CONCLUSION

The meditative poetry of AE offers a synthesis of the loftier elements of Nature and the human sensitivity which opens up path to divine perception. His attempt to come closer to the bounty of the Almighty through mystic exhilaration is actually an aesthetic excursion into the inner being with a view to exploring the fabric of the psyche. He made thorough studies into the various world-religions and philosophies but found them inadequate to help in the inward flowering of the spiritual self. Hence, instead, he cast his look towards the picturesque landscape and his country's legendary heritage wherefrom he derived inspiration to unfold the Mystic abundance filled in the earth, air and water. The grand powers of Nature, often obscured to the modern man, provided the poet with such sensuous delight that he made a rapport between the divine powers of the heaven-world and the mystic inclination of the earth-world.

In his contemplative writings — both prose and poetry — he wed the cosmic awareness with material perception in order that the two, together,
would develop a spiritual personality in man. Through the singularity of approach to cosmic life he opens vistas to spiritual understanding in modern English literature. His attitude to poetry is unique in the sense that he idealises the common and the insignificant aspects of natural manifestation by relating them to their source. He presents the culmination of human awareness in its association with the Mother Consciousness, which, in essence, is the True and the Beautiful. The gateway to higher consciousness, according to AE, is the transcending experience that visits man on moments of a rare unity of the finitude and the infinitude. It is a cosmos where the spirituality is forever ready to affect the mundane, where the God-power is eternally in contact with the human-power. And the mystic-poet, on his part, conveys the heavenly mystery in the body of poetry. The rare mystic splendour of the inorganic experience yields a transparency of vision that clears away the opacity hindering the Creator from the
creatures, and thereby links up the soul with the Oversoul. AE presents reverie or visionary imagination as the first step to transcendental experience whereby the psyche can ascend to spiritual heights.

AE's poetry, in its spirit, is dedicated to an extreme form of sensitivity recorded at the depth of the heart. There is little intellectuality involved in the mystic ordeals that fill the soul with an overwhelming divine grace. Mysticism, as revealed in his shorter lyrics, is the song of spiritual exaltation, rooted at an interaction between the physical plane and the ethereal. His poems are essentially feeling-oriented, meant to break the barrier between the trance-induced semi-consciousness and the Absolute Consciousness. With each mystic apprehension the poet feels his soul soaring up at a height to touch the borders of divine consciousness. This is the highest kind of meditation, the humblest of the humilities and the deepest veneration, man can ever offer to the Almighty.
A very close and keen study of AE's mysticism establishes Nature as a portal to the spiritual vision. He makes the essence of world-religions and dogmatism subordinate to the symbolic power of Nature. Through Nature and mystic inclination he realises and justifies the disposition of Providence.

As AE contemplates on the holy nature of Mother Earth, he becomes acutely aware of the sufferings of the people on earth who, despite the spiritual lineage, are dazed with material obliviousness. In his poems AE attempts to do away with the aestivalness of human condition by appeal to the soul's luminous past in the original abode.

In his conviction regarding the original grandeur of the soul AE comes very close to some of the Oriental doctrines on soul and spirit where the individual soul is held in an inseparable relation to the Mother Soul. The story of the soul's emanation from the Godhead and its ultimate assimilation in the source is a theory expounded by the Taoist, the Hindu
philosopher as well as the occult masters of the Theosophy. AE's interest in the Oriental and Occult views regarding life and divinity is thus significant in promoting an attitude towards the hopeful redemption of the soul. In the course of his exploration of the human spirit he was fascinated, in particular, by the Hindu doctrine of causality and the Buddhistic path of self-abnegation as a way leading to final liberation from the wheel of birth and death. He made detachment to self and desireless action feasible practices in life, intending to rise above selfhood and to invalidate the materialistic pursuits of mind.

Love and imagination are given priority in AE's mystic philosophy. Love in this Irish mystic, much like that of the Sufi, is a divine passion that purifies and consecrates human inclination. It is a kind of lofty altruism, deeply engrossing and edifying the individual spirit. Like love, imagination for him is often a notion analogous to divine vision which creates rapports between the tangible world and the mental world.
AE's mystical poems, having their origin in the divine vision and intensified imagination, are expressions of the soul's encounter with the Divine Spirit by help of favourable stimulus from the mighty Nature. Being an artist AE conveys the quintessence of the spiritual stimuli in form of awe and wonder.

AE's mysticism opens a novel outlook in the contemporary English poetry. Rising above the realms of philosophy and metaphysics, his poetry explores the beauty of the universe as venue to immortality of the soul. A proper study of the nature of his mysticism lands one at one of the most profound forms of practical philosophy, fittingly applicable to the modern man who is completely absorbed in the thorough-going materialism of the times. It explores an absolutely new aesthetic norm in the fear-striken and form-oriented history of the modern, scientific era. With a growing vulnerability to mechanization and the
destructiveness of the fast-flourishing technology, man is slowly being awakened to an inward feeling of restlessness and to the unimportance of individual existence in the vast universe. The rapid urbanization and its accompanying rat-race, the breakdown of the social structure through industrialization, and the spiritual suffocation in the ever-growing materialism have engendered terrible fright in man.

The mechanical age of the post-war period, making man consciously dependent upon artificialities, both in sensation and realisation, has created a psychic void in him. AE is one of the rarest of the twentieth century poets whose philosophic attitude is meant to replenish the void through first-hand directness of experience. He rejects the profitability of the space-age and instead, turns Nature-ward to discover and represent its oneness to spiritual evolution. His poems, with heightened imagination, create an utopia of wonder where
consciousness is suspended by an extreme vulnerability to Nature. Nature, as AE views it, is a living power, a rejuvenation whose spirit is identified with the world-spirit. It, in other words, is a remedy to the spiritual poverty that has almost gripped the present mammonistic civilization. The cooling and comforting note of his mystic poetry is a salve to frustration, ensuing from the fast changing values of the time.

The perusal of the permanent as reflected in the body of his poetic art is, in fact, the beginning of a new literary movement. It advocates a momentous progress in the field of analysing the inner-being, the psyche — the rudiments of existence on earth. This new aesthetic movement in literature re-establishes the spiritual hierarchy by connecting the spark of the Divine to the human consciousness where the divine glow illumines, enlightens and reminds the soul of its glorious antecedents. AE presents it as a truth, a reality which he himself experiences in the various modes of Nature.
In his mystically inclined lyrics AE dissolves the barrier between trance and spiritualization. Like the dream of a child and meditation of an occultist the reveries of a mystic is a path of ennobling romanticism, an unfolding of the magic of the universe before the soul. Through the opulence of the mystic vision the earth-world becomes the Eden-world, and man is given back, though for a moment, all the innocence and grandeur of the first human before the fall.

In the modern context, despite the materialistic hazards, AE's poems have great significance in steering human sensibility towards a new haven. His genuinely mystic outlook, besides stirring sensation in the intellectual and spiritual mind, has also, pioneered a revolution in the supra-material sphere in poetry. His poems with their allusions to the general insensitivity of living may effectively be compared to the highly metaphysical note, conveyed in the poems of Alex Mathews, chiefly known in the literary circle as Muse, who has hitherto remained rather unknown but who deserves our attention particularly in this context.
Alex Mathews (1890-1942), like his contemporary AE, was terribly upset by the spiritual apathy and growing antagonism in the world around. With his scanty but substantial poetic creativity, he has helped to build up a new norm of aestheticism in the spiritually impoverished spirit of the modern man. In his 'Rosicrucian Message of Hope and Peace' (Three Poems) and another collection of mystical verse, Poems of Wisdom and Hope, he intends to create a spiritual culture in the society through occultism and comparative religion. The poems exude a philosophic insight into the mystery of life and death as the chief source of his optimism lies in the realisation of the oneness of being.

In a spirit of complete dedication, he writes in one of his most self-expressive lyrics,

'O fullest Life! All life is but expressing
The oneness of the universe in thee,
For in that tie which binds all life together
Is found the wondrous Truth which sets us free.'

In muse, there is a distinct note of faith and hope in the divine ancestry of mankind. His
poems are a definite measure taken for reasserting the divine right, and thereby re-establishing the original link, now forgotten:

The Link remains unbroken, Roses bloom
Upon the Cross which we have cut and shaped
To mark the Path for Light, it commeth soon(2)

Both Maser and AE end up their literary excursion at the realisation of the Almighty. But, while Maser makes it a path of Christian mysticism, for AE it is primarily Nature-oriented mysticism, induced by idealization of vision and imagination.

AE's way of exploring divinity through nature has rather brought a revolution in modern man's attitude to life. Like AE, another modern Romantic, Walter de la Mare (1873-1956), too feels the pangs of bewilderment in his self-created dream-world which can otherwise be called a world of sensuous synthesis — an Eden of the heart. De la Mare's adulthood has much to reflect of AE's material consciousness. While Russell intends to elevate man's down-to-earth awareness to higher realms, de la Mare wishes to replace adult insensitivity by childhood innocence. And it is
peculiar to note that both the poets build up a romantic dreamland to reach their respective destinations. In a majority of his poems de la Mare presents a fusion of the phases of semi-conscious reality of the dream-world, exactly as AE substantiates a visionary tradition to his spiritual world. Commenting on de la Mare's poetic quest David Perkin's, in A History of Modern Poetry observes,

He is a poet of dream and of analogous times when the ordinary world may seem to be dissolving into another: twilight, when the boundaries of things begin to blur; night when the familiar is veiled in darkness or transformed in moonlight; falling asleep, the rational mind releasing its hold; memory, creating the light that never was in the past. And he is a poet of the quest, the knight or traveler on a heroic, possibly self-destructive, and mad journey to find the "reality" behind actuality.(3)

De la Mare's vision of beauty is a way to the exquisite sensitiveness of the subtler objects of Nature. And this sensitiveness, in the hands of AE, becomes a mode of mystic rapture which
Mr. H. F. Norman describes in *Ireland Today* as,

if AE is not understood as a visionary
his poetry will seem incomprehensible.
The normally imaginative man early
discovers within consciousness a self,
a soul, however he may later define
that being and whatever may be his
provisioning of its post mortem
existences. It was AE's distinction
to look deeper. "I know that I am a
spirit". (4)

In the realisation regarding the spirit's share
in the Spirit AE achieves a perfect blending of
thought and action. His mystic poetry is thus,
by far, the most genuine representation in
word-pictures and sensory images, of the deeper
values of life, a crux of the whole pattern of
ethics and metaphysics. His mysticism, along
with Walter de la Mare's crystallization of
consciousness and Muser's analytic introspective
philosophy, form a hierarchy of spiritual
apprehension in the English poetry of the
recent times.
AE's contribution to literature and philosophy is undeniably unique and unparalleled. By generalising his unorthodox encounter with the divinity he suggests to his readers a fresh response to life that is full and promising. As a poet he is the emissary of spirituality on this planet of insensitivity and callousness. It is quite true as someone once commented,

"Dear AE, He walked with God, surely." (5)

Above all, AE's most significant achievement lies in his attempt at opening a new horizon through visionary poetry to give man a glimpse of the serenity and bliss which the modern man has completely lost in the dim and bustle of the space-oriented life. He is quite aware of the terrible fact that in spite of all his quest for real comfort and happiness, through all kinds of technological and nuclear innovations, he has lost touch with the rhythm of nature and the power of the inner self that give him a sense of psychological security of belonging to the universe.
Herein the mystic ordeal of AE's poetry, being a link between the world of matter and the world of spirit, becomes very significant factor of communication between the lower and the higher self of human being. Indeed, in this respect AE, as a mystic poet, not only preaches sublimity of nature but also stimulates a contemplative mood in readers, an attitude that can best convert the morose loneliness into a joyous oneness.
NOTES


5. Ibid, p-77.