
Man is born in order to complete his karma ; he is also born to complete the cycle of birth and rebirth. The man of supernormal power, that is to say in whom divine power is functioning, can also himself change his karma.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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ANANDA VĀRTĀ

*The Eternal, the Ātman—
Itself pilgrim and path of Immortality
Self contained—THAT is all in One.*

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Do not feel distressed because you are deprived of his physical presence. It is the duty of the nearest and dearest of the departed to pray that he may progress on his upward path. However, if tears rush into your eyes because he has left his body, then cry invoking God. To weep for God is everybody's one and only hope. Also perform as perfectly as possible the duties prescribed by the *Sastras* for the wife and son of the deceased.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

(Reported by Sree Gurupriya Devi in "Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi," Vol. VII)

(Translated from Bengali)

Ma : Don't do anything secretly, and you won't have any secrets to guard."

Question : "What about one's *Iṣṭa-mantra* ?"

Ma replied : "That is the only thing you must carefully preserve in secret, so that it is not disseminated. After sowing a seed if you don't keep it hidden in the soil, if you take it out every-day to have a look at it, then there is no hope of getting a tree. Therefore, keep the seed preserved in the soil with great care, water it and look after it, and you'll find that in due time the seed has sprouted and the sappling is growing little by little."

Question : "Ma, if there is a strong blast of wind, it may destroy the young plant. How to protect it in that situation ?"

Ma : "In that case, the plant should be protected under cover. Of course, you know how people keep very small plants covered up whenever there is a hailstorm ! After some time, a fence has to be erected round the young plant to protect it from cattle. Thus protected and reared, the same tree becomes a protector to so many people."

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In response to people's comments like : We'll do such and such things only if *He* makes us do," "Everything depends on *Him*," "Only *He* knows (if we are to act in a particular way)," Ma said the following words :

"First of all, try to understand who *He* is ; try to find out in what relationship you stand to *Him*. Only after that you will have the right to say, 'I am doing what *He* is making me do'. At present you have got no acquaintance with *Him*—though, of course, even by repeating 'He, He', you may develop a desire to explore more about *Him*".

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A dialogue was going on. "Do you know," said Ma, "why people discuss so much ? They do *ālocan* (discussion) in order to become *ālocanā* (eyeless), is it not so ? For while there is seeing (*dr̥ṣṭi*), there is creating (*sr̥ṣṭi*)". Saying these words, Ma began to laugh.

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A Sikh gentleman who came for Ma's *darśan* said, "Ma, once I have been able to be in the company of the holy, why should I stay a destitute ?"

Ma replied, "If you can really live in the company of the saints, no such question arises. But do people really live in the aura of the saintly ?"

An engineer from U.P. who happened to be present there asked, "Then does nothing happen at all ?"

Ma : "One cannot say that nothing happens. On a sunny day, if you stand in the shade of a tree, you will be protected from the sun by its shade ; while you keep standing under the tree, it will cast its cooling effect on you, there is no doubt about it. But if after resting for a while in the shade, you come away and run about in the sun, then you are sure to get tired."

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The engineer again asked, "Ma, all people say that in *Kaliyuga*, the taking of God's name is the only efficacious spiritual practice. Yet I have seen so many people in so many places repeating the Name for years without making any notable progress. Why is it so ? To me it seems that there is a special manner of taking the Name of God, and those who practise it in the proper way get the benefit, otherwise it is no use."

Ma : "You see, the Name and He whom the Name indicates are one. If I, for instance, call you by your name, you will appear before me. Hence, there is no doubt that the repetition of the Name is effective. Yet you know how sometimes children go on reading aloud just mechanically without understanding anything—it may happen like that ! But then, you see even such people do gain some purity by taking the Name constantly, whereas otherwise they could have been so much worse."

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Once more, the Sikh gentleman queried, "Ma, do the *jivanmuktas* ever dream?"

Ma : (smiling) "How can dreams occur to those who are ever awake? But if you talk of dreaming, then all that we see around us is also a dream."

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"Well, Ma, do the *jivanmuktas* ever suffer from any disease?" This was another question from the same gentleman.

Ma : "Those who are free from *jivahood*, where is the question of their being afflicted with disease?"

Ma continued, "Look, I once caught malaria in Dehradun. I was shivering with fever. And then there came a *sannyāsī*. He said to me, "Ma, you have long been suffering from illness ; may I give you a medicine ?" I smiled and replied thus : 'Baba, it is said that according to the *Vedānta*, one should treat and regard all as equal : you being a *sannyāsī* believer in the *Vedānta*, why do you hate ill health ? Baba, I am not turning you out, am I ? then why must I turn out the disease ? All must accomplish their respective tasks. What if the disease take away this body ? All things are verily forms of the one Bliss. I haven't invited anyone in nor do I turn anyone out—and whom shall I turn out ? There is just the One without a second. Then again, you see, Baba, taking *sannyāsa* is not just for being spectacularly dressed and enjoying physical fitness to roam about and sight-see, nor

is it the fundamental principle of your *Vedānta*. Impartial behaviour, equal regard for all, being established in the Self, that is, regaining one's true Self—this is verily the objective of *sannyāsa*. Then why this repulsion towards disease only? If all these feelings of attraction and repulsion, amity and enmity linger, then what will happen to the main objective?" Saying so, Ma smiled a sweet smile. The engineer and the Sikh Sardar were both enormously pleased to hear Ma's words, and said, "Ma, this is really an excellent attitude—such an attitude is not very frequently found."

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In course of a dialogue, a *sadhu* put forward this question to Ma: "Whom do you worship?"

Ma (smiling): "Do you not understand anything about that by seeing me?"

He said: "No, within such a short time, I am unable to understand anything."

Ma said with a smile: "If you talk of *upāsanā* (worship), I do my own *upāsanā*."

In reply to a query about Her *Guru*, Ma said: "Father and Mother were my first *Guru*-s; after that, the one to whom they handed me, saying 'He is now your *Guru*,' him I regarded as my *Guru*. Again, you all, even birds and beasts, worms and insects—they are all my *Guru*-s. For He is the only *Guru* and He is in all things that you see in the world. Therefore, if you talk of my *Guru*, then He is the only *Guru*. Moreover, I am my own

Guru. Again, there is nothing as '*Guru*'—just take it how you will." Saying this, Ma started to laugh.

The *sadhu* again asked : "Whom do you worship, *Kṛṣṇa*, *Rāma* or *Devī* ?"

Ma (smiling) : "The one who is *Kṛṣṇa*, the one who is *Rāma*, the one who is *Devī* is all—only there are different names, forms, qualities and descriptions. There is really nothing else except that only one."

The *sadhu* : "Who is the One ? *Rāma*, the son of *Daśaratha*, or *Kṛṣṇa*, the son of *Nanda* ?"

Ma cut him short, saying : "I don't know any son of *Daśaratha* or son of *Nanda*. There is only one *Rāma* or one *Kṛṣṇa*—I know only this."

Bhakti, Jnana and Vijnana

"True devotion (Bhakti) is seeing God in all beings, like seeing gold not differently from ornaments. True Knowledge (Jnana) is knowing oneself ; and Realization (Vijnana) is knowing nothing, having known everything."

—Sri Tukaram

In association with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Sri Amulya Datta Gupta

(Translated from Bengali)

(*Continued from the last issue*)

The character of Bholanath and his Sannyas.

Ma continued to say, smiling,

“When there rose a discussion on whether or not Bholanath had obtained his initiation from this body, Bholanath said to me, “I have only received one mantra from you, but besides this, I have received several other mantras.”

It was true that when Bholanath was engaged on his sadhana at Uttar Kashi, he did receive certain enlightenments. Otherwise he could not have continued with his sadhana in the intense cold.”

I : Baba also carried out certain sadhanas in Tarapith and Jwalamukhi.

Ma : Yes, Bholanath was in Tarapith for only seven days, but even within that short time, there was a perceptible change in Bholanath’s character, there was some innate virtue within Bholanath due to which his body and mind became stilled whenever he sat down to perform his sadhana.

I am relating to you a particular incident at Shahbagh. At that time, although we lived in the Golghar (round chamber), this body often used to

walk about alone at night inside the Dance Hall. I was walking along this one night, when on approaching the Golghar I beheld Bholanath sitting on an asana. Mosquitoes covered his body in such quantities that it was clear that he was in a trance. On seeing this, I gave him a good shake and roused him. When Bholanath regained his senses, he said, "Why did you do this? I was enjoying myself now as I once did at Bajitpur."

I : What happened at Bajitpur ?

Ma : You know it. People said that this body was possessed by an evil spirit, and then certain incidents followed. At that time Ashu (Bholanath's nephew) used to stay with us. He saw that his uncle (i.e. Bholanath) became a piece of stone, and this body, when he had never beheld appearing in public before outsiders, was speaking with all and sundry, there was no veil over my head, nor did I show any signs of shyness or modesty. Everything was thus unnatural. He started weeping bitterly at this phenomenon.

Well, whatever it was, you know this body does not deliberately do anything, whatever is to take place happens of its own accord. Had I not scared Bholanath then in that position probably his life would have been completely altered. But if so, then all the lilas connected with his temper would not have taken place. That is why he was not allowed to remain in that state any longer.

You have heard so many things about Bholanath. I have perceived such ennobling thoughts within him that are not conceived even by many Mahat-

mas. Owing to bad advice from others, he often tried to threaten this body, that if I did not behave as he wished, he would become a Sannyasi and go away, or fall into evil ways. That he sometimes exhibited such extreme spells of anger was entirely due to the bad company he kept. But whatever be his action, nothing could make a permanent impression on his character. This body has repeated this sort of thing previously, and many must have thought that because he was my husband, this body had praised him so lavishly. They really cannot be blamed for saying or thinking thus. They must believe whatever their own instincts prompt them to believe !

I : When did Baba Bholanath embrace Sannyas ?

Ma : He was inclined towards Sannyas for a very long time. It was his desire that he would become a Dandi Sannyasi, and that he would receive his initiation from a powerful Mahatma of the Tirtha Sect. When he came to me and expressed such a desire, I gave him permission. I said, "All this is very good—keep on with your efforts in this direction." Whatever he may have admitted outwardly, he always consulted this body in everything before acting. But as soon as I had given him permission, Bholanath burst into anger and exclaimed, "Yes, you always want to drive me away to a distance etc. etc.". He had hoped that when he would raise the subject of his embracing Sannyas—I would object to it. Just because I placed no impediments in his way, he gave vent to his anger !

I explained to him that whoever wanted to consult me for my advice, I always advised them for their own good. For the same reason I had asked him to become a Sannyasi. How could he expect me to differentiate between him and others ?

Had I entertained the feelings of a householder, then perhaps when my husband wished to embrace Sannyas, like other wives I would have objected ! But this sort of feeling was never felt by this body.

After I had explained all this to him, Bholanath became somewhat pacified. Subsequently he tried to be initiated into Sannyas from Shringeri Math (the seat of the Shankaracharyas in the South). But after entering into correspondence with them, he found out that it would not be possible to embrace Sannyas from them. Thereafter it was decided after consulting Jyotish (Bhaiji) that he and Bholanath would proceed to the Shringeri Math together, and that Jyotish, after explaining all about Bholanath's condition to them, would try to ascertain if he was fit to be initiated into Sannyas by that sect. But since that time was inauspicious, even this did not materialise !

Later, when the Kailash expedition took place, and on the day when Jyotish's Sannyas mantra emanated from the lips of this body, it was found that even the next day the power of the mantra was still in force. Then on seeing Bholanath bathe in the Manas Sarobar, I said to him "If you like, you can repeat in Japa the Sannyas mantra that is now emanating from my lips". On hearing this,

Bholanath replied, "What kind of a mantra is this ? I know several other mantras that are better".

In one way Bholanath spoke the truth, because I had heard that during his sadhana at Uttarkashi, he had heard of several mantras from the senior Sannyasis there, and had copied them down in his note book. So, when Bholanath declared that he had several good mantras in his possession, it meant that they were written down in his book. So I said to him, "Very well, I have recited to you what came into my mind, now whether or not you follow this instruction is entirely up to you".

Saying this I proceeded elsewhere. When I had departed, it was found that Bholanath was reciting only the mantra that had poured out from my lips. He was then wearing only his Saffron silk cloth and had no loin cloth. Later of course he started donning a loin cloth.

Thereafter, when we returned from Kailash, I found a good excuse in the illness of one of his brothers, and sent him away to E. Bengal, telling him he could now consume as much meat and fish as he wished, so that he would finish once for all with all desire to do so in future. In actual fact, all this desire was already leaving Bholanath internally. Even if he did not wish to eat meat or fish himself, he always liked to feed others in this way with great pomp and ceremony.

Soon after, the bathing for Purna Kumbha commenced at Hardwar. On the day before the final bath, it occurred to this body that I should approach Bholanath and remind him of his Sannyas

mantra. This was actually done. I told Bholanath, "when you are bathing during the time of Purna Kumbha, you may repeat your Sannyas mantra in japa."

Bholanath left me without replying. Next day, on returning from the Kumbha Bath, even without my asking him, he started shouting out in the presence of the huge assembly, "I have done what you told me."

This was how Bholanath's Sannyas took place. As long as he was alive, all this was kept secret, but after his death it has of course now been made public.

The necessity to entertain noble aspirations.

After dinner at night, Nepal Dada started reading from the Mahabharat edited by Kaliprasanna Sinha. At the conclusion of his reading, he asked, "Ma, if somebody spends his whole life in worldly affairs, and later in his old age resorts to a spiritual life, will he retain this spiritual disposition at the time of his death?"

Ma : By 'life', you are referring to this particular life I suppose, but in reality such is not the case. You are not aware of the various inhibition and prohibitions that are already within you inherited from previous births. This being so, there is no question of determining what will happen at the tale end of anybody's life. This body is of the opinion that all eventualities are possible. That is why you must not pitch your hopes and aspirations at a low level. I have already explained

to you now, by dint of continuous thinking, you can bring about a change in your character. It even sometimes happens that purely through pitching your aspirations at a sufficiently high level, you can ascend from one height to another. That is why you must keep your aspiration at a high place. You should ponder over the fact that as He has aroused a feeling of searching for salvation within you, then He will surely bestow his salvation to you. Once the glimmering of light has appeared before you, then its total manifestation should not be impossible to be attained. Doubts or weakness will certainly assail you, but you must never allow this weakness to overpower you. It is better to continue to work for your liberation by keeping your hopes high. That you are unfit to accomplish anything, or that you are unable to find the strength to carry out your task, these are just mere passing thoughts, because you are certainly succeeding in carrying out your worldly duties and you have sufficient belief in your ability to do so. Had you come to the firm conclusion that you indeed have no power to achieve anything, had you reached such a conviction, then I would have believed that you had progressed far in your life as a Sadhaka. Is there any doubt that everything is due to His Divine mercy? It is the sole object of sadhana to realise that your strength is extremely limited, to understand within your soul that you yourself have no power to achieve anything on your own. And the amazing fact of all this is that it is so wonderful when you realise that

you are nothing but a mere tool in His hands. This is not a surprise only, it is the veritable Truth.

When this body was proceeding through the various steps of sadhana and a seeming stage of ignorance had enveloped it, then I have felt that this body was nothing but a mere tool in His hands. The other day I spoke to you of my becoming Mauna (giving up speech). At that time, although I was already busy with my household duties, I realised that I did nothing of my own accord, that my hands and feet were just somebody else's instruments. It was never known what would happen at the next moment, yet everything was being accomplished swiftly one by one. Suppose for instance that this body was engaged in cooking something then there was something cooking over the stone and it was time to remove the cooked food. I was never aware of anything definite. I noticed that my hands tore off a piece of cloth—why this was done I cannot tell. It was noticed that I was folding the piece of cloth, then with the help of that piece I removed the pot from the stone. I had thus perceived that all this work was actually performed yet I had done nothing. That is why I am repeating to you that the chief object of sadhana is to realise that whatever is accomplished by us, we have by ourselves not succeeded in achieving it. It is your duty to just go on working, owing to His Kripa everything will be possible."

Divine Manifesto

(III)

Sri Dibya Darshi

Deva Mission (Chandernagore)

“यस्तु विज्ञाने तिष्ठन् विज्ञानां अस्तुरो, विज्ञानं न वेद यस्तु
विज्ञानं शरीरम् स अस्तुर्यामी अमृतः”

नमस्तस्मै नमस्तस्मै परमात्मने नमः

[बृहदारण्यक ३।१।५]

The supreme Truth
Resides in Science Supreme
It knows not
What it is.

And controlled by supreme Truth,
Science is the body of the Soul,
He is the inner most content
He is the Bliss.

Salutation for the Supreme Soul
Rests for ever from the Seers.

In view of the incredible progress of natural science and social philosophy and psychology, it is a pertinent question even for highly educated men, whether the eternal religion of the Upanishads can stand the test of time. Yes, it is emphatically affirmed that the religion of the Upanishads has nothing to fear from the tide of advance of science and society, if material conditions improve, superstition and ignorance are removed and man becomes

rational in thinking and behaviour and enjoys perfect freedom to apply his mind to be unravelling of the mystery of his ephemeral existence on earth. If a materialistic philosophy is not imposed on him in the most unscientific way in the name of scientific progress, and man develops a habit of enquiry, free from any preconceived idea of God, it can be boldly and with emphasis declared that people in general will veer round to the religion of the Upanishads. They will meet here a perfect understanding of the unlimited dimension of human personality. A new horizon of enlarged consciousness will open for man. *It is a strange experience to meet people who boast of their scientific outlook, yet are found most dogmatic when they talk about religion.* Even most enlightened views on religion, as arrived at by the Upanishads, perfectly consistent with reason and rational investigation, do not provoke their interest, as they are afraid that the acceptance of those ideas will rob them of their age-long pleasing fancies of their own religion.

In fact science and religion are two great disciplines, which, combined harmoniously can bring about an all round development of human genius. They can heartily embrace each other and work for the good of humanity without detriment to the cause for which each stands. In the Upanishads one comes across bold questions and a perfectly rational attitude to religion. After a thorough investigation into the real nature of man, the stages of the Upanishads made a fundamental discovery : Man in his essential nature is divine :

behind the finite man is the Atman, ever free, ever pure and perfect. The body, the mind and the ego are mere externals of the real man who is immortal and divine. This discovery lead to the further discovery that the same divinity is the ground of the world as well. This they termed the Brahman, the totality of the self and not self.

In the Muṇḍaka Upanishad (1.1.3), we find the following question put by an earnest student to the Divine teacher : Kasmin no Bhagavo vijnāte sarvam idam vigñatām bhavati.” “What is the reality, oh Blessed one, by knowing which we can know all there is in the universe ?” Is there such a unique reality by knowing which we can understand all the manifestations of nature, internal as well as external ? Is there a unity behind this diversity, a one behind the many ? To this question the teacher gives a very significant reply—“Dve vidye veditavye iti ha sma yad Brahma vid vadanti parā caiva aparā.” “Two are the types of knowledge to be acquired by man, so say the knowers of the Brahman : one is called paravidya, higher or supreme knowledge : the other is called aparā vidyā, lower knowledge.” Both must be investigated. Of these the lower or ordinary knowledge consists of the sacred veds, phonetics, the code of rituals, grammar, epistemology, prosody and astronomy. In fact it includes all the sacred books, literature, art, history and science.

Here we have a scientific mind of the highest order, impersonal, objective and detached. There is no desire to put forth a pet opinion : Truth

alone is the motive power, even if that Truth goes against one's cherished attachments and aversions. The teacher says that even the Vedas, the sacred books belong to the category of lower knowledge. Who would dare to say that his sacred books are not of the highest knowledge except he who is of a detached and scientific frame of mind and is in search of Truth and not dogmatic—he who has no truth to hide, no opinion to uphold, no prejudices to defend, who just wants to find Truth and is prepared to sacrifice everything into the bargain. Suffused with the spirit of Truth, they declared :

‘सत्यमेव जयते नानृतम्
सत्येन पश्चा विभक्तो देवयानः’

(Mundaka Upanishad)

“Truth alone triumphs, not untruth. The path to the highest excellence is spread out through Truth only.”

In reality the teachers of the Upanishads had the detachment and boldness, proceeding from the love of Truth, to say that even the Vedas, held in such veneration by themselves and by their people, were secondary. All the sacred books and all the positive sciences and arts are but lower knowledge, aparā vidyā. What then is left to be included in the category of higher knowledge, Para vidyā? The teacher proceeds to indicate this elusive theme. There is a tremendous field of knowledge still left, he thinks, but it belongs to a different order. So he says.

‘अथ परा यज्ञा तदङ्कुरमधिगम्यते

(बृहदारण्यक)

“That is para by which Imperishable is realized.” Science and all the rest deal only with things that change, that are perishable.

Science gives us knowledge of structural form and not knowledge of the content : though we feel in the words of *Eddington* : “All through the physical universe runs that unknown content. If the positive sciences cannot get at it, there must be another discipline, another line of inquiry which is able to give us that knowledge.” Herein we might have an idea of the broad outline of the modern scientific thinker’s thought. The relationship between science and religion was not at all happy for the last two centuries. In the twentieth century, however, a new approach can be noticed and the representative thinkers among scientists and religious people are beginning to discern a close interrelation between these two branches of human knowledge. Although modern scientific thought does not yet have a recognised place for any spiritual reality or principle, several scientists of the twentieth century have endeavoured to soften the materialism of physical science and to find a place for spiritual experience in the scientific world picture. Science admits today that it deals only with the appearances of things and not with the reality behind those appearances. Some of the greatest modern physicists tell us that what science has revealed of the world around us is only the outer aspect of things. Behind this observable universe there is another unobservable universe. This is a great confession of the limitation of

science and its methods. We find scientists like the late *Sir James* writing books on the scientific view of the universe with such titles as "The Mysterious Universe." In spite of all the knowledge that he has gained, the scientist feels that he has only scratched the surface of nature, that he is yet far away from the heart of the problem of the universe. He is compelled to write a book on "*The New Background of Science.*" This new background is nothing but the spiritual mystery of the universe. If the mystery of the universe has eluded the scientist so much, the mystery of man has eluded him even more.

Sir Arthur Eddington the famous mathematician and physicist, concludes his book, "*Space, Time and Gravitation*", with a pointed reference to the predicament: "We have found a strange footprint on the shores of the unknown. We have devised profound theories, one after another to account for its origin. At last we have succeeded in reconstructing the creature that made the footprint. And lo, it is own. Man as thinker, man as observer, man as the Self, has left his footprints on the shores of the unknown."

It is time that science tried to unravel this remarkable mystery of man. Man is primarily a subject, man cannot be reduced to objective dimensions. He is essentially the seer, the knower, the the observer, he is the drk or saksin or ksetrajna in the language of the Upanishads.

“নৈব জ্ঞান পুমানেষ ন চৈবায় নপুংসকঃ
যদ্ যদ্ শরীরমাদত্তে তেন তেন স রক্ষ্যতে”

“Man is neither male nor female nor neuter, but holds the form in which it is enveloped.”

“বালাগ্রশতভাগস্য শতধা কলিপতস্য চ,

ভাগোজীব, স বিজ্ঞেয় ;

স চানন্তায় কলপতে”

(Swetaswetara Upanishad)

“Though like a hundredth part of a hair, the conscious being appears on the earth, still it goes on for eternity and has the possibility of unlimited extension.”

It is also curious to note that in the lecture on “The Evolutionary Vision”, delivered in 1959 to *commemorate* the century of the publication of Darwin’s “*Origin of Species*” Sir Julian Huxley, the noted biologist gave a spiritual orientation for the evolutionary process :

“The evolutionary vision shows us mind as enthroned above matter, quantity subordinate to quality...In the light of our present knowledge man’s most comprehensive aim is seen not as *mere survival*...but as *greater fulfilment*—the fuller realisation of more possibilities by the human species and more of its component members individually.” (“Evolution after Darwin”). He even suggests that the two books by Darwin “The Origin of Species” and “The Descent of Man” should have been properly named : “The Evolution of Organism” and “The Ascent of Man”.

Man is moving towards greater possibility of Divinity ; he is ascending. In reality the whole

of modern scientific thought is in the throes of a silent spiritual revolution with the emergence of mind and consciousness and the consequent need to develop what James Jeans calls "A new background of science". But the problem is who can correct those thinkers who based their philosophy on Darwin's "Origin of species" and became the votaries of triumphant materialistic philosophy? They obliterated religion from the scheme of life and proclaimed: "Religion is a sort of spiritual bonze, the true source of bumbergging mankind" (*Lenin*: "Socialism and Religion"). Had they been acquainted with the religion of the Upanishads, the whole picture would have been different. Whatever they severely criticised as religion, was the religion as revealed in the West, which has no possibility of any synthesis with science. It is also very gratifying to note that in the Communist Manifest *Marx* lamented over the loss of heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour which was destroyed by the bourgeoisie, when he said "It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour". Religion which he encountered in Europe was unscientific and dogmatic. Even men like *Bertrand Russel* who claimed to be an out and out materialist, betrayed his mind when he said: "A purely personal religion, so long as it is content to avoid assertions which science can disprove may survive undisturbed in the most scientific age—"

("Science and Religion")

These men had glimpsed of religion which might move in consonance with the march of time; but

they did not come across such a religion in their land of birth. Men like the great German poets *Goethe* and *Rilke*, the high souled *Tolstoy* were abundantly misunderstood and branded heretics and non-believers, because they could not reconcile their intellect and judgment with any personal God, although they had the deepest reverence for Christ and they were ardent seekers of divinity. In this respect we are fortunate to be borne in the land of the Upanishads which always inspire man to transcend the personal limits and say about God :

‘न तस्य प्रतिमास्ति

यस्य नाम महं यशः’

“He has no image. He is great and His greatness can be glorified and man be overwhelmed with his glory.”

The religion of the Upanishads will be the resort of all rational men of the world if they do not develop any prejudice against it, as it may not *be the religion in which they were born*. If people do not lose their self in the glory of technology and social philosophy and develop a true scientific mind of rational investigation even in the field of religion (which is expected of rational men) the religion of the Upanishads will be the religion of the whole of mankind embracing all religions ; it will broaden the outlook of man and allow him a glimpse of the true religion even in the background of the totality of human experience. It is also astounding to observe that in the cosmology of the physical universe, the Upanishads reveal many

points of context. The fundamental position in the cosmology of both is what the Upanishads say in the words of Swami Vivekananda : “The postulate of a self-evolving cause—i.e. the universe is evolving from a great cause, Upanishads call it Brahman, which is a universal spiritual principle.”

The Taittiriya Upanishad (111-1) defines the Brahman in a majestic utterance, which will be welcomed by every scientific thinker and find immense scope of imagination to understand the mystery of man and its spiritual significance.

Yatova imani bhutani jayante, yena jatani jivanti ; yat prayantabhi samvisanti ; Tad vijignasasva ; Tad Brahmatai.

“Wherefrom all these beings are born ; by which, being borne, they abide ; into which at the time of dissolution they enter—seek to know That ; That is Brahman.”

Evolution has revealed that the mystery of existence stirs in man as the mystery of the Self. The mystery of the universe will ever remain a mystery until the mystery of the Self is cleared. Till then all our conclusions about the Truth of the universe proceeding from science and philosophy, theology or logic will be speculative ventures yielding mere postulates and conjectures. The mystery of the universe is finally resolved through the discovery of the solution of the mystery within man himself. The sages of Upanishads discovered the centre of the universe in the heart of man. “Tat twam asi. “That thou art” proclaims the Chandogya Upanishad. It is the consciousness of the Supreme Soul that

will unravel the mystery of existence and of the universe. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says :

যঃ সৰ্বেষু ভূতেষু তিষ্ঠণ, সৰ্বভ্যো ভূতোভ্যাংরো
সৰ্বানি ভূতানি যস্য শরীরম্ যঃ সৰ্বানি
ভূতানি যময়তি, এষ তু আত্মা অন্তৰ্ধ্যামী অমৃতঃ

(বৃহঃ ৩।৭।১৫)

“That which exists in all beings and which is within everything ; which is the body of all beings, which regulates and constructs the inner being, is immortal bliss, the supreme soul.”

Herein, in the vast embrace of Upanishadic religion, science can have its full extension and still be of the Infinite Bliss. Referring to this spiritual kinship between modern science and Upanishads (Vedanta) Swami Vivekananda said in the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893 (and how prophetic was his statement)—“Manifestation and not creation is the word of science today and the Hindu is only glad that what he has been cherishing in his bosom for ages (in the Upanishads) is going to be taught in more forcible language and with further light from the latest conclusions of science.”

(Complete works, vol. I p. 15).

The religion of the Upanishads is the religion of man in quest of the mystery of the universe and the mystery of science. Herein science and religion will live in perfect harmony and peaceful embrace.

The Temples of South India

R. K. Banerjee

(Continued from the previous issue)

Once again we had to change trains at Pamban and proceed by rail to Dhanushkodi, the southernmost tip of India, where two oceans—the Bay of Bengal and the Indian ocean—meet.

We had arranged a bullock cart in advance to convey my wife in hottest part of the day over sand from the station to the sea, a distance of nearly two miles, where in the absence of any pucca shelters our stay was perforce restricted to a quick dip in the sea, and performance of Puja and Tarpan, before we made haste to return to the station at Dhanushkodi, to eat our lunch in an empty third class compartment with the pitiless sun streaming down, in the face of complete lack of washing or waiting facilities.

We left Dhanushkodi in a crowded train at about 2.45 p.m, and arrived back at Mandapam at 5 p.m. where we found our car waiting to take us back to Madurai.

We reached Madurai at 8.30 p.m., after dark, at the end of one of the longest day's outing since we had left Madras, but one night of absolute comfort in the remarkably equipped T.V.S. Guest House was sufficient to take away all our weariness, and the next morning, the 8th, we were ready to start

for Kanyakumari, as keen and as expectant as when we had left Madras on the 1st.

On the 8th morning, we left Madurai after breakfast for Kanyakumari intending to break journey at Tirunelvely enroute not only for lunch, but also to meet business friends of the neighbourhood.

The journey was uneventful, and on arrival at Tirunelvely we found the premises of the Government Rest House fully up to standard both as regards comfort, and the excellent food provided.

After a couple of hours there, we motored on to arrive at Cape Comorin just in time to see a brilliant sunset from the Kerala State Government Rest House, where our accommodation had been booked.

This Government Rest House is situated very conveniently on a hill rise with easy access to the Gandhi Memorial, and to the temple of Kanyakumari, and commands an excellent view of the surroundings.

The scene from the promenade where the three oceans—comprising The Bay of Bengal, The Indian Ocean, and The Arabian Sea—meet is truly magnificent, but nothing is so entrancingly beautiful as the image of the Goddess of Kanyakumari, which we were destined to see later in the evening on our first visit to the temple. The descriptions we had read of, or the pictures we had seen prior to our arrival paled into insignificance in Her Presence.

The temple authorities were exceedingly kind to us, and went out of their way to facilitate

worshipping by us, not only on this visit, but on each of three subsequent visits that we made during the next two days.

The magnificent diamond nose-ring which the Goddess habitually wears reflects the light of the Deepas all round her to illuminate her face perpetually. It is said that the lustre of the diamond was so brilliant in the old days, that passing ships at night used to mistake for a Lighthouse the light which could be seen clearly from a distance when the main door of the temple was opened, and so often got into difficulties by steering wrongly into the rocks. For this reason the main entrance has subsequently been permanently blocked, and the entrance nowadays is from the side.

The temple is dedicated to the Goddess Parashakti—modernly called Kanyakumari, and its origin goes back to the mythological days when the demon Banasura was destroyed by the virgin Goddess in battle, just before her destined marriage to Lord Shiva of Suchindrum Temple, some thirteen miles away. The temple as it stands today was built in the time of the Pandya Kings of Tamilnad, and considerable Tamil influence can still be seen around the temple.

It was very refreshing to bathe in the sea, at the confluence of the three oceans from the well equipped bathing ghat immediately to the south of the temple.

During our visit we saw under construction between the temple, and the bathing ghat, a memorial for Swami Vivekananda ; subsequently news has

been published to the effect that Swamiji's statue is indeed going to be erected on the Vivekananda rocks, which stand out of the sea, some 200 yards from the shores to the south-east of the temple. It is said that the famous visit to America was born of meditation on these very rocks.

On the evening of the day of our arrival, i.e., the 8th, we were transported from legendary mythology dating back to thousands of years, to the stark reality of the present atomic age, when we were privileged to see the second rocket fired from Thumba Station, not more than say 40 miles away as the crow flies.

The event took place at about 7.45 p.m., and although we could not hear the sound of firing, we saw the flight of the rocket to its full height, and for some time after it had been electronically operated into moving horizontally, as the clouds were brilliantly illuminated by the explosions.

In the same Guest House were staying Scientists of international repute, in charge of photographing the rocket's flight, and next morning at breakfast, we were entertained to a continuous and highly technical discussion of the successes and failures of the experiment.

As we were not destined to leave Kanyakumari for Trivandrum till the 10th morning, we managed to fit in a trip to Suchindram Temple and back on the 9th morning, instead of seeing it on our way to Trivandrum as most people do. This enabled us to spend some more time at Suchindram, than would otherwise have been possible.

This temple is one of the very few temples in India where Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar—that is—the Hindu Holy Trinity—are worshipped together, and the name of the temple is derived from the two words—Suchi-Indra, that is to say where the God Indra was purified. Suchindram is the name given to the deity of Shiva, and the story of Indra is connected with the penance where he undertook to do here in worshipping Shiva, after the incidents connecting him with the sage Ganthama and Ahalya, as narrated in the Puranas.

The forests round this temple were called Janaranya from the Vedic times, and it is said that the sage Atri and his wife Anusua lived here in a hermitage. They are also intimately connected with the reason why all three of the Holy Trinity are worshipped in the temple.

The temple of Suchindram contains the second biggest corridor of any temple in Southern India, second only to the corridors of Rameswaram.

There is a magnificently proportioned image of Hanuman in black stone in the front hall of the temple, which stands at least 30ft. high and which was found embedded in the sands near the temple, some years ago.

On the 10th morning it was difficult for us to tear ourselves away from a last visit to the Goddess Kanyakumari, before breakfast, but we had willy nilly to be on the road again to reach Trivandrum by lunch time, and see the famous Padmanabhan Palace en route.

This Palace has been built entirely of wood and plaster by the Travancore Kings in the middle ages with the help of Portugese artisans, and although Kerala still abounds in the beautiful woody trees from which the temple must have drawn its timber, nobody now can replace the exquisite plasterwork of the floors of the main royal halls, which even today shine like marble. We particularly remember the beautiful pictures of the gallery around the royal bedroom walls on the top floor and we will also not easily forget the extreme courtesy and the deep knowledge of the Guide who took us around the Palace with so much love and reverence as part of his daily duty.

We arrived at Trivandrum in time for lunch at the Trivandrum Club, where we were accommodated most comfortably in rooms on the first floor, with a fine open terrace overlooking the Club grounds.

Trivandrum has been built through the enormous efforts of the late Dewan of Travancore — Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer — and is the capital of modern Kerala today. The city certainly looks impressive with its neat houses, well built roads, residential estates, and fine public buildings.

Arrangements had been made for a visit by us to the famous Padmanabhan Temple the same evening, just before Arati was due to be started, but the perfect liaison which had worked so well during our trips up to Kanyakumari, was lacking for the first time at Trivandrum, and we arrived late by a few minutes to find that our friends

previous arrangements had been disrupted. However, in spite of being handicapped by lack of knowledge in the local language, I did manage to convey to the Priests in charge that my wife and I wanted to go right up to the front to see the Lord Padmanabhan from close quarters, and at the same time perform our individual worships. Eventually, after jostling our way through masses of humanity, we did manage to have our way.

The Lord Vishnu here is named Padmanabhan, and is lying in the Anantasayanam pose on top of a huge monolithic stone base. The figure is of such immense proportions that pilgrims can only have "darshan" through three different doorways — from one of which the head is visible, the central door gives a view of the body, and from the third the feet only can be seen and worshipped.

This famous temple is mentioned in old epics, such as the Brahmanda purana. It is said that Diwakar, who was a famous Vaishnav Saint, and descended from the Karnataka Tulu Brahmins, prayed for several years in the vicinity of Trivandrum for actual sight of the Lord Vishnu — who eventually appeared to him in the form of a beautiful child of two years old, on whom the Saint took compassion, so much so that he adopted the boy.

One day when the Saint was worshipping Vishnu on the Shaligram Shila, the boy took the Shila in his hands, and attempted to put it into his mouth, whereupon the Saint rebuked the boy sharply. Immediately the boy vanished, after telling him

that if he wanted to find him again, he would have to go into the forest of Anantan, which was a densely wooded forest on the site now occupied by the temple.

When Diwakar proceeded after a few days into the forest, he had a glimpse of the Divine child in the bole of a huge tree (*Cynometra Ramifolia*), which fell down at his approach, and verily appeared to the sage as the Lord Vishnu in the Anantasyanam pose.

Thus the idea of the temple, and the image was born.

The construction of the temple dates back to about 1049 A.D.

It is said that 12000 Shaligrams were used in the construction of the Sanctum Sanctorum by the famous Deccan architect — Taikar Bhattathiri.

It took some more years to complete the temple proper, that is, up to 1330 A.D., when the outer courtyards were constructed.

In 1344 the then Maharaja of Travancore — the famous Marthanda Varma — publicly bequeathed the whole of his royal Kingdom to the Lord Padmanabhan, and thereafter became His vassal.

Even today the temple of Padmanabhan is administered personally by the ruling member of the royal dynasty who attends the morning worship daily and feeds about 200 Brahmins.

The main image contains a close reference to the Holy Trinity as Brahma is shown sitting on a lotus emanating from the naval of the Lord Vishnu and Shiva is also represented in meditation.

The three Shaktis are represented by the Goddess Lakshmi, Bhumi and Nila.

The ramparts surrounding the temple are enormous in size in length and breadth as within them exists practically the old City of Trivandrum ; and ordinary life in the city centres principally round the temple and its activities. For instance at 5.30 a.m. a piercing siren wakes up the whole city as well as the temple Priests to commence their day of worship.

On every other evening there is an illuminated procession round the inner walls of the temple at which quite often the Maharaja himself takes part.

One such procession was witnessed by my wife the next evening that is one the 11th.

On the 11th morning, we were woken up as usual by the siren mentioned above, and it was just as well that we did so, because just before 6 a.m. that day I heard the tremendous 'whoosh' with which the second sodium rocket went up from Thumba — the Rocket Firing Station nearby.

That morning we took some time off and proceeded to the famous Bathing Beach at Kovilam, where there is a very comfortable and fully equipped Rest House, and the sea comes in along a back bay with waters as calm as in a Mill Pond.

Cheeky fishermen's children abound in the neighbourhood, pestering visitors to take them out in their catamarans to ride the breakers some distance away.

We found the bathing here very refreshing and cool after the heat inside the crowded temple the evening before.

The next morning, that is the 12th instant, we left after an early Breakfast for Kottayam, and had the misfortune to have a breakdown, about 3/4 of an hour after leaving Trivandrum.

This delayed our arrival at Kottayam till well after Lunch time, although the highlands we traversed on the way were very picturesque with their Coconut plantations, and Estate.

Our accommodation at Kottayam had been booked in a beautiful Guest House, situated on the top of a hill surrounded by woods, about four miles from the city.

The house had evidently been built for noblemen in the old days, as their country Rest House, but is now used as a superior holiday resort.

The rooms were lavishly furnished, and the cuisine was befitting a first class Metropolis Hotel. It was a pity that we had only been booked to stay there overnight, but just before Dinner there was some excitement caused by the killing of a big Cobra in the dark passage between the Kitchen and the Dining Room, from which my servant had a Providential escape.

The next morning, that is the 13th, we left after as late a breakfast as we could (to prolong our stay at Kottayam), and took the direct road to Cochin. Here occurred another of those unpermediated diversions, when my wife expressed a wish to see the famous Shiva Temple of Vaikam, which had not been included in our original itinerary, but was which practically on our route from Kottayam to Cochin.

(To be continued)

Ma Anandamayee in Madras and Tiruvannamalai

S. S. Cohen

(*Sri Ramanashram, Tiruvannamalai.*)

It is seldom that Rishis in this country go about to preach their gospels and inspire and uplift the people by their example and inner experience. Usually they are sedentary and, by the power of their mighty tapas and Supreme Realisation, automatically act as giant spiritual magnets and attract to their abodes seekers from many lands and climes. Yet, there are illustrious names in history, e. g. Lord Buddha, Sri Shankaracharya, Lord Gouranga and others, who travelled the length and breadth of the land and showed the way to infinite peace and happiness by their teachings and devotional songs. To this category belongs Sri Anandamayee Mata, the famous saint of Bengal, whose name is known in every household in North India. Although She became known very early in life and began Her peregrinations about two decades ago She had all this time not felt inclined to turn South*—or could it be that Heaven had reserved Her peculiar activities for the North, while South India was enjoying the ineffable presence of two

* She visited South India once many years ago, when she was known only to a few. (Editor's note)

Rishis of the first magnitude: Sri Ramana Maharshi and Sri Aurobindo, who brilliantly shone there for about half a century: Rishis who could have illumined any age by their vivid spiritual lustre? Now that both of these have passed into Mahanirvana and the people have to have a living God who speaks the language of men to turn their hearts and minds to Him, Mataji has come South to fill the gap. She set foot on the soil of Madras on October 27, at about 8-45 a.m. with twenty of Her devotees, headed by Sri Hari Baba Maharaj and Didi, Her personal attendant. She was received at the railway station by some of the most prominent citizens of the City and brought to the spacious bungalow "Abbotsbury", belonging to Sri J. H. Tarapore, in Teynampet, Mount Road. In "Abbotsbury's" vast grounds a large shamyana with an inner bedroom had been constructed for Her own use out of mats and palm leaves over which whole pieces of new long cloth and beautiful curtains were spread. It was suitably decorated, carpeted and electrified.

Mrs. F. Taleyarkhan of Ramanashram had met Sri Mataji last year in Delhi, and had taken a promise from Her that if she ever blessed South India by a visit, she Mrs. T. should be given the chance to serve Her by making all the arrangements necessary for Her stay, etc. Last September the promise was fulfilled and Mrs. T. immediately contacted the highest in the administrative, juridical and social life of Madras, and with her characteristic tremendous energy in a short time succeeded

in forming a powerful Reception Committee as well as making excellent arrangements for the honoured guest's accommodation, which made Her stay of one week a very great success. The people of the City poured in their hundreds to have Mataji's darshan. From the first to the last day of Her stay there was a constant stream of visitors, dozens of whom daily kept waiting for hours to see Her. Her appearance, Her magnetic personality and Her sweet conversation charmed everyone and attracted big audiences to Her bhajans and talks. The language difficulty was a serious bar for the majority of Southerners to contact and understand Her. The translation from Hindi into Tamil or English proved extremely inadequate to convey to the people the essence of Her teaching. The translators who knew Hindi were not sufficiently conversant with the spiritual subject with which She dealt, and those who were so conversant, did not know Hindi, with the result that the most significant parts of Her answers were either slurred over or distorted. Mataji Herself did not make it any easier for the baffled translator to wade his way through all. She said, but out of the depth of Her knowledge of the Supreme She poured out streams of ideas, which kept him whipping his memory to retain all he heard, and his wits to unravel the mystery of Her meaning. Nonetheless the audiences remained extremely satisfied, particularly those who could directly contact Her through the Hindi language.

Her very presence silently exhaled the perfume of purity and joyful innocence which pervaded and

won all hearts. Her child-like, guileless laughter, the hope She instilled in the minds of the troubled questioners, the deep sympathy and understanding with which She met their suffering, gave immense solace and turned sorrow to happiness and at times to tears of relief.

Mataji's one-week stay was crowded with engagements ; even the few hours She could snatch in the daytime for some rest were not without peering eyes and private interviews. Many were these interviews, wherein woes and laments and prayers for redress were made to Her, as it is generally done to the sacred image of the Mother of the Universe in temples. She patiently listened to them all, and with infinite compassion answered sweetly and persuasively. One of the questions was :

“Do ceremonies performed for the dead actually benefit them ? If so for how long ?”

Mataji : Yes ; they do benefit them, and for always ; for even if the departed person were reborn, these prayers, being spiritual in nature, would not fail to uplift the soul, which, after all, never dies, but remains the same from life to life, continually progressing in its onward march towards God, till it finally merges in Him and thus attains its Liberation — *Mukti* —, which is Supreme, Everlasting Bliss.

Then knowing the history of the grief-stricken couple who had put the question, she related anecdotes of bereavements which resembled the one they had suffered, and told how in one case the departed child was seen in a dream by his pining

mother extremely happy in Heaven in the company of thousands of other children, and how in another case the deep yearnings of the mother caused the soul of her dead child to take birth again in her womb very soon afterwards, which disturbed his rest and retarded his progress. Grief is thus shown to be most harmful to the beloved-ones whose loss we mourn. The third case She related was that of the death of an only son. The mother seeing the father unconcernedly smoking his hukka in a corner, piteously wailed and, with abundant tears accused him of hard-heartedness, to which he replied: "Do not think me to be indifferent to my son's death, but just now I am puzzling which son's death of all the dozens of sons I have had in the last eighteen lives I should mourn." This gave great comfort to the couple concerned, which made them look upon Mataji as a saviour-mother in whose lap they could always take shelter from the stormy blasts of life.

On the night of October 29, Sri Mataji for the first time answered questions in public. The talk was opened by a young lady who wanted to know the remedy for the fainting spells she had contracted almost from childhood and which used to seize her whenever she heard bhajans, attended puja, or concentrated on the statue of Sri Krishna in her house. Mataji cross-examined her, and for ten minutes gave her full explanation of the import of her complaint, and finally exhorted her to practise self-control. "As", She argued, "you remain unconscious during these spells, and as

they have all this long time caused you no spiritual progress, nor furthered your sadhana, you should consider them unfavourable, and you should therefore make an effort to steady yourself whenever the impulse to faint begins to be felt. Take to japam and strengthen your mind by repeating God's name," and, placing Her hand on the shoulder of the young lady, Mataji smilingly, and with extreme tenderness, said : "You have had the darshan of Sri Krishna, now I must have your darshan", and folded Her hands before her in salutation, which made everybody laugh, except the young lady who burst into tears out of excessive joy. At this stage a voice asked :

Voice : What is the easiest way to God ?

Mataji : Profuse tears.

Voice : And if tears do not come ?

Mataji : Then you should seek the company of those who shed tears, namely *Satsang*. This is the easiest way to God through love and devotion.

On the next night, the same voice rose :

Voice : People are asked to worship God, to sing His praise in bhajan, to perform puja, to repeat constantly His name, and they do all this without knowing what God is. Will you please explain ?

Mataji : God is all-knowledge, and one cannot know His true nature till one attains Self-realisation. Then one will find Him to be none other than oneself, the only *Atman*, the only Self there is, that He is with form as the world and without form as *chit*, Pure Consciousness. In the mean-

time prayers, worship, japa, dhyan, etc. have to be performed.

A lady stood up and asked with warmth :

Lady : How can our minds be free for prayer and meditation when we are so much burdened by work and family responsibilities :—husband, children, etc. ? What should we do in that case ?

Mataji : Let the work be done of its own accord without your exertion. Work without the feeling that it is you who are working. Take it as if it is God's work, done through you as His instrument. Then your mind will be at rest and peaceful. That is prayer and meditation.

Sri Anandamayee Ma has a partiality for temples and ashrams, and takes great interest in visiting as many of them as possible. It is erroneously stated in certain quarters that the *Mukta*, the Enlightened One has, by merging with the Absolute, cut himself off completely from the world and its activities. These *Muktas*, on the contrary, enjoy the world without the sense of participating in it, and in all the actions they perform they are free from the sense of doership and thus free from sorrow and delusion. They see the Divine Mind in the multitude of forms, colours and qualities which fill the universe in an eternal Play, which is all joy and bliss. They experience this gigantic Play within their own mind, which is also God's and themselves its detached spectators. Yet, Mataji looks at the murti in a temple as the outer symbol of the Formless God in a special sense, and feels the devotional fervour which, for decades and

centuries, lakhs of worshippers have poured out to it.

So, on the 28th morning She and Her party motored up to the big temple in Mylapore and to a few smaller ones in the City. On the 29th at 5 a. m., they visited the famous temple of Conjeevaram about fifty miles from Madras ; and on the 30th, the Seven Pagodas (Mahabalipuram), where ruins of many old Hindu shrines exist in profusion. On their way back they climbed to the world-renowned Tirukazugukuntram mandir on the top of a hill, where two eagles come every day from a very long distance at about 11 a. m. just to feed from the hand of a special priest and return with clock-like regularity in fair and foul weather and without a single day's break in all the many centuries of which tradition speaks. As Mataji's knees were too weak to permit Her to climb the great number of steps, she was carried to the top in a Palanquin.

Ramana-Bhajan is being performed on the last Thursday of every month in the house of Sri P.S.G. Rao in Adyar, Madras. Mataji had accepted an invitation to attend it. As in this month it falls on the 30th, She and Her party went in the evening of that day to Gandhinagar, Adyar. In the garden of his bungalow Sri P. S. G. Rao had made excellent arrangements for the bhajan. Mataji sat on a sofa under floral decorations, and facing Her at the farther end squatted scores of Brahmins who chanted in rhythmic cadence the Veda verses which have been daily recited in Ramanashram at

Tiruvannamalai during and after the life time of the Master, followed by “*Upadesa Saram*” in Sanskrit, the verses which He himself (Sri Raman Bhagawan) had composed. The very large audience spread out on the lawn, in the whole open space and the verandahs of the bungalow. Mataji’s presence, the large exhibited photograph of the Maharishi and his all-pervading influence, the *Veda parayanam* and the incense uplifted and thrilled all present.

Sri Mataji’s evenings were usually devoted to visiting outstanding places of interest, e.g. the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar, the Ramakrishna Math in Mylapore, the Gujerati Sangha, the Bengali Club, and the gardens of certain people, one of which was that of Sri J. H. Tarapore. It must be incidentally mentioned here that Anandamayi Ma never enters a house where a *grihsta* lives. All She does to bless the person concerned, is to enter his compound, sometimes even without stepping out of the car, halt for a few minutes and then leave. At Sri Tarapore’s, however, She did come out, but stood on the car platform, and, opening the big box of apples offered to Her along with other fruits, with Her own hand distributed almost all its contents to those present, not excluding the gardener of the bungalow. The Tarapore family and those who received prasād directly from Her hand felt themselves singularly blessed by this special mark of Her Grace. At the Gujerati Sangha and the Bengali Club there was music, but more than the

music in the former place, there was the riotous joy of the children who swarmed every inch of it, even in laps, over shoulders and backs, and under knees. The Bengali music was exquisite.

On some days there were at "Abbotsbury" three darshans, namely :

10 to 11-30 a.m.

4 to 5-30 p.m.

7 to 9-00 p.m.

The first two items were variable according to the circumstances and the engagements of the day concerned, but the last-one did not vary, and was solely reserved for bhajan, except the last fifteen minutes, when all remained in silent meditation. These attracted large crowds which were accommodated in the wide open space of the garden just outside the shamyana. On the last five nights after 9 p.m. when the majority of the audience dispersed to their distant homes, the minority, which was appreciably large, moved into the shamyana ante-room and filled it to capacity. Mataji then came in, sat on the sofa and answered questions, some of which have been reported above. That was a happy time for all to have direct contact with Her through speech. On one of the last nights a question was asked, as to when and at what age and through what sadhana She had attained Enlightenment. She laughed in her characteristic child-like way and said that She was not aware of any date or time when She had attained Enlightenment, that She knew of no sadhana deliberately performed, nor of any suddenness in spiritual

Illumination, which made a distinction between a life that had gone and a new one that had taken its place, that She was now as She had ever been. We have had to draw our own conclusions.

On another night, November-1, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Head of the Department of Philosophy of the University of Madras, undertook the difficult task of translating Mataji's answers on the spot, and on the next day he gave the following written record of the talk :

“Where questions arise, there is answer too. Who questions whom? There is only one *Atman* everywhere : you are that. Where there is duality, there is misery. You *are* non-dual, eternal. You seek and desire truth, knowledge, bliss ; because you are that. No one wants *Mṛityu, Ajnana, Duhkha*, (Death, Ignorance, Sorrow). True, evil has a fascination for man, who, attracted by it, falls. This is due to *vasana*, which means non-recognition (*na*) of the existence of God (*vasa*). To counteract it, one must be attracted towards God, one's true Self. You are *Purna* (complete).

Question : How to distinguish *purnata* from *apurnata* ?

Mataji : You are *purna*, and so you ought to know. There is the veil of *ajnana* ; but in the midst of that, there is the door of *jnana*. You have to find yourself. Of course, the guru will help you. You can begin from anywhere. What is required is *ekagrata* (one-pointedness). Enquire : “Who am I ?” and you will find the answer. Look at a tree : from one seed arises a huge tree ;

from it come numerous seeds, each one of which in its turn grows into a tree. No two fruits are alike. Yet it is one life that throbs in every particle of the trees. So, it is the same *Atman* everywhere.

“All creation is that. There is beauty in the birds and in the animals. They too eat and drink like us, mate and multiply; but there is this difference: we can realise our true nature, the *Atman*. Having been born as humans we must not waste this opportunity. At least for a few seconds every day, we must enquire as to who we are. It is no use taking a return ticket over and over again. From birth to death and death to birth, is *samsara*. But really we have no birth and no death. We must realise that.

Question: How do we know there is re-birth? There is the function of breathing in the body. As soon as it stops we die. How can we say that we are born again?

Mataji: Yes; that is ignorance. Why go so far as re-birth? One does not know what will happen the next moment. Yet, there is knowledge. Those who have crossed the veil of ignorance tell us that we are the eternal *Atman*.

“I am only a child and do not know how to lecture or give discourses. Just as a child, when it finds something sweet and good, takes it to his mother and father, so do I place before you what is sweet and good. You take whatever pleases you. Mine is only a child’s prattle. In fact, it is you alone that question and you alone that answer. You beat the drum, and you hear the sound.”

Mother addresses every man as 'pitaji' and every woman as 'mataji.'

At a very early hour on November 3, Mataji's car was ready to take Her to Pondicherry, the next stage on Her journey. Although it was very early in the morning, a number of admirers had collected earlier still to bid Her farewell. Their hearts were full and heavy at parting from Her. I looked at a particular face usually imperturbable, in which I was interested, and read in it a solemn, pensive emotion, which a month ago I could not have dreamt it was capable of feeling for any saint or any religious institution, and I heartily rejoiced. It was one of the miracles Mataji had performed in the short space of only one week : She had relieved the long pent-up sorrow of my friend.

Tiruvannamalai

After attending one or two functions of the routine programme of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, and spending the night in one of the Ashram houses near the seashore at Pondicherry, Mataji motored to the beautiful temple of Lord Nataraja at Chidambaram early next morning. Nataraja symbolises the Supreme Brahman dancing the Cosmic Dance as the manifested universe : the Formless Intelligence assuming countless forms and movements in an eternal Play.

Mataji was scheduled to arrive at Tiruvannamalai on the same day, the 4th, at 12-30 midday, when Mrs. Taleyarkhan in concert with the

Trustees of the big Arunachaleswara temple and the local officials prepared to receive Her with temple honours. But exactly at 11 a. m., i. e. 90 minutes before the scheduled time Her car quietly glided into Ramanashram ; thus leaving Trustees, officials, elephants, and priests cooling their heels in the shade of trees on the Chidambaram high road, waiting for Her, totally unaware of Her early arrival.

A few minutes afterwards She went round the Ashram to see the places sanctified by the holy presence of Shri Ramana Bhagavan in His life-time. Before His samadhi, She reverently stood with folded hands, and enquired about how the sacred body had been buried, and whether there was a lingam on the samadhi. The lingam She could not see because it was covered with flower garlands. Then She entered Mathur-booteswara shrine, which was built over the remains of the Master's mother and climbed to the *sanctum sanctorum*, where She was shown Sri Chakra and the sacred lingam. At 5 p. m. She attended the usual *Veda parayanam* near Sri Maharishi's samadhi, and between 7 and 9 p. m. the bhajan programme as in Madras.

All the Ashram devotees and many members of the Managing Committee who had come from Madras, gathered in the Ashram at 9 a.m. on the next day, the 5th. The ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of the Meditation Hall, which is proposed to be built over Sri Bhagavan's samadhi, was performed, and at its end, Sri Anandamayee Ma approached and strewed flowers over the foun-

dation stone to the joy of all present. Then She made the eight-mile pradakshina of Arunachala Hill by car.

At a darshan gathering on the 6th morning, Mataji replied to questions. D. M. put the first question :

D. M. : The other day in Madras you said that if one has no tears to shed in the search for God, one should resort to *Satsang*. I have had *Satsang* for many years, and yet, I see no appreciable improvement in myself.

Mataji : Your being here now and your asking the question are tears. By tears is meant perseverance in the search with devotion. How can you say then that you have not benefited by those years of *Satsang* ? But for them you might not have reached even so far.

A discussion ensued in which some of the Ashramites, Avadhut Baba, and lastly, Sri Hari Baba took part, which made Mataji laughingly remark : “You have to-day roundly caught him (Sri Hari Baba who seldom opens his mouth). Catch him again if you can.”

On the same night, She delighted the Maharishi's disciples by leading the bhajan in calling the name of Bhagavan “Oh Bhagavan”, “Eh Bhagavan”, “Ha Bhagavan”, etc.—for about ten minutes, suitably changing the modulations of the tune and the words of the appeal at each call. Her delicate, pure voice has the youthful timbre of that of a girl in her teens, which makes the glory of Her spiritual state all the more captivating. It did captivate a

neighbour at my left, judging from his loud groans and by what he later told me. Said he: "Seeing and hearing Mataji I get flabbergasted. I am one of those half-determined seekers, who hang between the material and the spiritual, inclined to lose hold neither of the one nor of the other. Mataji seems to be my conscience in human flesh... Now the question is, to leap or not to leap." I answered that he should first test his knees, and should he find them weak, he should lie down and continue to groan.

The bhajan that night—the last night—was closed earlier than usual, as a Ramana devotee took the congregation to the big Hall and showed them some films he had taken of Sri Bhagavan sometime before His last illness. The Master was not at His best in them: general debility had already overtaken His constitution, and the rheumatism in His knee-joints had turned his legs shaky. Yet, His countenance had not lost any of its radiance and dignity, and His movements any of their gracefulness, which must have told volumes to Sri Anandamayee, who had not seen Him in the flesh. After the brief show, a member of the Managing Committee approached Mataji and with folded hands begged Her to visit our Ashram again, to which She smilingly replied: "I am not going anywhere; I am always here. There is no going nor coming—all is *Atman*," which very much reminded us of the very words of our Divine Guru, Sri Ramana Bhagavan.

On the 7th, at 5 a. m., Mataji stood under the arch of Sri Ramanashram gate in clear moonlight

with Sirius brilliantly twinkling overhead. She looked around, and, seeing the small circle of Ramana bhaktas gathered to see Her off, affectionately bade them farewell, then entered Her car and sped away on Her journey in the direction of the Southern Cross, extremely satisfied at the reception given to Her here, and at the peaceful atmosphere of the Ashram. Sri Hari Baba expressed a wish that their stay might have been a month instead of only three days. He was the next centre of attraction ; but although self-asserting and strict in matter of time, a thing Sri Mataji never bothers about, he throughout effaced himself. His quietness and his very kind heart endeared him to all those who got to know him intimately.

Farewell, beloved Mataji, and, to speak the language of men, God be with you in your holy mission to bring peace and good cheers to the thousands of your children who need them, and who eagerly crowd to behold Thy divine face, and, seeing it, turn their minds and hearts to God. "God, after all" say they then, "*does* exist, and not only in some remote world in this far-flung universe, but *here and now.*"

The Test

Harekrishna Goswami

A seeker of Truth knows, 'We live in moments and not in time.' Such important is a tiny instant. A small or insignificant atom exhibits significantly enormous power when processed in a scientific way. As well, as per Sāṅkhya Philosophy in an atom the whole world is found to be present or duplicated. So to me a small incident, as presented here, remains ever-significant because it has given my life a new dimension.

I was doing engineering service at Ranchi township of Bihar State where I first got Darshan (visit) of Ma Anandamayee. I remember the day of heavy rain when I went to see Her, completely drenched, but to my utter surprise, without any after effect of cough or cold. She was sitting on a dias on the first floor of the ashram and narrating to a gathered mass sitting in front, how "Om" spontaneously evolved from Her naval. (A true utterance of a mantra evolves from the naval and not from lips only).

She stayed at Ranchi for a few days. Later from the first day I started mixing with Mother's devotees or followers. A few of Her devotees expressed that I should get initiation from the powerful Divine Mother which would help me. But in those days I was much influenced by life and

teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and would not give much importance to anyone else. So I did not decide anything about the initiation.

A few days later, Bhāgavata Pārāyana and Matri Satsang were arranged in a big hall near the ashram. The hall was about one hundred feet long or more. She would sit on the dias placed at one end of the hall and devotees sat on along the frontal space of the hall. One day, after programme of Bhāgavata was over She started distributing (throwing) flowers as Her blessings to the audiences. I was sitting on the farthest end of the hall and thought—‘Mother, if you are really powerful a flower should reach me here’. The matter was impossible because a man cannot throw light flowers with hand to a distance of about hundred feet or above. At best, among people sitting in the middle of the hall could somehow get some of the flowers. The throwing of flowers by Her was now over. Suddenly a middle man who gathered a lot of flowers started throwing some of the flowers he had got, thinking the total to be surplus for him. And to my surprise, a nice little bud of rose fell on my lap. I wondered, and wondered — besmeared with joy, and felt at heart, ‘Mother, you are really powerful. You have managed to give me a flower.’

Thus the test before accepting one as Guru was over. I took a decision to get initiated by Her. And initiation was over within three days from that time.

Ma and Ma Alone

2. *Discussions revealing how Ma is eternally with every one :*

Ma Das

The Nature and Problem of Ignorance

The world, with its countless beings, creatures and things of endless variety, is an illusion. This does not mean that nothing exists, but that what we normally see does not exist as we presume and imagine it to be. We are never aware of what truly exists, but only of the appearance we perceive, and what appears before us has no existence. There is a rope which exists, but we do not see it. In its place, we perceive a snake which does not exist. The nature of our ignorance of truth is due to this kind of illusion, in which there is absence of the knowledge of what truly exists, as the rope does. How does this illusion take place and what is the solution? How can we cease seeing the snake to become aware of the rope?

To understand this problem, consider the phenomenon of dream, which though seen, has no real existence. It is not only what is seen, namely, the dream, that is unreal, but also its seer. The unreal is that which is seen only for a limited period, and not on a permanent basis. And that, in truth, is no existence, but only a passing appearance like that of a snake in a rope.

The chief characteristic of a dream is that both the dream and its seer, the dreaming entity, appear together when the dream begins, and when it ends, both disappear simultaneously as they had appeared earlier. The knowledge that the dream is unreal is gained only when it is over, on awareness of the waking state. This knowledge can never come to the unreal entity that sees the dream. It dawns only in the waking state when the unreal entity that sees the dream ceases to be. For, how can the unreal entity, which does not itself exist but is a mere passing appearance, gain knowledge, during its lifetime, of the fact that the dream world, of which it itself is a part, is unreal? *It is the privilege only of the awakened entity to possess this knowledge.*

Exactly similar to this is the situation in the waking state. As in the dream state, both the dreaming entity and its dream world are, in reality, nothing but just the projection of an individual mind, so in the waking state, both the seer — the mortal individual — and the seen, i.e., the world at large, are, in reality, nothing but the projection of the cosmic mind. In fact, from the point of view of Ma, the Supreme Transcendental Reality, which alone IS, the world with all its multifarious manifestation is nothing but a dream. Says Ma, "What is perceived in this world is in the nature of a dream, similar to what one sees in dreams. The only difference is that the former takes place in the waking state, and the latter during sleep."¹

Now the knowledge about the waking mortal entity is not possible as long as the dream is there,

but is gained only when the dream ceases to be along with the disappearance of the dreaming entity. Similarly, the knowledge of Ma — our immortal Self — who alone IS, cannot be had so long as the cosmic dream continues, but can be gained only when that dream ceases to be along with the disappearance of its seer — the mortal entity — the mentally imagined separate concrete individual identifying itself in ignorance with an individual body and mind apart from others. As the individual dream involving ignorance of the waking state ends on waking, so *the cosmic dream based on ignorance of the truth of the Supreme Reality ends on awakening at the absolute plane.*

As the dreaming entity continuously suffers from ignorance of the knowledge about the normal individual conscious self in the waking state and his world, so does this self suffer from ignorance of the knowledge of Ma, the superconscious immortal Self — our permanent true nature. Such is the reasoning regarding the nature and problem of ignorance, and it does appear logical too. But the question is: are all these statements really valid without any flaw whatsoever? What is the justification, for instance, in assuming that an individual in the waking state is as unreal as a dreaming entity in the dream world?

The Three States

In the above discussion, it was assumed that it is only when the individual ego-centric seeker of Self-knowledge ceases to be that there can be aware-

ness of Ma — the self-effulgent eternal Reality — who alone knows Itself and can never be known by any individual in the waking state. This assumption was made on the analogy that no knowledge about the individual mortal conscious self of the waking state can be had before the dreaming entity ceases to be. Now this assumption can be accepted only if firstly, it can be established that our normal individual consciousness too, as we experience it in the waking state is an impermanent entity — as unreal as the dreaming entity which ceases to be on waking. And secondly, that there does exist an eternal entity which is revealed when the impermanent individual personality ceases to be altogether, like the revelation of the waking individual on the disappearance of the dreaming entity.

As the following facts will reveal, the individual consciousness as a separate entity is, indeed, unreal, because it keeps on changing in the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. To begin with, the waking ego is the result of identification with the individual body and mind, and comes into temporary existence simultaneously with our everyday world on waking. In the dream state, the waking ego ceases to be, and there is, then, no awareness either of the body or of the world. The individual consciousness that experiences the dream world is altogether different, both the seer and the seen being the creation of an individual mind. Again, when we enter the deep sleep state, there, the mind also ceases to be along with its created world of dream and the dreaming ego. The individual conscious-

ness in that state is just one homogeneous mass of bodiless and mindless, pure undifferentiated ignorance, without any external world at all—neither the concrete one experienced during the waking state nor the insubstantial seen during the dream state.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the waker or the individual consciousness in the waking state called *Vaishvanar*, does not exist in the other two states of dream and deep sleep. Similarly, the consciousness in the dream state, known as *Taijasa*, is not present during the two other states of waking and deep sleep. And finally, *Pragna*—the consciousness in the deep sleep state—is not found during the other two states. Each of these three has different characteristics too. *Vaishvanar* is the outer consciousness of the waking state, and its *bhog* (enjoyment) is gross. *Taijasa* is inner consciousness during the dream state, and its *bhog* is subtle, while *Pragna* is the homogeneous consciousness with its *bhog* of happiness in the deep sleep state.

To visualize still more vividly the fact that in each of these three states, an altogether different individual consciousness is singly there, let us consider the case of a dreamer who sees a lion in his dream. Now this lion is only a creation of mind, and if *Vaishvanar*—the individual consciousness of the waking state—were then present during the dream, there would be no fear of the lion. On the contrary, *Vaishvanar* would laugh and exclaim, “O, it is only a form created by my

imagination—the lion is not real !” But *Vaishvanar* is not there, and in its place, *Taijasa*, being itself a creature of the dream, naturally takes the dream as real and becomes mortally afraid of it, just as the waker is afraid of the lion in our work-a-day world, of which the waker is a part.

It is thus very clear that in each of the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, there is only one particular consciousness alone, and it is different from the other two. But, while this is always so, how do we explain the fact of everyday experience that after waking, when *Taijasa*, who alone had seen and experienced the dream is not there, *Vaishvanar*, who was not present when the dream was being seen and was, therefore, not an eye-witness of the same, describes the dream ? Or, again, the happiness in the deep sleep state is experienced by *Pragna*, and yet the fact of that experience is reported by *Vaishvanar*, the waking consciousness, which is always absent in that state because there is no awareness then, which is the characteristic of *Vaishvanar*. How does all this happen ?

Ma—Our Atma, the One Real Self

These are riddles only so long as our view is superficial, for although the three unreal states of consciousness are different, Ma—our *Atma*, the One Real Self is ever present. There is the light of this *Atma*, which shines through the mind and the senses and is the eternal witness of everything in all the three states. “This is super-consciousness.

It is sometimes called *turiya*. Our experience generally covers three states of consciousness—*jagrat* or waking, *svapna* or dreaming, and *susupti* or deep sleep. As distinct from these, there is the fourth state the *turiya*. It is not exactly a 'state' like the other three. It is a form of transcendental consciousness of which the other three states are partial manifestations. In that state the soul realizes that it is a part of the infinite Spirit."^a

In the waking state, besides awareness, there is the flow of thought. Against this, both these are absent in deep sleep. Because *turiya* is characterized by absence of thought in full awareness, it is sometimes known as wakeful sleep or sleeping wakefulness.

The discussion makes it plain that to experience *turiya* or attain Self-realization, one has to reach the thought-free condition during the waking state of awareness. Hence the vital role of *japa* and meditation for gaining one pointedness leading to the elimination or stilling of mind.

The sense of ego is a product of illusion—a divine deception of a superimposed illusory creation, born of the false identification, in ignorance, with an individual body-mind equipment, and this lasts only so long as there is ignorance of the truth of transcendental oneness of *Atma*.

Beyond Intellectual Understanding

Intellectual understanding (*Paroksha jnana*) of how there is only Ma and Ma alone all the time as discussed above, though most essential for the

earnest seeker, is still the first step. To go beyond this essential stage to that of direct experience (*Aparoksha Anubhuti*), resulting naturally in an everlasting choiceless awareness of the truth that there is only Ma and Ma alone, is the perfect attainment, as Bhaiji had experienced just before giving up his physical body as stated earlier.

Now, Ma does not only say, "We are all one *Atma*". In order to realize this, She adds, "This is what we have to bear in mind". And to ensure that this is being done — that the thought 'I am the *Atma*' has been fixed in the mind — She concludes Her utterance, as mentioned earlier, with the directive, "Preserve a spirit of calm and friendliness." To be able to do this in actual practice with one and all without exception all the time is possible only when we really cease to be an individual, or cease to identify ourselves totally with body and mind, by eliminating altogether the powerfully entrenched ego-sense.

But how can an individual, who constitutes the ego, eliminate himself unless he commits suicide. And it is, indeed, this that has to be done effectively. Since it is the mind — the unceasing flow of thought — which is the chief characteristic of a separate illusory entity, it is its elimination which is effective suicide. The physical body is inert ; its presence is no obstacle in gaining Self-knowledge. What is required is the destruction of *samskaras*, which cannot be achieved by eliminating the physical body. On the contrary, this action would make matters far worse, as it would result in horrible suffering —

the fruit of the most heinous sin of taking one's life. But how is the mind to be eliminated ?

This problem was the topic of conversation during a highly inspiring interview which two Dutch ladies, both Jungian Psychologists, had when they came for Mataji's *darshan* during Her stay at Vrindaban in early 1957.*

Question : "Psychologists cure patients by talking to them. With you it seems that your emanation cures people even without words. It is our endeavour to help people. What is the most essential thing we should do for them ?"

Mataji : "Who can be said to be normal in this world ? Everyone appears to be mad after one thing or another ; some after money, some after beauty, some after music, others after their children and so forth — nobody is really quite balanced."

Question : "What then is the remedy ?"

Mataji : "Just as one does not water the leaves of a tree but its roots, so also one has to grapple with man's disease at its root. Man's root lies in the brain. *Therefore, the remedy for all ills is to still the mind.* When man's mind has been stilled, all will be well with him both physically and psychologically."

Question : "How does the mind become still ?"

Mataji : "By treading the path that leads to the realization of 'Who am I ?' Your body that was young and is now old with its greying hair and its teeth falling out, does not last for ever. It is not the real 'I'. Therefore, man has to find out who he really is. When he tries to do this, his mind

will be supplied with the right nourishment that will calm it. The right sustenance for the mind cannot be had from anything that is of this world and hence perishable, but solely from that which is Eternal. *The taste (rasa) of the Eternal will still the mind.*

“The universe was created out of joy and this is why you find joy in the fleeting things of the world. Without joy, life is an ordeal. You must try to attain to that great joy which has brought forth the world.”

So the mind is stilled or eliminated by engaging in the quest for Self-knowledge. For the successful outcome of this effort, Ma gives a clear directive as follows, which can be faithfully carried out by one who is a truly one-pointed aspirant for truth with keen interest in undoing the knots of the ego.

(To be continued)

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The contemporaries of Sri Krishna Chaitanya and their successors

R. K. Banerjee

Sri Sanatan Goswami

Sri Sanatan Goswami was the eldest of the sons born to Sri Kumardeb, descended from the Bharadwaj Gotra Yajurvedi Brahmin family who had migrated from Karnataka to the north.

The approximate date of his birth is 1485 A. D., and he passed away in Vrindabandham in 1554 A. D. on Ashar Purnima day (Guru Purnima).

In Gaura-Ganoddeshdwipika, he is said to be an incarnation of Rati or Labanga Manjari. Because of his vast knowledge and learning his fame spread at a young age and he found favour in the court of Hussain Shah, the then ruler of Bengal, who engaged him as his Chief Secretary—Sakar Mallick.

His first meeting with Sri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu took place at Ramkeli, during Mahaprabhu's visit there enroute to Vrindaban, destined to be abandoned for the time being.

Sanatan had been brought up from childhood by being taught the Srimad Bhagvata, of which he was very fond, so his love for Sri Krishna was multiplied in meeting Mahaprabhu. There and then, together with his younger brother Sri Rupa, he was instructed to carry out a full Purascharan in

Krishna mantra (initiation into daily ritual worship with fasting).

At Ramkeli it was Sanatan, with his extensive worldly knowledge, who warned Mahaprabhu of the folly of proceeding to Vrindaban surrounded by such a large band of devotees, so the journey to Vrindaban was abandoned for the time being by Sri Nityananda, who diverted Mahaprabhu's route towards Shantipur, along the Ganga.

After the fateful meeting with Mahaprabhu both the brothers wished to renounce working any longer in court for gain or profit. Sri Rupa managed to escape sooner within a short time, but Sanatan was prevented from doing so by Hussain Shah who imprisoned him in jail, particularly during his absence to fight the Orissa wars.

But in the ruler's absence, Sanatan managed to bribe the jailor into releasing him, and finally he left the jail, accompanied by his servant Ishan, who unfortunately managed to smuggle some Gold Mohurs within his person in spite of Sanatan's strict instructions to the contrary.

After some adventures with dacoits on the way during which Sanatan foreshook Ishan and his money, he found his way to Varanasi, where Sri Mahaprabhu was deliberately and patiently awaiting his arrival, having instructed and guided Sri Rupa beforehand to proceed to Vrindaban.

Sanatan met Sri Chaitanya at Varanasi in 1515 A. D. when the later was staying at the house of Chandrasekhar Acharya.

Sri Chaitanya put Sanatan through an intensive course of instruction in the Vaishnav Shastras for two months, explaining to him thoroughly all about Sri Krishna's Swarup, Bhakti Tattwa, and Sadhan Tattwa.

Finally Sri Mahaprabhu enjoined on Sanatan the following four duties :—

1. To preach Bhakti-Tattwa.
2. To discover the glory of the old Tirthas in Braja Mandal.
3. To establish Krishna & Radha Vighras and start their worship.
4. To write and propagate the Vaishnav Shastras.

After arriving at Vrindaban and establishing his seat there, Sanatan was desirous of visiting Mahaprabhu at Nilachal. So he proceeded there along the Jharkhand route (more or less the present grand Chord line) through the jungles on foot. During the journey, Sanatan had to undergo incredible hardships, and was covered with sores and ulcers when he finally arrived at Puri.

In his extreme humility he did not wish to pollute the presence of Mahaprabhu with his unclean state, and took up his residence with Thakur Haridas.

But Mahaprabhu embraced him closely to his bosom covered as he was with purpurating sores, cured him, and kept him for a year at Nilachal for further instruction under Gadadhar Pandit, Jagadananda Pandit and Swarup-Damodar.

Sanatan eventually returned to Vrindaban, fully equipped for his destined path, and founded the

temple of Sri Madanmohan on the heights of Dwadas-Aditya Tila on the banks of the Jamuna.

The story of the temple is very interesting, and will be told hereafter.

But we must first recount here the story of a famous episode of renunciation by Sri Sanatan. Hearing of Sanatan's extraordinary powers, a poor Brahmin approached him for money, and in particular, the piece of precious stone with which Sanatan was supposed to turn all metal into Gold !

When Sanatan informed him he had chucked the stone away into the waters of the Jamuna as being of no use to him but that the Brahmin was welcome to it if he found it, the Brahmin first madly searched the length and breadth of the Jamuna banks, failing to discover the Sparshamani (Touch-stone). Eventually he came to his senses, and wondered why Sri Sanatan Prabhupad had not deemed it fit to retain it in his possession ! His subsequent thoughts have been immortalised by Sri Rabindra Nath in the exquisite rendering of his poem as follows :

“Je Dhane haiya Dhani, Maniye Manama Mani
Tahari Khamah, Magi Ami Natashire.”

“Oh lord, I beseech thee humbly with shaved head to give me a particle of the wealth you have acquired, as a result of which you have thought it fit to forsake even the riches represented by the touch-stone.”

This Brahmin eventually surrendered everything at the feet of Sri Sanatan and became his disciple.

When Akbar Badshah visited Vrindaban to meet the great Vaishnav saints living there, he was greatly impressed with Sanatan and promised to rebuild the river bank at the foot of the hillock on which the temple of Sri Madan Mohan stood, so that Sri Sanatan could have his daily bath in the Jamuna in comfort. But when, with this thought in mind, he personally went there to select a suitable site, he was astounded to behold exquisitely-built steps already existing there, studded with precious stones. Akbar then realised that there was nothing in his possession which Sri Sanatan could not match or exceed — had he wished to do so !

And so Akbar returned to Delhi a disillusioned and thoughtful Emperor.

The story of the founding of the Madan Mohan temple is very revealing. Sri Madan Mohan was one of the three deities, Sri Govinda, Gopinath and Madan Mohan, credited to have been fashioned under the personal supervision of Bajra, Sri Krishna's great-grandson and his mother Usha, who was then the only living person with personal knowledge of Sri Krishna's appearance.

In the years of ravage that followed, the Madan Mohan Vighraha seemed to have been lost sight of until it came into the possession of the Chaube family of Brahmins in Mathura, who had a number of sons, but looked upon Sri Madan Gopal as a special off-spring.

In fact Chaube's wife used to behold Madan Gopalji assume the form of a mischievous boy and play about with her own children !

When Sanatan arrived at Mathura on his way to Vrindaban from Varanasi, he stayed for a few nights with the Chaube family as their guest. One night Madan Mohanji appeared in a dream to Chaube's wife saying, 'I know you have cherished me very well for so many years, but now I have a longing to go farther afield back to Vrindaban with Sanatan, who is my old devotee'.

So willy-nilly, in spite of her natural inclinations the good Brahmin lady made over the Vighraha to Sanatan, who proceeded on his way to Vrindaban, carrying the image in a strong bag in his neck.

In due course Sanatan took up his abode on a hillock by the bank of the Jamuna, called Duradas Aditya Tila, and continued with his daily worship and Sadhana. He used to sling the bag containing the Vighraha round the branch of a big tree at night, under which he used to sleep. One night, Sri Madan Mohanji appeared to him in his sleep and said, "Sanatan, I am tired of living under a tree and being fed with your daily dry Roti without salt ! Build me a decent temple and prepare tastefully cooked Bhog for me." Sanatan replied "Thakur, I am a Sadhu, I have no means, so you must look after your needs yourself". So the Lord himself provided the way.

A rich Salt merchant with his laden boat was proceeding from Multan along the river to Delhi, when his boat got struck in the bank of the Jamuna below the Tila, and refused to budge any more. At night the Lord appeared to the merchant in his dream and said, "Don't worry, I will release your

boat provided you search along the shores for a resplendent Vaishnav Sadhu, who is engaged in worshipping me at the top of this Tila, and promise to build a proper temple for me according to his directions, so that my worship can be carried out in comfort in future.

And so it came about. The merchant fell at the feet of Sanatan, prayed that his boat be released, so that he would spend all the project from his trip towards building a temple.

It so happened that the merchant made a huge profit from his merchandise in Delhi, and on his way back he stopped at Vrindaban, and handed over sufficient funds to Sanatan to have the temple completed. The temple was opened in 1533 A. D. on the Sukla Dwitya Tithi of the month of Magh. The temple was destroyed by Aurangzeb and rebuilt in 1707 A. D. and finally a new temple was built in 1823.

Before Aurangzeb destroyed the temple, the Vighraha of Madanmohanji was taken away secretly by the Rajput princes to Jaipur in the first instance, together with the Vighrahas of Sri Govinda and Gopinath. Subsequently, when a prince for the Kingdom of Karauli married into the Jaipur family, Sri Madanmohanji's Vighraha was part of the dowry taken away to Karauli. Here Sri Madanmohanji is still being worshipped with full pomp and ceremony. The Karauli Raj family are all devotees of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, and Ma and her entourage have visited Karauli many times and enjoyed participating in the worship of Sri Madanmohanji there.

Sril Sanatan Goswami eventually entered into his Mahasamadhi worshipping his beloved Ista in the old temple, and is buried on the heights of the Dwadas Aditya Tila above the river bank.

He spent several years in a cave adjoining the lake at the foot of Gobordhan near Chakuleshwar Mahadevi's temple, where a big festival is held annually on Gurupurnima Day by the sevaitis of the adjoining Mahaprabhu temple to celebrate Sril Sanatans death anniversary.

(To be continued)

CORRIGENDA

In our obituary on Sasadhar Bhattacharya in the July issue, it was inadvertently mentioned that he was the nephew of the late Mahesh Bhattacharya.

In fact Sasadhar Bhattacharya was the *grand* nephew of the late Mahesh Bhattacharya.

The error is regretted.

Mahāmahopādhyāya
Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj
BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS
(1887-1976)

Mahāmahopādhyāya Pandit Gopināth Kavirāj, who has become a legendary figure in the field of Indological studies, was born in a pious Bengali Brahmin family on 7th September, 1887 in the house of his maternal uncle in a well-known village, known as Dhamrai, in the District of Dacca, now in Bangla Desh.

Being a posthumous child, after having passed through many vicissitudes in his boyhood, he passed his Entrance examination from Dacca, I. A. (Intermediate) and B. A. from Maharaja's College, Jaipur all with academic distinctions. The final phase of his education started at Varanasi in 1910 under the loving care and guidance of Dr. Arthur Venis, the then Principal of the famous Government Sanskrit College and got the M. A. degree in Sanskrit from the University of Allahabad in 1913, standing first in order of merit.

At the instance of Dr. Venis he was soon appointed Librarian of the famous Saraswati Bhavan Library of the Government Sanskrit College and whole-heartedly started his career of research. He declined to accept the Professorship offered to him even by Late Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee of the

Calcutta University and also did not accept the offer of the coveted post of Professorship in the Deptt. of Oriental Studies, London University. From now on for the next 62 years Mahāmahopādhyāya Pt. Gopinath Kaviraj remained uninterruptedly and deeply engrossed in self-less dissemination of knowledge till he left his body on 12th June, 1976 in the holy city of Varanasi itself.

He symbolised the true Indian spirit of selfless devotion to knowledge and maintained and upheld the noblest tradition of scholarship till his last days. As the Librarian of the Saraswati Bhavan he delved deep into the so far unexplored wealth of learning and edited and got published about seventy-two books under the Saraswati Bhavan Text and Studies Series, which opened for all a new horizon in the field of Indological studies and research. He discovered in most of his studies completely new meanings and shed new light not only on different branches of philosophy, like Sāmkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaisesika, Vedānta, Mimāmsā, Tantra etc. but also on Ancient Indian History, Epigraphy, Kashmir Saivism, Buddhism, Jainism and so on, which are considered to be the invaluable guide to academic and spiritual research for generations to come.

Mahāmahopādhyāya Pt. Gopinath Kaviraj was indeed an institution in himself. There was not a single branch of Philosophy, Indian or Western, which he had not completely mastered. He had also a profound knowledge and deep insight into Christian mysticism and Sufism as well.

For 23 years he served the Government Sanskrit College, Varanasi first as Librarian and subsequently as Principal, till he voluntarily retired in 1937 in order to devote himself fully in his life-long pursuit of spiritual studies and intense sadhana under the guidance of his Guru, the great Yogi Paramahansa Swami Viśuddhānandaji of Varanasi.

In due recognition of his invaluable services in the field of scholarship, the Government of India conferred upon him the title of Mahāmahopādhyāya in 1934, Coronation Medal in 1937 and the title of 'Padmavibhūṣaṇa' in 1964. Many an Indian University honoured itself by bestowing upon the great personality the degree of Doctor of Literature [honoris causa]. Although he was completely disinterested in any kind of worldly distinction and personal honour, various certificates of honour and degrees were heaped upon him one after another by the Government and different well-known institutions.

Gifted through divine grace with a prodigious memory and rare prajñā, Pt. Gopinath Kaviraj became a name to conjure with. He was a rare combination not only of uncommon erudition but also of singular Yogic experience. To him knowledge stood for 'Parā Vidyā' (Supreme Knowledge) which has no other objective than the realisation of the Ultimate Reality. It is indeed after centuries that a great soul like him descends on this earth.

Ashram News

Kankhal

1. On June 17, the day of "Ganga-Dashahara" puja was performed in the temple of mother Ganges. A special puja was also arranged in Ma's Maha-Samadhi. Many of the ashramites also took bath in the holy ganges on the occasion. On the 21st of July — the Gurupurnima Day special pujas were performed in the Maha samadhi of Ma and in the temple of Swami Muktananda Giriji. Worship was also offered to Adi-Guru Sankaracharyaji and Vyasdevji. Devotees from Delhi, Dehra Dun and also from other areas assembled on the occasion, sang kirtan and partook of prasad served to them.

Between 15th and 19th of August, Jhulan-purnima was celebrated with due pomp and serenity. All assembled offered "rakhi" to Ma. On the midnight of Jhulan-Purnima day, Ma received HER self-initiation and to commemorate the occasion, the devotees sang kirtan and sat in meditation (Maha-nisha dhyam). On August 27 in the midnight—the birth of Lord Krishna was celebrated by the devotees through special puja and devotional songs for Bhagwan.

In September, at the initiative of Dr. Kumari Padma Misra, "Bhagwat Saptaha" was celebrated in the Ashram very nicely in the memory of his departed parents. Simultaneously, during the same

period "Bhagwat Saptaha" was arranged too, for the ashramite late Lakshmi Dar and a few others.

This year during the holy "Kumbha" held in Hardwar one ashramite Brahmachari and a few Brahmacharinis took sannyas. They were Brahmachari Sripati and Brahmacharinis named Shanta, Indira, Bindu, Ganga, Nilima and Shibani. After their initiation they were named Swami Achutananda, Swami Purnananda, Swami Dhyanananda, Swami Shantananda, Swami Gangananda, Swami Nilam Giri and Swami Satyananda respectively.

Varanasi

2. As in previous years, puja, arati and kirtan were arranged on the 17th of June which was the "Ganga-Dashahara" day. On the day of Guru-Purnima on July 21, special pujas and bhog were offered to Shree Shree Ma and Guru. The brahmacharinis of Kanyapeeth performed Ma's puja in the Chandi-Mandap and a Guru Puja was also done before Didima's statue in the adjacent Shiva temple of Gopal Mandir.

The well-known Bengali saint Srimat Swami Purnananda Puri accompanied by a band of his disciples visited the Ashram and sang kirtan on the day. The saint told the assembled that he had the privilege of having Ma's Darshan on many occasions.

On the "Tirodhan" tithi of Swami Muktananda Giriji Maharaj, a special puja was arranged for her followed by Sadhu-Bhandara. This year Jhulan-Ekadashi having collided with the indepen-

dence Day on August 15, the very young brahmacharinis of the Kanyapeeth celebrated the independence day and the "Jhulan" simultaneously on the day. Lord Krishna was put in a decorated hanging swing in the evening and the function continued for five days till the 19th of August. On the request of late Gangadi, Ma used to be present in Varanasi ashram during Jhulan and Janmastami and so to commemorate the occasion — the Ashram Brahmacharinis had staged special plays depicting the various aspects of Krishna Lila and others did active performances. On the Jhulan-Dwadashi day — a special puja and feeding of Sadhus were arranged in memory of late Swami Mounananda Parvat (Bhaiji). In the evening of the Jhulan-Purnima day on August 19, pujas were offered both in the Ananda-Jyoti Mandir of Gopalji and in the worship room in Kanyapeeth when "rakhis" were offered to the deities by all. To commemorate Ma's self-initiation, a mid-night collective meditation was performed on the day by all concerned. Early in the morning on the day — a senior Ashramite — Sri Ranadhir Dastidar took initiation in Sannyas. On August 27, in the mid-night, the birth of Purushottam Lord Krishna was celebrated amidst chantings of vedpath and ringing of conch-shell by the ashramite Brahmacharinis. During the night, pujas were offered to Gopalji in the temple and also to Ma, Narayanji and Ma Annapurna in the Annapurna temple. On the following day, the young girls of Kanyapeeth staged Nandotsab. On 31st August—"Sanskrit day" as announced by the Govt. of India was observed by the Kanyapeeth girls who held a Cultural function on the day. The function was graced by the well-known scholar of Varanasi—Pandit Pattabhram Shastri and Doctor Vidya Nivas Misra of Kashi Vidyapeeth as president and chief guest respectively. Dr. Misra—in his speech particularly praised the girls for their correct pronunciation of

Sanskrit which was rather seldom these days elsewhere. On September 8, the ashram also celebrated the birthday of Late Maha-Mahopadhyaya Gopinath Kaviraj on the occasion of his birthday centenary celebration this year.

Ranchi

3. Gurupurnima was observed with due serenity and devotion through chanting of Geeta, Chandi and devotional songs. Swami Achutananda talked on Ma and about 300 devotees who assembled were entertained with prasad. On the Jhulan-Purnima day, puja, arati and kirtan were offered in Gopal Mandir and all present partook of prasad. Arrangement is underway now to hold the Durga-puja in the ashram in a befitting manner. On every 1st Sunday of the month, Akhand Ramnam Kirtan is also held in the ashram.

Agarpara

4. On the 21st of July — the Guru Purnima day, devotees in good number started arriving right from the morning and special pujas were offered to Shree Shree Ma, Baba Bholanath, Lord Mahadeb, Radha Krishnaji, Nitai-Gour and Giriji. Many also received their initiation on the day from Swami Chinmoyanandaji Maharaj. After puja, puspanjali and kirtan nearly 1000 devotees were entertained in the day. A satsang was also held in the afternoon. Jhulan, Janmastami were also celebrated in a befitting way and the devotees present were offered prasad as usual.

Preparation is presently going on for the ensuing Durga-Puja in the Ashram where Lakshmi-puja and Kali-puja are also held regularly every year with due pomp & devotion.

Obituary

I. Shibendra Nath Ghosh

We regret to report the passing away of a veteran devotee of Ma, Sri Shibendra Nath Ghosh, in Calcutta, at the age of 89, after a brief illness, patiently borne.

Although a disciple of one of Sri Bijoy Krishna Goswami's direct initiates, he was a close associate of the senior devotees who surrounded Ma in her early days at Delhi, Simla and Meerut. He was known for his extraordinary response to kirtan whenever it rose to a crescendo, when he used to exhibit all the signs that are laid down as belonging to the highest form of Bhakti in the Srimad Bhagavata or Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita.

After retiring from Government service in Delhi, he moved to Calcutta where he lived with his only daughter amongst other places at Tollygunge, Behala, and finally at Golf green.

In Calcutta he was associated with Ma from her days at Ekdalia Ashram in Ballygunge, before the Agarpara Ashram came into being.

He wrote a number of books on his close relationship with Ma and was a regular contributor to the Bengali Ananda-Varta and other religious publications such as Mandir, Shivam, etc.

One of his best books on devotional literature was his masterly publication in Bengali, "Why do Goswamiji's (Sri Bijoy Krishna's) disciples reach such great heights?"

He was a regular visitor to the various Nam Yagnas held in the houses of S. Calcutta devotees, and only lately he used to be accompanied by a close friend while negotiating trams and buses. His knowledge of the Bhagavata and Vaishnav literature was profound.

He passed away after having lived a long and ideal life of a Bhakta who had renounced everything at the feet of his Ista, and never compromised with anything that went against his inner convictions, attained after long and mature Sadhana.

II. With a heavy heart we inform you about untimely passing away of Sri Gopal Ganguly, our beloved Gopalda, on 2nd September '86 at 7-10 a.m. at his residence in Club Road, Ranchi. Gopalda was one of those devotees of Ma who was very close to her but always maintained a distance due to his innate humility. He was an indefatigable worker, an ardent and extremely devoted *Matri-santan* and an affectionate and always helping elder brother. His devotion to the cause of Matri-ashram was limitless and his loss is irrefairable not only to the Ashram but personally to many of us.

We all pray to Ma for eternal peace and rest of the departed soul at her lotus-feet and the greatest tribute that can be offered to Gopalda is to follow the example of his complete dedication to the cause of human good, human society and human relations.

We extend our heartfell condolence and sympathy to Mrs. Bula Ganguly and bereaved family.

III. It is a matter of deep sorrow for us to announce the deaths of the following members during the last quarter viz :

1. Sri Amit Bhattacharya — The Asst. Secretary of Dehra Dun Ashram.

2. Mr. Sabharwal — an old and ardent devotee of Ma and husband of Sm. Shanti Sabharwal — President of our Ashrams at Dehra Dun.

3. Sm. Lakshmi Tankha — a very old devotee and associate of Ma.

4. Sri Shiben Ghosh — an old devotee and also a regular article-writer in our quarterly — Ananda Varta.

5. Sri Gopal Ganguly — a sincere worker of our Ranchi Ashram.

6. Maharaja Jogendra Sen of Mandi — one of the oldest devotees of Ma.

We sincerely condole their losses and extend our heart-felt sympathies to the members of their bereaved families. We pray to Ma for their eternal peace.

7. In Mata Anandamayee Hospital, Varanasi, Swami Hari-Priyananda (Chhanadi) also breathed her last after a prolonged illness. She proved to be an able Store-in-Charge during the "Savitri-Maha-Yagna" performed in Varanasi Ashram in late forties under the direct inspiration and guidance of Ma. Let her soul be in eternal peace.

The activity of the mind that distracts man and takes him away from the remembrance of God is called wrong thinking. Endeavour to cultivate whatever will prevent your mind from harbouring that type of thought.

All your burdens are borne by God. Be convinced of this and ever try to abide in sincerity and cheerfulness.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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