2 October 1957

“The essential character of Supermind is a Truth-Consciousness which knows by its own inherent right of nature, by its own light; it has not to arrive at knowledge but possesses it. It may indeed, especially in its evolutionary action, keep knowledge behind its apparent consciousness and bring it forward as if from behind the veil; but even then this veil is only an appearance and does not really exist: the knowledge was always there, the consciousness its possessor and present revealer.... In the Mind of Light when it becomes full-orbed this character of the Truth reveals itself though in a garb that is transparent even when it seems to cover: for this too is a truth-consciousness and a self-power of knowledge. This too proceeds from the Supermind and depends upon it even though it is limited and subordinate. What we have called specifically the Mind of Light is indeed the last of a series of descending planes of consciousness in which the Supermind veils itself by a self-chosen limitation or modification of its self-manifesting activities, but its essential character remains the same: there is in it an action of light, of truth, of knowledge in which inconscience, ignorance and error claim no place. It proceeds from knowledge to knowledge; we have not yet crossed over the borders of the truth-conscious into ignorance.”

*The Supramental Manifestation, SABCL, Vol. 16, pp. 70–71*

Sweet Mother, I did not understand this passage: “In the Mind of Light when it becomes full-orbed this character of the Truth reveals itself though in a garb that is transparent even when it seems to cover...”
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And so? What is it you don’t understand?

This garb that is transparent and...

This is an image.

It is somewhat like this. In the supramental vision one has a direct and total and immediate knowledge of things, in the sense that one sees everything at the same time, complete in itself, total. The truth of a thing in all its aspects at the same time and... simultaneous, complete. And as soon as one wants to explain that or to describe it, one is obliged to come down, so to say, to a plane which he calls here “the Mind of Light”, where things have to be said or even thought or expressed one after another, in a certain order and a certain relation with one another; the simultaneity disappears, for in the present state of our mode of expression, to say everything at the same time, all at once, is impossible, and we are compelled to veil one part of what we see or know in order to bring it out one thing after another; and this is what he calls the “veil”, which is transparent, for one sees everything, knows everything at the same time; one has the total knowledge of a thing, but one cannot express it fully all at once. There are no words or any possibility of expression, so long as we are what we are. We must necessarily make use of an inferior process to express ourselves, and yet, at the same time we have the full knowledge; it is only the necessity of transmitting his knowledge in words which compels us to veil, so to say, a part of what we know and to let it come out only successively. But it is a transparent veil, for we know the thing— we know it, see it, understand it in its totality— but we cannot express it all at the same time. We have to say it, one thing after another, successively. It is the veil of the expression adapted to our needs both of utterance and understanding. The knowledge is there, it is there in reality—not that one is searching for it and expressing it as one goes on finding it— it is there in its totality but the
expression demands that one says it one thing after another; and so this naturally diminishes the omnipotence of which he speaks, for omnipotence is the total vision of the thing expressed in its totality. Omniscience is there in principle, it is there, perceptible, but the total power of this omniscience cannot act since it needs to come down one plane to be able to express itself.

Do you catch what I mean? Yes?

To be able to live fully in the supramental knowledge requires other means of expression than the ones we have now. New means of expression must be worked out to make it possible to express the supramental knowledge in a supramental way.... Now, we are obliged to raise our mental capacity to its utmost so that there is only, so to say, a sort of hardly perceptible borderline, but one that still exists, for all our means of expression still belong to this mental world, do not have the supramental capacity. We do not have the necessary organs for that. We would have to become beings of the supermind, with a supramental substance, a supramental inner organisation, in order to be able to express the supramental knowledge in a supramental way. So far we are... half way; we can, somewhere in our consciousness, rise entirely into the supramental vision and knowledge, but we cannot express it. We have to come down again one plane in order to express ourselves.

So, this veil which is transparent even when it seems to cover, is transparent for the consciousness, you see, for the consciousness sees and knows things in a supramental way, but one part is veiled and it only comes out progressively, for there is no other way of doing it. But for the consciousness it is transparent, though apparently it seems to hide. That's it.

(Silence)

I have been asked some questions about the film we saw
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yesterday.... ¹ The first one is to say the least bizarre! I am giving it to you exactly as it is here. I am asked:

"Is the real Buddha you know, whom you speak of in Prayers and Meditations, ² the same as the one whose statues are worshipped?"

Statues... there are thousands of statues of the Buddha. There is the Buddha as he is known in India, the Buddha known in Ceylon, the Buddha known in Tibet, the Buddha known in China, in Cambodia, Thailand, Japan and elsewhere. If you are speaking of the historical fact, I think they would all tell you that it is to the Gautama Buddha of India they pray, but in fact, each one of these branches of Buddhism, and many more, has its own conception of the Buddha, and it is the conception of a godhead which is worshipped in statues, much more than a divine being, so... If you show me a statue and ask me, “In this statue is there the influence or the presence of the Buddha as you know him?”, I could reply yes or no to you; but when you say “whose statues are worshipped”, I cannot answer you, for that depends on what they have drawn into the statue they worship. Historically, it is always the same name but in fact I don’t know if it is always the same spiritual person! So I cannot answer you.

If you ask me about the statues we saw yesterday... You saw how many there were and some of them were very, very different, it was a very different Buddha. There was one which was shown to us very often, and which is quite authentic, but there were many others which represented at the very least other personalities of the Buddha. It depends on what you mean; if you mean historically, yes, they always say it is the Buddha; but each statue is different.

So, that’s one question. Now we come to something quite different:

¹ An English documentary on the Buddha: Gautama Buddha.
² Prayers and Meditations, 20 and 21 December 1916.
“In what way can the teaching of the Buddha now be an obstacle or help to humanity on the path of supramentalisation?”

Everything that helps humanity to make progress is a help, and all that prevents it from making progress is an obstacle!

In fact, you are asking this because we study and meditate on the Dhammapada.... Naturally, I took this text because I consider that at a particular stage of development it can be very useful. It is a discipline which has been crystallised in certain formulas and if one uses these formulas profitably, it can be very helpful, otherwise I wouldn’t have taken it. How helpful depends on each one. It depends on whether one knows how to profit from it or not.

And then, the last question:

“This Aurobindo has said that the Buddha was an avatar....”

We have said this several times already.

And then, here it becomes very mysterious:

“Apart from the teaching of the Buddha, what remains of his personality in the world?”

(To the disciple who had asked the question) Why do you make this distinction?

When he entered into Nirvana, it was said that his teaching would now remain in the relics.

In the relics! Well, then that means the two things go together. I

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don’t see why you separate them. There is something of his influence in his teaching, naturally! It is the teaching that transmits his influence in the mental field.

His direct action, apart from his teaching, is limited to a very few people who are very fervent believers and have the power of evocation. Otherwise, the most important part of his action, almost the whole of his action, is associated, united, fused with his teaching. It seems difficult to make a distinction.

(After a silence) The forms of Divine Power which have incarnated in different beings, have incarnated with a specific aim, for a specific action, at a specific moment of universal development, but essentially they are only differentiated aspects of the One Being; therefore, it is in the particular purpose of the action that the difference lies. Otherwise it is always the same Truth, the same Power, the same eternal Life which manifests in these forms and creates these forms at a given moment for a specific reason and a specific aim; this is preserved in history, but eternally they are new forms which are used for new progress. Old forms can endure as a vibration lasts, but their purpose historically, it could be said, was momentary, and one form is replaced by another in order that a new step forward may be taken. The mistake humanity makes is that it always hangs on to what is behind it and wants to perpetuate the past indefinitely. These things must be used at the time when they are useful. For there is a history of each individual development; you may pass through stages in which these disciplines have their momentary utility, but when you have gone beyond that moment you ought to enter into something else and see that historically it was useful but now is so no longer. Certainly, to those who have reached, for instance, a certain state of development and mental control, I won’t say, “Read the Dhammapada and meditate on it”; it would be a waste of time. I give it to those who have not gone beyond the stage where it is necessary. But always man takes upon his shoulders an interminable burden. He does not want to drop anything of the
past and he stoops more and more under the weight of a useless accumulation.

You have a guide for a part of the way but when you have travelled this part leave the road and the guide and go farther! This is something men find difficult to do. When they get hold of something which helps them, they cling to it, they do not want to move any more. Those who have progressed with the help of Christianity do not want to give it up and they carry it on their shoulders; those who have progressed with the help of Buddhism do not want to leave it and they carry it on their shoulders, and so this hampers the advance and you are indefinitely delayed.

Once you have passed the stage, let it drop, let it go! Go farther.

Mother, the present religio-political movement for the revival of Buddhism...

What? Oh! I don’t take part in politics. It is altogether useless. People use things just for political ends, but that is not at all interesting.