

About his path: “Later I will write to you what my path of yoga is. Or, if you come here, I will tell you. In these matters the spoken word is better than the written. For the present I can only say that its fundamental principle is to make a synthesis and unity of integral knowledge, integral works and integral devotion, and, raising this above the mental level to the supramental level of the Vijnana, to give it a complete perfection. The defect of the old yoga was that, knowing the mind and reason and knowing the Spirit, it remained satisfied with spiritual experience in the mind. But the mind can grasp only the fragmentary; it cannot completely seize the infinite, the undivided. The mind’s way to seize it is through the trance of samadhi, the liberation of moksha, the extinction of nirvana, and so forth. It has no other way. Someone here or there may indeed obtain this featureless liberation, but what is the gain? The Spirit, the Self, the Divine is always there. What the Divine wants is for man to embody Him here, in the individual and in the collectivity—to realise God in life. The old system of yoga could not synthesis or unify the Spirit and life; it dismissed the world as an illusion or a transient play of God. The result has been a diminution of the power of life and the decline of India. The Gita says: *utsīdeyurime lokā na kuryām karma cedaham*, “These peoples would crumble to pieces if I did not do actions.” Verily “these peoples” of India have gone down to ruin. What kind of spiritual perfection is it if a few ascetics, renunciates, holymen and realised beings attain liberation, if a few devotees dance in a frenzy of love, god-intoxication and bliss, and an entire race, devoid of life and intelligence, sinks to the depths of darkness and inertia? First one must have all sorts of partial experience on the mental level, flooding the mind with spiritual delight and illuminating it with spiritual light; afterwards one climbs upwards. Unless one makes this upward climb, this climb to the supramental level, it is not possible to know the ultimate secret of world-existence; the riddle of the world is not solved. There, the cosmic Ignorance which consists of the duality of Self and world, Spirit and life, is abolished. Then one need no longer look on the world as an illusion: the world is an eternal play of God, the perpetual manifestation of the Self. Then is it possible fully to know and realise God—*samagraṃ māṃ jñātuṃ praviṣṭum*, “to know and enter into Me completely”, as the Gita says. The physical body, life, mind and reason, Supermind, the Bliss-existence—these are the Spirit’s five levels. The higher we climb, the nearer comes a state of highest perfection of man’s spiritual evolution. When we rise to the Supermind, it becomes easy to rise to the Bliss. The status of indivisible and infinite Bliss becomes firmly established—not only in the timeless Supreme Reality, but in the body, in the world, in life. Integral existence, integral consciousness, integral bliss blossom out and take form in life. This endeavour is the central clue of my yogic path, its fundamental idea.”

To Barin’s concern that he looks upon the body as a corpse: “ But there is one thing you write, that you admit no physical connection with men, that you look upon the body as a corpse. And yet your mind wants to live the worldly life. Does this condition still persist? To look upon the body as a corpse is a sign of asceticism, the path of nirvana. The worldly life does not go along with this idea. There must be delight in everything, in the body as much as in the spirit. The body is made of consciousness, the body is a form of God. I see God in everything in the world. *Sarvam idaṃ brahma, vāsudevaḥ sarvamiti* (“All this here is the Brahman”, “Vasudeva, the Divine, is all”)—this vision brings the universal delight. Concrete waves of this bliss flow even through the body. In this condition, filled with spiritual feeling, one can live the worldly life, get married or do anything else. In every activity one finds a blissful self-expression of the divine. I have for a long time been transforming on the mental level all the objects and experiences of the mind and senses into delight. Now they are all taking the form of supramental delight. In this condition there is the perfect vision and experience of Sachchidananda—the divine Existence, Consciousness and Bliss.”

As to whether the work in India is over yet: “In this connection let me tell you briefly one or two things I have been observing for a long time. It is my belief that the main cause of India’s weakness is not subjection, nor poverty, nor a lack of spirituality or religion, but a diminution of the power of thought, the spread of ignorance in the birthplace of knowledge. Everywhere I see an inability or unwillingness to think—incapacity of thought or “thought phobia”. This may have been all right in the mediaeval period, but now this attitude is the sign of a great decline. The mediaeval period was a night, the day of victory for the man of ignorance; in the modern world it is the time of victory for the man of knowledge. He who can delve into and learn the truth about the world by thinking more, searching more, labouring more, gains more power.”

“... Our civilisation has become a stagnant backwater, our religion a bigotry of externals, our spirituality a faint glimmer of light or a momentary wave of intoxication. So long as this state of things lasts, any permanent resurgence of India is impossible.

It is in Bengal that this weakness has gone to the extreme. The Bengali has quickness of intellect, a capacity for feeling, intuition. In all these qualities he is the foremost in India. Each of these qualities is necessary, but *they are not in themselves sufficient. If there were added to them depth of thought, manly force, heroic audacity, proficiency and delight in prolonged labour, the Bengali would become the leader not only of India, but of the world. But the Bengali does not want this; he wants to pick up things the easy way—knowledge without thought, results without labour, spiritual perfection after an easy discipline. He relies on emotional excitement, but excessive emotion devoid of knowledge is the very symptom of the disease. What has the Bengali been doing from the time of Chaitanya onwards, from long before that, in fact? Catching hold of some easy superficial aspect of spiritual truth and dancing about for a few days on waves of emotion; afterwards there is exhaustion, inertia. And at home, the gradual decline of Bengal, the ebbing away of her life-force. In the end, what has the Bengali come to in his own province? He has nothing to eat and no clothes to wear, there is wailing on every side. His wealth, his business and trade, even his agriculture begin to pass slowly into the hands of outsiders. We have abandoned the yoga of divine power and so the divine power has abandoned us. We practise the yoga of love, but where there is no knowledge or power, love does not stay. Narrowness and littleness come in. In a narrow and small mind, life and heart, love finds no room. Where is there love in Bengal? Nowhere else even in this division-ridden India is there so much quarrelling, strained relations, jealousy, hatred and factionalism as in Bengal.”*

*“... I want to make a vast and strong equality the foundation of my yoga; in all the activities of the being, which will be based on that equality, I want a complete, firm and unshakable power; over that ocean of power I want the radiation of the sun of Knowledge and in that luminous vastness an established ecstasy of infinite love and bliss and oneness. I do not want tens of thousands of disciples. It will be enough if I can get as instruments of God one hundred complete men free from petty egoism. I have no confidence in guruhood of the usual type. I do not want to be a guru. What I want is for someone, awakened by my touch or by that of another, to manifest from within his sleeping divinity and to realise the divine life. Such men will uplift this country.”*