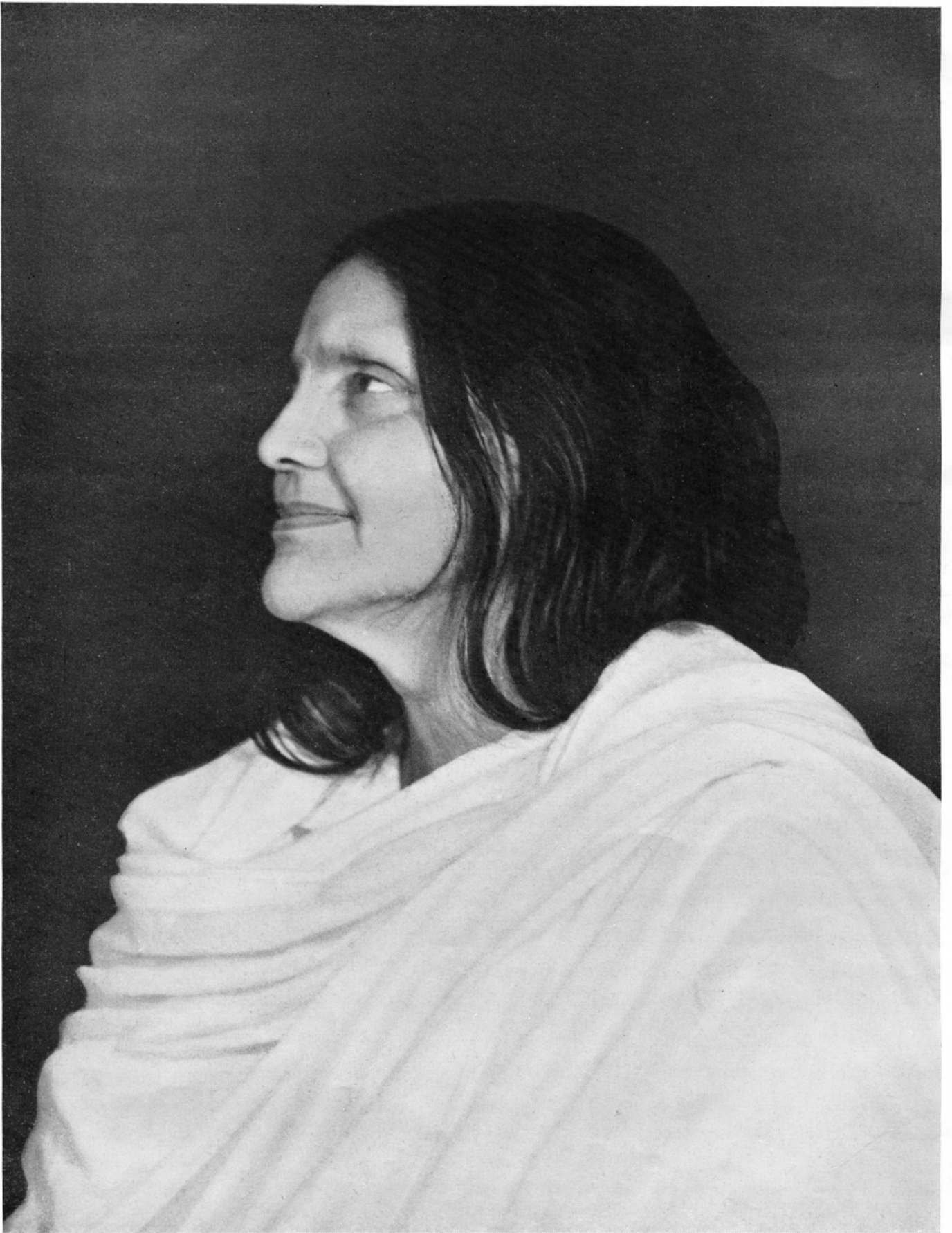


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The ONE who is the Eternal, the Atman,  
He Himself is the traveller on the path of Immortality,  
He is all in all, He alone is.

## MATRI VANI\*

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

121

You will have to turn your mind to Dharma;† for Dharma is the life of your life, the Self (Atma) that is established in Eternal Truth. Who is that Self? You must certainly get to know it. For how much longer will you reside in inns and journey on a road that leads astray and is beset with dangers and adversity? It is imperative to find one's own Path, to start out on the pilgrimage to one's Self—to renounce the merely pleasurable and adopt what is for one's highest good.

122

The Guru is God; He has accepted you, depend on Him. His grace and benediction pour out constantly. You must remain facing in His direction. In the measure that one engages in japa, meditation, remembrance of Him and so forth, the mind will tend to become calm.

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\* The Bengali original and its Hindi translation appeared in Ananda Varta Vol. VI, No. 1.

† The word 'Dharma' conveys in Sanskrit the idea of righteousness in thought, life and action and implies in addition a sense of inwardness in outlook, purity in aspiration and wholeness in character capable of reflecting the blissful integrity of Eternal Truth..

123

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 the 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 Shastras for the wife and son of the deceased.

124

On receiving the news of the unnatural death of a devotee's son :

Mataji said : "Write to the parents that there is nothing to be done by them at present except to abide in fortitude and bear their tragic bereavement with heroic strength and calm. Such is the law of God's creation. In some cases events of that kind are brought to an end by a special disaster of this sort. The current of life in the world is indeed made up of joys and sorrows, for man is born to reap the fruits of his past actions. Therefore having been blessed by birth in a human body, it is one's duty to seek unceasingly the path that leads beyond pleasure and pain. Verily, quite often by annihilating misfortune through misfortune God attracts man to Himself.

That you have to-day been plunged into an ocean of grief by the deceased and also whatever he himself has had to suffer, must be understood to be the results of some very grave Karma. Nevertheless you should keep in mind that even through this terrible blow he is advancing on his upward path. Pray to God for the welfare of his soul. Being the offspring of a religious family he has consequently had the privilege of a certain amount of *Satsung*. You know, father, that the Self is indestructible and that only the body is subject to change and decay.

That this body (Mataji) does not usually speak about past and future is well known to you, father and mother. If opportunity offers both of you may attempt to go on a pilgrimage some time. Even though you are suffering unbearable agony through the loss of your son, it is imperative to endeavour

to calm yourself by the remembrance and contemplation of God. Also let either of you regularly every day read a small portion of the Srimad Bhagavata; when you have completed the whole of it, start again from the beginning and so on. While reading imagine that your son is by your side listening.

125

On the journey through life in this world nobody ever remains happy. The pilgrimage to the Goal of human life is the only path to supreme happiness. Try to tread that path which is your very own, where there is no question of pleasure and pain—the path that leads to freedom from egotism and to the highest Bliss.

126

To remain calm and at peace under all circumstances is man's duty. To form a bad opinion of a person just because one has heard some gossip about him is wrong. Hostility, condemnation, abusive language, ill feeling and so forth, even if kept concealed within one's mind will and must fall back on oneself. Nobody should ever harm himself by harbouring such thoughts and feelings.

127

Human beings are not all made to the same pattern. From various places a great many people have assembled together in the sole endeavour at finding the highest good. It is then not always possible for everyone to give expression to his inborn tendencies and inclinations (*Samskar*) and this is why difficulties arise. The ONE who is all-pervading assumes particular forms at particular times. If, anchored in patience, you adopt this view, is it not likely that you will find peace? There are some who create disturbance and vexation for others as well as for themselves, but this is not what this body (*Mataji*) wishes: on the contrary it requests everybody to refrain from such behaviour.

128

To aspire to the realization of Truth is alone worthy of man. In the home of the house-holder (*Grihasthashram*) there should be no strain. Allowing

oneself to be agitated by mental anxiety amounts to strain—this is not the line to be taken, for by such a state of mind the power to create obstacles is developed.

By seeking refuge in the Power that is Bliss, the Destroyer of obstacles, Goodness and Beneficence, peace will be established in the home. This is man's special pursuit as well as his duty. Those sensible, intelligent and wise men and women who depend on God and the Guru and full of faith, in a spirit of renunciation, endeavour to attain to Reality should advance along any path that is most helpful to their aspirations, ever remaining tranquil and choosing that which promotes peace. In all one's actions one must aim at fulfilling one's Dharma.

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# MATAJI'S AMARA VANI

(26)\*

*Question* : Why does one not remember one's former lives ?

*Mataji* : Because of ignorance ; where is no Knowledge due to the veil that hides it.

*Question* : Why should there be a veil ? After the body dies the mind continues ; for one's *samskāras* (tendencies and inclinations) live on. Since these *samskāras* persist and also since one is able to remember what has happened to-day or yesterday, why should the events of one's past lives be forgotten ?

*Mataji* : Having entered the kingdom of forgetting† and error, everything is forgotten and everything is erroneous ; this world is the place of forgetting and illusion.

*Question* : Why should so very much be forgotten ? A small portion might at least be remembered !

*Mataji* : You say, do you not, that the Lord Buddha talked about the events of 500 of his previous lives. Can you recall everything that you experienced in your present birth, from your childhood until now ? You die at every instant without being aware of it—at this time you are neither an infant, nor a child, nor a youth. No sooner is a baby born than he starts of his own accord to drink his mother's milk and when he has drunk he feels happy and satisfied ; by this he has already given full evidence of his former births. Now also, whenever your hunger has been stilled you experience a similar sense of well-being and contentment as you did in your early childhood, only you do not recollect what you felt at that time.

*Question* : How does a *samskāra* form ?

*Mataji* : Through the force of sustained practice (*abhyāsa yoga*). If you aspire after God His remembrance will come to you automatically at the moment of death. The individual is that which is bound, and the world (*jagat*) means perpetual motion (*goti*). Whatever appears in this world of creatures is the manifestation of the ONE. The fact that you die at every moment,

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\* The Bengali original and its Hindi translation appeared in Ananda Varta, Vol. VI, No 1, page 4.

† The Bengali word is *bhūl* which means both error and forgetting.

in other words that *Brahma* (the creator) *Vishnu* (the Preserver) and *Shiva* (the Destroyer) are at work all the time, becomes evident when the body expires. If you wander about in the world of error and forgetting you must of necessity forget. Now what is a *samskara*? Just like the *samskara* (consecration) of a temple—that is to say what has already existed is taking shape. Furthermore consciously or unconsciously whatever you experience and whatever you do leaves an impression on your mind and this is styled *samskara*. He who has the capacity to see, will be able to ascertain that these imprints or *samskaras* originate from previous births. A *Jnani* (one who has attained to Supreme Knowledge) can see the impressions of a great number of past lives. But even though you may know the events of thousands of your former births, so long as you think in terms of evolution and progress, involution and retrogression—what can you possibly see?

All that exists anywhere in the world, be it trees and plants or insects and reptiles or anything else—their birth is indeed your birth and their death your death. On the level where everything is contained within you and you are present in everything—there is only HE and HE alone.

Suppose you are able to visualize five or six of your previous lives : your vision is limited by number. If you can recollect the history of your former births it means that you know only the course of your own lives in their own particular times and places, but you are not aware of the various movements and states of stability in the whole universe : you see 'the many' ; how will you go beyond this limited vision ? By finding your Self within the many. Who is that Self ? HE and none but HE. So long as HE, the Self, has not been revealed you are imprisoned within the boundary and boundary means ignorance ; therefore error and forgetting.

*Question* : Are you suggesting that we must reach the state of Divinity (*Ishwara Koti*) ?\*

*Mataji* : There is no question of this. So long as the veil of ignorance persists, it is impossible. Whether the aforesaid refers to the state of Divinity or the stage of the aspirant you yourself must ascertain !

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\* The soul which descends from above and assumes a human form in the interest of the world is essentially divine and belongs to the category of *Ishwara* (*Ishwara koti*), but the soul which is burdened with the seeds of *Karman* and takes on a particular human body to reap their fruits in course of nature is on the evolutionary path and belongs to the category of *Jiva* (*Jiva koti*).



*Question :* Surely, one who has become established in the Self will have to forget the world ?

*Mataji :* In the Kingdom of forgetting one forgets. So long as you are identified with the body (*deha*†) it is your very nature to call out "give, give ! (*deo, deo !*)" you say : "give !" because you are in want and where want exists there must needs be error and forgetting. When in the midst of all this you practise *sadhana* in order to realize your Self, or rather, when by God's Grace *sadhana* comes about, (for *sadhana* is itself the Grace of God), then after having worked through layers and layers of ignorance you discover that you are in fact the whole. "I am," this is why there are trees and plants and everything that exists, however manifold. Every single form is my form. So long as there is the "I", its nature and particularity is to want, to desire. There is no end to this. In the very form of the human body lie numberless feelings and ideas. numberless modes of expression. Indeed all forms that exist are infinite. Consequently 'I also must be infinite.' When this is realized you see that all forms, all species, all manifestations are also you yourself : thus you eternally *are*. So then you have discovered that you exist eternally and that you are of many forms ; you see that you are infinite and that your own particular form has an infinite variety of expressions. These countless expressions are existing within you in diverse ways—in fact you yourself are all these expressions. The separate aspects in their entirety and in an infinite number of variations are within you. When this becomes direct knowledge, when the manifold aspects are realized as a whole, then you are sure to find the ONE. How can the ONE and the infinite number be separate ? The many exist in the ONE and the ONE in the many.

This is why when you can visualize five hundred of your former births you are still limited by number—for there is so very much more than this ! When you have discovered yourself in all the untold forms, you realize that the Lord is present in everyone of them. When the essential nature of infinity and finiteness becomes fully revealed, you see that there is finiteness in infinity and infinity in the finite. You then are in a position to solve the problem between God with form and Formlessness.

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† There is a curious pun on the word 'deha' which means 'body' in Sanskrit and 'give' in Bengali. It implies that the assumption of body marks the beginning of a life of unceasing want.

Look, if there were no veil of ignorance for the individual, how could God's *Lila* (Divine Play) be carried on? Where error and forgetting exist, there the *Lila* could not proceed without the covering of the veil of ignorance. Consequently it is but natural that it should be there. Thus the world is perceived by the senses (*Srishti-Drishti*). To be a separate individual implies bondage and bondage is identical with the veil of ignorance : here is the clue to the forgetting about which you asked your question.

When you speak of previous births a feeling arises deep within you : Was there ever a time when I was not? You think in terms of before and after because you are confined within time. But in Reality there is no question of time and out of time, of day and night, of before and after ; so long as you remain enslaved by time there will be birth and death. Actually there is no such thing. It is true that at some stage the memory of previous lives will certainly occur ; on the other hand what is the significance of before and after, since "I exist throughout eternity !"

*Question* : If someone advances along the path of *advaita* (non-duality) will he acquire *Vibhūtis* (supernatural powers) ?

*Mataji* : If you speak of a *sadhaka* who aspires to the state of unqualified Oneness (*advaita sthiti*) then even if supernatural powers come to him, he will not accept them. Whereas the aspirant who worships God with form and attributes will accept whatever supernatural powers are granted to him, regarding them as manifestation of the ONE. Supernatural powers are bound to be developed in the course of *sadhana* since they represent the fruits of one's efforts. "*Vibhuti*" means the various manifestations of the all-pervading (*Vibhu*) One. For this reason it is only natural and certain that they should occur. The aspirant must however take care not to be possessed by these powers, because his progress would then be arrested at that stage.

The seeker whose approach is along the path of *advaita* will not accept duality, whereas one who practises the contemplation of God-with-form will not accept non-duality ; yet in the course of his practice he will arrive at the understanding of what supernatural powers actually are. What is called the "attributeless" (*nirguna*) must also become revealed. Thus the solution of the apparent discrepancy between *sākara* (God-with-form) and *nirākara* (the Formless) must come. At a particular stage diversity disappears, but this is

not to be mistaken for self-realization. For those who advance by the method of *Advaita*, the realization of the Oneself must come with the help of discrimination (*viveka*) and dispassion (*vairagya*). When all differences have been burnt up and everything has merged into the ONE this marks a state of achievement that some call *Advaita Sthiti* (established in non-duality). The everchanging world with its varying movements and states of rest and all diversity have completely vanished; only the One remains. Here the 'many' are simply non-existent; there is only One Supreme Reality (*Brahman*), One self (Atman). This is styled the state of *Advaita*.

Expressed from another angle: all is consciousness and nothing but that: Name, existence in space—everything. Form, species, manifestation is consciousness and in fact non-material. On the plane where no "others" exist only the One alone, everything is His very own image. Diversity as perceived from the worldly point of view has no place there. The word *Vibhuti* (supernatural power) consists of *Vibhu* (all-pervading)—the All-pervading one is Himself the image; and *ti* stands for *Tini* (He)—the Almighty who alone is in all forms by virtue of His *Vibhuti* (Divine Power.) Just as there is water in ice and ice in water. If there were no water out of what could ice have formed? If it did not lie in the nature of water to become solid under certain conditions, how could ice come into being? In other words: all is in Him and He is in everything; this is expressed by the saying: *Sarvang Khalvidam Brahman* (In reality all this is Brahman). In *advaita* the seeker becomes the eternal servant (who is one with his Master.) *Eternal* servant denotes that there is nothing transient in this relationship. THAT manifests as form and modes of being. If someone who aspires at the Formless realizes Him as the One-without-a-second, but fails to realize Him in the field of His Divine Play (*Lila*), his realization is not complete, for he has not solved the problem of duality. Different methods of approach have been described here. But Realization must be all-comprehensive, all embracing and one must find one's Self in everything. The tree yields a shoot and out of this shoot grows a tree. A huge tree is potentially contained in the small shoot. But as one gets new shoots from that tree, it has again come back to itself. No simile is ever perfect. One again has to choose those aspects of it which are applicable. That the One permeates all and that all abide within the One has to be revealed simultaneously. He is and He is not, yet neither is He nor is He not; how can this be? When looking at a seed you see only the seed, but not the plant or anything else;

but when the tree has developed it bears leaves, flowers, fruits, there is then an endless variety of growth. The mere seed as such contains nothing; therefore one may say: The world does not exist. Yet again when the tree has grown, it does exist. To say it is not because was not is also correct. Nevertheless it cannot be said that it does not exist, for what has once appeared, is. How can all this be possible? HE is of an infinite diversity of forms and at the same time One integral Whole. Then also He is not, because He was not. Where is the language to express all this? It is said that there is Being and Non-being and yet neither Being nor Non-being. In terms of duality: He Himself plays His Divine Play with Himself (alone). In the aforesaid a state had been described where everything is burnt and only the ONE remains, so that even when searching for diversity one cannot find it anymore; everything has disappeared into the One. It means that some aspect is still in darkness, for this is not Self-Revelation, the Kingdom of Pure consciousness has not yet been entered. There is no knowing when one will rise beyond this state.

When pure consciousness has been attained the image will be known as the Essence Itself. What was sorrow from the worldly point of view is now *viraha*, the pangs of separation from THAT, in other words to exist as a particular individual, (apart from the All). These pangs of separation are without end and manifest in ever new ways. By a mere stroke of imagination God creates this vast universe. What actually is this creation? HE Himself, the ONE. Why then are there distinctions, why should there be 'others'? There are no 'others'. How can the ocean be contained in the drop? When the ONE reveals Himself as a *vigraha* (image)—namely as Radha-Krishna—this *vigraha* exists eternally. Where? In Vrindaban. For him whose knots of the heart have been undone, only Vrindaban exists and nothing else. What you have realized as *Lila* (God's Divine Play) is infinite; and where will this infinity be known? When the world and all that belongs to it has been discarded? Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa said: "The Great Mother dances". Who is a Vaishnavite? One who sees Vishnu everywhere. The idea that the world has a boundary is delusive and consequently the conception of many different powers is also an illusion. It is you who have created the distinction between the natural and the supernatural—as a matter of fact all and everything is but His *Lila*. Within the All He will be found. The supernatural is not apart from the rest. If one remains confined within the boundary one's heart cannot become Vrindaban. When Realization has occurred there is nothing but Vrindaban,

nothing but Shiva, complete non-duality. Then only the entire universe has become His Divine Play. It is and it is not—as a matter of fact *Prakriti* (primordial matter) is also His. In the state of Pure Being the distinction between the natural and supernatural ceases to exist. When Consciousness has been revealed in its fullness, some present it as the state of *advaita* and others proclaim that everything is then seen as His Divine Play. He is the *vigraha* and at the same time He is not. The word *samagra* (whole, complete) denotes that *sama* (equality) comes first and foremost (*agra*). If one does not realize that equality comes first of all, it means that one still sees with the eyes of the world and this is not *advaita*. Whereas when non-duality has been attained, what else is there to be gained? In worldly life one had been drowned in sorrow and affliction—drowned means covered—all this has been left behind and there is only THAT. This image is perceived in everything; in motion and in rest is He alone. Who is the reflection (*Pratibimba*) of Reality? Also He alone. In this condition—who can cause one pain or trouble? The Oneness of all things has now been revealed. The grief that made you miserable to-day, has become the pangs of separation from the ONE. Worldly sorrow comes through the sense of want, but to pine for God is man's true nature.

What are the experiences of a seeker whose approach is through the contemplation of God with form and attributes? At first he is engrossed solely in the particular image he adores. Then, as he progresses he begins to question:—Is my Lord as small as all that? No, in Rama, Krishna, Shiva, Durga and in all other deities dwells my Lord. My Lord has many faces. At a later stage he comes to realize that his Beloved resides within every creature and everyone is in Him. On this path there are many planes and levels. The development from a particular angle is described here: To begin with, one is convinced that none can be likened to one's own Lord. If this attitude does not prevail at the start, deep devotion cannot be developed. However, by and by, as one's faith and adoration grow one comes to feel that one's Beloved is no other than the ONE. One's intense love and veneration will not allow one any longer to entertain such a petty conception of one's Lord. The *sadhaka's* humility and devotion increase; At last he realizes that ultimately the ONE is within everything and everything is contained in Him. He has now found in the ONE the image that he worships. From the seed the tree has grown and the tree has again yielded seed.

‘Devo bhūtvā devam yajeta’. To be able to worship the Lord one has to become identified with Him. If after Self-realization one still performs the worship of one’s particular deity, it means engaging in one’s own Puja. This is *Lila*.

*Question* : Whose *Lila* ?

*Matuji* : There is only God’s *Lila*. Whose else’s could it possibly be ?

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# Mother and the Supernatural Powers

*Sri Vijaiananda (Dr. A. Weintrob)*

Many people are attracted towards the spiritual path or eager to come in contact with saints and sages by the lure of psychic powers. Frequently we have been asked by outsiders whether Mother performs miracles. This childish attitude towards the 'beyond' generally changes when people become more familiar with spiritual things. All miracles are within the realm of the illusory world (*Maya*) and thus subject to relativity. For example to fly in the air, a normal thing for a bird, becomes a miracle when achieved by a human being. In any case, the Power that has brought into being this relative universe can also alter its details or the whole of it: and this Power resides in all living things and by its mere presence constantly performs the miracle of dynamic life.

But let us examine the problem from the ordinary (*vyavaharic*) point of view in order to reply to the question whether Mother performs miracles. It is a well-known fact that at a certain stage of development Yogis are able to accomplish all sorts of feats

that strike the imagination of the ordinary man. This is brought to its culmination in what is called the state of *Hiranyagarbha*, when one has mastered the cosmic *prana* and is identified with it. But this is by no means the final goal; all sages insist that psychic powers are only obstacles on the way and that to make use of them would block the road to further progress.

Great *bhaktas* also are able to perform miracles. Their personal will having been completely surrendered to God, they are not bound by psychic powers. In their case a miracle may be wrought by the Divine Will sometimes even without their being aware of it. As regards the full-blown *Jnani*, who is perfectly established in the Real, there is no reason for him to be interested in changes within the illusory world, that is to say in substituting one kind of illusion for another.

Mother cannot be called a *Yogini*, although during the period of Her life when She played the role of a *Sadhika*,

She passed in an extraordinarily short span of time through all the stages and varieties of *Yoga*, right to their final perfection. Nor may we call Her a *bhakta*, although this too has been part of Her *lila* of *sadhana*, for in the state of Oneness there is no worshipper nor any object of worship. Moreover from the point of view of Her devotees She is Herself the object of worship.

She is no doubt a perfect *Jnani* and a liberated being, but not in the ordinary sense of these words. For to have attained to *Jnana* one must first have been in *Ajnana*, to be liberated one must first have been in bondage. Mother has Herself indubitably declared that She has never been in the state of ignorance and bondage, except as a matter of play during a period of Her *lila* of *sadhana*. An M. A. who plays at appearing for matriculation does not thereby cease to be an M. A. As regards miracles it seems inappropriate to say that Mother has supernatural powers: for Her there is no difference between the natural and the supernatural and what we style as miracles comes to Her as naturally as to us eating or walking. Many saints and sages of the past have performed miracles in a spectacular manner in order to convince people of their spiritual attainment or their divine mission. Nothing of this kind has ever been noticed in Mother's case.

When asked about some supernatural happening She looks unattached and almost unconcerned. The reason I believe to be that She considers psychic feats as what they really are—trifling things. Furthermore it is my own (no doubt limited) opinion that Mother does not perform the miracles Herself. Let me make this clear: Mother, who is so near to our hearts is the same Mother as that Being spoken of in the Scriptures: free from the taints of birth and rebirth, all-knowing, all-powerful, pure Consciousness, etc. This Consciousness does not act by Itself, but through the medium of Its *Maya*, Its *Shakti*; it is not Mother who performs the miracles, but Her *Shakti*, at Her slightest wish or indication—as a king has just to say one word or make a sign to his minister and he knows that the work will be done to perfection, he may even ignore the details and the way in which it is being done.

But let us leave the field of speculation and see how in daily life Mother plays with the so-called supernatural, for no other purpose than our spiritual benefit and from no other motive than Her infinite mercy.

### 1

Curing diseases is the first thing a layman expects a sage to be able to do. Amongst the crowds surrounding



Mother one might discover a good number of people who have come in the hope of being relieved from a disease which doctors have failed to cure. But let people approach Her from any motive, in whatever way their relationship with Her may begin, it will sooner or later lead them to the right path.

When an unperfected *Yogi* uses his power to heal, he may possibly create disturbances in the patient. Diseases sometimes prove helpful to spiritual progress or else protect the aspirant from some other greater evil. Besides they happen by the law of *Karma* and if removed the reaction will be felt in another way. But Mother knows the source of everything and when someone is cured by Her grace—as it frequently happens—the results of the *Karma* (*Karma phal*) are cut out by their roots. Almost each one of Her devotees will be able to relate at least one case where Her grace has relieved him from some illness, be it a most severe disease (as in the case of the leper cured in Ambala in 1951) or perhaps just an ordinary rheumatic pain.

Sometimes when the disease is likely to be helpful She may shift it on to a period when the individual will be able to bear it more easily and get the maximum benefit out of it.

2

Even the Angel of Death has to obey Her. Only quite recently I heard about a devotee who was to die while on tour in America. But by Mother's grace his death was postponed until he returned to his family in India, where he finally expired. I am told by a reliable person that Mother has confirmed this fact.

3

What first strikes people who come in contact with Mother, is Her extraordinary power to captivate human hearts. Some *sadhakas*, especially those following the *tantric* path acquire in the first stages the power to charm people. This power is rooted in the vital being. Others in whom the *Sattwa guna* predominates, attract people by a natural charm emanating from their body.

But Mother's attraction is of quite a different nature. It is the reflection of our own true Self, the *Atman* that shines through Mother's physical frame.

4

As soon as we come in contact with Mother, at the first glance She sees our minds from the most secret subconscious level up to our superficial social personality, as easily as we may read from an open book. Whenever

we come into Mother's presence She immediately knows our state of mind, why we feel worried or pleased etc. It often occurs that someone having asked Mother a question mentally, will get the reply either uttered audibly by Her or in any other way, depending on the circumstances. To tell Her a lie or to try to conceal something from her is to act like the ostrich that hides its head in the sand. All this has been said from the ordinary point of view, for in reality Mother has no need to read our minds—She is ourselves.

## 5

Seeing and hearing from a distance : Mother has Herself said :\* “Just as at a flash of torch-light your faces gleam forth in bold outlines, all your facial expressions appear in my mind when you meditate on me or talk about me or pray to me...” Many of us have experienced that prayers addressed to Mother mentally and from any distance receive a response ; that She has an amazing knowledge of what we do most secretly. As regards our *sadhana* for instance She at times discloses in private or public things which we believed nobody could possibly know.

## 6

Our thoughts, our attitude of mind,

our moods at certain periods which may last for several days are based on definite types that have their root in the flow of the *pranic* energy (life force) in our bodies. Mother can at will change that root and thereby our whole attitude of mind.

## 7

The world that we perceive with our senses is only a part of the manifested universe. The sages say that there are other planes, six higher than the physical plane and seven nether worlds. Mother has often told us how beings invisible to ordinary eyes come to pay their respects to Her. In the life of the Lord Buddha it has also been recorded that *Devas* came into His presence.

## 8

Sometimes, if necessary, Mataji may manifest Herself far away from Her physical body, in a subtle body. Some of Her devotees have actually felt Her presence in *sukshma*.

## 9

We read in the Bible how Christ performed the miracle of feeding a multitude with a small amount of food. On several occasions, when Mataji was distributing Prasad a small quantity was found sufficient for a large number of people.

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\* She “Mother seen by Her Devotees,” p. 115.

It happens, while distributing fruit for example that the number of fruits tallies exactly with that of the persons present. In some cases when there appeared to be a shortage of one fruit, it was found out later that one person had received a double share and that this had a special significance.\*

## 10

Everything that Mother does is infallible (*amogha*) and bears the touch of perfection even to the slightest details. Suppose She cooks some food, it is always most delicious—not the best cook would be able to equal it; if She distributes fruits and sweets they are of the best type and according to the taste of the recipient; if She presents us with some cloth it will be just at the moment we need it and exactly the kind we were wanting; when She sings, it is always in perfect rhythm and tune. I have never seen Mother play a musical instrument except once, a few months ago, when She took a pair of cymbals (*Kartal*) into Her hands and began to play with such skill and perfection, as no human being would be able to do.

The atmosphere of the miraculous around Mother has impressed me ever since the very first day that I have

met Her. It is a daily experience in our relationship with Mother.

## 11

Mother can call down rain or stop it at will. When She toured South India in 1952, Madras Province had been suffering from acute scarcity of rain for a prolonged period. I was present when a delegation came and prayed to Mother to bring about rainfall. No sooner had Mother and Her party crossed over the area of South India on our way back, it began to rain in great abundance in Madras Province. This was reported in the newspapers.

## 12

Almost everyone of Mother's devotees will be able to recount at least one or two miracles that Mother has wrought for him or in his presence.

But the most wonderful miracle that She performs and the least apparent is that of the purification and transformation of our minds and hearts. Mother has repeatedly declared that in actual fact there is no need for us to "become" liberated: we are already free. The only thing that has to be done is to remove the obstacles that veil Reality, namely to purify the mind.

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\* See Ananda Varta, Vol. IV/3, p. 251-52.

Many aspirants can bear witness as to how Mother helped them on this 'razor edge' path—not only the way every *Guru* does, but in a miraculous way, obliterating in a few days obstructions that would normally have required long years of strenuous efforts to be

overcome. Sometimes even, identified with the *sadhaka* She may carry him across an obstacle, like a Mother lifting her child up in her arms.

The miracle of inner transformation is the true miracle—for this alone we should pray to Mother.

# UNFOLD THY DIVINE NATURE

*Sri Swami Sivananda , Rishikesh*

Peaceful, suspicious and beautiful, radiant, ever-pure and immortal is the nature of the inner Consciousness, the Atman, that pervades all creation. It is on account of the wrong superimposition of multiple unreal traits upon himself that man becomes ensnared, miserable and imperfect. A little reflection, introspection and enquiry will reveal that in the heart of every human being there is an impulse for self-awareness, an urge to know, to be happy and to be deathless. This reveals that man's real nature is Satchidanand, or existence, knowledge and bliss absolute. This is your birthright. If you deny yourself this, then you abrogate the very purpose of life.

All aspects of the human consciousness such as that of the race, parentage, intelligence and power are not representative of what one really is. These aspects depend upon the factors that are not permanent. They change when things change. They also change when the individual alters his thoughts, mode of living, or his philosophy and view of life. One can easily see how the other layers of inhibitions, habits and aptitudes are shed and acquired

from time to time in accordance with the changing circumstances and self-effort. But the Soul-Consciousness, however dormant it may be, cannot be shaken off by anyone, since it springs from the depth of one's real nature within.

To manifest this inner Consciousness is the essence of spiritual life. This is the goal of every human being. The purpose of life is to eliminate all that is negative and evil in man's personality and to develop in himself all that is sublime, good, auspicious and noble. That is done through the means of self-discipline and righteous living.

Moral rectitude and ethical perfection form the universal basis of all spiritual endeavours. Be good, do good, be kind, be pure, be compassionate, be tolerant, serve, love, give, purify, introspect, reflect, meditate and realize God, constitute the essence of all religious teachings.

Cultivation of positive traits such as purity, truthfulness, nobility, unselfish love, forbearance, humility,

absence of anger, greed and lust, spirit of brotherhood, self-sacrifice, integrity, composure of mind, and restraint of the senses, form the various disciplines in spiritual life. Renunciation of attachment, pride, egoism and all worldly desires are the basic requisites for Self-realization.

Recitation of the Lord's Name or Mantra, meditation on His form and attributes, perception of God immanent in all beings and worship of God through service of His creatures form the main means for attaining Self-realization.

Blessed Self, resolve anew to lead the spiritual life with utmost sincerity and perseverance. You should ever endeavour to correct your defects and mistakes, not under the burden of shame or a guilty complex, but with an earnest desire to evolve yourself ethically, morally and spiritually, so that you need no longer be tormented by mental conflicts, sorrow and suffering, but can set upon a new vista of joyous experiences and spiritual fulfilment.

May there be peace, prosperity and well-being all around. May all be happy. May the blessings of Gods be upon all !

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# THE ROOT OF JOY IN CULTURE PATTERNS

. Ramaswami Sastri)

In human civilisation the trend is for man's psychic needs to dominate his physical needs. In sub-human creation the reverse is the fact. That is why we must evaluate civilisations and cultures by psychic tests. It is by contact with other individuals and by life in and through society that man's psychic needs attain clarity and and sublimation and realisation. No two individuals are alike and yet no two individuals are totally unlike. It is on the elements of likeness that the national culture is built. In the same way there are basic and universal elements of likeness on which the universal culture is founded.

The life of man is not built on instincts as in the case of the sub-human kingdom but is built on intellect. That is why every man tends to vary from others. But all the same there is a common racial heritage and there is a basic fund of common social experience issuing in a social mind. The individuals vanish but the society can live for ever. The social pattern must and will change during generations but there is a basic structural pattern of culture which tends to

persist. If it changes *in toto* the culture must be deemed to be dead.

Thus culture is in the main a way of life. It includes usages and customs as well as beliefs and creeds and depends largely on the institutions in a society and the loyalty of the individual units to them. Habits of food and dress, the style of secular and sacred architecture, the ideals of education and life, the shape of the arts as a whole, the pattern of social decorum and demeanour and etiquette, the economic ideals, the philosophic ideas and religious beliefs etc. are all vital elements in the general pattern of culture.

Such is the interaction of the individual personality and the social personality. Each acts and reacts on the other. After passing out of schools and colleges and Universities, we are life-long students in the bigger school of social life. Some responses are consciously regulated but many responses become automatic and habitual. The concept of values in each society has a great influence on each individual concept of values in life.

The concepts of beauty and value are the soul's contribution to existence. They are not inherent in things. They are our inner addition to the external colours and harmonies and rhythms and symmetries. But here again the modern man living in large cities and having increasing power over Nature is prone to think that he is the maker of these concepts of beauty and value and to ignore or deny their supernatural and divine origin and control. Just as there is a gap between fact and value so there is a gap between value and joy. It is this innate, inalienable, infinite, eternal overflow of the element of spiritual joy that creates the concepts of beauty and value in the plane of the mind and invests facts with a new meaning and purpose and value. Facts and events crumble and disappear but the values remain though they may change while joy is perennial and eternal and unchanging.

The ultimate service of these values and culture patterns is the self-expression of the joy of the spirit in diverse forms. But the free overflow of this joy can be poisoned or perverted or hindered or even choked by perverse mental attitudes and evil customs, for instance, in modern industrial civilisations women crowd into factories for work in the name of liberty and equality. Even children are sucked into the whirlpools of industrial production.

The love of luxurious living increases. Even the habits of food and drink begin to change. Cigarettes, chocolates and intoxicating drinks abound. Clubs and Cinemas displace temples and bhajan halls. The standards of morality begin to fall and the percentage of divorces begins to rise. Self-control declines and contraceptives increase. Artistic taste becomes more and more perverted and artistic achievement tends to become more and more mechanised and bereft of the surge of the joyous emotion of creative art. A growing scepticism in regard to right and wrong and an increasing agnosticism and atheism in regard to God becomes more and more in life.

This is the great danger that always threatens civilisation. The ripeness in refinement tends to turn into rottenness. Civilisation tends towards love and worship of pleasure and such over-civilisation tends to kill civilisation itself. Let us take the illustration of going to a beauty-spot or a centre of sublimity or holiness. You can go to it by plane or by railway or by steamer or by car or on foot. The intensity of the ecstasy of the attainment diminishes with the ease of attainment and the love of much ease. The goal is reached but the glory slips away. Technocracy flourishes but goodness and holiness diminish. It is hence clear that no individual and



no society can afford to tamper with or dilute the fundamentals of cultural patterns and refinement. If they do so they do so at their peril. We must test each proposed change by the test, does it increase or lessen the purity and intensity of our concepts of joy and loveliness and goodness and holiness? Does it enrich or impoverish our inner experience? Does it feed egoism or negate egoism? We can best know the self by forgetting it, because by doing so we can see the Real Self.

The modern era of urbanisation and speed and publicity and advertisement is not conducive to leisure and receptivity and contemplation without which the receptivity to the highest values or the capacity to create them cannot exist. It must hence be the function of the education of children and the leaders of men and women who are but children of a larger growth to instil in the coming generation and the present generation the need for the preservation and perpetuation of the highest values and the essential and traditional cultural patterns of the various human societies in the interests of the civilisation of nations and the divinisation of man. Each generation must pass on to the next its cultural pattern enriched and sublimated and not impoverished and debased to the point of obliteration.

The above are some of the many reasons why I value so highly Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee's darsan and gospel. "The world is too much with us" and the spirit of Ananda is too little with us, though we say with our lips "from Ananda all things proceed" (Anandadhyeva Khalu imani bhootani jayante). I am writing this paper on the first day of the Navaratri which is devoted to the worship of Devi.

Kreeda te Loka rachana  
Sakha te chinmayah Sivah  
Aharaste Sadanandah  
Vasaste hridayam satam.

(your sport is the creation of the universe; your companion is Siva who is pure consciousness; your food is bliss; and your abode is the hearts of good persons).

Mataji, like Sri Ramana Maharshi, is rooted in the basic Satchidananda. From joy comes love and love materialises as beauty. When the individual life and the under-national and international life are based on joy and beauty, there is perfection in individual and universal life but not till then. For this dynamic spiritual leaders are vital and indispensable. Fortunately India has never failed to have an unbroken succession of them. In an age of ease and luxury and worldliness they are rooted in simplicity and altruism and divinism. Mataji is Joy

and radiates joy. One who has seen her even once can never become alien to Ananda. The radiation of joy from her is from her entire self but is at its maximum in her look and her smile (Kataksha and mandahasa). We call her Mother and she calls herself our Daughter. Uma is the Mother of the Universe and yet the daughter of Himalaya. The saint who is habitually in the realm of the superconscious and comes down into the plane of the conscious to help and uplift others is the only reliable guide to the solution

of the harassing problems of humanity, because selfish and worldly men merely confuse themselves and us.

Dehābhimāne galite vijnāte  
paramātmani

Yatra Yatra mano Yāti tatra  
tatra patāmṛtam

(when egoism slips away and God is realised, wherever the mind goes it revels in nectar).

(Saraswati Rahasya Upanishad).

# MA ANANDAMAYEE, AN ILLUMINATION FOR THE AGE

(Principal Jitesh Chandra Guha, M.A., B.L.)

The times are out of joint. The world is in turmoil. Values are fast losing their validity. Eternal verities are being challenged. Old moorings are giving way. Ancient traditions are being thrown on the scrap-heap. The whole atmosphere is surcharged with a spirit of unbelief and disbelief. People are losing their equilibrium. When we talk of 'one world', one universal humanity, one world-government, we have plenty of mental reservations and parochial narrownesses. Hypocrisy is writ large on all such projects or even ideas of one family of all nations. When the heart remains unchastened and nailed to its prejudices and passions, it cannot reach out to embrace the wider world.

Man's mind has just begun to run in a groove different from the worn-out, outmoded one. It is coming to think and contemplate that the paraphernalia of the modern civilization does not afford him the peace and the tranquillity that it hankers after. So there is thus a growing disillusionment. Even the foremost scientists of the

west are feeling a sense of ennui and frustration as they find that their inventions and discoveries, instead of leading mankind to enlightenment, are sending it deep down into the abyss of annihilation.

Man's mind has begun to hunger and thirst for such Beings as will heal and bless humanity by their benediction benignity. One such Being is Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee who, as she moves from place to place, hamlet to hamlet, all over our subcontinent, spreads her holy and exhilarating influence all round, shaming irreligion, superstition, corruption and all that is unholy, all that is of the earth earthy.

Her serene effulgence and divine smile soothes the world-wearied, the sorrow-laden and the care-worn. In a pithy and epigrammatic sentence she resolves all doubts and solves all problems. She had had no formal schooling, no regular and systematic initiation into the three R's, but like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, she speaks out immortal truths in homely

garb and thus carries conviction even to doubting Thomases. Her sayings are not dogmatic dicta, they are transcripts from life. They register the intuitions of the perfected soul.

The fact that India possesses a deep underlying unity which transcends the innumerable diversities of blood, colour, language, dress, manners and sect, is countenanced by the fact that wherever the Mother goes or stays, she draws to Her, as by a magnetism, various creeds and castes who bow down in prayerful obeisance to Her all over the country. Her life is a living commentary on all that is noblest and best in all the religions of the world. She is an embodiment

of all the past religious thoughts of India.

“The test of civilization”, says Emerson, “is not the census, nor the size of cities, nor the crops; no, but the kind of men the country turns out”. India, in spite of a thousand and one ills, her poverty and present-day degradation, can still stand this test, and stand it quite well. In the spectacle of the Mother we have a beatific Vision, an ennobling Mystery, an uplifting Influence that is creating gold out of base metal,—an Influence that augurs well for our country and for the benighted world. She is an Illumination throwing light upon one and all, here, and everywhere. May we deserve Her grace!

# From the Life of Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

Dr. Bithika Mukerji, M. A., Ph. D.

( CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE )

For the rest of the day Mataji remained in this unapproachable state of bhava. Late in the evening, when the time for offering 'bhoga' drew near, Bholanath with much difficulty managed to recall Her to Her surroundings. Even so, She had to be helped to get up; supported by Didi, She slowly went about looking after the arrangements that had to be made for distributing 'prasad' to the large gathering. Later on She Herself with Didi's help served the food to the assembled people. Didi noted with amazement that by then Mataji had again become Her usual efficient self and did not at all appear to be the same person who had been lying in a state of *samadhi* earlier in the day.

The musical instruments which had been procured for the kirtan, remained at Shahbagh for some time. Mataji one day suggested that they might as well be utilized for the performance of kirtan every evening. Pitaji took up this suggestion with great enthusiasm, and since then kirtan became quite a regular feature at Shahbagh. Although

Pitaji was not gifted with a very good musical voice, his great enthusiasm as usually conquered every sort of obstacle. He could inspire the most diffident among the crowd to join in the happy throng. (In this connection an incident may be related here which took place years later in Hardwar. A gentleman who did not want to join a kirtan procession which was being organized by Pitaji, quietly hid himself under a bed intending to remain there till the coast was clear. Pitaji however was not to be foiled so easily, and much to the amusement of those already recruited, the gentleman was dragged from his shelter and given a prominent place in the procession.)

Gradually people began to flock for the kirtan every evening. Didi writes that she daily used to bring a few sweets to be distributed among the people after the kirtan. Almost every day innumerable states of bhava could be observed manifesting themselves on Mataji's body. It must not be supposed however that the external stimulus of kirtan was always necessary to bring

on these conditions. On the other hand. Didi says that at that time Mataji mostly seemed to be dwelling in some world of Her own of which Her companions had no understanding. The passage of time had no meaning for Her. Her days did not begin with mornings or end with evenings. Didi would come in the morning and find that Mataji had sat up throughout the night. As often as not Mataji would spend the whole day lying prostrate on the floor, Her body limp and motionless as if without life. One day, when Didi came for her usual visit she was horrified to find Mataji's whole body and clothes covered with red ants.

From these states of *samadhi* Mataji was aroused with great difficulty by Pitaji. She Herself had instructed him as to the methods of this procedure. He, generally helped by Didi, would massage Her limbs gently, while concentrating his mind on the *mantra*, which Mataji had given him. Referring to this matter, Mataji has said; "Evidently this Body was to remain in this world for some time, and therefore everything conducive to its well-being occurred of its own accord."

When aroused Mataji would move about with great difficulty, Her limbs seemingly as disjointed as an infant's.

Either She would not be able to speak at all, or She would just manage to utter a few words which in the beginning sounded rather indistinct. Mostly after a state of *samadhi* or *bhava*, Mataji would first utter beautiful mantras in Sanskrit.\*

It may be said that the most remarkable feature of all this unusual behaviour was, that the graciousness of Mataji's demeanour never underwent a change. Even when She was unable to speak, Her winsome smile would reassure Her perturbed companions. It is noteworthy that the most extraordinary of the *bhavas* never inspired any feeling other than awe in the on-lookers. Everyone felt that he was in the presence of a Divine personality.

During that time Mataji ate next to nothing. As already mentioned earlier, when Didi met Her first, Mataji, was taking as little as nine grains of boiled rice daily or sometimes only three. Then again, She used for months together to take three morsels of food per day, with the few exceptions of once or twice a week.

At that period of Her life Mataji stopped taking food with Her own hands. During one of Didi's earlier visits, Mataji had one day sat down to a meal

\* Some of these mantras have been written down.

with Didi. When Mataji began to eat, She asked Didi to take food from Her hands, remarking smilingly, "Today I shall feed you. Later on you will have to feed me." At the time, naturally nobody understood the significance of those words.

A time came when it was seen that Mataji could not raise Her hand to Her mouth any more when eating. Her hand would stop midway and She would bend Her head to take the food from the hand. Then even this became impossible and She was unable to eat with Her own hand. Nobody knew better than Pitaji that all the stages in Mataji's life came about naturally and spontaneously, and it was no use remonstrating with Her because She was as clearly a witness to this change as were the others. So Pitaji took it upon himself to feed Her as a child is fed. When Didi became a regular visitor this duty was transferred to her. Needless to say that Didi was highly pleased to be able to render this service to Mataji, because usually Mataji never required anything to be done for Her.

Mataji used to vary the rules about Her diet. Once She said whatever a person could give Her in one breath, including water, would suffice for Her

for the whole day. Then evidently finding even this quantity not small enough She said She would take only as much food as a person could, in one breath lift with three fingers, that is, the thumb, the index and middle fingers.

It almost seemed that She did not require a normal meal but just wanted to keep up the habit of partaking of something or other. For some time She followed the rule of eating only the fruits found under trees in Shahbagh. Now the fruit trees in Shahbagh were mainly mango and leechi\* trees. It was not the season for either, so Mataji lived on practically nothing. She would sometimes take fruits if brought by somebody of his own accord. But Her companions were strictly forbidden to make any arrangements for procuring fruit. On the other hand if fruits were plentiful one day, She would not allow them to be saved up for the next day. This rule held good for all eatables. Whatever offerings in the nature of food were brought by bhaktas during the day had always to be distributed among the people. Absolutely nothing, not even one single fruit or a fine green chilly, were allowed to be preserved for the next occasion.

It happend that, people invited

\* A kind of Indian fruit.

Mataji and Pitaji to their places and they would prepare elaborately for the partaking of *bhoga* and *prasad*. Sometimes Pitaji, not wishing to hurt their feelings, would ask Mataji to take a full meal. As already written above, She always tried to obey Pitaji as far as possible and if specially asked by him would break Her rules and do as he wished. So in this manner She was for some length of time persuaded to take full meals on every *amavasya* (new-moon day) and *puṇnima* (full-moon day).

Sometimes on the other hand Mataji ate more than a normal meal also. Once Pitaji's sister (generally known as Pishima, that is 'father's sister') came on a visit and felt worried to see that Mataji was hardly eating at all. She planned to cook a large quantity of '*kheer*'\* prepared from 20 seers of milk and depended upon Pitaji to persuade Mataji to partake of a little of this. Although as a rule Pitaji did not interfere with Mataji's ways he could not oppose his sister, and so Mataji sat down to eat. After She had finished Her first helping She asked for more. Highly pleased, Pishima hurriedly brought a larger second helping. But Mataji very gravely ate up this also and would not

pause till She had finished the whole quantity that had been cooked. In the meantime fresh milk had been sent for and Pishima was trying her best to prepare more '*kheer*' as quickly as possible. Even so there was a little delay and like a hungry child Mataji started crying for more and was quite inconsolable till the yet only half-cooked and boiling hot '*kheer*' was brought to Her. By the time She had nearly finished this as well everyone was thoroughly alarmed and frightened. Yet She did not seem to have over eaten. Pishima then scraped a little of the left-over '*kheer*' from the serving dish and, pronouncing some mantra, placed it on Mataji's head. Strangely enough, Mataji stopped eating after this and everyone sighed his relief.

Something very similar occurred when Bhaiji† had become one of the regular visitors. He also felt anxious to see that Mataji ate next to nothing. So he quietly arranged to send a little fine flour and *ghee* regularly and asked Pishima to make a few '*purees*' for Mataji every day. This arrangement had to be kept secret because Mataji did not allow 'hoarding' of any kind and would have prepared and given away all the flour and *ghee* in one day.

For a few days Mataji did not say

\* *Kheer* Thicked milk boiled with rice.

† Jyotish Chandra Roy, I. S. O., the greatest of Mataji's devotees.



anything. Then one day She sent for Bhaiji and asked Pishima to make as many 'purees' as possible from the remaining flour. As many as seventy were made and when Bhaiji came She sat down and ate up every single one of them. After this She smilingly said to him, "Had there been more I would have eaten them all. I tell you, do not make any arrangements for me. If I really start eating none of you will be able to provide for me, however rich you may be." Naturally thereafter Bhaiji desisted from his efforts to take care of Mataji.

Didi writes that yet once again, a bhakta, seeing Mataji's lack of interest in food implored Her to take a full meal. She thus very gravely sat down to eat. Didi was feeding Her. Mataji seemed to be swallowing the food at double the normal rate. Moreover She impatiently remarked; "You are not quick enough. Call someone to help you." But even two people could not keep pace with Her that day. The result was that the bhakta thoroughly alarmed, now implored Her to cease eating. Mother plaintively said, "First you ask me to eat, but no sooner do I start you tell me to stop. Now what am I to do?"

These and similar incidents taught people to leave Her to Her own '*kheyal*', and not interfere with Her ways of living.

Also, when actually eating Mataji did not seem to pay any attention to the food in front of Her. According to Didi, "Once when I did not know Mataji so well I thought I would take advantage of this absent-mindedness and feed Her as much as possible. In my enthusiasm I fed Her more than a normally big meal and yet Mataji did not object. Then perforce I had to stop of my own accord. Mataji seemed to awake from a dream and said, "Why, have you finished?"

Besides, if not watched carefully Mataji would swallow the pips or peels of fruits or even the hard bones of fish. If remonstrated with She would say in surprised tones, "You asked me to eat and so I ate. Why didn't you tell me not to eat the pips, etc.?"

It may be said that Mataji remains unchanged amidst all these characteristics. A few years ago at Raipur, after She had finished Her meal one day, She asked the person who had fed Her to taste a little of the '*kheer*' of which She had partaken a few minutes ago. Accordingly, the person took a mouthful but the '*kheer*' was still so hot that it could neither be retained in the mouth nor swallowed, but had to be spat out. Sores formed in Mataji's throat and She suffered from them for months after.

Perhaps from the aforesaid incidents

people will have some inkling of the difficulties involved in looking after a personality like Mataji. Didi says that because of our limitations none of us are really fit to render the slightest service to Mataji. In this connection many more incidents may be related which took place in later years. Once in Dehra Dun a gentleman brought 'kheer' for Mataji, prepared with much loving care. He then asked to be allowed to feed Her himself. He was an addict to 'pan'\* (beetle-leaves) and also very fond of talking. After Mataji had finished, She asked: "Pitaji, have you put saffron into this?" He said: "No Mother, I did not put saffron into it." Mataji said, "But look, I seem to have been eating a lot of saffron." How great was his shame and remorse when he saw that the left over 'kheer' was simply sprinkled with red dots!

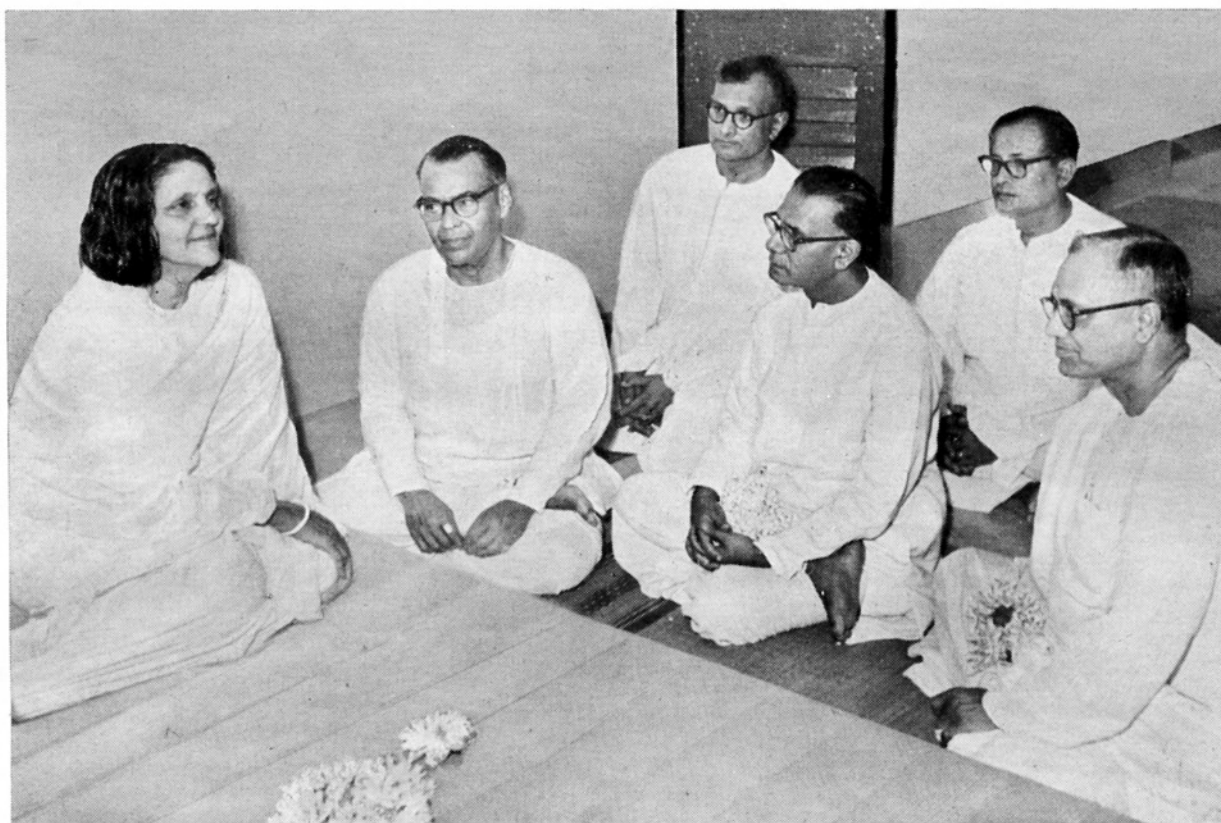
The other incident was related by Mataji Herself because the person concerned was not told anything about it. At that time Mataji was moving about in the hills of the Himalayas. Her only companions were Pitaji and

Bhaiji. Bhaiji used to go to neighbouring villages once a day and beg for food in the manner of a *sannyasi*. He would bring back whatever he could get, mostly 'ata' (wheat flour) and cook for Her. They had no cooking-utensils; Bhaiji would therefore choose a rock near a stream, clean it with water from the stream and knead the dough on it. Then he would light a fire built up with dry sticks and twigs and some how bake the unleavened bread on it. Mataji relates: "One day, when Jyotish lit the fire I saw that particles of refuse matter\* still adhered to the minute crevices of the rock. When the rock had been washed and was wet it looked clean enough, but the heat had made the dirt visible. I saw that Jyotish had not notice anything and that all the dirt was getting kneaded up in the dough."

On hearing this the very first question quite naturally was "But why didn't you tell him?" Mataji answered calmly, "Why should I? It was all the same to me, and Jyotish in any case was doing his very best."

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\* The hill people of India mostly have no lavatories. Rocks and streams suffice for them.



63rd Birthday of SREE SREE MA ANANDA MOYEE at newly purchased Ashram  
Agarpara, 24-Parganas.



63rd Birthday of SREE SREE MA ANANDA MOYEE at newly purchased Ashram  
Agarpara, 24-Parganas.

# MATRI LILA

( MAY-JULY 1958 )

For several years it had been felt that the Calcutta Ashram at Ballygunge was far too small and moreover situated in a congested area in the midst of the city. Devotees at Calcutta therefore desired to start a new and much larger Ashram in the suburbs of the city in more open and congenial surroundings. At long last a suitable site was found on the East bank of the Ganges at Agarpara, not far from Dakshineswar where Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa spent a good many years of his life. The old Ashram in the city was sold and only last spring the new plot of land, measuring  $9\frac{1}{2}$  bighas, with an abundance of fruit trees of various kinds and a two storied building was finally purchased. It was duly renovated and repaired and necessary additions and alterations were made and got ready for use in time for Didima's (Sri Muktananda Giri's) *Sannyasa Utsava*, which took place on April 13th. Since three years this celebration has become a regular feature of the Ashrams. A large number of disciples and admirers of Didima had assembled for the occasion, which was as usual observed by Kirtan, religious discourses and a feast given

to Sadhus as well as to all present, perhaps over a thousand persons. From April 14th to 28th Mataji stayed in Calcutta in the compound of the house of Sri Ranjit Banerji, and in the houses of Sri K. N. Banerji, Sri Nirmal Chakravarty and Sri Kiron Bose where separate arrangements are available for Mother's stay. A Bhagavata Saptah was also held in Mataji's presence at the residence of Sri Chakravarty from April 21st to 28th. The function was indeed a very nice one. Pandit Srinath Shastri of Vrindaban did the reading. On April 28th Sri 108 Haribaba Maharaj reached Calcutta with his party and was taken to the Agarpara Ashram in a decorated car, accompanied by a large Kirtan party and band.

Mataji's birthday was celebrated at the new Ashram from May 2nd to May 7th. As usual devotees from all over India had flocked together in very large numbers. Several distinguished Mahatmas attended the function. Mahamandaleshwar Sri 1008 Swami Maheshwaranandji from Bombay had also come and stayed at the Ashram with his disciples.

the purity of the place for the benefit of the people ....”

In the grounds of the Vindhyaachal Ashram beautiful ancient sculptures have been excavated and been taken to Government Museum in Lucknow. Not so long ago it was officially stated that very likely the original temple of Vindyaivasini was situated where the Anandamayee Ashram is now, rather than in Vindhyaachal proper.

These are only a few stray examples among many others.

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On May 30th Mataji with a very few companions proceeded to Puri, where She stayed at Her sea side Ashram for four nights only, while Sri Haribabaji remained in Ranchi with his party and Didi left for Agarpara. On June 5th Mataji returned to Calcutta. The train was late by several hours. Mataji went straight to the houses of a few devotees and also saw a couple of patients in hospitals. Late in the evening She reached the Agarpara Ashram where devotees had been waiting for Her darshan since early morning.

On the 10th of June Mataji left for Solan.\* Sri Haribabaji boarded the same train at Gaya Station and

Didi at Moghalsarai. Hundreds of devotees gathered at each of the railway stations at Allahabad, Kanpur, Etawah, Aligarh and Delhi to have Matajis Darshan. At the urgent request of a number of devotees Mataji broke journey at Chandigarh for a day and a night, while most of Her party proceeded straight to Solan. Mataji spent the night at the circuit House there. Many high Government Officials came to meet Her and had talks with Her.

Mataji remained in Solan for over a month. Solan has always been a place where one can enjoy Mataji's company in a very special and more intimate way than in most other places. Here Mataji is hardly ever surrounded by immense crowds. The arrangements made by the devout Raja Saheb of Solan, whom Mataji has called 'Jogibhai', are excellent in every respect; everything is done in an impersonal manner, so that an atmosphere of great harmony and ease prevails throughout. At Solan we have found, Mataji often feels inclined to disclose incidents from Her early days and interesting discussions on topics relating to sadhana invariably come about naturally.

A *Devi Bhagavata Saptah* was held from 18th to 25th June, the Principal of the Simla Sanskrit College being the

\* A hill Station in Himachal Pradesh.

recitor. His Sanskrit reading as well as his explanations in Hindi were delightfully clear and lucid and greatly appreciated by the audience.

On June 15th the news of the passing away of Swami Shanker Bharati reached Mataji by wire, followed by a long letter with elaborate details. Swami Shanker Bharati was one of the most learned and truly detached *Sannyasis* at Varanasi. He left his body at the age of 49 at the Lalita Devi Math, where he had been residing for *nearly* 20 years. He was guided by the Divine injunctions of the goddess Tripura Sundari and had the highest regard for Mataji.

During the first days of Mataji's stay at Solan a high official of the Himachal Pradesh who is an old devotee of Mataji, came to see Her with his family. He narrated two remarkable miraculous incidents :

(1) His son had been suffering for a long time from a serious type of eczema. One day the priest of a temple in the hills, which is far away from the official's residence, came to his house. The family had never met the priest before, nor had they had even any knowledge of his existence. The priest narrated to them that he had dreamt of a beautiful Divine lady, dressed all in white who was accompanied by two girl attendants. She

requested him to treat the official's son with a particular medicine which would cure his eczema. In order to fulfil the command received in his dream the priest tried his utmost to procure the medicine and when he finally succeeded he started out in search for the official's house. When the official heard the description of the priest's vision, he had not the slightest doubt that the lady in white was none else but Mataji. The priest began the treatment and in no time the boy was completely cured.

(2) One day the same official and his wife went to see a certain saint on a hill top. On their way a large poisonous snake suddenly coiled round the foot of his wife. Frightened to death and having lost all hope of escaping the poisonous fangs, She began to pray to Mataji. All at once the snake left her foot and vanished into the bushes. When they reached the saint's cottage, he told them that he had been watching them from a distance and had seen Mataji standing near them and that the snake receded at Her order.

Incidents of a similar type happen very, very often, but as a rule we have no chance of getting to know them. It is only very rarely that Mataji Herself discloses them.

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On July 1st Gurupurnima was celebrated in a most beautiful and dignified manner. For this occasion many arrived from out of the way places and a whole pile of letters and telegrams were received from bhaktas who were unable to be present in person. Towards the end of this happy day some devotees requested Mataji to speak about the easiest way to Self-realization. Mataji responded by explaining in clear and simple words that went straight to the hearts of everyone present. The following sentence of what Mataji had said, was included in replies to wires, letters etc. received on the occasion : "Try to become a pilgrim on the path to the Ultimate ; then there will be no anxieties, no misfortunes, no straying into by-paths."

Sri Haribabaji Maharaj and his party left for Vrindaban two days before the Gurupurnima. Before they left the Rasalila was enacted on two mornings by a party that had come from Vrindaban.

Sri Haribabaji used to relate from the lives of saints during the evening Satsang. After he left, Mataji was begged to reply to questions, which She did most generously for a few days. But then She introduced something new : She suggested that in continuation of Sri Haribabaji's

Satsang every evening a different devotee, both men and women, should narrate the story of a saint of their own choice. First we listened to the stories of Dhyaneswar, Jayadeva etc. but gradually people began to speak of saints whom they had contacted personally like Bhaiji, Sri Ramana Maharshi and others and finally some bhaktas of many year's standing told of their experiences relating to Mataji. It was fascinating to see that there is no end to the variety of Mataji's Lila.

It had been taken for granted that Mataji would proceed to Dehradun from Solan with a short halt at Delhi in between. But as so often Mataji suddenly announced that She was leaving straight for Varanasi on July 16th. We soon found out what was the probable reason for this sudden change. Sometime ago a devotee from Bombay had told Mataji that his family astrologer who was very aged and in fact likely to pass away any day had expressed an earnest desire to have a *Bhagavata Saptah*, a *Vishnu Yajna* and *Rudrabhishek* performed in a holy place like Varanasi on the banks of the Ganges. The devotee had also asked whether these functions could be arranged in the Varanasi Ashram. Mataji did not give a definite reply at that time. At Solan however Mataji suddenly enquired whether those functions could be started at the earliest

possible date. A Brahmachari was immediately sent from Solan to Vrindaban and Varanasi to make necessary preparations. In a miraculously short period of time everything was arranged and the functions began on July 20th and were successfully completed on the 30th. The devotee from Bombay came to Varanasi to be present at the inauguration and telegraphed to the old astrologer that the three functions had been commenced at the Ashram in Mother's

presence. A few hours after the old man received this message he passed away peacefully his last desire fulfilled.

On July 31st Mataji motored to Vindhyaachal from where She returned to Varanasi on August 4th, only to leave for Dehradun on the 5th morning. Only 4 or 5 persons were allowed to accompany Her. She remained at the Kishenpur Ashram until August 15th, when She proceeded to Delhi where Jhulan is to be celebrated at the Ashram at Chandra loka.



# DEMOCRACY, SOCIALISM AND VEDANTA

*Professor Bireshwar Ganguly, M.A., B.E.S.*

## INTRODUCTION :—

In the age of Sputniks, the portent of the moon is so ominous that human civilisation is standing at the cross-roads and therefore a time has come for the re-valuation of human ideals. The ascendancy of materialism and science has resulted, in the phraseology of Dr. C. E. M. Joad, in the "dropping of the values of life." Facing total annihilation, we are reminded of the mythological wars between gods and power-maddened Titans. Destiny alone will decide whether gods will be victorious or the Titans will be triumphant. According to Professor Hayek, the course of history is largely determined by the life and death of ideas. Thus the main source of change and of the great catastrophes in history is to be found in the free acceptance or rejection of ideas (i.e., Social theories and moral judgments) by the governing groups of the time. Therefore, destiny can be often pre-determined by human ideals or dominant ideals in society also.

The two greatest ideals preached and accepted in the West are those of democracy and socialism and the

greatest ideal ever preached and accepted in India is that of Vedanta. The salvation of the world lies in a harmonious synthesis between democracy, socialism and Vedanta. Let us consider, in brief, the essential values in democracy, socialism and Vedanta.

## DEMOCRACY :—

The shortest definition of democracy has been given by President Abraham Lincoln, who conceived democracy to be "The government of the people, for the people and by the people." According to Carner, "A democratic government is one which is constituted and administered on the principle that every adult citizen (including both men and women) who is not regarded as unfit by reason of his having been convicted of crime, or in some countries, because of his illiteracy, should have a voice, at least in the choice of those who make the laws by which he is governed, and that his voice should be equal in weight to that of every other elector". Democracy has been variously conceived as both a political status, an ethical concept and a social condition. Thus Giddings treats democracy as not only a form of

government but also a form of state, a form or condition of society or a combination of all three. Accepting this broader sense of democracy, Maxey defines it as "A search for a way of life in which the voluntary free intelligence and activity of man can be harmonized and co-ordinated with the least possible coercion and it is the belief that such a way of life is the best way for all mankind, the way most in keeping with the nature of man and the nature of the universe." According to Professor Smith the democratic ideal is almost a religious principle. In his words, "It is a practical manifestation of the enthusiasm for humanity. It is a concrete attempt at the reconciliation of the apparently contradictory principles of liberty, equality and fraternity in order that every individual in the community may be enabled to attain the highest good possible for him." But according to C. Delisle Burns, democracy as an ideal is not yet achieved.

Historically political democracy has been associated with the birth of capitalism. By the term capitalism or the capitalist system, or the capitalist civilization, Sidney and Beatrice Webb mean, "The peculiar stage in the development of industry and legal institutions in which the bulk of the workers find themselves divorced from the ownership of the instruments of

production in such a way as to pass into the position of wage-earner, whose subsistence, security and personal freedom seem dependant on the will of a relatively small proportion of the nation, namely those who own and through their legal ownership, control the organisation of the land, the machinery and the labour force of the community, and do so with the object of making for themselves individual and private gains". The emphasis originally given by Marx, who sought the essence of capitalism neither in a spirit of enterprise nor in the use of money to finance a series of exchange transactions with the object of gain was on a particular "mode of production." By mode of production he did not refer merely to the state of technique, but to the way in which the means of production were owned and to the social relations between men which resulted from their connections with the process of production. Thus capitalism was not simply a system of commodity-production but a system under which labour-power of millions of workers had itself become a commodity and was bought and sold in the market like any other object of exchange. Its historical pre-requisite was the concentration of ownership of the means of production in the hands of a class and the emergence of a property-less class, known as the proletariat.

The greatest defects of capitalism are inequality of income, recurrent trade depressions due to uncoordinated, unplanned nature of production by innumerable capitalist concerns and the consequent problem of unemployment on mass-scale. The marriage between capitalism and democracy has taken away much of the value of the democratic ideal and political democracy, in the absence of economic democracy, has degenerated merely into ballot-box democracy. To reap the best harvests of democracy, it is necessary that it should now be married to socialism.

#### SOCIALISM :—

Karl Marx was the founder of scientific socialism as opposed to Utopian Socialism. Engels brought out the distinction between the two. The Utopians were : preeminently Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen. In the twentieth century Mahatma Gandhi can be said to be the greatest Utopian socialist. In Marx's Communist Manifesto, the substance of the reproach directed against Utopian Socialists is the following :—

(a) They had no knowledge of the Proletariat as such,

(b) They made their appeal to the whole society, by preference to the ruling classes,

(c) They dreamed vague and fantastic pictures of new society,

(d) They appealed to morality,

(e) They lacked an objective historical perspective of class-war. That is they did not have a philosophy of history.

The function of scientific socialism was to reveal socialism as a necessary product of historical development. Given a knowledge of the laws according to which human history unrolls itself, the scientific socialist could show that the existing capitalist society could not fail to give birth to a socialist order according to the dialectic process of opposition and dynamic change. But Marxian socialism gradually took two forms, viz. revolutionary and evolutionary, according to the respective means to be adopted for social change. Russian Communists, French Syndicalists and Anarchists are all revolutionary socialists. Russian Communism as interpreted by Lenin has come to be the orthodox school of revolutionary socialism, commonly known as Communism, which stands for a bloody revolution to achieve social change, the dictatorship of the proletariat in the transition-stage and the final goal of a Classless, stateless society. German Revisionists, Guild Socialists and British Fabians are evolutionary socialists, who believe in

peaceful and gradual means for achieving social change.

Fabian Socialists have become the most popular school of evolutionary socialists, specially because of the successful formation of the British Labour Party on Fabian theory. It was essentially a middle-class movement at the beginning, rather a movement of the highly intellectual middle-class. It was saved because of the favourable environment in Great Britain for the growth of ideas on democratic socialist and also because in some mysterious way, it attracted to its membership in its early days a number of most remarkable men of their generation e.g. Sidney Webb, Bernard Shaw, Sydney-Oliver and Graham Wallas. As to what the Fabians meant by socialism, it is sufficient to say that there was never any Fabian Orthodoxy about principles and they had as flexible a meaning of socialism as Nehru has for the "Socialistic Pattern of Society in India to-day. To the Fabians, socialism was a logical corollary of democracy and gradual extension of state activity and nationalisation of industries for increasing production and reducing inequalities of income and opportunities became the cornerstone of Fabian policy.

According to Sallars, "Socialism is a democratic movement whose purpose

is the securing of an economic organization of society which will give the maximum possible at any one time of justice and liberty. "According to the definition given in the Encyclopaedia Britannica (Fifth Ed.) "Socialism is that policy or theory which aims at securing by the action of the Central democratic authority a better distribution and, in due subordination thereto, a better production of wealth than now prevails." Thus socialism, now-a-days, generally means Parliamentary Socialism, which is the accepted goal of India also. It should not be confused with Communism. Communism is a vague and distant ideal. It stands for a class-less stateless society, no doubt, but Russian communism to-day is passing through the so-called transitory phase of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a totalitarian, authoritarian, collectivist state, which enforces an all-embracing plan through arbitrary administrative decisions. There is no Rule of Law. Civil liberties of a democratic state are conspicuous by their absence in a communist country. Consumers sovereignty in the market has gone with the wind. In the opinion of Professor Hayek, totalitarian planning leads to the "road to serfdom," a regimented life, supported by mob frenzy and evil, enforced by a Government of sadists and gangsters. In the attempt to raise production and remove inequalities of income,

human freedom is surrendered. Hence in a future world, crying for freedom and more freedom, intelligent human beings cannot deliberately plan for a new kind of serfdom. Man does not live by bread alone. Man will ever cling to the spiritual values of life. It is true that bread is necessary for the masses. But bread can be assured to the masses through democratic planning also, provided that modern science and technology are properly utilized in the service of man instead of for destructive purposes.

Socialism reconciles the values of democracy as well as economic planning. It can achieve social and economic equality without bidding good bye to civil liberties and spiritual values. Socialism utilises the machinery of the state and through the parliamentary process gradually attempts to nationalise land and capital. "From each according to his capacity to each according to his contribution" is the formula of distribution under socialism. Hence inspite of equal opportunities to all, it guarantees incentives to production in developing economies. Socialism is based on the concept of a functional society, where, not birth but merit determines one's place in a society, where though there is some inequality of income, yet great inequalities have been abolished and there are maximum and minimum

limits of income. Economic life in a socialist country is essentially planned, but the whole plan is not carried through authoritarian direction. There is rather a harmonious blending of planning through direction and planning through inducement, maintaining a monetary market economy and consumers' freedom. Socialism subordinates profit to human welfare. In the transitory period between capitalism and full socialism, the economy assumes the character of a mixed-economy, in which both the private as well as public sectors of industry have their relative and properly assigned and co-ordinated roles to play. In a mixed economy like U. K. or France monopoly industries, as found in banking, transport, foreign trade, basic industries etc., are nationalised first and thus concentration of economic power is broken. Even in the mixed-economy-phase the state endeavours to work out a policy of full employment and an over-all social security policy. Democratic socialism is not only possible and desirable from all points of view, but the dialectic perspective of contemporary world history inevitably points towards this synthesis of democracy and socialism. If we re-interpret Marxian dialectics rationally, we shall see that Russian communism, by this time, has already passed from the stage of synthesis to a new stage of a thesis and American democracy has been

working as its great anti-thesis since the end of world War II. The new synthesis that is taking shape in western European countries and in India is that of democratic socialism, in which alone lies the salvation of the human race. Changes in the Soviet set-up since the death of Stalin are very promising indeed and the invention of dangerous inter-continental ballistic missiles, whether of long or of intermediate range, must convince any intelligent man that war has become out-of-date, on the assumption that the human race has to survive. Wisdom now lies in democratising the Soviet economy more and more and in socialising the American economy more and more. If the human race is to be saved from impending total annihilation, the only alternative is that of a world-federation based on democratic socialism for constituent nation-state.

#### VEDANTA :—

The analysis so far has made it clear that normatively democracy and socialism can solve the problem of our present civilisation, if we could form a world government. But therein lies the hitch. For who is to bring about this world-unity? The actual danger to-day presents itself as a clash between two opposing ideologies, one led by Russia and Red China and on the

other side a combination of states, partly capitalistic and partly moderate socialists who still cling with some attachment to the idea of individual liberty. Democracy and socialism as yet lack the cementing force for binding humanity together, as the former is essentially based on individualism and the latter on materialism, which does not recognise the soul of man. World unity and stable peace would be distant ideals without some moorings of a humanistic philosophy of life. The successor of the U. N. O. must be based on ideological unity. This ideological unity can be offered by Vedanta, the cream of Vedic civilisation. Vedanta is the monistic philosophy of India which vindicates the one-ness and immortality of soul, for all life is Brahman itself from the metaphysical point of view.

Of all the systems of Indian Philosophy, the Vedanta as interpreted in the Upanishads and the Bhagavat Geeta and by Shankaracharya has exerted the greatest influence on Indian Life. Vivekananda, Tilak, Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan have tried in our age to interpret the Vedantic view of life in thought and action with minor variations only in their approach.

According to the Vedanta philosophy, there is one supreme person

(Purusha, Purushottama, Puramatma, Parabrahma), who pervades the whole universe and yet remains beyond it. Apparent multiplicity of the phenomenal world is only of pragmatic significance. • Metaphysically all existence is one, all souls are but the one immortal blissful soul, Atman, or Brahman. The world originates from the only one Reality (Brahman), rests in it and returns into it when dissolved. From the point of view of ultimate analysis, the reality of the many particular objects perceived in the universe is denied and their unity in the one Reality is asserted ever and again. Vedanta is an attempt to follow out the Upanishadic idea of the unity of all existence to its logical conclusion. It stands in the history of human thought as the most consistent system of monism. As Willian James puts it. "The paragon of all monistic systems is the Vedanta Philosophy of Hindustan." Such a system, of course, would fail to appeal to those who would turn to philosophy for the justification of their imperfect ideas of worldly distinctions and worldly values. Vedanta is meant only for the strong-hearted rational human beings who want to achieve an ideal life individually and collectively. For those who value truth, Vedanta has also an emotional appeal. As James puts it. "An absolute one, and I that one,—surely we have here a religion which emotionally

considered, has a high pragmatic value; it imparts a perfect sumptuousness of security." "We all have some hour for this monistic music; it elevates and re-assures."

Now it may be objected that Vedanta, being the philosophy of Hindu India, would not appeal to Christians, Muslims or Buddhists. The reply has been given by Aldous Huxley, according to whom Vedanta offers the rational explanation of the perennial philosophy underlying all religions of the world. According to him the following four fundamental doctrines are found at the core of Perennial Philosophy, underlying all religions :—

(a) The phenomenal world of matter and of individualized consciousness—the world of thing and animals and men and even gods—is the manifestation of a Divine Ground within which all partial realities have their being and apart from which they would be non-existent.

(b) Human beings are capable not merely of knowing about the Divine Ground by inference; they can also realize its existence by a direct intuition, superior to discursive reasoning. This immediate knowledge unites the knower with that which is known.

(c) Man possesses a double nature,

a phenomenal ego and an eternal self, which is the inner man, the spirit, the spark of divinity within the soul. It is possible for a man, if he so desires, to identify himself with the spirit and therefore with the Divine Ground, which is of the same or like nature with the spirit,

(d) Man's life on earth has only one end and purpose; to identify himself with his eternal self and so to come to unitive knowledge of the Divine Ground.

These four doctrines constitute the Perennial Philosophy in its minimal and basic form. Vedantic Jnana Yoga (the metaphysical discipline of discrimination between the real and the apparent) lays emphasis on these four doctrines and logically explains them.

In the Geeta we find the explanation of the means to achieve the Vedantic ideal of the liberated soul, who has realised the unity of Brahman. To be a "Sthita-prajna" or a liberated soul, one need not give up work and life, but one should give up attachment to life and work. Explaining the fundamental tenet of Karma-Yoga, as found in the Geeta, Swami Vivekananda speaks, "The only true duty is to be unattached and to work as free beings, to give up all work unto God. There are two ways of giving up all

attachment. The one is for those who do not believe in God, or in any outside help. They are left to their own devices; they have simply to work with their own will, with the powers of their mind and discrimination, saying, 'I must be non-attached.' For those who believe in God, there is another way which is much less difficult. They give up the fruits of work unto the Lord." Though the liberated soul being perfect, has no end to achieve, he can work still without any fear of further bondage. Shankaracharya, following the Geeta, holds that work fetters a man only when it is performed with attachment. But one who has obtained perfect knowledge and perfect satisfaction, is free from attachment. The liberated man is the ideal of society and his life should be worthy of imitation by the people at large. Liberated man alone should be leaders of mankind and government should be entrusted to them, in order that, they might work for the common good alone. Plato's Philosopher kind resembles this kind of liberated soul, found personified in Ram, Krishna, Janaka, Gandhi etc.

For the common man also the Vedanta is a great source of inspiration and unity. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, "The Upanishads are the great mind of strength. Therein lies strength enough to invigorate the



whole world; the whole world can be vivified, made strong, energised through them. They will call with trumpet voice upon the weak, the miserable, and the downtrodden of all races, all creeds, and all sects, to stand on their feet and be free. Freedom, physical freedom, mental freedom and spiritual freedom are the watchwords of the Upanishads. Aye, this is the one scripture in the world, of all others, that does not talk of freedom." Speaking again about the necessity of a new religion for mankind that can give strength to the common man, Swami Vivekananda asserts, "It is a man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man making education all round that we want. And here is the test of truth, anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually and spiritually, reject as poison; there is no life in it, it cannot be true. Truth is strengthening, truth is all-knowledge. Truth must be strengthening, must be enlightening, must be invigorating." Thus you see, Vedanta is not an "Opiate" to life, as Marx dubbed religion to be. The socialist may find traditional Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism or Islam to be a hindrance to social progress but not Vedanta, as explained above. The following view of Swami Vivekananda again will dispel the common misconception about Vedanta that it has a negative

approach to life, that it does not encourage social work and social reform. Thus speaks Vivekananda about patriotism for a Vedantist, "I believe in patriotism, and I also have my own ideal of patriotism. These things are necessary for great achievements. First, feel from the heart. What is in the intellect or reason? It goes a few steps and there it stops. But through the heart comes inspiration. Love opens the most impossible gates; love is the gate to all the secrets of the universe. Feel, therefore, my would-be reformers, my would-be patriots. Do you feel? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and of sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving to-day, and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming consonant with your heart-beats? Has it made you almost mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that? That is the first step to become a patriot, the very first step."

Thus, you see how ennobling and inspiring the Vedantic ideal is for building up a new civilization. Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee of our age is not only a great upholder of the Vedantic ideal, but She is also the greatest living symbol of Vedanta.

#### CONCLUSION : —

Our analysis so far has proved that if human civilisation is to survive and if mankind is to evolve towards a better ideal, we have got to build up a world-federation on the economic and political ideals of democratic socialism and on the philosophical ideals, of Vedanta. Sri Aurobindo writes in *The ideal of Human Unity*, "We conclude that in the conditions of the world at present, even taking into consideration its most disparaging features and dangerous possibilities, there is nothing that need alter the view we have taken of the necessity and inevitability of some kind of world-union; the driver of Nature, the compulsion of circumstances and the present and future need of mankind make it inevitable."

But this world union must support a spiritual attitude to life, a divine approach to life, in order that life may find its ultimate goal of freedom and unity.

Expounding the ideal of Life Divine

on earth, towards which human civilisation has been progressing, Sri Aurobindo writes, "It is, then, this spiritual fulfilment of the urge to individual perfection and an inner completeness of being that we mean first when we speak of divine life. It is the first essential condition of a perfected life on earth, and we are therefore right in making the utmost possible individual perfection our first-supreme business. The perfection of the spiritual and pragmatic relation of the individual with all around him is our second pre-occupation. The solution of this second desideration lies in a complete universality and one-ness with all life upon earth, which is the other concomitant result of an evolution into the gnostic consciousness and nature. But there still remains the third desideratum, a new world, a change in the total life of humanity or, at the least, a new perfected collective life in the earth-nature. This calls for the appearance not only of isolated evolved individuals acting in the unevolved mass, but of many gnostic individuals forming a new kind of being and a new common life superior to the present individual and common existence. A collective life of this kind must obviously constitute itself on the same principle as the life of the gnostic individual."

According to the thesis of Sri

Aurobindo, the time has come for the descent of the Supramental consciousness on earth, in order that mental life of man may evolve into supramental divine life.

In my opinion this new type of

supramental civilisation will make a synthesis of science, democracy, socialism and Vedanta. Let us all be torch-bearers of this new truth and aspire for a life divine on a world-scale and make it possible within our life time.

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## Notes and Comments

We have to apologise to our readers for the delay in publishing this issue due to some unavoidable reasons. It is hoped that in future we shall be able to place before them the copies of the magazine by the middle of November, February, May and August.

Our apologies are also due to the Headmistress, Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee Kanya Vidyalaya, Jullunder for an error in page 73 of Matri Lila, May issue, wherein we have mentioned the institution as a Primary one. That, we now understand, is a full-fledged High School.

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We are extremely sorry to note the premature passing away of Swami Shree Shankar Chaitanya Bharatiji on Saturday, the 14th June at the Lalita Devi Math, Varanasi, where he had been residing for nearly twenty years. He was one of the most learned and dispassionate sannyasis of Varanasi and the author of certain very wellknown Vedanta works. Mata Anandamayee Ashram of Varanasi had been taking special care of the late Swamiji for more than eight years. A *Samasti Bhandara* (congregational feeding) was given on the thirteenth day by the Ashram where about four hundred sadhus and brahmacharis were sumptuously fed.

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Due to severe import restrictions and the consequent rise in prices of all photographic goods, the Publication department has been compelled to increase the prices of Mother's photos. The revised rates are as follows :

Size 10" × 12" (unmounted) Rs. 6'00

Size 6" × 8" (unmounted) Rs. 2'00

Size Cabinet (unmounted) Re. 1'25

Size Quarter (unmounted) '62

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We are glad to announce that the devotees of Allahabad are going to celebrate the Durga Pujas from 18th to 22nd October at the residence of Sri Baleswari Prasad, Advocate, 5, C. Y. Chintamani Road, George Town, Allahabad. It is hoped that Mother will grace the occasion with Her presence.

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