

Qualities of the Indian Mind

Second Edition

A Compilation from the Works of
Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Compiled by Jamshed M Mavalwalla

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Sri Aurobindo Society
AUROPUBLICATIONS
POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

Qualities of the Indian Mind

Second Edition

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Earlier e-books released on India are:

1. *India and Her Mission*
2. *The Task of Building India Is Spiritual*
3. *The Splendour of Bharat's Past Be Reborn*
4. *Spirit of Kshatriya with a Large Liberal Ideal*
5. *Become Indian and Do Not Imitate the West*

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

Our entire country is celebrating the auspicious occasion of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo and the 75th Anniversary of India's Independence on 15 August 2022. This year, we at Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Sri Aurobindo Society present a series of compilations on "India" from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

We present the sixth e-book in the series on India—*Qualities of the Indian Mind.* Once all the e-books are released, we hope that readers will recognize that the underlying theme of this series is "How India Can Achieve Its Mission". The aim of this series of compilations is to be as comprehensive as possible. All that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have said about India, as well as all that is directly or indirectly related to India, is included in these compilations.

The quotations in this compilation are from *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA); *Collected Works of the Mother*, Second Edition; Shri K. D. Sethna's book *India and the World Scene*; *Evening Talks with Sri Aurobindo*, recorded by Shri A. B. Purani, First Edition; *Talks with Sri Aurobindo* by Shri Nirodbaran; and from Sri Aurobindo's Archives and Research Magazines. A few quotations are also from *Conversations of the Mother with a Sadhak*.

Shri K. D. Sethna (Amal Kiran), Shri A. B. Purani, and Shri Nirodbaran were senior sadhaks who were close to Sri Aurobindo.

In the introduction to the book *India and the World Scene*, Shri K. D. Sethna writes, "Not only were my editorials written under his [Sri Aurobindo's] inner inspiration: they were also sent to him for approval. Only when his 'Yes' was wired to us did we plunge into publication." Thus, these quotations can be taken as representing Sri Aurobindo's opinion.

In the books by Shri Purani and Shri Nirodbaran, Sri Aurobindo, while talking to sadhaks, gave his opinion on many subjects.

After each quotation, the following abbreviations are used to represent the book or source from which it is taken.

CWSA: *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo*
CWM: *Collected Works of the Mother*, Second Edition
IWSKDS: *India and the World Scene* by Shri K. D. Sethna, First Edition
ISWFKDS: *The Indian Spirit and the World's Future* by Shri K. D. Sethna
CTMS: *Conversations of the Mother with a Sadhak*
ETABP: *Evening Talks with Sri Aurobindo,* recorded by A. B. Purani, First Edition
TWSAN: *Talks with Sri Aurobindo* by Nirodbaran

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 go through the fuller text are advised to refer to the original books.

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

The idea of taking up this comprehensive compilation on India was suggested to me by Vijaybhai [Sri Vijay Poddar] sometime in 2003. The hard copy of this compilation remained with him for many years. It was in May 2022 that he wrote to me: "I was looking again at your compilation on India. It is extremely comprehensive and very well done. I feel we should go ahead immediately to publish it as an e-book on our website." The quotations compiled in 2003 were drawn from the *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library* SABCL editions. With the devoted assistance of a few proofreaders, we have carefully revised and brought each of these quotations into conformity with *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* CWSA editions, thus enabling us to bring forth this series of e-books.

I aspire, like the flame of a lamp or a candle, to the Divine, praying that the process of India's achievement of her mission may be hastened.

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

Why a Compilation on "India" from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother?

Why should we learn about India from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother? Sri Aurobindo was born in India, and the Mother was born in France. Their lives, however, were not confined by the boundaries of nationality. For both of them, India represented something far greater than a geographical territory or a political entity. India had a deeper significance—a spiritual destiny, a mission, and a role to play in the evolution of humanity.

It is with this understanding that this compilation of quotations on "India" from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother has been prepared.

Sri Aurobindo writes:

> "I am impelled to this labour by the necessity of turning the mind of young India to our true riches, our real source of power, purification and hope for the future and of safeguarding it in the course of its search both from false lights and from the raucous challenges and confident discouragements cast at us by the frail modern spirit of denial. I write, not for the orthodox, nor for those who have discovered a new orthodoxy, Samaj or Panth, nor for the unbeliever; I write for those who acknowledge reason but do not identify reason with Western materialism; who are sceptics but not unbelievers; who, admitting the claims of modern thought, still believe in India, her mission and her gospel, her

immortal life and her eternal rebirth." (CWSA 12: 62–63)

These words point towards the purpose of this compilation. It is an attempt to bring together Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's writings on India so that the younger generation may encounter their vision of India—her true riches, her mission, her spiritual heritage, and her future.

But a question may arise: Why should we learn about India from Sri Aurobindo? Part of the answer lies in a letter Sri Aurobindo wrote to his wife, Mrinalini Devi:

> "I know I have the strength to deliver this fallen race. It is not physical strength,—I am not going to fight with sword or gun,—but the strength of knowledge. The power of the Kshatriya is not the only one; there is also the power of the Brahmin, the power that is founded on knowledge. This feeling is not new in me, it is not of today. I was born with it, it is in my very marrow. God sent me to earth to accomplish this great mission. The seed began to sprout when I was fourteen; by the time I was eighteen the roots of the resolution had grown firm and unshakable." August 30, 1905. (Letter written by Sri Aurobindo to his wife Mrinalini)

These words reveal that his concern for India was not merely political or intellectual. It was deeply rooted in his consciousness and in what he regarded as a great mission entrusted to him.

But Sri Aurobindo was not alone in this vision. The Mother, his collaborator in the spiritual work, gives another dimension to the same question:

> "What must be done to pull the country out of its difficulty? Sri Aurobindo has foreseen all the troubles and he has given the solution. Just now we are approaching his Centenary; [1972] … this would be a wonderful occasion to spread his teaching all over the country: ... his teaching about India, how to organise India, the mission of India. ...
>
> About all that has happened and all that is happening now, he has said clearly that to go back to it is useless. We must give the country its true position, that is, the position of relying on the Divine. Naturally, this is at the other end of what people try to believe now. But Sri Aurobindo explains it in such a way that even those who are against it can agree. You understand? He has found a way of saying it which can be understood by everybody. That's the only solution, as far as I can see; it is the only solution. All the rest will mean complication, contradiction and fighting.
>
> ... And this is above politics, you see. ... It is to organise the country beyond politics. And it is the only way. In politics it is always fight and ugly fight—ugly. And it has become so bad. He was telling me always that things would become worse and worse, because it is the *end* of this age. We are entering into an age where things must be organized differently. It is a difficult time because of that.

Because we know what will come, we can help to make it come sooner and with less turmoil. There is no hope in going backwards; it would make things last endlessly. We must go forward, absolutely, and go beyond, beyond party. And nobody can explain that better than Sri Aurobindo, because he was so much, *so* much beyond party; he saw the advantages and disadvantages of all parties and he stated them exactly.

If you read carefully what he has written—so much—you will find the answer to all these questions. And at the same time you will know that you will have the full support of the Divine Power. The Power that was behind him is behind this transformation. It is time for transformation. We can't cling to the past.

The best way to go beyond politics is to spread the message of Sri Aurobindo. Because he is no more a political element wanting to take power; there are only his ideas and ideals. And, of course, if people could understand and realise his programme, the country could be very strong, very strong." (CWM 15: 405–406)

This compilation also contains quotations from the Mother's *Collected Works of the Mother*. Although the Mother was born in France, she always felt that India was her true country, the country of her soul and spirit. She declared herself Indian by choice and predilection.

"I want to mark this day by the expression of a long cherished wish; that of becoming an Indian citizen. From the first time I came to India—in 1914—I felt that India is my true country, the country of my soul and spirit. I had decided to realise this wish as soon as India would be free. But I had to wait still longer because of my heavy responsibilities for the Ashram here in Pondicherry. Now the time has come when I can declare myself.

But, in accordance with Sri Aurobindo's ideal, my purpose is to show that truth lies in union rather than in division. To reject one nationality in order to obtain another is not an ideal solution. So I hope I shall be allowed to adopt a double nationality, that is to say, to remain French while I become an Indian.

I am French by birth and early education, I am Indian by choice and predilection. In my consciousness there is no antagonism between the two, on the contrary, they combine very well and complete one another. I know also that I can be of service to both equally, for my only aim in life is to give a concrete form to Sri Aurobindo's great teaching and in his teaching he reveals that all the nations are essentially one and meant to express the Divine Unity upon earth through an organised and harmonious diversity." *15 August 1954* (CWM 13: 43)

The reason for the Mother's deep connection with India becomes clearer in another of her statements:

> "It is true that this body was born in Paris and that its soul has declared that it is Indian, but I belong to no nation in particular." (CWM 13: 44)

She further explains why she chose France as the country of her birth:

> "It is France that can connect Europe with India. There are great spiritual possibilities for France. She will play a big part in spite of her present bad condition. It is through France that the spiritual message will reach Europe. That is why I chose France for my birth, although I am not French." (CWM 13: 379–380)

These words suggest that, for the Mother, nationality was never an end in itself. India and France could each have their own role, while both could participate in a larger movement towards human unity.

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, therefore, cannot be understood merely in the narrow sense of being Indian. Their work extended far beyond the boundaries of one country. Their aim was the upliftment of humanity and the movement of the earth towards a higher stage of evolution. Their love for India was intense because they saw in her a special role in the future of humanity.

The Mother says,

> "Sri Aurobindo always loved deeply his Motherland. But he wished her to be great, noble, pure and worthy of her big mission in the world. He refused to

let her sink to the sordid and vulgar level of blind self-interests and ignorant prejudices. This is why, in full conformity to his will, we lift high the standard of truth, progress and transformation of mankind, without caring for those who, through ignorance, stupidity, envy or bad will, seek to soil it and drag it down into the mud. We carry it very high so that all who have a soul may see it and gather round it." (CWM 13: 123)

The quotations of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are several decades old. A natural question therefore arises: How can words spoken so long ago remain relevant to India today?

When a Yogi or a realised person speaks, even on worldly matters, there will be Truth [Capital Truth] in what he says. This Truth will help one much more than what one would arrive at through one's own thinking. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother had the highest spiritual realisations. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother spoke from a vast spiritual vision. Their writings on India were not confined to the problems of a particular decade or generation. Their concern was with the deeper destiny of India and with her place in the evolution of humanity. This is why their words invite us to look beyond the immediate difficulties of the present moment.

Their vision and guidance can only lift India out of the present challenges she faces and help her achieve her mission. If one reads about the mission that India has to achieve and considers the present-day condition of our country, then one will realise that Sri Aurobindo's and the

Mother's quotations are as valid today as they were at that time. On reading these compilations, one will feel that they are relevant to today's conditions.

On reading these compilations, one may discover that the words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother do not belong only to the past. They can become a living subject of reflection for the present and the future.

There is, however, one caution that needs to be kept in mind while reading the quotations of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother: one need not become dogmatic about them. One really needs to live in the spirit behind these quotations.

It is not enough to know what Sri Aurobindo and the Mother said about India. The greater question is whether we can discover the spirit behind their words and allow that spirit to awaken something within us.

India, in their vision, is not merely a country with a glorious past. She is a country with a future to fulfil. And if that future is indeed a part of humanity's larger evolution, then these words are not merely words about India. They are an invitation—to remember, to understand, to aspire, and to participate.

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

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Section One: The Dominant Note in the Indian Mind Has Been Spiritual, Intuitive and Psychic

"The dominant note in the Indian mind, the temperament that has been at the foundation of all its culture and originated and supported the greater part of its creative action in philosophy, religion, art and life has been, I have insisted, spiritual, intuitive and psychic: but this fundamental tendency has not excluded but rather powerfully supported a strong and rich intellectual, practical and vital activity." (CWSA 20: 368)

I—Spirituality Is the Master-Key of the Indian Mind

1.

"Spirituality is indeed the master-key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinite is native to it. India saw from the beginning,—and, even in her ages of reason and her age of increasing ignorance, she never lost hold of the insight,—that life cannot be rightly seen in the sole light, cannot be perfectly lived in the sole power of its externalities. She was alive to the greatness of material laws and forces; she had a keen eye for the importance of the physical sciences; she knew how to organise the arts of ordinary life. But she saw that the physical does not get its full sense until it stands in right relation to the supra-physical; she saw that the complexity of the universe could not be explained in the present terms of man or seen by his superficial sight, that there were other powers behind, other powers within man himself of which he is normally

unaware, that he is conscious only of a small part of himself, that the invisible always surrounds the visible, the suprasensible the sensible, even as infinity always surrounds the finite. She saw too that man has the power of exceeding himself, of becoming himself more entirely and profoundly than he is,—truths which have only recently begun to be seen in Europe and seem even now too great for its common intelligence. She saw the myriad gods beyond man, God beyond the gods, and beyond God his own ineffable eternity; she saw that there were ranges of life beyond our life, ranges of mind beyond our present mind and above these she saw the splendours of the spirit. Then with that calm audacity of her intuition which knew no fear or littleness and shrank from no act whether of spiritual or intellectual, ethical or vital courage, she declared that there was none of these things which man could not attain if he trained his will and knowledge; he could conquer these ranges of mind, become the spirit, become a god, become one with God, become the ineffable Brahman. And with the logical practicality and sense of science and organised method which distinguished her mentality, she set forth immediately to find out the way. Hence from long ages of this insight and practice there was ingrained in her her spirituality, her powerful psychic tendency, her great yearning to grapple with the infinite and possess it, her ineradicable religious sense, her

idealism, her Yoga, the constant turn of her art and her philosophy." (CWSA 20: 6–7)

II—The Spiritual Mind of India Regarded Life as a Manifestation of the Self

1.

"The spiritual mind of India regarded life as a manifestation of the self: the community was the body of the creator Brahma, the people was a life body of Brahman in the *samasti*, the collectivity, it was the collective Narayana, as the individual was Brahman in the *vyasti*, the separate Jiva, the individual Narayana; the king was the living representative of the Divine and the other orders of the community the natural powers of the collective self, *prakrtayah*. The agreed conventions, institutes, customs, constitution of the body social and politic in all its parts had therefore not only a binding authority but a certain sacrosanct character." (CWSA 20: 403)

III—To the Indian Mind Dogma Is Least Important and Religious Spirit Matters

"This misunderstanding springs from the total difference of outlook on religion that divides the Indian mind and the normal Western intelligence. The difference is so great that it could only be bridged by a supple philosophical training

or a wide spiritual culture; but the established forms of religion and the rigid methods of philosophical thought practised in the West make no provision and even allow no opportunity for either. To the Indian mind the least important part of religion is its dogma; the religious spirit matters, not the theological credo. On the contrary to the Western mind a fixed intellectual belief is the most important part of a cult; it is its core of meaning, it is the thing that distinguishes it from others. For it is its formulated beliefs that make it either a true or a false religion, according as it agrees or does not agree with the credo of its critic. This notion, however foolish and shallow, is a necessary consequence of the Western idea which falsely supposes that intellectual truth is the highest verity and, even, that there is no other. The Indian religious thinker knows that all the highest eternal verities are truths of the spirit. The supreme truths are neither the rigid conclusions of logical reasoning nor the affirmations of credal statement, but fruits of the soul's inner experience. Intellectual truth is only one of the doors to the outer precincts of the temple. And since intellectual truth turned towards the Infinite must be in its very nature many-sided and not narrowly one, the most varying intellectual beliefs can be equally true because they mirror different facets of the Infinite. However separated by intellectual distance, they still form so many side-entrances which admit the mind to some faint ray from a supreme Light. There are no

true and false religions, but rather all religions are true in their own way and degree. Each is one of the thousand paths to the One Eternal." (CWSA 20: 180-181)

"The endless variety of Indian philosophy and religion seems to the European mind interminable, bewildering, wearisome, useless; it is unable to see the forest because of the richness and luxuriance of its vegetation; it misses the common spiritual life in the multitude of its forms. But this infinite variety is itself, as Vivekananda pertinently pointed out, a sign of a superior religious culture." (CWSA 20: 186)

IV—The Indian Mind's Drive Has Been Towards the Universal and Transcendent Self

"The drive of the Indian genius has been towards the Universal and Transcendent Self, the one God whose many forms and aspects are let loose in the universe in an evolving pattern. Becoming aware of the Self of selves would mean spontaneous fellow-feeling and sense of solidarity and also a practical creative inspiration from that unifying Presence, so that more and more the diverse peoples of the globe might live in concord and work towards the construction of a manifold dynamic existence on the basis of the peace that passeth understanding." (IWSKDS: 85)

V—Indian Mind's Spiritual Sincerity Makes the Vedas and Upanishads Powerful in Inspiration and Intimate in Living

1.

"It is this turn of the Indian mind, its spiritual sincerity and psychic positivism, that makes the Veda and Upanishads and the later religious and religio-philosophic poetry so powerful in inspiration and intimate and living in expression and image and it has its less absorbing but still very sensible effect on the working of the poetic idea and imagination even in the more secular literature." (CWSA 20: 327–328)

VI—The Instinct of the Indian Mind Was That the Reconstruction of Ideas and Society Must Start from a Spiritual Basis

"All great movements of life in India have begun with a new spiritual thought and usually a new religious activity. What more striking and significant fact can there be than this that even the new European influence, which was an influence intellectual, rationalistic, so often antireligious and which drew so much of its idealism from the increasingly cosmopolitan, mundane and secularist thought of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, precipitated in India from the very first an attempt at

religious reformation and led actually to the creation of new religions? The instinct of the Indian mind was that, if a reconstruction of ideas and of society was to be attempted, it must start from a spiritual basis and take from the first a religious motive and form." (CWSA 20: 24)

Section Two: The Indian Mind Has Always Been Profoundly Intuitive by Habit

I—India's Political and Social Thought Combines the Intuitions of Life and the Spirit with Reason Acting as an Intermediary

1.

"The Indian mind has always been profoundly intuitive in habit even when it was the most occupied with the development of the reasoning intelligence, and its political and social thought has therefore been always an attempt to combine the intuitions of life and the intuitions of the spirit with the light of the reason acting as an intermediary and an ordering and regulating factor." (CWSA 20: 402)

II—The Indian Mind Demands from Art the Higher Intuitive Vision

"The Indian mind in its natural poise finds it almost or quite as difficult really, that is to say, spiritually to understand the arts of Europe, as the ordinary European mind to enter into the spirit of Indian painting and sculpture. ... The critic tells me that the Indian figure is full of a strong spiritual sense—here of the very breath and being of devotion, an ineffable devotion, and that is true, it is a suggestion or even a revelation which breaks through or overflows the form rather than depends on the external work, …. The Indian sculptor stresses something behind, something more remote to the surface imagination, but nearer to the

soul, and subordinates to it the physical form. If he has only partially succeeded or done it with power but with something faulty in the execution, his work is less great, even though it may have a greater spirit in the intention: but when he wholly succeeds, then his work too is a masterpiece, and we may prefer it with a good conscience, if the spiritual, the higher intuitive vision is what we most demand from art." (CWSA 20: 262)

Section Three—The Indian Masses Are Nearer to Inner Realities

I—The Nearness of the Spiritual Turn Even in the Ignorant Masses Is the Fruit of an Age-Long, Still Living Spiritual Culture

"But at least the people of India, even the 'ignorant masses' have this distinction that they are by centuries of training nearer to the inner realities, are divided from them by a less thick veil of the universal ignorance and are more easily led back to a vital glimpse of God and Spirit, self and eternity than the mass of men or even the cultured elite anywhere else. Where else could the lofty, austere and difficult teaching of a Buddha have seized so rapidly on the popular mind? Where else could the songs of a Tukaram, a Ramprasad, a Kabir, the Sikh gurus and the chants of the Tamil saints with their fervid devotion but also their profound spiritual thinking have found so speedy an echo and formed a popular religious literature? This strong permeation or close nearness of the spiritual turn, this readiness of the mind of a whole nation to turn to the highest realities is the sign and fruit of an age-long, a real and a still living and supremely spiritual culture." (CWSA 20: 186)

II—The Indian Mind's Eyes Are Fixed on Inner Depths

"India's mind is really no less scientific, but its eyes are fixed primarily on the inner depths of our being; and by inner depths India, at her truest, means a vast and more illumined, a superhuman and divine consciousness hidden behind our intelligence, and not a Freudian chaos of the subconscious or even, as in Jung's psychology, a vague racial substratum of typal desire and fantasy." (IWSKDS: 85)

Section Four: The Indian Mind Has Realised That the Infinite Always Presents Itself in an Endless Variety of Aspects

I—Since the Minds of Men Are Unlimited in Their Variety, a Perfect Liberty of Thought and Worship Is Allowed in Their Approach to the Infinite

"The Indian mind has always realised that the Supreme is the Infinite; it has perceived, right from its Vedic beginnings, that to the soul in Nature the Infinite must always present itself in an endless variety of aspects. The mentality of the West has long cherished the aggressive and quite illogical idea of a single religion for all mankind, a religion universal by the very force of its narrowness, one set of dogmas, one cult, one system of ceremonies, one array of prohibitions and injunctions, one ecclesiastical ordinance. That narrow absurdity prances about as the one true religion which all must accept on peril of persecution by men here and spiritual rejection or fierce eternal punishment by God in other worlds. This grotesque creation of human unreason, the parent of so much intolerance, cruelty, obscurantism and aggressive fanaticism, has never been able to take firm hold of the free and supple mind of India. Men everywhere have common human failings, and intolerance and narrowness especially in the matter of observances there has been and is in India. There has been much violence of theological disputation, there have been querulous bickerings of sects with their pretensions to spiritual superiority and greater knowledge, and sometimes, at one time especially in

southern India in a period of acute religious differences, there have been brief local outbreaks of active mutual tyranny and persecution even unto death. But these things have never taken the proportions which they assumed in Europe. Intolerance has been confined for the most part to the minor forms of polemical [strongly critical] attack or to social obstruction or ostracism [exclusion from a society]; very seldom have they transgressed across the line to the major forms of barbaric persecution which draw a long, red and hideous stain across the religious history of Europe. There has played ever in India the saving perception of a higher and purer spiritual intelligence, which has had its effect on the mass mentality. Indian religion has always felt that since the minds, the temperaments, the intellectual affinities of men are unlimited in their variety, a perfect liberty of thought and of worship must be allowed to the individual in his approach to the Infinite." (CWSA 20: 186–187)

II—India Has Absorbed and Welded the Most Diverse Elements into a Fundamental Unity

"India, shut into a separate existence by the Himalayas and the ocean, has always been the home of a peculiar people with characteristics of its own recognisably distinct from all others, with its own distinct civilization, way of life, way of spirit, a separate culture, arts, building of society. It has

absorbed all that has entered into it, put upon all the Indian stamp, welded the most diverse elements into its fundamental unity. But it has also been throughout a congeries [a disorderly collection] of diverse peoples, … which yet succeeded in fitting into the general Indian type of civilization and culture. India's history throughout has been marked by a tendency, a constant effort to unite all this diversity of elements into a single political whole under a central imperial rule so that India might be politically as well as culturally one." (CWSA 36: 499)

III—The Indian Mind Has a Tendency to Follow Each Specialisation to Its Extreme Point

"The European eye is struck in Indian spiritual thought by the Buddhistic and illusionist denial of life. But it must be remembered that this is only one side of its philosophic tendency which assumed exaggerated proportions only in the period of decline. In itself too that was simply one result, in one direction, of a tendency of the Indian mind which is common to all its activities, the impulse to follow each motive, each specialisation of motive even, spiritual, intellectual, ethical, vital, to its extreme point and to sound its utmost possibility. Part of its innate direction was to seek in each not only for its fullness of detail, but for its infinite, its absolute, its profoundest depth or its highest pinnacle. It knew that without a 'fine excess" we cannot

break down the limits which the dull temper of the normal mind opposes to knowledge and thought and experience; and it had in seeking this point a boundless courage and yet a sure tread. Thus it carried each tangent of philosophic thought, each line of spiritual experience to its farthest point, and chose to look from that farthest point at all existence, so as to see what truth or power such a view could give it. It tried to know the whole of divine nature and to see too as high as it could beyond nature and into whatever there might be of supradivine. When it formulated a spiritual atheism, it followed that to its acme of possible vision. When, too, it indulged in materialistic atheism,—though it did that only with a side glance, as the freak of an insatiable intellectual curiosity,—yet it formulated it straight out, boldly and nakedly, without the least concession to idealism or ethicism.

Everywhere we find this tendency. The ideals of the Indian mind have included the height of self-assertion of the human spirit and its thirst of independence and mastery and possession and the height also of its self-abnegation, dependence and submission and self-giving. In life the ideal of opulent living and the ideal of poverty were carried to the extreme of regal splendour and the extreme of satisfied nudity." (CWSA 20: 10–11)

IV—Extremes Are Balanced by the Synthetic Tendency towards Fusion of Knowledge

"Yet it is notable that this pursuit of the most opposite extremes never resulted in disorder; and its most hedonistic period offers nothing that at all resembles the unbridled corruption which a similar tendency has more than once produced in Europe. … In every extreme the Indian spirit seeks for a law in that extreme and a rule, measure and structure in its application. Besides, this sounding of extremes is balanced by a still more ingrained characteristic, the synthetical tendency, so that having pushed each motive to its farthest possibility the Indian mind returns always towards some fusion of the knowledge it has gained and to a resulting harmony and balance in action and institution. Balance and rhythm which the Greeks arrived at by self-limitation, India arrived at by its sense of intellectual, ethical and aesthetic order and the synthetic impulse of its mind and life." (CWSA 20: 11)

Section Five: The Indian Mind Is Apostle of Liberty and Peace

I—The Indian Mind Is an Apostle of Liberty

"What sets her [India] apart in a class and makes her a far-reaching influence is the quality of her mind. Here is a mind markedly free from prepossessions as between the two blocs into which the world is in the main divided. She has no love for the relics, in the western democracies, of those habits which have been responsible for the so-long subjection of herself as well as other Asian countries. None can accuse her of being spoon-fed with doctrines dear in the proximate past to Britain, France or the U.S.A. At the same time she has a detachment from the policies pursued by the U.S.S.R.'s aggressive totalitarianism. She will never be coloured by the anti-West propaganda turned out by the Moscow Radio nor is she rendered jittery by the cold war waged by Stalin with the help of his satellites in Europe and his Red comrades in China. She is the apostle of liberty, and wherever liberty is most respected her sympathy goes and wherever it is subverted under any pretext she throws her challenge. But neither her sympathy nor her challenge takes the form of bellicose inflammableness." (IWSKDS: 84)

II—The Indian Mind Is an Apostle of Peace

"She is also the apostle of peace. With no territorial ambitions, no commercial interests at stake, no doctrinaire narrowness breeding hatred, she wants nothing for herself

or for any country except peace in which to develop the true national genius and to come together with others in an international harmony to embody the common world-consciousness that is trying everywhere to emerge. But her passion for peace is not expressed in just an organisation of life's externals for preventing warfare and promoting goodwill: it is not a peace-making machinery that she desires, though she will certainly make use of it. She is all for an organic growth of peace. From within outwards: this is her guiding principle. A consciousness whose natural paths are peace she endeavours to develop in herself and evoke in others. Both Europe and America make a fetish of outward means: the physically scientific mind that is their most remarkable modern achievement is always prone to emphasise environment and legislation.” (IWSKDS: 84—85)

Section Six—the Basis of the Intellectual Superstructure Is Brahmacharya, According to the Indian Mind

I—A Great Intellectual Superstructure Needs a Strong Foundation of Force and Energy

"At the basis of the old Aryan system was the all-important discipline of Brahmacharya. The first necessity for the building up of a great intellectual superstructure is to provide a foundation strong enough to bear it. … Information cannot be the foundation of intelligence, … An education that confines itself to imparting knowledge, is no education. The various faculties of memory, judgment, imagination, perception, reasoning, which build the edifice of thought and knowledge for the knower, must not only be equipped with their fit and sufficient tools and materials, but trained to bring fresh materials and use more skilfully those of which they are in possession. And the foundation of the structure they have to build, can only be the provision of a fund of force and energy sufficient to bear the demands of a continually growing activity of the memory, judgment and creative power. Where is that energy to be found?" (CWSA 1: 369–370)

II—The More We Increase and Enrich the Energy, the Greater Will Be Our Vigour of Our Intellectuality

"If this theory be correct, the energy at the basis of the operation of intelligence must be in ourselves and it must be capable of greater expansion and richer use to an extent

practically unlimited. And this also must be a sound principle, that the more we can increase and enrich the energy, the greater will be the potentially the range, power and activity of the functions of our mind and the consequent vigour of our intellectuality and the greatness of our achievement. This was the first principle on which the ancient Aryans based their education and one of the chief processes which they used for the increased storage of energy, was the practice of Brahmacharya." (CWSA 1: 371)

III—The Metaphysical Explanation of Brahmacharya

"This is the metaphysical theory. The application depends on a right understanding of the physical and psychological conformation of the human receptacle [container] of energy. The fundamental physical unit is the *retas*, in which the *tejas*, the heat and light and electricity in a man, is involved and hidden. All energy is latent in the *retas*. This energy must be either expended physically or conserved. All passion, lust, desire wastes the energy by pouring it, either in the gross form or a sublimated subtler form, out of the body. Immorality in act throws it out in the gross form; immorality of thought in the subtler form. In either case there is waste, and unchastity is of the mind and speech as well as of the body. On the other hand, all self-

control conserves the energy in the *retas*, and conservation always brings with it increase. But the needs of the physical body are limited and the excess of energy must create a surplus which has to turn itself to some use other than the physical. According to the ancient theory *retas* is the *jala* or water, full of light and heat and electricity, in one word, of *tejas.* The excess of the *retas* turns first into heat or *tapas* which stimulates the whole system, … which is a source of powerful action and success; secondly, it turns to *tejas* proper, light, the energy which is at the source of all knowledge; thirdly, it turns to *vidyut* or electricity, which is at the basis of all forceful action whether intellectual or physical. In the *vidyut* again is involved the *ojas*, or *pranasakti*, the primal energy which proceeds from ether. The *retas* refining from *jala* to *tapas, tejas* and *vidyut* and from *vidyut* to *ojas*, fills the system with physical strength, energy and brain power and in its last form of *ojas* rises to the brain and informs it with that primal energy … It is *ojas* that creates a spiritual force or *virya*, by which a man attains to spiritual knowledge, spiritual love and faith, spiritual strength. It follows that the more we can by Brahmacharya increase the store of *tapas, tejas, vidyut* and *ojus*, the more we shall fill ourselves with utter energy for the works of the body, heart, mind and spirit." (CWSA 1: 372–373)

Section Seven: The Indian Mind Holds That All Knowledge Is Within and Has to Be Evoked by Education

I—This Experience Is Only Possible When the *Sattwic* or Illuminative Element Has Been Powerfully Aroused

1.

"In addition it [Indian Mind] had the view that all knowledge is within and has to be evoked by education rather than instilled from outside. … Many of us have experienced also the strangeness of taking up a language or subject, after a brief discontinuance, to find that we understand it much better than when we took it up, … This is because the *jñātā* or knower within has had his attention called to the subject and has been busy in the interval drawing upon the source of knowledge within in connection with it. This experience is only possible to those whose *sattwic* or illuminative element has been powerfully aroused or consciously or unconsciously trained to action by the habit of intellectual clarity and deep study. The highest reach of the sattwic development is when one can dispense often or habitually with outside aids, the teacher or the text book, grammer and dictionary and learn a subject largely or wholly from within. But this is only possible to the Yogin by a successful prosecution of the discipline of Yoga." (CWSA 1: 373–375)

II—The Lotus of the Eternal Knowledge Is a Bud Folded Within Us and Opens Through Successive Realisations

"The lotus of the eternal knowledge and the eternal perfection is a bud closed and folded up within us. It opens swiftly or gradually, petal by petal, through successive realisations, once the mind of man begins to turn towards the Eternal, once his heart, no longer compressed and confined by attachment to finite appearances, becomes enamoured, in whatever degree, of the Infinite. …

Nothing can be taught to the mind which is not already concealed as potential knowledge in the unfolding soul of the creature. So also all perfection of which the outer man is capable, is only a realising of the eternal perfection of the Spirit within him. We know the Divine and become the Divine, because we are That already in our secret nature. All teaching is a revealing, all becoming is an unfolding. Self-attainment is the secret; self-knowledge and an increasing consciousness are the means and the process." (CWSA 23: 53–54)

Section Eight: According to Indian Thought, the Ideals of the Best Are

I—In the Heart: Benevolence, Love, Compassion

II—In the Character: Courage, Heroism, Energy

III—In the Mind: Wisdom, Intelligence and Love of Learning

IV— In the Inner Being: A Strong Religious Sense, Love of God, Seeking After the Highest, the Spiritual Turn

V— In Social Relations and Conduct: A Strict Observance of All the Social Dharmas

VI—This Was the Total Ideal of the Arya, the Man of High Upbringing and Noble Nature

"The universal embracing dharma in the Indian idea is a law of ideal perfection for the developing mind and soul of man; it compels him to grow in the power and force of certain high or large universal qualities which in their harmony build a highest type of manhood. In Indian thought and life this was the ideal of the best, the law of the good or noble man, the discipline laid down for the self-perfecting individual, *ārya, śreṣṭha, sajjana, sādhu*. This ideal was not a purely moral or ethical conception, although that element might predominate; it was also intellectual, religious, social, aesthetic, the flowering of the whole ideal man, the perfection of the total human nature. The most varied qualities met in the Indian conception of the best, *śreṣṭha*, the good and noble man, *ārya*. In the

heart benevolence, beneficence, love, compassion, altruism, long-suffering, liberality, kindliness, patience; in the character courage, heroism, energy, loyalty, continence, truth, honour, justice, faith, obedience and reverence where these were due, but power too to govern and direct, a fine modesty and yet a strong independence and noble pride; in the mind wisdom and intelligence and love of learning, knowledge of all the best thought, an openness to poetry, art and beauty, an educated capacity and skill in works; in the inner being a strong religious sense, piety, love of God, seeking after the Highest, the spiritual turn; in social relations and conduct a strict observance of all the social dharmas, as father, son, husband, brother, kinsman, friend, ruler or subject, master or servant, priest or warrior or worker, king or sage, member of clan or caste: this was the total ideal of the Arya, the man of high upbringing and noble nature. The ideal is clearly portrayed in the written records of ancient India during two millenniums and it is the very life-breath of Hindu ethics. It was the creation of an at once ideal and rational mind, spirit-wise and worldly-wise, deeply religious, nobly ethical, firmly yet flexibly intellectual, scientific and aesthetic, patient and tolerant of life's difficulties and human weakness, but arduous in self-discipline. This was the mind that was at the base of the Indian civilisation and gave its characteristic stamp to all the culture.” (CWSA 20: 163–164)

VII—The Indian Mind Is Spiritual, Ethical, Intellectual and Artistic

"For the Indian mind is not only spiritual and ethical, but intellectual and artistic, and both the rule of the intellect and the rhythm of beauty are hostile to the spirit of chaos." (CWSA 20: 12)

Section Nine: The Indian Mind Holds That the Rishi Is the Best Guide Even for Practical Life

I—The Indian Mind Believes That the Ultimate Truths Are Truths of the Spirit Which Can Reform Our Outer Life

"The average European draws his guiding views not from the philosophic, but from the positive and practical reason. … He honours the philosophers, but he puts their works on the highest shelf of the library of civilisation, not to be taken down or consulted except by a few minds of an exceptional turn. He admires, but he distrusts them. Plato's idea of philosophers as the right rulers and best directors of society seems to him the most fantastic and unpractical of notions; the philosopher, precisely because he moves among ideas, must be without any hold on real life. The Indian mind holds on the contrary that the Rishi, the thinker, the seer of spiritual truth is the best guide not only of the religious and moral, but the practical life. The seer, the Rishi is the natural director of society; to the Rishis he attributes the ideals and guiding intuitions of his civilisation. Even today he is very ready to give the name to anyone who can give a spiritual truth which helps his life or a formative idea and inspiration which influences religion, ethics, society, even politics.

This is because the Indian believes that the ultimate truths are truths of the spirit and that truths of the spirit are the most fundamental and most effective truths of our

existence, powerfully creative of the inner, salutarily reformative of the outer life." (CWSA 20: 112–113).

Section Ten: What Helped the Original Shaping of the Indian Mind?

I—The Right Understanding of the Vedic Hymns

"It is one great importance of a right understanding of the Vedic hymns as a form of sacred literature that it helps us to see the original shaping not only of the master ideas that governed the mind of India, but of its characteristic types of spiritual experience, its turn of imagination, its creative temperament and the kind of significant forms in which it persistently interpreted its sight of self and things and life and the universe. It is in a great part of the literature the same turn of inspiration and self-expression that we see in the architecture, painting and sculpture. Its first character is a constant sense of the infinite, the cosmic, and of things as seen in or affected by the cosmic vision, set in or against the amplitude of the one and infinite; its second peculiarity is a tendency to see and render its spiritual experience in a great richness of images taken from the inner psychic plane or in physical images transmuted by the stress of a psychic significance and impression and line and idea colour; and its third tendency is to image the terrestrial life often magnified, as in the Mahabharata and Ramayana ..." (CWSA 20: 327)

II—The Upanishads Are a Record of the Deepest Spiritual Experiences

"The Upanishads are the supreme work of the Indian mind, … that the highest self-expression of its genius, its sublimest poetry, its greatest creation of the thought and word should be not a literary or poetical masterpiece of the ordinary kind, but a large flood of spiritual revelation of this direct and profound character, is a significant fact, evidence of a unique mentality and unusual turn of spirit. The Upanishads are at once profound religious scriptures,—for they are a record of the deepest spiritual experiences,—documents of revelatory and intuitive philosophy of an inexhaustible light, power and largeness and, whether written in verse or cadenced prose, spiritual poems of an absolute, an unfailing inspiration inevitable in phrase, wonderful in rhythm and expression. It is the expression of a mind in which philosophy and religion and poetry are made one, because this religion does not end with a cult nor is limited to a religio-ethical aspiration, but rises to an infinite discovery of God, of Self, of our highest and whole reality of spirit and being and speaks out of an ecstasy of luminous knowledge and an ecstasy of moved and fulfilled experience, this philosophy is not an abstract intellectual speculation about Truth or a structure of the logical intelligence, but Truth seen, felt, lived, held by the inmost mind and soul in the joy of utterance of an assured discovery and possession, and this poetry is the work of the aesthetic mind lifted up beyond its ordinary field to express the wonder and beauty of the rarest spiritual self-

vision and the profoundest illumined truth of self and God and universe. Here the intuitive mind and intimate psychological experience of the Vedic seers passes into a supreme culmination in which the Spirit, as is said in a phrase of the Katha Upanishad, discloses its own very body, reveals the very word of its self-expression and discovers to the mind the vibration of rhythms which repeating themselves within in the spiritual hearing seem to build up the soul and set it satisfied and complete on the heights of self-knowledge." (CWSA 20: 329–330)

III—Brahmacharya and *Sattwic* Development Created the Brain of India

"We have stated, … the main psychological principles on which the ancient Indians based their scheme of education. By the training of Brahmacharya they placed all the energy of which the system was capable and which could be spared from bodily functions, at the service of the brain. In this way they not only strengthened the *medhā* or grasping power, the *dhī* or subtlety and swiftness of thought conception, the memory and the creative intellectual force, making the triple force of memory, invention, judgement comprehensive and analytic, but they greatly enlarged the range, no less than the intensity, of the absorbing, storing and generative mental activities. Hence those astonishing feats of memory, various

comprehension and versatility of creative work of which only a few extraordinary intellects have been capable in Occidental history, but which in ancient India were common and usual. ... In these two things lies the secret of Aryan intellectual achievement, Brahmacharya and sattwic development created the brain of India: it was perfected by Yoga." (CWSA 1: 376–377)

IV—The Seer-Poets of Ancient India Gave All Future Spirituality in Seed Form

"A sacred and hieratic tradition faithfully followed gave them [the Vedic Poets] both their form and substance, but this substance consisted of the deepest psychic and spiritual experiences of which the human soul is capable and the forms seldom or never degenerate into a convention, because what they are intended to convey was lived in himself by each poet and made new to his own mind in expression by the subtleties or sublimities of his individual vision. The utterances of the greatest seers, Vishwamitra, Vamadeva, Dirghatamas and many others, touch the most extraordinary heights and amplitudes of a sublime and mystic poetry and there are poems like the Hymn of Creation that move in a powerful clarity on the summits of thought on which the Upanishads lived constantly with a more sustained breathing. The mind of ancient India did not err when it traced back all its

philosophy, religion and essential things of its culture to these seer-poets, for all the future spirituality of her people is contained there in seed or in first expression." (CWSA 20: 326–327)

Section Eleven: The Guru–Disciple Tradition in the Indian Mind

I—The Indian Mind Has Given Absolute Authority to the Guru and Insists That the Disciple, Through Practice, Make This Knowledge His Own to Train His Mind Before Playing Freely With the Subject

"Europe will accept nothing which is not scientific, nothing, that is to say which does not take up its stand on an assured, well-ordered and verifiable knowledge. Undoubtedly, for practical purposes the West is right; since only by establishing ourselves on such an assured foundation can we work with the utmost effectiveness and make the most of what we know. For shastra is the true basis of all perfect action & shastra means the full and careful teaching of the principles, relations and processes of every branch of knowledge, action or conduct with which the mind concerns itself. Indian knowledge possesses such a scientific basis, but, in these greater matters, unexpressed or expressed only in broad principles, compact aphorisms, implied logical connections not minutely treated in detail, fully, with a patient logical order & development in the way to which the occidental intellect is now accustomed and which it has become its second nature to demand. The aphoristic method has great advantages. It prevents the mind from getting encrusted in details and fossilising there; it leaves a wide room & great latitude for originality & the delicate play of individuality in the details. It allows a science to remain

elastic and full of ever new potentialities for the discoverer. No doubt, it has disadvantages. It leaves much room for inaccuracy, for individual error, for the violences of the ill-trained & the freaks of the inefficient. For this, among other more important reasons, the Indian mind has thought it wise to give a firm & absolute authority to the guru & to insist that the disciple shall by precept & practice make his own all that the master has to teach him & so form & train his mind before it is allowed to play freely with his subject. In Europe the manual replaces the guru; the mind of the learner is not less rigidly bound & dominated but it is by the written rule & detail not by the more adaptable & flexible word of the guru.

Still, the age has its own demands, and it is becoming imperatively necessary that Indian knowledge should reveal in the Western way its scientific foundations." (CWSA 12: 65–66)

Section Twelve: The Indian Mind Can Absorb Alien Concepts without Losing Its Quality

I—India Is Not a Drab Unity of Culture; She Is Multiform, a Many-Sided Entity through Which Runs a Single Secret Strain

"There is nothing anywhere too foreign for us to allow assimilation of its central truth and purpose. Indeed our own nature is such that we can absorb a host of alien things without losing our typical quality. India is not a drab unity of culture: she is multiform, so much so that sometimes she is mistaken for a colossal colourful confusion. There is really no confusion but a many-sidedness through which yet runs a single secret strain. Both in body and mind she is a subtle persistent identity in the midst of a myriad variations. The variations, however, are as important as the underlying theme and as constitutive of the true character of us and therefore we should not hesitate to take in whatever in the modern scene draws our heart's genuine response. At the same time, in the light of the strange youthfulness that is our essence we should look back at our own history and attempt to understand how and why we are vigorously and hopefully what we are despite such a lengthy past trailing behind us." (IWSKDS: 9)

II—India Had to Contain All the Most Diverse Elements in Her Life and Assimilate Them

"Sri Aurobindo: It has been a special feature of India that, she has to contain in her life all the most diverse elements and assimilate them. This renders her problem most intricate.

Disciple: If it. is India's destiny to assimilate all the conflicting elements, is it possible to assimilate the Mahomedan element also?

Sri Aurobindo: Why not? India has- assimilated elements from the Greeks, the Persians and other nations. But she assimilates only when her Central Truth is recognised by the other party, and even while assimilating she does it in such a way that the elements absorbed are no longer recognisable as foreign but become part of herself. For instance, we took from the Greek architecture, from the Persian painting etc.

The assimilation of the Mahomedan culture also was done in the mind to a great extent and it would have perhaps gone further. But in order that the process may be complete it is necessary that a change in the Mahomedan mentality should come. The con-flict is in the outer life and unless the Mahomedans learn tolerance I do not think the assimilation is possible.

The Hindu is ready to tolerate. He is open to new ideas and his culture has got a wonderful capacity for

assimilation, but always' provided that her Central Truth is recognised." (ETABP: 306–307)

Section Thirteen: The Indian Mind Forgives and Forgets Easily

I—Only the Indian Mind Must Be Made to Feel That the Approach on the Other Side Is Frank and Whole-Hearted

"If the English mind would take the first step and try to see things from the Indian standpoint - [… …]3 and act accordingly, all difficulties might be solved. The Indian mind has not the Irish memory for past wrongs and discords, it forgives and forgets easily. Only it must be made to feel that the approach on the other side is frank and whole hearted. If it once felt that, every difficulty would be solved [.]" (CWSA 36: 253)

II—Indians Are Much More Sensitive to Feelings

" 'Europeans attach the greatest importance to the words uttered.

Indians are much more sensitive to the feeling, which more often than not those words veil.'

It's about a remark by B. She said something to someone with very kind and extremely polite words, but in her heart she doesn't like the person she spoke to; and she was shocked because the other became indignant.... But I understood immediately. She was indignant, she said, 'Why? I was very polite, so why?'

But they feel, deep down they sense the feeling with which you say the thing. That's what they feel and what they respond to." (CTMS: March 29, 1967)

III—Respect for Law Has Been the Characteristic of the Indian People

"A respect for the law is a necessary quality for endurance as a nation and it has always been a marked characteristic of the Indian people." (CWSA 8: 151)

IV—Peace Is Wrongly Understood by Indians

"They've asked me for a message.... On the 19th, the prince of Kashmir, K.S., is holding in Delhi a big meeting of all the members of the parliament and the government to tell them that there is only one policy worth following, that of Sri Aurobindo. And he wants a message from me. Here it is:

> '***O India, land of Light and spiritual knowledge, wake up to your true mission in the world. Show the way to union and harmony.***'

I deliberately didn't use the word peace; I said harmony. I don't want to say peace, because for them, peace means

telling other nations platitudes so as not to fight (!). So I don't want to use that word." (CTMS: August 12, 1967)

V—Indian Labourers Are Docile and Humble

"I have come in contact with the Indian masses and found them better than the Europeans of the same class. They are superior to the European working-class. The latter may be more efficient but that is due to other reasons. The Governor here remarked during riots that the labourers are very docile and humble; only when they take to drink they become violent. The Irish doctor who was in our jail could not think how the young men who were so gentle and attractive could be revolutionaries. I found even the ordinary criminal quite human and better than his counterpart in Europe.

There will always remain different states of development of humanity. It is a fallacy to say that education will do everything. Our civilisation is not an unmixed good. You have only to look at civilised races in Europe." (ETABP: 213)

"Sri Aurobindo: Yes, the Indian also was considered docile and mild like the elephant, but once he is off the line you better keep out of his way.

Now there is a new morality in the air. They talk of pacifism, anti-nationalism, anti-militarism etc. But it is

talked by those who can't do anything. In any case, it has to stand the test of time.” (ETABP: 219)

Section Fourteen: Indians Are a People Among Whom God Has Chosen to Manifest More Than Among Any Others

I—It Is Because God Has Chosen to Manifest Himself and Has Entered into the Hearts of His People That We Are Rising Again as a Nation

"We [Indians] are no ordinary race. We are people ancient as our hills and rivers and we have behind us a history of manifold greatness, not surpassed by any other race, we are the descendants of those who performed Tapasya and underwent unheard-of austerities for the sake of spiritual gain and of their own will submitted to all the sufferings of which humanity is capable. We are the children of those mothers who ascended with a smile the funeral pyre that they might follow their husbands to another world. We are a people to whom suffering is welcome and who have spiritual strength within them, greater than any physical force, we are a people in whom God has chosen to manifest himself more than in any other at many great moments of our history. It is because God has chosen to manifest himself and has entered into the hearts of his people that we are rising again as a nation." (CWSA 8: 38–39)

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