual vision, they both stand on the same level; the generosity of the one, the avarice of the other are deformations of a higher truth, a greater divine power. There is a power, a divine movement that spreads, diffuses, throws out freely forces and things and

whatever else it possesses on all the levels of nature from the most material to the most spiritual plane. Behind the generous man and his generosity is a soul-type that expresses this movement; he is a power for diffusion, for wide distribution. There is another power, another divine movement that collects and amasses; it gathers and accumulates forces and things and all possible possessions, whether of the lower or of the higher planes. The man you tax with avarice was meant to be an instrument of this movement. Both are important, both needed in the entire plan; the movement that stores up and concentrates is no less needed than the movement that spreads and diffuses. Both, if truly surrendered to the Divine, will be utilised as instruments for its divine work to the same degree and with an equal value. But when they are not surrendered both are alike moved by impulses of ignorance. One is pushed to throw away, the other is pulled towards keeping back; but both are driven by forces obscure to their own consciousness, and between the two there is little to choose. One could say to the much-praised generous man, from the higher point of vision of Yoga, 'All your impulses of generosity are nothing in the values of the spirit, for they come from ego and ignorant desire.' And, on the other hand, among those who are accused of avarice, you can see sometimes a man amassing and hoarding, full of a quiet and concentrated determination in the work assigned to him by his nature, who, once awakened, would make a

very good instrument of the Divine. But ordinarily the avaricious man acts from ego and desire like his opposite; it is the other end of the same ignorance. Both will have to purify themselves and change before they can make contact with the something higher that is behind them and express it in the way to which they are called by their nature.

In the same way you could take all other types and trace them to some original intention in the Divine Force. Each is a diminution or caricature of the type intended by the Divine, a mental and vital distortion of things that have a greater spiritual value. It is a wrong movement that creates the distortion or the caricature. Once this false impulsion is mastered, the right attitude taken, the right movement found, all reveal their divine values. All are justified by the truth that is in them, all equally important, equally needed, different but indispensable instruments of the Divine Manifestation.” (CWM 3: 119–120)

2.

“This power to hold is proportional to the capacity to use the money in the best way—‘best’ in terms of the general progress: the widest vision, the greatest understanding and the most enlightened, exact and true usage, not according to the warped needs of the ego but according to the general need of the earth for its evolution and

development. That is to say, the widest vision will have the largest capacity.

Behind all wrong movements, there is a true movement; there is a joy in being able to direct, utilise, organise in such a way that there is a minimum of waste and the maximum of result. It is a very interesting vision to have. And this must be the true side in people who want to accumulate money: it is the capacity to use it on a very large scale. Then, there are those who very much like to have it and spend it; that is something else—they are generous natures, neither regulated nor organised. But the joy of being able to satisfy all *true* needs, all necessities, is good. It is like the joy of changing a sickness into health, a falsehood into truth, a suffering into joy; it is the same thing: to change an artificial and foolish need—which does not correspond to anything natural—into a possibility which becomes something quite natural. So much money is needed to do this or that or the other, so much is needed to arrange this, to repair that, to build this, to organise that—that is good. And I understand that people like to be the channels through which the money goes exactly where it is needed. That must be the true movement in people who like to... translated into foolish egoism, who need to appropriate.” (CWM 13: 270–271)

XVI—In Most Men Generosity Is in Inverse Proportion to Financial Resources

1.

“I have even been led to make an observation about this: that in most men generosity seems to exist in inverse proportion to their pecuniary [financial] resources.

From observing the way in which workmen, the needy and all the unfortunate act among themselves, I was forced to conclude that the poor are far more charitable, far more prepared to succour their fellow-sufferers than are those more favoured by fortune. There is not enough time to go into the details of all that I have seen, but I assure you that it is instructive. I can, in any case, assure you that if the rich, in proportion to what they have, gave as much as the poor, soon there would no longer be a single starving person in the world.

Thus gold seems to attract gold, and nothing would be more fatal than wanting to accumulate riches before distributing them.” (CWM 2: 101)

2.

“It is infinitely more difficult to be good, to be wise, to be intelligent and generous, to be more generous, you follow me, when one is rich than when one is poor. I have known many people in many countries, and the most generous people I have ever met in all the countries, were the

poorest. And as soon as the pockets are full, one is caught by a kind of illness, which is a sordid attachment to money. I assure you it is a curse.

So the first thing to do when one has money is to give it. But as it is said that it should not be given without discernment, don't go and give it like those who practise philanthropy, because that fills them with a sense of their own goodness, their generosity and their own importance. You must act in a sattwic way, that is, make the best possible use of it. And so, each one must find in his highest consciousness what the best possible use of the money he has can be. And truly money has no value unless it circulates." (CWM 7: 54)

3.

"X wants to approach rich people for money, but does not know how to do it. He says that if people are approached directly, there may not be any response. His plan is to somehow make them take interest in our work so that they may themselves offer money without any asking. He asked me to take your advice in this matter.

If it is done in that way, X will have to wait for a result for years together. Even if they are interested, even if they are practicing Yoga, people don't think of giving money unless they are asked, except a few who have a generous vital nature. It is all right to interest people in the work and the

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Yoga—but of itself that will be rarely sufficient, they must know that money is needed and the idea of giving must be put into them.” (CWSA 35: 767–768)

4.

“I have an earnest desire to be of some help to the Ashram but I don’t know how. I know several rich people in Calcutta but I fail to make them respond generously to my request for donating to the Ashram. Please enable me to influence these people.

There are many men who are very pious, but they will give only to traditional institutions, temples, dharamshalas etc. Unless they are convinced, interested or somehow touched, they may not be so ready to give to the Asram. But the attempt can always be made.” (CWSA 35: 768)

5.

“Sweet Mother, what is the meaning of ‘to dry up the heart’?

To dry up the heart! People say that your heart is dried up when you no longer have any vital sentimentality. That’s what they call having a dried up heart, when one no longer has any vital sentimentality. A really dried up heart is a being who... who would be incapable of any goodness, any

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generosity, any goodwill; but happily this is very rare.”
(CWM 7: 249)

XVII—A Man Without Generosity Prevents the Coming of Mahalakshmi

1.

"Sri Aurobindo says here about Mahalakshmi: 'All that is poor... repels her advent'?"

Yes, poor, without generosity, without ardour, without amplitude, without inner richness; all that is dry, cold, coiled up, prevents the coming of Mahalakshmi. It is not a question of big money, you know! An extremely rich man may be terribly poor from Mahalakshmi's point of view. And a very poor man may be very rich if his heart is generous.

"When we say 'a poor man—un pauvre homme', what is the exact meaning of 'poor man'?"

A poor man is a man having no qualities, no force, no strength, no generosity. He is also a miserable, unhappy man. Moreover, one is unhappy only when one is not generous—if one has a generous nature which gives of itself without reckoning, one is never unhappy. It is those who are coiled up on themselves and who always want to draw things towards themselves, who see things and the world only through themselves—it is these who are unhappy. But when one gives oneself generously, without reckoning, one is never unhappy, never. It is he who wants

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to take who is unhappy; he who gives himself is never so.”
(CWM 4: 403–404)

XVIII—The Problems of Generous People

1.

"It is said that the Rishi Vishvamitra also created a new world.

What did he do? Tell me. He was not happy with this world and created another, did he? Where is this world?

Naturally, the first idea is to be greater than the one who has created the world. For one thinks that it is badly done. It is possible, you may say it is done badly. If you believe that you can do better than the Divine, I am not saying that you will be wrong. I am saying that you cannot say that you are not ambitious. I do not say they were wrong; I say they are ambitious. It is nothing else but that. The proof is that these are people who do good, these are the generous, good, disinterested ones who are the most difficult to convert; their ego is formidable. Their idea of justice, generosity, etc. is so big that there is no place for anything else, for the Divine.

Before being capable of doing good, one must go deep within oneself and make a very important discovery. It is that one does not exist. There is *one* thing which exists, that is the Divine, and so long as you have not made that discovery, you cannot advance on the path." (CWM 5: 1617)

2.

"As to egoism and selfishness, one can be generous and yet egoistic—one can be generous with vanity, pride etc. in the generosity; one can even be egoistic in self-sacrifice." (CWSA 31: 239)

3.

"Sweet Mother, is personal effort always egoistic?"

... There may be an effort which is not at all selfish and is yet egoistic, because the moment it becomes personal it is egoistic—that means, it is based on the ego. But this does not mean that it is not generous, compassionate, unselfish nor that it is for narrow personal ends. It is not like that. It may be for a very unselfish work. But so long as an ego is there it is egoistic." (CWM 7: 366)

4.

"In any case, you are not powerful enough to do it. How do you expect to help another if you do not have a higher consciousness than he? It is such a childish idea! It is children who say: "I am opening a boarding-house, I am going to build a crèche, give soup to the poor, preach this knowledge, spread this religion...." It is only because you consider yourself better than others, think you know better than they what they should be or do. That's what it is, serving humanity. You want to continue all that? It has not

changed things much. It is not to help humanity that one opens a hospital or a school.

All the same it has helped, hasn't it? If all the schools were abolished...

I don't think that humanity is happier than it was before nor that there has been a great improvement. All this mostly gives you the feeling 'I am something.' That's what I call ambition.

If these very people who are ready to give money for schools were told that there was a divine Work to be done, that the Divine has decided to do it in this particular way, even if they are convinced that it is indeed the Divine's Work, they refuse to give anything, for this is not a recognised form of beneficence—one doesn't have the satisfaction of having done something good! This is what I call ambition. I had instances of people who could give lakhs of rupees to open a hospital, for that gives them the satisfaction of doing something great, noble, generous. They glorify themselves, that's what I call ambition.

I knew a humorist who used to say: 'It won't be so soon that the kingdom of God will come, for those poor philanthropists—what would remain for them? If humanity suffered no longer, the philanthropists would be without work.' It is difficult to come out of that. However, it is a fact that never will the world come out of the state in which

it is unless it gives itself up to the Divine. All the virtues—you may glorify them—increase your self-satisfaction, that is, your ego; they do not help you truly to become aware of the Divine. It is the generous and wise people of this world who are the most difficult to convert. They are very satisfied with their life. A poor fellow who has done all sorts of stupid things all his life feels immediately sorry and says: 'I am nothing, can do nothing. Make of me what You want.' Such a one is more right and much closer to the Divine than one who is wise and full of his wisdom and vanity. He sees himself as he is.

The generous and wise man who has done much for humanity is too self-satisfied to have the least idea of changing. It is usually these people who say: 'If indeed I had created the world, I wouldn't have made it like this, I would have created it much better than that', and they try to set right what the Divine has done badly! According to their picture, all this is stupid and useless.... It is not with that attitude that you can belong to the Divine. There will always be between you and Him the conscious ego of one's own intellectual superiority which judges the Divine and is sure of never being mistaken. For they are convinced that if they had made the world, they would not have committed all the stupidities that God has perpetrated. And all this comes from pride, vanity, self-conceit; and there is exactly the seed of that in people who want to serve humanity." (CWM 5: 13–15)

5.

"And then there is this great virtue in men's eyes: 'philanthropy', 'love of humanity'; so many people say, 'I am going to do Yoga to be able to serve humanity, make the unhappy happy, organise the world in the happiest way for everybody.' I say this is not sufficient—I do not say that this is bad in itself, although I have heard an old occultist say wittily: 'It won't be so very soon that there will be no more misery in the world, because there are too many people who are happy to live on this misery.' It was a witticism but it is not altogether wrong. If there were no misery to soothe, the philanthropist would no longer have any reason for his existence—he is so satisfied with himself, he has so strong an impression that he is not selfish! I knew such people who would be very unhappy if there were no more misery upon earth! What would they do if there were no longer any misery to relieve, what would be their activity and what their glorification? How would they be able to show people 'I am not selfish!', and that they are generous, full of kindness?" (CWM 4: 66–67)

XIX—Generosity Is One of the Qualities of the Kshatriya and Vaishya

1.

"... the life of the Kshatriya,—manhood and strength moral and physical, the love of battle, the thirst for glory, the sense of honour, chivalry, self-devotion, generosity, grandeur of soul; ..." (CWSA 8: 19)

2.

"Courage is a sign of the soul's nobility.

But courage must be calm and master of itself, generous and benevolent." (CWM 14: 169)

3.

"A third turn [of Vaishya] is one that brings out into relief the practical arranging intelligence and the instinct of life to produce, exchange, possess, enjoy, contrive, put things in order and balance, spend itself and get and give and take, work out to the best advantage the active relations of existence. In its outward action it is this power that appears as the skilful devising intelligence, the legal, professional, commercial, industrial, economical, practical and scientific, mechanical, technical and utilitarian mind. This nature is accompanied at the normal level of its fullness by a general temperament which is at once grasping and generous, prone to amass and treasure, to

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enjoy, show and use, bent upon efficient exploitation of the world or its surroundings, but well capable too of practical philanthropy, humanity, ordered benevolence, orderly and ethical by rule but without any high distinction of the finer ethical spirit, a mind of the middle levels, not straining towards the heights, not great to break and create noble moulds of life, but marked by capacity, adaptation and measure. ... A largeness of mutuality, a generous fullness of the relations of life, a lavish self-spending and return and ample interchange between existence and existence, a full enjoyment and use of the rhythm and balance of fruitful and productive life are the perfection of those who have this Swabhava and follow this Dharma." (CWSA 24: 745–746)

XX—Other Quotations on Generosity

1.

[Significance of the twelve underground rooms which will radiate from the Matrimandir foundation]

“Sincerity, Humility, Gratitude, Perseverance, Aspiration, Receptivity, Progress, Courage, Goodness, Generosity, Equality, Peace.” (CWM 13: 226)

2.

“Just as each individual has a psychic being which is his true self and which governs his destiny more or less overtly, so too each nation has a psychic being which is its true being and moulds its destiny from behind the veil: it is the soul of the country, the national genius, the spirit of the people, the centre of national aspiration, the fountainhead of all that is beautiful, noble, great and generous in the life of the country. True patriots feel its presence as a tangible reality. In India it has been made into an almost divine entity, and all who truly love their country call it ‘Mother India’ (Bharat Mata) and offer her a daily prayer for the welfare of their country. It is she who symbolises and embodies the true ideal of the country, its true mission in the world.” (CWM 12: 42–43)

3.

[MESSAGE FOR THE INAUGURATION OF A FRENCH
INSTITUTE AT PONDICHERY]

“In any country the best education that can be given to children consists in teaching them what the true nature of their country is and its own qualities, the mission their nation has to fulfil in the world and its true place in the terrestrial concert. To that should be added a wide understanding of the role of other nations, but without the spirit of imitation and without ever losing sight of the genius of one’s own country. France meant generosity of sentiment, newness and boldness of ideas and chivalry in action. It was that France which commanded the respect and admiration of all: it is by these virtues that she dominated the world.

An utilitarian, calculating, mercantile France is France no longer. These things do not agree with her true nature and in practising them she loses the nobility of her world position.

This is what the children of today must be made to know.” 4 April 1955 (CWM 12: 252–253) (CWM 13: 379)

4.

“Certainly the Japanese have a highly developed sense of generous hospitality, reciprocal help, mutual support; but in their feelings, their thoughts, their actions in general,

they are among the most individualist, the most separatist people.” (CWM 2: 154)

5.

222 – The saint and the angel are not the only divinities; admire also the Titan and the Giant.

223 – The old writings call the Titans the elder gods. So they still are; nor is any god entirely divine unless there is hidden in him also a Titan.

224 – If I cannot be Rama, then I would be Ravana; for he is the dark side of Vishnu.

This means that sweetness without strength and goodness without power are incomplete and cannot totally express the Divine.

I could say in keeping with the kind of image used by Sri Aurobindo, that the charity and generosity of a converted Asura are infinitely more effective than those of an innocent angel.” (CWM 10: 280)

6.

“A broad mind, a generous heart, an unflinching will, a quiet steady determination, an inexhaustible energy and a total trust in one’s mission—this makes a perfect doctor.” (CWM 15: 155)

7.

"Granting, for example, that the psychic being has had the experience of a man who was a writer and could translate his experience through books and speeches; thus he covered a particular field of experience due to the associations and circumstances in which this being lived. But there is a field of experience he misses. For example, he says: 'I have lived with my brain, with the reactions of an intellectual to life, now I want to live with my feeling.' For usually this over-activity of the intellect in ordinary life diminishes very much the capacity of feeling. Therefore in order to have another field of experience, of development, he renounces his intellectual height; he is no longer a genius, a writer of genius, he becomes an ordinary man, but with a remarkable heart, very kind, very generous. ... It is not rare, for example, that a psychic being which has reached its maximum growth, after having enjoyed the experiences of a ruling authority (of all that the life of an emperor or king may bring) may want to be able to work in an obscure life, without being fettered all the time by governmental pomps, and may very well choose to be born in quite an ordinary environment, an ordinary bourgeois family, in the most mediocre conditions, so as to have that kind of incognito which will allow it to work without being hampered by all the necessities of governmental display that are binding on one who is at the head of a country. ... For the consciousness (I mean the true consciousness, the

divine consciousness) success or failure are the same, glory or mediocrity are the same. What is important is the growth of the consciousness. And certain conditions that appear very favourable to human beings can be very unfavourable for the growth of the consciousness.” (CWM 5: 267–268)

8.

“Well, doesn’t it ever occur to you to say: ‘How is it that this child whose father and mother are so good, so honest, so generous, so truthful, how is it that he is such a rascal?’ You may wonder at it, but it does not seem anything impossible. So, this is the same thing. Fundamentally, all depends on the inner constitution of the being. There are no two beings who are exactly alike; there are no two constitutions which are the same. And all depends on the inner organisation, the integral organisation of the being, on the order in which the elements are organised and what their inner relation is—even as the external form differs because the cells are not organised in the same way. But as this is a phenomenon you constantly see, in the midst of which you are born, which you see every day, it seems quite natural to you. But it is the same thing. It seems quite natural to you that a child is different from its mother and father—and yet this is the same thing. And in an emanation of the Supreme, to begin with, one part is necessarily different from the whole, though it may potentially contain

the whole, but the whole is not expressed. And as the whole is not expressed, it is perforce different from the whole, for the inner organisation is different.” (CWM 5: 381)

9.

“My present effort is not to stand up on a high and distant Supermind level and change the world from there, but to bring something of it down here and to stand on that and act by that, but at the present stage the progressive supramentalisation of the Overmind is the first immediate preoccupation and a second is the lightening of the heavy resistance of the Inconscient and the support it gives to human ignorance which is always the main obstacle in any attempt to change the world or even to change oneself. I have always said that the spiritual force I have been putting on human affairs such as the War is not the supramental but the overmind force, and that when it acts in the material world it is so inextricably mixed up in the tangle of the lower world forces that its results, however strong or however adequate for the immediate object, must necessarily be partial. That is why I am getting a birthday present of a free India on August 15, but complicated by its being presented in two packets as two free Indias: this is a generosity I could have done without, one free India would have been enough for me if offered as an unbroken whole.” 7 July 1947(CWSA 35: 368)

10.

[The Revival of Industry in India]

"I would appeal to Government and to our philanthropists to see if they cannot help us.

That which will help us most is a largely extended system of technical and general education, such as that on which Germany has built her commercial greatness. It is of course impossible to imitate the German system exactly. But it is not impossible to provide ourselves with a system which will meet our requirements. Though private individuals may do something in the matter, a satisfactory solution of the whole question must depend upon the sympathy and generosity of the Government. I believe that Government could not give a greater boon than such an education, and I think I am voicing the feelings of the educated classes at large, when I say that we are confident that we have not long to wait to see our rulers grapple with this problem, with their usual energy and decision. Meanwhile we must start our factories as best we can, and do the best with our present circumstances. I do not overlook the fact that the odds against us are heavy and that our infant industries have to struggle from the start in an open market with long-established competitors." (CWSA 1: 711–712)

11.

British Generosity

"There is another quality of which the English are equally proud, their fair-play and generosity to enemies. Here again the world's opinion of them does not coincide with their opinion of themselves. On the contrary, no nation is capable of greater meanness and venomous hatred in its treatment of the enemies and opponents who are so unfortunate as to fall into its hands. The generosity is reserved for those enemies who have beaten them in fight, like Washington, or with whom they have to come to an understanding after an equal struggle, like Botha. But towards others and specially for those who have put them in fear for their national existence or their supremacy or their commerce and then fallen into their power, they observe neither chivalry nor fairness nor truth. It was the British fair-play which in mediaeval times burned Joan of Arc at the stake and then for some centuries vilely slandered her character. It was British fair-play which pursued Napoleon during his lifetime with a campaign of slander and abuse of the most extraordinary vileness and then interned him in St. Helena and embittered his last days by the meanest pettiness and persecution. It was British fair-play which, in the early days of the Boer war avenged Majuba by an astonishing campaign of lies and abuse against the Boers, representing them as a race of dirty, brutal, cunning and uneducated semi-savages. We see the same national characteristic in the shameful vilification in which the Anglo-Indian Press have indulged

against the patriot whose influence in the Punjab has put in fear for their empire and their trade. We waive the question whether Lajpat Rai was or was not really guilty from the standpoint of the bureaucracy, whether he was or he was not actively working against the continuance of British rule, as he certainly was actively working against the continuance of irresponsible bureaucratic despotism. But as to the personal character of Lajpat Rai, his personal uprightness, honesty, candour, his earnest diligence in working for the religious, social and political elevation of his country, his unostentatious self-sacrifice, his modest worth, his quiet courage, even his opponents have nothing but praise. Yet it is this man whom the Anglo-Indian papers have been vilifying as a rascally agitator, a braggart, a coward, a 'mean specimen of humanity', whose influence was solely due to his having spent money freely on 'agitation'. We can only salute with reverence this fresh exhibition of British fair-play and generosity. But if the man was such a poor and inconsiderable specimen, how is it that you have treated him as if he were a second Napoleon, thinking even distant Mandalay not remote enough or strong enough to hold the mighty rebel? All this foul-mouthed brutality is a measure of the extraordinary panic into which the ruling race has fallen as the result of what the *Statesman* describes as no worse than a street row or an election fight. The tiger qualities of a ruling race, no doubt!" (CWSA 6: 437–438)

12.

A Nervous Samaj

“It is with great regret that we find ourselves compelled to enlarge on the hint we gave in our last issue and comment adversely on the methods by which the Arya Samaj is attempting to save itself from the displeasure of the Government. It is well that it should have disclaimed sedition and repudiated the charge of being not a religious but a political body. But to run nervously to all and sundry for a testimonial of respectability, to sue for a certificate of loyalty to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and express gratitude for an ungracious, ambiguous and minatory letter of reply, to prejudge by dismissal a man whose guilt has yet to be proved, are actions which show that Swami Dayananda’s religion may have emancipated the intellects of the leading Samajists but has done little to elevate their character. We must also express our amazement at the action of the Samaj in accepting the resignation by Lala Lajpat Rai of his offices on the various governing bodies of the Samaj. There are two men who are the glory of the Samaj and by whose adherence and prominence it commands the respect and admiration of all India, Lala Lajpat Rai and Lala Munshiram. By its action with regard to the former, the Samaj will lose heavily, it has already lost heavily, in public estimation. In his generous anxiety for the body to which he has devoted the

greater part of his lifework, Lala Lajpat Rai offered to it the chance of freeing itself from the attacks its enemies founded upon his connection with it. It was an offer which he was bound to make, but the Samaj ought to have refused. Lajpat Rai's only offence is that he has worked and suffered for his country. By its action the Samaj has announced to the whole world that no man must dare to feel and act, however blamelessly, for his country if he wishes to be recognised by the Samaj. If so, Aryaism will perish from the face of India and leave no trace behind. The world has no use any longer for religious bodies which exclude courage, manliness, generosity, justice and patriotism from their moral practice." (CWSA 8: 414–415)

13.

"Nobleness and generosity are the soul's ethereal firmament [heaven]; without them, one looks at an insect in a dungeon." (CWSA 12: 456)

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