

The ONE who is the Eternal, the Atman,  
 He Himself is the traveller on the path to Immortality,  
 He is all in all, He alone is.

## MATRI VANI

( *Replies to letters on various subjects from different people at different times.* )

42.

Accepting all conditions of life—whatever they be—as His gift, abide in fortitude and do service.

43.

Endeavour to keep your thought centred at all times on the divine Name or Form that appeals to you most. Let your mind be turned exclusively towards God — then, and then only, may you hope for peace.

44.

How can a man who is harbouring thoughts of suicide expect to become a Sannyasi ? The idea of suicide does not even enter the mind of those who consider themselves candidates for Sannyasa. A spirit of extreme self-denial and renunciation is the attitude that affords the greatest aid towards this exalted state. Vow to be truthful in speech and refrain from letter-writing. Do not talk to women nor allow your gaze to rest on them.

45.

To live in the joy that springs from the mind's constant occupation with things divine is man's duty. Thinking of anything other than God is what creates sorrow. Be it *Mantra Japa*, be it meditation, worship, the perusal of Sacred Texts, the simple awareness of God or a like device, be it Kirtan or religious music — all these are different modes of the Divine Presence. One should always remain engaged in one of them, in fact make it a point never to be without Him. Bear this in mind ! This is what this little child requests from Her friends and also from Her fathers and mothers.\*

---

\* Mataji often speaks of Herself as a little child and calls all children Her 'friends' and adults 'father' or 'mother'.

46.

It is by seeking to know oneself that the Great Mother of all may be found.

47.

God's holy Name is in itself the rite for exorcising undesirable influences. In the presence of God's Name ghosts and evil spirits cannot exist.

48.

Life's journey is bound to proceed inevitably in the manner you describe. Search in every home and see how many people can be found who have never known bereavement. This is why the one and only way out of the misery is the path toward Self-realization.

49.

A person who does not for the love of God and with a cheerful heart discharge himself of whatever responsibility that may fall to his lot at any time, will find life excessively burdensome and never be able to accomplish anything. Man's duty—more especially for those who have made the Supreme Quest their one and only aim — is to work joyfully for the uplift of the world, with the conviction that all service is His service. Work done in such a spirit helps to purify the mind and heart.

50.

Write to him that his condition very often indeed occupies this body's *Kheyal*.\* He himself, by his own effort of will must become strong-minded and drop his negative attitude, which makes him imagine that he cannot and will never be able to succeed. On the contrary he must be determined that it will be possible, that achievement will most certainly be his. He should say to himself: "In whatever condition it pleases God to keep me, to that I resign myself, surrendering to Him whose creature I am, whose body this is." That is all. With perfect calm and tranquillity he should pass most of his time lying straight on his back in what is called the "dead pose" (*Shavasana*) and silently repeat his Mantra in rhythm with his breathing. *There is only*

---

\* Ordinarily this phrase would be translated by "occupies my mind." However it would be incorrect to use the word 'mind' when referring to Mataji. *Kheyal*=Free Will (divine) expressing Itself spontaneously.

one Brahman without a second'—this is what he has to realize. Write to him in plain language that for him there is no need of an intermediary.

51.

Mataji said : Write to him, to tell the truth, some people undoubtedly do approach this body in quest of Reality ; but very many come to get their desires and longings fulfilled.

Although he has had such unmistakable proof of what is the true nature of the world, his heart is still in it ? At this juncture he should try his utmost to engage himself solely in doing service, regarding whatever he does as service to the Lord. Ask him, at all costs to make a resolute effort against letting his mind become entangled in anything pertaining to this ocean of sorrow. It is his attachment to the world which has brought such deep distress to the unfortunate man. Nothing but ignorance is at the root of it all. He should continue to give news of himself to this body in any way he is able, for he has no one to whom he can confide his troubles and afflictions, which—one and all—are but the fruits of his past actions.

By sorrow does the Lord dispel sorrow and by adversity does He destroy adversity. When this is done He sends no more suffering — this must be borne in mind at all times.

In very truth the Eternal's offspring must focus their thoughts on Him. Divorced from God there cannot be even a prospect of peace—never, never, never. By abiding in God man will find peace, the veil be rent, and the Dispeller of Sorrow stand revealed. He alone is the conqueror of evil. He is yours, the sole treasure of the human heart.

52.

They imagine this body to be far away, but actually it is always very, very near. How could it possibly leave anyone ? The question of distance arises solely from *their* point of view. Whenever they can get a holiday let them come and meet this body.

No matter what work one undertakes it should be done well. If one cultivates the habit of doing everything well, there is fair promise of one's doing likewise also on the spiritual path. The action is He and the doer of the action is He and no other. At all events one should make an attempt to develop this attitude of mind. Truth — in the presence of which illusion is recognized as illusion—Truth, THAT which IS, has to be made one's own.

## MATAJI'S AMARA VANI

( 11 )

From Mataji one can never get a definite decision on any problem. That is why I wondered whether it was any use, writing down all Her utterances? I asked Mataji about it. She replied :

*Mataji* : At least you have understood that there is a state where problems are no longer settled in any particular way. In the course of your life have you not after careful consideration come to a decision on many questions? But now you will have to realize that no solution can solve any problem finally ; in other words, you will have to go beyond certainty and uncertainty. The resolution of a problem arrived at by the mind must of necessity be from a particular side ; consequently there will be room for contradiction, since your solution represents but one aspect. What then have you actually solved? A complete synthesis of all the conflicting views can be attained through a number of distinctly separate avenues of approach. Again you will see that there is a place where lies the ultimate solution of the problems of all shades of opinion without the possibility of contradiction. What happens then? Whether a question be raised regarding a solved or unsolved problem, whether one may say "yes" or "no"—everything is THAT.

---

( 12 )

One evening during Mataji's stay at Solan in 1948, Srimati Rameshwari Nehru, the wife of one of Pandit Jawaharlal's cousins came for Mataji's Darshan. She asked the following questions :

Does the capacity to meditate come by practice in this life or is it an aptitude acquired in former births?

*Mataji* : It may be the result of either of the two or of both combined. Meditation should be practised every day of one's life. Look, what is there in this world? Absolutely nothing that is lasting ; therefore direct your longing towards the Eternal. Pray that the work done through you, His

instrument, may be pure. In every action remember Him. The purer your thinking the finer will be your work. In this world you get a thing and by to-morrow it may be gone. This is why your life should be spent in a spirit of service : feel that the Lord is accepting service from you through whatever you do. If you desire peace you must cherish the thought of Him.

*Question* : When will there be peace on earth ?

*Mataji* : Well, the present state of affairs is quite the other way ; things happen as they are destined to be.

*Question* : When will this state of unrest come to an end ?

*Mataji* : The fact that many of you feel concerned about it and ask : "When will it end ?" is also one of the ways of His Self-manifestation.

The world — *Jagat*\* — means ceaseless movement and obviously there can be no rest in movement. How could there be peace in perpetual coming and going ? Peace reigns where no coming exists and no going, no melting and no burning. Reverse your course and advance towards Him — then there will be hope of peace.

By your *japa* and meditation those who are in contact with you will also benefit through the helpful influence of your presence. In order to develop a taste for meditation you have to make a deliberate and sustained effort, just as children have to be made to sit and study, be it by persuasion or coercion. By taking medicine or having injections a patient gets well ; even if you do not feel inclined to meditate conquer your reluctance and make an attempt. The habit of countless lives is pulling you in the opposite direction and making it difficult for you : persevere in spite of it. By your tenacity you will gain strength and be moulded, that is to say you will develop the capability for doing *sadhana*. Make up your mind that however arduous the task, it will have to be accomplished. Recognition and fame last for a short time only, they do not accompany you when you leave this world. If your thought does not naturally turn towards the Eternal, fix it there by an effort of will. Some severe blow of fate will drive you towards God. This will be but an expression of His Mercy ; however painful, it is by such blows that one learns one's lesson.

\* The word "*jagat*" is derived from the root *gam* = to go.

The obstinacy of the mind must be checked with resoluteness. Whether the mind co-operates or not, you must be adamant in your determination to do a certain amount of practice without fail — simply because *Sadhana* is man's real work. For so long you have been accustomed to perform actions that fetter, therefore from sheer force of habit you feel the urge to bind yourself by activity again and again. But if you try hard for some time you will realize that you are caught in your work and that the more you engage in *Sadhana* the quicker will be your advance.

As to self-surrender by constantly endeavouring to live a life of self-dedication it will come about one day. What does self-surrender mean if not to surrender to one's very own Self!

Keep in mind what this little daughter\* of yours is asking you to do!

( 13 )

One day at Solan in 1948 Sri Kantibhai Munshaw of Ahmedabad told Mataji about a man who without stirring from his seat would produce all sorts of articles like flowers, garlands, sweets etc. They just appeared in his hands. In this connection Mataji then related an incident that had taken place in Dacca many years ago.

*Mataji* : What an incredible number of similar incidents has this body not witnessed! As a rule this body makes no comments upon such things, but on that particular occasion something rather strange somehow took place. When a certain lady came I felt like lying down across her lap. As I did so I distinctly noticed that a bundle containing various articles was tied in the lady's sari in the region of her stomach. Everyone began to request her to show them some objects that would come to her by supernatural means, since many had seen her do this before. People had heard it said that even the *Prasad* from the Kali temple in Dakshineshwar would of its own accord appear in her hands. This body said: "Even before it arrives from there I could disclose it, but would you like me to?" The lady said: "Yes, of course!" The question was repeated several times and every time she as well as her devotees replied: "Yes, please!" This is how it all came about. Even so this body did not take anything out with its own hands—only what was fated to happen, happened spontaneously. Afterwards one of

\* Mataji often refers to Herself in this manner.

the lady's devotees came to this body and inquired : "Ma, you never put anyone to shame and certainly not in public. Why then did you do so in this case ?" I replied : "Yes, as you know this body does not as a rule interfere with anyone's natural ways. Yet whether it concerns the most ordinary or the most extraordinary event — style it as you please —, what holds good for this body to this day and has until now always been so, is simply this : Whatever is meant to come about just happens spontaneously. When that lady arrived this body welcomed her with great respect, offering her its own *asana* and putting a garland round her neck. How very pleased everyone felt ! Every form, every expression is He and He alone. That day this body did not disclose anything. But the lady of her own free will declared : "I shall come again to-morrow !" You all heard it, did you not ? What occurred then was His way of revealing Himself. Tell me, what is there to do ? By whatever method He may choose to teach anyone at any time — this body has no desire of its own — only whatever comes to pass.

When ( in the early days ) this body used to do *Pranam* to every creature, whether an insect, a spider, a dog or a cat, it did so with the full consciousness of the presence of the Supreme Being in everything.

'Whatever comes to pass' — there is something else to be said in this connexion. To base one's life on deception can never be for one's good. He who deceives will himself be deceived. On the other hand falsehood may also be converted into truth. Someone may deliberately play false, yet through his disciple's sincerity the truth may actually be brought to light. As a result the disciple excels the Guru. The resolve to find the truth will inevitably lead to its revelation. I told that lady's devotee, "how many times did I ask you all : 'Shall I disclose it ?' And without exception you kept on begging me to do so. Therefore — what more can be said ?"

What a great variety of similar incidents occur ! Listen to the story of a young woman who under the slightest provocation would enter into 'Samadhi'—so people believed. She appeared to become lifeless, her hands and feet turning cold. When she came to this body she also went into this strange state which people mistook for *Samadhi*. The girl's mother was called 'grandmother' by this body, both were of the same village. She said to me : "Grand-daughter, please try and help this girl !" I quite understood what was the matter with the young woman, so I whispered into her ear ; "You

will very soon receive a letter from your husband," whereupon the girl recovered in no time. The news of the cure spread far and wide, people felt greatly mystified, wondering what powerful *Mantra* Mataji had whispered into the girl's ear! Indeed, under the circumstances it *was* the appropriate *Mantra* for her. Her condition was solely due to worrying about her husband's prolonged silence.

Then again there was a young man, into what supernormal states he used to go, how many kinds of visions he had! He would for example do *Pranam* and remain in that posture for hours together without raising his head, tears streaming down his cheeks. He said he saw and heard Sri Krishna teaching Arjuna, as described in the *Gita*, and that he had many other visions and auditory experiences of the kind. This body told him that if a *Sadhaka* could not maintain firm control over his mind, he would be liable to see and hear many things, both illusory and genuine all mixed up. He might even fall a victim to the influence of some 'spirit' or power. Such occurrences, far from intensifying pure Divine aspiration, would rather hinder than otherwise. Moreover to see someone in a vision or to hear him address you, may well become a source of self-satisfaction or egotistic enjoyment. To lose control over oneself is not desirable. In the search after Truth one must not allow oneself to be overpowered by anything, but watch carefully whatever phenomena may supervene, keeping fully conscious, wide awake, in fact retaining complete mastery over oneself. Loss of consciousness is never right.

The Lord Buddha is Himself the essence of Enlightenment. All partial manifestations of wisdom that come in the course of *Sadhana* culminate in Supreme Enlightenment ( *Bodha Swarupa* ). In a similar way Supreme Knowledge ( *Gyana Swarupa* ) or Supreme Love ( *Bhava Swarupa* ) may be attained. As there is a state of Supreme Self-Knowledge, likewise is there a state of perfection at the zenith of the path of love. There one finds the nectar of perfect Love identical with Supreme Knowledge. In this state there is no room for emotional excitement, indeed it would make it impossible for Supreme Love ( *Mahabhava* ) to shine forth. Be mindful of one thing: if when following a particular line of approach one does not attain to that which is the consummation of all *Sadhana*, namely the final Goal, it means that one has not entered the Stream. At the supreme summit of Love, which is *Mahabhava*, exuberance, excessive emotion and the like cannot

possibly occur. Emotional excitement and Supreme Love are not to be compared at all, they are totally different from one another.

While absorbed in meditation, whether one is conscious of the body or not, whether there be a sense of identification with the physical or not — in any case it is imperative to remain wide awake; unconsciousness must be strictly avoided. Some genuine perceptivity must be retained, whether one contemplates the Self as such or any particular form. What is the purpose of this type of meditation? It opens up one's being to the Light, to that which is Eternal. Suppose the body had been suffering from some pain or stiffness, — lo and behold after meditation it feels perfectly hale and hearty, with not a trace of fatigue or debility. It is as if a long period of time had elapsed in between, as if there had never been a question of any discomfort. This would be a good sign. But if tempted at the first touch of Bliss, to allow oneself to be drowned in it and later to declare: "Where I was I could not say, I do not know", — this is not desirable. As one becomes capable of real meditation and to the extent that one contacts Reality one discovers the ineffable joy that lies hidden even in all outer objects.

On the other hand when in the course of meditation one loses oneself as it were, lapsing into a kind of stupor and afterwards claims to have been steeped in intense bliss, this sort of bliss is a hindrance. If the life-force seems to have been in abeyance — just as one has a sense of great happiness after sound sleep — it indicates stagnation. It is a sign of attachment and this attachment stands in the way of true meditation, since one will be apt to revert to that state again and again; although from the standpoint of the world which is altogether different, it would seem a source of profound inward joy and therefore certainly an indication of spiritual progress. To be held up at any stage is obstructive, it simply means one has stopped advancing.

When engaging in meditation one should think of oneself as a purely spiritual being (*Chinmayi*) (without any touch of materiality), as Self-luminous, poised in the Bliss of the Self (*Atmaram*), and according to the Guru's instructions, try to concentrate on one's *Ishta* (the Beloved). The young man previously mentioned, (the one who used to have visions), was intelligent and therefore able to understand this sort of reasoning. As a result the spectacular experiences ceased and he attends now to his meditation and other spiritual exercises in a very quiet and unobtrusive manner.

The same evening when the conversation again reverted to *dhyana* (meditation) and *asana* (posture), Mataji said :

*Mataji* :—Look, if you spend hour after hour sitting in a certain posture, if you become wedded to that pose and are unable to meditate in any other, it shows that you are deriving enjoyment from the posture; this also constitutes an obstacle. When one first starts practising *japa* and meditation it is of course right to try and continue in the same position for as long as possible. But as one approaches perfection in these practices, the question as to how long one has remained in one posture does not arise; at any time and in any position lying, sitting, standing or leaning over to one side, as the case may be — one can no longer be deterred by anything from the contemplation of one's Ideal or the Beloved.

The first sign of progress comes when one feels ill at ease in any but a meditative pose. Nothing external interests one; the only thing that seems attractive is to be seated in one's favourite posture as long as may be and contemplate the Supreme Object of one's worship, plunged in a deep inner joy. This marks the beginning of single-mindedness and hence is a step in the right direction. Yet here great prominence is given to posture. If one stays in that position as long as the inclination lasts — confident that the Beloved can never do one harm, — and if one is able to remain fixed in it, then the posture becomes of overwhelming importance. This only shows that one is nearing perfection in the practice of *asana*. Rising, sitting down, walking, in fact any gesture taken up by the body is called an *asana*. It corresponds to the rhythm and the vibration of body and mind at any particular moment. Some aspirants can meditate only if seated in the pose indicated by the Guru or formulated in the *Shastras* and not otherwise. This is the way to proficiency in meditation. On the other hand someone may begin his practice while sitting in any ordinary position; nevertheless as soon as the state of *japa* or *dhyana* has been reached the body will spontaneously take up the most appropriate position, after the manner that belching happens involuntarily. As one's meditation grows more and more intense the postures correspondingly of themselves gain in perfection. When a little air is pumped into a tyre the tyre will be flabby; but when it is filled to capacity it remains completely stable in its own natural shape. Likewise when real meditation has been attained, the body feels light and free, and on

rising after meditation there is no fatigue of any kind, no pain, numbness or stiffness in one's limbs.

In true meditation Reality is contacted and just as the touch of fire leaves an impression, this contact also leaves its mark. In what way? Impediments fall away — they are either consumed by detachment from sense objects or molten by devotion to the Divine. Worldly things seem tedious, quite foreign to oneself; worldly talk loses all its appeal, becomes devoid of interest and at a further stage even painful. When a person's earthly possessions are lost or damaged the victim feels disturbed which gives evidence of the stranglehold that sense objects exercise over man's mind. This is what is called *granthi* — the knots constituting the I-ness. By meditation, *japa* and other spiritual practices, which vary according to each one's individual line of approach, these knots become loosened, discrimination is developed and one comes to discern the true nature of the world of sense perception. In the beginning one was enmeshed in it, struggling helplessly in its grip. As one becomes disentangled from it and gradually passes through various stages of opening oneself more and more to the Light, one comes to see that everything is contained in everything, that there is only One Self, the Lord of all, or that all are but the servants of the One Master. The form this realization takes depends on one's orientation. One knows by direct perception that as one exists so everyone else exists, then again that there is the One and nothing but the One, that nothing comes and nothing goes—yet also does come and go — there is no way of expressing all this in words. To the extent that one becomes estranged from the world of the senses one draws nearer to God.

When attaining to true meditation one's chosen posture no longer represents either an obstacle or a source of enjoyment; in other words it is quite impossible for one to feel able to meditate only in one particular pose and in no other. Whether one happens to sit straight or crooked, the right posture will form of itself pulling the body into the proper position. Again there are occasions when one becomes entirely independent of the physical pose: in whatever attitude the body may happen to be, meditation just comes about effortlessly. Albeit without a doubt there is also a state in which, if one takes up a special pose, such as for instance, *Padmasana* (the 'lotuspose') or *Siddhasana* (the 'perfect pose'), no interruption of one's union with the Supreme Being can ever occur.

# Mother as Revealed to me from a Distance by Looking at Her Picture.

By

Miriam Orr ( Paris. )

When I saw Mother's picture for the first time in the book "Ma Anandamayi" by Devotees, something strange happened to me. The picture caused an experience I had never had before. I was struck by Mother's beauty, sweetness and harmony; I felt inwardly shaken; Her sweet smile and Her loving eyes touched something in me, quite unknown till the moment I beheld Her picture. In silence Her sweet smile and Her loving eyes penetrated my whole being and seemed to tell me without words: "Why all this worrying, struggling and clinging to the forms of this world? Is it worth while, is it essential? The whirlpool of chasing, tangled pictures, forms and names — is it not a dream you are dreaming, a dream you are weaving like a spider's web? Should you not wake up? Are you not already awake, even while dreaming? Weaving your own dream and yet awake all at once, but not knowing that you are awake, being caught in the cobweb of your dreams?"

These words were not heard by me. I am using them in order to communicate something of the very first impression Mother's picture made on me, of the experience it evoked, an experience of a new order. It is difficult, if not impossible to describe. It was a little bit like when a small child who is fast asleep with the heavy sleep of childhood, is shaken by a grown-up because it is time to rise — and yet it was not like this. A child must leave his dream-world to get adjusted to the waking state, which is another world, the world of forms and actions. The way Mother woke me was different and the world into which Her sweet smile and Her radiant eyes shook me seemed a world without forms, without actions and without end. Forms and actions seemed to fall away as dry leaves drop from a tree.

This strange experience was much swifter than words, it might be compared to a sudden light in a dark chamber, to a soft, smiling light that made the world of forms and actions

fade away and appealed to something within and beyond it, to some inner region, quite new and yet very old, within me and beyond me.

Mother's picture, especially Her smile and Her loving look, were like a soft wind that shakes all the plants, makes the withered leaves fall off and stirs up men to realize something unknown. Mother's smile, sweet and silent, was felt as a soft, ringing sound, passing through my inner being and re-shuffling it into a new pattern. And yet it was not like this. It was different, much simpler. I was aware of an inner touch and an inner disentanglement. Mother's smile seemed silent and resonant at the same time. It gave me the feeling of a ringing sound, delicate like the ripples on a quiet lake moved by a gentle breeze. This silent, ringing sound filled the universe and passed through all it contains.

When I wish to recall this extraordinary inner experience I have only to look at Mother's picture with its sweet smile and its soft, loving gaze. It melts my whole being and gives me a faint glimpse of a state beyond time.

To look at Mother's picture induces something like the great spring cleaning in the houses: old, useless furniture is thrown out, accumulated

dust and cobwebs are removed and everything is re-arranged.

I look at Mother's picture whenever I am alone or have not got to talk: in the underground or the bus, before falling asleep and on waking in the morning. This is very little, far too little.....and it is after all only a photo I am looking at. What must it be like to see Mother Herself, to be in Her loving Presence?

Although a mere picture on a poor piece of paper, worn by being kept in my handbag and having been taken out and put back so often, it has revealed to me what I have never read in any book or heard anyone say.

The first thing it revealed to me is that the only true Love is the Love that wears away the veil that separates man from the Divine Light. Every other manifestation of love is more or less possessive, ego-centric. Mother's smile and Her eyes tell me that Her Love is egoless. Hers is the divine Love of Salvation. Salvation re-establishes the link, the oneness with God which had been forgotten and could not be remembered because it was covered with the dust of separation, brought about by the ego. Mother's love, radiating from Her eyes and Her smile is saving Love, Divine Love. It is not on the ego-

level of give and take, of exchange. It is egoless Love beyond separation.

Another fact Mother's picture revealed to me is that Mother has no memory. Men divorced from their own inner Light, with a very limited consciousness and field of vision need memory. When in one room we cannot see what is in other rooms ; when leaving a town and travelling to another we can no longer perceive the first-one. Therefore we require memory, memory in space and memory in time. Mother has full vision, She sees everything at the same time. She may not "see" just the concrete forms, but the forces working through them. Having full vision in space as well as beyond it, seeing time as well as the timeless, there is no place for memory, memory being a consequence of separateness, of limitation. What we experience as distance in time and space is no distance to Her.

Further Her picture made me understand what I had already read in the Bible, but what had hitherto been nothing but meaningless words to me, filling the storehouse of memory. I am referring to the story of the mana-bread in the desert of Sinai and to the multiplication of loaves and fishes by Jesus. When I read in the book "Ma Anandamayi" on p. 72 that food had been prepared for 400

people but many more came to partake of the meal and Mother said: "..... no one should go unfed. Leave this body alone. Report only if there is any shortage....." and I looked at Her photo, the following dawned on me : In the created world everything is food. Minerals are food for plants, plants are food for other plants, for animals and men, animals are food for other animals and some men, and after having decayed and become part of the earth, they are again food for plants. Minerals, plants, animals, men pass through one another's bodies in the form of food and build up one another's physical frames through digestion. Air is food for all breathing creatures. The created world is an enormous, seething womb, where everything is food for everything else in a continuous communion, interpenetration and transformation. Created matter passes continually through all creatures in a mutual exchange and in ceaseless transformation. What we eat, what builds up our bodies had to undergo mutual penetration and transformation in the gigantic womb of the created world.

Mother is able to create food directly from the uncreated Source of Creation. Mother provided food that had not undergone transformation by

being eaten and digested by many forms of life. Mother produced food for all who came to be fed. This is immediate creation. Reading Her words as related by Arun Prakash Banerjee I intuitively felt that this is possible and the above mentioned Bible stories are now a living truth to me, not just legend, myth, accepted in blind faith.

Moreover on p. 62 of the same book Nalini Kanta Brahma says "Mother Anandamayi is practically an unlettered woman.....But when She is engaged in any philosophical or religious discussion, it is difficult to believe that She has had virtually no education or training in Her life .....". These lines and Her sweetly smiling picture made me realize that reading and writing are techniques typical of our epoch, of a span of perhaps 10,000 years or so. As long as mankind had more or less complete vision of the Divine Forces playing in and through the created world, reading and writing were not invented, because unnecessary. Writing helps to preserve the memory of what can no longer be perceived. As soon as there is full vision, reading and writing drop away, they are not needed. Mother hardly writes at all. She is Herself the Heavenly Bread of Life and so, naturally, writing is not for Her. It

is for Her bhaktas to write the glad tidings that She has taken shape in a human body to help mankind to realize Union, Divine Love.

Divine Incarnations hardly ever write. They radiate Peace, they are that Peace. Writing is for those who are in the world of *becoming*, of eating and digesting, of transformation. Mother belongs to the world of *Being*, even though She has taken shape in the world of becoming.

Furthermore Mother's sweet smile and Her loving eyes seemed to put life into the words of a friend of mine in the Middle East who once said to me : "Do not seek help from men, seek the help of God !" Although that friend of mine is a God-intoxicated woman her words were then mere words to me, dry and meaningless. Mother's picture in its eloquent silence conveyed to me that everything happening in this world of forms, names and actions is prompted by forces within and beyond it. We may call them God's Will—there is really no difference between God's Will and all that happens. Events may appear to be against His Will, may seem cruel and senseless, yet in the end, in spite of many deviations, it is always His Will that works through the created world and if we ask for His help, it is the shortest way. Water drawn from its source is invariably purer than

water transmitted by pipes and aqueducts. God is the Spring and to obtain His water directly is more healing than getting it indirectly through his waterpipes, men. "Seek God's help, not the help of men" is now a living truth to me. God's waters will flow through the right channels and cure all ills. Mother's picture made me see this.

Finally I heard from a friend in India that Mother neither takes on *Chelas* nor gives *Mantra Diksha*. My whole life I have been waiting for a Guru and initiation. Mother's smile tells me that She is not and cannot be a Guru in the sense we attribute to the word, a Guru being a man who by various methods and techniques has succeeded in catching a glimpse of the Light Divine and is therefore competent to indicate to others the way to Realization. Mother is not a human being like all the others. She is Divine Light clad in a human form. Therefore She did not require any methods or techniques, just as She does not need to read and write.

Those who are in the valley have to use a stick, an indicator of the

path, in order to reach the mountain-peak. But one who has descended from the top knows and sees all ways. The very Presence of such an one is enlightening, to a certain extent even from a great distance.

If one of a group of men who imagine to be blind, succeeds by diligent and painful exercises to regain his eyesight partly, he will take much trouble to teach his fellow-beings how to get rid of their illusion of being blind. But one who has always had full sight, will not teach methods. He will smile and laugh away and dispel the error, the weird spider's web.

Mother, being Divine Light clothed in a human form, has no need of human methods and techniques, which are the consequences of separation. For Mother separation does not exist. Were She just a human being She could not through a poor worn photo have revealed a glimpse—however tiny—of Her Light to a far-away bhakta, who is waiting to be in Her physical Presence as a prisoner pining for freedom, as a sick man craving for health, as a dweller in the dark longing for the sun.

# THE ALL-PERVADING PRESENCE OF THE MOTHER

By

Kenneth Grant (London)

It is, perhaps, not a matter for remark that extraordinary things sometimes occur in circumstances involving Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma, but I would like to place the following event on record as showing Mother's omniscience and omnipresence concerning one who has not contacted Her in the physical at all, not even through correspondence.

The following event may seem trivial to those to whom long association with Mother has revealed many such events of a truly miraculous and marvellous nature. It must be remembered, however, that to one living in England where these events are conspicuous by their absence, and which is as remote from Mother's physical presence as may be, such an event stands out as a singular and inspiring witness to an occult order of things which no amount of materiality may afford even to deaden, much less then to destroy.

Having spent an evening perusing and contemplating certain numbers of this Magazine, Ananda Vārtā, I had retired for the night, my mind

quite naturally attuned to thoughts of Mother and Her infinite Grace.

Having a particular and distressing problem at the back of my mind which welled forth into the forecourts of consciousness in the lucidity preceding sleep, I decided that I would submit my perplexity to Mother and seek Her advice.

It is to be noted that there was no conscious formulation of prayer designed with the purpose of creating a link or channel between Mother and myself, through which She might pour the healing streams of Her Grace; on the contrary, there was a distinct feeling, or decision, of postponing the matter till the morrow when I would either compose a letter describing the problem, or, more subtly, ask directly of Mother, and within myself, that She give me the strength to dispel my perplexity, enshrining my plea in some sort of prayer or formula or incantation, I had not even made up my mind which it was to be.

Imagine my amazement, then, on waking next morning to receive a

letter from one of Her devotees in India, one whom She has Herself named Shuddha Priya, wherein was contained an answer to my unformulated plea – an answer, note well, that must have been given long before I had thought even of approaching Mother concerning my problem, an answer somehow implanted in the mind of another devotee with the express purpose of having that devotee convey same to me in the manner in which it happened. Needless to say, my correspondent had not been informed in any way either by Mother or by myself as to the state of my mind *which was known to none other* during the time the letter was conceived, written down and despatched. Mother's ways are truly mysteri-

ous. Such an event, quite apart from the problem or the answer thereto, has had the effect of conferring that most valuable of all boons, the *certainty* of the unity of existence, i. e. the absolute conviction that Guru and Chela are one, and that if we could only and at all times enter and abide in the deep recesses of Being, where alone is the true Undifferentiated Consciousness, we could always know That which being known everything is known. And whether a problem is trivial or great, such distinctions of degree altogether vanish in that union of the individual soul with the Infinite Life which, for the sake of convenience and of our limited and finite understanding, we lovingly refer to simply as.....Mother!

# The Message of the Bhāgavata

By

Dr. S. K. MAITRA, Banaras Hindu University

( Continued from last issue. )

## What is Bhakti ?

In Sandilya Sutra 2 *para bhakti* or primary devotion is defined as attachment to the Lord ( "सा परानुरक्तिरीश्वरे" ). In order to meet the objection raised by Patanjali's Yogasutras, namely, that any attachment is a *klesa*, Sandilya Sutra 21 asserts that the objection of Patanjali applies only to worldly objects and not to attachment to God.

The Nārada Sutras define Bhakti as "love for the Lord" ( "सा तस्मिन् परम-प्रेसरूपा" ). This is practically the same as the definition of the Sandilya Sutras, but Rūpa Gosvami in his *Bhaktirasamrtasindhu* makes a distinction between attachment and love, giving the latter a higher place than the former. He has, in fact, given an ascending series of sentiments in which love occupies the highest place, and has identified *para bhakti* with it.

In the Bhāgavata, after a description of inferior types of bhakti, namely, *sattviki rajasiki*, and *tamasiki bhakti*, the highest type of bhakti, called *nirguna bhakti* is described as follows :

“अद्गुणश्रुतिमात्रेण मयि सर्वगुहाशये  
मनोगतिरविच्छिन्ना यथा गंगात्मसोऽम्बुधौ ॥  
लक्षणं भक्तियोगस्य निर्गुणस्य ह्युदाहृतम् ।  
अहेतुक्यव्यवहिता या भक्तिः पुरुषोत्तमे ॥

Bh. iii 29. 11-12

“The sum and substance of which is that *nirgunabhakti* is *bhakti* in *Purusottama* which is not tainted by any worldly purpose ( *ahaituki* ) and is not obstructed by anything ( *avyavahita* ). It is that which arises spontaneously in the heart on hearing legends about the Lord and which flows freely like the waters of the Ganga into the sea. The Bhāgavata's definition of bhakti is practically the same as that of the Sandilya and Nārada Sutras, but it stresses two important characteristics, namely, that it should be untainted by any worldly motive ( *ahaituki* ) and that it should be unimpeded ( *avyavahita* ).

But although the Bhāgavata gives practically the same definition of bhakti as the Bhaktisūtras, yet its attitude towards *jnana* and *harma* is, as we have seen, far more liberal than that of the latter. For instance, it

does not hold the view of the Bhakti-sutras either that knowledge is not the cause of devotion but can at best be regarded as auxiliary or accessory to it, or that devotion can never produce knowledge.

### The Bhagavata's conception of the Society of Bhaktas

One of the most beautiful things which we find in the Bhāgavata is its conception of the Society of Bhaktas with God as their head. It occurs in the speech of Lord Kṛṣṇa in answer to Durvāsa's earnest appeal to Him to save him from the attack of Sudarśana Chakra. The Lord tells him that He is powerless, being Himself in a state of bondage to His bhaktas. And then follows a description of His relationship with His bhaktas, which we give below in the original :

“अहं भक्तपराधीनो ह्यस्वतन्त्र इव द्विज ।

साधुभिर्मस्तहृदयो भक्तैर्भक्तजनप्रियः ॥

नाहमात्मानमाशासे मद्भक्तैःसाधुभिर्विना ।

प्रियमात्यन्तिकी ब्रह्मन् येषां गतिरह परा ॥

ये दारागारपुत्राप्तप्राणान् वित्तमिदं परम् ।

हित्वा मां शरणं याताः कथं तास्त्यसुमुत्सहे ॥

Bh. 9. 4. 63-65

( “I am dependent upon my bhaktas and have no independence, O Dvija. My heart is in the possession of my faithful devotees, and I am the beloved of my bhaktas. I have no

desire for anything, not even for salvation, apart from My devotees, O Brahmana. How can I think of abandoning those who have given up their wives, sons, their dear lives and even their wealth to take refuge in Me ?”

It is a wonderful conception, in which there is perfect comradeship between God and man and perfect equality between man and man. Can any communist society come anywhere near this conception of perfect equality and universal brotherhood under the fatherhood of God? In fact, it is a sort of Divine communism, based upon the principle of love. Man is brought into intimate relationship with God, and at the same time he does not lose his individuality. Man's love for God is fully reciprocated by God's love for man. A faint echo of this we find in Spinoza's conception of the intellectual love of God, wherein Spinoza has said that man's love for God must mean also God's love for man.

### The absolute monism of the Bhagavata

The beauty of the whole thing is that the Bhāgavata is in a position to maintain this relationship between God and man without deviating an inch from the standpoint of absolute monism. It does not believe in any

of qualified monism. In the first book it has stated very clearly that its standpoint is that of absolute monism :

एकं तत् तत्त्वविदस्तत्त्वं यज्ज्ञानमद्वयम् ।  
परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्द्यते ॥  
Bha. I. 2-11  
who know the ultimate

non-dual knowledge, called Brahman, Pāramātmā or Bhagavān” ).

The principle of absolute monism is also stated very clearly, in the following verse which occurs in connection with Lord Kṛṣṇa's advice to Devahūti.

‘आत्मनश्च परस्यापि यः करोत्यन्तरोदरम् ।  
तस्य भिन्नदृशो मृत्युर्विदधे भयमुल्बणम् ॥

Bha. III 29-26

( “He who makes a distinction between Ātman and the world—for such a man who sees difference, I as Death create a terrible fear” ).

The same principle of absolutely unqualified monism appears also clearly in the words addressed to Lord Kṛṣṇa by Mahādeva, when requesting Him to show His *mohinirupa* :

त्वं ब्रह्म पूर्णममृतं विगुणं विशोकमानन्दमात्रम-  
विकारमनन्यदन्यत् ।

विश्वस्य हेतुरुदयस्थितिसंयमानाम्  
आत्मेश्वरश्च तदपेक्षयानपेक्षः ॥  
Bh. VIII 12-7

( “You are Brahman, the Perfect, the Immortal, the Attributeless, Pure Bliss, the Unchanging, the Identical as well as the Different, the Cause of the origin, preservation and dissolution of the universe, the Indwelling Spirit which controls, while remaining Itself quite detached.”

monism appears clearly in the famous hymn addressed by Brahmā to Lord Kṛṣṇa :

‘एकस्त्वमात्मा पुरुषः पुराणः  
सत्यः स्वयं ज्योतिरनंत आद्यः ।  
नित्योऽक्षरोऽनन्तसुखो निरञ्जनः  
पूर्णान्वयोमुक्त उपाधितोऽमृतः ॥

Bh. X 14-23

( “You are the One, the Ātmā, the Eternal Puruṣa, the Truth, the Self-luminous, the Infinite, the Origin, the Indestructible, the Repository of Infinite Happiness, the Attributeless, the perfectly Non-dual, free from all attributes, immortal” ).

Innumerable other verses can be quoted in support of the view that the standpoint of the Bhāgavata is that of absolute monism. The Bhāgavata has thus shown very clearly that a Bhakti Dharma can very well be constructed on a foundation of absolute monism. It is a very wrong idea that it must necessarily rest upon a dualistic basis.

**Voluntary relinquishment on the part  
of the Bhaktas of the right of complete  
union with God**

It may be objected, however, that if Bhakti Dharma is based upon absolute monism, how is it that the bhakta maintains his separate individuality and is not absorbed in the Absolute. The answer of the Bhāgavata is very striking. It says that although it is open to the bhaktas to claim complete absorption in God, yet they willingly abrogate this right for the sake of enjoying the privilege of serving God. This is repeated in several verses in the Bhāgavata. For instance, in verse 13 of the 3rd Skandha, it is clearly stated that even if a bhakta is given *salokya*, (the privilege of living in the same loka with God), *sarsti* (the power of possessing the same *aśvarya* as God), *samipya* (the privilege of living in the vicinity of God), *sarupya* (the privilege of possessing the same form as God) and *aikya* (union with God), he does not accept them but prefers to remain a servant of God. It is therefore not due to any weakness of his or of any fundamental difference between him and God, that the bhakta does not get complete union with God, but it is solely due to his own preference for a state where he can serve God. This is in contrast to the position assigned to him in Rāmā-

nūja's system where, on account of a difference which cannot be annulled, it is not open to man to claim complete union with God.

The same idea of the voluntary relinquishment of his right to enjoy union with God by the bhakta in order to be able to serve Him, is stated clearly in Bhāgavata, xi. 20.34, which runs as follows :

“न किञ्चित् साधवो धीरा भक्ता ह्येकान्तिनो मम ।  
वाञ्छन्त्यपि मया दत्तं कैवल्यमपुनर्भवम् ॥

( “The devotees of Mine who take refuge in Me alone never express any desire for obtaining *kaivalya* ( complete mergence in God ) or freedom from the cycle of birth and death, even if these things are offered to them.

Exactly the same thing is also stated in ix.4. 67, which runs as follows :

“मत्सेवया प्रतीतं च सालोक्यादि चतुष्टयम् ।  
नेच्छन्ति सेवया पूर्णाः कुतोऽन्यत् कालविद्रुतम् ॥

( “By virtue of their serving Me, it is known to them that they can have *salokya*, etc., for the mere asking, but they who are full of service do not want them, not to speak of other things which are temporal” ).

This is a grand conception—this idea of a voluntary relinquishment by man of his right to complete union with God which at one stroke removes

the difficulties which stand in the way of restoring to man his individuality without deviating an inch from the standpoint of absolute monism. The Bhāgavata does not deny man the privilege of being completely united with God, losing his name and form, as a verse of the Mundakopaniṣad says. But it says that those who are believers in the path of bhakti are not attracted by the prospect of being absorbed in God and prefer to enjoy His company and the privilege of serving Him. Thus, by a voluntary relinquishment of his inherent right to be one with God, man can enjoy the bhakta's paradise, which is to serve God and live in perpetual comradeship with Him.

#### The Bhagavata's conception of God's relationship with man

Looking at the matter from the other side, it appears that God's relationship with His bhaktas is different from His relationship with other men. This does not mean any special favour shown to them; it means only giving men what they are fit for. In the Gita also the Lord says :

“ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम्” (IV.11)

(“However men approach Me, even so do I welcome them” - Annie Besant's translation).

It cannot be said that giving the bhaktas the privilege of enjoying His company denotes conferring upon them a higher privilege than is enjoyed by others. From the strictly metaphysical point of view, the privilege of being completely united with God, which is what the followers of the path of knowledge aspire to, is higher than that of enjoying His company. God, therefore, cannot be charged with partiality if He gives His bhaktas the right to enjoy His company and serve Him. He only gives them what they aspire to and what they deserve. It does not mean giving them a more favourable treatment than is meted out to others.

Of course, it means that God is looked upon as *Purusottama* and not as *Aksara Brahman*. This is a legacy which the Bhāgavata has got from the Gita. The Bhāgavata's conception of God as *Purusottama* or as *Bhagavan* follows the lines of the Gita's conception of Him, as depicted in its fifteenth chapter. It has only dotted the i's and cut the t's of that conception. God as *Purusottama* sheds His awful aloofness and comes into direct relationship with the world. The further delineation of the different types of relationship with different kinds of being, according to their needs, is only a matter of detail.

### A picture of an ideal Bhakta

I shall end up by the description of an ideal bhakta as given in the Bhagavata. The ideal Bhakta is no other than Ambariṣa, son of Nābhāga. In the description of him in the ninth book, we have a very good picture of what a bhakta should be, the qualities which go to his making, his outlook upon life, his hopes and aspirations. He was no ordinary mortal but a great king of an extensive kingdom. In spite of his enormous wealth and a huge kingdom, he looked upon his vast possessions as mere straw as a result of his devotion to Vāsudeva and His devotees. Then follows a description showing how every minute action of his was guided by his great devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, which I must give in the original, for no translation can convey the wonderful beauty of it :

“स वै मनः कृष्णपदारविन्दयोः  
वचांसि वैकुण्ठगुणानुवर्णने ।  
करौ हरेर्मन्दिरमार्जनादिषु  
श्रुति चकारान्युतसत्कथोदये ॥  
मुकुन्दलिङ्गालयदर्शने दृशौ  
तद्भृत्यगात्रस्पर्शोऽगन्गमम् ।  
घ्राणं च तत्पादसरोजसौरभे  
श्रीमत्तुलस्या रसनां तदर्पिते ॥  
पादौ हरेः क्षेत्रगुणानुसर्पणे  
शिरो हृषीकेशपदाभिवन्दने ।

कामंच दास्ये न तु कामकाम्यया  
यथोत्तमः श्लोकजनाश्रया रतिः ॥”

Bh. ix. 4.18-20

( “He dedicated his mind to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, his speech to the recital of His praise, his hands to the cleaning of the temples of Hari, his ears to the hearing of the legends of the Acyuta. His eyes he employed for seeing the images of Mukunda in the temples, the contact of his body he dedicated to the touch of the bodies of the devotees, his nose to smelling the tulsī emanating from the Lord’s lotus feet and his tongue to tasting the oblations that were offered there. His feet he dedicated to travelling to places of pilgrimage sacred to Him, his head to bowing to the feet of Hṛṣīkeśa, his desires to the prospect of serving Him and not to worldly objects; in brief, his devotion was of the type which only the greatest of devotees of the Lord could have”).

I conclude by offering my prayer to Him who is the Source of the inspiration of the Bhāgavata :

“विना यस्य ध्यानं ब्रजति पशुतां सूकरमुखाम्  
विना यस्य ज्ञानं जनिमृतिभयं याति जनता ।  
विना यस्य स्मृत्या कृमिशतजनिं याति स विभुः  
शरण्यो लोकेशो मम भवतु कृष्णोऽक्षिविषयः ॥

# IDEALS OF SUFISM

By

Dr. M. Hafiz Syed, M. A., Ph. D. Litt.

There is no religion, ancient or modern, which is devoid of moral principles and spiritual elements. Islam has clearly and unmistakably recognised the fact that God has been merciful enough to send teachers and prophets to every nation and country from the earliest days of Adam up to the last prophet Muhammad through whom Islam was given to the world. Therefore every devout Muslim who has faith in the revealed religion has to respect religions other than his own. The Holy Quran says that no distinction is to be made among the prophets.

Islam like most of the religions of the Aryan and the Semitic stock believes that God is the Supreme Source of all creation, and as the Father and Originator of all human beings is equally interested in the spiritual welfare of all mankind. As the source of our being is One we have a common destiny, namely spiritual evolution and perfection in due course of time.

As all religious teachers were ordained by the Higher Power to

serve human beings without any distinction, the essential teachings of almost all the great religions of the world not only bear striking similarities, but in certain cases, one is agreeably surprised to find identity in some of the ways of God-realisation and the final destiny of man. It is right to presume that the essential unity of various schools of mystical thought is based upon rational grounds. As human beings differ in tastes, talents and tendencies, so they are divided into various races, religions and tribes. This division however is neither vital nor essential.

*Sadi* the great mystic poet of Persia says that all men are limbs of one body. In view of these basic facts it will be very interesting and instructive to learn that there is a common ground on which the Muslims of the world can meet their brethren of Hindustan and of other countries on a common platform of goodwill and mutual fellowship.

The Sufis are divided into innumerable orders. The two original orders are : (1) HULULIYA, which means

the inspired. This order believes that God has entered into them and that the divine spirit enters into all who are devout and lead an austere life, purifying their hearts of all impurities and evil thoughts. (2) ITTIHDIYA, which means the unionists. This order believes that God is joined with all enlightened beings; that He is as fire and the soul as charcoal (ready to become fire); and that the soul by union with God becomes God.

The Muslim mystics are agreed that God is one, Alone, Single, Eternal, Everlasting, Knowing, Powerful, Mighty, Majestic, Generous, Clement, the Master, Merciful and Compassionate; that He is qualified with all the best names; that since eternity He has not ceased to continue with His names and attributes; that there is nothing eternal but He and no God besides Him; that He is neither body, nor shape, nor form, nor person, nor element, nor accident.

One of the great Sufis says: "He is hidden in His manifestation, manifest in concealing, He is outward and inward, near and far; and in this respect He is removed beyond the resemblances of creatures." They are agreed that He is neither perceived by the eyes, nor assailed by thought, that His attributes do not change, and that His names do not alter; that He is the first and the last, the outward

and the inward, that He is acquainted with everything, that there is nothing like Him, and that He sees and hears.

The conception of the Unity of God is the pivot round which revolve all other doctrines. The oneness of God is acknowledged by all schools of mysticism. The pure existence of the Supreme Reality is called *Zat*, without any reference to His attributes. It is known through its qualities and attributes called *Ism-e-Sifat*. The neophyte is expected to meditate on the Divine attributes and through his constant meditation, prayerfulness and singleminded devotion, a glimpse of God's Beauty, Greatness and Grandeur will be vouchsafed to him. The aspirant is enjoined to draw a curtain over his mind against *Masea*, that which is not God, and desire nothing but Him and the ability to do His will. Islam really and literally means complete resignation and surrender to the will of God, which attitude becomes to him the only ruling idea of his life. He owes allegiance to no other being. He bows down before none, kneels down before the Almighty Allah who is his Soul-Refuge, Benefactor and Supreme Master.

The first step enjoined by Islam to attain one's goal is five times daily prayer, a full month's fast once a year, sharing at least one fortieth of one's property with the poor and per-

forming a pilgrimage to Mecca, called *Hajj*. The second step is constant repetition of God's name, mentally and verbally, and meditation on Him and His qualities. In order to fully succeed in one's effort at spiritual realization one has to seek the help and guidance of a *Murshid* (*Guru*), to whom is offered the utmost devotion and who in his turn initiates him into the mysteries of divine wisdom and takes him along from one step to another in the sphere of spiritual development. In this connection three kinds of meditation are practised. The first is called *Teaswur-e-Shaikh* (meditation on one's teacher), the second *Teaswur-e-Rasul* (meditation on the prophet), the third *Teaswur-e-Allah* (meditation on God). Thus an aspirant is led step by step systematically till he attains God's Grace and an insight into the mystery of Divine Wisdom.

The most manifest of existences is the existence of God. The existence of things is by the light of God. The perception of your self is the perception of God. He who has understood his *Nafs* (real Self) has understood God. The Reality of God is His existence which is really his *DHAT*. The absolute existence has no form, or shape, no limitations, neither beginning nor end; in spite of this He has manifested Himself in different shapes

without any change in His *DHAT*. It is like a person surrounded by mirrors of different sizes, makes and colours, appearing in the mirrors according to the requirements of the mirrors, without any change in His own personality.

Dhunnun-e-Misri has said: "Knowledge in God's *Dhat* is ignorance. No prophet or *Wali* has ever reached or will ever reach that point." The prophet has said: "MA ARAFNAKA HAQQA MARIFATIKA. I have not known Thee to the extent that Thy knowledge demands." The Sufis believe that God has two aspects: (1) *Tanzih*, corresponding to *Nirguna* and (2) *Tashbih*, corresponding to *Saguna*. They also believe that He is both present and absent, both one and many. He thus joins in Himself contraries and contradictories.

The prophet once said; "I am from the light of God and all things are from my light". Truly God is beautiful and He loves beauty. Beauty is the personal attribute of *Zat*. "God created man in His own face," says the Sufi.

"He clothed him with His own attribute of beauty. Man is therefore inclined to the beautiful. God was thus Beauty and Love. His beauty was love, and His love beauty. He was the lover and beloved at the same time. He saw himself in the mirror of His own beauty. He loved himself."

THE *MURID* (disciple) must observe the *Jamal* (beauty and grandeur of the *PIR*), the *PIR*'s *JAMAL* must be reflected in the mirror of the *MURID*'s heart. "Whoever hath seen me hath seen God" says the prophet. "The reality of *Imam* is the Observance of me," says the Prophet.

*Shayk-i-Akbar* says that a *MURID* who seeks another *PIR* during the life time of his *PIR* breaks his Covenant with God which he made at the time of performing *BAYAT* (initiation). The follower of the prophet cannot become a follower of another during the former's life time.

The object of *SHAGAL* (practice), *ZIKR* (repetition of God's name) and *MURAQEBA* (deep meditation) is to enable the mind not to retain in itself the remembrance of anything other than God. The beginner should not be apprised of his defects so that he may not be estranged from the path. After purity of heart is established, all defects disappear of themselves.

The *SHAIKH* can be in the west and aware of the condition of his *MURID* in the east. The least capacity of the *PIR* is that he possesses *KSHAF-I-QULUB* (that is, he is conscious of the condition of the hearts of people), if he has not this capacity it is forbidden for him to accept anyone as his disciple. He should know the past and future conditions of the world. He is the *KHALIFA* of God on earth. "We have made him", says the Quran, "Vice-regent on earth".

*MURIDS* are of two kinds, ordinary and special. The *PIR* instructs them in different ways, according to their aptitudes and temperaments, the one gets ordinary instructions, and the other gets instructions that are kept back from the ordinary *MURID*. "*SHARIAT* is my ward, *TARIQAT* is my action and *HAQUIQAT* is my personal condition", said the prophet (peace be with him).

( To be continued )

---

# DIARY LEAVES

By

Atmananda

The following are notes taken in June-July 1955 at Solan, continued from the last issue.

## On Clothes

A young university student asked : "Why do Sadhus wear a special dress, matted hair, long beards and so on ? What has all this to do with spirituality ?"

*Mataji* : Why do you put oil on your hair and part it in front of a mirror ? Why do you wear fine trousers and well-laundered shirts ? Whom do you wish to please ? Who is it that is your own and that you are trying to impress by your elegant appearance ? You think : "What will people say ?" You really are afraid of public opinion. You like to look like a gentleman. You admire well-dressed people and so you say to yourself : "I must also dress in the same fashion." What benefit do you expect to get out of it ?

*The young student* : It gives me satisfaction to look neat and nice.

*Mataji* : Exactly. It gives you pleasure. And what will this kind of satisfaction lead to ? Can you tell ?

*The young student* : It is difficult to tell.

*Mataji* : You do not find an answer. All this dressing up is done for the sake of self-satisfaction. A genuine *sadhaka* is too preoccupied with his search to bother about his appearance. He is impatient to attain to the vision of the Supreme. He has no time to look after his clothes, to cut his nails, trim his beard, etc ; all his time and energy are spent in *sadhana* and therefore he goes about looking anyhow. He feels : "Whom should I please by being well-dressed ?" A Sadhu is out for Self-realization and hence cannot give thought or time to his appearance. The Rishis of old used to have matted hair and long beards, in spite of this being very troublesome in the hot weather. They put up with the inconvenience because matted hair and long beards had become, as it were, the badge of a Rishi, were known as the outer signs of a man intent on Self-realization.

Now have you still other doubts concerning this question ?

*The young man* : Does the special

dress of a Sannyasi help him in his *sadhana* ?

*Mataji* : You dress well for your own pleasure, not because it brings you nearer to God. The real Sadhu is eager for Supreme Bliss. Of course not all Sadhus are genuine. There are also 'Babu Sadhu's.' Although they have taken the robe, they are still worldly-minded.

Once coming down from Mussoorie in a bus, we were travelling with a Sadhu whose face seemed to shine with inner radiance. People were greatly impressed by him, but later he was caught painting his cheeks.

I have heard of another Sadhu with a large following, whose *charanamrit*\* was said to taste sweet. A doctor of medicine came to hear about this and said he also wanted a taste of the sweet water. The Sadhu always used to have a bath before people took his *charanamrit*. But the physician insisted on washing and drying the Sadhu's feet with his own hands and on cutting his toe-nails before proceeding with the ceremony. As a result the *charanamrit* did not taste sweet. The actual fact was that when the Sadhu went for his bath he put sacharin under his toe-nails.

Many people who have been disillusioned in similar ways have come to this body and related various stories of the same kind.

It is said that a Sannyasi wears the ochre robe as a symbol of the fire of renunciation and he shaves his head and face to indicate that this fire has burnt away everything, not leaving even a single hair on his head. These outer observances are meant to remind him constantly of this fact. You may say, "why should a man who has not attained to complete desirelessness take Sannyasa ?" "Taking" Sannyasa is one thing, but it is quite another when renunciation just happens effortlessly. Initiation into the order of Sannyasa is taken as an aid, so that real Sannyasa, which is supreme renunciation, may come about.

\* \* \* \*

### On Food

*Question* : It is said that what one eats affects the mind. Is that true ? What is the connection between the mind and food ?

*Mataji* : There is indeed a close interrelationship between the mind and food. Sri Krishnananda Avadhutaji

\* It is a custom to ceremonially wash ( or rather dip into water ) the feet of saints. The water is then called *charanamrit* and is drunk by people in the belief that power and purity are transmitted to them by it.

explained this in detail to you only the other day, and your Shastras also give elaborate instructions on this theme. *Sattwic* food will produce *sattwic* qualities, *rajasic* food *rajasic* qualities, and so forth. Therefore people observe special rules concerning their diet. But if someone engages in *sadhana* he will automatically feel the necessity of giving up certain types of food and of introducing others. He will come to experience an aversion for the eatables that hinder his *sadhana*. Just as a fever patient craves for water, so will the *sadhaka* instinctively conceive a desire for particular articles of diet and a distaste for others. But also by reasoning one may adopt a *sattwic* diet and later develop gradually a taste for it.

*Question*: We see that people cannot live without food. Yet we are told that during your life there were times when you ate infinitesimal quantities, as for instance, three grains of rice twice daily or as much as can be given in one breath, etc.

*Mataji*: Once I had to travel by carriage, it was over-crowded, so I sat on a woman's lap. The *Kheyal* came to this body that it would be too heavy for her, so this body became lighter than a leaf. When afterwards it got out of the carriage this body sat down on the ground, again

assuming its weight. That was *Yoga Kriya* (a yogic process). This is one thing. Another is as follows: When a kite flies in the air it gets into a state of poise so that the wooden frame to which it is attached is also held in the air in balance, although at other times it would fall down. Similarly there is a state of poise in which the rhythm of the breath is such that six months may become equal to six hours. At the time when this body lived on such scanty diet its health was excellent. It could walk for hours and climb without getting breathless. When walking up a steep hill people usually pant, but at that time this body did not feel any fatigue or exertion. If there had been the *Kheyal*, it could have remained in that condition for years or for a whole age. But this also is only a state, namely the state of a Yogi. Since this body does nothing by personal will, but everything happens spontaneously, it now behaves like other human beings; it gets a stomach-ache, a pain at the foot and so on--it is all the same.

Another point is this: The energy of the grain or fruit is absorbed into oneself by eating them. But if this energy is within one's reach in a more direct way, one requires no food. Where the power to create, preserve

and destroy is present—what is it, not to eat? Nothing at all.

All this is only a tiny fragment of the whole matter.

\* \* \* \*

### On the Use and Misuse of Psychic Powers.

*Question* : Is it legitimate to use psychic powers in order to obtain results in the material world, as for example, in business or in one's relationship with people?

*Mataji* : If divine energy (*Bhagavat Shakti*) is used for anything save for divine purposes (*Bhagavat Karya*), it is wasted. A man who studies medicine employs his knowledge to cure patients, the one who learns engineering to do an engineer's work. If the power acquired in the course of one's search after Truth is directed towards material ends, the current of the Supreme Spiritual Energy (*Maha Shakti*) is thereby inhibited. The power that accumulates within as a result of spiritual exercises must not be frittered away in worldly pursuits. Certain supernormal powers (*vibhutis*) may be developed. Yet is not everything God's *Vibhuti*, His *Lila*,\* His *Maya* †? If in the midst of this play you do not seek the Reality behind it, and if instead of using for this purpose the powers and capacities you have been blessed with, you get

sidetracked into the ways of the world, this will have undesirable consequences. Having once become a pilgrim on the road to Immortality and been endowed with powers, to neglect this path and linger in by-paths hinders spiritual progress. It means to revert to worldly interests.

One must not allow oneself to be caught by the lure of supernormal faculties. Suppose one has acquired the power that whatever one utters becomes true or whatever one desires fulfilled. What of it? This is only a stage. By using such powers to destroy or improve people one may become arrested on that level instead of progressing towards the ultimate. To get entangled on the level of these powers is a waste of energy. Having acquired them one must not lose sight of the supreme Goal of human existence, but strive unceasingly after Self-realization. Failing to do so will create obstacles and may result in a fall.

*Here someone else asked* : Having acquired supernormal powers does not the desire to use them for lower purposes vanish?

*Mataji* : Having developed a little power one may feel tempted to use it for worldly ends. But where the Supreme Power of the Self functions, it is quite a different matter. The world is no longer perceived

\* Play. † God's power to appear as the many.

as separate and it may well happen that the power will effect certain material changes. In this there is no personal will and moreover there appear unmistakable signs : A person through whom this Supreme Power expresses itself is full of humility, compassion, forgiveness and mercy, he cannot possibly feel hostile towards anyone. In this case the power manifests spontaneously, whereas in the other case it is being 'used'. Where it is used it implies that there is 'doing' and a 'doer' and therefore one has not risen beyond praise and prestige. This is why there is the danger of sustaining a fall.

\* \* \* \*

#### On Alms and Hospitality

*Question :* It is written in the Shastras that it is the duty of a householder to give when appealed to and to entertain any guest that may come to his house. Yet he is warned not to give money to those who may use it for unworthy purposes, for he will reap part of the fruits of their evil deeds. What then are we to do ? If we refuse to give we sin and if we give to the evil-minded we also sin. It is impossible to make sure of the character of everyone who begs for alms. We householders are really unfortunate : whether we act in this way or that we have to bear the brunt of our conduct.

*Mataji (laughing) :* Yes, you are quite right : if you give money to someone who uses it well you get part of the merit ; but suppose it is spent on drink, part of the responsibility for the evil consequences falls to you. It is really very difficult. The only way out is to regard everyone as the Supreme Being. If you give only to the One, neither good nor evil consequences will be attached to your deed. With the conviction that it is God you may worship a dog or a cat or a tree, it makes no difference. It is said that every guest is *Narayana*, ( the Lord of men ). If you serve a guest with the firm faith that *Narayana* has come to your house in this guise, it does not matter who the guest be.

There is a story of a Brahmana who chose *Narayana Puja* for his main *sadhana*. He and his wife never ate before a guest had come to their house and been entertained by them with the honours due to *Narayana*. Before they died they requested their son to continue this practice faithfully. He obeyed. After finishing his morning ablutions and prayers he would cook food, arrange the guest's seat and wait till a guest turned up, even though it might not be till evening. He decided to remain a bachelor all his life, but friends tried to persuade him to get married. At first he refused, but when they

continued to press him, he finally said: "Very well, I agree on the condition that should my wife disobey me I cut off her head." His friends did not take this threat seriously and arranged for the wedding.

He directed his wife to cook food and serve *Narayana* whenever he should appear in the form of a guest, and after she had done this to call her husband for food. He himself would spend his days practising *Japa* and studying the Scriptures. All went well for some time until one day no guest came. Evening was approaching and the young housewife was getting very hungry and thirsty. She began to wonder whether it would be possible to deceive her husband by telling him the guest had left the house after taking his meal. But for fear of losing her life if found out, she refrained. Just then a man, carrying a cow's head dangling on a stick, entered the house. He asked her to cut up the head and prepare it for his meal. She had never before done such a thing and did not know how to set about it. However the guest showed her how to proceed and in spite of disgust she felt, she submitted for fear of displeasing her husband. When the meat was placed before the strange guest, he bade her taste it first. Being a Brahmana's daughter she became nauseated at the thought

of eating cow's flesh, but again out of fear was ready to obey. Just as she was raising her hand to put the first morsel into her mouth, the guest said: "First call your husband!" She dropped the meat, washed her hand and entered her husband's room. "It is almost night," he said, "has the guest been fed and left the house satisfied?" "No," was the reply, "he has not yet eaten, but asked me to call you first." "What wrong have you done?" thundered the husband, "now I shall have to cut off your head." However they went to see what the guest wanted; lo and behold—the man with the cow's head had disappeared; instead both husband and wife had a clear vision of Radha and Krishna occupying the guest's seat.

Intense faith as well as fear coupled with blind obedience are paths to the vision of God. This story brings it home in a drastic manner. The man who was obviously an outcast violating the rules of his Brahmana host revealed himself as God. If you treat every guest as *Narayana*, no matter what be his behaviour, your yourself and he will be benefited. Whether you are prompted by firm faith or deadly fear, either of these will lead you in time to the vision of THAT which IS.

# MATRI LILA

( August-October 1955 )

There are two articles in this issue of Ananda Varta that bear striking evidence of the fact that Mataji's Lila is by no means limited to what we see taking place in Her immediate surroundings. The authors of those articles live in two different countries in Europe and neither of them have met Mataji in the physical; yet it is quite obvious that they are in living touch with Her. We cannot possibly know how many bhaktas there are all over the world and in what way Mataji chooses to reveal Herself to them.

Perhaps it is not out of place to quote here what an Indian devotee wrote home when she had all by herself gone to foreign countries on an educational trip.

"Ma has always been in my thoughts. I do not think I have ever thought of Her or relied upon Her as much as I have done during the last few months. I feel very strongly that She has been guiding and helping me all along. There have been such almost miraculous incidents. Just when I felt everything was uncertain and was apprehensive of what might happen, a helping hand was stretched

out from the dark. Help came from the most unexpected quarters. I feel so humble when I think of this all-protective, all-guiding Power which envelopes one on every side—I have never thrown myself upon It so much as I have now done and never have I profited more than now. And yet one feels so stupidly frightened and so stupidly proud."

A devotee who suddenly had to undergo a major operation in a foreign country of the Far East wrote: "I was thinking so intensely of Ma, it never occurred to me to feel nervous or afraid. I was completely unconcerned when the doctors and nurses prepared for the operation."

On returning from the U.S.A. where, a devotee had met with unusually adverse and depressing circumstances in which he seemed caught for the rest of his life, he said: "I have never felt Mataji nearer than at that time. There seemed to be no way out of the difficulty. I had already resigned myself to it, when somehow the whole trouble resolved itself and I found myself free to return to the life I wanted to live. To this day

however I cannot understand how this could have been made possible."

These are only a few stray examples. Yet just as a sailor knows that land must be near when he notices a blade of straw floating on the water, so do we feel justified in surmising that we can have no idea of the magnitude and universality of Mataji's Lila.

\* \* \* \*

Last August we had already reported that Mataji reached Vrindaban on July 29th. The *Jhulan* celebrations as customary started on *Ekadashi*, July 30th, and *Jhulan Purnima*\* was observed most solemnly by Arati, Kirtan and a long midnight meditation. It is the anniversary of the memorable fullmoon night in 1922, when Mataji all by Herself went through the actions of a spiritual initiation (*Diksha*). She Herself was the *Guru*, the *Mantra* and the *Ishta*. Some time before this happened the *Kheyal* had come to Her to play the role of an aspirant for Self-realization. Thereupon the different stages of a *shadhaka*, namely the intense yearning for God or Truth, the finding of the *Guru* and initiation, then the performance of various *sadhanas* under His guidance—(the *Guru* was also Herself), spontaneously manifested through

Her body with a perfection quite beyond human imagination. During that period of Her life all the 24 hours were spent in *sadhanas*, She hardly ate or slept. Not that *sadhana* was necessary for Her in any way—there was nothing to be attained—it was just part of Her Lila and Her Lila is invariably self-sprung action manifesting for the benefit of all sentient beings.

\* \* \* \*

*Jhulan* means 'swing festival'. When this year at Vrindaban the swing was fixed in Didima's room next to the hall some birds' nests had to be removed from the ventilators. Two baby birds fell down. They died during the Kirtan at the time of fullmoon in Mataji's presence in holy Vrindaban—a rare combination of auspicious factors. After the function the fortunate little birds were given *samadhi* under a young mango plant in the compound.

Vrindaban is the place where Sri Krishna spent His childhood, where the *Rasalila* took place, the Divine love-play between Him and Radha, between Him and the Gopis. Every tree, every stone is associated with sacred memories. There is a saying that many Mahatmas live in Vrindaban in the guise of stones, trees, plants, birds, reptiles or animals, just to enjoy

\* Fullmoon.

the atmosphere of the blessed town.

Somewhere in the Ashram grounds there is a large white stone. Last spring the following strange incident took place: During one of Mataji's evening strolls a devotee from Gujerat saw a man appear and do Pranam to Mataji. She stopped and folded Her hands as She usually does and the devotee heard Her say: "Oh, in the shape of a stone!" She walked on and the devotee could clearly see the human figure disappear into the stone. When later he asked Mataji about it, She said: "You have also seen him?"

The Vrindaban Ashram was built only recently (the inauguration took place in March 1954\*), yet it has quickly developed and gained in importance. Mataji has favoured it with frequent short and long visits. Situated near the entrance of Vrindaban on the road to Mathura, it naturally attracts attention. The plot of land on which it stands measures approximately 8 bighas. It is planned to cultivate on it every species of the trees mentioned in the *Bhagavata*, so as to evoke the memory of ancient Vrindaban.

We have already reported at length about the temple of Mahaprabhu†; a temple of Shiva still awaits completion. A one-room cottage for a *sadhaka* and a new cow-shed were ceremonially opened on *Janmastami* day (Aug. 10th); Mataji Herself fed the cows.

Later that day She visited *Brahmanda Ghat* at Gokul‡, the famous spot where Jashoda Mai is said to have ordered her child Shri Krishna to open His mouth, suspecting that he was eating earth—and wonder of wonders—She beheld the whole universe in it.

Throughout Mataji's stay at Vrindaban bhaktas kept on arriving from far and near. On several occasions large numbers of the Sannyasis, Goswamis and Vaishnavites of the town were entertained at the Ashram.

From August 14th-17th Mataji's sojourn was interrupted by four days spent in Gwalior at the invitation of the Maharani; it was a most enjoyable trip.

On Sept. 10th Mataji left by car for Mainpuri, where She was accommodated at the Sri Ekarasānanda Ashram. About two furlongs before

\* See Ananda Varta, Vol. II, No. 1, p. 100.

† See Ananda Varta, Vol. III, No. 1, p. 37.

‡ Shri Krishna's birth place.

reaching Her destination, devotees came to receive Her. She was requested to get into a bullock-cart which bhaktas themselves drew. At the Ashram the students of the *Vidyapith* performed *Surya Namaskars* before Mataji and then *Sandhya*, *Havan* and *Arati* before the statue of Sri *Ekarasānanda*.

On Sept. 12th Mataji proceeded to Etawah. Here also She was welcomed most enthusiastically by a large gathering of people from Etawah and other towns and villages of the U. P. In the course of Her stay She visited, among other places, Shri Shivaji Maharaj's temple, where She had stayed in 1950 and where perpetual Kirtan was being performed this time. She was also taken to the spot where about 20 years ago She twice spent some time in *ajñata vasa* (incognito).

From 15th-17th Sept. Mataji blessed Kanpur\* with Her presence. As at Etawah She followed invitations to the compounds of various devotees. The Satsang was held in a Girls' College and on the roof of Her host's house.

On the 17th Mataji entrained for Allahabad. For the last few years She has always been present at a ceremony connected with the forth-

coming *Durga Puja* at Sri Gopal Thakur's Ashram. He himself having passed into Mahasamadhi, Mataji this year accepted the invitation of his family.

On Sept. 20th Mataji reached Banaras after an absence of full six months. A tremendous ovation was accorded to Her by a great number of bhaktas. A kirtan party received Her on the main road and triumphantly led the way to the Ashram which was decorated with special care and wore a truly festive appearance. Flower petals were showered on Mataji as She approached. She responded to our deep joy at having Her once again in our midst by giving Darshan for several hours that evening. During the annual celebration of the *Bhashitvata Jayanti*, which took place from Sept. 24th—Oct. 2nd, Mataji was present daily throughout the Hindi discourses, mornings and afternoons. Occasional heavy storms and rainshowers failed to create disturbance.

Foreigners hailing from Germany, Italy, France, Hungary, Mauritius and Israel came for Mataji's Darshan and some of them to talk to Her.

On Oct. 3rd Mataji motored to Vindhyachal, returning to Banaras on the 6th. On Oct. 7th, the anniversary

\* We were grateful to receive detailed reports of Mataji's visits to Mainpuri, Etawah and Kanpur. We regret however that due to lack of space we are unable to publish them.

of Sri Akhandānandaji's\* Mahasamādhi, a feast was given to Sannyasis and Brahmanas.

On Oct. 8th Mataji quite unexpectedly left for Bombay, where She put up in a special structure in the garden of a devotee at Vile Parle. Sri Gurupriya Devi had been in Bombay for treatment ever since leaving Solan in July. She accompanied Mataji to Calcutta, arriving there on Oct. 19th.

Durga Puja is the most important religious festival in Bengal. Apart from being observed in every family, it has in recent years become the custom for whole localities to join in community celebrations. During this season the entire city is in a festive mood for many days.

Devotees from Calcutta had come to Solan beseeching Mataji to be present at Calcutta during Durga Pūja. In an open space in Lake Road a very large pandal was erected and elaborately decorated. From every

corner of the city huge crowds flocked for Mataji's Darshan, not to speak of the many devotees who had come from outside. On Saptami day torrential rain played havoc, but the emergency was met immediately by covering the floor with wooden planks and platforms, so that every one could sit in the dry. It luckily cleared up the next day and the function henceforth proceeded undisturbed.

On Oct. 27th Mataji went to Dum Dum, returning on the 30th for Lakshmi Puja. On the 31st She journeyed to Deoghar and from there on Nov. 1st to Rajagriha. About the 8th of Nov. She is expected to reach Ranchi, where a permanent vighraha of Kali is to be installed in the Ashram During Divali. Mataji may possibly be in Banaras for Annakut, pass a few days at Vindhyaachal and is likely to reach New Delhi on the 20th. The Samyam Vrata will be observed at the Kali Bari, Reading Road from Nov. 22nd-28th, 1955.

\* Sri Gurupriya Devi's father.

# **SRI SRI MA'S 60th JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS**

Already the last issue of AnandaVarta contained a short announcement concerning the celebrations of Mataji's 60th Jayanti, which are to take place at Banaras from May 2nd-27th, 1956. We are singularly fortunate to be able to witness this happy event and the spontaneous urge in all of us is to express our profound joy over Mataji's presence among us by celebrating this auspicious day in a befitting manner worthy of the occasion. It is therefore naturally expected that all of us should join in the effort to make the function a unique success; with Mataji's blessings we can feel sure that it will be so.

It has been estimated that a minimum of Rs. 50,000/- will be required for a celebration of the kind we have in view. Local committees have been formed in all important centres in order to raise the necessary amount. We are glad to note that enthusiastic response has been received from most of them, who consider themselves privileged to be able to serve Mataji in this manner. It is hoped that the devotees and admirers of Sri Sri Ma will contact the committees of their respective areas and render whatever help they can.

A meeting of the General Council of the Sangha will be held during the Samyam Vrata at New Delhi at the end of this month to discuss and draw up a preliminary programme of the Jayanti celebrations. We hope to be able to publish the programme and other details in the February issue of 'Ananda Varta'.

---

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

The circle of our readers is growing, not only in India but also abroad. The 'Ananda Varta' has found its way to several countries in Europe, to America, Australia, China, Japan, Israel and Africa. At the request of some foreign subscribers we are now publishing a separate English edition in which the Bengali and Hindi sections have been omitted. Indian subscribers who would prefer to receive the English edition may kindly communicate with the editor.

\* \* \* \*

Our readers will be glad to learn that the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha has had two grammophone records prepared, one of Mataji singing *bhajans* and the other of Mataji replying to questions in Hindi. Bhaktas may order the records from the Banaras Ashram, at the price of Rs. 3/- each.

\* \* \* \*

"*Upadeshamrita Sangraha*", which is a collection of Mataji's sayings from the first seven volumes of Sri Gurupriya Devi's book "*Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi*" has been translated into Hindi and is available in Hindi as well as in Bengali at the price of Rs. 1/8/-.

\* \* \* \*

The third volume of Sri Gurupriya Devi's book "*Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma*" has been rendered into Hindi and has gone to Press. There is every hope that it will be ready for sale very shortly. Price Rs. 2/-/-.

\* \* \* \*

We are happy to inform our readers that Sri Gurupriya Devi's (Didi's) health has much improved since our last announcement. We hope that by Mataji's Grace this progress towards recovery will be maintained so that she may soon be restored to normal health.