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Pattom Palace,
Trivendrum

Holding Prasadi
Tulsi-Leaves of
Sri Padmanabham

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Mātri Vāni

So long as the manifestation of the Guru's power is not experienced, the special pilgrimage to Enlightenment, to Self-knowledge has not really begun. This is why you have not found your own steady speed of progress. *Sādhana* proceeds within the realm of *prakṛiti*.* Therefore it is man's bounden duty at every moment to be intent on advancing rapidly and vigorously.

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After happiness gloom is bound to follow. The realization of the Brahman is a state beyond joy and dejection; just as when you see a wet earthen vessel from a distance you presume that it is filled with water because generally an earthen pot full of water looks wet.

* *Prakṛiti* Nature or Primordial Matter consisting of *sattwa*, *rajas*, *tamas*, its inherent qualities or aspects, namely luminosity, motion, inertia.

Similarly knowers of the Brahman give the impression of being steeped in joy; but this is not that ordinary joy or happiness. What that state is like cannot be described in words.

* * *

To see that which when seen the wish to see anything more vanishes for ever; to hear that which when heard the desire to hear anything else does not awaken anymore. Real *darśana* (vision) is that *darśana* after which no more question can arise of vision or no vision or of displaying anything. *Darśana* must be all-encompassing, unveiled, uninterrupted, indisputable.

* * *

When touching your finger, one has touched you, although you are not the finger; by touching your dress one has contacted you though you are not the dress. Just as you are in the smallest part of yourself, so you are also in the whole of yourself. He is one and yet He is the many; and in spite of being the many He is one. Such is His *līlā* (play). He is as equally whole in a grain of sand as He is whole in man and as He is whole in His totality—complete and perfect. Nevertheless, among all creatures it is man's distinctive mark to be endowed with the special capacity or power to realize

this perfection, this wholeness. This body calls a human being him who has discrimination, who is aware of this possibility. One who is not conscious of it but engrossed in desires for sense objects—what is one to call him ?

* * *

You all are at present in a state of constant wanting. This has for the time being become your second nature. When you are hungry you are in need of food; having eaten you feel satisfied. Then again you want to sleep. After waking up you conceive the need to go out or to talk to someone. In this way you are always wanting something or other. This condition of ceaseless wanting has become your state of being. This is what this body calls the state of constant wanting that has become your second nature. The ability to dwell in his true Nature, in his Self, in his own state of Being is potentially inherent in man. The veil of ignorance is there, yet there is also a door to Knowledge. By passing through that door of Knowledge man returns to his own true Nature, becomes established in his own state of Being.

Mātri Satsang

Swami Bhagavananda Giri

(Translated from Hindi.)

Ardha Kumbh Mela,
Triveni, Prayag,
January 27th, 1948.

Question : Everybody says that a Guru is an absolute necessity. But as for myself, I need neither a Guru nor parents. I want only God.

Mataji : The Guru is God Himself. The Guru makes one understand what the Divine essentially is. The Guru must not be regarded as a human being. Every time one has the Guru's *daršana* one should look upon him as God. There is a state where by awakening a certain power the whole world can be awakened. World means that which is moving. It is God who brings forth, preserves and again absorbs this world into Himself. So who can be its Guru ? The real Guru is God alone. By having faith in God one comes to know about Him. The Guru of this whole universe is none but God Himself. Through the power of the Guru God can be realized. So long as one has not secured the Guru's help, it is very difficult to find God. How far can man's intelligence take him ? You want to grasp God by your intelligence ? How can this be done ?

To find God the first necessity is a Guru. It also should be understood that He Who is your Guru is everybody's Guru.

Question : Is the Guru *one* from the point of view of the world ?

Mataji : Gurus are also of various kinds : Gurus who give spiritual instructions, Gurus who teach, Gurus who bestow initiation, Gurus who confer a mantra; and by touch also the Guru's power can be communicated. Similarly there is an infinite variety of disciples. So long as there is no inner desire to take initiation and to seek refuge at the lotus-feet of the Guru, one should not go in for initiation. Always pray to God to grant you a Sadguru. Do not take initiation because someone has told you to, otherwise you will repent of it later. Once you have accepted initiation from a Guru you have to live according to his behest. Once a marriage has been performed, it cannot be undone anymore.

Question : Ma, I am studying at Allahabad. I have accepted Swami Ramatirtha as my Guru. When I was eleven years old I heard about Him and ever since I have looked upon Him as my Guru.

Mataji : You should understand that once you have found a Guru you must not accept any other preceptor. Do not change from one to the other. Also adhere regularly to some practice. Every day pray to God to reveal Himself to you. Contemplate God. The teaching of Swami Ramatirtha you have got anyway. Be careful to put his instructions into practice.

Question : Why can't one make God Himself one's Guru ?
What need is there of an intermediary ?

Mataji : If you want to meet the Governor you must first apply for permission. Without this you will not be allowed to meet him. This is why to find God a Guru is necessary. In order to be blessed with a Guru meditate on God. By meditating regularly He will manifest. Do not worry, just keep your mind on God. Be sure that if you need a Guru, God will provide one for you. You are eager to find only God. The keener your effort the sooner you will be able to realize Him.

Question : How much I have sought God—and found nothing.

Mataji : You must never give up your search until you find. God may become revealed at any moment.

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Dr. Pannalal : Ma, what is wrong if the Brahmacharis of your Ashram want to come to you or to remain with you ?

Mataji : The desire to come to this body and to remain with it is of course good. But one has also to obey the bidding of this body, has one not ? By carrying out the instructions of this body one will progress in one's *sādhana*. If someone is sent away, it should be understood that it is for the sake of some work that has to be done. At another time it may again happen that this body calls someone to stay with it. Orders have to be obeyed. By carrying out instructions, spiritual well-being will be promoted.

One should not pay attention to the shortcomings of others. Rather than noticing the mistakes of others,

each one will do well to discover his own faults. First of all one should try to improve oneself. By blaming another you will make contact with what you blame him for. Anger is also very bad. It creates a great obstacle on the path to God-realization. If you must be angry, be angry with yourself; if you are greedy, be greedy to find God; if you have a strong desire, let it be the desire for God-realization. You have all come here to become *sādhus*, so you will have to adopt a life of self-restraint. In the householder's āśrama also self-mastery has to be practised. There are some here who have the attitude that since this body is their mother, they can do anything they please. This is not good, it will pull you down.

A widow came and told me ; "I have educated my son with great love. But he has become very bad. He even beats me. Things have come to such a pass that I feel ashamed to tell anyone." This body told the woman : "Give to your son whatever possessions you have and spend the rest of your life in the search and contemplation of God."

January 28th, 1948.

Question : Should one keep the details of one's *sādhana* secret ?

Mataji : First of all fill everything outside and inside with the one Self. Become God's real servant. This will remove the ego to the last trace. He who is a World-teacher can help everyone to realize God. First the ego has to be obliterated. Then, if you wish you may build a temple or serve *sādhus* or practise charity. If you continue in this

way you will get nearer to God. In some places it is forbidden to set up religious institutions. Under certain conditions all these things cannot be done. Just become attached to God with the utmost love and reverence. The Supreme Power is everywhere present. If you have developed some power you can later pass it on to others. If you possess little you can give little. But if you have made the Supreme your own, you can communicate the Supreme to others.

Question : As I go on putting questions, my eyes fill with tears. How am I to hide them ?

Mataji : Listen ! You say your eyes fill with tears. If tears come of themselves, this may also take you to God-realization. At some stage, when one cannot help crying, one's life may be transformed thereby. If man becomes completely absorbed in *bhāva* (deep feeling), then at times tears flow from his eyes. Try to find God. Some people weep because of bereavement. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu would shed tears profusely in his *bhāva*.* At times veritable torrents of water would rush from his eyes. Deep devotion calls forth tears. To cry out of love for God is very good. If you feel power or the love of God awaken in yourself, try to accept and hold it within yourself. What is the result of restraining one's feeling ? Do you know ? It increases one's power. Some people's eyes fill with tears when they hear God's name or *kirtana*. Baby Didi's son, after having become a District Magistrate, died in a car accident. But his mother displayed no emotion. She attended to the dead body and made all arrangements. Someone said, "Let her cry or she will go mad !"

* Religious ecstasy.

Question : Every little *bhāva* (feeling of devotion) makes me weep. What am I to do ? Should I get up and go outside ?

Mataji : When tears begin to flow there is no need to go outside. Try to control your feeling. Even when you are in the grip of strong emotion go on listening to the discourse. Hold the emotion within yourself, try to absorb it within. If you can restrain it, so much the better. Thereby your inner power will grow. Finally your life will be changed by the development of sattvik qualities. In this manner the inner and outer life of the individual fuses and becomes one. If such a *bhāva* overcomes someone and he goes and stays in the world, he must certainly control these *bhāvas*. They may occur there also. In such a case he must try his utmost to restrain them. If someone goes into *samādhi*, an ignorant person may say he has fallen asleep. But the wise man, he who knows, will understand that it is *samādhi*. The One Supreme alone is everywhere. There are two kinds of *bhāvas* : 1) the *bhāva* that comes to the person who still lives in the realm of want. This should be controlled as much as possible. The *bhāva* that supervenes through the influence of God's name, one should try to conceal within oneself. 2) *Mahābhāva*.

Question : What is the difference between a worldly *bhāva* and this *bhāva* ? As for instance if someone breaks out into anger—is that *bhāva* also of a similar kind ?

Mataji : Through the divine *bhāva* the desires for sense objects gradually diminish. This *bhāva* is the signpost that indicates how far you have progressed towards God-realization.

Question : If anger is aroused, how can one stop it ?

Mataji : Anger, greed, passion, attachment are obstacles to one's sādhana. This does not mean that you have to give up worldly life. Now straight away, under the very circumstances in which you are placed, try to improve yourself. By recognising and acknowledging your mistakes and shortcomings you will certainly correct yourself. If you blame others their defects enter into you. To find fault with another is itself a fault. When you go into a garden admire the beautiful flowers; why look for thorns ?

Question : I have a great desire to attain to *ānanda*, but to leave one's family is difficult.

Mataji : *Ānanda* pervades everywhere. Just as when someone dresses up in various disguises, yet he knows all along who he is in reality. One should constantly pray to God for the realization of *saccidānanda*. What wonderful arrangements God makes ! Children stay with their parents. If the child disobeys, the mother gives him a slap and takes him home. If one does not seek God, one encounters any amount of pain and trouble. One must search for one's real home. God is indeed the supreme Self, the supreme Father and the supreme Friend. In the world of duality there is sorrow. Where two are there is pain, there is death. Whatever God does is for one's real welfare. By finding God one finds supreme *ānanda*. Don't go where sorrow and bereavement dwell. Proceed in the direction of supreme bliss. You meet with affliction because you are

not heading towards supreme bliss. Water and the wave are one and the same thing.

This body is only a small child, this is why it chatters away in front of its fathers. One should speak only about God, all the rest is painful and futile. Where Rāma is there is *arāma* - rest and ease; where Rāma is not, there is *vyarāma*—discomfort and disease. Do you know who in truth is your own? God alone is truly everyone's own.

Question : Mataji, you always call yourself a small child. Are you teasing us in this way?

Mataji : Not once but a hundred times is this body a small child. You cannot make an old woman of this little girl. An old woman will be pushed away and kept in a corner. This will never do. This body is your tiny baby and will sit on your lap.

Someone : Small children talk a lot.

Mataji : It is a small child's nature to prattle.

A devotee : Mataji, I have just seen your whole camp.

Mataji : Nothing belongs to this body. Again from another point of view, whatever is, whatever was and will be in the world, it all belongs to this body.

Question : But if there is something separate?

Mataji : There is nothing separate. Everywhere is only God alone.

Mātri Mouna

By

Shivashankari

“I have no need of doing or saying anything; there never was any need, neither is there now nor will there ever be in the future. What you found manifested in me in the past, what you see now and what will be observed in the future is only for the good of you all. If you think that there is something peculiarly my own, I must tell you that the whole world is my own.”

Mataji

Since the middle of last August (August 18th 1971) Mataji has been keeping silence—Her own special brand of “silence” in which She utters only the Names of God and, more recently, other holy words related especially to our *sādhana*, such as “*japa*” “*dhyāna*,” etc.

Naturally everybody wonders about this: Why is She depriving us of the incomparable sweetness and inspiration of communication with Her by natural speech? We tried in the beginning to connect this with such special occurrences as the establishment of the Sacred Fire in Kalyanvan, Dehradun, with which a *yajña* was begun at the time She stopped talking normally; then with the terrible suffering in the East and the war that brought Bangla Desh into being. But her new behaviour continued beyond these happenings and we could no longer find

anything to rationalize about in connection with it. However, even though our minds do not seem to find an answer to this new riddle She poses us on the level of external happenings, Her behaviour must be "saying" something to us; Her "silence" must have a language.

The English photographer, Richard Lannoy, who has given us several extraordinarily fine portraits of Ma, has also given us a very beautiful impression of Her in words which may help to penetrate this mystery. I quote at length in order to preserve the beauty and the effect of his statement.*

"I had been away in Europe and had not seen Sri Anandamayi Ma for eighteen months. The car drove along a track and came to a halt before an unfinished dyke. All around was silent in the night. Two boys gestured into the blackness and told me the Ashram was some way off in the middle of a plain. Carrying my bundles I set off through the thorns and scrub. Soon I could make out a small light and the dark, indistinct silhouette of buildings. As I approached I heard a gong sound—it was a quarter to nine and the time of silence. On tiptoe I came near to the terrace and could make out a small building and a single lamp. Figures were seated; there was no sound at all as I peeped into the room, but in the flickering light I could distinguish Her seated, wrapped in a white robe, motionless. It was as if this small concentration of silence, serenity and power were quite outside of time, as if it had always been so, had remained just so, an oasis of quiet, subsisting beneath the flux and activity of life and my own mobility, my journeys, my time spent travelling across the sea in Europe and Africa. There

* See *Ānanda Vārtā*, Vol. IV, no. 1, May, 1956.

had been no apparent interruption, for I felt as I stood silent in the doorway looking towards Her, that in spite of myself this domain of stillness had resided within me all those months too, but that I had been blind enough to close myself to it and to ignore it. Ever since I first saw Sri Anandamayi Ma I have felt that Her ways and doings, Her activity, Her presence, were not entirely separate but had its correspondence within myself, were subtly contained within an inner realm of which I have very little knowledge beyond a dim sensing that it exists there....”

In one form or another, this is the experience of all : that Mother, no matter how exalted and sublimely remote She may seem, is not something apart from us; She is, in some way which the mind cannot comprehend, the outer expression of Something deep within our own being.

So often in the past year or so I have dreamed of Her, and always the same import is there though the circumstances of the dreams vary : She is talking to me, directly, intimately—and in English. On awaking I rarely remember what She has said, but I am intensely aware that She has been speaking to me in *my own language*. Is this not what Her silence is : the own true language of each of us ? And out of that Silence come only those sounds which will aid us in the discovery of our own silent depths.

Of Herself Ma has said, “Truly this body belongs to all; for this reason it behaves and speaks as far as possible to fulfil the needs of the people with whom it deals at any particular time.” Therefore, it must be that Her silence as well is to fulfil our need. Certainly it cannot be said that out of any need of

Her own She deliberately practises some form of *mouna*. Perhaps our very longing to hear Her speak as before opens the depths of our being to Her influence in a way that cannot be accomplished by the exchange of words—"words floating on the surface."* Besides, do we really listen, do we hear Her when She does speak? She has given us everything; She has told us again and again—each according to his need and tendencies—all that we need to know. Yet how many are really able to do as She says, to practice what She has given with the whole-souled intensity that She demands of us? Perhaps now, out of Her boundless *kripa*, She Herself, by Her silence, creates in us the capacity to do so. By ceasing to communicate on a superficial level there is created within us a rather distressing sense of separateness—something quite other than the over-powering sense of the Impersonal that we often experience in Her very Personality—a sense of apartness that may become real *viraha*, driving us to discover at last what Ma Anandamayi truly is within our own self.

Of course, anything that we may try to say about Mataji's action must seem highly complicated or become a gross oversimplification of the actual Fact of Her Being. However, there are, no doubt, different levels on which Her behaviour speaks to us. The most obvious "purpose" of Her silence may well be simply an example to us, Her stumbling, fumbling children for our own behaviour; for it does not seem to be enough that She has *told* us repeatedly, individually and collectively, to speak only what is necessary and what is conducive to the attainment

* The word meaning "language" and that meaning "to float" sound alike in Bengali.

of the Goal. Like little children we have to be shown that it can be done.

“So long as speech has to be employed”, Ma has said, “use your words sparingly. Listen and try to assimilate what others say, and only when necessity demands utter a few words measured out in homœopathic doses, as it were...What is the hidden motive behind talkativeness? Is it not to display superiority or erudition or else to defeat someone by argument? The force of action is much greater than mere words. Superficial conversation and discussion will not take you far. Practise self-introspection and calm the passions of the heart and you will see how little inclination there is then for talk.”

And on the practice of silence She has told us :

“To observe silence means to keep the mind fixed on Him. At first one feels the impulse to talk, later all inclination and disinclination vanish. It is also like this : just as the bee collects honey, so all that one needs is gathered together naturally. What is necessary becomes available of its own accord—presents itself, as it were—when there is ever closer union with Him.

“When one entirely refrains from speaking and even from communicating by signs or gestures, how is the body kept alive? Everything dovetails, and the silent person just watches as a kind of spectator. In the measure that one progresses towards union, one will notice that obstacles disappear, and whatever is necessary provides itself. It is one thing if everything happens by itself, and quite another to make arrangements by one's own effort. Real silence means there is actually nowhere else for the mind to go. In the end, whether the mind exists or not, whether one speaks or not, makes no difference.”

(Continued on page 205)

My First Visit

U. C. Dutt. M. A., P. E. S. †

I think it was in May 1929. In the summer vacation I was going to Mussoorie, the queen of the hill-stations, as a guest of a military officer. I was in high spirits.

I halted at Hardwar at the foot of the Shivalak hills – quite a modernized town in the lap of nature. The long ranges of hills on one side contrast with the ever flowing Ganga and the canal on the other side. I heard the call of the Himalayas—a clear call it was, I could not resist. I took a different route and moved towards the North. Crossing the Ganga I spent about a week in some *chattis* on the way leading to the holy shrine of Badrinath.

Against my wishes I had to return to Hardwar for the sake of a friend of mine who was accompanying me. In the evening I went to Har-ki-pairi and there on the platform met Mahamahopadhyaya Pt. Gopinath Kaviraj, Principal, Sanskrit College, Banares. My joy knew no bounds to see him there quite unexpectedly and I enquired from him if there was any real Mahātmā in that locality. Kavirajji told me that Mother Anandamayī had been at Hardwar a few days back but suddenly had left for Ayodhya. Her father and Kunja Babu (Swami Turiyananda) were waiting for her at the *dharmashāla* at Bhim-

† Reprinted from A. V., Vol IV/1, May 1956.
Sri U. C. Dutt passed away a few years ago.

goda. He advised me to make further enquiries about her return at Bhimgoda the next morning.

As the day dawned I went to the place where the party stayed. The Mother had not turned up. Her father and Kunja Babu too were reported to have gone to Brahma Kunda. I left the place in despair, wandered about at Brahmakundā and then came down almost exhausted to sit on a ghat in front of the Bholagiri *dharmasāla* where we were putting up.

Someone came and told me that Mother was calling me. "Which mother?" said I. The reply was: "Anandamayi Ma." I was taken aback. How was it that one so far could be so near? She did not know me. How could she call me? I followed the messenger and went upstairs. Entering a room I saw an exquisitely beautiful lady sitting cross-legged on the floor together with some other persons. She appeared to be divinely inspired. At once she greeted me with a smile and talked to me as if I had been known to her for a long time. Respected Kavirajji was there. I sat beside him close to the Mother. Someone requested her to sing a song. Without a moment's hesitation she started singing: "O Mother, be gracious and make me like a child. Do not allow me to grow old, leaving the charms of childhood behind." In a few minutes she was transported to another sphere, her face was illumined. She lost outer consciousness and plunged into *samādhi*. We felt a divine Presence. One was reminded of Sri Ramakrishna who, while singing or talking, passed into the super-conscious state at ease and often. After some time in that state some Vedic hymns in a regular rhythm of rise and fall found expression through her tongue. It appeared that she was an expert in Vedic lore. Kavirajji whispered

to me, "Mantras like those of the Vedas are being revealed once more." I was struck dumb with wonder.

Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj and his family put up in the Bholagiri Dharmasāla, I too was there. At our request Mother agreed to stay there and the party shifted from Bhimgoda. I felt very happy to be in close touch with such an exalted being. Mother was extremely human and at the same time supremely divine—a meeting-ground of heaven and earth.

That same evening Mother was sitting on the terrace of the dharmasāla. Just below the Ganga canal flowed steadily to an unknown destination, the moon shone brightly and created thousands of silver ripples on the running stream. The yonder Shivalak sent occasional sighs to dull the smiling Ganga. The sight was charming. Mother's presence elevated the entire surroundings to a level above the earth. I felt a child at the feet of the Mother. She began to tell me about her life—how as a girl of three she appeared to lose consciousness on hearing kirtana at a neighbour's house, how this kind of thing repeated itself often, so that her family became apprehensive and consulted some doctors and *vaid*s (ayurvedic doctors); and how a distinguished physician, Dr. Mahendra Ch. Nandi of Kalikutch told her people that she needed no treatment, since the symptoms indicated a highly spiritual state. What resembled fainting fits were by no means attacks of epilepsy or due to any disorder of body or mind. They were signs of God-intoxication. People who knew Dr. Mahendra Nandi had great faith in him. Since then Mother was looked upon differently.

A word must here be said about Dr. Nandi. Being a resident of the same village I knew him personally. I have

travelled from Assam to Punjab but I do not remember having seen the like of him anywhere. A unique personality with a giant figure, a flowing beard and hair all white, of serene appearance, with large penetrating eyes, dressed in *dhoti, chadar* and a pair of slippers, he was universally respected. To see him was to touch his feet. Late Bipin Chandra Pal, the great political leader, orator and savant, called him "the Tolstoy of Bengal." Though an eminent physician and surgeon, he was considered to be a *siddha mahātmā* (a man of realization). So was his father, the late Ananda Babu known as Ananda Swami to his numerous Hindu and Muslim disciples. He was an intimate friend of the Brahma-leader Keshav Chandra Sen and of Mahatma Vijai Krishna Goswami. His grand-father, the late Ram Dulal Dewan, minister of Tripura State, was no less distinguished. Even his son Ashok, who died in prison during the Svadeshi days is described by Sri Aurobindo in his *Karakahiny* as *yoga bhrashta*. A word from a saint like Dr. Nandi was enough to convince people of Mother's greatness.

I asked Mother if she had committed to memory some of the Vedic hymns which she had recited in the morning. She answered calmly : "Here there is no question of committing anything to memory. Whatever comes, comes of itself. People say it resembles Vedic hymns". I thought with Carlyle of the Great Unconscious through which Truth is revealed to mankind. I got the impression that Mother's states were of two kinds : The one a state of overwhelming, uninterrupted bliss (*ānanda*) and the other even more sublime state of *samādhi*.

I think Mother derives her name "Anandamayi" from the first state which is a constant phase of her life. A feeling

of unbroken joy becomes natural for one who lives on the plane of bliss or reaches the *ānandamayī kośha* (sheath of bliss). The other state dawns on transcending the five sheaths—the physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual. It is a supra-mental and highly exalted state, comparable to *Nirvikalpa Samādhi*, a state without modifications, without pleasure-pain tone. Words and thoughts stop short and come back suffocated so to speak, from that dizzy height. Blessed are those who attain to that state. They become one with the Supreme Reality. They become omniscient and omnipotent.

As night was approaching I took leave and left Mother to herself. She sat for long hours all alone, shining in her own glory.

The next morning I came to learn that Mother had passed into a deep *samādhi* some time during the night and there was no sign of her regaining normal consciousness soon. I observed her for a pretty long time. She appeared to be in a deep sleep, but she was not sleeping for her eyes were half open and drawn within, they seemed to have lost all lustre and to be wholly oblivious of the world of the senses. The outer form was lying there, the inner spirit, detached from its garb, seemed in holy communion with the world-spirit.

A friend of mine, Dr. Nigam of Fyzabad happened to be there. I told him to see Mother in that state if he wanted to get an idea of real *samādhi*. The doctor was amazed when he saw her and paid her homage.

Hours passed. The sun went down the meridian. It was 1 p. m. or so. All felt hungry. Even Mother's old father

did not take anything without feeding his divine daughter. He began to utter loudly divine names close to her ears. No response for about fifteen minutes or so. Four or five of us, including Kavirajji were in the room. The chanting of divine names was continued and a slight change could be noticed in her features. The eyes began to show signs of life and shed tears in torrents. At once I thought of the sattvik signs : *ashru* (tears), *pulak* (joy), *kampa* (trembling) etc. and said in an undertone to Kavirajji that the next thing might be '*kampa*'. No sooner was it said than Mother began to shiver violently. All these states began to appear and reappear one after another. Then commenced a tug of war between the sensory and super-sensory elements of her life. As soon as physical consciousness started dawning on the body it was drawn in and she was again lost to the senses. The process continued till outer consciousness reasserted itself. She opened her eyes and tried to speak but failed. Some eatables were placed before her, not so much for her as for the sake of others as they wanted her *prasāda*. With great efforts she uttered a word or two expressing her inability to eat anything. Then she lay quietly for some time.

I had seen others in *samādhi*, but never before had I witnessed a *samādhi* of that type. Such a long period of super-consciousness, no sign of life, so to speak, and above all the wonderful states that accompanied the regressive process of climbing down to normalcy. I have seen the snow-clad Himalayas touching the sky, the source of the sacred Ganga babbling on pebbles and the sun rising from a blue sea but I have not seen a sight so touching in its majesty as Mother's *samādhi*. I may forget everything else, but I can never forget what I saw at Hardwar

twenty-seven years ago. It was superb. It was sublime. It surpasses everything.

In the evening I approached Mother and told her that I had a mind to go to Mussoorie, but if she stayed at Hardwar for some time, I could postpone my departure. Mother gave me to understand that her movements were uncertain. She might leave at any moment. So she advised me to keep to my programme. Accordingly I arranged to leave Hardwar the following day.

The next morning (3rd day) I bowed to Mother and told her that I was going to Sahasradhara first and then to Mussoorie. She suggested going to Sahasradhara as well. I felt very happy to have the privilege of escorting her to a lovely spot and to be able to live in her company for at least one other day. Several ladies and gentlemen together with Mother's father and Kunja Babu accompanied her. We went to Dehradun by train, then took a bus to Rajpnr. From there to Sahasradhara we walked a distance of three miles. I hired a dandi for Mother but she was at the head of the party, walking very fast and leading others. The dandi was used by turns by two old people.

We reached Sahasradhara. A projected hill-top was dripping water all the twenty-four hours through not thousands but millions of openings. There were a temple of Siva by the hot springs and a small *dharmasālā*. We took our bath in the spring and sat round Mother in the temple of Lord Siva. One could easily imagine that the Divine Mother Parvati had come to her father Himalaya with her children for a short stay. All of us began to feel the presence of a living Goddess in a lonely valley.

of eternal life. We took our midday meal, talked and laughed and felt that we were children again. We knew one person and she was our wonderful Mother.

Before the sun went down the party left the sweet retreat and moved to Rajpur. A bus was ready to take them back to Dehradun. With a heavy heart I took leave of the Mother and felt very wretched like an orphan.

That night I passed at Rajpur and thought of the unique experience I had had during those three days.

Years after, in 1950 I met Mother at Banaras. She referred to the trip and told a large number of devotees who had collected for her *darśana* that she first went to Dehradun with me and liked the area. Later *bhaktas* built some ashramas there. Then she said jokingly. "But Baba went away leaving this small child behind."

Life is a mystery. The intellect is a light no doubt but not strong or pure enough to pierce through the thick curtain that conceals Reality. A better instrument is needed for the purpose. It is intuition, *prajña*. Intuition can be easily developed with the help and grace of a dynamic spiritual personality like Mother. She soars at dizzy heights but keeps her look on the earth as well. Her earthly life is a reflection of the life beyond. She serves as a connecting link between heaven and earth and through her one can know "the Great Unknown". Her presence creates an atmosphere in which the human mind naturally comes to know its limitations and knocks at the door of illumination. In the words of Goethe : "one's soul is charmed, enraptured; feasted, fed".

I believe that as a form of Divine Energy (*Sakti*) Mother has come down to the earth to inspire and guide blundering humanity. May her visit to this dark planet be sufficiently long so that those who walk with eyes open may no longer grope in the dark but see a moving pillar of light. As a mark of profound gratitude I offer my humble tribute of sincere homage and adoration to Mother on the happy occasion of Her Diamond Jubilee celebrations.*

Continued from page 196, "*Matri Mouna*"

If thou speakest not, I will fill my heart with thy silence
and endure it. I will keep still and wait like the night
with starry vigil and its head bent low with patience.

The morning will surely come, the darkness will vanish,
and thy voice pour down in golden streams breaking
through the sky.

Then thy words will take wing in songs from every one
of my birds' nest, and thy melodies will break forth in
flowers in all my forest groves.

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—TAGORE

* This essay was written for Mataji's 60th birthday in 1956,

From An Old Diary

With Mataji in May-June, 1952.

Atmananda

It was Sri Triveni Puri Maharaj's keen desire that Mataji should bless Khanna* by her presence during her birthday celebrations this year. He had built a couple of rooms for her adjoining the Saraswati Sanskrit College which is situated in the open fields just outside of the city of Khanna. The College, by the way, owes its existence largely to the initiative of Sri Triveni Puriji who was eager to promote and spread Sanskrit learning in the Punjab.

Unfortunately Sri Triveni Puriji passed away shortly after he had been to Hardwar with Mataji in February to attend the consecration of the new Siva Temple built at Kharkhari by the Raja Durga Singh of Solan.

Sri Krishnavadhutaji and the disciples of Sri Triveni Puri, however, prevailed on Mataji to come to Khanna for her birthday all the same and Mataji agreed. She arrived there on May 1st from Varanasi, accompanied by Sri Gopal Thakur of Allahabad and others, and remained there until May 13th. A *Samādhi Mandir* for Sri Triveni Puri had been erected in the close vicinity of the Saraswati College. Thanks to the personal efforts of Sri Avadhutaji the building was completed in its main structure before Mataji reached Khanna in spite of the very short time at his disposal. A fine, life-like statue of the

* Khanna is a small town in East Punjab.

great Mahatma had been modelled by an artist and placed into the inner room of the *mandir*. Perpetual *kīrtana* of the *Mahā-mantra* was kept up on the veranda of the *mandir* throughout the twelve days and nights of Mataji's sojourn at Khanna. She would visit the *Samādhi* at least once or twice daily and sometimes was present for the evening service (*āratī*). After her birthday celebrations had been completed, on May 13th, the day of her departure, Mataji settled down on the veranda of the *mandir* for several hours in the early afternoon, not heeding the flaming hot wind, and listened to the songs of Punjabi ladies, stirring up their enthusiasm by her encouragement and now and again joining herself in the *kīrtana*.

Those twelve or thirteen days at Khanna were extremely well planned and organized, and deeply enjoyed by all present. An increasing number of Mataji's devotees kept on arriving daily from all parts of India. There was ample opportunity for Mataji's *darśana* while listening to the interesting and inspiring talks of Sri Avadhutaji and of other *Mahātmās* at the *satsang* held three times daily—mornings and afternoons in the College hall and at night in the spacious courtyard. In between, Mataji could be more intimately contacted in her own room. A group of people usually accompanied her on her evening walks. On those occasions Mataji was found to be in a delightfully communicative mood, relating incidents from her life at Shahbag (Dacca).

One evening we came to a cluster of houses among trees in the open fields near Khanna. Mataji sat down on a brick-platform under a peepal-tree and we all sat on loose bricks on the ground. The tree had lovely fresh green leaves in spite of the heat of May, and Mataji remarked on it. Then she began

to tell us about the trees at her ashram in Dacca. This is the gist of what she said : "There is a tree there of a Madrasi species of mangoes. This kind of tree is not found in Bengal. But because so many Mahātmās had lived at that spot, anything might be possible. Someone may have eaten a Madrasi mango and thrown away the stone, and the tree grew. The leaves of that tree shed honey. I noticed that the veranda of the Ashram was always besieged by ants. One day I told someone to put a tray under the tree. So much honey dropped from the tree that it filled a jar. Some say, the tree is not a tree but a Mahātmā in the shape of a tree.

"Then there is a jack fruit-tree there which gives fruit all the year round. Where so much *kirtāna* is sung, many wonderful things may happen. In Shahbag *kirtana* was performed day after day. There are two cypress trees near the house where this body lived. The wood of those trees has turned into sandalwood. Not only has it the fragrance of sandalwood but also its other characteristics. People use it for sandal-paste for their *pujā*. Manmohan Baba* cut a piece of wood from the tree trunk and took it to Varanasi. It is there now. The leaves, flowers and fruits of the trees are still those of cypress, only the wood has changed."

Someone asked : "Are there any sandal-trees near about ?"

Mataji : "No, sandal-trees do not grow in Bengal."

For several days Mataji related the most charming stories of a similar kind and also of a more personal type.

* Late Manmohan Ghosh knew Mataji in Dacca and was the architect of the Annapurna temple at the Varanasi Ashram after the partition.

Twice or three times Mataji visited the little house in a narrow lane of Khanna, where Sri Triveni Puri had spent about forty years of his life and where still lives the very aged lady who attended on him for many years.

On Mataji's birth anniversary a Vedic Pūjā was performed all through the night. On the veranda of the Colloge Mataji reclined on a couch profusely decorated with flowers, and everyone gathered round her, occupying the Colloge hall behind the veranda and the spacious courtyard in front. Not only Mataji's devotees who had come from far and near sat up all night but also a surprisingly large number of the inhabitants of Khanna, especially women, remained in their places throughout the function, spell-bound and obviously fascinated by the great outpouring of divine blessing that is always felt on these occasions.

The next day, after the enormous quantity of sweets that had been placed before Mataji as an offering during the *pūjā*, had been distributed to all, Mataji left for Jullundur. For three days she and her party put up at the Savitri Devi Ashram. One cannot help being touched by the warmth and the spirit of selfless and efficient service that are so outstanding at that fine little Ashram, which is put at Mataji's disposal whenever she cares to make use of it. It is maintained by Sardar Sadhu Singh* and his three sons, whom Mataji has named Rama, Lakshman and Satrugna (the fourth, Bharat, passed away some time ago). Mataji obviously feels at ease here in spite of the crowd thronging round her most of the day. Of her own accord Mataji herself led the *kirtana* several times during her short visit. Mataji's grace was lavished on all

* The Sardar passed away several years ago. (Editor)

abundantly and our generous hosts must have felt more than rewarded for the great pains they had taken.

Mataji spent only twenty-four hours at Hoshiarpur, at the Ashram of Sri Haribabaji's late Guru. A programme of *Kirtana*, reading of scriptures, and of discourses on spiritual topics, had been arranged throughout the day until late at night. The crowd was almost unmanageable. The whole city seemed to have come to hail Mataji and to do homage to her during those few hours, as if to make up by intensity and by numbers for the shortness of the time that Mataji was able to spend in their midst.

After one more day at Jullundur, Mataji proceeded to Solan on the night of May 17th and from there on May 19th to Simla, where the Raja of Solan has recently built for Mataji a charming little cottage in a lovely garden. It is half way up Jacco Hill amongst tall deodars, with a fine view on the surrounding Himalayas. Sri Krishnananda Avadhutaji and Sri Gopal Thakur went with her and only very few others were allowed to accompany her and were accommodated in a larger house in the same compound. Of the ten days of Mataji's sojourn at Simla the first two or three days were really solitary.

There, one early morning, Mataji composed an unearthly beautiful song, Radha's call to Krishna. Gurupriya Devi and Brahmachari Vibhu, whom Mataji called to listen, could not make out the language. Afterwards it was identified as perfectly correct *Brijbhāsha*, the language spoken in the villages round Mathura and Vrindaban where Sri Krishna was born and lived.

Mataji cannot nowadays remain in solitude for long. Rapidly enough the news of Mataji's arrival spread throughout

Simla and within a few days the house could no longer hold all those who, in spite of the great distance and a very steep climb, were eager to attend the *satsang* both mornings and evenings. Towards the end of her stay, Mataji visited the Kali Bari and the Ladies' Club at Chhota Simla where larger numbers had the benefit of Mataji's *darśana*.

On May 28th, Mataji returned to Solan and remained for one full month until June 27th night, occupying the lovely and comfortable Ashram which the Raja and the late Rani of Solan had built for Mataji nearly six years ago just below the palace on the tennis court. Mataji's large party which comprised devotees from places as distant as Calcutta, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Varanasi and so forth, were accommodated in the Raja's guest houses nearby.

Only once, on June 15th Mataji interrupted her stay at Solan by a visit to Kasauli for a few hours, accompanied by Sri Krishnanandaji and others. A tremendous welcome was accorded to her. A *kirtana* party carried her on a palanquin in procession from where the car stopped down to the Gurdwara in the bazar, a distance of nearly a mile, where the *satsang* took place. The attendance was spectacular and everyone regretted the shortness of the time.

Solan is a place which has been graced by Mataji's presence many times and in a special way. In March, 1934 Mataji, for a few weeks lived in a cave at Šalogra, about three miles off Solan on the road to Simla. There the Raja of Solan had her *darśana* for the first time. Sri Hari Ram Joshi, a staunch devotee of Mataji, had to use all his power of persuasion to make him go there as the Raja felt little inclined to see "a woman saint."

When he was actually face to face with Mataji, he changed his mind completely and since then has become one of her most ardent devotees. The cave at Salogra was just big enough for Mataji to sit in, but as in those days she never used to lie down, she did not wish for any better shelter, even though sometimes the cave was flooded with rain water.

Since then Mataji has visited Solan several times, accepting the Raja's hospitality for herself and her party. In summer 1946 Mataji spent nearly two whole months there together with Sri Haribabaji and his disciples. On that occasion Mataji occupied the ladies' "Durga Club" where the *satsang* was held as well. Sri Haribabaji was reading out of the Srimad Bhagavata and from the lives of saints. One morning he said he would read (or rather translate into Hindi) 'Matri Darshan,' Bhaiji's book about Mataji.* This was a new unheard of thing to do—to read out Mataji's life in her presence. Mataji said, she would not come and remained in the tiny dressing-room, which was the only other chamber available. Sri Haribaba declared he was not going to start reading until Mataji came out. For some time the *satsang* proceeded in silence. Then Haribabaji sent another messenger to humbly request Mataji, would she grace the meeting with her *darśana*. Mataji suddenly got up with a start, saying, "Well, after all what does it matter to me whether someone else's story is read out or the story of this body? It is all the same," and she came. From that morning onwards Haribabaji would daily read out a short portion from Bhaiji's book interrupting his exposition time and again by questions to Mataji for greater

* Matri Darshan appeared in Hindi translation only in 1951 and in English in 1952 under the title "Mother as Revealed to Me."

details and closer explanations of what he was reading. Mataji did not always respond and sometimes uttered only one or two sentences. But by and by she felt moved to give ever more detailed, more revealing and more illuminating replies. On occasions she would forget the time and the hushed assembly listened spell-bound to the precious nectar of words that fell from her lips. Everyone present was, as it were, swept off the ground, rising above his ordinary level transported by Mataji's fascinating accounts of various incidents from her life, especially from the *līlā* of her multifarious *sādhana*s. This went on day after day. Haribabaji had won; there were occasions when he read only for a few minutes and Mataji talked animatedly for the rest of the hour.

A somewhat similar thing happened this summer (1952). Sri Avadhutaji started by holding "questions and answers" meetings twice daily as he had done at Simla. Some of the Simla audience had specially come to Solan to attend the *satsang*. Mataji was present regularly and listened attentively but hardly ever uttered a single word. Though when the *satsang* was over and after everyone had had his meal and only a handful of people remained on her veranda or in her room until she retired, she sometimes related incidents from her early life as she had done on her walks at Khanna. Once or twice a violent storm proved very kind to us; Mataji went on talking until the weather had cleared up. Everyone had forgotten the late hour of night and prayed for another storm the next day. Then, gradually even the *satsang* was invaded by accounts of Mataji's *līlā*. To begin with, Sri Avadhutaji asked Brahmachari Kamlakanta (who has been in close touch with Mataji since the early days at Dacca) to elucidate some facts concerning

Bholanathji and Bhaiji. Kamlakanta's accounts were not always quite adequate and Mataji showed more and more inclination to come to his rescue. On some occasions, Mataji, as she herself stated, had the *kheyāla* to disclose details which she had never mentioned before, not even to such close bhaktas as Didi or Bhaiji. By and by Avadhutaji and other mahātmās felt encouraged to address Mataji directly and she was most extraordinarily generous in her replies. The *satsang* was held on the spacious veranda of Mataji's Ashram. Thanks to the high standard of Avadhutaji's scholarly expositions, only serious people used to climb up the hill to attend the *satsang*. Not too many people were thus present and during the last few days Mataji talked every morning and sometimes also in the evening. Some of the accounts were known to us from Bhaiji's and Gurupriya Didi's books, but to hear Mataji relate herself is a very different thing from reading about her in a book, however well written. What Mataji says is alive; when she tells a story, it is not a story but an experience relived and shared by those who listen; it uplifts the heart and enlightens the mind. The incident may be forgotten but the effect remains with us for ever after.

This was the special feature of Mataji's sojourn at Śolan. Whenever Mataji is in Varanasi there is an hour (or sometimes more) in the morning between the reading of the Bhagavad Gita etc. and the midday meal when Mataji replies to questions. Blessed are those who are able to listen to her answers; they are not only replies to the questions posed, but again and again people have found that Mataji has solved their own personal problems, which they had no chance of mentioning to her. It

occurs that someone comes out of the hall quite dazed, saying :
‘Ma has told me exactly what I was struggling to discover.
My query was quite different from the question that had been
addressed to her, but I got my answer and in precisely the way
that was needed !’

But in Solan Mataji granted us many glimpses of her early
life when only Bholanathji and Bhaji and a very few others
were with her; when she was hardly known to the public and
when she was infinitely more surprising and unaccountable than
she is even now. Much that was witnessed only by two or three
or anyway by a very small number of her close associates, she
most generously and graciously revealed to us, thanks largely
to the sincerity and whole-hearted devotion of Sri Krishnananda-
ji Avadhuta and of Yogibhaiji, the Raja of Solan.

An Introduction to
**Sri Aurobindo's THE LIFE DIVINE
and SAVITRI**

Bireswar Ganguly, D. Litt.*

Introduction

Sri Aurobindo, the greatest philosopher yogi of modern times was born in Calcutta on August 15, 1872 and passed through three distinct phases of his unique career, viz., (i) a life of brilliant scholarship and academic pursuits, (ii) a life of ardent and vigorous political thinking, writing and action and (iii) a life of exclusive spiritual *sādhana*, not merely for personal salvation, but for the supramentalisation of the whole human race, since his stay at Pondicherry in 1910, till his death on December 5, 1950. Of his innumerable prose and poetic writings, the *magnum opus* is *The Life Divine* which is a major philosophical work in the present century and his longest and best poetic work is the *Savitri*. *The Life Divine* prepares the philosophical ground for Sri Aurobindo's *Divina Comedia-Savitri* and *The Mother*, one of his smallest booklets, establishes a practical link of *sādhana* between terse metaphysics and mystic poetry.

The Life Divine

The Life Divine seeks to present, through a highly elaborate and massively structured metaphysical thinking, his central

* This essay was written on 15-8-72 to commemorate the birth centenary celebration of Sri Aurobindo. —Author

vision of the evolution of man from the mental to the supra-mental plane. It has 28 chapters in Book I and 28 chapters in Book II, spread over a total span of 1,040 pages. The first twenty-eight chapters are concerned with the exploration of the nature of omnipresent Reality and the Universe. He reveals the truth of the present predicament of mental man and the dualities of the phenomenal world. At the two ends of the scale of existence there are Matter and Spirit, the gulf between which has not been bridged as yet in the course of evolution. In the realm of philosophical speculation also the gulf has often persisted. The materialist philosophers have denied the existence of the Spirit altogether, whereas the idealist, the monist and the ascetic have denied the existence of Matter. In spite of the assertion of the *Ishopanishad* that "all this is for habitation by the Lord, whatsoever is individual universe of movement in the universal motion" (vide : verse 1), and that "he who knows That as both in one, the Knowledge and the Ignorance, by the Ignorance crosses beyond death and by the Knowledge enjoys Immortality," (vide : verse 11), most of the philosophers, seers and sages of India have laid emphasis only on Knowledge and have decried Ignorance. They have taken the supraphysical reality of the Spirit as the only Reality worth striving for and the world of physical matter is to them an appearance, an illusion. The materialist, the atheist, the worldly-wise man, the empirical scientist and others, on the other hand, believe that it is some blind physical force alone, which is behind the drama of the evolutionary process,—life evolving out of matter and mind out of life, which is the last link in the process. In this way the schism between the ascetic and the materialist, between the followers of Knowledge and the

followers of Ignorance has gone on widening and thus the modern intellectual man stands perplexed and bewildered. Sri Aurobindo comes here to bridge the gulf, to solve the problem, to strike a note of synthesis and thus restore confidence in man.

Sri Aurobindo assumes the Darwinian theory of evolution and supplements it. Creation, according to him, has a purpose and man must move to a higher goal through the unfolding of consciousness. According to the theory of evolution, originally all was Matter without Life, which came out of Matter at a later stage. Thus the plant world was born. It was the first primeval stirring of consciousness, however vague and blind it might be. There was after this a period of gestation and incubation, at the end of which a rudimentary Mind appeared and the animal was born. Consciousness is clearer and freer at this stage with instinct or sensibility, which in its higher grades is infused with a streak of thinking. At a higher level and at a later stage sensuous mentality gave birth to Mind proper, inhering in it thought, reflection, rationality and Man appeared on the stage of the world. A fully awakened consciousness is the characteristic, marking out human consciousness from animal consciousness. According to Sri Aurobindo, if mind came out of life and life out of matter, it is but simple logic to assume that they were already involved in the former existence of matter. But who brings about this transformation? Sri Aurobindo has established the truth that the Supreme Reality is what ancient Indian philosophers called *Satchidānanda* and it is through the effective principle of the power and consciousness of *Satchidānanda*, called the Supermind that the phenomenal world came into being. This is the reverse process of evolution or involution. While creating this

phenomenal world, the Supermind and beyond that, the very *Satchidānanda* got involved in it.

A parallel concept of Sri Aurobindo's Supermind is found in Kashmir Shaivism or the *Pratyavijna* philosophy of Abhinava Gupta (993 to 1015 a. e.),* according to which *Parama Shiva* is the Absolute Reality and there are 36 *Tattvas* in all. In the order of what may be called, for want of a better phrase, the relative distances of the first eight from the Ultimate Reality, that is, *Parama Shiva*, they are the ever-existing, mutually inseparable realities of (1) the *Shiva Tattva* and (2) the *Shakti Tattva*, and the three orders of the Pure Way, viz., (3) *Sadakhya* or *Sada-Shiva Tattva*, (4) *Aishvarya* or *Ishwara Tattva*, and (5) *Sad Vidya* or *Shuddha-Vidya*, below which are (6) *Māyā*, (7) *Purusha* and (8) *Prakriti*, below which there are the other 28 *Tattvas*.

I feel that Sri Aurobindo's *Satchidānanda* is Abhinava Gupta's *Parama Shiva* and the former's Supermind is the latter's *Sad Vidya* or *Shuddha-Vidyā*, which is responsible for further processes of involution.

The recovery of the Knowledge and Power of the Supermind alone can bring about a higher form of existence than we have at present. Hence, according to Sri Aurobindo, we are left with no other alternative than to transcend the limits of the triune reality of matter-life-mind, in order that we might usher in the fullness of the divine life here.

The next question that naturally comes to our mind is as to how we had fallen down from the Supermind to this world of duality, of suffering and pain, ignorance and incapacity, darkness

* Vide : Jagadish Chandra Chatterji, *Kashmir Shaivism*, 1914

and death. It is tantamount to a fall from Light to Night and from Immortality to Mortality. Sri Aurobindo gives his answer to this vital question in the course of the next fourteen chapters in Book II-Part I. After dealing with the concepts of *Brahman*, *Purusha*, *Ishwara*, *Māyā*, *Prakriti* and *Shakti*, he gives a new and comprehensive analysis of Ignorance. The threadbare analysis of the seven-fold character of Ignorance is one of the most original and illuminating contributions of Sri Aurobindo to metaphysical literature.

Sri Aurobindo devotes his next fourteen chapters in Book II-Part II to the enquiry and discovery of how we can get back Knowledge, Power, Delight, Immortality etc., according to the evolutionary law operative in the universe. This entails a whole process of ascent through the levels of the Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition and Overmind to the Supermind. Here again Sri Aurobindo's contribution is one of the most original in the philosophic and spiritual thought of mankind. In the course of the evolutionary march of mankind from mental consciousness to supramental consciousness, there will thus manifest a new type, a higher functioning of consciousness and a new race or species will appear on earth with a new consciousness as the ruling principle. The birth of the Superman, out of the ashes of Man is but an inevitable course of evolution. In Sri Aurobindo's own words :

“Man, the mental being, has an imperfect life because mind is not the first and highest power of consciousness of the Being; even if mind were perfected, there would be still something yet to be realised not yet manifested. For what is involved and emergent is not a Mind, but a Spirit, and mind is not the native

dynamism of consciousness of the Spirit; supermind, the light of gnosis, is its native dynamism. If then life has to become a manifestation of the Spirit it is the manifestation of a spiritual being in us and the divine life of a perfected consciousness in a supramental or gnostic power of spiritual being that must be the secret burden and intention of evolutionary Nature." *

His concluding remarks on the descent of the Supermind and the divinisation of human nature are worth noting here :

"If there is an evolution in material Nature and if it is an evolution of being with consciousness and life as its two key-terms and powers, this fullness of being, fullness of consciousness, fullness of life must be the goal of development towards which we are tending and which will manifest at an early or later stage of our destiny. The self, the spirit, the reality, that is disclosing itself out of the first inconscience of life and matter, would evolve its complete truth of being and consciousness in that life and matter. It would return to itself—or, if its end as an individual is to return into its Absolute, it could make that return also,—not through a frustration of life but through a spiritual completeness of itself in life. Our evolution in the Ignorance with its chequered joy and pain of self-discovery and world-discovery, its half fulfilments, its constant finding and missing, is only our first state. It must lead inevitably towards an evolution in the Knowledge, a self-finding and self-unfolding of the Spirit, a self-revelation of the Divinity in things in that true power of itself in Nature which is to us still a Supernature."**

* Sri Aurobindo ; *The Life Divine*. The Sri Aurobindo Library, The Greystone Press, New York, N. Y., 1949, p. 903.

** *Ibid.* p. 947.

Sri Aurobindo has not only given the metaphysical foundations of a supramental or divine life, but has also gone through the whole process of *yoga-sādhana* or spiritual discipline himself for its realization and has chalked out the path for others in such books as *The Mother* and *The Synthesis of Yoga* and such collections of letters as *Base of Yoga*, *Lights on Yoga*, *More Lights on Yoga*, *The Riddle of this World*, etc.

The Mother

Sri Aurobindo's unique booklet (62 pages only), *The Mother*, can be compared only with such jewels of spiritual literature as H. P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*. It not only deals with the four aspects of the Divine Mother, viz., *Maheshwari*, *Mahakali*, *Mahalaksmi* and *Mahasaraswati*, but also mentions the essence of *yoga-sādhana*, needed for the descent of the Supramental in human consciousness. In Sri Aurobindo's words : "There are two powers that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavour, a fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below and a supreme grace from above that answers."* The personal effort that is required of a *sādhaka* (spiritual aspirant) is a triple labour of aspiration for the divine, the rejection of the movements of the lower nature and surrender of oneself to the Divine and the Shakti. All through his new system of *yoga*, he emphasises the dual role of personal effort and Divine Grace. To quote him again :

"To walk through life armoured against all fear, peril and disaster, only two things are needed, two that go always

* Sri Aurobindo : *The Mother*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1969, p. 1.

together—the Grace of the Divine Mother and on your side an inner state made up of faith, sincerity and surrender.”*

Savitri

Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* is the supreme culmination of his distinctive poetic achievements, based on the solid foundation of his prose works on philosophy and *sādhana*. It is a noble example of metaphysical epic, that is the result of what he has termed “overhead” poetry. With its 23,813 lines it is the longest poem in the English language and among world epics, which can be compared with it in general poetic quality, only the *Shahnamah*, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* exceed it in length. Dr. Iyengar has aptly remarked that it was Sri Aurobindo's “final stupendous effort as a poet, as a philosopher, and yogi and not only as a poet; it is steeped in Vedic symbolism, it is Upanishadic, Valmikian and Kalidasan in the crystalline quality of its blank verse inspiration, and it is a philosophic poem and a cosmic epic recalling, alone among the great poems of the world, Dante's *Divina Comedia*.”** K. D. Sethan compares the author of *Savitri* with Valmiki and Vyasa in the following words : “*Savitri* stands with the masterpieces of Valmiki and Vyasa in more than one respect. It has been conceived with something of the ancient Indian temperament which not only rejoiced in massive structures but took all human life, and human thought in the spacious scope of its poetic creations and blended the working of the hidden worlds of Gods and Titans and Demons with the activities of earth. A

* *Ibid*, p. 11.

** Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar : *Sri Aurobindo*, (Booklet), pp. 46-47.

cosmic sweep is Savitri's...”* This monumental work of Sri Aurobindo reveals his many-splendoured personality as a *yogi* and philosopher, a mystic and a poet, all combined together. Sri Aurobindo takes up the ancient Indian legend of Savitri and Satyavan and transmutes it into an epic drama, a new creation of man's conquest of Death in this very life. The poem opens as well as closes with Dawn. In individual terms, it is the dawn of the fateful day when Satyavan, the husband of Savitri, is pre-destined to die. In cosmic terms, it is also the “symbol dawn” of a new epoch in human history. The legendary events of a single day are transfigured into the symbolic time of all eternity, in which spiritual action takes place. In the exquisite poetry of *Savitri* we get beautiful descriptions of man's journey into new dimensions of consciousness. It unravels the mystery of the dual role of *sādhana*, viz., the Ascent of Man and the Descent of the Divine. Through the yoga of ascent, man has to rise as far as his personal efforts can lead him, and then surrender to the Divine and call out to the Divine, so that Divine Grace may descend and complete the unfinished task. The Savitri-Satyavan legend of *Vāna-parva* in *Mahabhārata* has been expanded by Sri Aurobindo and transformed into a symbol of man's “dialogue with Death,” and the final conquest of Death, a symbol of the New Dawn of Supramental Life. The dawn of new consciousness means the rise of man above mind. In the long and strenuous journey of Aswapati, the father of Savitri, Sri Aurobindo describes the gropings of the mind in search of a new consciousness. The birth of Savitri brings about the fulfilment of the promise, that is the arrival of the

* K. D. Sethan ; ‘Savitri’ in *Mother India*, August, 1954, p. 38.

New Dawn or the descent of a new consciousness which cannot take place through the efforts or *sādhana* of man alone, but has to be achieved by the Grace of the Divine.

Savitri narrates man's journey through the Night of Ignorance and speaks of the promise of the arrival of the New Dawn of Supramental consciousness. Thus the subject of Dawn is the under-current of the whole epic. The poem begins with the following exquisite description of the first dawn :

“It was the hour before the Gods awake,
 Across the path of the divine Event
 The huge foreboding mind of Night, alone
 In her unlit temple of Eternity,
 Lay stretched immobile upon Silence' marge,

 A fathomless zero occupied the world.”

The above description of the first Dawn presents a fitting background for the fateful event that is to take place, —the death of Satyavan. The epic ends with a more exquisite description of “a greater Dawn” in the following lines :

“Night, splendid with the moon dreaming in heaven,
 In silver peace, possessed her luminous reign,
 She brooded through her stillness on a thought,
 Deep, guarded by her mystic folds of light,
 And in her bosom nursed a greater dawn.”

Rohit Mehta beautifully summarises thus the necessity of the close association of *Savitri*, the feminine consciousness and *Satyavan*, the masculine consciousness for building heaven on

earth together : "The mind of man, barren in its efforts cries out today for a gift from Heaven. And the gift from Heaven is indeed the birth of Savitri. If modern civilization is to save itself from doom and disaster then it must understand the great mystery of the birth of Savitri. It is in unravelling this great mystery that man will witness the linking of science and spirituality, the close association of the Masculine and the Feminine consciousness, the marriage of Earth and Heaven."*

In the canto on "The Issue" Sri Aurobindo formulates the issue with which Savitri is faced in the lines :

"To wrestle with the Shadow she had come
And must confront the riddle of man's birth
And life's brief struggle in dumb Matter's night,
Whether to bear with Ignorance and Death
Or hew the ways of Immortality,
To win or lose the godlike game for man,
Was her soul's issue thrown with Destiny's dice."

To be aware of immortality, man has to face death fearlessly and have a free dialogue with it like *Nachiketa*, but not for his own salvation alone. Savitri faced death, had entered a game with it, so that she might bring to humanity the gift of Immortality in this very life.

Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* combines and transcends the themes of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. It transcends the themes of John Milton in the sense that Savitri is concerned with regaining the paradise not for herself but for the entire human race. Man confined within the limits of Mind

* Rohit Mehta : *The Dialogue with Death*, Ahmedabad, 1972, p. 6.

experiences the tragedy of the loss of paradise. Man can regain his paradise by bringing down the light of the Supermind in his consciousness. The first step for this is to reject the demands of duality by accepting the alchemy of Love. Savitri conquers Death by Love, which is born in a state of non-duality. Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* is the true saga of Love. Savitri's return to earth, after her successful dialogue with death, establishes her unchallenged claim over Satyavan, which indicates the emergence of the Empire of Love. The poet describes this great truth in the following lines :

‘The whole wide world clung to her for delight,
Created for her rapt embrace of love,
Her life was a dawn's victorious opening,
The past and unborn days had joined their dreams,
Old vanished eves and far arriving noons
Hinted to her a vision of prescient hours.’

Satyavan, the mental man, by himself, cannot conquer death, for he is the victim of Time. He needs the touch of Savitri, a pilgrim from the timeless regions of Supermind, in order that he may wake up from the fathomless sleep of death. Satyavan rises up from his deep slumber as a changed man with a ‘new wonder in his heart’ and ‘a new flame of worship in his eyes.’ He discovers in Savitri ‘Gohead and woman, moonlight of my soul’. After real sublimation has taken place, Satyavan finds with a new wonder in his heart that Savitri is ‘a goddess still and pure, yet dearer to me by thy sweet human paths.’ She now seems ‘almost too high and great for mortal worship,’ for ‘time lies below thy feet.’ He invokes her bless-

ings for a life divine on death ;

“My human earth will still demand thy bliss ;
Make still my life through thee a Song of joy
And all my silence wide and deep with thee.”

Savitri answers ‘Softly like a murmuring lute’ :

‘All now is changed, yet all is still the same,
Lo, we have looked upon the face of God,
Our life has opened with divinity.
Our love has grown greater by that mighty touch
And learnt its heavenly significance,
Yet nothing is lost of mortal love’s delight.
Heaven’s touch fulfils but cancels not our earth.’

Time Flows Back

D. S. Mahalanobis

Time, according to The Second Law of Thermodynamics, is irreversible. Nevertheless, judged by the advanced cosmic concepts of the mystic Seers of India, time's irreversibility is not so sacrosanct as it appears on the face of it. The unidirectional temporal flow, ancient cosmology suggests, is only a stop-gap version; there is another face to it, to this triumphal march of time. In the seemingly indeterminate career of the universe, the ancient study reveals, a dateline comes at long last, as it comes to everything created, or one may say to everything that has had a beginning,—when a fateful reverse process sets in and time turns to flow back. That is how the ageing world dies. It has been designated *pralaya*, disintegration or dissolution. It is an unflagging reverse process to that of becoming,—a back march from the *non plus ultra* of the go, the ageing limit of time, back across old age to maturity, to youth, infancy and choate life at the beginning, then frittering away into nothingness as it were. The fact is, the universe in the long course of time, reverts to its timeless existence in infinity, which is a quiescent state, amorphous, undifferentiable from the primordial stuff from which it had evolved. *Pralaya* has to happen not as an accident in blind Nature's venturesome gropings, but in a set katabolic introversion opposite to anabolic extroversion. *Pralāya* signifies dissolution in a set process—step by step.

We have already gone over the ground¹ how our universe evolved out of undifferentiated quinary matter (*panchikrita bhūta*) which had earlier processed down as an end-product by gradation from the non-atomic primal stuff known as subliminal *ākāsa* i.e. primal ether, the “mother and reservoir of all creation.”

If we look back to the universe through its different stadia from the day of its birth as inchoate matter to its ageing as a cosmos, we can pick out a few things, assisted by our knowledge of modern astronomy,—that are of more than usual interest in our study of the ancient theory. From the circumference across the centre our world (excluding the Super-world which modern science does not know) is a vast stretch of quinary matter of every description between very rarefied ether and the densest inertial mass (matter). These graded formations are not uniformly distributed on the basis of density extending out to tenuity. Material bodies lie scattered here and there—planetary systems, galaxies, etc. Towards the border of our universe space must be very rarefied. Things must have become shipshape over an immense period of time. We can now realise that atomic *ākāsa*, quinary ether, is the rarefied extremity of the cosmic series (*ākāsa, vāyu, tejas, ap* and *kshiti*), and the heaviest quinary matter (*kshiti*) the other, the grossest of the gradations. Between them there are three cognizable formations of this series, viz. *vāyu, tejas* and *ap*, each a different product of the same five constituents and each different from the rest only in the proportion of its constituents, which however, are common to all. Leaving aside the Super-world, our world is an

1. Vide “Evolution of Matter”, Ananda Varta, Vol. XIII, No. 3 and subsequent articles ?

enormous tract of these five categories, that is, atomic *ākāśa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *ap* and *kshiti*, in modern terminology : atomic ether, kinetic energy, light energy, electrical energy and gravitation respectively—all matter of a kind, rarefied or gross. We must remember that science has accepted the inescapable relativistic consequence that energy has mass—even light has mass i.e. light is matter as the rest of the world stuff. It is true that the existence of ether, accepted in ancient cosmogony, has not been proved in science. That is because it is undetectable experimentally; modern methods cannot reach up to the fineness and subtlety of ether, even when it comes down to atomicity to start the life cycle of the universe.

It may be recalled here in passing, that the rejection of the ether theory was based on a classic experiment by Michelson and Morley in 1881. The reason for this extraordinary step was fulcrumed on the belief that a light beam flashing through ether would be retarded or speeded up by it when light flowed against or in the direction of earth's motion. Since the velocity of light, 186,284 miles per second, was not affected in any direction in the experiment, it was assumed there could be no ether in space. Science for once forgot that ether could be so subtle that it would elude any such experiment conducted on the comparatively grosser material level of the light. If the mass of an electron (9×10^{-28} grams) is taken to be 1 (one), then relatively the mass of a light particle (photon) can only be regarded as 0 (zero). And if for comparison, the mass of a proton is assumed as one, that of an ether particle must be considered as infinitely less than zero ! Hence, a light beam in passing through ether, will encounter less than zero resistance from it. However, the whole edifice of Einstein's relativity theory rests on the assump-

tion that the velocity of light is constant, and ether is discarded in favour of space-time. On the other hand, the ancient cosmology of India accords the highest cosmic value to *ākāśa* (ether). "In its [ether's] higher aspect, it is the Soul of the World."² The lower aspects are phenomenal illusory, but they are the scientists' sole possessions to go upon in investigation.

It is noteworthy that modern science does not claim to know what is matter nor can it "yet 'really', explain electricity, magnetism, and gravitation; their effects can be measured and predicted, but of their ultimate nature no more is known to the modern scientist than to Thales of Miletus, who first speculated on the electrification of amber around 585 B. C."³ Einstein has however suggested that matter is largely composed of gravitation and electricity. It is significant to observe that Einstein's assumption almost goes halfway in supporting the Sāṅkhya theory that matter (*pañchikṛita bhūta*) is constituted of *śabda*, *spṛṣha*, *rūpa*, *rasa*, and *gandha*, or in other words, atomic ether, kinetic energy, luminiferous energy (light and heat), electricity, and gravitation, respectively.⁴

If *pralaya* must occur, it has to begin by splitting up matter into its components,—a retrograde shift. In this reverse process, the first component to fall back on the retreating march must necessarily be the one that had appeared last. The formative order we know was *ākāśa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *ap* and *kṣhiti* alongside the *tanmātrā* series—*śabda*, *spṛṣha*, *rūpa*, *rasa*, and *gandha*. "The

2. "The Secret Doctrine,"—Madame Blavatsky.

3. L. Barnett

4. The modern equivalents of the *tanmātrās* have been explained in Ananda Varta, refer footnote I ante.

tanmātrās originate from one another in one linear series, and each bhūta originates in a separate line from its own tanmātrā⁵” Thus by a series of transformations the formative order is reversed at *pralaya* in the direction of earlier and simpler modes (refer footnote I *ante*). In this katabolic reversion gravitation returns to its earlier mode, electricity. Thus quinary *kshiti* (gross matter) deprived of gravitation becomes quaternary *ap*. Similarly *ap* becomes *tejas*, *tejas vāyu*, and *vāyu* atomic *ākāśa*, successively; each preceding gross term is reverted to its earlier simpler status to merge into the succeeding term. What remains now is the atomic *ākāśa*, which at long last resumes its primordial existence as acosmic *ākāśa*. The world has lived out its useful life, first in the direction of time, then back through time’s retrograde march till it regains its starting base, and primordial character—timeless, amorphous, unknowable and infinite. The world cycle is a timeward flow at birth and becoming, then in the opposite direction away from age to non-age, to *status quo ante*. If time can flow forward, it can flow backward too! For, what, after all, is time but a concept of empty conception accompanying evolution?⁶ If time arose out of *ākāśa*, etc.⁷; it is a construction of our mind to understand events, the first event being *śabda*⁸ in *ākāśa* as a mode of motion: When cosmic *ākāśa* resolves back into acosmic *ākāśa* at *pralaya*, all motion ceases, *śabda* dies down, events cannot happen, and Time stops. There is a beautiful allegory

5. Dr. B. N. Seal, based on Parasara.

6. —do—

7. —do—

8. cf. “In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God”. —The Bible.

in one of our Puranas, describing this quiescent state. The subdued sky, it says, empty of its contents, — sun, moon and wind,— lay a motionless infinitude, as if in a state of profound sleep, and unfathomable darkness reigned everywhere. In this ocean of darkness, the allegory continues, in the guise of another darkness *kāraṇa salita*, appeared. *Kāraṇa-salita* is the primal energy projected in Silence of acosmic *ākāśa*; it initiates the world-ward urge and expression. The same idea has been picturesquely elaborated in ‘The Life Divine’: “It is out of this Silence that the Word which creates the worlds for ever proceeds; for the Word expresses that which is self-hidden in the Silence. It is an eternal passivity which makes possible the perfect freedom and omnipotence of an eternal divine activity in innumerable cosmic systems. For the becomings of activity derive the energies and their illimitable potency of variation and harmony from the impartial support of the immutable Being, its consent to this infinite fecundity of its own dynamic Nature.”⁹

The whole process in all the ramifications of the cosmic existence,¹⁰ does not occur in a partial dispersion (*khanda-pralaya*), but in a plenary dissolution (*mahā-pralaya*); disintegrating activities continue till the whole creation is abrogated under the Law. But there is a revival too, as we have noticed earlier.

Scientists probably will demur at in this account of Time’s counterflight. But, that, in ancient view, is what happens to the universe when it turns back to from where it had come to be born again, fresh and young. The Law is the same for the

9. “The Life Divine”. —Sri Aurobindo.

10. The Hindu cosmology recognizes the existence of numerous universes.

microcosm and the macrocosm. This is how the world repeats its life cycle in unending succession of births and deaths.

But, what makes this dissolution an inevitable event? It is, in occult teaching, inherent in the creative urge, creation is conditioned on its revocation; which is what the expanding universe signifies.

Modern science teaches us that we live in an expanding universe. This notion of expansion seems to have been known to the Indian mystics, as we find it foreshadowed in the conception of the Super-world, of which ours is the comparatively stable core enmassed by gravitation. Now, if the world continues to expand inexorably,—and at a tremendous rate at that.—a time must come when it has had to reach a critical limit, an unstable equilibrium. Gravitational forces can then no longer hold the units, cosmic reshuffling occurs in which gravitation undergoes the changes that reduce it to its earlier mode, electricity. Thus, every term of the series—gravitation, electricity, luminiferous energy (light and heat), kinetic energy, etc, one after another resolves back to its original states i. e. cosmic ether, which finally reverts to its cosmic higher existence—undifferentiable, immutable, self-lost in itself.

Astrophysicists and cosmologists of today speculating on the fate of our expanding universe, have put forth several theories based on data made available to them by scientific workers in different fields, such as observations by giant telescopes that could sweep across the fringes of heavens 500 or more million light years away. Side by side with them, the ancient theory compares not unfavourably with its present-day neotypes, just not to be brushed aside as a mere gibberish.

Modern scientists argue that our world is dissipating its energy towards an ultimate *pralaya*, i.e. 'heat-death' which could only be countermanded if somewhere beyond man's range of knowledge it is being rejuvenated or reorganized. "All the phenomena of nature, visible and invisible, within the atom and in outer space, indicate that the substance and energy of the universe are inexorably diffusing like vapour through the insatiable void. The sun is slowly but surely burning out, the stars are dying ambers, and everywhere in the cosmos heat is turning to cold, matter is dissolving into radiation, and energy is being dissipated into empty space.

"The universe is thus progressing towards an ultimate 'heat death', or as it is technically defined, a condition of 'maximum entropy.' When the universe reaches this state some billions of years from now all the processes of nature will cease. All space will be at the same temperature. No energy can be used because all of it will be uniformly distributed through the cosmos. There will be no light, no life, no warmth—nothing but perpetual and irrevocable stagnation. Time itself will come to an end."¹¹

There are other theorists who, depending on certain other data, presume, that the world will never be overtaken in a catastrophic end; processes are in operation unknowingly to us to replenish the energy that is being dissipated. "In the light of Einstein's principle of equivalence of mass and energy, it is possible to imagine the diffused radiation in space congealing once more into particles of matter—electrons, atoms, and molecules—which may then combine to form larger units, which

11. "The Universe and Dr. Einstein"—Barnett.

in turn may be collected by their own gravitational influence into diffuse nebulae, stars, and ultimately galactic systems. And thus the life cycle of the universe may be repeated for all eternity."¹²

Modern theories are yet in their speculative range. They are amateurish, uncertain career-forecasts of the relatively tiny system called our universe by the side of the infinitely vaster outer space unknown to astronomy. Ancient cosmology of India had to painstakingly cover much ground that the noetic mathematician or scientist will never know and science can therefore never have an answer to the mystery to annul in essential features the conclusions of the ancient study, whatever else be its grouse on the subtle methodology. The beyond always will remain infinitely beyond to the measuring yard-stick of present day science; its shortcomings are not denied to-day. "All high-roads of the intellect, all by-ways of theory and conjecture lead ultimately to an abyss that human ingenuity can never span."¹³

12 & 13 *Ibid.*

An Anthology of Four Christ Poems

K. P. Roy

The Word

Words, Words !

I searched for words,

Desiring the appropriate ones, and those
that are simple and smile with life's
freshness and candour :

'A word in its place' aspiring,

I searched for words.

Thus intensely agonised as I kept
moving 'midst the pigeon-holed
store of my relentless memory,

This, suddenly flashed in my mind :
If I knew the 'WORD'

The words were known instantly.

There He Comes

There He comes !

Imprinting His footsteps, here on the paths of time,

Saying : I am the LIGHT of the world;

In fact, He is LIGHT of the light.

But the darkness that the world is

Comprehended it not.

He said : Come unto me all yee.....

And man would not,

Contemplating it unpropitious to take

His yoke upon him,
In spite of His promise that the burden
would be light.

He also said :

I am the Bread of life,
Who-so-ever eateth my meat and
taketh my blood need not starve.

And great was the temptation for this Bread
amongst those whose lot it was
to pray for their bare provisions daily.

They all gathered around Him therefore,
This meat and drink from His hands desiring.
Yet, not a little surprise it was for them,
As they presently knew that He asked
for a price also —

Demanding from each one of them
to deny himself, and take up
his cross and then follow Him;

And as well as bade them :
Whosoever would likewise lose
his life for His sake, might
receive the same.

This, they all likened to a great riddle
That, one losing could gain, or ever
denying even fulfil.

And so turning away therefrom
In disappointment,
All about Him soon forgot.

From That Self-luminous Orb

From that self-luminous orb
Where time and space is not,

One,

Tracing His steps amidst space and
time's winding corridor

Behold, did once grace this earth

Saying : I am the way, the truth
and the life.

And lo, In His own life did unfold
the mystery revealing the way
that leads you beyond this maze
and the labyrinth.

Now,

If it so happens

That, once again, He reappearing

Confronts you and me

With searching words as these :

Show me friends, how do you follow
the footprints left by me !

Come, tell me comrade

What could we reply our unexpected guest,

But simply avow this :

With our own designing hands

Thy footmarks obliterating,

Have we missed Thy track for

Calvary and Gethsemane,

And in its place,

O Lord,

A hundred thousand churches
have we built in Thy name,
and have produced many times
more its number of books in print.

Not Love

Not Love,
But call me Pride henceforth :
I am thy saviour, the Light of
the new Epiphany,
Know me hence for the sake of me,
'Not to destroy but to fulfil' that came,
I am He.

See,
I am thine that from thy heart
gave thee spur of action every time.

I, I
That gave thee faith and love
and thy understanding;
For, I am thee, I am thine—
Thy creator and thy glory.
The Holy Ghost of the new Epiphany,
I am Pride, the Paraclete,
I am thy comforter, not thy enemy,
Hail me then, O brave soldier,
I, I am thy Glory.

Mātri Līlā

(July 15th—Sept. 20th, 1972.)

In the last issue of *Ānanda Vārtā* we reported that Mataji had gone to Poona for a long stay about the 15th of June. When, after visiting South India, Matāji went to Poona in the middle of January, a beautiful new hall was inaugurated in our Ashram. It was built exactly where Sri Haribabaji had held his last satsang in a pandal in summer 1969. Mataji had the *Kheyāla* that the hall should be built on that very spot. This summer elaborate satsang took place there, just as Sri Haribabaji would have arranged, were he still in the body. His garlanded photo was placed on a decorated armchair while *Rāsalilā* and *Mahāprabhu līlā* were performed daily and a *Bhāgāvate Saptaha* was held as well. Mataji sat through it all as if Haribabaji were present in person.

A new extraordinarily beautiful *singhāsana* with a swing, made entirely of sandalwood, had been ordered in the meanwhile and on July 12th, Sri Gopalji who had been installed in the new *mandir* in January was now placed on it and a grand *pūjā* performed. A new *vigraha* of Radha-Krishna was also consecrated the same day.*

During the *Nāma Yajña*, celebrated on July 20th by our Delhi Kirtan party, Mataji sang for a long time and went into

* *Mātri Līlā* in the July 1972 issue of *Ānanda Vārtā*.

a *bhāva* such as had not been observed for many years. On July 24th Mataji and the whole party visited the farm of Sri S. Mahindra where the evening satsang was held. The entire staff and all labourers, over 120 men, queued up to do obeisance and Mataji with her own hands distributed fruits and nuts to all of them.

On July 26th, *Guru pūrnimā* was celebrated, preceded by *Satyanārāyaṇa Pujā* on the 25th night. An enormous throng of devotees had collected from all over Maharashtra and Gujrat to pay homage to Mataji on that auspicious day. Mataji was available practically the whole day from 6 a. m. onwards. As she usually does on this occasion, she blessed all who approached her by touching their heads and distributed fruits and sweets with full hands. Several hundred of people partook of the feast at midday. There was kirtan all day and a special *pūjā* of Padamanabh with *abhisheka*. Mataji herself decorated the image.

Mataji was expected to leave for Varanasi immediately after *Gurupurnima* and to proceed from there to Calcutta in the beginning of August. She was further expected to be present at Kankhal on August 16th for the second anniversary of Didima's *Mahāsamādhi*. However, Mataji did not go to any of these places. Didima's festival was observed at Kankhal with quite a large attendance of Ashramites and devotees from Dehradun, Delhi and Varanasi, but without Mataji's physical presence. The exquisitely beautiful, very dignified *samādhi mandir* is now complete, except for the statue. Instead a very large photo of Didima was placed on the *samādhi* and profusely adorned with flowers and garlands. As Didima passed away

between 1 and 2 a. m. there was soft music and half an hour's meditation at that time not only at Kankhal but also at Poona where Mataji was physically present. On the 16th morning *pūjā* was performed in the *samādhi mandir* as well as in Jaipuria House at Ramghat, Hardwar, where Didima had left her body. Hundred *sannyāsis* were entertained to a feast at Nirvani Akhara and all devotees in our ashram.

In the meanwhile Mataji quietly remained in Poona, after almost everyone had dispersed. None knew where Mataji would go next and when. On August 5th, she suddenly left for an unknown destination with a few companions by two cars. She did not disclose to anyone where she was going. First the driver was asked to proceed towards Miraj, a place she had visited three years ago. Some devotees were following in their own cars. After several miles, when all the cars had been left behind or had turned back, Mataji changed the direction and went to Bombay. There she got down at Siva Mandir, Sion that has a hall in which Mataji used to put up in former years whenever she visited Bombay. It is situated next to a house of an old devotee, Sri Muljibhai Patel. He and his wife were in Poona. Only their daughter Nandu had the delightful surprise of Mataji's sudden arrival. Mataji remained in the Siva Mandir hall for two and a half days in complete seclusion with all the curtains drawn. Even Swami Paramananda was asked not to go out into the street, so as not to give a clue to Mataji's whereabouts. In the meanwhile Sri Gurupriya Didi, who had left for Varanasi soon after Gurupurnima, was frantically phoning to various places to find out where Mataji was. On August 8th Mataji left her retreat and moved to her pagoda at Sri B. K.

Shah's place at Vile Parle and from there returned to Poona on August 12th. Only then it was decided to celebrate *Jhulan** (20th to 24th August) and *Janmastami* (Sri Krishna's birthday) on August 31st in Poona. Mataji had never before been in Poona during those festivals.

On August 14th a new room in the guest-house built by a devotee of Bombay was opened in Mataji's presence. At Ranabaw near Porbander some devotees had constructed a small cottage for Mataji. They were very keen that Mataji should grace the opening ceremony before the *Jhulan* festival started. But Mataji sent Brahmachari Virajananda to represent her. They arranged for a procession through the town in which a very large photo of Mataji was carried on a palanquin that was shaped like a boat. When Mataji got up from her rest that afternoon at Poona, she said she had seen her body being carried on a ship on land. She described in detail the landscape of Ranabaw though she had never been there physically. Later a film of the proceedings in Ranabaw was shown in our Ashram.

The *Jhulan* and *Janmastami* celebrations proved an unequalled success. Some old devotees declared that they had never before experienced such wonderful Krishna festivals. Mataji was in an excellent mood and kept excellent health, better than

* *Jhulan* swing-festival. From the 11th day of the bright phase of the moon until the fullmoon day in *Shravan*, images of Krishna and Radha are placed every evening on a decorated swing and worshipped to the accompaniment of songs. The festival has been described at length in *Ananda Vārtā* several times. For significance of *Jhulan* see A. V. vol XVI/4 October, 1969, p. 195.

she had for a long time. The people of Poona were extremely enthusiastic and generous, giving there full unstinted co-operation in labour, cash and kind. Moreover they kept exemplary discipline, obeying without questioning Mataji's injunctions. When asked not to come, they stayed away. Thus Mataji did not have to remain behind closed doors but could move about freely all day with only half a dozen people about. Mataji always gives to the limit of the capacity of the receiver—physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. The devotees of Poona as well as all guests from Bombay and other places were literally flooded with Mataji's grace.

One can well imagine that the attendance during the functions was very large. There were two tastefully decorated swings; the permanent one of sandalwood on Sri Krishna's altar and another one just outside of the temple. Mataji sang on two or three occasions : once for a whole hour : "*Premamoyi Rādha, Prānamoyi Rādha.*" On *Raksha Bandhan* day, which is *Jhulan Purnima* day, Mataji indefatigably, with endless patience, accepted and distributed *rākhis** the whole day. There was special *pūja* both in the morning and evening. All decorations were made with fruits instead of flowers that day and the lights in the hall covered with blue paper to give the effect of soft moonlight. The Rani of Mandi had arranged a large swing for Mataji's own use on the veranda of the guest-house, but Mataji would not sit on it. However at about 10 p. m., when the *Jhulan* celebrations had been completed, she lay down on it, closed her eyes and covered herself from head to foot. She remained there for about an

* *Rākhi* bracelet made of gold or silver tinsel, ornamented in various ways.

hour, then rose abruptly and went to her room. The midnight meditation, in commemoration of Mataji's self initiation in 1922 very solemnly took place in the hall in Mataji's presence.

Between *Jhulan* and *Janmastami* Mataji one day went to the Ashram of the blind Swami Sri Gangeshwarananda to be present at the installation of the Vedas.

On August 31st, Sri Krishna's birthday was celebrated as customary by elaborate midnight *pñjā* in the temple. Many had fasted all day without water and could offer *Pushpānjali* ** at 2 a.m. Mataji herself distributed *prasāda* to hundreds of people at about 3 a.m. The next morning the traditional *Nandotsava* * was observed on the platform in front of the old Ashram building. A couple of devotees who every year play the roles of the main actors on that occasion, had come from Delhi, and dressed up as cowherds (*gopās*). Matāji was in great *bhāva* and putting her arms round the necks of two portly elderly ladies who were dressed up in elaborate Marwari costume with their faces heavily veiled, sang and moved round with them. She then joined hands with each woman, one after another, swinging them round once. Afterwards Mataji fed literally hundreds of

** *Pushpānjali* Flower offering.

* *Nandotsava* takes place the morning after Sri Krishna's birth night. It symbolizes the riotous joy of the people of Vrindaban over the birth of the divine child. Devotees dressed up as cowherds, one of them carrying a yoke with two earthen vessels filled with curds, dance and sing round a circular altar on which an image of the child Krishna is placed. The smashing of one of the vessels, while its contents are splashed all over, marks the climax of this dance.

people with curds under great merriment. Curds had been provided in abundance, even late comers got their share.

During her stay of about two and a half months in Poona, Mataji followed several invitations to the homes of devotees where satsang and kirtan took place in her presence. Sri Dilip Kumar Roy and Srimati Indira came to see Mataji off and on and regaled us with their beautiful songs. On September 2nd, Mataji again visited Sri Mahindra's farm.

On September 4th Mataji finally left Poona for Bombay and from there on the 5th took the night train to Ahmedabad. Sriman Narayan, the Governor of Gujrat, had earnestly requested Mataji to go there and she accepted although she had very little time at her disposal. We have on former occasions reported in the pages of *Ānanda Vārtā* about Sriman Narayan meeting Mataji and even more often about the visits of his wife Smt. Madalasabehn, the daughter of Seth Jamunalal Bajaj, a great follower and co-worker of Mahatma Gandhi. The Sethji had met Mataji towards the end of his life, in 1941 and had been tremendously impressed by her. He and his whole family became deeply devoted to Mataji. It was Sriman Narayan's great desire to bring the whole population of Gujrat in touch with Mataji. Already during her visit to Ahmedabad in July 1969, he had invited Mataji to Government House to give *darśana* to the "Gujrati Congress men and women born in free India." The entire elite of the city had been present on that occasion.*

But never before had Mataji actually put up in any Government House. A green-house in the garden had been

* See *Ānanda Vārtā*, Vol, XVI/4, October 1969, pp. 192-193.

converted into a cottage for Mataji and her small party was accommodated in Government House itself, a palatial building on the bank of the holy river Sabarmati, with extensive grounds, commanding a charming view. Mataji's sojourn was planned like that of an official guest. Every minute detail had been carefully thought out and arranged beforehand. The Governor himself, his wife and their daughter-in-law, assisted by the Governor's highly efficient staff, took immense trouble over the preparations for Mataji's visit. No wonder it turned out a huge success and the maximum number of people could derive the maximum benefit from Mataji's short stay of not quite two days.

On September 6th, at 6 a. m. Mataji was received at the station by Sriman Narayan and Srimati Madalasabehn and taken straight away to the Durbar Hall where she was given a reception for about an hour and a half with *bhajans*,* *kirtan* and *ārati*. About five hundred persons had assembled. The high officials of the province and the V. I. P.s of Ahmedabad belonging to all religious communities, as well as Mataji's devotees had been invited. Sri Chavan, the Finance Minister of the Central Govt., was also present and later had a private interview with Mataji.

At 4.30 p. m. about a hundred social workers met Mataji. During her stay in Poona recently, Srimati Madalasobehan had in Mataji's presence felt the inspiration to found a Child Welfare Organisation. On returning to Ahmedabad, she had called all the social workers and it had been decided to start a "*Shishu Mangal Kalyan*". The inaugural meeting of it took place in Mataji's presence. About twenty social workers spoke in Gujrati, only the Governor and Srimati Madalasabehn talked in

‡ Religious music.

Hindi. Mataji alone sat on the dais. The Governor pointed out that Mataji had been requested to bless the gathering rather than to preside over it. In this as in every other meeting he stressed that Mataji's teaching was completely universal and applied to all men and women, irrespective of religion, sect, caste, class or nationality. He had made it a point to invite Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Mohammedans, Christians, Parsis to every single gathering. Mataji was asked to give a message to the new Child Welfare Centre. She said : "*Bhagavan-srishti-sthiti-laya.-Yatra jiva tatra Siva, Yatra nārī tatra Gouri. Bālgopāl, Kumārī sevā*". "God emanates, preserves, and again absorbs into Himself (the universe). Wherever a man is, there is Siva and wherever a woman there is Gouri (Siva's consort). Serve children looking upon them as Bālgopal and Kumārī".‡

At about 6 p. m. Srimati Sarala Devi Sarabhai and her daughter Srimati Bharati took Mataji for a drive. From 7-9 p. m. a public meeting was held on the enormous lawn. The Governor had given orders to announce in all papers that Mataji would give *darsana* at that time in the premises of Government House and that everyone without distinction was welcome. This was perhaps the first public religious meeting ever held in the grounds of any Raj Bhavan. According to newspaper reports about twelve thousand people assembled. Again Mataji alone was asked to sit on the dais. The Governor, all ministers and other V.I. Ps. had their seats on the cushioned

‡ In other words : There is nothing but God. The divine aspects of *Śiva* and *Śakti* are present in every human being. Serve children regarding them as divine manifestations.

lawn in front. Exemplary order was maintained by civil clothes men. One can well imagine how impressive it was to watch that vast congregation in complete discipline and pindrop silence. None made an attempt to approach Mataji. It was an unforgettable experience. The programme consisted for the most part of religious music sung by well-known Gujrati artists. In the second hour the Ashram girls sang and at the end Mataji led the kirtan herself for nearly half an hour. She spontaneously composed new words on this occasion : *Jagat guru sharnam mama, namo, namo; Vishvaguru sharanam mama, namo, namo*". ("The Guru of the whole world is my refuge, I bow to him again and again; the Guru of the Universe in my refuge, I bow to him.....".) It seemed obvious that Mataji chose these words so that people of all religions could participate. After the meeting there was private *darśana* in Mataji's room. The Governor and his family left at 10 p. m. to give Mataji time to rest, but other devotees remained until late.

On the 7th from 8.30-9.30 a. m. professors and students of all colleges and of the university had been invited to meet Mataji. Srimati Madalasabehn delivered the inaugural speech, then the Governor spoke, again emphasising Mataji's universality. The talks were succeeded by songs by our Ashram girls. Mataji was asked to give a message. She herself said : "*Bhagavan-Parabrahma-Paramātmā-Rūpa-Arūpa*". ("There is only ONE, call Him God, *Parabrahma* or *Paramātmā*. He is With-Form and Formless"). The following had been dictated by Mataji and was read out by one of her people : "माँ तो सर्वदा ही कहती हैं, "माँ, बाबा, दोस्त लोग एक भगवान ही सब सम्प्रदाय का, जैसा पिता, पुत्र, पति एक । मनुष्य जीवन दुर्लभ । मनुष्य जीवन में ही भगवान् लाभ । सफल जीवन

के लिए कोशिश होना । जाति धर्म निर्विशेष में सत्य वाक्य अपना-अपना जप ध्यान स्मरण पूजा । निज निज सम्प्रदाय में जो जो हैं वही स्थिति में से प्रारम्भ करें । सद्ग्रन्थ पाठ, सत्संग, कीर्तन । भगवत् बुद्धि में सर्व सेवा ।’

‘Mataji always says ‘mother, father, friends,’‡ There is only one God worshipped by all religions and sects, just as the same man is father, son and husband. Human birth is a rare boon. Among all creatures the human being alone has been endowed with the potentiality to realize God. One must endeavour to fulfil this purpose of human life. No matter to what caste, class or religion anyone may belong, he should be truthful in speech and engage in his particular *japa*, meditation, worship and the remembrance of God. Each one should start along the lines taught by his own religion. Study scriptures, seek satsang, sing the names and praises of God. All service has to be done as a service to God”.

After this meeting Mataji paid a visit to the Munshaw family where she had stayed on her previous visits to Ahmedabad. A pandal had been erected for this occasion. Almost a thousand people tried to approach Mataji and do *pranāma*. The Governor was also present. Mataji remained for about an hour. There was *kirtan*, *bhajan*, *ārati* and Mataji sang herself. On her way back she halted at the houses of three other families but did not leave the car. At midday a last gathering at Government House, Mataji led the *kirtan* for a long time and the whole assembly repeated after her. From the Governor to the A.D.C.

‡ Mataji addresses all married women as “Mother”, all married men as “Father” and all children and unmarried people as “Friends”.

and the constables, everyone sang with enthusiasm. It was a rare spectacle, moving and inspiring. Mataji started with "*He Bhagavan, Priya Bhagavan, Jyoti Bhagavan.....*" and at the request of the Governor's daughter-in-law sang also "*Krishna Kanheya*", "*Sitaram*", "*Krishna Keshava*", "*Sri Krishna sharanam mama*".

At 4 p. m. before leaving for the station, Mataji was shown an exhibition of photos and writings of Sri Kamalanayana the late brother of Srimati Madalasabehn, a famous social worker, who had been personally known to Mataji. The Governor and his wife themselves and the whole Government of Gujrat went to see off Mataji. She sat on a chair on the railway platform for half an hour before the train left. One should have imagined that once the train started Mataji would be able to lie down quietly and rest. Far from it! A great rush of people was found thronging outside of Mataji's compartment for her *daršana* at every single station up to Abu Road. The Governor had it announced in the papers by which train Mataji was travelling. He wanted everyone in the whole province to receive Mataji's blessing. Even at small way-side stations people were waiting, eager to catch a glimpse of Mataji. At Palampur Junction the crowd amounted to 600 or 700 and the police had to make order. People were stationed also on the roofs of the station buildings, while Mataji was standing in front of the open door of the bogie.

On September 8th at about 10 a. m. Mataji reached Jaipur, putting up in the cottage built for her by Dr. Purohit. She had come mainly to inspect Didima's statue, but also visited Govindaji's Mandir. Late that night she boarded the train to

Delhi from where she motored to Vrindaban on the 9th morning. Sri Avadhutaji is ailing and Mataji wanted to pay him a visit. On the 10th afternoon she returned to Delhi, spending four hours in our Ashram at Kalkaji before boarding the train to Hardwar where she alighted on the 11th early morning. A few hours later she drove to Dehradun and went first of all to Kalyanvan where the first anniversary of the installation of the sacred fire* was commemorated. Mataji reached there at about 12 p. m. and drove back to Kankhal at 4 p.m. The whole time she was busy at both Ashrams. When she was about to leave, Sri Swami Govind Prakash of Ramathirta Ashram came to see her. Mataji sat down in the Ashram hall for half an hour. Pushpa sang Mataji's new kirtan "*Jagatguru sharanam mama*" and the Swamiji delivered a short address.

At Kankhal Mataji remained for a week of comparative rest. Many devotees from Dehradun and a few from Delhi went there for her darsana. On September 18th night she left for Varanasi, where the yearly *Bhagavata Jayanti* had already begun. On September 22nd, Mataji suddenly left with only three companions for Rajgir. But she said she would return soon.

Mataji is expected to go to Naimisharanya early in October. Durga Puja will be celebrated there from 13th-17th October, Lakshmi Puja on the 22nd and Kali Puja on November 5th. Between Oct. 23rd and Nov. 5th Mataji may possibly go elsewhere.

The 23rd *Samyam Mahavrata* will be observed from November 13th-19th in Surat Giri Bangala, Sri Girisharanda Ashram, P. O. Kankhal, Hardwar.

* This fire had been lit for *havan* after a Kali Puja in Dacca in 1927 and been preserved ever since. After the partition it was transferred from Dacca to Vindhyachal and later to Varanasi and Calcutta. Last year it was also brought to Dehradun.