

The Sunlit Path



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Editorial

My dear friends,

I am happy to bring to you the 15th May, 2020 issue of The Sunlit Path. This issue contains several short passages from writings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother which indeed enlighten us in our experiential journey *within*.

In the Living Words, we have a very simple yet profound reply from The Mother to a question '*How can one "learn of pure delight"?*'

Integral Education contains a very precise description of the '*Status of Knowledge Which Integral Yoga Envisages*'. An essay by Nolini Kanta Gupta on '*From the Known to the Unknown?*' illumines us about the relativity of different approaches in the quest of knowledge.

I do hope you will find the contents inspiring.

Sincere regards,
Dr Bhalendu Vaishnav



True Delight of Being

The Mother

How can one “learn of pure delight”?

First of all, to begin with, one must through an attentive observation grow aware that desires and the satisfaction of desires give only a vague, uncertain pleasure, mixed, fugitive and altogether unsatisfactory. That is usually the starting-point.

Then, if one is a reasonable being, one must learn to discern what is desire and refrain from doing anything that may satisfy one’s desires. One must reject them without trying to satisfy them. And so the first result is exactly one of the first observations stated by the Buddha in his teaching: there is an infinitely greater delight in conquering and eliminating a desire than in satisfying it. Every sincere and steadfast seeker will realise after some time, sooner or later, at times very soon, that this is an absolute truth, and that the delight felt in overcoming a desire is incomparably higher than the small pleasure, so fleeting and mixed, which may be found in the satisfaction of his desires. That is the second step.

Naturally, with this continuous discipline, in a very short time the desires will keep their distance and will no longer bother you. So you will be free to enter a little more deeply into your being and open yourself in an aspiration to... the Giver of Delight, the divine Element, the divine Grace. And if this is done with a sincere self-giving—something that gives itself, offers itself and expects nothing in exchange for its offering— one will feel that kind of sweet warmth, comfortable, intimate, radiant, which fills the heart and is the herald of Delight.

After this, the path is easy. (1)

Status of Knowledge Which Yoga Envisages

Sri Aurobindo

The status of knowledge, then, which Yoga envisages is not merely an intellectual conception or clear discrimination of the truth, nor is it an enlightened psychological experience of the modes of our being. It is a “realisation”, in the full sense of the word; it is the making real to ourselves and in ourselves of the Self, the transcendent and universal Divine, and it is the subsequent impossibility of viewing the modes of being except in the light of that Self and in their true aspect as its flux of becoming under the psychical and physical conditions of our world-existence. This realisation consists of three successive movements, internal vision, complete internal experience and identity. (2)

From the Known to the Unknown?

Nolini Kanta Gupta

From the known to the unknown: that is a well-known principle of procedure in the matter of knowledge, of action and of life generally. It is a golden rule that one should never take a step forward unless and until the previous step has been held firm and secure. But after all is this counsel the supreme counsel of perfection or even in point of fact does this represent and actuality? We have our misgivings.

For may not the contrary motto- "from the unknown to the known" - be equally valid both as a matter of fact and as a matter of principle? Do we not sometimes at least, take for granted and start with the unknown number x to find out the solution to our problem? Why go far, the very first step that the child takes in his adventurous journey of life, is it not a veritable step into the unknown? Indeed, many, in fact most of the scientific laws- the Laws of Nature-are they strictly the result of calculation and deduction from known and observed data or are they not rather "brilliant surmises", "sudden revelations" that overwhelm by their unexpected appearance? Newton did not arrive at his Law of Gravitation in the trail of a logical argument from given premises towards unforeseen conclusions. Nor did Einstein discover his version of the Law in any syllogistic way either. The fact seems to be more often true that the unknown reveals itself all on a sudden and is not reached through a continuous series of known steps. Examples could be easily multiplied from the history of scientific discoveries.

For the fact is that man, the being that knows, is composed not merely of known elements, known to himself and to others but possesses a hidden, an unknown side which is nonetheless part of himself. And even though unknown, it is not inactive, it always exerts its influence, imposes its presence. Man has a submerged consciousness which is in contact and communion with similarly submerged worlds of consciousness. Man's consciousness possesses aethers that catch vibrations from unknown regions. He has a secret sensitiveness that receives intimations from elsewhere than his physical senses and his logical reason. His external

mind does not always recognise such unorthodox or abnormal movements; he only expresses his surprise or amazement at the luminosity, the authenticity of solutions that come so simply, suddenly, inevitably, the unknown revealing itself miraculously.

In the spiritual field the unknown is a fact of primary importance and has to be given the first place, the foremost consideration. For the call is towards the Beyond and no amount of trafficking with the actual- the near and the known-can lead you out of it. There must be a sudden leap at one time or another. That is what is meant by saying that the deep calls unto the deep. For man has the power, the privilege to contact directly the thing that is unknown and beyond. There is an opening in him, a kind of backdoor, as it were, through which he can pass straight into another dimension.

That is why it is said constantly by the ancient sages that the truth cannot be found by much inquiry and much study, the truth is found only when it condescends, to reveal itself to the inquirer. The true truth is not at our beck and call, you cannot get it as and when you like, it does not wait comfortably just at the terminus of your investigations and argumentations. This does not mean, however, that we remain helpless and hopeless until the manna falls from heaven. No, something lies in our power, a spontaneous and natural faculty, to create at least favourable, conditions for the light to descend and appear. A quiet awaiting in the being, calm concentration and aspiration, a sincere opening are some of the conditions under which it is easier for the unknown to reveal its identity.

It is not blunder and it need not lead inevitably to a catastrophe if, for example, a child were given its first education not through his mother tongue, but through what is termed a foreign language. Would it, for that matter, harm a child invariably and necessarily, if he did not confine himself within the walls of his school in the midst of the known and the familiar, if he were to stir out and venture into wilds-how otherwise would Alice discover her Wonderland? A foreign tongue, a foreign atmosphere would often interest a child more than things known and familiar very distant and imprecision and even the peculiar difficulties exert a charm and evoke greater attention in the child. This is not to say

that familiarity breeds contempt, but that unfamiliarity does not repel but attracts also.

There is some point in a system of education which seeks to pull out the child from its familiar old-world *milieu* and place him in the midst of conditions where he can grow freely unencumbered by ties of the past and the immediate. The Russians have been blamed for many of their revolutionary, if not scandalous changes in social life and pattern: the child not knowing its father and mother, but being brought up in a common, almost anonymous nursery where he loses his family brand but develops a consciousness that is cosmopolitan and widely human. It seems it is only when one is thrown into strange and unfamiliar and unknown surroundings that one gets the best out of oneself. If you wish to increase the stature of your being, that is the way – if not *the way*, at least one effective way. (3)





Acknowledgement

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1. The Mother, Collected Works of The Mother, CWM 9, 22
2. Sri Aurobindo, Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, 23, 304
3. Nolini Kanta Gupta, Essays on Mysticism, Collected Works of Nolini Kanta Gupta 2; 300-302 Published by Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Pondicherry, January, 197

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