

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.*)

150.

Man's life must be oriented towards finding Himself.
To find one's Self means to find God.

The day that is gone will never return. Do not waste
precious time.

151.

It behoves a human being to aspire solely at the
realization of Truth. To be regularly engaged in the practices
and techniques into which one has been initiated by the Guru
is the path to Enlightenment. One's prayers and petitions
should be addressed to God and to God alone.

152.

Throughout the twenty-four hours abide in the
awareness of the Presence of God. ~~Then only can there be~~
hope of Realization. Who can foresee at what moment He
may choose to reveal Himself? This is why one must ever
keep wide awake.

*The Bengali original appeared in Ananda Varta Vol. VII,
No. 1. page 1

153.

Conditioned by the tendencies brought over from former births everyone is searching for a way. To embrace the most excellent and to abandon what is merely pleasing to the senses is man's duty. Real Truth brings peace and the highest bliss.

154.

Why speak of Self-realization (*Atma Darshana*) in the future ? It is here and now — only the veil that hides it has to be destroyed. What is meant by 'destroyed' ? That which in any case is doomed to destruction is to be destroyed. When the veil falls to pieces THAT which eternally IS shines forth — the ONE Self-luminous.

155.

You are imperfect, something is lacking in you, this is why you feel the desire for fulfilment. "Body"* signifies that which slips away, which is continually changing. If there is no want, no desire then the kind of body that is ever in the process of perishing does not persist. Thus after God-realization one can no longer speak of such a body — for the Self stands revealed.

156.

There is only one book and everything is contained in it. Once it has been mastered nothing else remains to be

* The Bengali word for "body" is "*shorir*" and the verb "*shora*" means to move on, to slip away.

studied. *Sadhana* has to be practised for the sole purpose of discovering one's own true wealth.*

157.

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

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

158.

Towards Self-realization is the only direction in which to advance ; all the rest is vain and leads to suffering.

159.

Man's relationship with the MOTHER of all is eternal, for nothing exists but the ever familiar ONE SELF.

160.

The sovereign and universal remedy is the contemplation of God. At all times to think only of Him and to serve Him is essential for every human being.

*Another pun : the Bengali for "own wealth" is "*Svadhan*", pronounced like "*Sadhana*"

THE LADY ALL IN WHITE

(AN ALLEGORICAL TALE)

RICHARD LANNOY

Be vacant, and you will remain full,

Be worn, and you will remain new.

Clay is moulded into vessels,

And because of the space where nothing exists

We are able to use them as vessels.

When all in the world understand beauty to be

beautiful, then ugliness exists.

Three quotations from the Tao Te Ching.

There once was a great city in which there lived a master artist whose fame spread to the four corners of the world. Indeed it was the reputation of the Master which shed lustre and renown upon the fair name of this city. Notorious for his mysterious and secluded habits, the Master was so esteemed by the population that he required no patron to support him, nor the official backing of the government. Whatever work he executed he did solely for his own delight, or at least for purposes known only to himself. Few people had visited him and none dared to consider themselves his intimate friends. Had it not been for the quality of profound compassion that pervaded his entire creative work the Master would have been mistaken for one of those obscure artists who live a remote life, aloof from the affairs of the world.

His paintings, masterpieces of an unsurpassable creative invention, had for subject the images of all types of people,

the humble, the eminent, the rich, the poor, scholar, craftsman, peasant and poet. He never shrunk from the most tragic elements of life, whereas at the same time, in all his work, even portraits of the forlorn, the forgotten, those in the most pitiful misery, there was a great reverence for life and a strangely pervasive feeling of joy. Though some of his imagery frightened people, its mood could evoke happiness and laughter as well as grief. All recognised that this was creative genius with energy and scale for exceeding the limitations of lesser men.

Mystery enveloped the figure of the Master, but it was observed that those few who were known to have seen him, though silent or reserved in their manner of reporting the occasion, frequently bore an expression of excitement or even of elation on their faces when questioned.

In the kind of circles where such matters are discussed with considerable vigour, not to say authority, there was one old man, held in great respect by people whose judgment was never for a moment questioned, who could speak of the Master with more knowledge than most would dare to boast. One day, while speaking to a gathering of his friends, this old man caused considerable commotion with some news he was eager to impart.

"Listen friends", he said, "when I arrived in the Master's house I was ushered into a room such as I have never seen before. The Master was standing in the middle of a bare space, for this huge room contained no decoration of any kind, there was not a single piece of furniture and the walls were of plain white. Yet it was a noble room most nobly proportioned. The Master did not turn to look at me but

was gazing with a deeply abstracted air at the sole object in all that bare space—a large white canvas—upon which there was no sign or trace of work commenced. He was silent for some while, a silence that was positively uncomfortable in such a setting. But I had ample time to overcome my amazement and realise that the Master was not as it were caught in a moment of absent minded reverie, but in his concentration on that empty canvas there was a purposefulness, something unutterably stark, something I can best express as both serene and kind.

“After several minutes of total silence he slowly turned to me and said that this empty canvas had for a long time been a source of constant interest and preoccupation. He told me that he had several times completed a picture on this very canvas but had stripped it down and started afresh. People had not evinced any particular enthusiasm for the works he had already produced on it. Therefore he had set himself the task of creating once again on the spotless white a totally new picture and might continue to do for as long as his powers endured. But more of his project I could not persuade him to divulge.”

As it so happened, in the weeks following this incident many conflicting rumours flew around the city concerning the progress of the new picture, until once again the old man was able to give his friends a more reliable account of what had happened. It appears that the Master, normally in the habit of selecting his models for painting from among the people, had decided that for once he would not proceed as usual. After prolonged concentration he had formed in his mind's eye a subject so sublime, so perfect, that it must be an act of pure

creation. Standing before the white expanse of his canvas he was inspired to produce an image of spotless purity. Now it was known that the Master hitherto had worked slowly, building, altering, rebuilding from his palette, images of detailed subtlety requiring considerable time for completion. On this occasion, the old man reported, alone in his house, the Master had awoken as from a deep trance, and in a single gesture had created on the white canvas the perfect form of a fabulous being, not an imaginary fantasy vague in outline, but palpably and with incomparable loveliness, the portrait of a "Lady All in White."

Soon after this news became widely talked about in the city the Master himself invited a number of people to visit him. They had returned from their visits mystified and stirred by the new work. One of them said: "He summoned me to him and said, 'my friend, you see on this canvas the figure of a lady dressed all in white. Now you may wonder why she alone appears on such an expanse of canvas, but I must tell you that this picture is but scarcely begun. In the first moment of creation I have, indeed, drawn the most important and central theme, but I can't leave this picture as it stands now. So I am asking you to let as many people as possible know about this new work. I want those who are really interested to come themselves and look at the Lady All in White. I want to try and break down the gulf that seems to have kept people away from here. I believe that this picture could become a more meaningful part in the daily life of the people. I intend to incorporate within the picture's design various groups of people. And for this I am asking friends here so that I may put them into my picture. If I can persuade them to drop their self-consciousness by

concentrating on the central figure of the picture, forget to pose, as they habitually do whenever they come to my house, forget about colours, tones, harmonies; if they should renounce their ideas about how pictures ought to be painted, about techniques and composition, I will put them on my canvas with all their concentration clearly delineated. Go now and let it be known that I await all who wish to come.' So saying he spoke not a word more, but as I left I noticed him smile, more to himself than at me, as if secretly amused and eager about some project or purpose known only to himself."

The invitation spread through the city swiftly and even travelled abroad to other countries where these matters are as much a topic of interest as in the city. Many people responded to the invitation, the curious, the grieved, the idle, the bored, scholars, princes, statesmen and beggars. Sometimes they came alone, sometimes in crowds, and while some returned many times, others were content with a single visit which they long remembered.

What exactly was the nature of the attraction that the figure of the "Lady All in White" had for so many people? It is difficult to define, beyond the singular quality of this image, the precise reasons for the Master's success. By careful examination of the scene it represents, we may approach somewhere near to an idea of the very powerful appeal that was focussed on the main figure of the composition. All other persons within the picture, even the lines, the light and shade, the movement, were indissolubly and subtly linked to the central figure. The soft black strands of her hair were arranged as a frame to her face, accentuating

the strange mistiness and withdrawn expression in her eyes. One felt that in the very brilliance of the space which enveloped her, she was turned to a concentration of quite extraordinary pitch, as if the air whispered. There were trees and flowers, rivers and hills in the background, and movement—all was animated, intense, vital. Here was a masterpiece which defined nobility of soul as precision. The greater the precision the more its capacity to suggest limitless meanings. The scene was both dynamic movement and serene stillness, a microcosm in which the ordinary world was transmuted into something more intensely real. A self-contained scene, it reached beyond the limits of its frame to stir the whole broad panorama and depths of life.

Among those who were frequent visitors to the Master's house was a man of great erudition, a famous Critic. When he heard of the new picture he declared : "Of course I cannot pronounce upon the value of this work until I have seen it, but it appears that the Master still retains some curiously archaic ideas. There is no special magic attached to creative activity ; it is illusionism, depending upon the application of certain specific techniques. Beauty is a subjective whim and its meaning originates not in fantastic imagery but in the perfect control of techniques."

This opinion of the Critic was uttered with a show of his habitual ill-temper and many people strongly reproved him for his conceit, until their heated retorts stung him into the necessity of substantiating his remarks : "All right then !" he shouted. "I'll go and see for myself what all the fuss is about." He went to the Master's studio full of misgiving, but after a long perusal of the great picture, fell into silence,

for the simple beauty of it disarmed him. After some time the Master discussed his work with him at length.

"I want everyone to experience a feeling of exhilaration and delight," he said, "and although the very nature of my picture is to have its definite shape within the limits of its frame, I want people to experience a feeling of great concentration, as if everything in life were there, but enhanced with poetic meaning. I want them to feel the picture as a part of life, but a more ordered one, something more acute, where all is disposed in a balanced design. But the design is merely the framework, because within it I want all to feel free.

"Furthermore," he continued, "I have lately grown dissatisfied with the limitations of a picture which once completed, remains fixed, an unchanging image that for the rest of time will remain as rigidly similar as it was at the moment of completion. I have decided to give the picture a role in the life of the city that none of my pictures has had before. I shall constantly change it, so that no person seeing it more than once will ever see it the same again. It will be like a constantly changing drama, with no repeat performances. You see, for a long time I have pondered on the role my art plays in people's lives. What is a picture? It is never a complete world. It depends upon certain highly significant aspects of life being selected, purified, enhanced. For each beholder the picture means, inevitably, a different thing; each man projects into it his own dreams and desires—and to each it gives different encouragement. But at the most I can only suggest perfection, never state it. That is why I chose white as the very focus of attention in the harmonious relationship of colours. White, as you know—pure white is

an impossibility in pigment, a contradiction in terms, it is optically and chemically impossible. By introducing the colours of the surrounding figures in close proximity to the white I can at most heighten the effect of greater white purity. If I have succeeded in my central figure, I have failed so far to reach the same degree of success in the rest of the picture. Until no single flaw remains I must continue. I may even have to begin all over again. Of course all this talk is of technique, of tricks so to speak; like a conjuror I must have the whole-hearted participation of my audience. I am not merely interested in sleight of hand. This may seem to you like an arduous task but, I assure you, for me there is no other delight but the delight of continuous creation."

Returning to the company of his friends the Critic talked earnestly of his views about the picture. "Oh how subtle, how crafty he is!" he exclaimed, "and how persuasively he seeks to win me over. Talking of colour harmonies and the like, when he knows that this is my special province! Let us be frank about it, the Master certainly knows how to present a strong case. Even though I do say that he employs certain tricks to gain his advantage. I have imprinted on my memory every mark of his brush, I have analyzed the method of colour composition, I have examined every detail. But I will confess that I have to admit that although I may know all the intricacies of his technique, nevertheless the full meaning of his work eludes me. It depends, in all its nobility of scale, detail and complexity, upon, upon....." and here he became, as it were, violently, upset and distracted as he searched for words, "upon that central white." It is curious how it exerts a kind of negative attraction upon the figures

in the coloured areas of the scene, upon the figures gathered round the "Lady All in White." I regret those figures being there at all, for they not only crowd the canvas but they distract from the splendour of the main theme." His scepticism aroused some people into replying angrily about "his coldness and lack of appreciation for the warmth and humanity which characterise the work of the Master." "What," somebody enquired, "is so special about that white?"

The Critic was hesitant and slow to reply. "When one seeks the meaning through the method, one always remains outside the conception of the work—I would look into the picture, or try to, and finally I find that it depends upon that spotless figure in white—and when I look at that aura of whiteness I see" he fumbled for words, a look of wild desperation on his face.

"But what do you see?" everyone cried.

"I see that there is nothing—nothing—nothing," and the great Critic was so choked with sobs that his words were smothered, while all listened, tense with silent astonishment. Suddenly the Critic looked up and faced his anxious interrogators, his eyes were not focussed on them however, but upon some apparently distant object. "Nothing," he gasped, "nothing," and rushed moaning out of the room and into the street. His voice echoed along the pavement in the few seconds that elapsed before his friends, stunned by this extraordinary behaviour, hastily followed him out into the street. They immediately guessed he had taken the road which led to the house of the Master, and as they arrived somewhat breathlessly at the door, he was about to go in. But he turned for a moment, glared at them with an expression of pitiful

torment and cried out, "leave me alone!" and rushed inside. But his friends, anxious to see that no harm should come to him, stood around in the street talking excitedly arguing as to whether they should follow him in or not and wondering whether perhaps he was out of his mind. After some time the Critic re-appeared, his whole appearance changed, his voice shaking with emotion as he spoke to the hushed crowd which had gathered.

"I have examined the picture again" he told them, "and whether we have been deceived or not I cannot tell, indeed I do not care—take it how you like, but as sure as I am standing here, as sure as water can turn into ice, there is nothing there now on the canvas, nothing but spotless white."

Uttering these words and leaving no time for further explanation he slammed the door in their faces.

The Critic was never heard of again. Nor did anyone feel inclined to speak of him, for when next day his friends, who could no longer contain either anxiety or curiosity, again went to the house of the Master, they found the picture, with but few alterations, virtually the same as before. The disappearance of the Critic would have been completely forgotten had not a few of his more observant friends thought that they could detect a certain marked resemblance to his features discernible in one of the figures in the picture who stood near to the "Lady All in White."

Characteristics of a Jivanmukta

SWAMI SIVANANDA, RISHIKESH.

A saint has no separate will of his own. He has merged his individuality in the Supreme Reality.

A Sage is not repelled by anything repellent, nor attracted by the attractive.

A Saint sees one life vibrant in every atom. He sees the indwelling Atman in all.

Everybody's happiness is his happiness. Everybody's misery is his misery. Everybody's satisfaction is his satisfaction. He is one with all.

He whose craving is annihilated is a Sage.

He who is free from anger, lust, greed, egoism and jealousy is indeed a Sage.

He who calls nothing in this world his own, he who speaks wisely, he who is not elated by success or gain, he who is not depressed by failure or loss is a Sage.

He who is free from covetousness, who does not grieve over what is no more, who has overcome desire is a Sage or Brahma Jnani.

He who does not crave for sensual pleasures, who has no attachment, who is independent is a Sage.

He who is free from avarice, deceit, conceit, misbehaviour, who is without desire for the future and who does not grieve for the past is a Sage.

He who is not displeased with anything, who has no desire for pleasant things, who is calm under any condition or circumstance is a Sage.

The Malady of the Age its Cause and Cure

DR. B.L. ATREYA, M.A., D. LITT.

Padmabhusan, Knight Commander, Darshanāchārya.

(*Continued from the previous issue.*)

There is a well-known proverb: Iron alone cuts iron. We have seen that our present malady is due to a wrong outlook on life based on the findings of a few physical sciences. To counteract the effect of a wrong philosophy of life we need building up a correct one on the basis of all that the various branches of science have upto this time discovered about man and the universe, and also on the basis of all other aspects of human experience which have not yet been studied by science since the method to which science is vowed is incapable of noticing and investigating them.

All scientists now admit that science has not investigated all the aspects of the universe and man, and that it is incapable of doing so because of its self-imposed limitations. In formulating a complete and comprehensive and, therefore, satisfactory view of the world, we shall have to take into consideration all the facts of experience and particularly all sides of human life. Man being a part and product of the universe, a proper and full understanding of man must be regarded as a key to the understanding of the universe. And particularly so, because it is only in man that the potentialities of the world seem to have become actualised, he being the last evolute ; and also because it is in himself alone that

man, the creator of all sciences, is conscious and so can be conscious of all the facets of reality. We know the external world only through our senses, but we know ourselves in many more ways. It is, therefore, wrong to interpret man in terms of the knowledge of the external world alone gained through the senses. On the other hand, it is right to interpret the universe and nature in terms of the knowledge gained by understanding man as deeply and comprehensively as possible. It is no use criticising this method as anthropomorphic. All knowledge being ultimately human and to a great extent subjective, all science is anthropomorphic. Hence the only remedy of our present day troubles is a deep and comprehensive understanding of man and thereupon building a more healthy philosophy of life than the one which prevails today. Most of our problems today being human problems—the misuse of science and technology being one—a right understanding of man and building our society and government accordingly is the only way out of the present trouble.

One may ask here : Is complete and correct understanding of man possible in view of the fact that we know so little of him as yet ? Yes, much of what man is in his fulness remains unknown and may remain so for a long time to come ; and so a complete understanding of him is not possible on incomplete data. But more and more knowledge of man gathered from all possible scientific data and from other sources yet untapped by science, shall certainly enable us to correct our false view constructed on the basis of very scanty data collected by only a few sciences which do not have man as their chief concern. To be rid of false views, to know that we are deluded, is itself a great achievement

and a big step towards building a more comprehensive, and, therefore, more correct view.

For this purpose let us have a brief survey of all that we have come to know about man through the piecemeal attempts of various scientific, empirical and analytical approaches hitherto made.

Physics deals with and confines itself to matter, its constitution, its forces and forms. It tries to understand the nature of time, space, energy, light, heat, electricity, magnetism, sound etc., and discovers laws of their action, reaction and interaction. The human body, being a physical object and as such a part of the physical world, is an object of the study of physics. It regards the body as a form of matter, which has come out of matter and goes back to matter. It is subject to the influence of all the material forces of nature. For example, the body can thrive only within a certain range of temperature; and the temperature of the earth depends upon the radiation of the sun, the distance of the earth from the sun, and the rate of the rotational speed of the earth. The extent and density of the atmosphere around the earth, the tiltage of the earth's axis, the distance of the moon from the earth and the gravitational pull of the earth affect our very existence. Physics, therefore, holds that man is a part of nature and is completely determined by natural forces. It has no interest in anything else in man.

Chemistry studies and confines itself to the various kinds and the composition of matter, the amount and kind of energy required for bringing about changes in the forms of matter, and the laws which govern the changes. The human body is

material and is composed of parts which have chemical properties and undergo changes that affect their properties. Recent discoveries in chemistry have brought to light chemical changes in the body which affect the life-processes, determine instinctive and emotional reactions in the body, mould its frame, and determine the temperament and character of individuals. Man cannot exist, grow and work without taking in the required amount of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, minerals, water, oxygen and vitamins, which are all chemical compounds. To digest foods certain enzymes, which have a strong chemical reaction, are required, and they are generated within the body by the internal chemical factories, called glands. There is a special kind of glands—pineal, pituitary, thyroid, thymus, adrenal and gonads—which secrete certain strong chemical substances, called hormones, which directly fall into the bloodstream and produce marvellous effects on the temperament, behaviour and personality of the individual. Drugs which have a stimulating or depressing action on the organs of the body and on the body as a whole, are important chemical agents which greatly affect the health and character of the individual. Medical science is bringing about extraordinary changes in the personality of man. Chemistry, therefore, claims to hold the key to understanding, changing and controlling human personality, which is chemical in its structure and function.

Biology distinguishes the living from the non-living among the beings in the universe and studies the countless forms and functions of the former. Some biologists who are not biassed towards physical and chemical explanations of life-phenomena and their functions, think that life is *sui generis* and cannot be understood and explained in terms of physical forces and chemical changes and properties alone.

Man is a highly complex living being ; hence an object of biological study. All living beings, including man, differ from non-living ones in having the following characteristics : (a) Metabolism, which consists in digestion, dissimilation and assimilation of food, (b) growth and development, and (c) reproduction of its own kind. The smallest unit of life is a cell which is made of protoplasm, a unique kind of chemical compound. Animals are unicellular and multicellular. All multicellular animals, including man, perform the following functions with specialized organs and systems : holding and protecting the vital organs, movement and locomotion, digestion, respiration, circulation of blood, excretion of unrequired materials, conduction or transmission of impulses from one part in the body to another, sensation, internal secretion of hormones, and reproduction. Biologically man is only a more complicated animal with greater unification of the systems of organs. He seems to have appeared late in the pageant of life. The laws of heredity of parental biological traits are almost the same in all those living beings which multiply by the union of male and female. Physiology, a branch of biology, which specializes in the study of the functions of the organs and systems of the body, has come to the conclusion that all mental activities of man are correlated with and therefore dependent upon the functions of the brain and the nervous system. The human brain is a very complicated organ and therein lies, according to physiology, the secret of entire human behaviour. A little malfunctioning of any part of the brain may cause serious aberrations in human conduct. Brain surgery and medicines which bring about chemical changes in the brain are now regarded as effective treatment of all mental troubles of man.

Biology does not postulate the existence of mind or soul as something apart from the body.

Psychology is the science of the mental aspects of man. It aims at understanding how men know, feel and act. Mental processes not being open to scientific observation and experiment, self-observation or introspection and its report are admitted as a part of psychological method. Psychology, claiming to be a science, an attempt, however, is made to make it as objective and experimental as possible, and to avoid the use of introspective report. So, strictly scientific psychology now avoids all reference to subjective states and confines itself to observable and measurable reactions of the organism as a whole. As there is no final agreement on some principal issues among psychologists, there are several schools of contemporary psychology.

Watson, the founder of Behaviourism, has tried to make psychology a purely objective science like physics, chemistry and biology, discarding the use of all subjective terms like sensation, attention, thought, consciousness, feeling, emotion, intention and will etc. He considers man as a highly complex machine, governed by mechanical and biological laws. All human behaviour which is the subject-matter of psychology, however complex and organised, is built up by reflexes and conditioned reflexes. All learning is conditioned behaviour.

Gestalt psychology does not proceed by analysing complex mental phenomena into parts. It studies all mental and even psycho-physical processes as unanalyzable wholes. For, it is not the component parts that determine the character of the whole and indivisible mental states by the addition

or fusion of functions and qualities ; but the wholes have their own specific qualities and functions. Those determine the nature and the functions of the component parts. Personality, with which psychology is mainly concerned, is the development of the psycho-physiological organism as a "peculiar kind of system" (Koffka), which maintains its own orderly equilibrium and spatial and temporal unity as it evolves and interacts with the world. The nucleus of the personality is the ego, which represents and incorporates the peculiar needs and ambitions of the individual.

Mc Dougall led a reaction against the material, mechanistic and non-purposive view of animal and human behaviour and founded a new school of psychology, called Hormic or Purposive Psychology. Although psychology is still defined by him as the science of behaviour, all behaviour, according to him, is purposive; and it begins not with reflexes but with complex and unanalyzable instincts. An instinct is a purposive reaction of the individual as a whole. It is defined as "An innate disposition which determines the organism to perceive any object of a certain class, and to experience in its presence a certain emotional excitement and an impulse to action which finds expression in a specific mode of behaviour in relation to that object. "All instincts serve some purpose of the organism, no matter whether it is conscious or unconscious. They combine with other instincts and give rise to complex behaviour and sentiments. All sentiments and behaviour patterns organised around the sentiment of self-regard constitute a personality."

Although a few psychologists still retain the name of self as a necessary subject of all our mental processes, psychology in general now-a-days does not talk about the soul, self,

mind or consciousness. It only deals with the concrete personality and the way in which it is formed and organised, and how it develops and undergoes changes under the influence of heredity and environment. A typical definition of personality given by Morton Prince is: "The sum-total of all the biological innate dispositions, impulses, tendencies, appetites and instincts of the individual, and the acquired dispositions and tendencies acquired by experience". *The Unconscious*, p. 532). Warren and Charnichael say, "Personality is the entire mental organization at any stage of his development. It embraces every phase of human character, intellect, temperament, skill, and every attitude that has been built up in the course of one's life". (*Elements of personality*, p. 48).

Psychology, although originally a science of soul (psyche), leaves many a problem of human life in the dark in its zeal to become an objective science. It does not give any satisfactory explanation of awareness, of identity and continuity despite constant changes in the psycho-physical organism, of memory and recognition, of the feeling of being a free agent of one's actions, of dreams, of differences in intelligence, of performances of geniuses, of mystic experiences, and of paranormal phenomena, which are facts of human experience.

Sociology reveals a very important and essential aspect of man, namely, social. Most of what man is, is built on the contribution from the society in which he lives; and most of his behaviour depends upon the particular social situation in which he is placed. What a man eats, thinks, and aspires at; the way in which he speaks and dresses; the gods he worships; his attitude and behaviour towards the members

of the other sex; the knowledge he acquires—all are determined by the group or community of which he is an insignificant member. His own thoughts and actions, in their turn, and particularly those of great and powerful individuals produce their indelible influence on society. Communities and their "weltanschauung" live longer, and continue to determine the thoughts and behaviour of generations of individuals.

Psychoanalysis and its offshoots, Individual Psychology and Analytical Psychology, all now going by the name of Depth Psychology, have gone far deeper into the nature of man than the orthodox scientific psychology has been able to do. They regard man as a purely mental structure governed by its own laws, which are quite different from physical, chemical and biological ones. Depth Psychology has discovered that man is not confined to what he is conscious of within himself at any time. His personality extends to unknown and unfathomed depths of which he himself is not aware. The psychic causes of many happenings in our conscious life lie and function in this deeper region. Our personalities are like ice-bergs only a little of which is seen above the surface of water. According to the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud our minds have three strata of existence, namely, the conscious, the foreconscious, and the unconscious. The conscious is that of which we are usually aware and with which we identify ourselves. The foreconscious is that which retains those impressions of our past experience which can easily be recalled and used. The unconscious is the deepest layer of our mind far removed from the conscious. The contents of this region can be brought to consciousness with great difficulty and by special methods

devised by psychoanalysis. Or they come to consciousness by their own laws of expression.

As our conscious life is more or less a life adapted to the reality which consists of our natural and social environment, and of moral ideals and restraints, all that is in the unconscious and seeks for expression cannot be allowed to enter consciousness. A kind of censorship is exercised at the threshold. There are moments and occasions, however, when the censor is not on its guard, when it is weak or slackened, or when it does not function at all. At such times the unconscious contents rush to consciousness, singly or in groups, called complexes, systematically or chaotically. Some very strong and persistent complexes or single contents do not wait for such occasions, and, therefore, take a disguised form, and escape through the censor, and thus force themselves upon consciousness. Thus we have dreams, slips of pen and tongue, undue forgetfulness, unaccountable fears and anxiety, compulsions, neuroses, psychoses, hallucinations, illusions and delusions etc. Very often the unconscious complexes continue to be underground, but their effects are experienced in the conscious mind.

From the point of view of the contents and their qualities the total personality of man is regarded as composed of three factors, namely, Id, Ego and Super-ego. The id is our primitive nature consisting of all sorts of irrational and animal urges, illogical affects, selfish, aggressive, sexual, amoral and anti-social wishes which characterise a baby. It is governed by the pleasure-principle. Under the pressure of the external world and environment, a part of the id gets organised in the form of the ego, whose activities are governed

by the reality-principle. Under the influence of the exhortations and fear of parents, and under social pressure and demand, a super-ego or normal conscience develops out of the ego and the id both. It is partly conscious and partly unconscious in its operations. The realm of the id is not governed by rational, moral or aesthetic considerations. Judged from the standard of a cultured and specially developed man, the baby in whom the id functions in its original form, is "polymorphously perverse", according to the discoveries of Freud.

The most predominant urge in the id is that of love or sex. Freud calls it Libido. In the life of a baby it finds expression in a number of "component instincts" associated with sensitive parts and organs of the body and with aggression. The young body takes pleasure in exercising them. In the course of normal development the component instincts get co-ordinated and organised under the leadership of the genital instinct. With regard to the object of the libido, during its development, three main stages have been discovered, viz., auto-erotic, narcissistic, and allo-erotic. The chief feature of the allo-erotic stage at an early age is the oedipus complex, i.e. affectionate attachment to the parent of the opposite sex. After a period of sexual latency before puberty, there comes a stage of homosexuality, which is normally followed by hetero-sexuality (love for the opposite sex), which is the normal feature of sex-life. On account of various difficulties and frustrations an individual may either get fixated at a particular stage or may regress to an earlier one; and thus may not grow into a normal hetero-sexual individual. A correct knowledge of one's libido-development gives a clue to one's character.

Thus, according to psychoanalysis man is, at his very base selfish, hedonistic, aggressive, sexual, amoral, asocial, if not immoral and anti-social, and irrational. We start in life as "polymorphously perverse" and in our unconscious we ever remain so. Our civilization and culture are only skin-deep and built under the pressure of reality, which originally we never like to face. Under stress and strain, under insurmountable difficulties and frustrations, and under the influence of unconscious factors, we tend to revert to our original nature of brute-instincts.

Psychical Research gives us a glimpse of another aspect of man, which has not yet been studied and investigated by any other science. It is a scientific investigation into those strange occurrences in human life and those extraordinary powers and faculties of man which have always been regarded as matters of fact by the common man, but which were never before seriously studied and examined by investigators trained in modern scientific methods. Preceded by a number of stray and individual investigations which had brought to light many a strange phenomenon, a society for Psychical Research was organised in England in 1882 to make a systematic and scientific investigation into the alleged and reported strange occurrences. Within the last 76 years this Society, and many others in other countries with the same end in view, and also many individual scientific investigators, have been able to collect such varied and important data as cannot be ignored by serious investigators of human nature.

(To be continued)

Desecration and Consecration of Life

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

In his volume on *Personality*, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore reveals two precious truths which the complexities and miseries of life are likely to screen from our view. The first about the difference between an animal and a man. The animal's knowledge is limited by its need of food and its love is limited to its offspring. But man seeks knowledge for the sake of knowledge and he seeks to widen the bounds of his love beyond the narrow circle of the family life. His science and philosophy thrive upon his passion for surplus knowledge, and his social, economic, political life as well as his culture, ethics, religion and art are based upon his ever-enlarged fund of altruism i.e. goodness for the sake of goodness, upon his love of beauty for its own sake and upon his love of God as the supreme ideal of life. "Man's civilisation is built upon his surplus."

The second truth urged by Tagore is that inspite of man's transcending the limitations of the animal he has not attained to peace and happiness because of his love of domination and his fighting propensities. Dr. Tagore says: "At the present stage of history civilisation is almost exclusively masculine, a civilisation of power, in which woman has been thrust aside in the shade. Therefore it has lost its balance and is moving by hopping from war to war. Its motive forces are the forces of destruction, and its ceremonials are carried through by an appalling number of human sacrifices. This one-sided civilisation is crashing along a series of

catastrophes at a tremendous speed because of its one-sidedness."

Dr. Tagore says that all this desecration of life can be checked and turned into the consecration of life only if "woman steps in and imparts her life-rhythm to the reckless movement of power". (Page 172) Man is likely to be sucked into the whirlpools of power unless some kind and angelic hand takes hold of him and saves him. Man, despite his progress beyond the limitations of animal life, has not known how to complete his work by substituting the angel for the animal in him. That is why the task of the consecration of life should be taken up by woman. Dr. Tagore says: "For woman's function is the passive function of the soil, which not only helps the tree to grow but keeps its growth within limits. The tree must have life's adventure and send up and spread out its branches on all sides, but all its deeper bonds of relation are hidden and held firm in the soil and this helps it to live. Our civilisation must also have its passive element, broad and deep and stable. It must not be mere growth, but harmony of growth..... Woman is endowed with the passive qualities of chastity, modesty, devotion and the capacity for self-sacrifice in a greater measure than man is. It is this passive quality in nature which turns its monster forces into perfect creations of beauty—taming the wild elements into the delicacy of tenderness fit for the service of life."

It is thus clear that it is woman who has to tame the assertive and adventurous passions of man, bring in the notes of peace and amity and concord and affirm the supreme importance of the spiritual values in life. Dr. Tagore says: "Man has to do his duty in a world of his own where he is

always creating power and wealth and organisations of different kinds. But God has sent woman to love the world which is a world of ordinary things and events. In God's world women have their magic wands everywhere, which keep their hearts awake—and these are not the golden wands of wealth nor the iron rods of power."

Ma Anandamayee stands for this magic wand of inner purity and love of all beings and devotion to God. Man is now enmeshed in his organisations of power and is becoming less and less conscious of the divine worth and value of the individual and of what Dr. Tagore describes as "the deeper spiritual necessity of sympathy and love."..... The civilisation of competing commerce and fighting powers must also make room for that *stage of perfection whose power lies deep in beauty and beneficence.*The next civilisation, it is hoped, will be based not merely upon economical and political competition and exploitation but upon world-wide spiritual cooperation; upon spiritual ideals of reciprocity and not upon economic ideal's of efficiency. And then women will have their true place. Woman can bring her fresh mind and all her power of sympathy to this new task of building up a spiritual civilisation, if she will be conscious about her responsibilities."

Ma Anandamayee is the symbol, the shrine and the creator of such a new spiritual civilisation. On her shines :

"The light that never was on sea or land
The consecration and the poet's dream."

The *Ananda Rasa* and the *Ananda Jyoti* of God shine in her and through her and quicken and kindle the *Ananda Rasa* and the *Ananda Jyoti* in all personalities.

The fact is that the Eternal Feminine is more firmly rooted in *dharma* and devotion than the Eternal Masculine. Man who belongs to the stronger and sterner sex has the defects of his virtues. His very superiority in strength, skill and intellect is the source of his spiritual peril. That is why the well-known story about the glory of Srimad Bhagawata (*Bhagawata Mahatmya*) in the Padma Purana emphasises the fact that wisdom (*Jnana*) and renunciation (*Vairagya*) are the sons of *Bhakti* (Devotion), suggesting thereby that mere intellect, unillumined by devotion, and mere renunciation, unsweetened by the love of God, may lead to sheer egotism and superiority complex and may develop into terrible spiritual snares and perils. We must realise that the earthly life is but an inn and not our home. A famous verse in the Bhagawata says: "A man of cleansed soul will never let go his clasp of Sri Krishna's feet and will be liberated from all sorrows and sufferings, just like a traveller wandering from place to place feels composure and peace and rest and bliss on reaching home.

धौतात्मा पुरुषः कृष्णपादमूलं न मुञ्चति ।

मुक्तसर्वपरिक्लेशः पान्थः स्वशरणं यथा ॥

It is noteworthy that in Tamil language and literature *Moksha* or Spiritual Liberation is called *Veedu* (Home). Sri Mataji Anandamayee says equally well: "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." The Katha Upanishad contrasts the good (*sreyas*) with what is merely pleasant (*preyas*) and says that he who pursues the path of hedonistic pleasure will lose

Yoga Kshemz (spiritual order and progress and perfection). Bhagawan Sri Krishna points out in Chapter XVI of the Bhagawad Gita that *Kama* and *Krodha* and *Lobha* (lust and anger and greed) are the three doors to hell and that only when we shut those doors and turn away from them we can achieve the highest good.

That is why Sri Mataji insists again and again that we must achieve a proper revaluation of life. The more we crave for pleasures the more shall we miss the supreme values of life. *Sanga* (attachment) will push us on the downward course while *Asanga* (detachment) will lead us on the upward course. In Chapter II of the Gita Sri Krishna teaches us that *Sanga* will lead to *Kama* (egotistical desire), which will lead to *Krodha* (anger and hatred), which will lead to delusion, which will lead to the loss of the memory of the higher life. Such loss of memory will ruin the higher intellect and bring about our total degradation. We can attain *Shanti* (peace) and *Ananda* (bliss) only by engaging in Japa, meditation, devotion etc. These activities will bring about inner transformations. If you wish to change the environment for the better and bring a new heaven an earth, you must convert man the brute into man the angel. As the poet says :

“Move upward working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.”

The ape is in us ; so also is the angel in us. We must suppress the ape in us and express fully the angel. In Mataji the Divine shines brightly and beckons to us to express the Divine that shines in all.

From the Life of Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

KUMARI BITHIKA MUKERJI, M. A., D. PHIL.

(Continued from last issue)

(9)

Shahbagh and Siddheshwari :

The incident of the eighth day may best be related in Mataji's own words. "On the eighth day," She said, "it rained heavily at dawn. Beckoning* Bholanath to follow me, I stepped out of the temple. We almost had to step over Baul Babu, but he did not wake up. Tired out by his night long vigil he had fallen asleep at the break of day.

"Although we were not familiar with the surroundings, I unhesitatingly walked in a northern direction from the temple. After walking a little distance this body (Mataji's method of referring to Herself) seemed to arrive at the destination and walked round that particular plot of ground thrice in the manner of a '*Pradakshina*'†. Then drawing a circle (the usual procedure by which Mataji broke Her silence as has been related in detail in previous accounts) I sat down where I was standing, facing south. What you call "*Mantras*" were then pronounced. In the meantime I had placed my right hand on the ground and was leaning on it. Strangely it

*These incident took place during Mataji's period of "Maanam" or silence which lasted for three years.

†The ritual of circumambulating thrice round a deity or temple or any holy place.

felt as if layer after layer of the solid ground was slipping away, like the removing of curtains, and my hand and arm went down unimpeded right up to the shoulder. Pitaji felt frightened and quickly caught hold of me and managed to pull up my arm. At the same time a little reddish warm water welled forth from the hole thus left in the ground."

Pitaji also saw some object clasped in Mataji's hand, which She had brought out of the earth. Not liking the look of this object (neither of them has disclosed what it was) he took it from Her hand and threw it into the pond nearby.

Now Mataji asked Bholanath to insert his hand also into the hole. Bholanath was at first very reluctant to do this. But Mataji said, "There is no need to be frightened. It is necessary for you to do this." Thereupon Bholanath also inserted his arm in the hole. It felt like warm empty space to him. When he withdrew his arm the warm reddish water again welled forth from the mouth of the hole. Mataji and Bholanath stood there for sometime, watching this water trickling away on the ground. Then stopping up the mouth of the hole with earth, they came away.

Baul Babu was very sad when he realized that he had after all missed witnessing this strange incident, but took it upon himself to clear a space all around this spot and later thoughtfully planted a few flowering shrubs and a Tulsi there.

Mataji went back to Shahbagh the same day, but returned to Siddheshwari again at night. In accordance with Baul Babu's wish "*bhoga*" was cooked and offered at the place where Mataji had inserted Her arm in the ground.

Mataji kept on paying frequent visits to Siddheshwari. Although She has not yet disclosed the real significance of this incident so far, She has said that the place had been sanctified by the *Sadhana* of ascetics of repute. Especially *Pitaji* in some previous life had practised vigorous *tapasya* there. He had also performed "*Durga Puja*" there and the earthen image of the goddess had been immersed in the pond close by.

Hearing of these incidents, Pran Gopal Babu contributed Rs. 10/- towards the upkeep of the place. With this money a brick '*vedi*' (platform) was constructed over the hole in the ground and a bamboo fence erected all around it. This '*vedi*' was about 22 inches square. Mataji sometimes sat on it and the devotees would gather round Her singing *kirtan*. Sometimes they were so carried away by ecstatic feelings that they would spend whole nights in this fashion.

Sometime later during one of Mataji's '*bhavas*' she indistinctly said something about Siddheshwari and a room to be constructed there. Swami Akhandanandaji at once took up the matter and asked for instructions the next day. Although Mataji's speech was as yet indistinct, she managed to give specific directions about the exact size of the room. She also said that the bamboo fence was not to be removed but the walls were to be raised all around it. The '*vedi*' also was to remain unaltered. The plinth of the room therefore had to be raised all around the "*vedi*" with the result that when the floor was cemented, it formed a hollow in the middle of the room. Mataji invariably sat on this *vedi* or rather in the hollow. Sometimes She even managed to curl up and lie down within its narrow confines. Didi says that it would not have seemed possible, but she had actually seen Her do it.

It will be remembered that the *vedi* was only 22" square.

Another incident may be related here in this connection.

There was a big ant-hill near the *vedi*. When Swamiji brought labourers to put up the room, they felt unaccountably afraid to break up this anthill. On hearing of this difficulty Mataji asked Bholanath to break it up for them.

The First Vasanti Puja at Siddheshwari :

While in Bajitpur, Bholanath had once expressed his wish for a house with a pond, where he would be able to perform *Durga Puja*. Mataji had at once said, "Why, you already have a house. Gokul Thakur's house in Dacca is your house." Pitaji had naturally at that time taken no notice of this. Much later when Bhaiji and others purchased the house for an Ashram in Dacca it came to their knowledge that the name of the original owner had been Gokul Thakur. Mataji had not said anything about the *Durga Puja* at Bajitpur. Now at Siddheshwari She told Bholanath to make arrangements for the *Puja* if he wished. When the devotees heard of this, they joyfully began to prepare for the celebration. An earthen image of the Goddess has to be constructed for the purpose. The *Puja* is of three days duration. On the fourth day the image is taken out in a procession and immersed in a river or pond.

By that time Siddheshwari was becoming a little more populated. Much of the jungle had been cleared off and new houses were being built all around the little Ashram. It was arranged that during the *Puja* all the men would stay on the verandah of the Kali Temple, and the women would put up in the new houses. All Bholanath's relatives were invited. Pishima (Bholanath's sister) came to help with the cooking.

Among the guests were his elder brother's wife and daughter Labanya. This was Labanya's first visit to her beloved "kakima" (aunt), after She had begun to lead this sort of life.

Mataji gave instructions that for three days all who came should be given "prasad". But "bhoga"* was to be cooked only once. She meant that food was to be prepared for the *Puja* only and not with a view to feeding people. Now this naturally was a difficult problem. Nobody was willing to make an estimate of the amount to be cooked every day, under such unpredictable conditions. So Mataji Herself came to the kitchen every morning and showed them how much to cook. The first day passed without any mishap. Late in the evening of the second day, the kitchen-in-charge decided that the influx of visitors had come to an end. Keeping a little apart for the people who had been working all day, he cleared up the kitchen and put out the utensils to be cleaned. Just then a party of devotees arrived from Dacca, Bholanath and others, in a flurry, quickly made arrangements for cooking rice, forgetting Mataji's injunction that there should be no cooking except for the purpose of 'bhoga'. Didi went and said to Mataji, who was sitting on the *vedi* in the *Puja* room, "Many people have come and there is hardly anything to offer to them." Mataji said, "Give them whatever has been kept apart for yourselves. We shall see about you all later on." Then the four pots of rice were taken down. Strangely enough the seemingly little food sufficed not only for the visitors but for the inmates of the Ashram as well !

* The food that is offered to the Deity. After the ceremony it is partaken of by everybody as 'prasad'.

Labanya :

Perhaps the most beautiful incident of this period was the ecstatic experience of Bholanath's young niece, Labanya.

At the end of the first day, the sky suddenly clouded over and strong gusts of wind precluded a violent storm. Bholanath and others felt afraid that some harm might come to the image. He quickly came to Mataji and said, "you must see that nothing happens to the *Pratima* (image)."

Within a few minutes the storm raged round the small building. The cooking shed was blown off. All the people gathered together in the *Puja* room, fearfully expecting the collapse of the room as well. Mataji on the other hand seemed to find the storm exhilarating. Her demeanour underwent a swift change and she seemed to have become one with the very spirit of the storm. She was sitting on the *vedi*. Now she stood up swaying in the rhythm of the raging storm outside. Labanya had never seen her 'aunt' like this before. With a cry of, "what has happened to kakima," she rushed forward and put both her arms round Mataji. She fell away almost at once and in the crowd nobody noticed her. By this time the people had started to sing *kirtan*. Mataji led the way and stepped right out into the lashing rain. Followed by the *kirtan*-party she first went to the Kali Temple and from there to one of the houses where the women had been put up. Gradually the strains of the *kirtan* rose above the howling storm, and then as suddenly as it had arisen, the storm subsided. The people dispersed to change into dry clothes and repair minor damages.

Swami Akhandanandaji returned to the *Puja* room alone and was astonished to hear a clear and beautiful voice just

repeating the name of the Lord in the manner of a *kirtan*. The utter beauty of this sound held him spell bound for some moments. As he could see no one, he almost believed that it was a voice that did not belong to this world. Then following the direction of the sound he found young Labanya lying on the ground, in a pool of mud and water. She was so covered with mud that the Swamiji could barely distinguish her. When he picked her up, She seemed quite oblivious of her surroundings. There was an ecstatic expression on her face and She went on repeating the names of the Lord in that enthralling voice. She was taken home, bathed and her clothes were changed, but there was no change in her manner. Her mother became very perturbed and alternately scolded her and remonstrated with Mataji to restore her to her normal condition. Labanya was not affected in the least. She smilingly said to Mataji, "Look auntie, have I gone mad that mother should behave in this manner? What else is there in this world except this beautiful Name?"

But her mother did not understand anything of this. She kept on insisting that Labanya should be brought back to normal and went on scolding her, saying, "I won't ever let you come again to your Kakima, if you behave like this."

Mataji then took Labanya with Her to another room. Didi also accompanied them. Mataji told Didi that this ecstatic state had come about after Labanya had touched Her when She had stood up on the *vedi* at the commencement of the *kirtan*. She further said, "Look, this state of bliss is coveted by *sadhakas* of all times. She has come by it so naturally, but what can I do? Her people are so determined not to allow anything of this." Mataji then touched Labanya

again and seemed to perform certain *kriyas*. Labanya's manner underwent a little change but only temporarily. Mataji commented, "Do you see, it is like putting out a large conflagration. You control it at one end, yet the fire bursts out with greater vigour at another end."

However, Labanya gradually regained her normal demeanour. She was in this blissful state of ecstasy for three days and all those who saw her, wondered and marvelled at it.

The *puja* celebrations came to an end. The image of the *Devi* was taken out in a great procession and immersed in the nearby pond, as Bholanath had done once before.

Thus we see that both these places, Shahbagh and Siddheshwari were importantly associated with the life of Bholanath. Perhaps Mataji will disclose the real significance of this association some day.

After the *Puja*, Mataji and Her party returned to Shahbagh.

(To be continued)

PAGES FROM MY DIARY

SRI GURUPRIYA DEVI

(*Translated from Bengali*)

Saturday, 21st December, 1951.

On the 11th December Mataji suddenly left Vindhyachal for Rajgir, accompanied by a very few people only. Hardly anyone knew where She had gone. After seeing Her off at Mirzapur station, I went to Lucknow via Allahabad; as soon as my work there was completed, I hurried to Rajgir so as to be again at Mataji's feet. Brahmachari Kamal, Sri Kantibhai Munshaw of Ahmedabad, Sri J. C. Mukerji of Allahabad and a new-comer, a young American, Jack Unger, whom Mataji had named 'Jayananda', were also with us.

On arriving at Rajgir I found that Mataji was putting up at the Mahavir Dharmasala. To begin with She had for a day or two stayed in a small room near the Rajgir water tank but at the special request of the proprietress of the Mahavir Dharmasala, Mataji had shifted there. I noticed that the woman had tremendous faith in Mataji. She had had the good fortune of Mataji's Darshan for the first time only a few days before, after Mataji arrived at Rajgir. From the very first moment She was so deeply impressed that she simply could not tear herself away from Mataji's presence. Seeing that she had to put up with any number of inconveniences, Mataji requested her several times to return to the *Dharma-sala*, but the woman had made up her mind not to return without Mataji. This is how Mataji came to stay there.

Having left their home, this Maharashtrian woman and her husband were staying in a corner of the *Dharmasala*. They had adopted the life of *Vanaprasthas*. She was sincerely religious as well as learned in Vedanta and very keen on serving Sadhus. Untiring in her effort to be of service to Mataji, she was never satisfied with what she did. Monday, 23rd December.

This evening a gentleman, who had come to see Mataji, asked what was the purpose of dedicating one's *japa* to God every time after completing it.

Mataji said: "Look, if children receive some valuable article and keep it with themselves, there is always the possibility of its becoming spoiled or damaged, for the simple reason that they are unable to understand the true value of what they have received. Whereas if they entrust it to their mother's keeping, she, recognizing its nature, will store it away carefully. Later when the children have grown up and become capable of appreciating its value, the mother will explain it to them. Then they will without a doubt be able to make use of it and benefit by it in various ways. Similarly practising *japa* has its own beneficial effect. If the fruit of the *japa* is dedicated to God, it can never be lost or spoiled. When the time is ripe God will return the fruit of the *japa* to the aspirant. That is to say, when a person can observe how his passions and desires grow weaker, he will know that God has given him the fruit his practice has borne. This is the purpose of dedicating one's *japa* to God (*japa samarpana*).

"Besides, look, after offering your *japa* to the Lord, you have to bow down (do *pranam*) at His Lotus feet. What does *pranam* signify? To lay one's head at the Lord's feet.

What happens by so doing? The head of the Lord's servant becomes united with the Lord's holy feet.*

In the evening when Mataji went for a stroll, She said: "You have worries, haven't you? Do you know why? When God is imagined to be far away, anxieties and worries arise. Evil-mindedness also has the same significance: To place God at a distance is called evil mindedness and stupidity, in other words the mind that harbours the idea that God is far away is an evil and unintelligent mind.

"While working with your hands, keep your mind concentrated on God's name. What you do with your hands regard as the ritual of the Lord's worship and together with it repeat His Name. Nursing a patient or whatever you may do is a service to Him, *His* work; this is the attitude to be held. Belief and disbelief cause happiness and pain. In order to go beyond belief and disbelief, you will have to believe in Him. But instead of believing in Him, you put your trust in all kinds of things. Just as there is a veil of ignorance, there is also a door to knowledge. It can be opened by your aspiration. What is bound is called the individual and where bondage is, there must of necessity be sorrow."

Monday, 29th December.

This morning Mataji left Rajgir and started in the direction of Puri. A car took us to Bakhtiarpur, from where we caught the train to Howrah. There we changed into the train for Puri. The devotees of Calcutta had not been informed about Mataji's movements. While sitting in the train, She said to me: "Look, Didi, I have seen Gopibaba[†]"

* Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj.

(needless to say, in his subtle body of course). She said something else in this connexion, which however has not been disclosed so far.

Tuesday, 31st December.

As soon as we alighted at Puri station this morning, we came to learn about an accident that had happened to Mukti Maharaj. Yesterday, immediately after reaching Puri he had gone to the Jagannath Temple together with Brahmachari Kamalakanta, Jack Unger and Mrs. Rama Saksena. Somehow or other a dispute with the *pandas* (priests) of the temple had ensued, in the course of which Mukti Maharaj was pushed down by the *pandas*. He fell and fractured his hip-bone and had to be taken to the hospital then and there. No sooner had this been reported to Mataji, than She went straight to the hospital. After seeing Mukti Maharaj She proceeded to the Ashram.

Wednesday, 1st January 1952.

Since Mataji felt that in Puri Mukti Maharaj could not be provided with all the medical aid and care he needed, She Herself took him to Calcutta, where we arrived this morning. Sudhinda,† Soporibhai†† as well as Dr. B.C. Das Gupta,††† tried their utmost to make the best possible arrangements for Mukti Maharaj's treatment. He was thus admitted into the Presidency General Hospital. Mataji Herself also said to

† Dr. Sudhin Mazumdar, Assistant Director of Health. He unfortunately passed away about a year and a half ago.

†† Sri Shyamsunder Nath Sopori, Deputy General Manager, Associated Cement Companies.

††† Dr. Bhupesh Chandra Das Gupta, Retired Director of Health Services.

everyone concerned : "He is a *sadhu*. *Sadhus* have no home or family of their own. Everybody and every home is meant for their service." We had a talk with the Medical Officer-in-charge of the hospital, Dr. Anil Moitra, who is a real gentleman, utterly sincere and devoted to service; that he is scrupulous in the performance of his duties goes without saying.

Monday, 13th January.

After all the necessary arrangements for Mukti Maharaj's treatment and nursing had been completed, Mataji returned to Puri on the 11th.

To-day Mataji said in the course of a conversation : "HE is and this is the only reason why I am. If He were not, where would I be ? HE is indeed in the closest contact with me. If you live with this idea, you will gradually discover that there is none but He alone. If at all the "I" remains, it will exist only as His servant and therefore the notion that He is far removed will be ruled out. In order to induce this attitude of mind the uninterrupted repetition of God's Name is required. The more one thinks of one's Beloved (*Ishta*) the firmer will one's faith in Him grow. Do not allow the mind to wander here and there, but endeavour to make it one-pointed. Why should there be fear and anxiety ? If one remains anchored in fearlessness how can the question of fear arise at all ?"

Then again in some other connexion Mataji said : "I was just wondering about the following : When according to your point of view this body is somewhat indisposed you see it apparently adopting more than usual the ways of your

world. While on the other hand when this body is what you call in good health, then you say it is turned to the 'other side of things.' That you observe this is due to the fact that you distinguish between different states of mind. Whereas to this body—whatever comes to pass is equally welcome. It does not choose between this or that side. To say "not" does not either express it adequately. The word 'you' is being used because you differentiate between "mine" and "thine." The idea that there is "mine" and "thine" is in fact your illness. In the relationship between the Lord and His eternal servant however, there is no such thing as "mine" and "thine."

This evening Mataji left once more for Calcutta to pay a visit to Mukti Maharaj.

Tuesday, 15th January.

When Mataji arrived at Howrah station this morning, Her old devotee from Serampur, Trigunadada took Her for a few hours to Serampur in Mr. Sopori's car. On returning to Calcutta in the afternoon, Mataji went straight to the hospital to see Mukti Maharaj. Mataji's presence created a tremendous stir throughout the hospital. On seeing so many people collect round Mataji, all the doctors asked in amazement: "Who is She?" While those who were already acquainted with Mataji or had heard about Her, approached Her full of reverence to do *pranam*. The relatives of the patients humbly requested Mataji: "Won't you be so gracious as to see them just for a minute, please, Ma?" In response to their entreaties Mataji went from ward to ward thus giving *darshan* to the sick. Merciful as She ever is, She lightly touched some of them and placed Her hand on the foreheads

of others. Seeing the loving tenderness of our compassionate Mother everyone present felt deeply grateful. As Mataji was moving from ward to ward, She remarked :—"This is also a temple with God's images. It is He who manifests in the shape of disease as well. In everyone of these temples the gods and goddesses are giving *darshan*."

While Mataji was sitting in Mukti Maharaj's room, a European lady came and sat by Her. She was ill and could hardly walk. She had been brought on some sort of a trolley. The lady seemed full of anxiety and begged Mataji to bless her sick ward by Her visit.

Friday, 18th January.

One or two days ago Mataji went to the hospital to see Mukti Maharaj. Dr. Radhakrishnan* is at present in the Presidency Hospital, as he had to undergo an operation. Immediately after the operation, Mataji had the special *kheyal* to go and see him. Dr. Radhakrishnan was not yet conscious. No visitors are allowed to enter a patient's room while he is in that condition. But since it was Mataji's *kheyal* to see Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. B. C. Das Gupta took Her with him to the patient's cabin. The two nurses in charge of Dr. Radhakrishnan were unwilling to permit Mataji to step into the room. But since Dr. Das Gupta had brought Her, they could not prevent it. Having no alternative left to them, the two nurses entered together with Mataji, and joining hands, stood on both sides of the bedstead. They obviously tried to keep Mataji from touching the patient. But Mataji somehow put Her hand below theirs and, without anyone noticing it, She touched the bedsheet. When on recovering conscious-

* Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the Vice-President of India.

ness Dr. Radhakrishnan received the news of Mataji's visit, he expressed great joy and requested a number of people to convey his deep gratitude to Her. It is difficult for us to understand when, on whom and in what way Mataji may bestow Her grace. Nobody requested Her to go and see Dr. Radhakrishnan, nobody even mentioned to Her that he was in the hospital, yet of Her own accord she came and blessed him. This is called "*ahetuki kripa*", grace without any conceivable reason or cause. Who could have foretold what was written in Dr. Radhakrishnan's fate ?*

In this connexion another example of Mataji's grace without any visible cause or reason comes to my mind. Some time ago a middle-aged woman without any means of her own came to live in our Varanasi Ashram. Although her name was Kamala, Mataji has called her, "Gopal's mother," since she keeps an image of the child Krishna (Gopala) with her, whom she worships. She became a regular inmate of the Ashram, although she was unable to take her due share in the work of the Ashram. I was hardly acquainted with her, however I noticed that Mataji showered Her grace with great lavishness on the woman. One day Mataji said to me : "Gopal's mother is a very fine person. Moreover she is very clean and neat in her work." I felt amused at Mataji's praising her so highly and replied : "Really ? I have failed to notice it so far !" Mataji contradicted, saying : "May be. But remember that the poor woman has no one and nothing to call her own. She can do only as much work as she is capable of."

*When Dr. Radhakrishnan recovered he came to see Mataji and at his special request Mataji once visited his residence in Delhi.

One night Mataji's health did not seem at all satisfactory. At about midnight she suddenly remembered Gopal's mother and sent for her at that very moment. As soon as she came and stood in front of Mataji, Mataji gave her a broad smile and asked: "Well, how do you like staying in the Ashram?" Gopal's mother did not reply at all cheerfully. Mataji listened attentively and then said: "Look, in the Ashram you are living on the banks of the Ganges. Do your worship and prayers (*sadhana-bhajana*) and for the rest try to give whatever service you can. All the Ashramites will take care of you, and you also try to look after them just a little. How does this sound to you?" Mataji's loving words seemed suffused with compassion.

A few days later, when Mataji's health had improved to some extent, she went to Gopal's mother's room and arranged every detail in it, the place of her worship, the place where she slept, etc. Our gracious Mother confers Her grace without any cause or reason, unexpectedly. Who can tell by what good works in her former births Gopal's mother earned the privilege of finding refuge with Mataji and of becoming the recipient of Her boundless grace.

Saturday, 2nd February 1959.

Together with Mataji we left Calcutta for Kanpur via Banaras. At Kanpur a gathering of *Sadhus* is to be held. Mataji has come at the invitation of Sri Prabhudatta Brahmachari. We are putting up at the residence of Dr. Jagadish Mukerji.

Sunday, 3rd February.

This morning we motored to Kashipur with

Sri Chakrapaniji and Sri Prabhudattaji. The road was extremely bad. Sri Prabhudattaji had had no idea of this beforehand. With the greatest difficulty, partly by car and partly on foot, Mataji was taken to the place where the function was to be held. But seeing that arrangements were not at all satisfactory, Prabhudattaji of his own initiative offered to take Mataji back to Kanpur. How great was Dr. J. Mukerji's joy when we returned to his home the same evening.

Monday, 4th February.

This afternoon after partaking of our midday meal, we started by car for Lucknow. Many devotees were waiting all along the road to have Mataji's Darshan, not heeding the discomfort that this entailed. After we passed Unnao, Mataji pointed to a nearby village, exclaiming: "Look, Didi, what a lovely little village!" I saw a cluster of houses nestling among trees but could not discover anything extraordinary about that small village. When a little later I heard Mataji remark again: "Weren't those trees beautiful!", I said: "Come on, let us go and see them!" Mataji replied with some hesitation: "The car has taken us quite a distance from there by now." "What does it matter?" I put in eagerly, "let us go there, please!" The driver was told to turn the car and drive back. When we had covered a short distance I saw that there was an opening in the middle of the fields: the car could take us right into the village. As soon as we had reached it, Mataji got out of the car and walked with great speed straight towards one of the houses. I asked: "Ma, where are the trees of which you talked?" But instead of replying, Mataji said: "Bring all the flower garlands and the basket with fruits that are in the car!" I did as I was

bidden and carrying the flowers and fruits in both hands I started running behind Mataji. Soon I saw a pond near a house and on the banks of the pond there were two young trees, one a banyan, the other a margosa tree, growing side by side. Mataji went close to the two trees and started fondling and caressing them with so much affection, that we all stood speechless, staring in amazement at this unusual scene. Pressing the forehead and Her face again and again against the two tree trunks, She said : "Well, well, so you have brought this body here to see you !" As far as I could judge the two trees did not seem at all special, outwardly at least, neither were they particularly strong, nor had they many leaves, nor were they well shaped ; yet invisible to us there must surely have been something about them that made Mataji bless them so abundantly.

By and by the villagers came out of their houses and crowded round us. Mataji asked them : "What is the name of your village ?" "Bhawanipur," was the reply. Mataji : "Who has planted these two trees ?" Someone said : "Dwarka." At our inquiry we were told that the master of the house was not at home. Everyone pointed to his wife. Standing close to the trees, Mataji said : "Take great care of these two trees and worship them. It will be for your good." Then Mataji with Her own hands decorated the trees with all the garlands She had brought and distributed among the villagers whatever fruits She had.

She asked the mistress of the house : "Have you a daughter ?" The poor woman could not understand what Mataji was driving at. In the fashion of village women she had a long veil drawn over her face. Seeing all that Mataji

was doing, she stood quite perplexed. Addressing her again, Mataji said: "I have made you my mother," and pointing to Herself: "This is your little daughter!" While walking back to the car, Mataji uttered: "Margosa and banyan—Hari and Hara!" I asked: "Have you given the trees these names? Fine!" When we got into the car, the crowd had followed us there as well. I enjoined on them: "Plaster the space under the trees with mud!" Mataji asked them: "Do you repeat God's holy name? Even though you may not be able to do so daily, at any rate now and again perform *puja* and sing *kirtan* or religious songs under those trees."

The car started. "How surprising!" Mataji observed. "Those two trees were pulling this body towards them as human beings might. The car was carrying us away from them, but it was just as if they had caught hold of the chest and back of this body and dragged it backwards in their direction. This kind of thing has never happened before."

We tried hard to find out from Mataji who or what those two trees actually were. But Mataji gave no clear reply. It is difficult to foretell whether light will ever be thrown on this mysterious incident. Behind many of Mataji's apparently trifling actions deep mystery lies hidden. What a great number of supernatural happenings occur in connexion with Mataji and how many of them are we able to understand?

MĀTRĪ LĪĀ

15TH APRIL—15TH JULY 1959.

In the last issue of 'Ananda Varta' we briefly reported about the consecration on March 7th, Shiva Ratri day, of the two temples newly built in the garden of the Kishenpur Ashram at Dehradun and of the Shiva Shrine at "Kalyanvan." We also promised to publish in the current issue some of the interesting details of how those three temples came into existence. A number of bhaktas are already aware of the following facts :

In 1937 Shri Bholanathji* took *Mahāsamadhi* at the Kishenpur Ashram. Several years after he passed away, one of Mataji's devotees, Srimati Nihar Kana Ghosh of Calcutta dreamt that Bholanathji, whom she had never seen in his lifetime, suggested to her to take *Diksha*.† She attached no special importance to the dream until it was repeated again the following night which made her thoughtful. When in the third night at about 4 a. m. Bholanathji appeared to her once more asking her with a peremptory voice to rise and have a bath, she obeyed and initiation was then actually given by Bholanathji according to the full rites prescribed in the *Shastras*, notwithstanding the fact that Sri Bholanathji had passed away years before. She hurried to her husband and said, "Bholanathji has just given me a *mantra*." Her husband advised her not to pronounce the *mantra* to anyone, but to sit in their prayer room and she at once began to practise the repetition (*japa*) of the *mantra* and to continue this practice

* Mataji's husband.

† Initiation by mantra.

regularly day by day. Her husband was of the opinion that everything must have happened in a dream. She herself, however, felt that there was no more necessity for her to take *diksha* again in the physical as well. When she uttered the *mantra* before Mataji, Mataji confirmed that it was one of the *mantras* to be found in the *Shastras*. But nothing was at that time mentioned to Mataji about the strange dream.

The new disciple conceived an ardent desire to have a memorial shrine erected for her Guru in the Kishenpur Ashram, where he had breathed his last. She discussed the matter with Sri Jogesh Brahmachari, one of Matajis oldest devotees. A few hundred Rupees were collected by her and other devotees for the purpose. However with such a small sum one could not even think of building. The money was therefore given into Sri Jogesh Brahmachari's custody.

A few years later another interesting thing happened. Srimati Bhabani, wife of Sri Ranjit Banerji of Calcutta, dreamt of three temples: Two were close together and made to the same pattern, the third one was some distance away, small and somewhat round in shape. Her dream was vivid and impressive. She related it to Mataji and requested Her to present her with a *Shiva Linga*. By Mataji's grace she was so fortunate as to receive a *Shiva Linga* that had been brought from the holy river Narmada, of which it is said that every stone there is a *Shiva Linga*. When visiting Hardwar with Mataji after some time she was surprised to find that the Shiva temple built by the Raja Saheb of Solan at Hardwar somewhat resembled the one she had perceived in her dream. During her stay at Hardwar her *Shiva Linga* was given the name of "*Gangeshwar*".

On returning to Calcutta she told her husband about her dream vision and expressed a keen desire to have a temple for '*Gangeshwar*' constructed in their own compound. However, on thinking over the matter her husband had serious misgivings as one could not be sure whether after he and his wife left this world, the Puja would be continued regularly by their descendants. Such neglect is considered most inauspicious for the whole family. He therefore suggested that the temple should be built in one of Mataji's Ashrams and he made an offering of Rs. 5000/- for the purpose. It was subsequently decided to erect the Shiva temple in memory of Sri Bholanathji in the grounds of the Kishenpur Ashram.

As fate would have it, devotees from various places felt inspired to contribute towards the expenses of the temple, the construction of which was begun in September, 1957. It seems appropriate to say here a few words about those who helped in this pious cause.

Srimati Shanti Devi, wife of the late Sri Choudhry Sher Singh, Zemindar of Dehradun, died of an operation shortly after the building work had been taken in hand. Before going to hospital she deposited Rs. 5000/- with her relatives, requesting them to pass this sum on to the Ashram in case she did not recover. The money was added to the building funds and a *Shiva linga* named '*Shantishwar*' set up in memory of the deceased. Srimati Maharatan Jaspal, a Punjabi devotee (who by the way did not even know that temples were being constructed) suddenly offered Rs. 5000/- to Mataji to be used for any purpose required. Prof. Nalini Kanta Brahma whose son had recently lost his life in a tragic accident

donated Rs. 1000/- for the installation of a *Shiva Linga* in memory of the departed. The *Linga* was named '*Kalyaneshwar*'. Further, a bhakta of many years' standing, Srimati Lakshmi Tankha, widow of Pandit Kashinarayan Tankha, the architect who built the main Kishenpur Ashram, presented Rs. 1000/- in memory of her husband. A *linga* called '*Kashishwar*' was therefore added. Yet another old and faithful devotee, Kumari Sharada Sharma (Sevā) donated Rs. 500/- with the request for a *linga* in her father's memory, which was given the name of '*Māmuleshwar*.' Finally, a *linga* called '*Kirtishwar*' was installed in memory of the son of Sri Rameshwar Sahai, Chief Conservator of Forests, U. P. who bore the expenses for the construction of the alter of the temple. At the desire of Sri Ranjit Banerji and his wife '*Gangeshwar*' was consecrated; and by the consecration of the *Shiva Linga* named '*Bholanath*' the heart's desire of Srimati Nihar Kana was at last fulfilled and thus the new Shiva temple came to house in all seven *Shiva Lingas*.

When Mataji first visited the Sapta Rishi Ashram at Hardwar, the thought suddenly occurred to Her about seven Shivas in the memory of seven Sages. She went into the temple and touched the *Shiva-Linga* with Her hands. Strangely enough, when seven *Shiva-Lingas* were installed in our new temple, Mataji one day was heard to say like this: "Look, Dehradun is so near Rishikesh and Hardwar, all in the *Uttarakhand*. '*Bholanath*' and '*Gangeshwar*' have become the main cause of the installation of seven Shivas, *Mahayogeshwars*, on one and the same altar."

Now about the second temple, *Matri Mandir*. During the opening ceremony of the Kishenpur Ashram a raised platform

with a sacrificial pit (*homa kunda*) in the centre had been erected and one lakh of libations were offered into the sacrificial fire on that occasion. Bhaji (Sri Jyotish Chandra Roy) was too eager to build over that platform a temple dedicated to Mataji. But during the few years that were still left to him he had no opportunity to see his pious wish materialize. Therefore Sri Gurupriya Debi tried ever since he passed away to fulfil what he had left undone and she kept on collecting and putting aside small sums of money for the purpose. When the construction of the Shiva Temple was now taken in hand the construction of the *Matri Mandir* too proceeded along with it and both temples were consecrated on the last Shiva Rātri.

The small shrine at Kalyānvan has also a history of its own. Late Sachikanta Ghosh, Retired Asst. Income Tax Commissioner, who many years ago bought a plot of land now called 'Kalyānvan' on Rajpur Road, about 3 furlongs above the Ashram, had fixed a place in it for a special room for Mataji. He laid the foundation stone and buried the Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads and other sacred scriptures also in that spot. He later presented the whole of the plot to the *Vidyapith*.* But he died soon after and his desire to accommodate the room for Mataji in the grounds of Kalyānvan did not materialize.

When the two temples at the Kishenpur Ashram were in the process of being constructed, Mataji suddenly said one day : "I see that you are building a Shiva Temple here. Sachibābā bought Kalyānvan for the use of the Vidyapith.

* A small residential school run by Shree Shree Anandamaye Sangha at Almora, where boys are educated according to the ancient ideals of the Brahmacharya ashram, while they are taught all modern subjects at the same time.

There is no sign to mark the blessed spot where he has buried so many holy books and people walk over it. Is this right? Suppose you dug up the ground and found the place where the foundation-stone was laid and the scriptures buried, how would it be if a *Shiva Linga* were erected over it? Think it over and decide!"

Thus shortly before Shiva Ratri a small Siva Shrine named '*Maheshwara*' was built over the spot where the sacred scriptures had been found buried. The shrine was consecrated along with the other two temples of the Ashram on March 7th, 1959.

Readers will remember that Srimati Bhabani Banerjee had dreamt of three temples. When she arrived at Kishenpur to be present at the consecration, she found only two temples there and exclaimed: "In my dream I saw another small round temple at a short distance. I cannot see it here." Swami Paramananda said: "Go to Kalyanvan and you will find it." When she reached the garden she stood speechless with amazement: The three temples she had dreamt of had actually been completed as they had appeared to her in the dream. This can surely not be explained by ordinary commonsense or reason. By Mataji's grace the impossible becomes possible. Who could have foretold that the pious wishes of all the devotees concerned would materialize in this way! While supervising the construction of the temples Swami Paramananda felt that the two temples in the Ashram grounds should be made to the same pattern, but the third one to a different one. Thus Srimati Bhabani's dream came true. Mataji always says: "The Will of the Almighty is being fulfilled."

There is another interesting feature worth mentioning:

When some people voiced their doubts as to how the constant expense involved in *Puja* and *Bhoga* in all the temples could be regularly met, Mataji replied: "You need not worry. Shivaji will Himself see to all arrangements." Indeed, this has already happened in the most unexpected manner!



In the last issue we have already reported about Didima's *Sannyasa Utsava* that was celebrated at Ramnagar, Rishikesh on April 13th, 1959.

From April 15th—22nd the Ninth *Samyam Mahavrata* was observed in the same place. Ramnagar is about three miles distance from Rishikesh, right on the banks of the Ganges. The natural beauty of the surrounding is entrancing with spreading old trees and lofty mountains rising from the opposite bank of the river. *Atma Vijnan Bhawan* is owned by the Kalikamlibaba Dharmasala. Apart from a fine Satsang hall there are a number of spacious buildings scattered over the extensive grounds. All of them had been put at the disposal of the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha for the occasion.

The *Samyam Vrata* is as a rule held only once a year in November. But this *Samyam Week* was a special one, special in more than one respect. Many felt that it was the most wonderful and inspiring gathering in which they had ever taken part. Physical arrangements were good, but by no means as perfect as during the *Samyam Vrata* at Kanpur last November. A number of modern comforts were conspicuous by their absence, such as taps and bath-rooms etc., although it must be said that thanks to Shri G. M. Modi who very

kindly lent us an electric plant, electricity could be temporarily installed and the loudspeaker was in working order, even if the transmission was not too clear. Yet these outer inconveniences seemed only to enhance the spirit of the function. The atmosphere of the gathering was quite incomparable from beginning to end.

Mataji is always at Her best during the *Samyam Vrata*, but this time we felt as if She were even more radiant, more accessible and communicative than ever. During the short intervals between the long hours of *Satsanga* when Mataji sat in the hall, we could meet Her in smaller groups on the roof near Her room which overlooked the Ganges and the hills. While at previous *Samyam Saptahs* an impetuous crowd used to inundate the hall (or pandal) as soon as the doors were opened after the group meditation at 9 a. m. and 4 p. m., on this occasion there was no crowd, no rushing and no crushing. Only a comparatively small number of visitors were able to come from Rishikesh, Hardwar and Dehradun in cars and once or twice parties arrived by special buses. The whole function passed in intense and ever-growing concentration and harmony, without any discord or disturbance. Everyone of the participants must have returned to his ashram or home inwardly enriched, refreshed and purified. The programme and the austere diet of the Samyam Week have been described at length on several occasions in this journal. It goes without saying that in a place situated between Hardwar and Rishikesh there could have been no dearth of *Mahatmas* to grace the function with their presence and to enlighten the audience by their inspiring and learned discourses.

We were fortunate to welcome amongst us for three days four American *Sannyasis*, all disciples of Sri

Paramahansa Yogananda. Chief of them was Sister Daya, the President of the Self-Realization-Fellowship, which consists of 84 centres for meditation all over the world, five Ashrams in India and another five in the U. S. A. Although our foreign guests had been in India only for a few months, they had adopted themselves admirably to the ways of this country, in fact they appeared to feel more at home here than in their motherland. We deeply regretted that they could not stay longer and they also had tears in their eyes when they said good-bye to Mataji. Sister Daya gave a short talk in English that went straight to the hearts of the listeners, telling us about her Guru and what he had related to her about Mataji and Mataji's picture had been an inspiration to her for many years until she finally met Mataji in Calcutta last February. She enjoined on us to make the utmost of the precious boon of Mataji's holy presence and pray for nothing except self-realization.

As on former occasions every day's programme of the *Samyam Vrata* ended with "*Matri Sanga*", when Mataji either replies to questions or sings; every one cherishes that delightful half hour from 9—9-30 p. m. One evening toward the close of the function, Mataji requested an old bhakta, Sri Arun Prakash Banerji to tell us of a strange experience he had had.

He said something like the following: "Yesterday afternoon I went to have a bath in the Ganges, but as I walked back I discovered that I had lost the key of my room. All searching proved fruitless. Here I was, aching to join the *Satsang*—but how could I enter the hall when I was wearing wet clothes? Almost in tears I sat down on a stone,

wondering how to open my room. Suddenly I felt someone was approaching. Looking up I saw a beautiful lady dressed in a fine sari—she seemed to hail from the hills—standing before me. “What is the matter?” she inquired. I told her and she replied: “your key may be in the water somewhere.” She took off her sandals and stepped into the Ganges. In no time she had found my key under a stone. It seemed quite miraculous amongst all those stones. I felt so intensely grateful, I could not help thanking her. “You call me, “Mother” and thank me?” she said. “Go and wash your key, it is covered with sand.” I obeyed and when I turned round and looked up, the lady had vanished. How she could have disappeared out of my sight so quickly I could not understand, there was in fact something incomprehensible about the whole incident. I opened my room and changed into dry clothes, but I did not go to the *Satsang*. I was deeply stirred, I had lost my key and my mother had found it for me. But where was the key to my life? How could I open the door to my real being? I was tormented by this question and lay awake all night. When I told Mataji about my strange experience, She asked a few questions about the beautiful lady and then said: “It was Mother Ganges who appeared to you,” I said: “There was no one to be seen there,” Mataji remarked: “Where no one is, there is HE.”

After we had listened to the old gentleman's story Mataji said: “This is why you take part in the *Samyam Vrata*—in order to find the key. This is why the function is held on the banks of a holy river, that you may find the real key that has remained lost through so many births. This is the place where the key can be found, Mother Ganges herself may come and give it to you.”

On April 22nd Mataji and a large party left for Dehradun. Sri Hari Babaji Maharaj and his party joined us there on May 3rd, the day on which Mataji's birthday celebrations commenced. As on former occasions *Satsang* consisting of discourses by Mahatmas with Kirtan in the intervals was kept up from early morning till late at night. Simultaneously perpetual *Japa* throughout the 24 hours was sustained in the *Matri Mandir* until May 26th, the actual anniversary of Mataji's birth. From May 9th-16th a *Bhagavata Saptah* was celebrated and from May 17th-July 16th the *Raslika* party that had arrived from Vrindaban delighted the audience and even more the children who turned up in large numbers, by acting scenes from the lives of Sri Krishna and Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu, morning after morning for about two and a half hours by rain and by sunshine.

For the last seven years we have in great detail described similar celebrations in the pages of this magazine, and although Mataji and everything about Her is ever and ever new, there is yet the danger of becoming repetitive when attempting to write about these functions again and again.

Mataji has been in Kishenpur ever since She arrived there from Rishikesh. She is expected to stay on for *Guru Purnima*, which falls on July 20th and leave for New Delhi the next day. Dehradun has played a prominent part in Mataji's *Lila*. It was the first place She visited after leaving Bengal in 1932, when She remained in Raipur with Bholanathji and Bhaiji for a whole year. This summer also Dehradun has been singularly fortunate to be blessed by Mataji's presence for full three months. It happens very rarely indeed that Mataji stays in one place for such a long period. It will be

remembered that Mataji spent two months in Dehradun two years ago, but there Her health was not at all satisfactory and She did not leave Her room for 23 days. We are happy to say that Her health has been very much better this time and people could enjoy Mataji's company to their heart's content.

Many prominent visitors came to Kishenpur for Her *darshan*, to mention only one example, Srimati Indira Gandhi with her two sons. It was many years ago that her mother, Srimati Kamala Nehru used to come to Kishenpur for Mataji's *darshan* as often as she could, spending night after night in meditation near Mataji and returning to her home in the early morning.

Among foreign visitors there was a gentleman from Columbia in South America; then a couple from Wisconsin who felt rather mystified, as they both noticed a striking resemblance between Didima and the mother of the American lady. A Dutch paintress arrived, desiring to paint Mataji's portrait. She stayed for three days and then proceeded to Mussoorie to paint a picture of the Dalai Lama. Many painters, both Indian and foreign have tried to produce Mataji's likeness on canvas, but so far none of them have succeeded. It is by no means easy to reproduce Mataji's ageless face, Her mysterious eyes with their distant look that seems to gaze at what we cannot even fathom, Her radiance, Her perfect repose, Her super-human serenity under all circumstances, Her sweet and bewitching smile. Besides there is another difficulty. After having spent a few hours in the Ashram, a famous painter once said: "Mataji has so many faces, I have already seen ten or twelve. I wonder which of them I am to paint! At moments She looks like a young girl, then again like an old woman and so on."

Mataji is expected to remain in Delhi for about two weeks and then to be present at Vrindaban at a *Bhagavata Saptah* beginning on August 10th and ending on August 17th (*Jhulan Purnima* day). Durga Puja is to be celebrated at Varanasi from 8th October, 1959.

“In your sorrows and troubles address your prayers and petitions to Him. To Him you should confide all your difficulties, for He is the Fountain of Goodness.”

“Ma”