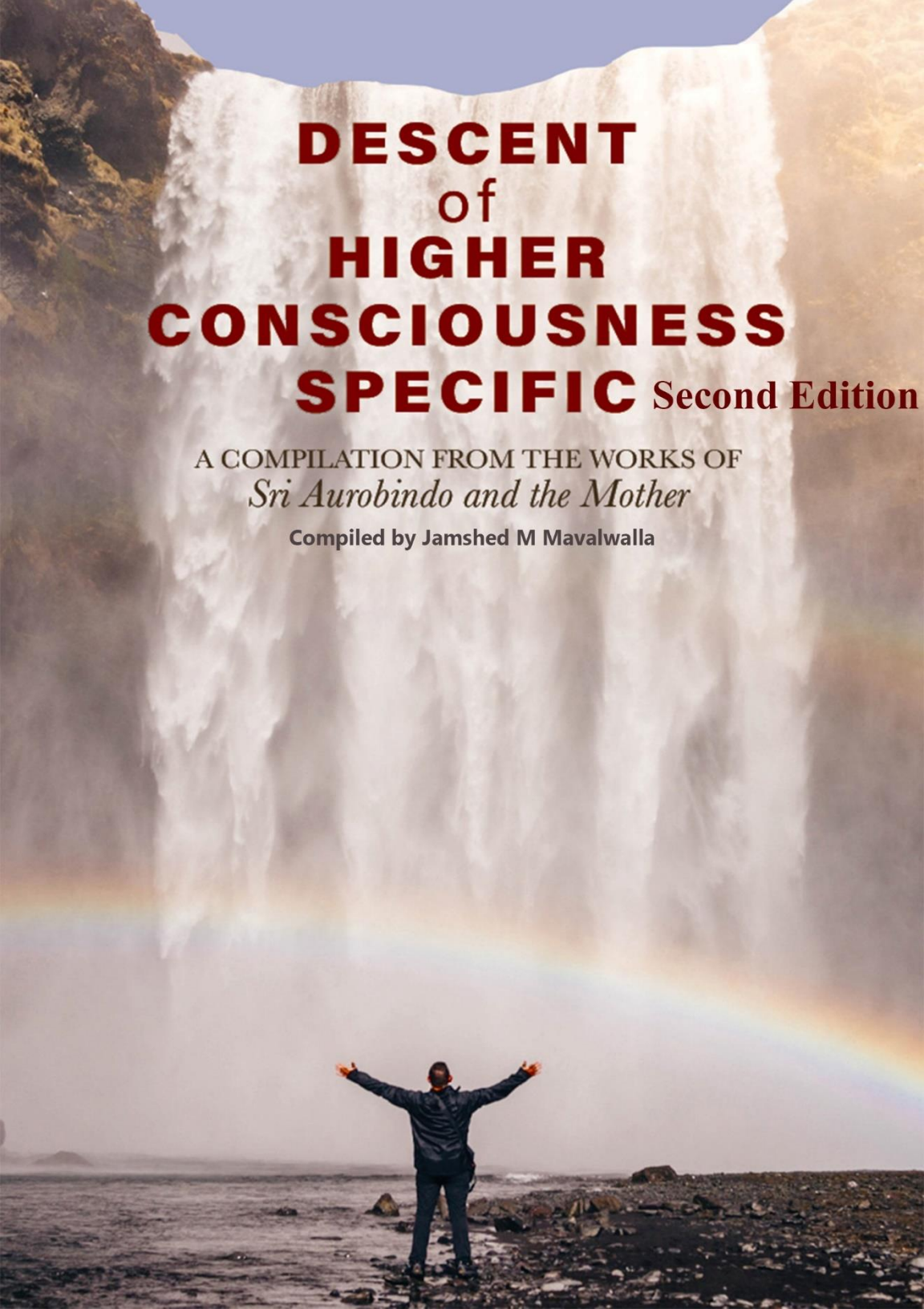
DESCENT of HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS SPECIFIC

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

Descent of Higher Consciousness Specific

Second Edition

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Waterfall is the symbol of the descent of the divine forces upon the physical plane which is portrayed on the Cover.

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

As part of our series of comprehensive compilations on the topic "Descent of Higher Consciousness in Sadhana," we now bring out the second volume, entitled *Descent of Higher Consciousness—Specific*.

Following the first volume, *Descent of Higher Consciousness—General*, this book presents a more focused compilation dealing with the specific aspects of the descent of Peace, Purity, Force, Light, Ananda, Knowledge, Wideness, Silence, Strength, Divine Force and Shakti in Sadhana.

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.

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

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I—The Descent of Peace

1.

"In the beginning the peace and calmness comes like that only for a short time. The Adhar cannot keep it, its own natural condition being different. But afterwards the power of holding increases until in some part of the being at least it is constant." (CWSA 29: 149)

2.

"The descent of calm and light which you experience is a sign that the sadhana has actually begun in you; it shows that you are open now consciously to the Divine Force and its workings. The descent of calm and light into the being is the beginning of the foundation of the yoga. At first it may be felt in the mind and upper part only, but afterwards goes further down until it touches all the centres and is experienced in the whole body. At first it comes only for a moment or two; afterwards it lasts for longer periods." (CWM 14: 55)

3.

"However strong the attack may be and even if it overcomes for the time being, still it will rapidly pass away if you have formed the habit of opening to the Mother. The peace will come back, if you remain quiet and keep yourself open to it and to the Force. Once something of the Truth

has shown itself within you, it will always, even if for a time heavily clouded over with wrong movements, shine out again like the sun in heaven. Therefore persevere with confidence and never lose courage." (CWSA 32: 303)

4.

"I have said that the most decisive way for the Peace or the Silence to come is by a descent from above.

... the sadhak is not always conscious of the process; he feels the peace settling in him or at least manifesting, but he has not been conscious how and whence it came." (CWSA 30: 323–324)

5.

"The peace liberates from all dependence on outer contacts—it brings what the Gita calls the *atmarati*. But at first there is a difficulty in keeping it intact when there is the contact with others because the consciousness has the habit of running outwards in speech or external interchange or else of coming down to the normal level. One must therefore be very careful until it is fixed; once fixed it usually defends itself, for all outer contacts become surface things to a consciousness full of the higher peace." (CWSA 29: 151)

6.

"In some it [descent] comes down like a flood, in others it goes through with a methodical and deliberate increase. I

don't think the peace descent is in the habit of waiting for companions—more often it likes at first to be all by itself and then call down its friends with the message, "Come along, I have made the place all ready for you." (CWSA 30: 447)

7.

"I am glad to hear that these experiences are coming—they are a sign of rapid progress coming. The descent as of a drizzling rain is a very characteristic and well-known way of descent of the higher Consciousness; it brings peace but it also brings all other possibilities of the higher Consciousness too and, as you felt, the seeds of transformation of the physical consciousness—by the coming in it of the seeds of the powers and qualities of the higher Nature." (CWSA 30: 475)

8.

"If the peace and power that were acting on the head and in the chest have come down into the stomach and below, that would indicate that they are no longer acting on the mind and emotional being only, but fully on the vital also—that is a great progress.

The desires you refer to are those of the vital-physical in the subtle physical consciousness—impulse to talk, essential hunger, thirst, etc. Peace and quietude full in the vital-physical and subtle physical and down even in the

lowest levels are necessary for the whole change to be made." (CWSA 31: 256)

9.

"To nobody does the divine calm and peace come uninterruptedly in the early stages of the Yoga—it comes little by little—it is sometimes absent for long periods together, or there are strong attacks which cloud it over. It is by long sadhana that one gets the permanent peace." (CWSA 29: 149)

10.

"At first the peace and calm are not continuous, they come and go, and it usually takes a long time to get them settled in the nature. It is better therefore to avoid impatience and to go on steadily with what is being done. If you wish to have something beyond the peace and calm, let it be the full opening of the inner being and the consciousness of the Divine Power working in you. Aspire for that sincerely and with a great intensity but without impatience and it will come." (CWSA 30: 45)

11.

"One thing more. In this process of the descent from above and the working it is most important not to rely entirely on oneself, but to rely on the guidance of the Guru and to refer all that happens to his judgment and arbitration and

decision. For it often happens that the forces of the lower nature are stimulated and excited by the descent and want to mix with it and turn it to their profit. It often happens too that some Power or Powers undivine in their nature present themselves as the Supreme Lord or as the Divine Mother and claim the being's service and surrender. If these things are accepted, there will be an extremely disastrous consequence. If indeed there is the assent of the sadhak to the Divine working alone and the submission or surrender to that guidance, then all can go smoothly. This assent and a rejection of all egoistic forces or forces that appeal to the ego are the safeguard throughout the sadhana. But the ways of Nature are full of snares, the disguises of the ego are innumerable, the illusions of the Powers of Darkness, Rakshasi Maya, are extraordinarily skilful; the reason is an insufficient guide and often turns traitor; vital desire is always with us tempting to follow any alluring call. This is the reason why in this Yoga we insist so much on what we call *samarpana*— rather inadequately rendered by the English word surrender. If the heart centre is fully opened and the psychic is always in control, then there is no question; all is safe. But the psychic can at any moment be veiled by a lower upsurge. It is only a few who are exempt from these dangers and it is precisely those to whom surrender is easily possible. The guidance of one who is himself by identity or represents the Divine is in this

difficult endeavour imperative and indispensable." (CWSA 30: 329–330)

12.

"Once these experiences [*of peace and the descent of force*] begin, they repeat themselves usually, whether the general condition is good or not. But naturally they cannot make a radical change until they settle themselves and become normal in the whole being or at least in the inner part of it. In the latter case the old movements can still come, but they are felt as something quite superficial and the sadhana increases in spite of them." (CWSA 30:25–26)

13.

"Experiences and descents are very good for preparation, but change of the consciousness is the thing wanted—it is the proof that the experiences and descents have had an effect. Descents of peace are good, but an increasingly stable quietude and silence of the mind is something more valuable. When that is there then other things can come—usually one at a time, light or strength and force or knowledge or ananda. It is not necessary to go on for ever having always the same preparatory experiences—a time comes when the consciousness begins to take a new poise and another state." (CWSA 30: 232)

14.

"The descent of Peace, the descent of Force or Power, the descent of Light, the descent of Ananda, these are the four things that transform the nature." (CWSA 30: 449)

II—The Mother's Method to Establish a Settled Peace

1.

"Q: *How can we establish a settled peace and silence in the mind?*

A: First of all, you must want it.

And then you must try and must persevere, keep on trying. … You sit quietly, to begin with; and then, instead of thinking of fifty things, you begin saying to yourself, 'Peace, peace, peace, peace, peace, calm, peace!' You imagine peace and calm. You aspire, ask that it may come: 'Peace, peace, calm.' And then, when something comes and touches you and acts, say quietly, like this, 'Peace, peace, peace.' Do not look at the thoughts, do not listen to the thoughts, you understand. You must not pay attention to everything that comes. You know, when someone bothers you a great deal and you want to get rid of him, you don't listen to him, do you? Good! You turn your head away (*gesture*) and think of something else. Well, you must do that: when thoughts come, you must not look at them, must not listen to them, must not pay any attention at all, you must behave as though they did not exist, you see! And then, repeat all the time like a kind of—how shall I put it?—as an idiot does, who repeats the same thing always. Well, you must do the same thing; you must

repeat, 'Peace, peace, peace.' So you try this for a few minutes and then do what you have to do; and then, another time, you begin again; sit down again and then try. Do this on getting up in the morning, do this in the evening when going to bed. You can do this... look, if you want to digest your food properly, you can do this for a few minutes before eating. You can't imagine how much this helps your digestion! Before beginning to eat you sit quietly for a while and say, "Peace, peace, peace!" and *everything* becomes calm. It seems as though all the noises were going far, far, far away (*Mother stretches out her arms on both sides*) and then you must continue; and there comes a time when you no longer need to sit down, and no matter what you are doing, no matter what you are saying, it is always 'Peace, peace, peace.' Everything remains here, like this, it does not enter (*gesture in front of the forehead*), it remains like this. And then one is always in a perfect peace... after some years.

But at the beginning, a very small beginning, two or three minutes, it is very simple. For something complicated you must make an effort, and when one makes an effort, one is not quiet. It is difficult to make an effort while remaining quiet. Very simple, very simple, you must be very simple in these things. It is as though you were learning how to call a friend: by dint of being called he comes. Well, make peace and calm your friends and call

them: 'Come, peace, peace, peace, peace, come!'." (CWM 6: 313)

2.

"Q: *The pressure is constantly there. Grant me quietness, my sweet Mother.*

A: I never cease pouring peace and quietness and calm on you why don't you accept them?

Q: *What must I do to accept the peace and quietness and calm?*

A: Want them sincerely and integrally—not only with one part of your being." (CWM 17: 59–60)

3.

"Q: *And I always ask You for silence and peace (as I told You the other day) because I know that if one can always keep that silence and peace one never feels poor for any reason.*

I don't want to be, I don't want to feel so poor.

A: You have already had this experience of peace and silent joy; you know what it is and it is sure to come back stronger and steadier. Remain confident, do not torment yourself—in this way you will hasten its coming.

Tender love from your mother." (CWM 16: 100)

III—How to Bring About Descent of Peace

1.

"The result of the concentration is not usually immediate—though to some there comes a swift and sudden out flowering; but with most there is a time longer or shorter of adaptation or preparation, especially if the nature has not been prepared already to some extent by aspiration and tapasya." (CWSA 30: 328)

2.

"It is quite natural that at first there should be the condition of calm and peace only when you sit for concentration. What is important is that there should be this condition whenever you sit and the pressure for it always there. But at other times the result is at first only a certain mental quiet and freedom from thoughts." (CWSA 29: 313)

3.

"To be able to detach oneself from the action of the mechanical mind is the first necessity so that it may be like a noise in the street which passes and which one can ignore. It is easier then for the quiet and peace of the mind to remain undisturbed by this action even if it occurs.

If the peace and silence continue to come down, they usually become so intense as to seize the physical mind also after a time." (CWSA 29: 314–315)

4.

"I was very glad to get your letter and especially to know that you are more at peace. That is what is first needed, the settling down of a natural peace and quiet in the nature—the spiritual peace is a bigger thing that can come afterwards.

Then as to concentration. Ordinarily the consciousness is spread out everywhere, dispersed, running in this or that direction, after this subject and that object in multitude. When anything has to be done of a sustained nature, the first thing one does is to draw back all this dispersed consciousness and concentrate. It is then, if one looks closely, found to be concentrated in one place and on one occupation, subject or object—as when you are composing a poem or a botanist is studying a flower. The place is usually somewhere in the brain, if it is the thought, in the heart if it is the feeling in which one is concentrated. The Yogic concentration is simply an extension and intensification of the same thing. It may be on an object as when one does tratak on a shining point—then one has to concentrate so that one sees only that point and has no other thought but that. It may be on an idea or a word or a name, the idea of the Divine, the word OM, the name Krishna, or a combination of idea and word or idea and name. But, farther, in Yoga one also concentrates in a particular place. There is the famous rule of concentrating between the eyebrows—the centre of the inner mind, of

occult vision, of the will is there. What you do is to think firmly from there on whatever you make the object of your concentration or else try to see the image of it from there. If you succeed in this, then after a time you feel that your whole consciousness is centred there in that place—of course for the time being. After doing it for some time and often, it becomes easy and normal.

I hope this is clear. Well, in this Yoga, you do the same, not necessarily at that particular spot between the eyebrows, but anywhere in the head or at the centre of the chest where the physiologists have fixed the cardiac centre. Instead of concentrating on an object, you concentrate in the head in a will, a call for the descent of the peace from above or, as some do, an opening of the unseen lid and an ascent of the consciousness above. ...

It may be asked what becomes of the rest of the consciousness when there is this local concentration? Well, it either falls silent as in any concentration or, if it does not, then thoughts or other things may move about, as if outside, but the concentrated part does not attend to them or notice. That is when the concentration is reasonably successful.

One has not to fatigue oneself at first by long concentration if one is not accustomed, for then in a jaded mind it loses its power or value. One can "relax" and meditate instead of concentrating. It is only as the

concentration becomes normal that one can go on for a longer and longer time." (CWSA 29: 308–309)

5.

"If the inner mind centre opens, then the peace etc. from above can enter easily into the mind and afterwards into the vital and both mind and vital will become quiet." (CWSA 30: 203)

6.

"Keep the quietude and do not mind if it is for a time an empty quietude; the consciousness is often like a vessel which has to be emptied of its mixed or undesirable contents; it has to be kept vacant for a while till it can be filled with things new and true, right and pure. The one thing to be avoided is the refilling of the cup with the old turbid contents. Meanwhile wait, open yourself upwards, call very quietly and steadily, not with a too restless eagerness, for the peace to come into the silence and, once the peace is there, for the joy and the presence." (CWSA 29: 145)

7.

"What the sadhaka has to do is to be careful to reject and hush these outsiders, so that during the meditation at least the peace and quietude of the mind and vital may be complete. This can be done best if you keep a strong and

silent will. That will is the will of the Purusha behind the mind; when the mind is at peace, when it is silent one can become aware of the Purusha, silent also, separate from the action of the nature." (CWSA 29: 160)

8.

"When you sit in meditation you must be as candid and simple as a child, not interfering by your external mind, expecting nothing, insisting on nothing. Once this condition is there, all the rest depends upon the aspiration deep within you. If you ask from within for peace, it will come; if for strength, for power, for knowledge, they too will come, but all in the measure of your capacity to receive it. And if you call upon the Divine, then too—always admitting that the Divine is open to your call, and that means your call is pure enough and strong enough to reach him,—you will have the answer." (CWM 3: 99)

9.

"But once concentrated here [the concentration in the head] one must open the silent mental consciousness upward to all that is above mind. After a time one feels the consciousness rising upward and in the end it rises beyond the lid which has so long kept it tied in the body and finds a centre above the head where it is liberated into the Infinite. There it begins to come into contact with the universal Self, the Divine Peace, Light, Power, Knowledge,

Bliss, to enter into that and become that, to feel the descent of these things into the nature." (CWSA 29: 7)

10.

"A disclosure from within or a descent from above are the two sovereign ways of the Yoga-siddhi. An effort of the external surface mind or emotions, a tapasya of some kind may seem to build up something of these things, but the results are usually uncertain and fragmentary compared to the result of the two radical ways. That is why in this Yoga we insist always on an 'opening'—an opening inwards of the inner mind, vital, physical to the inmost part of us, the psychic, and an opening upwards to what is above the mind—as indispensable for the fruits of the sadhana." (CWSA 30: 324)

11.

"The second opening [the opening of the mind centres to all that is behind and above them] is effected by a concentration of the consciousness in the head (afterwards, above it) and an aspiration and call and a sustained will for the descent of the divine Peace,..." (CWSA 30: 328)

12.

"The feeling you had in the afternoon of the cessation of thought and the sensation of something within you going

up above the head is part of the movement of the sadhana. There is a higher consciousness above you, not in the body, so above the head, which we call the higher, spiritual or divine consciousness, or the Mother's consciousness. When the being opens then all in you, the mind (head), emotional being (heart), vital, even something in the physical consciousness begin to ascend in order to join themselves to this greater higher consciousness. One has when one sits with eyes closed in meditation the sensation of going up which you describe. It is called the ascension of the lower consciousness. Afterwards things begin to descend from above, peace, joy, light, strength, knowledge etc. and a great change begins in the nature. This is what we call the descent of the higher (the Mother's) consciousness." (CWSA 30: 384–385)

IV—Why Peace Is the First Thing That Has to Be Brought Down from Above

1.

"In the old days long before you came plenty of things were brought down—including the love. Hardly one could bear it and even then only in a small measure. Is it any better now, I wonder? It does not look like it. That is why I want the supermind first,—and especially the peace, the balance in an intensity unshakable. There are several who have been trying to push on with the intensities, but—. Well, let us hope for the best. For God's sake, peace, balance, an unshakable supramental poise and sanity first. Ecstasies and intensities of other kinds can come afterwards." (CWSA 35: 274–275)

2.

"What you are doing is entirely the right thing and nothing more is needed. The peace you feel is the basis, the foundation for the transformation, all the rest will be built on it. To open to the Divine Forces with a quiet and strong aspiration, to become conscious of their working, to allow quietly that working and calmly to contain it, seconding it with one's aspiration, getting more and more knowledge and understanding of what is being done as one goes on—this is the sound and natural way of the Yoga." (CWSA 29: 123–124)

3.

"The first thing that you have to bring down is a positive, complete and enduring peace from above—that is the only foundation on which the rest can be done, i.e. the development of the higher consciousness, force, knowledge, love, Ananda." (CWSA 29: 123)

4.

"The meditation experience seems to be developing in the right direction. Before it was only an opening; but to get something settled, there must be this assimilation and the growth in stability, in peace. Peace is the basis of the spiritual change—all the rest falls into the peace and is sustained on it as on a sure foundation." (CWSA 29: 124)

5.

"Peace is the basis of the sadhana." (CWSA 29: 124)

6.

"... the only thing that is worth living for: attainment of the true consciousness, integral self-giving to the Divine, the peace, the light and the delight that come from the true wisdom and self-forgetfulness." (CWM 3: 218)

7.

"But besides that a new consciousness must be created in it—first a consciousness of pure and purifying Divine Peace

from above which must take hold of all down to the most physical—then in that peace an increasing inner strength pure and unegoistic—then the Divine Light and Knowledge transforming all the consciousness and movements. When this has been done, then the human form can contain the Divine Love and Ananda." (CWSA 29: 334)

8.

"And all this [Force, Light, Ananda] can descend into us. Any of them and all of them can come down, not peace alone; only the safest is to bring down first an absolute calm and peace for that makes the descent of the rest more secure; otherwise it may be difficult for the external nature to contain or bear so much Force, Light, Knowledge or Ananda. All these things together make what we call the higher, spiritual or divine consciousness. ... This upward opening puts us into direct relation with the whole Divine and can create in us the divine consciousness and a new birth or births of the spirit." (CWSA 30: 326–327)

9.

"Equanimity and peace in all conditions in all parts of the being is the first foundation of the Yogic status. Either Light (bringing with it knowledge) or Force (bringing strength and dynamism of many kinds) or Ananda (bringing love and joy of existence) can come next according to the trend

of the nature. But peace is the first condition without which nothing else can be stable." (CWSA 29: 123)

10.

"So, if one wants to be safe on the path, it seems to me that to seek for peace, for perfect calm, perfect equality, for a widening of the consciousness, a vaster understanding and liberation from all desire, all preference, all attachment, is certainly an indispensable preliminary condition.

It is the guarantee of both inner and outer equipoise." (CWM 8: 328)

11.

"Peace is necessary for all; without peace and an increasing purity, even if one opens, one cannot receive perfectly all that comes down through the opening. Light too is necessary for all—without light one cannot take full advantage of all that comes down." (CWSA 29: 123)

12.

"Quiet, quiet and more quiet, calm strength, calm gladness are what are needed in mind and nerves and body as a basis for the siddhi—precisely because the Force, the Light, the Ananda that come down are extremely intense and need a great stillness in the being to bear and support them." (CWSA 30: 450)

13.

"But also there is much above the human mind and it is this which you feel like a world above your head. All these are the ordinary experiences of our Yoga. It is only a beginning. But in order that it may go on developing, you must become more and more quiet, more and more able to hold whatever comes without getting too eager and excited. Peace and calmness are the first thing, and with it wideness—in the peace you can bear whatever love or Ananda comes, whatever strength comes or whatever knowledge." (CWSA 28: 100)

14.

"Calm, even if it seems at first only a negative thing, is so difficult to attain that to have it at all must be regarded as a great step in advance.

In reality, calm is not a negative thing; it is the very nature of the Sat-Purusha and the positive foundation of the divine consciousness. Whatever else is aspired for and gained, this must be kept. Even Knowledge, Power, Ananda, if they come and do not find this foundation, are unable to remain and have to withdraw until the divine purity and peace of the Sat-Purusha are permanently there." (CWSA 29: 146)

15.

"It is very good news. The peace settling in the system and with it a happy activity—that is the basis for your Yoga which I always wanted you to have—a sunny condition in which what has to come in will come in and expand like a bud into flower and what has to fall off will fall off in its time like a slough discarded." (CWSA 29: 148)

16.

"The first thing to do in the sadhana is to get a settled peace and silence in the mind. Otherwise you may have experiences, but nothing will be permanent. It is in the silent mind that the true consciousness can be built." (CWSA 29: 149-150)

17.

"Purification and calm are the first needs in the Yoga. One may have a great wealth of experiences of that kind (worlds, visions, voices etc.) without them, but these experiences occurring in an unpurified and troubled consciousness are usually full of disorder and mixture." (CWSA 30: 45)

18.

"One may get influences from above, but so long as the mind is not full of the higher calm, peace, silence, one cannot be in direct contact. These influences get

diminished, mentalised, vitalised and are not the powers of the higher planes in their native character." (CWSA 30: 428)

19.

"If the peace or silence is once absolutely established, no amount of movements on the surface can impair or abolish it. It can bear all the movements of the universe and yet be the same." (CWSA 29: 150)

20.

"When the peace is fully established everywhere in the being, these things [reactions in the lower vital] will not be able to shake it. They may come first as ripples on the surface, then only as suggestions which one looks at or does not care to look at, but in either case they don't get inside, affect or disturb at all.

It is difficult to explain, but it is something like a mountain at which one throws stones—if conscious all through the mountain may feel the touch of the stones, but the thing would be so slight and superficial that it would not be in the least affected. In the end even that reaction disappears." (CWSA 29: 150–151)

21.

"The calm, the detachment, a peaceful strength and joy (*atmarati*) must be brought down into the vital and physical

as well as into the mind. If this is established, one is no longer a prey to the turmoil of the vital forces. But this calm, peace, silent strength and joy is only the first descent of the Power of the Mother into the Adhar." (CWSA 28: 42)

22.

"The first result of the descent is the calm which he experiences; for it is only in a calm mind and vital (*manah-prana*) that the Divine Shakti can do her work rightly." (CWSA 30: 470)

23.

"The danger of the mental forces is that when the higher consciousness descends they tend (unless there is a deep silence) to become active in the consciousness for forming ideas of a mental type which can always be misapplied. First, there should be a basis of entire calm, peace and silence—if there is activity, it should be that of a knowledge coming down and the mind silent receiving it accurately. This you can easily have, provided the
mind is quiet." (CWSA 30: 490)

24.

"Whatever [Light, Ananda, Force, Bliss] comes has to be welcomed—for there is no absolute rule for all,—but if the peace has not come first, care must be taken not to swell oneself in exultation or lose the balance. The capital

movement however is when the Divine Force or Shakti, the power of the Mother comes down and takes hold, for then the organisation of the consciousness begins and the larger foundation of the Yoga." (CWSA 30: 328)

25.

"The more the calm, peace, joy and happiness descend and take possession, the stronger the foundation. It is the sign of the contact [with the Divine]." (CWSA 29: 361)

26.

"Peace and movement on the basis of peace are the first aspects of the One to establish themselves. Bliss and light do not fix so easily or so early—they have to grow." (CWSA 30: 450)

27.

The Peace, Purity and Calm of the Self must be fixed—otherwise the active Descent may find the forces it awakes seized on by lower Powers and a confusion created. That has happened with many." (CWSA 30: 450)

V—Sri Aurobindo's Experience of Vast Calm Descending Upon Him

1.

"Before he met Lele, Sri Aurobindo had some spiritual experiences, but that [was] before he knew anything about Yoga or even what Yoga was,—e.g. a vast calm which descended upon him at the moment when he stepped first on Indian soil after his long absence, in fact with his first step on the Apollo Bunder in Bombay; (this calm surrounded him and remained for long months afterwards,) the realisation of the vacant Infinite while walking on the ridge of the Takht-i-[Sulaiman]1 in Kashmir, the living presence of Kali in a shrine in Chandod on the banks of the Narmada, the vision of the Godhead surging up from within when in danger of a carriage accident in Baroda in the first year of his stay etc. But these were inner experiences coming of themselves and with a sudden unexpectedness, not part of a sadhana." (CWSA 36: 110)

2.

"By intensive sadhana I meant the endeavour to arrive at one of the great positive realisations which would be a firm base for the whole movement. I observe that he speaks of sometimes getting a glimpse of some wide calm when he feels the leading of Vyasa. A descent of this wide calm permanently into the consciousness is one of the

realisations of which I was thinking. That he feels it at such times seems to indicate that he may have the capacity of receiving and retaining it. If that happened or if the Prakriti-Purusha realisation came, the whole sadhana would proceed on a strong permanent base with a new and entirely Yogic consciousness instead of the purely mental endeavour which is always difficult and slow. I do not however want to press these things upon him; they come in their own time and to press towards them prematurely does not always hasten their coming. Let him continue with his primary task of self-purification and self-preparation; I shall always be ready to give him what silent help I can." (CWSA 29:236)

3.

"I have read and considered your letter and have decided to give you the opportunity you ask for—you can reside in the Asram for two or three months to begin with and find out whether this is really the place and the path you were seeking and we also can by a closer observation of your spiritual possibilities discern how best we can help you and whether this Yoga is the best for you.

This trial is necessary for many reasons, but especially because it is a difficult Yoga to follow and not many can really meet the demands it makes on the nature. You have written that you saw in me one who achieved through the perfection of the intellect, its spiritualisation

and divinisation; but in fact I arrived through the complete silence of the mind and whatever spiritualisation and divinisation it attained was through the descent of a higher supra-intellectual knowledge into that silence. The book, *Essays on the Gita*, itself was written in that silence of the mind, without intellectual effort and by a free activity of this knowledge from above. This is important because the principle of this Yoga is not perfection of the human nature as it is but a psychic and spiritual transformation of all the parts of the being through the action of an inner consciousness and then of a higher consciousness which works on them, throws out the old movements or changes them into the image of its own and so transmutes lower into higher nature. It is not so much the perfection of the intellect as a transcendence of it, a transformation of the mind, the substitution of a larger greater principle of knowledge—and so with all the rest of the being." (CWSA 35: 585–586)

VI—The Descent of Purity

1.

"The Divine presence, calm, peace, purity, force, light, joy, wideness are above, waiting to descend in you. Find this quietude behind and your mind also will become quieter and through the quiet mind you can call down the descent first of the purity and peace and then of the Divine Force. If you can feel this peace and purity descending into you, you can then call it down again and again till it begins to settle; you will feel too the Force working in you to change the movements and transform the consciousness. In this working you will be aware of the presence and power of the Mother. Once that is done, all the rest will be a question of time and of the progressive evolution in you of your true and divine nature." (CWSA 31: 741)

2.

"The higher consciousness in descending brings peace and purity into all the inner parts; the inner being separates itself from the imperfect outer consciousness and at the same time the peace that comes carries in it a power which can throw out what contradicts the peace and purity. Ego can then slowly or swiftly but surely disappear—rajas and tamas change into their divine substitutes." (CWSA 31: 237)

3.

"Afterwards or concurrently we have to spiritualise the being in its entirety by a descent of a divine Light, Force, Purity, Knowledge, freedom and wideness." (CWSA 23: 282)

4.

"... and also to bring down from above the peace, wideness, purity etc. of the higher Self which is that of the Mother's consciousness." (CWSA 29: 77)

5.

"Why should it [*a sense of purity in the being*] be an imagination? When the higher consciousness touches it creates so long as it is there an essential purity in which all parts of the being can share. Or, even if the exterior being does not share actively in it, it may fall quiescent so that there is nothing to interfere with the whole inner being realising the truth of a certain experience. The state does not last because it is only a preparatory touch, not the full or permanent descent; but while it is there it is real." (CWSA 30: 443)

6.

"The sense of peace, purity and calm felt by you is brought about by a union or strong contact of the lower with the higher consciousness; it cannot be permanent at first, but

it can become so by an increased frequency and durability of the calm and peace and finally by the full descent of the eternal peace and calm and silence of the higher consciousness into the lower nature." (CWSA 28: 66)

7.

"What usually comes is a descent of the Divine Power to work upon the nature and prepare it for the Divine Presence in the heart. There is much in human nature that has to be changed before it can hold what descends—incapacity and limitation of the mind, insufficient purity in the heart and elsewhere, restlessness etc. To contain the descent a quiet mind and pure heart are needed. That is why there is the restlessness and sense of incapacity in her. That is a quite common experience. If she wants to go farther, she must aspire for calm, peace, purity, etc. in the mental and emotional being and allow what is descending to establish it in her." (CWSA 30: 488)

8.

"Peace and purity of the consciousness are the very foundation of the necessary change in the nature." (CWSA 29: 123)

9.

"Light or rays of light are always light of the higher consciousness working in the being to illumine or to purify

or to awaken the consciousness or attune it to the Truth." (CWSA 30: 118)

10.

"Q: When I called down the Purity from above, the whole being was filled with Peace and Purity and I felt the Mother's Presence in the heart. An intense aspiration rose from the heart, from below, in fact, from all parts of the being. The heart was filled with adoration for the Mother; there was devotion and genuine surrender.

A: That is one of the most important things for the psychic opening and the inner relation to the Mother.

Q: I pray for Purity and Peace above all. With these I am sure of union with the Mother. Am I not correct?

A: Yes.

Q: I pray for your observations regarding this psychic experience. Was it not psychic?

A: Yes, certainly, it was a psychic opening and at the point emphasised, which is very important—the opening to the higher Purity." (CWSA 32: 470–471)

VII—The Descent of Power and Force

1.

"The Force descends for two things:

(1) To transform the nature.

(2) To carry on the work through the instrument.

At first one is not conscious of either working, afterwards one becomes conscious of the Force working but not of howit works. Finally one becomes conscious entirely and in detail." (CWSA 30: 441)

2.

"The experiences you have had are very clear evidence that you have the capacity for Yoga. The first decisive experiences in this Yoga are a calm and peace that is felt, first somewhere in the being and in the end in all the being, and the descent of a Power and Force into the body which will take up the whole adhar and work in it to transform mind, life and body into the instrumentation of the Divine Consciousness. The two experiences of which you wrote in your letter are the beginning of this calm and the descent of this Force. Much has to be done before they can be established or persistently effective, but that they should come at this stage is a clear proof of capacity to receive. It must be remembered however that the Yoga is not easy and cannot be done without the rising of many obstacles and much lapse of time—so if you take it up it must be with

a firm resolve to carry it through to the end with a whole-hearted sincerity, faith, patience and courage." (CWSA30: 455)

3.

"It is the Mother's force that descended to work in the system. There are two things that have to be established in order to make a foundation for the workings of the sadhana in the waking consciousness, 1st a descent of Peace from above, 2nd a descent of the Force. If one has these two things permanently established in the consciousness, then one has the basis." (CWSA30: 455)

4.

"By Force I mean not mental or vital energy but the Divine Force from above—as peace comes from above and wideness also, so does this Force (Shakti). Nothing, not even thinking or meditating can be done without some action of Force. The Force I speak of is a Force for illumination, transformation, purification, all that has to be done in the Yoga, for removal of the hostile forces and the wrong movements—it is also of course for external work, whether great or small in appearance does not matter—if that is part of the Divine Will. I do not mean any personal force egoistic or rajasic." (CWSA 30: 455–456)

5.

"Yes, it [the Force] is quite concrete. Usually at first it descends of itself from time to time—and also one calls it in face of a difficulty. But eventually it is always there supporting or determining all the action of the being." (CWSA 30: 456)

6.

"The Force comes down as soon as it finds an opening and acts in the Adhara whenever it is ready. What determines the descent cannot always be mentally fixed. Aspiration, call, will, prayer, etc. create a favourable precondition in the head or heart or anywhere else and are sometimes the determining cause." (CWSA 30: 456)

7.

"What you feel in the head is probably the first conscious descent into the body of the divine Force from above. Up to now it must have been working unfelt by you from behind the heart. If the concentration takes place naturally in the head you must allow it to do so, but the possibility of this has been prepared by the previous concentration in the heart, so that also need not be discontinued unless the force working in you insists on the upper concentration only. Aspiration can be continued in the same way until the conduct of the sadhana by the Mother's power is clearly felt and becomes to you the normal thing." (CWSA 30: 456)

8.

"The experience you had was simply the descent of the Divine Force into the body. By your attitude and aspiration you called for it to work in you, so it came. Such a descent brings naturally a deep inward condition and a silence of the mind, and it may bring much more—peace, a sense of liberation, happiness, Ananda. It is very often attended as in this experience by a light or luminosity. It was felt enveloping the upper part of the body down to the cardiac centre, because it is these centres, the head and heart centres that are first invaded and occupied by whatever descends from above, Consciousness, Force, Light or Ananda. Usually, there is at first a pressure from above on the head, then one feels something entering the higher part of the head and then the whole head is occupied, as you feel now with the *fourmillement* at the time of concentration. Once the head with its mental centres is open and occupied, the Force descends rapidly to the heart centre, unless there is some obstacle or a resistance in the higher vital parts. From there it sends its stream into the whole body and begins to occupy the vital and physical centres—from the navel to the Muladhara. The coming of this experience, occupation of the body by the Force from above, is a great step forward in the sadhana.

The fear of a syncope was due only to the sanskara in the mind; it must be dismissed. The Force can very well come down in the full waking consciousness; if it brings a

kind of samadhi, it is usually a conscious inner condition—the consciousness taken away from outward things, but in full power within. Even if a trance came, it would be a trance and not a swoon." (CWSA 30: 456–457)

9.

"The good condition of openness with the Force descending and the constant remembrance—or whatever other form the condition takes—is the beginning of the true consciousness and its duration is always short at the beginning, because the ordinary consciousness is not accustomed to it, but to something else. But it always increases in duration and power until it is able to maintain itself even when the outer consciousness is occupied with other things. At first it remains there as something behind which emerges as soon as the outer preoccupation ends; afterwards it remains behind, but as something just felt, and in a later stage it is always there, so that there are two consciousnesses, the inner consciousness always connected with the Mother and full of her working or her presence or both and the surface consciousness occupied with outer things. Finally, even the surface consciousness begins to feel the direct connection in action itself. One need not mind if there are intervals when the true condition is not there. It does not prove that you are unfit; it is only a period in which what is not yet changed comes up to be worked upon and prepared for change. When the inner

consciousness is well established, then these periods take place only in the surface consciousness and are no longer troublesome as before." (CWSA 30: 457–458)

P. S. Probably the difficulty you feel is in the externalising mind the centre of which is in the throat. When there is no resistance there, the Force comes down to the heart level and below.

10.

"As for the dynamic descent, you say that the Force has descended to your forehead (inner mind) centre. It seems to be very slow in coming through. It has to come down to the heart centre and below before it can begin to be fully effective. Probably there must be something either in the physical mental (throat) or the emotional vital that obstructs the descent. That may be the reason of the union of the upper Agni and the psychic fire and the push on the psychic centre—something is trying to remove the difficulty." (CWSA 30: 457–458)

VIII—The Descent of Light

1.

"The descent of the Light producing a concrete illumination of the consciousness is always one of the decisive experiences of the sadhana." (CWSA 30: 460)

2.

"You can tell her that Light like peace is one of the things that come down from the higher consciousness. It is the light of the Truth that is there—it is sometimes golden, sometimes white, sometimes blue of various shades, sometimes sunlight." (CWSA 30: 460)

3.

"It is a true experience and the Light that you felt is the Light of the Truth from above. These things indicate that there is already an opening, but it takes time to become constant and complete. That always happens at first—there are periods in which the consciousness or something in it opens, there are others in which the opening is clouded until something more opens. This goes on until the whole consciousness has been sufficiently worked upon for the full opening and lasting experience to be there." (CWSA 30: 460)

4.

"These are special forces of the Light and there is a play of them according to need, but the Light in itself can be lived

in as much as one can live in Peace or Ananda.(1) As Peace and Ananda can pour through the whole system and fully stabilise themselves so that they are in the body and the body and the whole being are in them—one might almost say, are that, are the Peace and Ananda—so it can be with Light. It can pour into the body, make every cell luminous, fix itself and surround on all sides in one constant mass of Light." (CWSA 30: 460)

1 The correspondent asked how one can 'live in' the different forces of the Light such as the white light of the Mother, the pale blue light of Sri Aurobindo, the golden light of the Truth and the pink light of the psychic.—Ed

5.

"Several times when my mind has become blank I have experienced light descending from higher planes—probably supramental.

But he has the root experience already in the descent of the Light in the state of blankness. The Light is the Divine Light from the plane of spiritual consciousness above. The supramental comes only at the end of a long sadhana." (CWSA 35: 521)

6.

"One may have some light of realisation at the spiritual summit of the consciousness but the parts below remain

what they were. I have seen any number of instances of that. There must be a descent of the light not merely into the mind or part of it but into all the being down to the physical and below before a real transformation can take place. A light in the mind may spiritualise or otherwise change the mind or part of it in one way or another, but it need not change the vital nature, a light in the vital may purify and enlarge the vital movements or else silence and immobilise the vital being, but leave the body and the physical consciousness as it was, or even leave it inert or shake its balance. And the descent of Light is not enough, it must be the descent of the whole higher consciousness, its Peace, Power, Knowledge, Love, Ananda. Moreover, the descent may be enough to liberate, but not to perfect, or enough to make a great change in the inner being, while the outer remains an imperfect instrument, clumsy, sick or unexpressive. Finally, the transformation effected by the sadhana cannot be complete unless it is a supramentalisation of the being. Psychisation is not enough, it is only a beginning; spiritualisation and the descent of the higher consciousness is not enough, it is only a middle term; the ultimate achievement needs the action of the supramental Consciousness and Force. Something less than that may very well be considered enough by the individual, but it is not enough for the earth-consciousness to take the definitive stride forward it must

take at one time or another." (CWSA 29: 398–399) (CWSA 35: 153–154)

7.

"As the knowledge becomes more complete and the psychic being opens upwards one feels all the activities descending from above and can get at their true source and transform them.

The light playing in his head means that there has been an opening to the higher force and knowledge which is descending as light from above and working on the mind to illumine it. The electrical current is the force descending in order to work in the lower centres and prepare them for the light. The right condition will come when instead of the vital forces trying to push upward the Prana becomes calm and surrendered and waiting with full assent for the light and when instead of the chasm in between there is a constant aspiration of the heart towards the truth above. The light must descend into these lower centres so as to transform the emotional and vital and physical being as well as the mental thought and will." (CWSA 36: 336)

8.

"It is only by constantly aspiring to the Mother's light and force that you can make true and steady progress. It is only by the constant repetition and persistence of the Mother's light and force that the habit of disturbance and

lack of organisation can diminish and finally disappear. Only so can the lower being be prepared and the decisive descent of the Truth and Light be finally made possible." (CWSA 32: 135)

9.

"The descent of Light etc. is always impermanent at first. First the Peace and Force and Light have to be settled in the mind, then in the vital (heart, navel and below) and the physical. The desires etc. will then have been pushed out into a kind of environmental consciousness from which they try to return and must be driven out from there also. This will create a firm basis for the rest of the sadhana." (CWSA 30: 484)

10.

"It is in calm that the Light can descend." (CWM 17: 131)

11.

"There is no imagination in the seeing of these lights—it is when the inner vision is open or active that one sees them—for they themselves are subtle and not physical lights." (CWSA 30: 117)

12.

"The light above the head is never an imagination in Yoga; if it is felt, it is because it is there. If it is the moon, it means

the light of the spiritual consciousness in the mind." (CWSA 30: 145)

13.

"It depends upon the colour of the Light. In any case it is the light of a Force from above. All lights are indications of a Force or Power. It is the work of the Lights and the Forces they represent to act in their descent on the lower nature and change it." (CWSA 30: 461)

IX—The Mother's Light

1.

"The white light is the Mother's light and it is always around her." (CWSA 32: 264)

2.

"*Q: Last night I got contact with the Light and prayed for its descent. But it got lost as soon as my mind began to get into a white peaceful Mother's consciousness.*

A: That was quite right. The contact with the Light must create peace.

Q: I felt myself in a mind all white, but each time I tried it was impossible to get a rapid downward pull of the Light. After that I got into feelings and nice sensations in the body, but they took me down to a low state.

A:

(1) The Mother's consciousness (white) is not only peace, but Light and Power.

(2) When one gets into contact with the Light above the mind, the first result should be peace in the mind.

(3) Whatever Power of the Light descends should descend into the peace of the mind without disturbing it.

(4) If you pull down the Light into an active mind, then the action of the Light may get deformed and may be used by the mind in a wrong way, with confusion and disturbance or for purposes and movements that are those of an inferior consciousness and not those of the Truth.

(5) There cannot be any real incompatibility between the Mother's consciousness and contact with the Light above." (CWSA 32: 263–264)

3.

"The pale blue light is my light—white light is the Mother's (sometimes gold also). People generally see either the white or both the white and the pale blue around her." (CWSA 32: 265)

4.

"*Q: When the Mother comes on the terrace in the evening, I often see white light around her; it is clearly visible around her body and sometimes the top of the whole building seems to emit light. One day I thought that there may be a background of light behind all material things which can be seen physically. Is it true? Is there any systematic process to open oneself to that physical vision?*

A: The white Light around the Mother is the Mother's own light—that of the Divine Consciousness. Many nowadays are able to see it around her when she is on the roof. One

can also see all objects in this light—it means that the light has descended here and is floating around everything." (CWSA 32: 265)

5.

"*Last night after eight o'clock after returning from work, I sat for meditation. My mind and vital became quiet and opened to the Mother. My heart became vast and opened to her. Then in this quietness something very soothing descended from my chest down to my navel and below it. Then, below the navel, I saw a bright white light penetrating and it filled the whole area with light; then it rose up above the navel till even the head was filled with light. I am unable to express the peace and quietness I felt at that time. The peace was very pure. Now whenever I sit for meditation, I see a very white light coming around me.*

The white Light is the Mother's light. Wherever it descends or enters, it brings peace, purity, silence and the openness to the higher forces. If it comes below the navel, that means that it is working in the lower vital." (CWSA 32: 265)

6.

(a) It [*the diamond light*] means the essential Force of the Mother.

(b) The diamond light proceeds from the heart of the Divine Consciousness and it brings the opening of the Divine Consciousness wherever it goes.

(c) The Mother's descent with the diamond light is the sanction of the Supreme Power to the movement in you.

(d) The Mother's diamond light is a light of absolute purity and power.

(e) The diamond light is the central consciousness and force of the Divine." (CWSA 32: 266–267)

7.

"*Q: Today while going to the Mother, I felt concentrated in the mind, with a will to get contact with the Mother. Then I found that my mind was opening to the Light. I saw flashes of golden light two or three times. In the morning I remained peaceful and quiet and later I saw the Light many times.*

A: It was the contact with the Mother that originally brought the opening to the Light, the descent of the golden light, the wideness and the knowledge. The two things naturally go together or follow one on the other; it is a mistake to think that there is any incompatibility or opposition between them." (CWSA 32: 456–457)

X—Explanation of Visions of Light Descending

1.

"About your vision. It came as an answer to your call for the removal of ugly things in your own nature and you were shown how it would be effectively done.

First a vivid realisation was given of what the lower nature is, its terrible darkness and ugliness in which men contentedly live. But having realised its true nature a cry came from your lower nature itself for the change.

You were then shown the light of the higher nature by whose descent the change could come—the white light of the Mother's consciousness and a flame of it descended into you by the usual path and filled you with the light. From there it descended into the subconscient and brought the light there. As a result the consciousness (it was the inner consciousness) became like a crystal pillar connecting the heights with the depths, the superconscient with the subconscient. In it the image of the Mother filled with the light in her." (CWSA 30: 121)

2.

"The golden and blue lights are both of them lights of Krishna. It was intimated to you by your seeing them once that they are there within you waiting to manifest. But it is by a psychic and spiritual, not a physical pressure that it must be done. If the mind can become silent and not

interfere and if the nature can become more pure and both open to what is above the mind, these lights descend into the body and with them the divine influence." (CWSA 30: 118)

3.

"Golden Light is the light of the divine Truth descending from above." (CWSA 30: 129)

4.

"The Light of the Sun descending into the heart (the Sun of the Knowledge) turns upon the physical and purifies it. (CWSA 30: 129)

5.

"The deep red is the light of the Power that descended before the 24th [*November 1933*] for the transformation of the physical." (CWSA 30: 133)

6.

"The vision of the moon and the rain of flowers means always the falling of the light of spirituality on the consciousness (the moon) and the descent of a psychic influence (flowers). These things are symbols to the mind, but in the inner experience they have a reality and can produce a tangible effect." (CWSA 30: 138)

7.

"The flower-rain is the descent of something from the supramental or else from the higher realms of consciousness—the lake is a formation of it in the consciousness, the steamer symbolises a new movement of the Yoga which Sri Aurobindo is bringing down. The Mother's descent with the diamond light is the sanction of the Supreme Power to the movement, the Peacock being the Bird of Victory." (CWSA 31: 477)

8.

"7 is the figure of realisation. 3 x 3 means the descent from above and the answer from below." (CWSA 30: 188)

9.

"Less generally the cobras are the forces of the evolution, the evolution towards the Divine. Their taking the place of the legs means that their action here takes place in the physical or external consciousness, in the evolution of the external mind, vital, physical towards the experience of the Divine and of the Divine Nature. The bite of the cobras (Shiva's cobras!) does not kill, or it only kills the 'old Adam' in the being; their bite brings the ecstasy of the presence of the Divine—that which you felt coming upon your head as trance waves. It is this trance ecstasy that has descended upon you each time you went inside or were even on the point of going inside in meditation. It is the

universal experience of sadhaks that a force or consciousness or Ananda like this first comes from above—or around—and presses on or surrounds the head, then it pierces the skull as it were and fills first the brain and forehead, then the whole head and descends occupying each centre till the whole system is full and replete. (Of course there are or can be preliminary rushes occupying the whole body for a time or some other part of the system most open and least resistant to the influence." (CWSA 30: 141)

10.

"The star is always a promise of the Light to come; the star changes into a sun when there is the descent of the Light. It is not possible to fix the actual value of these signs for the future; they indicate a turn or a possibility, but everything depends on herself and the future orientation she gives to her being." (CWSA 30: 146)

11.

"The rain is the symbol of the descent of Grace or of the higher consciousness which is the cause of the riches— the spiritual plenty. " (CWSA 30: 149)

12.

"… the rain [*in the dream*] is a symbol of a descent from some other consciousness, …" (CWSA 31: 483)

13.

"Normally, the ocean of higher consciousness is above the head (mind) and all below is that of the lower consciousness. Your seeing of the two oceans rather means that in the descent the influence of the higher consciousness reaches down to the heart (emotional being with the psychic behind it), but does not yet reach below in the lower vital and physical—but it is dissolving the knot in the heart centre which prevents the descent into the lower vital and physical centres. The joy in the *śānta svarūpa* is indeed a sign of the release of the heart centre. But the phrase in the Upanishads refers more particularly to the breaking of the knots of desire, attachment, sanskara, ego in the heart, which stand in the way of spiritual liberation and ascension—not to the knot which prevents the descent." (CWSA 30: 150–151)

14.

"The boy with the flute is Sri Krishna, the Lord descended into the world-play from the divine Ananda; his flute is the music of the call which seeks to transform the lower ignorant play of mortal life and bring into it and establish in its place the lila of his divine Ananda. It was the psychic being in you that heard the call and followed after it." (CWSA 30: 156)

15.

"The flute is the call of the Divine which descends into you from above and awakes the psychic yearning (the tears) and ends by bringing a vast peace and shows to you the clear sky of the higher consciousness in which there are the Truth-formations (golden stars) some of which begin to descend in a rain upon the physical consciousness (the earth)." (CWSA 30: 184)

16.

"It is quite clear; it is the Vedic image. In the Veda the Cow is the Divine Light—the white Cow is the pure Consciousness in which there is the Light. The milk is the Knowledge and Power descending from the divine Consciousness." (CWSA 30: 165)

17.

"The vision of the cows must have taken place in the psychic world. It has also a symbolic significance. The sun is the symbol of the Divine Truth, the cows are its powers, rays of the sun, sources of true knowledge, true feeling, true experience.

The descent you felt must have been into some depth of light, probably in the psychic nature." (CWSA 30: 165)

18.

"It is in answer to your aspiration that the Mahakali force descended—the Serpent is the Energy from above working in the vital answering to the Serpent Kundalini which rises from below." (CWSA 30: 171)

19.

"This [*vision*] is the symbol of the opening of the centres to the Light.

The swan is the Indian symbol of the individual soul, the central being, the divine part which is turned towards the Divine, descending from there and ascending to it." (CWSA 30: 172)

20.

"The serpent is a symbol of force, very often a hostile or evil force of the vital plane. The sea is a symbol of a plane of consciousness. The white light is a manifestation of pure divine force descending from one of the truth-planes leading to the supramental.

The indication is that of a hostile vital force being expelled and the purifying light from above descending to illumine and deliver the part of the plane formerly occupied by it." (CWSA 30: 173)

21.

"In the evening meditation I saw a white cock in the physical and heard it crowing. I felt it as an indication of

the dawn of the Supramental Descent. Was this a right feeling? What does the symbol indicate?

That is of course a symbol of triumph. It is true that a Force came down full of an intense white light which the Mother had never known to come down before and it seemed to have a supramental authority. Your feeling therefore was probably right." (CWSA 35: 361)

22.

"*Q: Today while meditating in the Pranam hall I saw: The sky is filled with blue light. From the sky a long path is coming down on earth. The path is beautifully paved. On this path the Mother is slowly and joyfully coming towards the earth. Her whole body is white and full of golden light and this light Mother is spreading out on all sides. When the Mother has come to the end of the path, her body will get mixed with the soil of the earth. Then I suddenly woke up from meditation. Was this a vision? What plane was it from?*

A: Yes, it is a vision from the plane of mind (not ordinary, but higher mind). It indicates the descent of the Mother with her light of purity and Truth (white and golden) into Matter." (CWSA 32: 273–274)

23.

"Today I was meditating in the Pranam Hall. As soon as the Mother took her seat, I saw in vision a range of mountains from which white light was coming out. What is the meaning? From what plane does it come?

Mental. The mountain is the symbol of the ascent from the lower to the higher. The white light is the Mother's light, the light of the Divine Consciousness descending from the heights." (CWSA 32: 531–532)

24.

"Q: Today I saw with open eyes diamond white light descending on the sides of the Mother's ears; while doing pranam I felt a strange kind of touch and with it something entered inside me. When I returned home, I was still absorbed in pure bliss. What was it that descended into me?

A: There is always a touch coming from the Mother at pranam, one has to be conscious and open only to receive it." (CWSA 32: 554)

25.

"What you saw was indeed a sun,—the sun of blue light which is the light of a higher mind than the ordinary human mind. The sun is the symbol of Light and Truth. This higher

spiritual Mind is trying to wake in you, but at the beginning there is always a difficulty because the consciousness is not habituated to receive, so there is the sense of pressure deepening sometimes into a feeling of headache or this feeling of the head preparing to split. It is nothing but a sensation in the physical created by the inner mind (this part of the head is the seat of the inner mind) trying to open under the touch from above." (CWSA 30: 482)

26.

"*Q: Yesterday when the Mother was playing her music, I was much struck by the descent of forces in me. I clearly experienced these three elements: aspiration, surrender and the receiving of blessings. First, her soul as the immanent Divine aspired to the transcendent Divine; it was a call for her transcendent Self to come down and take possession of the downtrodden natures of her children. Then the surrender: in her zeal for union with her highest Divine Self, she almost loses herself. Then from the highest, her Voice comes down for the benefit of her children. She receives the blessings from above and showers them upon all her children. I do not know how far I am right.*

A: I think it is fairly correct. At any rate the first and second parts are quite correct. I do not remember the third in this form but it was a firm assurance of the realisation." (CWSA 32: 572)

XI—The Descent of Ananda

1.

"It is quite possible that if a too intense Ananda is allowed before the purity and peace are in the nature, it may disturb the system—though I don't know whether there is any instance of madness as a consequence. At any rate it is a fact that normally Ananda comes (in the natural course, I mean, if not pulled down) only occasionally so long as the peace and purity are not there as a base. It is probably right that it should be so." (CWSA 30: 461)

2.

"I presume it is the development of the Truth Power and the Ananda Power in the overmind consciousness that is being pursued. The transcendent Ananda in itself could descend only after the complete Supramentalisation of the being and would mean a stupendous change in the earth consciousness. It is the divine Truth in the overmind and the divine Ananda in the overmind that can now prepare their manifestation and it is that which is being indicated in these experiences." (CWSA 28: 300)

3.

"You are dealing in the right way with the sex feeling. As to why it rose when you were using the name there are two reasons. One is that when you use the name, it is the

Mother's power that you call there and the first result often is that the difficulty rises like a snake whose head is touched to resist the pressure or—if you look at it from another point of view—it rises to be dealt with. The other is that when what is to be brought down is the Ananda—of the force, light etc., but especially of the love—then the vital-physical passion rises up to try and mix with and get hold of the Ananda hoping to turn it to a sort of sublimated vital pleasure. It is well known that this happens to Vaishnavas very often when they do the Sankirtan. In your case it is probably the first reason, because the love-Ananda or any other is not yet coming, so that explanation is improbable." (CWSA 30: 462)

4.

"As for Ananda, I have already explained that I mean by Ananda something greater than peace or joy, something that, like Truth and Light, is the very nature of the supramental Divine. It can come by frequent inrushes or descents, partially or for a time even now, but it cannot remain in the system so long as the system has not been prepared for it. Meanwhile, peace and joy can be there permanently, but the condition of this permanence is that one should have the constant contact or indwelling of the Divine, and this comes naturally not to the outer mind or vital but to the inner soul or psychic being. Therefore one who wants his Yoga to be a path of peace or joy, must be

prepared to dwell in his soul rather than in his outer mental and emotional nature." (CWSA 31: 167–168)

5.

"I did not say it [*a descent of Ananda*] was vital and mental, but that it was Ananda manifesting itself in the mental and vital—a quite different thing—for the one Ananda (the true thing) can manifest in any part of the being." (CWSA 30: 462)

6.

"It [*a flow of sweet liquid in the mouth*] is a form of the flow of Ananda from above—when it takes a quite physical form the Yogins call it Amrita." (CWSA 30: 462)

7.

"The embodied soul's entry into this highest absolute, unlimited, unconditional bliss of the spirit is the infinite liberation and the infinite perfection. It is true that something of this bliss can be enjoyed by reflection, by a qualified descent even on the lower planes where the Purusha plays with his modified and qualified Nature. There can be the experience of a spiritual and boundless Ananda on the plane of matter, on the plane of life, on the plane of mind as well as on the gnostic truth-plane of knowledge and above it. And the Yogin who enters into these lesser realisations, may find them so complete and

compelling that he will imagine there is nothing greater, nothing beyond it. For each of the divine principles contains in itself the whole potentiality of all the other six notes of our being; each plane of Nature can have its own perfection of these notes under its own conditions. But the integral perfection can come only by a mounting ascent of the lowest into the highest and an incessant [non-stop] descent of the highest into the lowest till all becomes one at once solid block and plastic sea-stuff of the Truth infinite and eternal." (CWSA 23: 499)

XII—The Descent of Knowledge

1.

"The knowledge comes from above like the light and peace and everything else. As the consciousness progresses, it comes from a higher and higher level. First it is the higher or illumined mind that predominates, then the intuition, next the overmind, lastly the supermind; but the whole consciousness has to be sufficiently transformed before the supramental knowledge can begin to come." (CWSA 30: 461)

2.

A light descends and touches or envelops or penetrates the lower being, the mind, the life or the body; or a presence or a power or a stream of knowledge pours in waves or currents, or there is a flood of bliss or a sudden ecstasy; the contact with the superconscient has been established. For such experiences repeat themselves till they become normal, familiar and well understood, revelatory of their contents and their significance which may have at first been involved and wrapped into secrecy
by the figure of the covering experience. For a knowledge from above begins to descend, frequently, constantly, then uninterruptedly, and to manifest in the mind's quietude or silence; intuitions and inspirations, revelations born of a greater sight, a higher truth and wisdom, enter into the

being, a luminous intuitive discrimination works which dispels all darkness of understanding or dazzling confusions, puts all in order; a new consciousness begins to form, the mind of a high wide self-existent thinking knowledge or an illumined or an intuitive or an overmental consciousness with new forces of thought or sight and a greater power of direct spiritual realisation which is more than thought or sight, a greater becoming in the spiritual substance of our present being; the heart and the sense become subtle, intense, large to embrace all existence, to see God, to feel and hear and touch the Eternal, to make a deeper and closer unity of self and the world in a transcendent realisation. Other decisive experiences, other changes of consciousness determine themselves which are corollaries and consequences of this fundamental change. No limit can be fixed to this revolution; for it is in its nature an invasion by the Infinite. (CWSA 22: 946–947)

XIII—Descent of Knowledge by Revelation

1.

"78–When knowledge is fresh in us, then it is invincible; when it is old, it loses its virtue. This is because God moves always forward.

Sri Aurobindo is speaking here of knowledge by inspiration or revelation, when something suddenly descends and illumines the understanding. You suddenly have the impression that you know something for the first time, because it comes directly from the domain of Light, of true Knowledge, and it comes with all its innate power of truth—it illumines you. And when you have just received it, it seems indeed that nothing can resist that Light. And if you take care to allow it to act within you, it accomplishes all the transformation it can achieve in its own domain.

This is an experience one may often have. When it comes, for some time—not very long—everything seems to organise itself quite naturally around that Light. And then, little by little, it mingles with the rest; the intellectual knowledge remains—it is formulated in one way or another—it remains, but it is just as if it were empty. It no longer has that driving power which transforms all the movements of the being into the image of this Light. That is what Sri Aurobindo means: the world moves quickly, the Lord is always moving onward and all this is the trail He

leaves behind Him, but it no longer has the same immediate and almighty power as when He projected it into the world.

It feels like a rain of truth falling; everyone who can catch even a drop of it receives a revelation. But unless they themselves are moving forward at a fantastic speed, the Lord with His rain of truth is already very far ahead and they must run very fast to catch up with it! This is what he means.

Yes, but for this knowledge to have a real power of transformation...

Yes, it is the higher Knowledge, the Truth expressing itself, what Sri Aurobindo calls the true Knowledge, and it is this Knowledge that transforms all creation. But it is as if He were pouring it down all the time and you have to make great haste so as not to be too late!

But haven't you ever had the feeling of a dazzling light in your head? And then it is translated by, 'Oh, but of course!' Sometimes it is something you knew intellectually, but it was dull, lifeless, and it suddenly comes like a tremendous power that arranges everything within the consciousness around that Light. It does not last very long. Sometimes it lasts only a few hours, sometimes a few days, but never more than that, unless you are very slow in your

movement. And in the meanwhile the source of the truth is moving, moving, moving....” (CWM 10: 141–142)

XIV—The Descent of Wideness

1.

"Like everything else, peace, Light, Power, so wideness descends." (CWSA 30: 461)

2.

"Ananda comes afterwards—even if it comes at the beginning it is not usually constant. Wideness does not come because the consciousness is not yet free from the body. Probably when what is felt above the head comes down, it will be liberated into the wideness." (CWSA 30: 461)

XV—The Descent of Equanimity

1.

"What you are experiencing is the true foundation of the spiritual life and realisation. It has three elements—first, the love which is the heart of Bhakti; then the descent of peace and equanimity which is the first necessary basis for realisation of self and the higher knowledge—what comes with it is the descent of the force which will work out in you the whole sadhana; thirdly, the feeling of a guiding presence or power which is the basis of Karma—of work and action founded in the spiritual consciousness." (CWSA 30: 320)

2.

"The other [method of progress] is the descent of a full calm and strength and equanimity into these parts so that you may conquer life and its difficulties and do your work for the Divine. This calm and strength had often descended into your mind and higher vital, but these other parts were still open to much weakness and attachment and a self-indulgent movement. That must go if one wants to become a hero and master of spiritual action. ... Outer difficulties or inconveniences you should not allow to alarm or depress you. Inner difficulties should also be met with detachment, calm equality, the unshakable will to conquer.

For the rest, you have rightly said, 'I must preserve my equanimity and have faith in Divine Guidance when falsehood'—or any trouble or difficulty—'confronts me.' ... The path of spiritual calm and strength and the consecration of all your forces to the Divine is the one safe way for you and that you must now consistently follow." (CWSA 31: 264)

XVI—The Descent of the Silence

1.

"I have said that the most decisive way for the Peace or the Silence to come is by a descent from above. In fact, in reality though not always in appearance, that is how they always come;—not in appearance always, because the sadhak is not always conscious of the process; he feels the peace settling in him or at least manifesting, but he has not been conscious how and whence it came." (CWSA 30: 323–324)

2.

"It is not easy to get into the silence. That is only possible by throwing out the mental and vital activities. It is easier to let the silence get into you, i.e., to open yourself and let it descend. The way to do this and the way to call down the higher powers is the same. It is to remain quiet at the time of meditation, not fighting with the mind or making mental efforts to pull down the power of the Silence but keeping only a silent will and aspiration for them. If the mind is active, one has only to learn to look at it, drawn back and not giving any sanction from within, until its habitual or mechanical activities begin to fall quiet for want of support from within. If it is too persistent, a steady rejection without strain or struggle is the one thing to be done." (CWSA 36: 300)

3.

"The silence descends into the inner being first—as also other things from the higher consciousness." (CWSA 30: 213)

4.

"In any case, if he wants to go into the inner consciousness and move in the inner planes — which will inevitably happen if he shuts off the waking consciousness in his meditation — he must cast away fear. Probably he expected to get the silence or the touch of the divine consciousness by following out the suggestion of the Gita. But the silence or the touch of the divine consciousness can be equally and for some more easily got in the waking meditation through the Mother's presence and the descent from above. The inward movement, however, is probably unavoidable and he should try to understand and, not shrinking or afraid, to go to it with the same confidence and faith in the Mother as he has in the waking meditation. His dreams are of course experiences on the inner (vital) plane." (CWSA 30: 221)

5.

"The first step is a quiet mind—silence is a farther step, but quietude must be there, and by a quiet mind I mean a mental consciousness within which sees thoughts arrive to it and move about, but does not itself feel that it is thinking

or identify itself with the thoughts or call them its own. Thoughts, mental movements may pass through it as wayfarers appear and pass from elsewhere through a silent country—the quiet mind observes them or does not care to observe them but in either case does not become active or lose its quietude. Silence is more than quietude; it can be gained by banishing thought altogether from the inner mind keeping it voiceless or quite outside; but more easily it is established by a descent from above—one feels it coming down, entering and occupying, or surrounding the personal consciousness which then tends to merge itself in the vast impersonal silence." (CWSA 29: 141–142)

6.

"The descent of the Silence is not usually associated with sadness, though it does bring a feeling of calm detachment, unconcern and wide emptiness, but in this emptiness there is a sense of ease, freedom, peace." (CWSA 30: 464) (CWSA 35: 357)

7.

"You must dismiss the fear of the concentration. The emptiness you feel coming on you is the silence of the great peace in which you become aware of your self, not as the small ego shut up in the body, but as the spiritual self wide as the universe. Consciousness is not dissolved; it is the limits of the consciousness that are dissolved. In

that silence thoughts may cease for a time, there may be nothing but a great limitless freedom and wideness, but into that silence, that empty wideness descends the vast peace from above, light, bliss, knowledge, the higher Consciousness in which you feel the oneness of the Divine. It is the beginning of the transformation and there is nothing in it to fear." (CWSA 30: 276)

8.

"The recurrence of the experience of the receding away of thoughts, the cessation of the thought-generating mechanism and its replacement by the mental self-space, is normal and as it should be; for this silence or at any rate the capacity for it has to grow until one can have it at will or even established in an automatic permanence. For this silence of the ordinary mind mechanism is necessary in order that the higher mentality may manifest, descend, occupy by degrees the place of the present imperfect mentality and transform the activities of the latter into its own fuller movements. The difficulty of its coming when you are at work is only at the beginning—afterwards when it is more settled one finds that one can carry on all the activities of life either in the pervading silence itself or at least with that as the support and background." (CWSA 30: 259)

9.

"What is trying to come down in you is the silence and peace of the Self—when that comes fully, then there is no ego-perception, it is drowned in the wideness of the silence and peace of the Self. But this realisation is at first in the static condition of the Self only—in the dynamic movements the ego may still be there owing to past habits—but each time an ego-movement is abandoned, the sense of the loss of ego becomes deeper and more complete. It is perhaps some impression of what is trying to come that has touched you." (CWSA 30: 453)

10.

"It must have been the descent of the higher silence, the silence of the Self or Atman. In this silence one perceives, but the mind is not active,—things are sensed, but without any responsive connection or vibration. The silent Self is there as a separate reality, not bound or involved in the activity of Nature, aloof, detached and self-existent. Even if thoughts come across this silence, they do not disturb it; the Self is separate from the thinking mind also. In this connection the feeling 'I think' is a survival from the old consciousness; in the full silence what one feels is 'thought occurs in me'—the identification with thoughts as well as with the perception of objects ceases." (CWSA 30: 453–454)

11.

"To still the mind *absolutely* is not so easy. It can be done usually only by the descent of the Silence from above and even then it is not complete until the whole system has been occupied by the higher silence and peace." (CWSA 30: 454)

12.

"It is the silence and calm of the higher consciousness pressing down into the body. When it comes down fully then there is the 'still statue' feeling at first. Afterwards the calm or silence becomes free and normal." (CWSA 30: 454)

13.

"Who told you that whenever there was silence or genuine silence knowledge would come down? The silence is a fit vessel for anything from above, but it does not follow that when there is silence, everything is bound to come down automatically." (CWSA 30: 454)

14.

"In what may be called the first silence, it is like that—silence alone with no emotion or other inner activity. When it deepens one can feel the Nirvana of the Buddhists or the Atmabodha of the Vedantins. Both force and bliss or either can descend into the silence, filling it with calm Tapas or silent Ananda." (CWSA 30: 454)

15.

"Silence is... more easily established by a descent from above." "From above" means what, Sweet Mother?

From the higher regions of consciousness. You see, if you open to the higher regions of consciousness and the force descends from above, quite naturally it establishes a silence in the lower regions, for they are governed by this higher power which descends. This comes from higher regions of the mind or from beyond, even from the supermind. So when this force and consciousness come down and enter into the consciousness of a lower plane, this consciousness becomes naturally quiet, for it is as though invaded, flooded by that higher light which transforms it.

In fact, this is even the only way of establishing a constant silence in one's mind. It is to open oneself to higher regions and let this higher consciousness, force, light descend constantly into the lower mind and take possession of it. And here, when this happens, this lower mind can remain constantly quiet and silent, because it is this one which acts and fills the whole being. One can act, write and speak without the mind being active, with this force which comes from above penetrating the mind and using it; and the mind itself becomes just a passive instrument. And in fact, this is the only way of establishing silence; for once this is established, the silence is

established, the mind does not stir any longer, it acts only under the impulsion of this force when it manifests in it. It is like a very quiet, very silent field and the force when it comes puts the elements into movement and uses them, and it finds expression through the mind without the mind's being agitated. It remains very quiet." (CWM 6: 328–329)

16.

"But this is not the only line of issue; it is possible, on the contrary, for me to wait till through the silence of this timeless unfilled liberation I begin to enter into relations with that yet ungrasped Source of myself and my actions; then the void begins to fill, there emerges out of it or there rushes into it all the manifold Truth of the Divine, all the aspects and manifestations and many levels of a dynamic Infinite. At first this experience imposes on the mind and then on all our being an absolute, a fathomless, almost an abysmal peace and silence. Overpowered and subjugated, stilled, liberated from itself, the mind accepts the Silence itself as the Supreme. But afterwards the seeker discovers that all is there for him contained or new-made in that silence or through it descends upon him from a greater concealed transcendent Existence. For this Transcendent, this Absolute is not a mere peace of signless emptiness; it has its own infinite contents and riches of which ours are debased and diminished values. If there were not that Source of all things, there could be no universe; all powers,

all works and activities would be an illusion, all creation and manifestation would be impossible." (CWSA 23: 117–118)

17.

"*Can all the impurities of the mind, vital and physical disappear by the descent of this silence?*

Silence cannot cure all the impurities, but it alleviates a great many of them." (CWM 17: 20)

XVII—The Descent of Strength

1.

"Experiences and descents are very good for preparation, but change of the consciousness is the thing wanted—it is the proof that the experiences and descents have had an effect. Descents of peace are good, but an increasingly stable quietude and silence of the mind is something more valuable. When that is there then other things can come—usually one at a time, light or strength and force or knowledge or ananda. It is not necessary to go on for ever having always the same preparatory experiences—a time comes when the consciousness begins to take a new poise and another state. (CWSA 30: 232)

2.

"As for the things that are necessary to be done, they can be done much more easily by the Force and Peace descending (bringing the solid strength) than by your own mental effort." (CWSA 30: 254)

3.

As for the things that are necessary to be done, they can be done much more easily by the Force and Peace descending (bringing the solid strength) than by your own mental effort. (CWSA 30: 358)

4.

"But as often happens the Force is preparing its own reception and habituating the body to the descent. Having done that sufficiently it is coming down as a massive peace. The higher consciousness in its descent takes several fundamental forms—peace, power and strength, light, knowledge, Ananda." (CWSA 30: 444)

5.

"Yes, when things begin to descend, they must come down on a solid basis. That is why it is necessary to have peace as the first descent and that it should become as strong and solid as possible. But in any case to contain is the first necessity—then more and more can come and settle itself. Once these two things are settled—peace and strength, one can bear any amount of everything else, Ananda, Knowledge, or whatever it may be." (CWSA 30: 451)

6.

"The experience of this "solid block" feeling indicates the descent of a solid strength and peace into the external being,—but into the vital physicalmost. It is this always that is the foundation, the sure basis into which all else (Ananda, light, knowledge, bhakti) can descend in the future and stand on it or play safely. The numbness was there in the other experience because the movement was inward; but here the Yogashakti is coming *outward* into the

fully awake external nature,—as a first step towards the establishment of the Yoga and its experiences there. So the numbness, which was a sign of the consciousness tending to draw back from the external parts, is not there." (CWSA 30: 451)

7.

"It is good—the strength is the next thing that has to come down after the peace and join with it. Eventually the two become one." (CWSA 30: 451)

8.

"The other is the descent of a full calm and strength and equanimity into these parts so that you may conquer life and its difficulties and do your work for the Divine. This calm and strength had often descended into your mind and higher vital, but these other parts were still open to much weakness and attachment and a self-indulgent movement. That must go if one wants to become a hero and master of spiritual action." (CWSA 31: 264)

9.

"For your sadhana it is necessary first to establish the entire openness of the physical being and stabilise in it the descent of calm, strength, purity and joy with the feeling of the presence and working of the Mother's Force in you.

It is only on that assured basis that one can become an entirely effective instrument for the work." (CWSA 31: 362)

10.

"The physical changes slowly always—its nature is habit—so it is only by constant descents [of calmness, purity, light and strength] that gradually its substance gets changed and it becomes accustomed to the higher condition." (CWSA 31: 403)

11.

"X [a doctor] has as yet written nothing; he is waiting, I suppose, for the urine examination he wants to make.We can say nothing until he writes. We do not ourselves like anybody being under medical treatment except when it is necessary in moments of emergency. It seems to me if you get back your sleep and are able to get quiet in the nerves, the rest would set themselves right by the descent of peace and strength in the body." (CWSA 35: 786)

XVIII—The Descent of Divine Force

"For when the Peace is established, this higher or Divine Force from above can descend and work in us. It descends usually first into the head and liberates the inner mind centres, then into the heart centre and liberates fully the psychic and emotional being, then into the navel and other vital centres and liberates the inner vital, then into the Muladhara and below and liberates the inner physical being. It works at the same time for perfection as well as liberation; it takes up the whole nature part by part and deals with it, rejecting what has to be rejected, sublimating what has to be sublimated, creating what has to be created. It integrates, harmonises, establishes a new rhythm in the nature. It can bring down too a higher and yet higher force and range of the higher Nature until, if that be the aim of the sadhana, it becomes possible to bring down the supramental force and existence. All this is prepared, assisted, farthered by the work of the psychic being in the heart centre; the more it is open, in front, active, the quicker, safer, easier the working of the Force can be. The more love and bhakti and surrender grow in the heart, the more rapid and perfect becomes the evolution of the sadhana. For the descent and transformation imply at the same time an increasing contact and union with the Divine." (CWSA 30: 327) (CWSA 32: 204–205)

XIX—The Descent of the Shakti, the Power of the Infinite and the Eternal

1.

"The Shakti, the power of the Infinite and the Eternal descends within us, works, breaks up our present psychological formations, shatters every wall, widens, liberates, presents us with always newer and greater powers of vision, ideation, perception and newer and greater life-motives, enlarges and new-models increasingly the soul and its instruments, confronts us with every imperfection in order to convict and destroy it, opens to a greater perfection, does in a brief period the work of many lives or ages so that new births and new vistas open constantly within us. Expansive in her action, she frees the consciousness from confinement in the body; it can go out in trance or sleep or even waking and enter into worlds or other regions of this world and act there or carry back its experience. It spreads out, feeling the body only as a small part of itself, and begins to contain what before contained it; it achieves the cosmic consciousness and extends itself to be commensurate with the universe. It begins to know inwardly and directly and not merely by external observation and contact the forces at play in the world, feels their movement, distinguishes their functioning and can operate immediately upon them as the scientist operates upon physical forces, accept their action and

results in our mind, life, body or reject them or modify, change, reshape, create immense new powers and movements in place of the old small functionings of the nature. We begin to perceive the working of the forces of universal Mind and to know how our thoughts are created by that working, separate from within the truth and falsehood of our perceptions, enlarge their field, extend and illumine their significance, become master of our own minds and active to shape the movements of Mind in the world around us. We begin to perceive the flow and surge of the universal life-forces, detect the origin and law of our feelings, emotions, sensations, passions, are free to accept, reject, new-create, open to wider, rise to higher planes of Life-Power. We begin to perceive too the key to the enigma of Matter, follow the interplay of Mind and Life and Consciousness upon it, discover more and more its instrumental and resultant function and detect ultimately the last secret of Matter as a form not merely of Energy but of involved and arrested or unstably fixed and restricted consciousness and begin to see too the possibility of its liberation and plasticity of response to higher Powers, its possibilities for the conscious and no longer the more than half-inconscient incarnation and self-expression of the Spirit. All this and more becomes more and more possible as the working of the Divine Shakti increases in us and, against much resistance or labour to respond of our obscure consciousness, through much

struggle and movement of progress and regression and renewed progress necessitated by the work of intensive transformation of a half-inconscient into a conscious substance, moves to a greater purity, truth, height, range. All depends on the psychic awakening in us, the completeness of our response to her and our growing surrender.

But all this can only constitute a greater inner life with a greater possibility of the outer action and is a transitional achievement; the full transformation can come only by the ascent of the sacrifice to its farthest heights and its action upon life with the power and light and beatitude of the divine supramental Gnosis. For then alone all the forces that are divided and express themselves imperfectly in life and its works are raised to their original unity, harmony, single truth, authentic absoluteness and entire significance. There Knowledge and Will are one, Love and Force a single movement; the opposites that afflict us here are resolved into their reconciled unity: good develops its absolute and evil divesting itself of its error returns to the good that was behind it; sin and virtue vanish in a divine purity and an infallible truth-movement; the dubious evanescence of pleasure disappears in a Bliss that is the play of an eternal and happy spiritual certitude, and pain in perishing discovers the touch of an Ananda which was betrayed by some dark perversion and incapacity of the will of the Inconscient to receive it. These

things, to the Mind an imagination or a mystery, become evident and capable of experience as the consciousness rises out of limited embodied Matter-mind to the freedom and fullness of the higher and higher ranges of the super-intelligence; but they can become entirely true and normal only when the supramental becomes the law of the nature.

It is therefore on the accomplishment of this ascent and on the possibility of a full dynamism from these highest levels descending into earth-consciousness that is dependent the justification of Life, its salvation, its transformation into a Divine Life in a transfigured terrestrial Nature." (CWSA 23: 183–185)

2.

The wider your consciousness becomes, the more you will be able to receive from above. The Shakti will be able to descend and bring strength and light as well as peace into the system.

What you feel as narrow and limited in you is the physical mind; it can only widen if this wider consciousness and the light come down and possess the nature.

The physical inertia from which you suffer is likely to lessen and disappear only when strength from above descends into the system.

Remain quiet, open yourself and call the divine Shakti to confirm the calm and peace, to widen the consciousness

and to bring into it as much light and power as it can at present receive and assimilate.

Take care not to be over-eager, as this may disturb again such quiet and balance as has been already established in the vital nature.

Have confidence in the final result and give time for the Power to do its work. (CWSA 29: 125

XX—The Descent of the Divine Fire of Aspiration

1.

"The fire is the divine fire of aspiration and inner tapasya. When the fire descends again and again with increasing force and magnitude into the darkness of human ignorance, it at first seems swallowed up and absorbed in the darkness, but more and more of the descent changes the darkness into light, the ignorance and unconsciousness of the human mind into spiritual consciousness." (CWSA 30: 459)

XXI—The Descent of Faith

1.

"*What are the conditions in which there is a descent of faith?*

The most important condition is an almost childlike trust, the candid trust of a child who is sure that it will come, who doesn't even ask himself about it; when he needs something he is sure that it is going to come. Well, it is this, this kind of trust — this indeed is the most important condition.

To aspire is indispensable. But some people aspire with such a conflict inside them between faith and absence of faith, trust and distrust, between the optimism which is sure of victory and a pessimism which asks itself when the catastrophe will come. Now if this is in the being, you may aspire but you don't get anything. And you say, 'I aspired but didn't get anything.' It is because you demolish your aspiration all the time by your lack of confidence. But if you truly have trust... Children when left to themselves and not deformed by older people have such a great trust that all will be well! For example, when they have a small accident, they never think that this is going to be something serious: they are spontaneously convinced that it will soon be over, and this helps so powerfully in putting an end to it.

Well, when one aspires for the Force, when one asks the Divine for help, if one asks with the unshakable certitude that it will come, that it is impossible that it won't, then it is sure to come. It is this kind... yes, this is truly an inner opening, this trustfulness. And some people are constantly in this state. When there is something to be received, they are always there to receive it. There are others, when there is something to have, a force descends, they are always absent, they are always closed at that moment; while those who have this childlike trust are always there at the right time." (CWM 6: 403–404)

XXII—The Descent of Divine Love

1.

"To bring the Divine Love and Beauty and Ananda into the world is, indeed, the whole crown and essence of our Yoga. But it has always seemed to me impossible unless there comes as its support and foundation and guard the Divine Truth—what I call the Supramental—and its Divine Power. Otherwise Love itself blinded by the confusions of this present consciousness may stumble in its human receptacles and, even otherwise, may find itself unrecognised, rejected or rapidly degenerating and lost in the frailty of man's inferior nature. But when it comes in the Divine Truth and Power, Divine Love descends first as something transcendent and universal and out of that transcendence and universality it applies itself to persons according to the Divine Truth and Will, creating a vaster, greater, purer personal love than any the human mind or heart can now imagine. It is when one has felt this descent that one can be really an instrument for the birth and action of the Divine Love in the world." (CWSA 29: 333)

2.

"*Today while meditating in the Pranam hall before the Mother came down, I saw: From a high place the Mother is coming down in us, wearing a rosy coloured sari and*

having a 'Divine Love' flower in her hair. What does this signify?

It is a symbol of the descent of Divine Love." (CWSA 32: 271)

3.

"With the Divine Love is the supreme power of Transformation. It has this power because it is for the sake of Transformation that it has given itself to the world and manifested everywhere. Not only has it infused itself into man, but also into all the atoms of the most obscure Matter in order to bring the world back to the original Truth. It is this descent that is called the supreme sacrifice in the Indian scriptures. But it is a sacrifice only from the human point of view; the human mind thinks that if it had to do such a thing it would be a tremendous sacrifice. But the Divine cannot really be diminished, its infinite essence can never become less, no matter what "sacrifices" are made.... The moment you open to the Divine Love, you also receive its power of Transformation. But it is not in terms of quantity that you can measure it; what is essential is the true contact; for, you will find that the true contact with it is sufficient to fill at once the whole of your being." (CWM 3: 171–172)

4.

"*You say, "Love is everywhere. Its movement is there in plants, perhaps in the very stones....*" *If there is love in a stone, how can one see it?*

Perhaps the different elements constituting the stone are coordinated by the spark of love. I am sure that when the Divine Love descended into Matter, this Matter was quite unconscious, it had absolutely no form; it may even be said that forms in general are the result of the effort of Love to bring consciousness into Matter. If one of you (I have my doubts, but still) went down into the Inconscient, what is called the pure Inconscient, you would realise what it is. A stone will seem to you a marvellously conscious object in comparison. You speak disdainfully of a stone because you have just a wee bit more consciousness than it has, but the difference between the consciousness of the stone and the total Inconscient is perhaps greater than that between the stone and you. And the coming out of the Inconscient is due exclusively to the sacrifice of the Divine, to this descent of divine Love into the Inconscient. Consequently, when I said "perhaps in the stone", I could have removed the 'perhaps'—I can assert that *even* in the stone it is there. There would be nothing, neither stone nor metal nor any organisation of atoms without this presence of Divine Love." (CWM 4: 240)

5.

"Consequently, the birth of the Inconscient is prior to the formation of the world, and it was only when the perception came that the whole universe was going to be created uselessly that there was a call and Divine Love plunged into the Inconscient to change it into consciousness. Therefore, it can be said that the formation of the material worlds as we know them is the result of the descent of the supreme Consciousness into the Inconscient." (CWM 4: 241–242)

6.

"And when the day will come for the manifestation of the supreme Love, for the crystallised, concentrated descent of the supreme Love, that will indeed be the moment of Transformation. Because nothing will be able to resist That." (CWM 15: 87)

7.

"Afterwards too, even when the seeker has opened to the Divine Love transcendental, universal or immanent, yet if he tries to pour it into life, he meets the power of obscuration and perversion of these lower Nature forces. Always they draw away towards pitfalls, pour into that higher intensity their diminishing elements, seek to capture the descending Power for themselves and their interests and degrade it into an aggrandised mental, vital or physical

instrumentation for desire and ego. Instead of a Divine Love creator of a new heaven and a new earth of Truth and Light, they would hold it here prisoner as a tremendous sanction and glorifying force of sublimation to gild the mud of the old earth and colour with its rose and sapphire the old turbid unreal skies of sentimentalising vital imagination and mental idealised chimera. If that falsification is permitted, the higher Light and Power and Bliss withdraw, there is a fall back to a lower status; or else the realisation remains tied to an insecure half-way and mixture or is covered and even submerged by an inferior exaltation that is not the true Ananda. It is for this reason that Divine Love which is at the heart of all creation and the most powerful of all redeeming and creative forces has yet been the least frontally present in earthly life, the least successfully redemptive, the least creative. Human nature has been unable to bear it in its purity for the very reason that it is the most powerful, pure, rare and intense of all the divine energies; what little could be seized has been corrupted at once into a vital pietistic ardour, a defenceless religious or ethical sentimentalism, a sensuous or even sensual erotic mysticism of the roseate coloured mind or passionately turbid life-impulse and with these simulations compensated its inability to house the Mystic Flame that could rebuild the world with its tongues of sacrifice. It is only the inmost psychic being unveiled and emerging in its full power that can lead the pilgrim sacrifice unscathed

through these ambushes and pitfalls; at each moment it catches, exposes, repels the mind's and the life's falsehoods, seizes hold on the truth of the Divine Love and Ananda and separates it from the excitement of the mind's ardours and the blind enthusiasms of the misleading life-force." (CWSA 23: 166–167)

XXIII—The Mantra, the Word, Descends from High Above

1.

"The Word is the Mantra. But it is something quite exceptional, it is when the will formulated in the spirit wants to come down into matter and act directly upon matter that it makes use of the sound—not only of the word but of the sound, the vibration of the sound—to act directly upon matter itself, in matter. … But one must first have gone high up above in order to be able to come down again. One must have reached the silent consciousness to be able to descend and do this. It must come from above, the source of this word must be up there, not in any intermediary domain. That then is the Word. …

…

An aspiration for all that is essentially true, real, perfect. And this aspiration must be free from words, simply a silent attitude, but extremely intense and unvacillating. Not a word must be allowed the right to enter there and disturb it. It must be like a column of vibrations of aspiration which nothing can touch—and in total silence—and therein, if something comes down, what descends (and will be clothed in words in your mind and in sounds in your mouth) will be the Word. But nothing less than this will do." (CWM 6: 98–99)

XXIV—Descent of Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuitive Mind, and Overmind

1.

"… from the point of view of the ascent of consciousness from our mind upwards through a rising series of dynamic powers by which it can sublimate itself, the gradation can be resolved into a stairway of four main ascents, each with its high level of fulfilment. These gradations may be summarily described as a series of sublimations of the consciousness through Higher Mind, Illumined Mind and Intuition into Overmind and beyond it; there is a succession of self-transmutations at the summit of which lies the Supermind or Divine Gnosis." (CWSA 22: 972)

Ascent into higher mind

2.

"Our first decisive step out of our human intelligence, our normal mentality, is an ascent into a higher Mind, a mind no longer of mingled light and obscurity or half-light, but a large clarity of the spirit. … but its special character, its activity of consciousness are dominated by Thought; it is a luminous thought-mind, a mind of spirit-born conceptual knowledge." (CWSA 22: 974)

3.

"This higher consciousness is a Knowledge formulating itself on a basis of self-existent all-awareness and manifesting some part of its integrality, a harmony of its significances put into thought-form. It can freely express itself in single ideas, but its most characteristic movement is a mass ideation, a system or totality of truth-seeing at a single view; the relations of idea with idea, of truth with truth are not established by logic but pre-exist and emerge already self-seen in the integral whole. … In the end there is a great totality of truth known and experienced but still a totality capable of infinite enlargement because there is no end to the aspects of knowledge, *nāstyanto vistarasya me*." (CWSA 22: 975)

Higher forces in their descent are not immediately all-powerful

4.

"It has here to be emphasised, in order to obviate a natural misconception which can easily arise when the superior power of the higher forces is first perceived or experienced, that these higher forces are not in their descent immediately all-powerful as they would naturally be in their own plane of action and in their own medium. In the evolution in Matter they have to enter into a foreign and inferior medium and work upon it; they encounter there

the incapacities of our mind and life and body, meet with the unreceptiveness or blind refusal of the Ignorance, experience the negation and obstruction of the Inconscience. On their own level they work upon a basis of luminous consciousness and luminous substance of being and are automatically effective; but here they have to encounter an already and strongly formed foundation of Nescience, … There is thus ready-formed a power of resistance which opposes or minimises the effects of the descending Light, a resistance which may amount to a refusal, a rejection of the Light, or take the shape of an attempt to impair, subdue, ingeniously modify or adapt or perversely deform the light in order to suit it to the preconceived ideas of the Ignorance." (CWSA 22: 976–977)

To allow the higher Light, it is necessary to acquire a power for quietude or psychic control

5.

"This obstacle will be there,—even though it may progressively diminish,—at each stage of this greater ascent. In order to allow at all to the higher Light an adequate entry and force of working, it is necessary to acquire a power for quietude of the nature, to compose, tranquillise, impress a controlled passivity or even an entire silence on mind and heart, life and body: … A previously

established psychic control is very desirable as that creates a general responsiveness and inhibits the revolt of the lower parts against the Light or their consent to the claims of the Ignorance." (CWSA 22: 978)

6.

"A preliminary spiritual transformation will also reduce the hold of the Ignorance; but neither of these influences altogether eliminates its obstruction and limitation: … The power of the spiritual Higher Mind and its idea-force, modified and diminished as it must be by its entrance into our mentality, is not sufficient to sweep out all these obstacles and create the gnostic being, but it can make a first change, a modification that will capacitate a higher ascent and a more powerful descent and further prepare an integration of the being in a greater Force of consciousness and knowledge." (CWSA 22: 978)

Illumined mind

7.

"This greater Force is that of the Illumined Mind, a Mind no longer of higher Thought, but of spiritual light. Here the clarity of the spiritual intelligence, its tranquil daylight, gives place or subordinates itself to an intense lustre, a splendour and illumination of the spirit: a play of lightnings of spiritual truth and power breaks from above into the

consciousness and adds to the calm and wide enlightenment and the vast descent of peace which characterise or accompany the action of the larger conceptual-spiritual principle, a fiery ardour of realisation and a rapturous ecstasy of knowledge. A downpour of inwardly visible Light very usually envelops this action; … light is primarily a spiritual manifestation of the Divine Reality illuminative and creative; material light is a subsequent representation or conversion of it into Matter for the purposes of the material Energy. There is also in this descent the arrival of a greater dynamic, a golden drive, a luminous 'enthousiasmos' of inner force and power which replaces the comparatively slow and deliberate process of the Higher Mind by a swift, sometimes a vehement, almost a violent impetus of rapid transformation.

The Illumined Mind does not work primarily by thought, but by vision; thought is here only a subordinate movement expressive of sight. The human mind, which relies mainly on thought, conceives that to be the highest or the main process of knowledge, but in the spiritual order thought is a secondary and a not indispensable process." (CWSA 22: 978–979)

8.

"As the Higher Mind brings a greater consciousness into the being through the spiritual idea and its power of truth,

so the Illumined Mind brings in a still greater consciousness through a Truth Sight and Truth Light and its seeing and seizing power. It can effect a more powerful and dynamic integration; it illumines the thought-mind with a direct inner vision and inspiration, brings a spiritual sight into the heart and a spiritual light and energy into its feeling and emotion, imparts to the life-force a spiritual urge, a truth inspiration that dynamises the action and exalts the life movements; it infuses into the sense a direct and total power of spiritual sensation so that our vital and physical being can contact and meet concretely, quite as intensely as the mind and emotion can conceive and perceive and feel, the Divine in all things; it throws on the physical mind a transforming light that breaks its limitations, its conservative inertia, replaces its narrow thought-power and its doubts by sight and pours luminosity and consciousness into the very cells of the body. In the transformation by the Higher Mind the spiritual sage and thinker would find his total and dynamic fulfilment; in the transformation by the Illumined Mind there would be a similar fulfilment for the seer, the illumined mystic, those in whom the soul lives in vision and in a direct sense and experience: for it is from these higher sources that they receive their light and to rise into that light and live there would be their ascension to their native empire.” (CWSA 22: 980–981)

Intuition

9.

"But these two stages of the ascent enjoy their authority and can get their own united completeness only by a reference to a third level; for it is from the higher summits where dwells the intuitional being that they derive the knowledge which they turn into thought or sight and bring down to us for the mind's transmutation. Intuition is a power of consciousness nearer and more intimate to the original knowledge by identity; for it is always something that leaps out direct from a concealed identity. It is when the consciousness of the subject meets with the consciousness in the object, penetrates it and sees, feels or vibrates with the truth of what it contacts, that the intuition leaps out like a spark or lightning-flash from the shock of the meeting; or when the consciousness, even without any such meeting, looks into itself and feels directly and intimately the truth or the truths that are there or so contacts the hidden forces behind appearances, then also there is the outbreak of an intuitive light; or, again, when the consciousness meets the Supreme Reality or the spiritual reality of things and beings and has a contactual union with it, then the spark, the flash or the blaze of intimate truth-perception is lit in its depths. This close perception is more than sight, more than conception: it is the result of a penetrating and revealing touch which

carries in it sight and conception as part of itself or as its natural consequence. A concealed or slumbering identity, not yet recovering itself, still remembers or conveys by the intuition its own contents and the intimacy of its self-feeling and self-vision of things, its light of truth, its overwhelming and automatic certitude.

In the human mind the intuition is even such a truth-remembrance or truth-conveyance, or such a revealing flash or blaze breaking into a greatmass of ignorance or through a veil of nescience: but we have seen that it is subject there to an invading mixture or a mental coating or an interception and substitution; there is too a manifold possibility of misinterpretation which comes in the way of the purity and fullness of its action." (CWSA 22: 981–982)

10.

"But even if the mind became predominantly an intuitive mind reliant upon its portion of the higher faculty, the co-ordination of its cognitions and its separated activities,—for in mind these would always be apt to appear as a series of imperfectly connected flashes,—would remain difficult so long as this new mentality has not a conscious liaison with its suprarational source or a self-uplifting access to a higher plane of consciousness in which an intuitive action is pure and native." (CWSA 22: 982–983)

11.

"Intuition has a fourfold power. A power of revelatory truth-seeing, a power of inspiration or truth-hearing, a power of truth-touch or immediate seizing of significance, which is akin to the ordinary nature of its intervention in our mental intelligence, a power of true and automatic discrimination of the orderly and exact relation of truth to truth,—these are the fourfold potencies of Intuition. Intuition can therefore perform all the action of reason—including the function of logical intelligence, which is to work out the right relation of things and the right relation of idea with idea,—but by its own superior process and with steps that do not fail or falter. It takes up also and transforms into its own substance not only the mind of thought, but the heart and life and the sense and physical consciousness: already all these have their own peculiar powers of intuition derivative from the hidden Light; the pure power descending from above can assume them all into itself and impart to these deeper heart perceptions and life-perceptions and the divinations of the body a greater integrality and perfection. It can thus change the whole consciousness into the stuff of intuition; for it brings its own greater radiant movement into the will, into the feelings and emotions, the life-impulses, the action of sense and sensation, the very workings of the body consciousness; it recasts them in the light and power of

truth and illumines their knowledge and their ignorance." (CWSA 22: 983–984)

Overmind

12.

"The next step of the ascent brings us to the Overmind; the intuitional change can only be an introduction to this higher spiritual overture. But we have seen that the Overmind, even when it is selective and not total in its action, is still a power of cosmic consciousness, a principle of global knowledge which carries in it a delegated light from the supramental gnosis. It is, therefore, only by an opening into the cosmic consciousness that the overmind ascent and descent can be made wholly possible: a high and intense individual opening upwards is not sufficient,—to that vertical ascent towards summit Light there must be added a vast horizontal expansion of the consciousness into some totality of the Spirit. At the least, the inner being must already have replaced by its deeper and wider awareness the surface mind and its limited outlook and learned to live in a large universality; for otherwise the overmind view of things and the overmind dynamism will have no room to move in and effectuate its dynamic operations. When the overmind descends, the predominance of the centralising ego-sense is entirely subordinated, lost in largeness of being and finally

abolished; a wide cosmic perception and feeling of a boundless universal self and movement replaces it: many motions that were formerly ego-centric may still continue, but they occur as currents or ripples in the cosmic wideness." (CWSA 22: 984–985)

13.

"The overmind change is the final consummating movement of the dynamic spiritual transformation; it is the highest possible status-dynamis of the spirit in the spiritual-mind plane. It takes up all that is in the three steps below it and raises their characteristic workings to their highest and largest power, adding to them a universal wideness of consciousness and force, a harmonious concert of knowledge, a more manifold delight of being." (CWSA 22: 987)

14.

"In the terrestrial evolution itself the overmind descent would not be able to transform wholly the Inconscience; all that it could do would be to transform in each man it touched the whole conscious being, inner and outer, personal and universally impersonal, into its own stuff and impose that upon the Ignorance illumining it into cosmic truth and knowledge. But a basis of Nescience would remain; it would be as if a sun and its system were to shine out in an original darkness of Space and illumine everything

as far as its rays could reach so that all that dwelt in the light would feel as if no darkness were there at all in their experience of existence. But outside that sphere or expanse of experience the original darkness would still be there and, since all things are possible in an overmind structure, could reinvade the island of light created within its empire. Moreover, since Overmind deals with different possibilities, its natural action would be to develop the separate possibility of one or more or numerous dynamic spiritual formulations to their utmost or combine or harmonise several possibilities together; but this would be a creation or a number of creations in the original terrestrial creation, each complete in its separate existence. The evolved spiritual individual would be there, there might evolve also a spiritual community or communities in the same world as mental man and the vital being of the animal, but each working out its independent existence in a loose relation within the terrestrial formula. The supreme power of the principle of unity taking all diversities into itself and controlling them as parts of the unity, which must be the law of the new evolutionary consciousness, would not as yet be there. Also by this much evolution there could be no security against the downward pull or gravitation of the Inconscience which dissolves all the formations that life and mind build in it, swallows all things that arise out of it or are imposed upon it and disintegrates them into their original matter. The

liberation from this pull of the Inconscience and a secured basis for a continuous divine or gnostic evolution would only be achieved by a descent of the Supermind into the terrestrial formula, bringing into it the supreme law and light and dynamis of the spirit and penetrating with it and transforming the inconscience of the material basis. A last transition from Overmind to Supermind and a descent of Supermind must therefore intervene at this stage of evolutionary Nature." (CWSA 22: 988–989)

15.

"As soon as there is a sufficient spiritual development, something of intuition, illumination of the being, the movements of the higher spiritual grades of Consciousness begins to manifest,—sometimes one, sometimes the other or all together, and they do not wait for each power in the series to complete itself before a higher power comes into action. An Overmind light and power may descend in some sort, create a partial form of itself in the being and take a leading part or supervise or intervene while the intuitive and illumining mind and higher mind are still incomplete; these would then remain in the whole, acting along with the greater Power, often penetrated or sublimated by it or rising into it to form a greater or overmind intuition, a greater or overmind illumination, a greater or overmind spiritual thinking. This intricate action takes place because each descending power by its intensity of pressure on the

nature and uplifting effect makes the being already capable of a still higher invasion before that earlier power itself is complete in its self-formation; but also it happens because the work of assumption and transformation of the lower nature can with difficulty be done if a higher and higher intervention does not take place. The illumination and the higher thought need the help of the intuition, the intuition needs the help of the overmind to combat the darkness or ignorance in which they labour and to give them their own fullness. Still, it is not possible in the end for the overmind status and integration to be complete until the higher mind and the illumined mind have been integrated and taken up into the intuition and the intuition itself subsequently integrated and taken up into the all-enlarging and all-sublimating overmind energy. The law of the gradation has to be satisfied even in the complexity of the process of evolutionary Nature." (CWSA 22: 992)

16.

"A further cause of complexity arises from the need of integration itself; for the process is not only an ascent of the soul to a higher status, but a descent of the higher consciousness so gained to take up and transform the inferior nature. But this nature has a density of previous formation which resists and obstructs the descent; even when the higher power has broken the barrier and descended and is at work, … Ordinarily, in their task of

assumption and assimilation of this difficult stuff of Nature, the higher powers descend first into the mind and occupy the mind centres because these are nearest to themselves in intelligence and knowledge-power; if they descend first into the heart or into the vital being of force and sensation, as they sometimes do because these happen to be in some individuals more open and call them first, the results are more mixed and dubious, imperfect and insecure than if things happen in the logical order. But, even in its normal working when it takes up the being part by part in the natural order of descent, the descending power is not able to bring about a total occupation and transformation of each before it goes farther. It can only effect a general and incomplete occupation, so that the workings of each remain still partly of the new higher, partly of a mixed, partly of the old unchanged lower order. All the mind in its whole range cannot be transmuted at once, for the mind centres are not a region isolated from the rest of the being; the mind action is penetrated by the action of the vital and physical parts, and in those parts themselves are lower formations of mind, a vital mind, a physical mind, and these have to be changed before there can be an entire transformation of the mental being. The higher transforming power has, therefore, to descend, as soon as may be and without waiting for an integral mental change, into the heart so as to occupy and change the emotional nature, and afterwards into the inferior vital centres to

occupy and change the whole vital and kinetic and sensational nature, and, finally, into the physical centres so as to occupy and change the whole physical nature. But even this finality is not final, for there are still left the subconscient parts and the inconscient foundation. The intricacy, the interwoven action of these powers and parts of the being is so great that it may almost be said that in this change nothing is accomplished until all is accomplished." (CWSA 22: 992–994)

17.

"A third complexity is brought in by the power of the consciousness to live in more than one status at a time; … In the spiritual opening, it is the awakened inner being that readily receives and assimilates the higher influences and puts on the higher nature; the external surface self, more entirely moulded by the forces of the Ignorance and Inconscience, is slower to awake, slower to receive, slower to assimilate. There is therefore a long stage in which the inner being is sufficiently transformed but the outer is still involved in a mixed and difficult movement of imperfect change. This disparity repeats itself at each step of the ascent; for in each change the inner being follows more readily, the outer limps after, reluctant or else incompetent in spite of its aspiration and desire: this necessitates a constantly repeated labour of assumption, adaptation, orientation, a labour reproduced in new terms always but

always the same in principle. But even when the outer and the inner nature of the individual are unified in a harmonised spiritual consciousness, that still more external but occult part of him in which his being mixes with the being of the outside world and through which the outside world invades his consciousness remains a field of imperfection. … the inner spiritual influence is met by quite opposite influences strong in their control of the present world-order; the new spiritual consciousness has to bear the shock of the dominant and established unspiritualised powers of the Ignorance. This creates a difficulty which is of capital importance in all stages of the spiritual evolution and its urge towards a change of the nature." (CWSA 22: 994–995)

18.

"… if the individual has to project himself into the world and in a sense take the world into himself, this cannot be dynamically done without receiving the world influences through one's own circumconscient or environmental being. The spiritual inner consciousness has then to deal with these influences in such a way that, as soon as they approach or enter, they become either obliterated and without result or transformed by their very entry into its own mode and substance. Or it may force them to receive the spiritual influence and return with a transforming power on the world they come from, for such a compulsion

on the lower universal Nature is part of a perfect spiritual action. But for that the circumconscient or environmental being must be so steeped in the spiritual light and spiritual substance that nothing can enter into it without undergoing this transformation: the invading external influences have not to bring in at all their lower awareness, their lower sight, their lower dynamism. But this is a difficult perfection, because ordinarily the circumconscient is not wholly our own formed and realised self but ourself plus the external world-nature. It is, for this reason, always easier to spiritualise the inner self-sufficient parts than to transform the outer action; … But since the integral transformation must embrace fully the dynamic being and take up into it the life of action and the world-self outside us, this completer change is demanded of the evolving nature." (CWSA 22: 995–996)

19.

"The essential difficulty comes from the fact that the substance of our normal being is moulded out of the Inconscience. Our ignorance is a growth of knowledge in a substance of being which is nescient; the consciousness it develops, the knowledge it establishes are always dogged, penetrated, enveloped by this nescience. It is this substance of nescience that has to be transformed into a substance of superconscience, a substance in which consciousness and a spiritual awareness are always there

even when they are not active, not expressed, not put into form of knowledge. Till that is done, the nescience invades or encompasses or even swallows up and absorbs into its oblivious darkness all that enters into it; it compels the descending light to compromise with the lesser light it enters: there is a mixture, a diminution and dilution of itself, a diminution, a modification, an incomplete authenticity of its truth and power." (CWSA 22: 996)

20.

"But even when the higher powers and their intensities enter into the substance of the Inconscience, they are met by this blind opposing Necessity and are subjected to this circumscribing and diminishing law of the nescient substance. … There is an occult truth behind its negations which only the Supermind with its reconciliation of contraries in the original Reality can take up and so discover the pragmatic solution of the enigma. Only the supramental Force can entirely overcome this difficulty of the fundamental Nescience; for with it enters an opposite and luminous imperative Necessity which underlies all things and is the original and final self-determining truth-force of the self-existent Infinite." (CWSA 22: 997)

XXV—The Ego Can Be Eliminated Altogether by the Descent of a Wider Ego-free Consciousness from Above

1.

"But what is this ego of which you speak? Everybody has the ego and it is impossible to get rid of it altogether except by two things—the opening of the psychic within and the descent of a wider ego-free consciousness from above. The psychic being opening does not get rid of the ego at once but purifies it and offers it and all the movements to the Divine, so that one becomes unegoistic through self-giving and surrender. At the same time the nature opens above and the wider ego-free consciousness comes down and ego disappears and by the power of the psychic you know your own true being which is a portion of the Mother. This is what has to happen, but it cannot happen in so short a time. Do not be always thinking of the vital movements and the ego—you have seen them and know that they are, it is enough. Concentrate rather in the heart on the opening there; concentrate persistently and aspire persistently and do not mind if it takes time. Call in any way, even if you cannot call yet deeply—then the deeper call will come." (CWSA 31: 236)

2.

"It is possible [*to diminish the ego by the action of the Force*] if your consciousness associates itself with the

action; then at least one can get rid of its major action and leave only minor traces. To get rid of the ego altogether however comes usually only by the descent of Consciousness from above and its occupation of the whole being aided of course by the rule of the psychic in the nature." (CWSA 31: 236)

3.

"I think you still give an exaggerated importance and attention to the ego and other elements that are interwoven in the nature of humanity and cannot be entirely got rid of except by the coming of a new consciousness which replaces them by higher movements. If one rejects centrally and with all sincerity the ego and rajas, their roots get loosened and sattwa can prevail in the nature, but the expulsion of all ego and rajas cannot be done by the will and its effort. After a certain stage of preparation therefore one must stress more on the positive side of the sadhana than on the negative side of rejection,—though this of course must remain to help the other. Still what is important is to develop the psychic within and bring down the higher consciousness from above. The psychic as it grows and manifests detects immediately all wrong movements or elements and at the same time supplies almost automatically the true element or movement which will replace them—this psychic process is much easier and more effective than that of a severe

tapasya of purification. The higher consciousness in descending brings peace and purity into all the inner parts; the inner being separates itself from the imperfect outer consciousness and at the same time the peace that comes carries in it a power which can throw out what contradicts the peace and purity. Ego can then slowly or swiftly but surely disappear—rajas and tamas change into their divine substitutes." (CWSA 31: 237)

4.

"To go away and suffer the consequences is not a solution. As for the rest, the selfishness of the ego is not a reason for not calling down the higher (divine) consciousness of which the peace and the force are as it were the front or the basis. How can you get rid of the selfish ego unless you call down that higher consciousness to which the ego is not a necessity?

In the evolution of the lower consciousness here ego and selfishness were a necessity. So long as the higher consciousness above ordinary mind does not descend, ego remains a necessity even in aspiring towards the Divine or towards Mukti, even if it becomes a sattwic ego. It is only in the higher consciousness that ego can dissolve, either by ascending there or by its descent into the consciousness below." (CWSA 31: 238)

5.

"Let the power of the Mother work in you, but be careful to avoid any mixture or substitution, in its place, of either a magnified ego-working or a force of Ignorance presenting itself as Truth. Aspire especially for the elimination of all obscurity and unconsciousness in the nature." (CWSA 32: 136)

6.

"The Divine Forces are meant to be used—the mistake of man individualised in the Ignorance is to use it for the ego and not for the Divine. It is that that has to be set right by the union with the Divine Consciousness and also by the widening of the individual being so that it can live consciously in the universal. Difficult it is owing to the fixed ego-habit, but it is not impossible." (CWSA 29: 187)

7.

"All power comes from the Divine but it is more usually misused than used spiritually or rightly." (CWSA 29: 187)

XXVI—Resistance to the Descending Force

1.

"If the habit of the ordinary nature is not any obstacle to the descent, then what is the need of sadhana? What prevents the whole higher consciousness from coming down and changing you into a superman in one second? It is because the things of the lower nature offer an obstinate resistance that long sadhana is necessary." (CWSA 30: 487)

2.

"It is not possible to say with any precision what the resistance in the higher vital parts will be, what form it takes, because it may take different forms with different natures. It is quite normal that there should be some resistance almost at every point to the descent of the higher consciousness; for the different parts of the present nature are each more or less attached to their own established way of seeing, acting, feeling, reacting to things and to the habitual movements and formations of their own domain which each individual has made for himself in the past or in his present life. What is needed is a general plasticity of the mind, the vital, the physical consciousness, a readiness to give up all attachment to these things, to accept whatever the higher consciousness brings down with it however contrary to one's own received

ideas, feelings, habits of nature. The greater the plasticity in any part of the nature, the less the resistance there." (CWSA 28: 190)

3.

"As for the causes of the dejection, there were causes, partly general in the shape of a resistance to a great descending force which was not personal to you at all, and, so far as there was a response to it in you, it was not from your conscious being, otherwise you would not have had it in this way, but from the part in us which keeps things for a long time that have been suppressed or rejected by the conscious will. It is the conscious will that matters, for it is that that prevails in the end, the will of the Purusha and not the more blind and obstinate parts of Prakriti. Keep the conscious will all right and it will carry on to the goal,—just as the resistance in universal Nature will yield in the end before the Divine Descent." (CWSA 31: 195–196)

4.

"The sadhak becomes restless under the Force only if he resists it—otherwise it brings peace and calm and happiness and strength.

It is probably some other part of the mind—the vital mind or physical mind—it is these usually that resist." (CWSA 30: 446)

5.

"The infinite calm you felt coming down was the calm of the Divine Consciousness—the higher or spiritual consciousness above the head, which descends as the higher parts of the being open to it. The experience of faith, love or aspiration come from the psychic being. It is when the psychic being is in front and governs all the nature and the Higher Consciousness descends through an open mind, vital and physical that the transformation of the nature begins to take place. The opposite experience of dryness, despair etc. comes from the resistance of the ordinary lower nature (lower vital, physical consciousness, especially). This resistance is to be got rid of—and one condition of that is never to indulge the desires of the lower vital and the body. You must turn them on the contrary wholly to the Divine." (CWSA 30: 464)

6.

"The experience of the action in the three centres is perfectly all right (the opening to the higher consciousness and its characteristic action and results already beginning there) except for the pains which mean a resistance. These experiences are quite sound and according to the divine schedule. But the pain at the bottom of the neck indicates that in trying to pass from mind to higher vital towards the heart, the Consciousness encountered an obstruction.

However that too is in the day's work. It will be overcome in due time. So nothing to grumble—there at least.

The concentration is all right—since it is proceeding so well, the concentration in the higher centres should continue, but as the consciousness comes down or to help its coming down to the vital centres, more concentration in the heart may be necessary hereafter." (CWSA 30: 487–488)

7.

"An uneasiness of that kind is always due to a resistance somewhere—something that remains closed and does not open when it is touched by the Force. It is due probably not so much to yourself as to other conflicting influences that are acting upon you." (CWSA 30: 487)

8.

"If one brings down more force or light than some part of the being is ready for and that part resists— or if there is a struggle between descending and adverse forces in the body, then these things [*a burning sensation etc.*] can take place." (CWSA 30: 487)

9.

"There can indeed be great descents of spiritual light, purity, power, love, delight into the earth consciousness in its human formula; but man as he is now can hold only a

little of these things and he can give them no adequate organisation and shape and body in his mental movements or his life-action or his physical and material consciousness and dynamis." (CWSA 13: 430–431)

10.

"The feeling of resistance [*to the descent of the Force*] may be the result of the effort at response. When there is the free flow there is neither effort nor resistance." (CWSA 30: 487)

11.

"The pain was due to some resistance in the Adhar; it disappears as soon as the system is accustomed to the descent and grows wide enough to admit it. The first result of the descent is the calm which he experiences; for it is only in a calm mind and vital (*manaḥ-prāṇa*) that the Divine Shakti can do her work rightly." (CWSA 30: 470)

12.

"Headaches 'produced by a pressure from above', as you put it, are not due to the pressure or produced by it, but produced by a resistance." (CWSA 30: 482)

13.

"The pressure [*from above*] does not 'bring' a resistance. 'If there were no resistance there would be no headache'

is the proper knowledge, not the reverse. So long as you think that it is the pressure that brings the resistance, the very idea will create the resistance. *X*'s case is not an example either of headache due to resistance or of headache due to pressure—it is due to ordinary physical and psychological causes." (CWSA 30: 482)

14.

"Pain in the head and physical strain are due to resistance, but pressure and throbbing and electric sensation are only signs of the Force working, not of resistance. The sensation of coolness is a very good sign." (CWSA 30: 483)

15.

"*During this Darshan, instead of Ananda, Force or Light I felt a great dryness*.

It depends upon your condition whether the Ananda or Force or Light descends or whether the resistance rises. It is the resistance of the ordinary physical consciousness ignorant and obscure that seems to have risen in you. The period of the 15th is a period of great descents but also of great resistances. This 15th was not an exception." (CWSA 35: 524)

16.

"When you felt the Force, the concentration, the peace, it meant evidently the true consciousness coming; that could

not produce the restlessness at night. If the restlessness were the result of the Force coming, it would follow that the more the Force comes down, the more the restlessness must increase. But that would be absurd and is not the case. What happened was simply that with the Force came a beginning of the inner or spiritual peace; in the nerves the old restlessness which was lying dormant rose up as a resistance, trying as all these habitual things of the nature do to prolong itself. As the peace enters the vital and the nervous being, these things naturally diminish and are eliminated. One has only to remain quiet and detached and let the Force in its working bring in the peace there also. If the difficulty persists, you will let us know so that we may see to it." (CWSA 30: 490)

17.

"The Power that is above your head has not only to be in connection with you, but to occupy the consciousness with its influence. The restlessness is due to a resistance of the lower consciousness which is not accustomed to the process by which this is done and probably feels uneasy—as you say you feel everything unsure." (CWSA 30: 488)

XXVII—People with a Crude, Simple Nature and without Education Will Find Obstacles to Bear the Descent of a Higher Force

1.

"Education is certainly one of the best means of preparing the consciousness for a higher development. There are people with very crude and very simple natures, who can have great aspiration and attain a certain spiritual development, but the base will always be of an inferior quality, and as soon as they return to their ordinary consciousness they will find obstacles in it, because the stuff is too thin, there are not enough elements in their vital and material consciousness to enable them to bear the descent of a higher force." (CWM 7: 59)

XXVIII—Resistance to the Descending Force Creates Disorder and Disharmony

1.

"Above them there is a consciousness which is seeking for manifestation and embodiment upon earth, and in its descent towards matter it meets everywhere the same resistance, in man and in physical Nature. All the disorder and disharmony that we see upon earth is the result of this resistance. Calamity and catastrophe, conflict and violence, obscurity and ignorance—all ills come from the same source." (CWM 3: 38)

2.

"Rajas perverts knowledge, makes our reason the accomplice of falsehood and the abettor of every wrong movement, disturbs and twists our life-force and its impulses, oversets the balance and health of the body. Rajas captures all high-born ideas and high-seated movements and turns them to a false and egoistic use; even divine Truth and divine influences, when they descend into the earthly plane, cannot escape this misuse and seizure. Tamas unenlightened and rajas unconverted, no divine change or divine life is possible." (CWSA 23: 237)

3.

"*Sweet Mother,*

You write in Your Conversations: 'Each time that something of the Divine Truth and the Divine Force comes down to manifest upon earth, some change is effected in the earth's atmosphere.'

(1) Is this change always violent and destructive, such as a revolution or a war?

Not necessarily. What expresses itself as a war or a revolution is the resistance in the human consciousness to the New Force. When the resistance is less, everything takes place harmoniously.

(2) And is the converse always valid: if there is a war or a revolution, is it the sign of a descent of the Truth?

Not necessarily. Human folly takes advantage of the slightest cause to manifest itself." (CWM 16: 329)

XXIX—Dangers and Safety in the Process of the Descent

1. The dangers in the process of the descent are a) the lower nature is stimulated and excited by the descent b) powers undivine in their nature present themselves as the Supreme Lord or as the Divine Mother c) the disguises of the ego are innumerable d) the illusions of the Powers of Darkness, Rakshasi Maya, are extraordinarily skillful e) reason is an insufficient guide and often turns traitor and f) vital desire is always with us, tempting us to follow any alluring call
2. Safety in the process of the descent consists of a) the guidance of the Guru, b) the assent of the sadhak to the Divine working alone c) rejection of all egoistic forces d) surrender to the Divine and e) the psychic always being in control

1.

"In this process of the descent from above and the working it is most important not to rely entirely on oneself, but to rely on the guidance of the Guru and to refer all that happens to his judgment and arbitration and decision. For it often happens that the forces of the lower nature are stimulated and excited by the descent and want to mix with it and turn it to their profit. It often happens too that some

Power or Powers undivine in their nature present themselves as the Supreme Lord or as the Divine Mother and claim the being's service and surrender. If these things are accepted, there will be an extremely disastrous consequence. If indeed there is the assent of the sadhak to the Divine working alone and the submission or surrender to that guidance, then all can go smoothly. This assent and a rejection of all egoistic forces or forces that appeal to the ego are the safeguard throughout the sadhana. But the ways of Nature are full of snares, the disguises of the ego are innumerable, the illusions of the Powers of Darkness, Rakshasi Maya, are extraordinarily skilful; the reason is an insufficient guide and often turns traitor; vital desire is always with us tempting to follow any alluring call. This is the reason why in this Yoga we insist so much on what we call *samarpaṇa*— rather inadequately rendered by the English word surrender. If the heart centre is fully opened and the psychic is always in control, then there is no question; all is safe. But the psychic can at any moment be veiled by a lower upsurge. It is only a few who are exempt from these dangers and it is precisely those to whom surrender is easily possible. The guidance of one who is himself by identity or represents the Divine is in this difficult endeavour imperative and indispensable." (CWSA 30: 329–330) (CWSA 32: 213–214)

2.

"This descent, this working is not without its possibility of calamitous fall and danger. If the human mind or the vital desire seizes hold on the descending force and tries to use it according to its own limited and erring ideas or flawed and egoistic impulses,—and this is inevitable in some degree until this lower mortal has learned something of the way of that greater immortal nature,—stumblings and deviations, hard and seemingly insuperable obstacles and wounds and suffering cannot be escaped and even death or utter downfall are not impossible. Only when the conscious integral surrender to the Divine has been learned by mind and life and body, can the way of the Yoga become easy, straight, swift and safe.

And it must be a surrender and an opening to the Divine alone and to no other. For it is possible for an obscure mind or an impure life force in us to surrender to undivine and hostile forces and even to mistake them for the Divine. There can be no more calamitous error. Therefore our surrender must be no blind and inert passivity to all influences or any influence, but sincere, conscious, vigilant, pointed to the One and the Highest alone." (CWSA 12: 170–171)

3.

"The danger of the mental forces is that when the higher consciousness descends they tend (unless there is a deep

silence) to become active in the consciousness for forming ideas of a mental type which can always be misapplied. First, there should be a basis of entire calm, peace and silence—if there is activity, it should be that of a knowledge coming down and the mind silent receiving it accurately. This you can easily have, provided the mind is quiet.

The danger of the vital is that of taking hold of love, Ananda, the sense of Beauty and using it for its own purposes, for vital human relations or interchange or else some kind of mere enjoyment of its own." (CWSA 30: 490)

4.

"There is no rule, but the most normal course is for a certain Peace and Force and Light which is above the mind to descend and as the result of its workings the cosmic consciousness opens and in it higher and higher levels above mind. Many people get an opening into the cosmic consciousness first but without the basis of the higher Peace and Light it brings only a mass of unorganised experiences." (CWSA 30: 449)

5.

"They [*the mind and vital*] are always more open to the universal forces than the material. But they can be more restless than the material so long as they are not subjected to the peace from above." (CWSA 30: 452)

6.

"The movement of universality by itself cannot prevent the vital from disturbing—it is the complete surrender and the complete descent of peace into all the being down to the most material that can do it." (CWSA 30: 452)

XXX—The Descent Is Dangerous without Mastery of Sex or Sublimated Sex

1.

"The attempt to treat it by detachment without complete excision breaks down; the attempt to sublimate it, favoured by many modern mystics in Europe, is a most rash and perilous experiment. For it is when one mixes up sex and spirituality that there is the greatest havoc. Even the attempt to sublimate it by turning it towards the Divine as in the Vaishnava *madhura bhāva* carries in it a serious danger, as the results of a wrong turn or use in this method so often show. At any rate in this Yoga which seeks not only the essential experience of the Divine but a transformation of the whole being and nature, I have found it an absolute necessity of the sadhana to aim at a complete mastery over the sex-force; otherwise the vital consciousness remains a turbid mixture, the turbidity affecting the purity of the spiritualised mind and seriously hindering the upward turn of the forces of the body. This Yoga demands a full ascension of the whole lower or ordinary consciousness to join the spiritual above it and a full descent of the spiritual (eventually of the supramental) into the mind, life and body to transform it. The total ascent is impossible so long as sex-desire blocks the way; the descent is dangerous so long as sex-desire is powerful in the vital. For at any moment an unexcised or latent

sexdesire may be the cause of a mixture which throws back the true descent and uses the energy acquired for other purposes or turns all the action of the consciousness towards wrong experience, turbid and delusive. One must therefore clear this obstacle out of the way; otherwise there is either no safety or no free movement towards finality in the sadhana." (CWSA 31: 502–503)

2.

"This movement [*of vital interchange*] is a wrong and a dangerous one. It is not so much repeating the old game under the garb of Yoga, but, what is worse, turning the Yoga-power itself into the instrument of satisfaction of a vital force. There must be absolute abstention from all vital interchange with others. The warning has often been given that no special or personal relation, even under the colour of a psychic connection or otherwise, must be formed with the women sadhakas. The whole principle of this Yoga is to give oneself entirely to the Divine alone and to nobody and to nothing else, and to bring down into ourselves by union with the Divine Mother Power all the transcendent light, force, wideness, peace, purity, truth-consciousness and Ananda of the supramental Divine. In this Yoga, therefore, there can be no place for vital relations or interchanges with others; any such relation or interchange immediately ties down the soul to the lower consciousness and its lower nature, prevents the true and full union with

the Divine and hampers both the ascent to the supramental Truth consciousness and the descent of the supramental Ishwari Shakti. Still worse would it be if this interchange took the form of a sexual relation or a sexual enjoyment, even if kept free from any outward act; therefore these things are absolutely forbidden in the sadhana. It goes without saying that any physical act of the kind is not allowed, but also any subtler form is ruled out." (CWSA 31: 499)

3.

"He is to be congratulated on the victory in the matter of sex—it is very important to have that when the intense definitive experiences are beginning. For if once the actual penetrative descent is felt, the less the higher consciousness is met by the sex force the better, for then a dangerous mixture may take place or else a struggle which is better avoided." (CWSA 30: 484)

4.

"The Ananda descending cannot be held if there is too much sexual impurity creating an intoxicant or degrading mixture; the Power recedes, if there is ambition, vanity or other aggressive form of lower self, the Light if there is an attachment to obscurity or to any form of the Ignorance, the Presence if the chamber of the heart has not been made pure. Or some undivine Force may try to seize hold,

not of the Power itself, for that withdraws, but of the result of force it leaves behind in the instrument and use it for the purposes of the Adversary. Even if none of these more disastrous faults or errors should take place, still the numerous mistakes of reception or the imperfections of the vessel may impede the transformation. The Power has to come at intervals and work meanwhile behind the veil or hold itself back through long periods of obscure assimilation or preparation of the recalcitrant parts of Nature; the Light has to work in darkness or semi-darkness on the regions in us that are still in the Night. At any moment the work may be stayed, personally for this life, because the nature is able to receive or assimilate no more, — for it has reached the present limits of its capacity, — or because the mind may be ready but the vital, when faced with a choice between the old life and the new, refuses, or if the vital accepts, the body may prove too weak, unfit or flawed for the necessary change of its consciousness and its dynamic transformation.” (CWSA 22: 948–949)

XXXI—Sex-Desire Can Bring Down Adverse Vital Powers, Leading to Disturbance and Disaster

1.

"To master the sex-impulse,—to become so much master of the sex-centre that the sexual energy would be drawn upwards, not thrown outwards and wasted—it is so indeed that the force in the seed can be turned into a primal physical energy supporting all the others, *retas* into *ojas*. But no error can be more perilous than to accept the immixture of the sexual desire and some kind of subtle satisfaction of it and look on this as a part of the sadhana. It would be the most effective way to head straight towards spiritual downfall and throw into the atmosphere forces that would block the supramental descent, bringing instead the descent of adverse vital powers to disseminate disturbance and disaster. This deviation must be absolutely thrown away, should it try to occur and expunged from the consciousness, if the Truth is to be brought down and the work is to be done.

It is an error too to imagine that, although the physical sexual action is to be abandoned, yet some inward reproduction of it is part of the transformation of the sex-centre. The action of the animal sex-energy in Nature is a device for a particular purpose in the economy of the material creation in the Ignorance. But the vital excitement that accompanies it makes the most favourable

opportunity and vibration in the atmosphere for the inrush of those very vital forces and beings whose whole business is to prevent the descent of the supramental Light. The pleasure attached to it is a degradation and not a true form of the divine Ananda. The true divine Ananda in the physical has a different quality and movement and substance; self-existent in its essence, its manifestation is dependent only on an inner union with the Divine. You have spoken of Divine Love; but Divine Love, when it touches the physical, does not awaken the gross lower vital propensities; indulgence of them would only repel it and make it withdraw again to the heights from which it is already difficult enough to draw it down into the coarseness of the material creation which it alone can transform. Seek the Divine Love through the only gate through which it will consent to enter, the gate of the psychic being, and cast away the lower vital error." (CWSA 31: 500)

2.

"The transformation of the sex-centre and its energy is needed for the physical siddhi; for this energy is the support in the body of all the mental, vital and physical forces of the nature. It has to be changed into a mass and a movement of intimate Light, creative Power, pure Divine Ananda. It is only the bringing down of the supramental Light, Power and Bliss into the centre that can so change

it. As to the working afterwards, it is the supramental Truth and the creative vision and will of the Divine Mother that will determine it. But it will be a working of the conscious Truth, not of the Darkness and Ignorance to which sexual desire and enjoyment belong; it will be a power of preservation and free desireless radiation of the life-forces and not of their throwing out and waste. Avoid the imagination that the supramental life will be only a heightened satisfaction of the desires of the vital and the body; nothing can be a greater obstacle to the Truth in its descent than this hope of a glorification of the animal in human nature. Mind wants the supramental state to be a confirmation of its own cherished ideas and preconceptions; the vital wants it to be a glorification of its own desires; the physical wants it to be a rich prolongation of its own comforts and pleasures and habits. If it were to be that, it would be only an exaggerated and highly magnified consummation of the animal and the human nature, not a transition from the human into the Divine.

It is dangerous to think of giving up 'all barrier of discrimination and defence against what is trying to descend' upon you. Have you thought what this would mean if what is descending is something not in consonance with the divine Truth, perhaps even adverse? An adverse Power could ask no better condition for getting control over the seeker. It is only the Mother's Force and the divine Truth that one should admit without barriers. And even

there one must keep the power of discernment in order to detect anything false that comes masquerading as the Mother's Force and the divine Truth, and keep too the power of rejection that will throw away all mixture." (CWSA 31: 501)

3.

"Q: In *Bases of Yoga*, it is said about the sex-movements that they 'throw into the atmosphere forces that would block the supramental descent, bringing instead the descent of adverse vital powers'. Is it meant that any kind of sex-movement in the Ashram atmosphere would block the supramental descent? If it were so, the descent would hardly be possible because new sadhaks or temporary visitors may indulge in sex-movements and throw these forces in the atmosphere.

A: That is not what is said in that passage. What is spoken of is the taking of sex indulgence as a part of the aim and method of the sadhana. It is said that if that were done, the sadhana would bring down vital Forces of a type adverse to the supramental change which would serve to block (stand in the way of) the supramental descent." (CWSA 35: 136)

XXXII—Liberation from Sex through the Descent of Settled Higher Consciousness into the Physical Being

1.

"*Before, when I had ordinary contact with women, I did not feel the sex-pull so much, nor did I have the sense that it was always behind. Now it shows itself so vividly: contact, imagination, sensation. I am in despair, and feel I should give up my efforts and go away.*

Sex is your main difficulty—it is in fact the only very serious one and it is so because it is always behind and you have sometimes pushed it back, but never cut with it entirely. It is the physical vital that is weak and when the thing comes, becomes pliant to it in spite of the mental will's resistance. But even so; if the mental will made itself real and strong, these crises would be met and overcome, or at least pass without leading to indulgence in one form or another. The other possibility is the settled descent of the higher consciousness into the physical being. It is in these two ways that liberation from sex is possible." (CWSA 35: 719)

2.

"Q: I find that after several years the sex hunger has reawakened in me and clamours for satisfaction. What is the use of my undergoing a slow torture? As nothing else

succeeds, I suggest the exhaustion of this complex which somehow has got formed.

The Mother has already told you the truth about this idea. The idea that by fully indulging the sex hunger it will be finished and disappear for ever is a deceptive pretence held out by the vital to the mind in order to get a sanction for its desire—it has no other raison d'etre or truth or justification. If an occasional indulgence keeps the sex desire simmering, a full indulgence would only sink you in its mire. This hunger like other hungers does not cease by temporary satiation; it renews itself after a temporary abeyance and wants again indulgence. Neither sops nor gorgings are the right treatment for it. It can only go by a radical psychic rejection or a full spiritual opening with the increasing descent of a consciousness that does not want it and has a truer Ananda." (CWSA 32: 401–402)

3.

"If it [turning the seminal energy into ojas] is to be done by a process, it will have to be by Tapasya (self-control of mind, speech, act) and a drawing upward of the seminal energy through the Will. But it can be better done by the descent of the Force and its working on the sex-centre and consequent transformation, as with all other things in this Yoga." (CWSA 31: 508)

4.

"What seems to be best is that the movement of rising above should be completed and if you can feel there the wideness, peace, calm, silence of the Self and that can come down into the body through all the centres and there can be the working of the Force in that condition of the physical being, then the vital physical difficulty can be faced. The effort to do it by personal tapasya can carry one to a certain point, it can throw out sex etc., but for most it does not prevent all coming back by attack—unless the force of tapasya is so great and continuous that these forces get no chance. But the elimination of these things can only come, I think, by the descent of the higher consciousness—bringing with it the self-existent calm and wideness, the higher force and the Ananda occupying all down to the cells of the body. It is quite certain that these three together in the body can leave no room for sex—even if sex came, it would at once get so transmuted that it would be sex no longer." (CWSA 31: 513–514)

5.

"Naturally, if the sex is active (instead of giving place to Beauty and Ananda) and if the lower movements are active, it forms an obstacle to the establishment of the higher consciousness. But the higher can descend, if there is at all an opening, even before the lower movements

have definitely gone—it has then to complete the work of displacing them." (CWSA 31: 514)

6.

"It is the crude vital-physical that returns upon you in this way [*sexual suggestions*]—and these returns must be the cause of all the feeling of illness, weakness, tamas that you get. A purification of this part by the descent of the higher consciousness into it is a very great necessity for your sadhana." (CWSA 31: 518)

XXXIII—Descent into a Small Mind Makes Those Experiencing It Proclaim Themselves as Avatars

1.

"Each time that something of the Divine Truth and the Divine Force comes down to manifest upon earth, some change is effected in the earth's atmosphere. In the descent, those who are receptive are awakened to some inspiration from it, some touch, some beginning of sight. If they were capable of holding and expressing rightly what they receive, they would say, 'A great force has come down; I am in contact with it and what I understand of it, I will tell you.' But most of them are not capable of that, because they have small minds. They get illumined, possessed, as it were, and cry, 'I have the Divine Truth, I possess it whole and entire.' There are now upon earth at least two dozen Christs, if not as many Buddhas; India alone can supply any number of Avatars, not to speak of minor manifestations. But in this way, the whole thing begins to look grotesque; but if you see what is behind, it is not so stupid as it seems at the first glance. The truth is that the human personality has come in contact with some Being, some Power, and under the influence of education and tradition calls it Buddha or Christ or by any other familiar name. It is difficult to affirm that it was Buddha himself or the very Christ with whom there was the contact, but none can assert either that the inspiration did

not come from that which inspired the Christ or the Buddha. These human vessels may very well have received the inspiration from some such source. If they were modest and simple, they would be content to say that much and no more; they would say, 'I have received this inspiration from such and such a Great One', but instead they proclaim, 'I am that Great One.' I knew one who affirmed that he was both Christ and Buddha! He had received something, had experienced a truth, had seen the Divine Presence in himself and in others. But the experience was too strong for him, the truth too great. He became half crazy and the next day went out into the streets, proclaiming that in him Christ and Buddha had become one." (CWM 3: 78–79)

XXXIV—The Descent of the Vital World

1.

"Q: The Mother, in her prayer of 4 August 1914, says: *'Les hommes, pousses par le conflit des forces, accomplissent un ´sublime sacrifice´*. Apparently she refers to the great war; but as a result of that war, has any '*pure lumiere*' filled the hearts of men or the '*Force Divine*' spread on earth as she says later in the same prayer; has anything beneficial come out of that chaos? Since the nations are once more preparing for war and are in a state of constant conflict, there seems to be no indication of any change in the inner condition of men. People want war. Even people in a country like India seem to secretly wish for another great war. Hardly anyone seems to require Peace, Light or Love.

A: There has been a change for the worse—the descent of the vital world into the human. On the other hand except in the 'possessed' nations there is a greater longing for peace and feeling that such things ought not to happen. India did not get any real touch of the war. However what the Mother was thinking of was an opening to the spiritual truth. That has at least tried to come. There is a widespread dissatisfaction with the old material civilisation, a seeking for some deeper light and truth—only unfortunately it is being taken advantage of by the old

religions and only a very small minority is consciously searching for the new Light." (CWSA 32: 603–604)

2.

"*You say that after the great war there was 'the descent of the vital world into the human'. But did not the vital world already descend on earth—in Matter— even before human beings came? What other vital world remained yet to descend into the human? And how is it that it decided to come down just at present—to prevent the higher Light from coming down or finding room in the human world?*

A: When there is a pressure on the vital world due to the preparing Descent from above, that world usually precipitates something of itself into the human. The vital world is very large and far exceeds the human in extent. But usually it dominates by influence not by descent. Of course the effort of this part of the vital world is always to maintain humanity under its sway and prevent the higher Light." (CWSA 32: 604)

3.

Q: If, as you say, there has been a 'change for the worse' due to the descent of the vital world, would it not make the supramental descent in the earth-consciousness impossible or postpone its coming to some distant future instead of here and now? Moreover, the 'possessed'

nations are endowed with all the possible material power, making it difficult for any movement of peace to be successful. Except for their egoistic plans, nothing will be allowed to succeed.

A: The vital descent cannot prevent the supramental—still less can the possessed nations do it by their material power, since the supramental descent is primarily a spiritual fact which will bear its necessary outward consequences. What previous vital descents have done is to falsify the Light that came down as in the history of Christianity where it took possession of the teaching and distorted it and deprived it of any widespread fulfilment. But the supermind is by definition a Light that cannot be distorted if it acts in its own right and by its own presence. It is only when it holds itself back and allows inferior Powers of consciousness to use a diminished and already deflected Truth that the knowledge can be seized by the vital Forces and made to serve their own purpose." (CWSA 32: 604–605)

4.

"Hence, if we can escape another world war... Because war is there, it has never stopped. It has been there from almost the beginning of this century; it began with China, Turkey, Tripolitania, Morocco—you are following?—the Balkans, it has never stopped, it has become worse, but

each time it has become a world war, it has assumed altogether sordid proportions. All you my children, you have been born after the war (I am speaking of the First [World] War), so you do not know much about this, and then you have been born here, in a country which has been truly privileged. But the children born in Europe, latterly, these little ones, who were children of the war, carry something in them which will be very difficult to eradicate, a kind of horror, a fright. One could not have been mixed up with that without knowing what horror is. The first war was perhaps worse than the second. The second was so atrocious that all was lost.... But the first, oh! I don't know.... The last months I spent in Paris were truly fantastic. And it can't be told. The life in the trenches, for example, is something that cannot be told. The new generations do not know.... But, you see, the children born now will not even know if this was true, all these horrors which are related to them. What happened in the conquered countries, in Czechoslovakia, in Poland, in France—the frightful things, unbelievable, unthinkable, which took place—unless one has been very close by, has seen, one cannot believe it. It was... I was saying the other day that the vital world is a world of horrors; well, all the horrors of the vital world had descended upon earth, and upon earth they are still more horrible than in the vital world, because in the vital world, if you have an inner power, if you have the knowledge, if you have strength,

you act upon them—you act, you can subdue them, you can show yourself stronger. But all your knowledge, all your power, all your strength is nothing in this material world when you are subjected to the horrors of a war. And this acts in the terrestrial atmosphere in such a way that it is very, very difficult to eradicate it." (CWM 4: 302–303)

5.

"For instance, the First World War was the result of a tremendous descent of the forces of the vital world (hostile forces of the vital world) into the material world. Even those who were conscious of this descent and consequently armed to defend themselves against it, suffered from its consequences. The world, the whole earth suffered from its consequences. There was a general deterioration from the vital point of view, I could say, which was inevitable even for those who consciously knew whence the force came, whence the deterioration came, and who could therefore fight against it consciously—they could not prevent certain effects being produced in the earth atmosphere. Naturally, men do not know what happened to them; all that they have said is that everything had become worse since the war. That was all that they could affirm. For example, the moral level went down very much. It was simply the result of a formidable descent of the vital world: forces of disorder, forces of

corruption, forces of deterioration, forces of destruction, forces of violence, forces of cruelty.” (CWM 5: 305)

XXXV—Vision of the Mother's Descent Experienced by Sadhaks

1.

"Q: *In the afternoon I went to sleep remembering the Mother. After a while I saw that my subtle mind, vital and body had risen up high into a beautiful world, profound and peaceful. Then I saw many saints, sages and Gods tirelessly calling the Mother in their meditations. The joy of that world was truly deep. What a beautiful world! Then I saw the Mother slowly descend into their midst; she had ten arms and a bright white complexion. Suddenly I woke up. But lying quietly on the bed, I realised that my outer mind, life and body were moving inside the Mother's circle. In this condition I looked at my body and saw that my gross body had a beautiful golden colour. All this time I kept calling the Mother quietly. Is all this true?*

A: You seem to have ascended into a plane of the Higher Spiritualised Mind with a descent into it of Maheshwari bringing the power of the Divine Truth. The result in the physical consciousness was a perception of the One Consciousness and Life in all things and an illumination of the cells of the body with the golden light of the higher Truth." (CWSA 32: 275)

2.

"The day before yesterday, just before the Mother came down for her evening walk, I saw: The fire of aspiration is rising from my heart and its flame is slowly going upward as I constantly remember the Mother. Then I saw: The Mother, as we see her every day, is descending in the fire and filling my mind, vital and physical with peace and strength. In the second vision why did I see the Mother's image exactly as we see her every day?

It indicates an aspiration and an action for realisation in the external nature and not only in the inner being. When it is an inner action or action of another plane one can see the Mother in any of her forms, but for realisation in the physical her appropriate form is that which she wears here." (CWSA 32: 273)

3.

"Q: During my noon nap, I was in the Mother's lap. She put her transforming palm on my head. With her thumb she was pressing the Brahmic centre at the top of my head and opening it; I felt that something was being received from there. Then suddenly there was a shift of the consciousness into some world other than the terrestrial. A supraphysical light was experienced in the cells of the body, which was already flooded with the light. The

physical itself was taken up. Can this experience be explained?

There is nothing to explain. It was what you describe. At once the raising of the consciousness to a higher plane and the descent of that into the physical." (CWSA 32: 277)

4.

"*Q: Two years before I came here I had a vision one night: High above in the sky I saw two dark blue feet. So far as I remember they were adorned only with anklets. The soles were the colour of the red lotus. I concluded they were the Mother's lotus feet because that is how I felt and immediately saw a spotted cloth that is used in India in the Mother's worship descending from Her right side. Who could be this Mother?*

A: There is here a general symbolism in the details of the figure, but it is clearly the same experience [*as in the next two visions*] at its first stage in the first contact.

Q: The same night or the next, I had another vision. In front of me I saw a pure white staircase; it went up for countless steps until the top of it got lost in the sky. A white figure in a pure white gown (European style) rapidly descended the upper part of the stairs and, taking her

stand on the staircase, opened her arms to me. Who was this Mother?

A: Here and in the next it is obviously the Mother here. The staircase is a very usual symbol seen by many and it meant the acceptance and call to the ascent.

Q: A third experience I had when I came here for the first time. One night I heard something descending with a revolving motion above my head. No sooner did I hear the sound than I saw a smaller image of the above white Lady entering into me from above and stopping somewhere in the heart region. Who is this Power and Personality? How is she related to the second, the second to the first and all the three to you? How can I be true to her and to you?

A: By self-opening and an increasing self-giving to the Divine.

All these are visions of the Mother and it agrees with what she felt when she first saw you." (CWSA 32: 281–282)

5.

"Q: Yesterday night in a dream I was in a garden—it was night perhaps; there was not much light. I was there with some other sadhaks and we were there to meditate with the Mother. I could not see Mother but I knew she was

there, high up, waiting to give us meditation. But some of the sadhaks were careless, some were yawning, some were lying down. I was trying to meditate and I felt Mother's hand come down and touch my forehead for about a minute. Then I felt something in me being drawn up through my whole body as she slowly drew her hand back, and I felt something being taken away. But when I woke up, I did not know if it was a good or bad thing Mother took away. What was it?

A: It was certainly a true dream of the lower vital or perhaps subtle physical plane, where the laziness, indifference, frivolity of the sadhaks is a fact and the chief obstacle to the supramental descent into Matter. Because in your inner physical you were sincere and aspiring, the Mother's blessing came upon you and removed something there that was in the way. There is no indication in the dream as to what it was, but something in the lower vital or physical connected with this general defect." (CWSA 32: 282)

6.

"*Today in meditation my entire body opened and spread out infinitely. I felt a slight uneasiness at first, but I could feel the Mother's force. It carried me deeper and deeper into dense darkness through immense worlds of disgust and depression. Though I felt no peace and joy on this long*

journey, I continued to walk steadily and swiftly. Someone seemed to say, 'Do not be depressed. Walk on, proceed. You have to cross through still darker worlds of disgust and depression, but keep on going.' Along with this experience, I felt a great force. My heart opened wide; peace and profound contentment descended into it and I saw white light playing everywhere. Crossing another dark world, I saw a vibrant golden light. How powerful and beautiful that golden light was! My body, mind and heart were satisfied. I felt a sense of fearlessness. A sadhak's life is like the life of a warrior. However long the struggle, whatever the obstacles, we will ascend to the Supreme Truth. Is this the right way to observe my problems and difficulties?

A: Yes, that is the attitude you have to keep. If it is kept, then there will be no disturbance or only a superficial unease. The experience itself was that of the descent of the Mother's light of Divine Consciousness into domains of being which are ignorant or inconscient and obscure. The Mother herself has descended into these domains and moved through them to bring light there." (CWSA 32: 285–286)

7.

"Q: Over my head I see a plane of infinite and eternal Peace. The Mother is the Queen of this plane. From there I feel a ceaseless flow coming down towards me. It first

touches the higher being and then the lower parts. When they are prepared, the Peace or silence descends like a current of water which passes through the Brahmic hole.

A: That is quite correct. In many however it descends in a mass through the whole head and not in a current through the Brahmic hole." (CWSA 32: 287–288)

XXXVI—The Symbol of the Descent of the Divine Forces Upon the Physical Plane

1.

"*What is symbolised by the waterfall in the picture you have given me? Is it not the current of your serene peace and of your divine force which constantly floods me?*

Yes, it is the symbol of the descent of the divine forces upon the physical plane." (CWM 15: 40)

XXXVII—Experiences That May Occur Following an Invasion by the Infinite through the Descent

1.

"… the descent which is essential for bringing the permanent ascension, an increasing inflow from above, an experience of reception and retention of the descending spirit or its powers and elements of consciousness. This experience of descent can take place as a result of the other two movements or automatically before either has happened, through a sudden rift in the lid or a percolation, a downpour or an influx. A light descends and touches or envelops or penetrates the lower being, the mind, the life or the body; or a presence or a power or a stream of knowledge pours in waves or currents, or there is a flood of bliss or a sudden ecstasy; the contact with the superconscient has been established. For such experiences repeat themselves till they become normal, familiar and well understood, revelatory of their contents and their significance which may have at first been involved and wrapped into secrecy by the figure of the covering experience. For a knowledge from above begins to descend, frequently, constantly, then uninterruptedly, and to manifest in the mind's quietude or silence; intuitions and inspirations, revelations born of a greater sight, a higher truth and wisdom, enter into the being, a luminous intuitive discrimination works which dispels all darkness of

understanding or dazzling confusions, puts all in order; a new consciousness begins to form, the mind of a high wide self-existent thinking knowledge or an illumined or an intuitive or an overmental consciousness with new forces of thought or sight and a greater power of direct spiritual realisation which is more than thought or sight, a greater becoming in the spiritual substance of our present being; the heart and the sense become subtle, intense, large to embrace all existence, to see God, to feel and hear and touch the Eternal, to make a deeper and closer unity of self and the world in a transcendent realisation. Other decisive experiences, other changes of consciousness determine themselves which are corollaries and consequences of this fundamental change. No limit can be fixed to this revolution; for it is in its nature an invasion by the Infinite.

This, effected little by little or in a succession of great and swift definitive experiences, is the process of the spiritual transformation. It achieves itself and culminates in an upward ascent often repeated by which in the end the consciousness fixes itself on a higher plane and from there sees and governs the mind, life and body; it achieves itself also in an increasing descent of the powers of the higher consciousness and knowledge which become more and more the whole normal consciousness and knowledge. A light and power, a knowledge and force are felt which first take possession of the mind and remould it, afterwards of the life part and remould that, finally of the little physical

consciousness and leave it no longer little but wide and plastic and even infinite. For this new consciousness has itself the nature of infinity: it brings to us the abiding spiritual sense and awareness of the infinite and eternal with a great largeness of the nature and a breaking down of its limitations; immortality becomes no longer a belief or an experience but a normal self-awareness; the close presence of the Divine Being, his rule of the world and of our self and natural members, his force working in us and everywhere, the peace of the infinite, the joy of the infinite are now concrete and constant in the being; in all sights and forms one sees the Eternal, the Reality, in all sounds one hears it, in all touches feels it; there is nothing else but its forms and personalities and manifestations; the joy or adoration of the heart, the embrace of all existence, the unity of the spirit are abiding realities. The consciousness of the mental creature is turning or has been already turned wholly into the consciousness of the spiritual being. This is the second of the three transformations; uniting the manifested existence with what is above it, it is the middle step of the three, the decisive transition of the spiritually evolving nature." (CWSA 22: 946–947)

2.

"If the spirit could from the first dwell securely on the superior heights and deal with a blank and virgin stuff of mind and matter, a complete spiritual transformation might

be rapid, even facile: but the actual process of Nature is more difficult, the logic of her movement more manifold, contorted, winding, comprehensive; she recognises all the data of the task she has set to herself and is not satisfied with a summary triumph over her own complexities. Every part of our being has to be taken in its own nature and character, with all the moulds and writings of the past still there in it: each minutest portion and movement must either be destroyed and replaced if it is unfit, or, if it is capable, transmuted into the truth of the higher being. If the psychic change is complete, this can be done by a painless process, though still the programme must be long and scrupulous and the progress deliberate; but otherwise one has to be satisfied with a partial result or, if one's own scrupulousness of perfection or hunger of the spirit is insatiable, consent to a difficult, often painful and seemingly interminable action. For ordinarily the consciousness does not rise to the summits except in the highest moments; it remains on the mental level and receives descents from above, sometimes a single descent of some spiritual power that stays and moulds the being into something predominatingly spiritual, or a succession of descents bringing into it more and more of the spiritual status and dynamis: but unless one can live on the highest height reached, there cannot be the complete or more integral change." (CWSA 22: 948)

3.

"Moreover, the necessity of working out the change separately in each part of the being in its own nature and character compels the consciousness to descend into each in turn and act there according to its state and its possibility. If the work were done from above, from some spiritual height, there might be a sublimation or uplifting or the creation of a new structure compelled by the sheer force of the influence from above: but this change might not be accepted as native to itself by the lower being; it would not be a total growth, an integral evolution, but a partial and imposed formation, affecting or liberating some parts of the being, suppressing others or leaving them as they were; a creation from outside the normal nature, by imposition upon it, it could be durable in its entirety only as long as there was a maintenance of the creating influence. A descent of consciousness into the lower levels is therefore necessary, but in this way also it is difficult to work out the full power of the higher principle; there is a modification, dilution, diminution which keeps up an imperfection and limitation in the results: the light of a greater knowledge comes down but gets blurred and modified, its significance misinterpreted or its truth mixed with mental and vital error, or the force, the power to fulfil itself is not commensurate with its light. A light and power of the overmind working in its own full right and in its own sphere is one thing, the same light working in the obscurity

of the physical consciousness and under its conditions is something quite different and, owing to dilution and mixture, far inferior in its knowledge and force and results. A mutilated power, a partial effect or hampered movement is the consequence." (CWSA 22: 949–950)

4.

"Neither life nor mind succeeds in converting or perfecting the material existence, because they cannot attain to their own full force in these conditions; they need to call in a higher power to liberate and fulfil them. But the higher spiritual-mental powers also undergo the same disability when they descend into life and matter; they can do much more, achieve much luminous change, but the modification, the limitation, the disparity between the consciousness that comes in and the force of effectuation that it can mentalise and materialise, are constantly there and the result is a diminished creation. The change made is often extraordinary, there is even something which looks like a total conversion and reversal of the state of consciousness and an uplifting of its movements, but it is not dynamically absolute." (CWSA 22: 950–951)

5.

"Only the supermind can thus descend without losing its full power of action; for its action is always intrinsic and automatic, its will and knowledge identical and the result

commensurate: its nature is a self-achieving Truth-consciousness and, if it limits itself or its working, it is by choice and intention, not by compulsion; in the limits it chooses its action and the results of its action are harmonious and inevitable." (CWSA 22: 951)

XXXVIII—In the Descent, What Is an Experience and What Is Realisation

1.

"Your going up to a higher plane is an experience—the descent of the higher plane into you, if temporary, is an experience.

If you become fully aware of the nature of the higher plane and if that becomes part of your consciousness, it is a realisation.

These are the two words usually used, realisation and experience." (CWSA 30: 5)

2.

"Experience is a wide term which covers almost everything that happens in the inner consciousness—usually it indicates either a spiritual happening, e.g. the descent of peace, the feeling of the presence of the Mother, or an occult experience, e.g. a going into the other worlds in dream and seeing and doing things there. There are thousands of different kinds of experience. Visions are a special kind of experience in which the inner eye is active." (CWSA 30: 87)

3.

"Experience of Truth is an isolated or repeated descent of the Truth into the consciousness or ascent of the

consciousness into it. Realisation is when the Truth becomes a settled part of the consciousness." (CWSA 30: 5)

4.

"Of course one can sit down and try... not to meditate, because that's an activity of thought which does not lead to experience, but to concentrate and aspire and open oneself to the force from above; and if one does it persistently enough, there is a moment when one feels this force, this peace or this silence, this quietude descending, penetrating and descending into the being quite far. The first day it may be very little, and then gradually it becomes more. This also is an experience. All these are easy things to do." (CWM 7: 79)

5.

"There is no law that a feeling cannot be an experience; experiences are of all kinds and take all forms in the consciousness. When the consciousness undergoes, sees or feels anything spiritual or psychic or even occult, that is an experience—in the technical Yogic sense, for there are of course all sorts of experiences that are not of that character. Feelings themselves are of many kinds. The word feeling is often used for an emotion, and there can be psychic or spiritual emotions which are numbered among Yogic experiences, such as a wave of shuddha

bhakti or the rising of love towards the Divine. A feeling also means a perception of something felt—a perception in the vital or psychic or in the essential substance of the consciousness. I find even often a mental perception when it is very vivid described as a feeling. If you exclude all these feelings and kindred ones and say that they are feelings, not experiences, then there is very little room left for experiences at all. Feeling and vision are the main forms of spiritual experience. One sees and feels the Brahman everywhere; one feels a force enter or go out from one; one feels or sees the presence of the Divine within or around one; one feels or sees the descent of light; one feels the descent of peace or Ananda. Kick all that out on the ground that it is only a feeling and you make a clean sweep of most of the things that we call experience. Again we feel a change in the substance of the consciousness or the state of consciousness. We feel ourselves spreading in wideness and the body only as a small thing in the wideness (this can be seen also); we feel the heart-consciousness becoming wide instead of narrow, soft instead of hard, illumined instead of obscure, the head-consciousness also, the vital, even8 Letters on Yoga — III the physical; we feel thousands of things of all kinds and why are we not to call them experiences? Of course it is an inner sight, an inner feeling, subtle feeling, not material like the feeling of a cold wind or a stone or any other

object, but as the inner consciousness deepens it is not less vivid or concrete, it is even more so." (CWSA 30: 7–8)

6.

"There are two classes of things that happen in Yoga—realisations and experiences. Realisations are the reception in the consciousness and the establishment there of the fundamental truths of the Divine, of the Higher or Divine Nature, of the world-consciousness and the play of its forces, of one's own self and real nature and the inner nature of things, the power of these things growing in one till they are a part of one's inner life and existence,—as for instance, the realisation of the Divine Presence, the descent and settling of the higher Peace, Light, Force, Ananda in the consciousness, their workings there, the realisation of the divine or spiritual love, the perception of one's own psychic being, the discovery of one's own true mental being, true vital being, true physical being, the realisation of the overmind or the supramental consciousness, the clear perception of the relation of all these things to our present inferior nature and their action on it to change that lower nature. The list of course might be infinitely longer. These things also are often called experiences when they only come in flashes, snatches or rare visitations; they are spoken of as full realisations only when they become very positive or frequent or continuous or normal.

Then there are the experiences that help or lead towards the realisation of things spiritual or divine or bring openings or progressions in the sadhana or are supports on the way—experiences of a symbolic character, visions, contacts of one kind or another with the Divine or with the workings of the higher Truth, things like the waking of the Kundalini, the opening of the chakras, messages, intuitions, openings of the inner powers, etc. The one thing that one has to be careful about is to see that they are genuine and sincere and that depends on one's own sincerity, for if one is not sincere, if one is more concerned with the ego or being a big Yogi or becoming a superman than with meeting the Divine or getting the Divine Consciousness which enables one to live in or with the Divine, then a flood of pseudos or mixtures comes in, one is led into the mazes of the intermediate zone or spins in the grooves of one's own formations. There is the truth of the whole matter." (CWSA 30: 38)

7.

"The experiences you have had from above are spiritual experiences. The experience has come, but not yet taken possession of the centres—it is touching them so as to prepare. The Truth consciousness is the consciousness which lives in the Truth or in constant touch with it and not, as the ordinary mind does, in the Ignorance." (CWSA 30: 443)

8.

"It was not an imagination, but an experience. When such an experience occurs, the attempt to take hold of it mentally and continue it may on the contrary interrupt it. It is best to let it continue of itself; if it ceases, it is likely to recur." (CWSA 30: 48)

9.

"What you felt was not imagination at all, but the usual experience one has when the consciousness is lifted out of the body and takes its stand above the head. One is no longer bound then by the physical consciousness or the sense of the body—the body becomes only an instrument, a small part of the consciousness which has to be perfected. One enters into a larger free spiritual consciousness in place of the present bound and limited physical consciousness. If this lifting up above the body can be repeated always until it can be maintained, it will be a great landmark in your progress. It is the confinement in the physical consciousness that makes you (and everybody) narrow and selfish and miserable. Hitherto the higher consciousness with its peace etc. has been descending into you with great difficulty and fighting out the vital and physical resistance. If this release upward into the higher consciousness can be maintained, then there will be no longer the same difficulty. Much will still remain

to be done, but the foundation will have been made." (CWSA 30: 438)

XXXIX—The Descent of the Higher Consciousness Is the Basis of Realisation

1.

Four Bases of Realisation

"You know the four things on which the realisation has to be based—(1) on a rising to a station above the mind, (2) on the opening out of the cosmic consciousness, (3) on the psychic opening, (4) on the descent of the higher consciousness with its peace, light, force, knowledge, Ananda etc. into all the planes of the being down to the most physical. All this has to be done by the working of the Mother's force aided by your aspiration, devotion and surrender. That is the Path. The rest is a matter of the working out of these things for which you have to have faith in the Mother's working." (CWSA 30: 319)

2.

"What you are experiencing is the true foundation of the spiritual life and realisation. It has three elements—first, the love which is the heart of Bhakti; then the descent of peace and equanimity which is the first necessary basis for realisation of self and the higher knowledge—what comes with it is the descent of the force which will work out in you the whole sadhana; thirdly, the feeling of a guiding presence or power which is the basis of Karma — of work

and action founded in the spiritual consciousness." (CWSA 30: 320)

3.

"You can reply to *X* that the three experiences he is having are the right ones—viz. the opening of the psychic through the heart, the descent of peace and the consciousness of his true being as the witness. But these experiences must be developed, deepened, completed and made the ordinary state of the consciousness. So established they become the triple foundation of the sadhana." (CWSA 30: 320)

4.

"If you keep the wideness and calm as you are keeping it and also the love for the Mother in the heart, then all is safe—for it means the double foundation of the Yoga—the descent of the higher consciousness with its peace, freedom and security from above and the openness of the psychic which keeps all the effort or all the spontaneous movement turned towards the true goal." (CWSA 30: 320–321)

XL—Observing Experiences without Fear or Alarm

1.

"It is always dangerous to allow fear to come in like that and associate itself with experiences in the sadhana. There is nothing in the experiences themselves as you describe them that are at all alarming. A burning in the head or a creeping or ticklish sensation or a sense of something moving and working in the head has often been felt by many when there was an opening and the Force was working there. The other things also are in themselves usual enough, the sense of something separate from oneself and the opening and connection made between the head and the centre above. But where the anomaly comes in is that with the connection comes the fear and nervous physical upsetting. So long as there is fear it is no use going on with these experiences—you have to stop and get back to the normal consciousness. Besides that, as I have already said, you must realise what it is in you that has come across and created this upsetting. It is not the descent and the experiences, for many have had them or similar things without being any the worse. It is something in you, probably in your lower vital and physical, that does not want the Higher Consciousness because it will have to change and it has no intention of changing. When this pressure acts, it gets at once a fear and shakes the physical mind and system by its fear. You will have then to get rid

of this—till then it will not be safe for you to go farther." (CWSA 30: 49)

2.

"*I feel the descent of the Mother's peace and power and the action of her Force down to the physical. Why then does this trouble still persist? Is the nervous part of my being not receiving the Force or is it receiving it but refusing to change?*

The Peace and Force come down, but the nervous weakness also rises up and resists and counteracts their influence and prevents them from settling in the being. That is because your mind assents to the nervous weakness, accepts its suggestions as true, is full of apprehensions and doubts, believes even that it is the Force which creates the nervous trouble. If you fear the action of the Force, how can the Force do its work?" (CWSA 32: 220)

3.

"The first condition of progress in sadhana is not to fear, to have trust and keep quiet during an experience. What happened was simply that the Force came down and tried to quiet the mind and hold the body still so that it might work. If you had not feared, that would have happened. But your terror made the mind and body resist and get the

impression that they were being tortured or in danger. The feeling of the tough body and great force like a hand upon it is quite usual in this kind of experience and does not terrify the sadhak, but brings a great joy and release. In future you must try to be quiet and not have any fear or imagination of danger. Naturally when you thought that you could not bear it, the Force withdrew as you are not ready to receive." (CWSA 30: 484)

XLI—Sri Aurobindo's Poem on Descent

Descent

All my cells thrill swept by a surge of splendour,
Soul and body stir with a mighty rapture,
Light and still more light like an ocean billows
Over me, round me.

Rigid, stone like, fixed like a hill or statue,
Vast my body feels and upbears the world's weight;
Dire the large descent of the Godhead enters
Limbs that are mortal.

Voiceless, thronged, Infinity crowds upon me;
Presses down a glory of power eternal;
Mind and heart grow one with the cosmic wideness;
Stilled are earth's murmurs.

Swiftly, swiftly crossing the golden spaces
Knowledge leaps, a torrent of rapid lightnings;
Thoughts that left the Ineffable's flaming mansions,
Blaze in my spirit.

Slow the heart-beats' rhythm like a giant hammer's;
Missioned voices drive to me from God's doorway

Words that live not save upon Nature's summits,
Ecstasy's chariots.

All the world is changed to a single oneness;
Souls undying, infinite forces, meeting,
Join in God-dance weaving a seamless Nature,
Rhythm of the Deathless.

Mind and heart and body, one harp of being,
Cry that anthem, finding the notes eternal,—
Light and might and bliss and immortal wisdom
Clasping for ever." (CWSA 26: 377–378) (CWSA 2: 578)

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