

*The Self, self-contained,
calling to Itself for its own Revelation—
this is Happiness.*

Matri Vani

Apart from seeking refuge in the contemplation of God, there is no way of becoming liberated from worldly anxiety and annoyance. Engage in whatever practice that helps to keep the mind centred in Him who is manifest as Creation, Preservation, and Dissolution. To regret one's bad luck only troubles the mind and ruins the body ; it has no other effect—keep this in mind ! He by whose Law everything has been wrought, He alone should be remembered.

So much has already been accomplished by you in the world of action. Now endeavour to give your mind exclusively to the Eternal. Do not waste invaluable time. Those who do not practise the contemplation of God, in other words do not advance towards Self-realization, are self-murderers. Adopt the Good, relinquish mere pleasure.

The real significance of the concept 'Guru' is extraordinarily profound. The Guru should be regarded as God. Where the Guru has been given up, it means that the act by which the relationship of Guru and disciple is established has never taken place. The Guru can never commit anything wrong or improper. The Guru who is said to guide one life after life, His power and the devotion for Him can never slacken. He who in the search after Truth is Truth itself, God sees to the fulfilment of his aim.

The path of renunciation is indeed the path of bliss. The man who is on the pilgrimage to God is fortunate. The path to God is alone worthy of being called a path ; all others are wrong paths, where one meets with troubles and calamities at every step.

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Where mature spiritual experience is a fact, agitation should certainly not be brought in. One speaks of transformation when worldly attachment lacks. In the measure that worldly interests decrease one progresses towards real joy.

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Man must ever be intent on discovering the *Mahāyoga* that will reveal his eternal union with the Divine.

From the Diary of a European

BY MELITA MASCHMANN

(Translated from German)

Vindhychal, October 1963.

This afternoon I sat for about an hour on the veranda in front of Mataji's room. When she came out (she probably had slept) she looked old and ill. Her features were colourless, almost grey, her eyes dull and without expression. Less than five minutes later she appeared at her door, erect, with a laughing face glowing with intensity, a dynamic centre of power emitting flashes of lightning; casting forth joy like fiery sparks. What a transformation! What a triumph: may the flesh grow old and progress towards decay, the soul irradiates it in eternal youth.

As so often here, she walked up and down between us for a short while. I wish I could describe how she walks to say with buoyancy would be misleading, for it would not do justice to the great calm and dignity of her steps, which, only with considerable hesitation—for are not all such epithets commonplace?—I should like to call majestic—or would it be better to say powerful? One must quickly add that the power that is displayed here is at the same time graceful, not brutal or rigid, but elastic and lovely. Who is able to grasp this? I am reporting what I perceive, but does it make a picture? Even more difficult to understand: the power of her walk at certain moments seems due to the fact that Mataji has invisible companions. I know what I am talking about, and that to the European mind it must seem nonsense that cries to heaven—also to my own usual thinking. All the same, it is there as a noticeable fact, to be perceived with the eyes that in rare moments open behind our physical eyes. It moves with her, perhaps independantly of gravitation, per-

haps not? In the region of her shoulders it is most distinct but is it therefore permissible to say that at that spot it keeps itself in balance? I have no experience whatsoever in the kingdom of the invisible. (My reason doubts unflinchingly its very existence). Yet here a whole delegation is present, not just one but several of them. This is all I know yes indeed, I say, 'know' Mataji calls Chitra; she presses through this 'delegation' of which she obviously has no inkling.

Later Mataji is 'alone' again. She sits down on the low wooden stool on the veranda, facing towards the open door of her room. There three old men are waiting who have come from the vicinity to speak to Mataji. The oldest of them is blind. The rest of us settle down to the right and left of her. I am sitting about four meters away from Mataji, nobody is between her and me.

Mataji assumes a meditative pose. I can see only her profile. Her attitude expresses composed stillness. For a long time she remains motionless. Suddenly she turns her head in my direction. Her gaze falls on me, it is focussed on me like the beam of a search-light. The gentleman who was sitting obliquely behind me, told me later: "I looked at my watch because it never ended. It must have continued for four or five minutes." For me, what happens here is not within time, but it has an aroma which, ever since my childhood I have tasted now and again, it has a flavour of timelessness.

Without a single movement of her eyelids her gaze remains fixed on me, penetrating, luminous, like the big calm gaze of the evening sun. Its tranquillity communicates itself to me. I observe how the doors within me open of themselves. A powerful stream of pure light enters into me. While I keep still to receive it, my consciousness registers with great precision what is taking place.

Abruptly Mataji averts her gaze and during the same second makes a joke about one of the girls who with a fierce

expression is knotting at a handbag. I seem to notice again and again: the transition from the keenest spiritual intensity to the commonplace, nay trivial, proceeds with Mataji at the speed of seconds. One has to be alert not to let the precious melt away without transition into the trifling. Just as a well-known face may suddenly emerge from a crowd, only to vanish again at the next look: was it really there, one asks oneself, or have you been dreaming?

I believe I can guess why these transitions are so seamless. For us, the moments of clarity, of a touch of the spirit, are rare and priceless: they appear to our consciousness like pearls in the sand of the desert. Not a single one can ever be forgotten. Mataji lives in the medium of spirit or light. It is as natural to her as the texture of our everyday existence that she shares with us. Yet, she does not live in two worlds, that of light and that of our materiality, but in undifferentiated oneness.

Another thing that ought to be pointed out: the superpersonal quality of Mataji's gaze this afternoon. When does a human being ever look at us for such a long time and with such penetrating intensity? Between lovers somewhat similar looks may occur when they have reached the end of language. But then they express the most personal, specific, individual. Mataji's look was exactly the reverse of this. What it conveyed to me did not emanate from her human heart but from a centre of power that lies behind it and uses the heart only as a passage, as a transmitter. It there assumes a quality for which our receiving apparatus is prepared.

Of course—the process is of the greatest subtlety. The transformation of spirit into 'communicable spirit', as it takes effect in Mataji, is an achievement of love. Like her whole life altogether. What she herself receives of Light she imparts to us, adapted to our capacity of seeing; for our 'illumination' is the only thing she desires, the purpose of her life.

Precisely this was what my consciousness registered while Mataji gazed at me today: the entirely superpersonal quality of that which she imparted to me and the loving gesture of giving. One of Mataji's girls illustrated to me a similar happening in the following manner. Mataji is the mother who says: 'God has given me a barn full of rice and I have prepared it into food for you. Eat, so that you may grow strong.'

In a certain way the act of taking corresponded to that of giving.

Who does not again and again experience the two souls that live in him? The Hindus speak of the 'I' and of the 'Self'. All these generalizations are dangerous since they easily may lead to distortions, when a phenomenon cannot effortlessly be fitted into their frame. All the same I adopt it, not dogmatically, but 'pragmatically.' What Mataji doned to me by her look was bread for the Self. This Self of mine is infinitely nearer to her than to my own 'I'. It accepted what was designed for it with a personal and at the same time impersonal gratitude.

Later, after Mataji had got up, I followed her and thanked her with a wordless *pranāma*. She almost overlooked it. One who thanks, resides in the world of duality where there is giving and taking. For him who lives in oneness, such distinction is meaningless. When I looked up, her eyes seemed to ask me: Does one thank also oneself?

After a few rounds on the veranda, Mataji resumes her seat on the low stool outside of her room. The three men are waiting to be addressed by her. She at once begins to talk with great vivacity and eloquence. During an interval I succeed in asking someone what she has said last. Mataji had spoken to the oldest of the men, "How have you spent your life, Baba?" She said, "Every breath with which we do not remember God is wasted. Birth in a human body is a rare boon. If you had been born as animals or birds, what significance would your lives have? Human beings

have alone been endowed with the capacity to seek and find God." And to all the others who had gathered round her: "Ask yourselves how you are using your time. One so easily forgets that not a single hour that is gone ever returns. Days glide by without your noticing it. Suddenly you have grown old and are too tired to make a sustained effort. God is not the work for your old age when you have nothing else to do anymore, He is the task of your lives that requires your best skill. He who has not yet started, should begin today, now, immediately!" Her eyes move slowly from one to the other. Suddenly she rises and disappears in her room.

In the evening she calls us inside. The youngest of the three old men wants to demonstrate some exercises that 'lengthen life.' He says his master lived up to 118 years.

He himself seems rather self-important and narrow-minded. Everyone foresees that he will do nonsense, but it does not occur to anyone to prevent this. Mataji would not tolerate it. Ceremoniously he shows some gymnastic exercises. There is nothing remarkable about them except his complete rigidity. Mataji watches with infinite friendliness, puts questions, corrects him. He is delighted.

What this incident made clear to me is that Mataji does not practise patience with us. Patience is a bridle that we employ to keep our ego in check. With the gentleman in question for instance I have to have patience. He bores and disturbs me. Where no 'I' exists anymore, there is no element that resents boredom and disturbance.

Mataji's friendliness also is of a different order than ours even if we succeeded in feeling interest and sympathy for the gentleman and his request. I, for example, would have to say to myself: "You should take him serious. After all, he is out for something that he considers beneficent. Let others think as they please, he needs a confirmation etc." With Mataji it is entirely different. Friendliness is not an ethical claim for her, not an achievement for which

she has to struggle. She is friendly. This must be understood as a fundamental definition, just as to a certain question one would reply: She is Indian. Every human being whom she meets is her friend. This is not a polite phrase or a manner of speaking, but an exact definition.

Just as a physician (if he is what he should be) does not in his patients see rich or poor, intelligent or stupid, handsome or ugly, good or bad people, but simply ailing men and women whom he has to cure, in a similar way Mataji sees in all human beings her friends. And she meets them accordingly: with friendliness. Here probably lies the secret of her irresistible charm: she never has to exert herself in order to be friendly or to act in a friendly manner. Unfriendliness is something that would cost her an effort. In Raipur I witnessed an attempt of this kind. One of the girls had apparently repeatedly done what the others considered wrong. (I believe it was a case of overdoing asceticism). "Reprimand her," begged the other girls. "She does not listen to us. Do, please scold her!" Mataji summoned the culprit. The expression of Mataji's face was moving and funny at the same time. She obviously tried hard to look severe. But the mask of anger was only too transparent and brittle and her voice expressed the same play of hide and seek behind her pretended unfriendliness. Suddenly she turned round on her heel and laughed heartily. Still laughing, she stood before the girl like a child that has been caught. "Don't you know that I cannot be angry with anyone? How then could I scold her?"

The words 'charm' and 'charisma' (charity, love) have the same root. When looking at Mataji one understands this directly. Her charm is a religious quality. The same holds good for her indiscriminating friendliness. One can, no doubt, grasp it rightly only if one interprets it with the religious concept of the oneness of the Brahman that provides the frame for Mataji's self-knowledge: Her friendliness is an expression of Love with which God loves Himself.

The Quintessence of the Yoga Vasistha

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II

Subjective Idealism

According to the *Yogavāsistha*, every individual perceives and cognizes only that which is within his own experience ; no mind perceives aught but its own ideas. The world experience of every individual has arisen individually to every one. Every mind has the power to manufacture its own world. Such a view is called subjective idealism in modern philosophy. (III. 40. 29 ; III. 55. 61 ; Vib. 13. 4).

Objective Idealism

The statement that there are countless individual minds, which is often made in the *Yogavāsistha*, implies an extra-individual reality in the form of other individuals who, of course, must likewise have their own world experience. Vasistha is alive to this implication and therefore admits a cosmic world with countless objects and individuals within it, which in its original form is a system of ideas in the Cosmic Mind called *Brahma*. *Brahma* imagines the world and all the individuals within it at the commencement of the Creation, and they continue to exist as long as the *Brahma* continues to exist.

Reconciliation of Subjective and Objective Idealism

The experience of a common world by many individuals is thus due to the fact that over and above these individuals, there exists a Common Mind, the Cosmic Mind, in which all the common contents of the world as well as all the individuals themselves exist as ideas and are represented in every individual mind within the Cosmic Mind. The ideas imagined by the *Brahma* are the common objects of experience of us.

all, although in our own mind they enter as our own. Or, it may also be said, they are the real (*bimba*) which our minds imitate or copy (*pratibimba*). As every mind is an idea of the same Cosmic Mind, it is capable of representing within itself other individual minds also as its own ideas. One is an idea in the mind of others as much as others are ideas in that of the one. Although nobody knows anything except his own ideas-the perception of other individuals and common things being our own ideas-yet they are believed as existing in a common universe, for they are the common ideas of all alike. As it is possible that several men may see the same dream, so, in the same way, it happens that we all experience the same objects. As the same person may be seen in imagination by many individually, so also the same world experience is imagined in every mind in the same way as it has arisen in the Cosmic Mind. (Vib. 20.7:III.55.48; V. 49.10; Vib. 151.10; Vib. 154.11; 111.53.25; Vib. 38.4).

Worlds within Worlds

The terms Cosmic and individual minds are to be understood in a relative sense. That which is considered as an individual in relation to a wider Cosmic Mind and Its contents, may in its own turn, be considered as cosmic, in relation to the entries within its own objective experience. For, according to Vasistha every object has a subjective aspect, i. e., is a mind in which is experienced a world peculiar to itself; as in a dream. Every idea thus is a monad in itself and has a world within its experience, every ideal content of which is, again, in its turn, in itself, an individual monad having another world within itself. There is no end to this process of worlds within worlds. In this way, in every universe, are contained millions of other universes, and this process goes on ad infinitum. All this is unknown and unreal to us, but it is directly known to those who have attained purity of mind and vision of the Absolute (IV. 18.16.27; IV. 19.1; 111.52.20 Ps 111.44.34; Vib. 59.33.34).

Variety of World Experiences

One need not, however, believe that all the worlds which thus arise successively or simultaneously are of the same kind, or are governed by the same laws, or are evolved in the same way as our own world. There is no such uniformity having under its sway all the worlds, actual or possible. Some of them may, however, be similar in their entire nature, others similar only in some aspects; others quite different from one another. So is the case with the countless individuals in the different worlds. The theories of creation propounded in various *Shāstras* are only idle fancies. The Divine Mind is not bound by any particular law of creation to be followed always and everywhere. (IV. 47.14; VIa. 66. 23; IV. 47.17; VIa. 66.24)

The General Law of Manifestation of an Objective World.

The manifestation of an objective world within a mind proceeds by way of materialization and externalization of ideas in the form of things, body and senses, consequent upon a wish, craving or desire to enjoy the particular objects; this process can be well understood by a study of the phenomena of dreams, for the law of evolution or rise of an objective world is the same in the case of a dream, of an after-death vision or of the rise of a cosmos. The dynamic force behind the manifestation of all objects in one's experience is the desire to be something or to have something, which the creative imagination supplies forthwith. (111.12.2; VIb. 22.37; VIb. 114.17; 111.3.79).

Individuality or Mind (Manas)

Individuality (*Jivatva*), according to Vasistha does not consist in being something like a simple, undecomposable, spiritual entity, called soul. It consists, on the other hand, in being a mind, *manas* which means a particular mode of the Ultimate Reality, determined by a peculiar movement, tendency, desire, or will to imagine. The form is in perpetual change. It is called by various names on account of its diffe-

rent functional forms. It is called *Buddhi* (intellect) when it knows something definitely; *Ahankāra* (ego), when it assumes for itself a distinct existence; *Chitta*, when it displays fickleness; *Karma* (action), when it moves towards a desired end; *Vāsanā* (desire), when it attaches itself to something not in its possession; *Indriyas* (sense-organs), when it reveals external objects to the Self; and *Prakrit* (root-matter), when it creates objects out of itself. In fact, everything that we know is, according to the *Yogavāsistha*, a mode of mind. (III.96.3,17.27; V. 13.80.54; 111.46.43).

Mind is not anything different and separate from the Absolute Brahman. It is the Brahman itself manifesting itself as a creative agent. It is the whole looked at from a particular point of view (IV. 42.18 : V. 13.24.53; VIa, 96.19). From the point of view of grossness and limitations there may be distinguished three grades in the manifestation of the mind, namely, the monad (*jīva*), the ego (*ahankāra*) and the body (*deha*). The *jīva* or monad is that aspect of mind in which it originates as a ray from the Absolute consciousness and is yet very subtle in character. The ego is the *jīva* in a grosser and more limited form in which objectivity acquires a greater degree. The body is the grossest form of the mind (III,64.12.14; 111,13.15,22.24,28,29). There is no limit to the number of monads in the world, and the monads are of various kinds (III 43.1 ; IV. 43. 2,3).

Thought Power

As minds, we have got tremendous power at our command. Thought is the most potent force in the world. The mind, according to the *Yogavāsistha*, is omnipotent (III. 11, 16). It is endowed with creative power (VIb. 139.1). In creating a world for itself, it is absolutely free (III. 4.79). We all attain what we aspire for. All that we intensely desire comes to us early or late. Our own efforts guided by our aspirations are the warp and woof of our destiny (III.

45.12; III.54.48). The nature of things around us is as we think it to be. Our lives are what we make them by our own thought. Thoughts are the bricks with which we build the mansions of our personality. We become what we aspire to be. The world around us is the reflex of our thought. It changes its appearance as we change. The extent of space and duration of time are relative to our thoughts and emotions. (III. 56.28.33; III. 60.16.17.20.22.28; VIB. 148.33; VIB. 100.3; IV.23.13). Faith or bhavana is the secret of all achievement. Our perceptions are coloured by our beliefs. (IV. 21.20.22.56,58 ; IV. 17.4; VIa. 51.3) Even bondage and freedom are also states of our mind and wrought by our thought (III. 98.3; III. 99.43; III. 115. 24). The body is a creation of the mind and can be shaped by it into any form. Most of the diseases of the body originate in the disturbances of the mind and can be cured by right thinking and re-educating the mind. (IV. 45.7; IV. 11.19; IV. 21.16; VIa. 28.34). If we never allow the balance of the mind to be overthrown by ambitious cares, anxieties and worries etc. there is no reason why disease should ever lodge in the temple of our body (VIa. 26.10.35). Happiness is another name for the harmony of the mind; right culture of mind is the secret of joyful living. (V. 21.12.14).

The Secret of Supernormal Powers

The secret of attaining supernormal powers is to rise above identity with the physical body, which is another name for limitation, imperfection and incapacity of doing great things, and to affirm one's being spiritual in nature and therefore full of higher powers. Through this process of constant denial of the actual limitations and thoughtful auto-suggestion and affirmation of the ideal perfection, very extraordinary powers are evolved in us (III. 57.30-33. VIa. 82.26). Extra-ordinary powers can also be realized through the awakening and control of the *Kundalini Shakti* (Serpent-power) residing in the solar plexus of the body. When one

has mastered the Kundalini power, through the control of the movements of the vital current (*prāna*), one can have communion with the invisible *siddhas* (enlightened ones), can leave one's body at will and enter another, can have a vision of distant events and things, and can become abnormally small or large in size. (VIa. 24; VIa. 80; VIa. 81; VIa. 82)

(to be continued)

Evolution of Matter

D. S. MAHALANOBIS.

[The materials of this thesis lie scattered in the scriptural and philosophical literature of the Hindus. I have put them into shape and tried to make them intelligible to the modern minds in a language that aims at explaining ancient technical matter in a current vocabulary. A considerable scientific ground has had to be covered, and has been done in a methodology which is neither matter-of-factly scientific nor advisedly speculative.

In ancient India science and philosophy went hand in hand, in a system of education that looked upon man as an integral being needing an all-round training of the mind and body, making him a complete unit mentally, morally, physically and spiritually. Hence, sifting our science from philosophy, in this ancient sphere, could be an unrewarding task.

It is to be noted that the ancients had no interest in science except as a means to an end. Matter and mind were, to them, a single phenomenon split up by invisible links. And, in their quest of the Unknown, mystery of matter had needed prodings in order to cut across a vignettted world shaded off into the mist of Infinity. Their main guidance came not from the laboratory, but in spells of superconscience to the exalted mind. Latter-day developments, for this reason, do not compare with ancient wisdom.

Although the Sankhya system of philosophy lies at the core of my theme, I have steered clear of doctrinairism, and, to fill up a lacuna or to trim off a baffle, if it happened to be in the way, I have often had to depend on other sources or on new interpretations. The different ancient systems, it may be remembered, are not mutually exclusive as, on a superficial examination, we are apt to think. If they disagree, the differences are likely to be due either to the methodology in each case, or to the dissimilarity of the facts presented. Whatever they may be due to, the supreme authority is in the Vedas.—Author.]

Matter, in Vedic conception, is a quinary end-product of five basic constituents. These constituents are never known to us separately, nor can they all be separated. It is probable that they also exist freely in nature even for very brief intervals, unknown to us and recusant to our laboratory probings. They are subtle entities, subtler even than

the mysterious neutrino. It, matter, is the most complex stuff we know of. It evolves as the result of a serial integrating process in five stages. At each stage a new product arises, and the evolutionary series progresses a step. At the end, we have the final stuff familiar to us, to physicists and chemists, as matter. The ancient physicists of India have named the five terms of the evolutionary series, in order of increasing complexity, as *ākāsa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *ap* and *kshiti*. The last in this series is quinary matter. We at once see how the materiality of matter arises by a sort of gradual involution of all the components, in a process in which one component after another, as it evolves, gets integrated with the one or ones that have preceded. It is an orderly process.

This is a hazy first description, which will clear up as we go on.

What are they, these five terms,—*ākāsa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *ap* and *kshiti*? They have been erroneously interpreted to mean the elemental sky, air, fire, water and earth respectively, or their equivalents as we meet them in nature. Here was a fatal mistake which, in the dark age that tarries at its fag-end yet, has shut out access to us of a fascinating study across the hesitancy of materialistic interpretation of science and philosophy of today. *ākāsa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *ap* and *kshiti* are key-words to us to open out clues to the arcana of ancient wisdom. They are not, as some would have us believe, mere beginners' vocabulary of gropings in phenomenology, titivated into metaphysics. We must trace them back again, for a fuller knowledge, in their primal setting.

Let us for a while leave aside this matter group—*ākāsa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *ap* and *kshiti*, and turn to their components.

In the evolution of matter, we have seen that five basic constituents exclusively have decided its pattern. These five decisive components are: (a) 'sound principle', (b) 'contact principle', (c) 'luminosity principle', (d) 'affinity principle', and (e) 'inertia principle'. These five terms are the

equivalent: of their ancient concepts : *śabda*, *sparsa*, *rupa*, *rasa* and *gandha*, respectively. They are called *tanmātrās*. They are the infra-sensible underframe of the whole universe. What modern science understands by them should for a moment be banished from our minds. They are new ideas to us and should be studied with caution and understanding. From the unusual terminology no one should suppose that these are metaphysical concepts existing only in our thoughts in a Berkeleyian world unrelated to physical realities. No, we are right in the midst of real matter and things of the material world. The psychic field lies ahead, out of bounds to us for the present. What are these *tanmātrās* then ?

Tanmātrā

*Tanmātrā*¹ etymologically means constituents of matter. They are a quintette, as we have seen. They have each a distinct identity and function, and each of them bears a token name as if to remind us of their close kinship to our sense organs, which they excite hiding in matter, in their disguised roles as sensory stimuli of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. Indian physicists have therefore, stuck these names on them: sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, that is, *śabda*, *sparsa*, *rupa*, *rasa* and *gandha* respectively, in Indian terminology. They are to us confounding terms to denote substantive entities. They are the *tanmātrās*.

The ancient naturalists, however, were not wholly without reason in choosing these names for the constituents of matter. They—*śabda-tanmātrā*, *sparsa-tanmātrā*, *rupa-tanmātrā*, *rasa-tanmātrā* and *gandha-tanmātrā*, are Mother Earth's only means of communication with us. We have a corresponding set of sense organs, as we know : ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose. Each of these senses of perception,

1. *Tanmātrā* = *tasya mātrā*, *bhūta-mātrā* (Kausitaki Upanisad), meaning, measure of matter. *Mātrā* is a cognate form of Sanskrit *mātri*, etymologically, one who measures, i. e., mother, Latin *mater*, German *mutter*. Matter is perhaps akin to L. *mater*, mother (Webster) : it is Mother Earth.

in its unique role, can be excited only by a particular kind of stimuli, out of the entire range of five sent out by an external object. The smell sense, for example, can only be excited by the smell-stimuli, taste sense by the taste-stimuli, sight by the sight-stimuli, etc., and not otherwise. For instance, sight-stimuli cannot excite the organ of hearing.

This is not to say that our senses could perceive stimuli of all intensities, high or low, scattered from an external source. For example, the visual organ is not sensitive to invisible light, that is, light of very high or low intensities. Out of an immense range of "light" waves the human eye is capable of responding to only a few of them we call VIBGYOR, that is, a narrow band of radiation between violet and red, which represent the visible light between the wave-lengths of $\cdot 00004$ cm. and $\cdot 00007$ cm. A vast range of radiations with shorter and longer waves, such as cosmic rays, gamma rays, X-rays, ultra-violet rays, infra-red rays, television waves, radio waves, radar waves etc., remains outside the scope of our visual perception. Yet they are all "light" of sorts, invisible to us, but some of them are visible to animals. Similarly our ear is not sensitive to all sounds, that is molecular vibration of all frequencies. Our audible range is represented by sonic waves between 20 and 22,000 frequencies per second (Stout). All our sense organs are restricted in the same way. The external world is perceived by men not in its entirety but in its essentials, which are only symbolic specimens of five types and correspond to our five sense organs. From each of these five types of sense-data only a representative group is selected for human perception. In fact, our end-organs are evolved in response to these sense-data transmitted by their excitors embedded in matter. These exclusively, that is, the sense-exciters, are the factors of materiality in matter, its constituents known as *tanmātrās*.

If there were a sixth kind of exciters to stimulate man's perceptive faculties, he surely would have had an

organ developed for it, for, in man, says the Indian scripture, the universe is epitomized. He is a microcosm. If, on the other hand, the constituents of matter were less than five, they could not by any combination stimulate five perceptive organs. For example, if there were only three elementary constituents in matter, only three sense organs could be stimulated by them. No combination of these three could excite the other two organs. *Tanmātrās* or constituents of matter are not like chemical elements, capable of combination chemically or positive-negatively. They are unique types. Hence, according to the ancient physicists, matter is a pentactinal product of five basic components, each of which is a correlate of one of our sense organs.

These five components represent the five types of properties in matter—sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. We must here make a distinction between the chemical and the material properties in substances. In elements, chemical properties are believed to be fixed by the number of extra-nuclear electrons in their atoms; in compounds, properties arise in several ways of electronic regroupings. Chemical properties are liable to change following chemical reaction, atomic disintegration under laboratory control, or radioactive decay, as in radio-active uranium which turns into lead in course of time. Material properties, on the other hand, are due to the constituents that give materiality to matter, that is, they result from the integration of the five constituents in the process of evolution of matter. They can never be categorically changed, that is to say, the properties of one category cannot be transformed into those of another, for instance, the 'Luminosity' factors in any piece of matter (sense object) can never become sound, touch, taste or smell factors in another piece of matter. Every bit of matter has these five basic elements (*tanmātrās*) in varying proportions, although our perceptive organs may not respond to all of them in a particular combination, that is, all components may not send out sufficiently strong

impulses to be detected by the senses. They are *physical characteristics* indicating the presence of the components, which by themselves are not sensible as separate units, and are regarded as elementary. Material properties may, however, change in their ratios in relation to one another under conditions necessitating such changes. We shall see later that there are only five categories of matter, in each of which one kind of constituent predominates.

It should be remembered that the ancient physicists do not claim that they could directly apprehend the five constituents of matter by means of the five sense organs. What they postulate is that the five classes of sensory stimuli perceived by us justify the recognition of their exciters, which in relation to a material object, are its constituents, and in relation to our sensory organs, are correlates of our sense faculties. The sensory data supply us the *prima facie* evidence of the existence of the *tanmātrās* in matter.

But, do the sensory data perceived by us come always from the inherent components of an object? For instance, do we perceive from sound-stimuli the existence of 'sound-principle' in matter? The sounds we hear are due to vibrations of air molecules which have been agitated by an external agency, say, human voice. Hence, what we hear is, in this case, an imposed pattern of vibration and not the sound-*tanmātrā* inherent in matter. *Tanmātrās* are subtle principles; impulses scattered by them are not always sensible to us, for instance, our auditory organ is not acute enough to be able to hear the *śabda-tanmātrā* enmeshed in matter. We only hear a proxy as it were, i.e., molecular vibrations and not the intrinsic *tanmātric* operations. Nevertheless, the ancients think these operations are in

2. Extra-sensory perceptions, such as clairvoyance, telepathy, telaesthesia, etc., are not dependent on sensory data and are a different class by themselves. We are not concerned with them here.

evidence even in gross manifestations, though imperfectly. It is necessary to bear in mind that our end-organs are on the gross plane and that our sense-data come from matter on the gross plane. Therefore, what our senses perceive are gross patterns of *tanmātrīc* modes and not their original characteristics. Each of our senses perceives a unique type, be it on a subtle or a gross plane. Only a particular *tanmātrā* can produce it either by itself, or an approximation of it through gross matter, which too is a *tanmātrīc* manifestation degraded into grossness. We shall see later that *sabda*, *sparsa*, *rupa*, *rasa* and *gandha* had a deeper significance to the ancients than they have to us in our every day use.

In ancient India, nomenclature followed a principle, and all true names had to be connotative, as a general rule. And what names could better be assigned to these *tanmātrās* than those associated with their functions? Hence, they were termed *sabda*, *sparsa*, *rupa*, *rasa* and *gandha*, loosely translated as sound, touch, colour, taste and smell respectively, which are in fact different principles viz., 'sound-principle,' 'contact-principle,' 'luminosity-principle,' 'affinity-principle' and 'inertia-principle'. We shall know in the next chapter what they really are and how they are related to *ākāsa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *ap* and *kshiti*, the evolutionary series mentioned earlier. We shall also get to know by and by that there are two series of *ākāsa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *ap* and *kshiti*, an evolving series as referred to here, and a post-evolution series, each term of which latter is a different category of quintuplicated matter.

(to be continued)

Take up your Cross

MARK HALPERN

"Take up your cross and follow me!"
Christ's burning words rang out.
The rich young man could then be free—
Instead he turned about.

He walked away, head hanging low,
And left the Light behind :
His flaming zeal a feeble glow,
Possessions made him blind.

"Sell all you have", the Christ had said,
"And give all to the poor."
The young man sadly shook his head—
The world still had its lure.

"You cannot serve two masters, friends,"
The Christ had clearly shown :
"When man loves God, not just pretends,
Proud Mammon's naught but stone."

But those who yield to Mammon sway,
For comfort, wealth, and fame,
From Christ's appeal they turn away,
And put his words to shame.

Yet some there are who heed his call,
Thus taking up their cross :
They ask for naught and give their all,
And count it gain not loss.

Unknown, unsung, no wealth or fame,
Unheralded by men :
They own on high a hallowed name
Inscribed with Heaven's pen.

Old Diary Leaves

ATMANANDA

Various Kinds of Deaths.

Question : The other day I read in the newspaper that someone was found dead. He had left a letter to say that since the woman he loved had passed away, he had gone to join her, for he could not live without her. Can one by committing suicide really be united with a deceased person ?

Mataji : Never ! One who commits suicide enters a deep darkness from which it is most difficult to be released, unless someone who wields great supernatural power takes pity and liberates him from it. In that condition of dense darkness one cannot meet anyone. Suicide is a most heinous crime. Man is born in order to reap the consequences of his actions of former births. To try and escape from this by suicide is extremely foolish, it only prolongs the agony indefinitely. No one who is in his senses can possibly take his life; at the moment of doing so a person is invariably disturbed in his reason. Suicide does not solve any problem, on the contrary it creates endless complications and prevents one from paying off one's karmic debts.

Question : What about murder ?

Mataji : Well, the murderer will no doubt have to suffer for his crime.

Question : And the murdered ?

Mataji : It is unfortunate indeed to be murdered. But it has to be borne in mind that this is due to some evil Karma. It is an inauspicious death.

Question : What about *sati* ?

Mataji : That is a different matter altogether. A real *sati* has to be completely steady in mind and body. If entering the fire she suffers, she cannot be called a *sati*.

Once Mataji related the story of one of her ancestors. After circumambulating seven times around her husband's funeral pyre, she put one of her fingers into the flame of a candle to make sure whether she would be able to bear being burnt alive. The finger did not move. She then told her relatives that since one of her little toes had once inadvertently touched the pillow of her husband (which is considered a sin), that toe would in order to expiate this sin, feel the flame and therefore riggle, but nobody should be alarmed at this. She then entered her husband's pyre and at once her body became completely still, just like a corpse. She obviously did not feel any pain whatsoever, she was perfectly steady.

Mataji then referred to a story of *sati*, which she had heard from Bholanath. That particular woman did not even have the chance to leap into the fire. While doing *praṇāma* before entering her husband's pyre, life ebbed away from her and her dead body was consumed by the flames together with her husband's.

* * * * *

After the terrible disaster at the Kumbh Mela in Allahabad in 1954, when hundreds were trampled to death, Mataji was questioned as to the fate of the victims. According to the *Sāstras* '*Apamrityu*' (untimely death by accident) causes the departed to undergo a restless, ghostly existence. In some cases the deceased is tied to the place of the accident, unable to proceed to higher states of consciousness.

Mataji said : "What the *sāstras* declare, holds good in the ordinary course of events. In special cases it is different.

On this occasion, just consider: The constellation of the Kumbh, the sacredness of the Triveni, the atmosphere created by a vast gathering of *sādhus* and *sannyāsis* with their spirit of complete renunciation. Death occurred at that auspicious moment; this ought certainly to mean the opening out of a path to higher planes of consciousness. Just as there is such a thing as '*apamrityu*', there are other possibilities as well."

Later Mataji asked Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj about his opinion. He replied: "The condition of man after he leaves his physical body depends on his state of mind at the instant of death. On that auspicious day and when at the crucial moment everyone was deeply concentrated I cannot believe that this could have been a case of *apamrityu*. It is of course true that the time, place and manner of death are the result of one's past actions; but since it happened during the constellation of the *Maha Kumbh*, at the Triveni, in the holy month of *Magh* and in the presence of so many saints and sages, I feel as good as certain that there can have been no question of *apamrityu*. On the contrary, the departed must have had the rare good fortune of being raised up into higher states of existence."

Later again Dr. G. Kaviraj said: "I know of a similar occurrence where, by some special Divine Grace the dying in their subtle bodies were severed from their physical just an instant before death took place and were lifted into higher states of consciousness. I have a strong feeling that here also, due to the intervention of some special Divine Mercy the dying were blessed with the capacity to ascend straight away into loftier states of being."

In reply to a question, Mataji stressed the importance of what one thinks at the moment of death. For, just as the leech does not leave its place without hooking on to something else, so the soul at the time of leaving the body hooks on to some kind of new existence according to the

state of mind of the dying person. But at that moment one has no control over one's thought. It will automatically dwell where it usually dwells. This is why one has to practise the Presence of God while one is well and fit, so that the thought of God may come spontaneously when one is ill and weak. To illustrate this fact Mataji told two stories.

“An old woman who had spent many years of her life selling oil, was about to die. Her relatives had assembled round her and were urging her to repeat ‘Rama’ or ‘Krishna’. But the dying woman was only half conscious and her power of hearing was impaired. To the shouting of her children and grand-children; “Repeat God's name”, she kept on replying what she had been used to say to beggars who came to her shop begging for oil : ‘Not a drop will I give, not a drop.’ Saying this, she passed away.

“The following actually occurred in your Ashram at Varanasi. The aged mother of one of the Ashramites had come to spend the end of her life in the Ashram. She used to attend to her *pūjā* and *japa* with great regularity from early morning until nearly midday, without eating or even drinking water. She would then cook and eat her food and scrub the vessels. Towards evening she got busy again with her *sādhana*. After some time she fell ill and was confined to bed, but continued with her *japa* without interruption. Whenever some food or drink was brought to her, she would indicate by signs that she had not finished her *japa* and could therefore not take anything. Finally she breathed her last, with her fingers in the correct position for doing *japa* according to the prescribed rules. Those who took her body to the burning-*ghāt* related that, when it had burnt to ashes and only the bones were left over, even then the skeleton remained in the same position until at last the arms crossed over the breast. The people present declared that they had never before witnessed anything of the sort.

Varanasi, a rainy evening in August, 1949. Mataji was seated in her usual place in the hall with only a few ashramites on either side of her. Nobody had ventured out into the pouring rain. Exactly opposite to Mataji at the west end of the hall an emaciated old lady was lying on her bedding that had been spread on the floor. She was very ill and had shifted to the Ashram a few weeks ago, as she wished to die in Mataji's presence and in sight of the Ganges. Her last hour had obviously come. Her son had been called and was sitting close by her, chanting holy texts, while her daughter was attending to her. The dying woman had a rosary in her hand. She was hardly breathing but evidently fully conscious. Her blouse had been loosened and one could see every one of her protruding ribs, in fact she looked already like a skeleton. Mataji was watching her intently. Off and on she would shout loudly: 'Mother, are you doing *japa*?' The old lady could respond only by almost imperceptible gestures. Her daughter confirmed: 'Yes, she was doing *japa* and listening to her son's chanting.' Mataji suggested sprinkling Ganges water on her chest, and a few drops of the sacred liquid were instilled into her mouth with a piece of cottonwool as she was too weak to drink. Not for a moment did Mataji let her eyes off her. Suddenly Mataji got up and walked straight to the dying woman. With great motherly affection she gazed at her, placed a garland on her chest and then with a swift and determined gesture passed both her hands over the shrivelled body from head to foot. The end had come. It was an unforgettable, most impressive moment.

"Call the girls to sing *kirtan*!" said Mataji. The Brahmacharinis of the Kanyapith (the Girls' school of the Ashram) came and sang, some of them children of nine or ten. What a beautiful idea to make children witness death in this atmosphere of peace and serenity! Everyone felt moved, but there was no weeping, no lamenting, no regret, on the contrary, a hush, a sense of quiet joy, of fulfilment pervaded

the atmosphere. "Death means changing one's garments", one can often hear Mataji say.

The *kirtan* continued for some time, then the body was taken down to the *ghat*. Some Ganges water was poured over the spot where the old lady had breathed her last and an oil-lamp placed there. Everyone left the hall. Fortunate is he who ends his days in this manner.

Swami Ramdas*

The Saint of Anandashram

D. V. SESHIAH GUPTHA

Swami Ramdas was ever bubbling over with joy and freedom. His talks were full of instructive and graphic descriptions of events, full of fun and laughter. His God was a God of love and joy and fun and play. His only condition for a truly spiritual life : 'self-surrender' to such a God. As for *sādhanā* there were no baths and no fasts, no inconvenient rising in the early morning and above all no peculiar postures prescribed. Do what you like, only repeat His name—whichever you please—all the time of the day and night, doing all things as they come along, in the style of a secretary, so that all the activities that appear to flow to you are in reality planned and controlled by the Old Man, whose shoulders are broad enough for all your so-called burdens. Fine indeed. All sense of responsibility, and the trouble it means, are gone at one stroke ! Papa had only one patent pill—the Name—for all the ills of life.

Swami Ramdas was called "Papa" by most of his devotees. He stayed at an Ashram called 'Anandashram' (abode of bliss). It is as lovely as he himself and his ways were. A bell used to ring four times a day, when—wherever you may have been, whatever you may have been engaged in—you had to run to the dining-hall for breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea or coffee and dinner. For the rest, one could go in for any study one liked in one's own room or in the library, for any *sādhana* one pleased. Or one could pass one's time with Papa himself and have one's difficulties solved—though usually they solved themselves in the atmosphere of the place. One could join the *bhajana* or bathe in the constant flow of Rama Nama that was going on in the Bhajan Hall.

* Swami Ramdas left his body in July 1963 at the age of 80.

The place is beautiful, on top of a hill, with a higher hill behind it, with the sea in front, fair fields and sloping grounds all round. To this restful place, many persons go even now—of all shades of opinion, belonging to all religions, Indians and foreigners, and all feel happy and return convinced.

“Anandashram” is a veritable mart of Divine Bliss. This institution is a public charitable Trust maintained solely by the love-offerings of the innumerable devotees of Swami Ramdas and Mother Krishnabai.

Mother Krishnabai, popularly known as “Mataji” by the devotees, is looking after all the activities. She is an embodiment of universal love and service. This Ashram teaches how to realize your oneness with the all-pervading immortal Spirit, and based upon this experience, behold and love all beings and creatures as expressions of God.

The Ashram publishes a monthly journal called “The Vision.” Swami Ramdas wrote a number of books describing his spiritual experience and talks during his tours in India, Europe, U.S.A., Japan and other countries.

“God Seized Me”

One night, Sri Vittal Rao, so was called Swami Ramdas before *Sannyāsa*, while engaged in drinking the sweetness of God’s Name, was made to think in the following strain :

“O Ram, when thy slave finds Thee at once so powerful and loving, and he who trusts Thee can be sure of true peace and happiness, why should he not throw himself entirely on Thy mercy, which can be possible only by giving up everything he called ‘mine’? Thou art all in all to Thy slave. Thou art the sole Protector of the world. Men are deluded when they declare, “I do this—I do that, this is mine—that is mine.” All, O Ram, is Thine and all things are done by Thee alone. Thy slave’s one prayer to Thee is to take him under Thy complete guidance and remove the ‘I’ ness in him.”

The prayer was heard. Now Ram prompted Ramdas to open at random the book "Light of Asia," which was before him at the time. His eyes rested upon the pages wherein is described the great renunciation of Buddha who says :

"For now the hour is come when I should quit
This golden prison where my heart lives caged,
To find the truth, which henceforth I will seek
For all men's sake, until the truth is found."

Then Ramdas similarly opened the 'New Testament' and lighted upon the following definite words of Jesus Christ :

"And everyone that had forsaken houses or brothers or sisters, or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life."

Then again Ramdas was actuated in the same way to refer to the 'Bhagavad Gita' and he read the following slokas :

"Abandoning all duties, come to Me alone for shelter, sorrow not. I will liberate thee from all sins."

Ram had thus spoken through the words of these three great Avataras—Buddha, Christ and Krishna—all of them pointed to the same path: renunciation. At once Ramdas made up his mind to give up, for the sake of Ram, all that he still hugged to his bosom as his own and get out of the 'Samsarik World'.

Spiritual Rebirth.

It was the memorable night of 27th December 1922. He wrote a letter to his wife whom Ram had made him look upon for some time past only as his sister. It ran thus :

To Srimati Rukmanibai.

Dear Sister,

You are to me only a sister in future. Sri Ram at whose feet I have surrendered myself entirely has called me away from the past sphere of my life. I go forth as a beggar in the wide world chanting the sweet name of Sri Ram. You know I have no ambition in life, except to struggle for the attainment of Sri Ram's grace and love. To that aim alone I dedicate the rest of my life and suffer for it—suffer to any extent. We may not meet again, at least as husband and wife. Walk always in the path of God and Truth and make Rumme do the same.

Don't give up the spinning wheel. It will give you peace and happiness. Let Rama also work it.

Sri Ram's blessings on you and Rumme. He protects you both.

Yours affectionately,
P. Vittal Rao

27-12-22.

Sri Vittal Rao had turned his back on worldly life, to which he was nevermore to return.

To describe his spiritual rebirth in Swamiji's own ecstatic words :

"The thrills of a new birth, a new life, filled with the sweet love of Ram were felt. A peace came upon the struggling soul of Ramdas. The turmoil ceased, Ram's own hands seemed to have touched the head of his slave—Ram blessed. O tears, flow on, for the mere joy of a deliverance ! Sorrow, pain, anxiety and care—all vanished, never to return. All glory to Thee, Ram. The great blessing came from Ram; 'I take thee under my guidance and protection, remain ever My devotee, thy name shall be Ramdas.' Yes, Ramdas, what a grand privilege to become the 'das' of Ram, who is all love, all kindness, all mercy, all forgiveness !"

Elsewhere in joyous strains Swamiji sings :

“God thought seized me and made me divine
with this new light and joy.

I roamed on this earth like one distraught...”
and yet again :

“For my life burns like a flame
At the shrine of my Lord.
It enters into His being
Still a worshipper at His Feet.
My Lord I found within—
My heart His temple of light.
He is my Master, my Mother,
I am His slave, His child.”

—: * :—

Matri Lila

(APRIL—JULY, 1965.)

On April 23rd Mataji alighted in Ranchi where her 69th birthday was celebrated from May 2nd to 19th. Ranchi, Hazaribagh and other places in Chhota Nagpur are considered congenial for *tāntric sādhanā*. This was the first occasion on which Mataji blessed Ranchi with her presence for two full months. It may therefore be interesting to relate here a few details of the history of our Ranchi Ashram.

Dr. P. R. Ghosh, a young dentist originally hailing from East Bengal, but settled at Ranchi, met Mataji for the first time during the Samyam Mahavrata that was held in Calcutta in November, 1953. When soon after, at the invitation of devotees, Mataji paid a short visit to Ranchi, it was suggested (since Mataji does not enter the residence of a householder) that she should occupy one of the rooms in the as yet unfinished house that Dr. Priya Ranjan Ghosh was building for himself on the Main Rd. As soon as Mataji entered the largest room she remarked that it would be a good place for the performance of Kirtan. Dr. Priya Ranjan, a bachelor and a religiously inclined person felt that after Mataji had sanctified the house by living in it, it was too good to be used merely as his clinic and residence, and he expressed his desire to donate it to our Ashram. The devotees of Ranchi were in any case eager to have an Ashram in their town. His offer was accepted. In October, 1954 the new Ashram was opened in Mataji's presence by the celebration of Durga Puja under a pandal in the open space adjoining the Ashram. It developed into a grand function during which the *Devi Bhāgavata* and the whole of the *Rāmāyana* were recited as well. Dr. Priya Ranjan then suggested that an image of Kali should be installed in the new Ashram. A devotee donated Rs. 1000/- for the purpose and Sri Nitai Paul,

the artist who had sculptured the beautiful twin statues of Nitai-Gauranga for the temple at our Vrindaban Ashram was subsequently commissioned to carve an image of Kali; to be installed at Divali, November, 1955 in one of the rooms of the Ashram (which now serves as an office). Mataji herself gave some indications of how the image should be made. While, for example, Kali is usually black, this Kali is of the hue of the heavy grey-blue clouds that gather before the monsoon breaks. The statue is quite unusually alive and impressive. During the consecration a strange thing happened. The priest, a Brahmachari of our ashram who had been a student of science, noticed that the locket suspended on a golden chain with which the goddess was adorned, vibrated distinctly as if the statue was breathing. When afterwards he carefully examined the image to make sure whether there was no physical cause to the phenomenon, he found on the contrary that the locket had become stuck in the paint that was not yet quite dry.

Since the room seemed quite inadequate as an abode for the goddess, it was suggested that a temple should be built on the spot where Durga Puja had been celebrated in 1954. When the difficulties over the acquisition of the plot, which belonged to a Catholic Mission, were finally overcome, the problem of funds remained as yet to be solved. However, Kali Herself seemed to take the matter in hand.

Many years ago, a little boy called Manik Banerjee had said to the goddess : "When I am grown up I shall build a temple for you !" In his home at Barisal in East-Bengal, a statue of Kali had been kept in a hut with a thatched roof. Manik's mother used to worship Kali every morning before starting her day's work. So the little boy also got used to worshipping together with his mother. When much later he settled in Ranchi and built a house for himself, he felt that the time had come to fulfil his promise to Kali. He planned to build a temple right in front of his house. But he had a curious dream. Kali appeared to him and said : "Why build

here? I am already in Ma Anandanayi's Ashram." In his dream Manik Babu saw the Ashram of which in waking he did not even know that it existed. Replying: "Won't you come to my home at all Mother?" He woke up. He disclosed his dream to a friend who was Mataji's devotee and who took him to the Ashram. When soon after, namely in May 1958, Mataji visited Ranchi, he was introduced to her and in a long private interview told her of his life-long devotion for Kali and of his dream. Mataji said: "Well, try to build the temple and then see what Kali Ma does."

Actually Sri Manik Banerji bore the entire cost of the temple, while construction of the beautiful large hall in front of it was financed by other devotees.

Swami Jnanananda Giri of the Bholagiri Ashram at Hardwar was requested to supervise the building work. As usual, some difficulties arose and the actual expense far exceeded the estimate. But Kali Ma reassured the Swami in a dream, in which She showed him masses of gold coins and told him not to worry. On one occasion the Swami felt so desperate that he said to Kali; "Rather than return to and wait till money is provided, I shall sell all your jewellery and complete the temple." That night he dreamt of a place covered with a cloth. On removing it, he found an iron safe that contained money. Kali said: "Take money from here!" "I am a Sannyasi," he replied, "I cannot take anything, it has to be given." Kali then directed him to approach Manik Babu again.

During the Diwali festival in 1962, the beautiful temple was consecrated in Mataji's presence. Although the Ashram is situated in such a busy street the temple and the hall are pervaded by a most powerful and inspiring atmosphere. It has come to light that the site of the Ashram was formerly a dense forest in which sadhus and yogis practised meditation and one of them is said to have attained *siddhi* in that very spot. In olden times there was

a Kali Temple belonging to the Rajas of Chhota Nagpur, exactly where our temple is now.

When the Ashram was started it was very small, gradually it is growing large. This time again three new rooms on the upper floor were inaugurated a few days after Mataji's arrival.

In the beginning of Mataji's stay in Ranchi this time there were comparatively few people and so it was a restful time when one could enjoy Mataji's darshan in small groups.

On April 27th Mataji visited the residence of Sri R. N. Pandit, a devotee in Hatia, which is a new colony (about 6 miles from the town) where with the help of Russian and Czech engineers, some huge factories for heavy industries have been built up and are still being enlarged. (Later in June, Mataji was shown round those factories on a second visit.) Satsang was held in a delightful garden. Mataji was relaxed and communicative. When the kirtan was over, a Czech engineer asked a few questions. At the end he said: "I do not believe in reincarnation. Does it matter ?" Mataji replied : "You believe in this life, don't you ? There is only one real life, namely, the one that is dedicated to the search of God ; only one real death, which is the death of death. After that there is no more birth and death."

On April 28th Mataji slipped on the staircase and slightly hurt the bone of the middle finger of her right hand. A couple of days later a doctor examined the finger and wanted to prescribe some medicine. Mataji explained to him that her body did not tolerate medicine of any kind. In the course of the conversation she related that about 40 or 50 years ago when during a cholera epidemic everyone had been inoculated, Mataji at first refused; but when Bholanath pressed her, she finally stretched out her arm and the injection was given. The whole arm swelled up tremendously,

however after sometime it became normal again. Yet, a weakness remained. Mataji said that all the pains she gets even now in her arm are due to that one inoculation.

* * * *

Mataji's birthday celebrations had been thought out and prepared with great care and a good deal of trouble was taken over the arrangements. Everything therefore proceeded in great harmony and beauty. Large numbers of guests arrived from far and near, the greatest number from Calcutta. Accommodation had been provided in various places in the neighbourhood. Almost next to the Ashram, a very spacious house with long verandas and a courtyard, which had served as an office, happened to be available, and provided as the kitchen, dining-places and several living rooms. The Yogoda Math, which is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from our Ashram, very kindly offered hospitality to nearly a hundred of our guests. A large pandal was erected in a compound adjoining the Ashram. However the satsang was transferred from the hall to the pandal only on May 14th, when Sri Haribabaji Maharaj arrived and with him the *Rāsālilā* party. A number of prominent mahatmas, such as Mahamandaleshwar Swami Maheshwaranandaji from Bombay, Swami Viṣṇu Ashramji from Sukhtal, Swami Sharananandaji and Sri Krishnananda Avadhutji reached Ranchi about the same time and daily enlightened the audience by their inspiring talks. Before their arrival some local University Professors and Pandits gave interesting and instructive lectures on spiritual subjects in Hindi and Bengali alternately. A full programme of kirtan, bhajan, puja, recitation of Scriptures and discourses on religious topics was kept up from early morning until 10 p. m. throughout the birthday celebrations. Along with it *akhaṇḍa japa* was also sustained day and night without a break from May 2nd to 19th.

The *Tithi Puja* in the night of May 19th, which marks the culmination of the function, was so well arranged that

everything proceeded in perfect order and solemnity in spite of the enormous attendance. After the puja, as customary on that occasion, a long queue was formed and everyone was allowed to ascend the dais and offer his pranams to Mataji, who, as usual that night, was lying completely still and as if far removed from this world. The obeisances took about two hours. There was no crowding and no pushing. Rasalila was performed as usual later in the morning and a feast given to everyone who cared to partake.

The next day the statue of Kali was newly painted for the first time after its installation. A special, very elaborate puja was therefore performed. Mataji sat in the hall most of the time and sang for about an hour. In reply to questions, she also related something of how the Kali Temple came into being.

By the end of May, most of the visitors had dispersed, but Sri Haribabaji's daily Kirtan, his talks about the lives of saints as well as the Rāsālilā continued regularly until Mataji left for Jamshedpur. For a whole fortnight in the 2nd half of May, Pandit Kapindraji delighted the audience by his humourous and spirited exposition of the Ramayana as the last item of the day.

On June 12th Sri Narendra Brahmachariji, a *gurubhai* of the late Sri Gopal Thakur came to the Ashram with a large party and performed a congregational puja in the hall in front of the Kali Temple. Women also took part in the very impressive and original puja.

One afternoon, while Sri Haribabaji was expounding the Gita between 5 and 6 p. m., Mataji saw a man with a long white beard, who had the appearance of a *Rishi*, looking through the window. She called one of the Brahmacharis and drew his attention to this, and he also was able to see the venerable old man. Just outside the hall, under a spreading banyan tree, there is a tomb of a Mohammedan saint who is supposed to have been a "*siddha fakir*." It is possi-

ble that he was the one whom Mataji saw looking in through the window that day. A sum was given to the attendant of the grave to perform a special puja and distribute the *prasāda* to the Mohammedan devotees.

During the latter part of her stay at Ranchi, Mataji visited the T. B. hospital, run by the Ramakrishna Mission. She also graced the homes of several devotees with her presence.

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On June 21st Mataji with a small group of people and Sri Haribabaji and his party left for Jamshedpur at the invitation of some old *bhaktas*. Everyone was put up in a Gujarati School. The Rāsaliḷā party acted both Sri Krishna and Sri Mahaprabhu Lila with considerable success. A local party also did some specially beautiful Kirtan in which incidents from Sri Krishna's life were sung. Mataji and Sri Haribabaji were invited to a large public hall by the Municipal Board and given an official reception.

On June 24th Mataji left for Puri with an enormously large party. Our Ashram there is right on the seashore, next to the burning ghat. Since it is very small several houses in the neighbourhood were rented to accommodate Mataji's and Sri Haribabaji's parties. The *satsang* and the Rāsaliḷā had to take place in the open or rather under a canvas that had to be pitched and removed daily. The monsoon had started and several times the rain threatened to upset the programme. But fortunately the situation was always saved somehow as if by miracle and the *satsang* could be held regularly.

June 30th was the day of the renowned car festival "*Rathayatra*" when Lord Jagannath is taken out in procession to a place at a distance of 2½ miles. Seats had been reserved for the whole Ashram party and everyone went to have



A Scene from Tithi-puja

May 19, 1965



Feeding of Kumaris

May, 1965

darsana on the 3rd day of the festival. Even Didima, notwithstanding her 90 years was carried up on the chariot on the shoulders of a Sannyasi disciple and so was able to touch the image.

After a stay for about eleven days in Puri Mataji, Sri Haribabaji and the whole party arrived in our Ashram at Agarpara on the 7th morning. As usual the *bhaktas* from Calcutta inundated the spacious Ashram, where *Gurupurnima* was also observed on July 13th. This time *Guru puja* was offered not as on former occasions to Didima and Ma, but to Govindaji, the *Narayan Shila* at the temple.

On July 9th, Mataji accompanied by Sri Haribabaji and a few others went to pay a visit to Sri Sitaramdas Omkarnath, who was ill. He was staying in a thatched hut in the compound of a wealthy devotee in Calcutta. On July 10th, Sri Haribabaji left by plane for Delhi, the same afternoon Mataji with a small party were taken to Kalyani, about 30 miles beyond Agarpara to bless the newly built house of some devotees of many years' standing. Being sufficiently far from Calcutta it proved a restful place and arrangements were excellent. Mataji spent one night there and on July 11th went to inaugurate the house of another devotee at Behala, where she remained for the next night. On the 12th afternoon she visited the residence of a devotee in Calcutta where Sri Mohanananda Brahmachari was putting up with his party.

On July 14th Mataji left for Varanasi where on July 16th a new building to house the Medical out-door and Dispensing section of the Charitable Hospital which Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha is building, was ceremonially opened.

It is understood that the hospital, when complete, will have various out-patients departments along with a provision for having 80 indoor-beds. To proceed with the full implementation of the scheme the Sangha will require

not less than Rs. 10,00,000/-. Its needs no saying that the proposed charitable hospital in Varanasi will go a long way to serve the suffering humanity, irrespective of any caste or creed.

On July 18th Mataji left for Kishenpur where she is expected to remain for a few weeks. She gives *darśana* daily after 6 p. m. and pays a visit to Kalyanvan every day at least once. From 21st to 24th July at the request of a devotee, one hundred *Durga Saptah Sati* were chanted at the Rama Temple at Kalyanvan by 10 pandits who had been specially called from Hardwar and Varanasi. It was followed by a *Havan* (fire sacrifice) on the 25th and a special Siva Puja called *Rudravisheka* on the 26th.

The whole of the Ramayana will be read in the Kishenpur Ashram from 2nd to 3rd August. A *Bhagawata Saptaha* is also to be held there from August 4th with Pandit Srinath Shastri officiating.

It is expected that the next Durga Puja will be celebrated in our Agarpara Ashram from September 30th to October 5th and the Samyam Saptaha Mahavrata will take place at Hazaribagh (Bihar) from November 1st to 7th at the cordial invitation of Sri Jagannath Roy of Bhagyakul, an ardent devotee of Mataji.
