Supermind and Humanity

WHAT THEN would be the consequence for humanity of the descent of Supermind into our earthly existence, its consequence for this race born into a world of ignorance and inconscience but capable of an upward evolution of its consciousness and an ascent into the light and power and bliss of a spiritual being and spiritual nature? The descent into the earth-life of so supreme a creative power as the Supermind and its truth-consciousness could not be merely a new feature or factor added to that life or put in its front but without any other importance or only a restricted importance carrying with it no results profoundly affecting the rest of earth-nature. Especially it could not fail to exercise an immense influence on mankind as a whole, even a radical change in the aspect and prospect of its existence here, even if this power had no other capital result on the material world in which it had come down to intervene. One cannot but conclude that the influence, the change made would be far-reaching, even enormous: it would not only establish the Supermind and a supramental race of beings upon the earth, it could bring about an uplifting and transforming change in mind itself and, as an inevitable consequence, in the consciousness of man, the mental being, and would equally bring about a radical and transforming change in the principles and forms of his living, his ways of action and the whole build and tenor of his life. It would certainly open to man the access to the supramental consciousness and the supramental life; for we must suppose that it is by such a transformation that a race of supramental beings would be created, even as the human race itself has arisen by a less radical but still a considerable uplifting and enlargement of consciousness and conversion of the body’s instrumentation and its indwelling and evolving mental and spiritual capacities and powers out of a first animal state. But even without any
such complete transformation, the truth-principle might so far replace the principle we see here of an original ignorance seeking for knowledge and arriving only at a partial knowledge that the human mind could become a power of light, of knowledge finding itself, not the denizen of a half-way twilight or a servant and helper of the ignorance, a purveyor of mingled truth and error. Mind might even become in man, what it is in its fundamental origin, a subordinate, limited and special action of the Supermind, a sufficiently luminous receptacle of truth, and at least all falsity in its works might cease.

It could at once be objected that this would alter the whole evolutionary order and its balance and leave an incurable gap in its completeness: there would be an unbridged gulf between man and the animal and no way for the evolutionary nisus to journey over it in the progress of the consciousness from animality to divinity; for some kind of divinity would be involved in the suggested metamorphosis. It might be contended that the true process of evolution is to add a new principle, degree or stage to the already existing order and not to make any alteration in any previously established feature. Man came into being but the animal remained the animal and made no progress towards a half-humanity: all slight modifications of consciousness, capacities or habits in domestic animals produced by the association with man or by his training of them are only slight alterations of the animal intelligence. Still less can the plant move towards animal consciousness or brute Matter become in the slightest degree, even subconsciously or half subconsciously, aware of itself or responsive or reactive. The fundamental distinctions remain and must remain unaltered in the cosmic order. But this objection presumes that the new humanity must be all of one level; there may well be gradations of consciousness in it which would bridge the distance between its least developed elements and the higher animals who, although they cannot pass into a semi-human kind, might still progress towards a higher animal intelligence: for certain experiments show that these are not all entirely unprogressive. These gradations would serve the purpose of the transition quite as well as the least developed humans
in the present scale without leaving a gap so wide as to disturb
the evolutionary order of the universe. A considerable saltus can,
as it is, be observed separating the different orders, Matter and
the plant, the plant and the lower animals, one species of animals
and another, as well as that always existing and large enough
between the highest animal and man. There would therefore be
no incurable breach in the evolutionary order, no such distance
between human mind and animal mind, between the new type of
human being and the old animal level as could not be overleaped
or would create an unbridgeable gulf for the most developed
animal soul in its passage to the least developed type of the new
humanity. A leap, a saltus, there would be, as there is now; but it
would not be between animality and divinity, from animal mind
to Supermind: it would be between a most highly developed
animal mind turning towards human possibilities — for without
that the passage from animal to man could not be achieved —
and a human mind waking to the possibility, not yet the full
achievement, of its own higher yet unattained capacities.

One result of the intervention of Supermind in the earth-
nature, the descent of the supreme creative Truth-Power, might
well be a change in the law of evolution, its method and its ar-
rangement: a larger element of the principle of evolution through
knowledge might enter into the forces of the material universe.
This might extend itself from a first beginning in the new creation
and produce increasing effects in the order which is now wholly
an evolution in the ignorance, and indeed starts from the com-
plete nescience of the Inconscient and proceeds towards what
can be regarded even in its highest attainment of knowledge
as a lesser ignorance, since it is more a representation than a
direct and complete possession of knowledge. If man began to
develop the powers and means of a higher knowledge in some-
thing like fullness, if the developing animal opened the door
of his mentality to beginnings of conscious thought and even a
rudimentary reason, — at his highest he is not so irrevocably far
from that even now, — if the plant developed its first subcon-
scient reactions and attained to some kind of primary nervous
sensitiveness, if Matter, which is a blind form of the Spirit, were
to become more alive with the hidden power within it and to offer more readily the secret sense of things, the occult realities it covers, as for instance, the record of the past it always preserves even in its dumb inconscience or the working of its involved forces and invisible movements revealing veiled powers in material nature to a subtler generalised perception of the new human intelligence, this would be an immense change promising greater changes in the future, but it would mean only an uplifting and not a disturbance of the universal order. Evolution would itself evolve, but it would not be perturbed or founder.

It is difficult for us to conceive in theory or admit as a practical possibility the transformation of the human mentality I have suggested as a change that would naturally take place under the lead of the supramental Truth-consciousness, because our notions about mind are rooted in an experience of human mentality in a world which starts from inconscience and proceeds through a first almost complete nescience and a slowly lessening ignorance towards a high degree but always incomplete scope and imperfect method of only partially equipped knowledge which does not serve fully the needs of a consciousness always pushing towards its own still immeasurably distant absolute. The visible imperfections and limitations of mind in the present stage of its evolution here we take as part of its very nature; but in fact the boundaries in which it is still penned are only temporary limits and measures of its still incomplete evolutionary advance; its defects of methods and means are faults of its immaturity and not proper to the constitution of its being; its achievement, although extraordinary under the hampering conditions of the mental being weighed down by its instrumentation in an earthly body, is far below and not beyond what will be possible to it in its illumined future. For mind is not in its very nature an inventor of errors, a father of lies bound down to a capacity of falsehood, wedded to its own mistakes and the leader of a stumbling life as it too largely is at present owing to our human shortcomings: it is in its origin a principle of light, an instrument put forth from the Supermind and, though set to work within limits and even set to create limits, yet the limits are luminous borders for
a special working, voluntary and purposive bounds, a surface of the finite ever extending itself under the eye of infinity. It is this character of Mind that will reveal itself under the touch of Supermind and make human mentality an adjunct and a minor instrumentation of the supramental knowledge. It will even be possible for the mind no longer limited by the intellect to become capable of a sort of mental gnosis, a luminous reproduction of the Truth in a diminished working, extending the power of the Light not only to its own but to lower levels of consciousness in their climb towards self-transcendence. Overmind, Intuition, Illumined Mind and what I have called Higher Mind, these and other levels of a spiritualised and liberated mentality, will be able to reflect in the uplifted human mind and its purified and exalted feeling and force of life and action something of their powers and prepare the ascent of the soul to their own plateaus and peaks of an ascending existence. This is essentially the change which can be contemplated as a result of the new evolutionary order, and it would mean a considerable extension of the evolutionary field itself and will answer the question as to the result on humanity of the advent of Supermind into the earth-nature.

If mind in its origin from Supermind is itself a power of Supermind, a principle of Light and a power of Light or a force for Knowledge specialised in its action for a subordinate purpose, yet it assumes a different aspect when in the working out of this purpose it separates itself more and more from the supramental light, from the immediate power and supporting illumination of the supramental principle. It is as it departs more and more in this direction from its own highest truth that it becomes a creator or parent of ignorance and is or seems to be the highest power in a world of ignorance; it becomes itself subject to ignorance and seems only to arrive at a partial and imperfect knowledge. The reason of this decline is that it is used by the Supermind principally for the work of differentiation which is necessary if there is to be a creation and a universe. In the Supermind itself, in all its creation there is this differentiating power, the manifestation of the One in the Many and
the Many in the One; but the One is never forgotten or lost in its multiplicity which always consciously depends upon and never takes precedence over the eternal oneness. In the mind, on the contrary, the differentiation, the multiplicity does take precedence and the conscious sense of the universal oneness is lost and the separated unit seems to exist for itself and by itself as a sufficient self-conscious integer or in inanimate objects as the inconscient integer.

It should be noted, however, that a world or plane of mind need not be a reign of ignorance where falsity, error or nescience must have a place; it may be only a voluntary self-limitation of knowledge. It could be a world where all possibilities capable of being determined by mind could manifest themselves in the successions of Time and find a true form and field of their action, the expressive figure of themselves, their capacity of self-development, self-realisation of a kind, self-discovery. This is actually what we meet when we follow in psychic experience the line of descent by which the involution takes place which ends in Matter and the creation of the material universe. What we see here is not the planes or worlds of the descent in which mind and life can keep something of their truth and something of the light of the spirit, something of their true and real being; here we see an original inconscience and a struggle of life and mind and spirit to evolve out of the material inconscience and in a resultant ignorance to find themselves and grow towards their full capacity and highest existence. If mind succeeds in that endeavour there is no reason why it should not recover its true character and be once more a principle and power of Light and even in its own way aid in the workings of a true and complete knowledge. At its highest it might pass out of its limitations into the supramental truth and become part and function of the supramental knowledge or at the least serve for a minor work of differentiation in the consensus of that knowledge: in the lower degree below Supermind it might be a mental gnosia, a spiritual or spiritualised perception, feeling, activity, sense which could do the works of knowledge and not of ignorance. Even at a still lower level it could be an increasingly luminous passage leading
from light to light, from truth to truth and no longer a circling in the mazes of half-truth and half-nescience. This would not be possible in a world where untransformed mind or human mind burdened with its hampering disabilities, as it now is, will still be the leader or the evolution’s highest achievement, but with Supermind for the leading and dominant power this might well happen, and might even be regarded as one result and an almost inevitable result of its descent into the human world and its touch on the mind of humanity.

How far this would go, whether the whole of humanity would be touched or only a part of it ready for the change, would depend on what was intended or possible in the continued order of the universe. If the old evolutionary principle and order must be preserved, then only a section of the race would pass onward, the rest would keep the old human position, level and function in the ascending order. But even so there must be a passage or bridge between the two levels or orders of being by which the evolution would make its transition from one to the other; the mind would there be capable of contact with and modification by the supramental truth and thus would be the means of the soul’s passing on upward: there must be a status of mind capable of receiving and growing in the Light towards Supermind though not reaching it; through that, as even now happens in a lesser degree through a dimmer medium, the lustre of a greater truth would send down its rays for the liberation and uplift of the soul in the ignorance. Supermind is here veiled behind a curtain and, though not organised for its own characteristic action, it is the true cause of all creation here, the power for the growth of truth and knowledge and the ascension of the soul towards the hidden Reality. But in a world where Supermind has made its appearance, it could hardly be a separate factor isolated from the rest, it would inevitably not only create superman but change and uplift man. A total change of the mental principle, such as has been suggested, cannot be ruled out as impossible.

Mind as we know it, as a power of consciousness quite distinct from Supermind, no longer a power devolved from it, connected with it and dependent upon it, but practically
divorced from its luminous origin, is marked by several characteristics which we conceive to be the very signs of its nature: but some of these belong to Supermind also and the difference is in the way and scope of their action, not in their stuff or in their principle. The difference is that mind is not a power of whole knowledge and only when it begins to pass beyond itself a power of direct knowledge: it receives rays of the truth but does not live in the sun; it sees as through glasses and its knowledge is coloured by its instruments, it cannot see with the naked eye or look straight at the sun. It is not possible for mind to take its stand in the solar centre or anywhere in the radiant body or even on the shining circumference of the orb of perfect truth and acquire or share in its privilege of infallible or absolute knowledge. It would be only if it had already drawn near to the light of Supermind that it could live anywhere near this sun in the full splendour of its rays, in something of the full and direct blaze of Truth, and the human mind even at its highest is far from that; it can only live at most in a limited circle, in some narrow beginnings of a pure insight, a direct vision and it would take long for it, even in surpassing itself, to reach to an imitative and fragmentary reflection of a dream of the limited omniscience and omnipotence which is the privilege of a delegated divinity, of the god, of a demiurge. It is a power for creation, but either tentative and uncertain and succeeding by good chance or the favour of circumstance or else, if assured by some force of practical ability or genius, subject to flaw or pent within unescapable limits. Its highest knowledge is often abstract, lacking in a concrete grasp; it has to use expedients and unsure means of arrival, to rely upon reasoning, argumentation and debate, inferences, divinations, set methods of inductive or deductive logic, succeeding only if it is given correct and complete data and even then liable to reach on the same data different results and varying consequences; it has to use means and accept results of a method which is hazardous even when making a claim to certitude and of which there would be no need if it had a direct or a supra-intellectual knowledge. It is not necessary to push the description further; all this is the very nature of our terrestrial ignorance and its shadow
hangs on even to the thought and vision of the sage and the seer
and can be escaped only if the principle of a truth-conscious
supramental knowledge descends and takes up the governance
of the earth-nature.

It should be noted, however, that even at the bottom of
the involutionary descent, in the blind eclipse of consciousness
in Matter, in the very field of the working of the Inconscient
there are signs of the labour of an infallible force, the drive of
a secret consciousness and its promptings, as if the Inconscient
itself were secretly informed or impelled by a Power with a direct
and absolute knowledge; its acts of creation are infinitely surer
than the workings of our human consciousness at its best or
the normal workings of the Life-power. Matter, or rather the
Energy in Matter seems to have a more certain knowledge, a
more infallible operation of its own and its mechanism once set
going can be trusted for the most part to do its work accurately
and well. It is so that man is able, taking hold of a material
energy, to mechanise it for his own ends and trust it under proper
conditions to do for him his work. The self-creating life-power,
amazingly abundant in its invention and fantasy, yet seems to be
more capable of flaw, aberration and failure; it is as if its greater
consciousness carried in it a greater capacity for error. Yet it
is sure enough ordinarily in its workings: but as consciousness
increases in the forms and operations of life, and most when
mind enters in, disturbances also increase as if the increase of
consciousness brought with it not only richer possibilities but
more possibilities of stumbling, error, flaw and failure. In mind,
in man, we seem to reach the height of this antinomy, the greatest,
the highest, widest reach and achievements of consciousness, the
greatest amount of uncertainty, defect, failure and error. This, we
may conjecture, may be because in inconscient Nature there is a
truth of energy at work which follows infallibly its own law, an
energy which can walk blindfold without stumbling because the
automatic law of the truth is within it, operating surely without
swerving or mistake when there is no external intervention or
interference. But in all normally automatic processes of existence
there is this law: even the body has an unexpressed knowledge of
its own, a just instinct in its action within certain limits and this when not interfered with by life’s desires and mind’s errors can work with a certain accuracy and sureness. But Supermind alone has the truth-consciousness in full and, if this comes down and intervenes, mind, life and body too can attain to the full power of the truth in them and their full possibility of perfection. This, no doubt, would not take place at once, but an evolutionary progress towards it could begin and grow with increasing rapidity towards its fullness. All men might not reach that fullness till a later time, but still the human mind could come to stand perfected in the Light and a new humanity take its place as part of the new order.

This is the possibility we have to examine. If it is destined to fulfil itself, if man is not doomed to remain always as a vassal of the Ignorance, the disabilities of the human mind on which we have dwelt are not such as must remain irredeemably in possession and binding for ever. It could develop higher means and instrumentalities, pass over the last borders of the Ignorance into a higher knowledge, grow too strong to be held back by the animal nature. There would be a liberated mind escaping from ignorance into light, aware of its affiliation to Supermind, a natural agent of Supermind and capable of bringing down the supramental influence into the lower reaches of being, a creator in the light, a discoverer in the depths, an illuminant in the darkness, helping perhaps to penetrate even the Inconscient with the rays of a secret Superconscience. There would be a new mental being not only capable of standing enlightened in the radiance of the Supermind but able to climb consciously towards it and into it, training life and body to reflect and hold something of the supramental light, power and bliss, aspiring to release the secret divinity into self-finding and self-fulfilment and self-poise, aspiring towards the ascension to the divine consciousness, able to receive and bear the descent of the divine light and power, fitting itself to be a vessel of the divine Life.