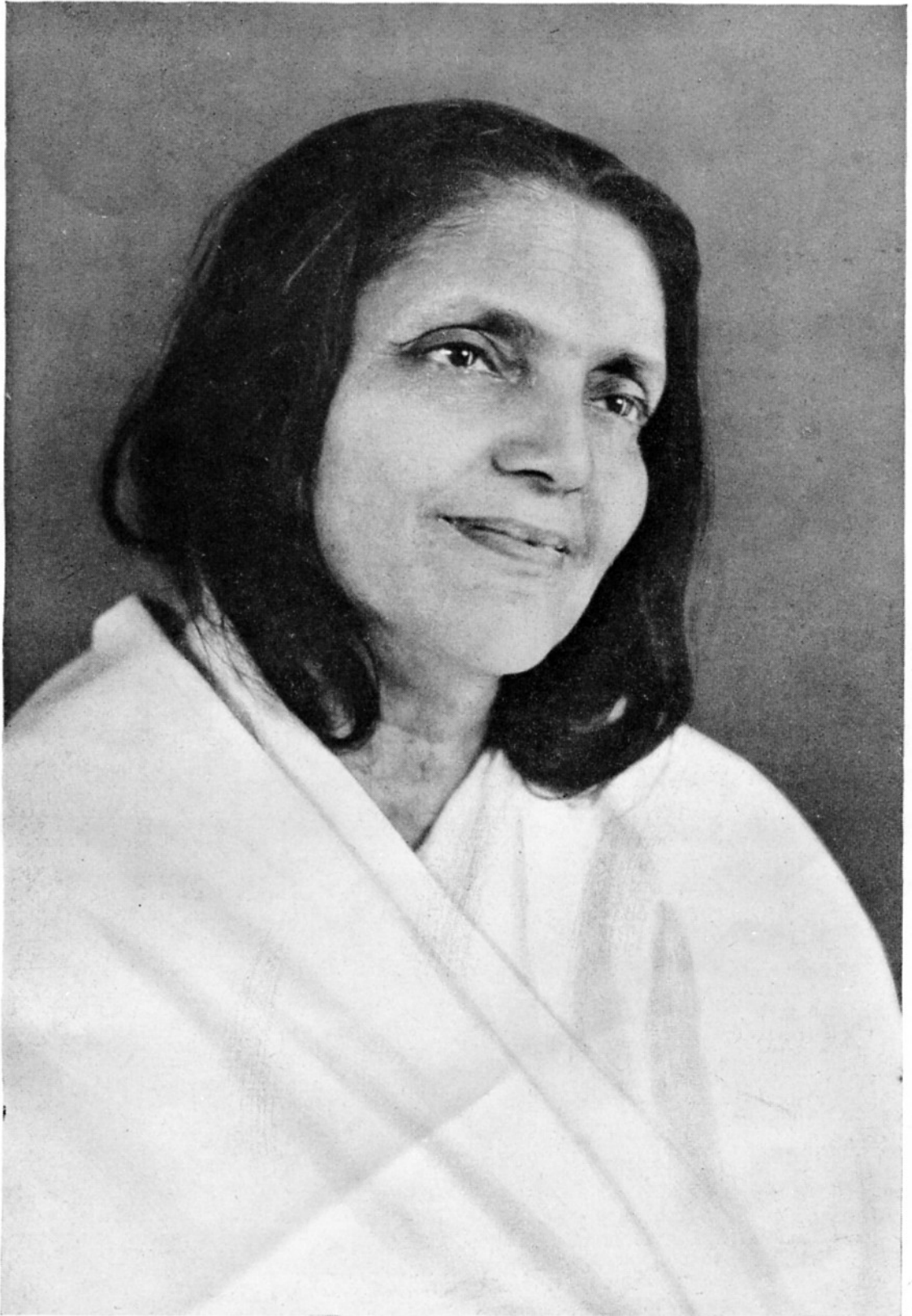


Contents

ENGLISH SECTION

	Page No.
1. Matri Vani	161
2. Conversations with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee— Prof. Ganguly	163
3. Pages from my Diary—Sri Gurupriya Devi	171
4. How I met Sri Sri Anandamayee Ma— His Holiness Syedna Hazarat Talattuf Hussain Saheb	178
5. Psychic Control in Education—U. C. Dutt	182
6. The Malady of the Age and its Cause and Cure —Dr. B. L. Atreya, M.A., D.Litt.	194
7. Matri Lila	199
8. Notes and Comments	210

*Printed & Published by K. Bose for
Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, Varanasi,
at the Kamala Press, Godhowlia, Varanasi.*



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

Look, in order to pluck a rose one has to put one's hand into the midst of thorns. But if the rose is a person's aim and he has a keen desire to pluck it, he will not refrain from doing so for fear of being pricked. Moreover the Great Mother arranges whatever is necessary for each one: She certainly knows the real need of every individual. If one has at least this much faith, there is no reason at all to feel distressed.

* * * *

HE at all times lavishes His Grace on everyone. Only in order to acquire the capacity to understand this, one must tenaciously fix one's gaze at Him as Goal.

* * * *

Who is 'Anandamayi Ma'? Who indeed is '*Anandamayi*' (permeated with Divine joy)? HE is eternally enthroned in the hearts of all beings, verily He dwells *everywhere*. Having seen Him, reached Him, everything is seen, everything attained; in other words one becomes fearless, certain, free from conflict, immutable, imperishable.

* * * *

To live in a foreign country is in itself painful; but to be in one's own home together with one's near and dear ones is happiness. This is why there is the search for one's real Home, for one's true Beloved. How much longer will you remain in this alien land and suffer misery ?



Do you imagine that you are liberated ? In order to become actually liberated, that is to realize Him, one has to set apart a little time. If you live in the spirit of "He is engaging me in His service," there is no cause for bondage. But if this attitude of mind is absent the desire for praise and fame awakens. The serving is He, the server is also He and the one who is served is likewise He alone : there is none apart from the ONE.



Who is going whither and from whence does he come ? For this body there is no going and no coming. That which existed before exists even now. What does it matter whether one dies or remains alive ? Even after having died he still exists, so why worry ?

Conversations with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

RECORDED BY PROFESSOR B. GANGULY

(Translated from Bengali.)

(1)

Question : In *satsang** who keeps company with whom ?

Mataji : You keep company with your Self.

Question : To what purpose ?

Mataji : So that Truth, Supreme Knowledge may be revealed. You should seek *satsang* in order to attain to Self-realization.

Question : Which aspect of my being associates with what other aspect ?

Mataji : Your being has innumerable aspects, you in your aspect of ignorance associate with yourself in your aspect of Knowledge : in other words your outer self concentrates and makes contact with your innermost Self.

Question : Is it right to have faith when seeking *satsang* ?

Mataji : Certainly. It is you yourself who exist also in the form of faith.

**Satsang* : The company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, either the actual physical company or in an applied sense by reading holy Scriptures or the lives of saints. Also a religious meeting and in its widest sense the practice of the presence of God.

Question : It is surely appropriate to seek *satsang* with full consciousness ?

Mataji : The objective of *satsang* is to awaken to full consciousness, to progress from unconsciousness to consciousness.

Question : "Where a superman has walked that is the Path"—what does this mean ?

Mataji : The superman is ever present within you. A superman is not any particular person, no one external—it is HE Himself. The inner superman, who is the real superman, follow His Path ! The superman is Self-effulgent, it is beside the point to ask who He is. Are you aware of the superman within you ? Then why your question ? Speak of that which you can perceive directly. It is imperative that the superman within you should become revealed to you. If you say : "I am the instrument and He wields it," this is all right. Once you have come to know that superman, questions will no longer arise, but because you are unable to grasp Him, you need an outer superman. He who is sublime among sages, who is a superman, a divine incarnation—what He says, the path He treads, that is the Path. Do you know why one has to accept a Guru ? It is necessary to be initiated by an outer Guru so as to be able to find the Guru who dwells within. This is why you make contact with a superman. If you ask : "How can one recognize Him ?" When the time is ripe He will let you find Him. If you are eagerly longing for Him, He will allow you to recognize and understand Him and to make close contact with Him. What will be the ultimate outcome of this ? You will find your Self,

the superman who is hidden within you will be revealed to you. Then you will understand that your own superman appeared to you in such and such a guise. Unless He Himself lets you grasp Him you cannot do so.

Question : Can the *prārabdha** be obliterated if there is desperate eagerness ?

Mataji : Unless one has reached the shore the *prārabdha* cannot be obliterated. Eagerness† is the means, not the fulfilment, it is but the way to fulfilment. There are degrees also of eagerness.

Question : Who is called a mother and what are the characteristics of a mother ?

Mataji : Nobody is called a mother. A mother is just a mother. Those who become her children know what she is like.

Question : Does one understand the mother by becoming her child or by becoming oneself a mother ?

Mataji : Either way. When a spade is dug into the earth, has the earth been pierced by the spade entering into it, or will you say that the spade has entered because the earth has been pierced ? Likewise it is one and the same whether you say the child has recognized his mother or the mother her child.

**Prārabdha karma* is that portion of one's past action, which is bound to fructify in the present life and cannot be averted.

†A play upon words : "Kul" means shore, 'vyakulta' restless yearning, eagerness. Thus unless the shore has been reached there is restless longing for it.

Question : What is the means to blot out the *prārabdha karma* ?

Mataji : To kindle the fire of Supreme Knowledge.

Question : How will Self-realization come about ?

Mataji : By receiving and holding the power of the Guru. What is already within you becomes revealed. A person whose brain is not clear cannot be taught. In a similar way the inner power to know your Self is realized by engaging in *sadhana*. It is like an electric connection. If it were not within you, you could never discover it. Just as some persons—but not all—possess the gift of writing poetry or of elocution and so on. If it be someone's fate the scales will fall from his eyes, the veil will drop away. It happens by itself, another cannot give Realization; one has to become possessed of one's inner Knowledge. Everyone is born with his innate tendencies and talents. Just as one can acquire worldly knowledge so also is Reality known by becoming possessed of one's inner power—and then there is Awakening. The Guru's power is bestowed on the disciples, but one among millions can be found who is capable of holding it. The *mantra* has a power of its own and its repetition will not be in vain, but the power of the Guru is not conferred upon all.

Question : What actually is "the Grace of the Guru ?"

Mataji : When together with His instructions the Guru bestows the capacity to translate them into action—this is His Grace. Grace is being poured out at all times. But it cannot enter because the receptacle is turned upside down. When one becomes receptive one is able to receive Grace.

The means to turn the receptacle the right way up is to obey the Guru's orders to the very letter. By virtue of the yoga of sustained practice the veil will be torn asunder, and the Self stand revealed—one will advance towards one's real home. So long as there is craving one will be born again and again, in other words physical existence continues due to the sense of want. Through sustained spiritual practice one may be released from it. In order that the fact of man's eternal union with the One may be revealed the commands of the Guru must be followed. By so doing one becomes worthy of His Grace. The Guru in His mercy points out each one's own path, the path that leads to Self-realization. There are two kinds of grace, namely with and without cause or reason. The first is obtained as the result of one's actions ; but when it is understood that one cannot get anywhere by one's own effort, then Grace without cause or reason (*ahetuk kripa*) is received. From the state of utter helplessness He lifts one up.

Question : Who has the capacity to confer power and who to receive it ?

Mataji : He who can liberate one from the ceaseless round of birth and death He is indeed a *Sad-Guru* ; it is He who wields the authority to confer power. Just as a child cannot beget until he grows into a young man, likewise is there a stage when one becomes a receptacle and then at the right moment the Guru transmits power into it.

Question : Can the power be conferred no matter what be the nature of the receptacle ?

Mataji : HE can mould the receptacle.

Question : Thus if the receptacle is not ready, does the Guru withhold the power ?

Mātaji : No, when a flood comes it carries everyone along with it.

Question : What is the means of entering the tide ?

Mataji : To ask this question with desperate eagerness.

Question : How can such eagerness be called forth ?

Mataji : By keeping *satsang* for a great length of time. Where that which is doomed to destruction is destroyed, there the Beloved stands revealed. For those who have received initiation it is fitting to devote much time to the repetition of their *mantra* and to meditation—then only will there be awakening.

Question : Does the repetition of God's Name also amount to *satsang* ?

Mataji : Most certainly; for He is present as the Name. Verily, the essence of Truth is He, the essence of the *mantra* is He. The significance of the Name is that its constant repetition will make it easy for the aspirant to advance towards God. It is He who is present in the form of the Name, the letter (*akshara*) and the *mantra*. Therefore to be with any of them is also *satsang* : you have found Him in the guise of the Name. If *japa* is practised with faith the benefit will be much greater, but even when adhered to without faith it will yield some result. Ever keep the Name in your mind, ever foster it in the depth of your heart. Just as a seed has to be buried in the earth, so the Name has to be firmly

implanted in the soil of the heart and repeated constantly. As a result a tree will develop out of the seed. The tree signifies Self-realization. God's names and forms are of infinite number and variety ; by the sustained repetition of His Name His innumerable shapes will be revealed. Having been implanted in the heart the Name will quite naturally reveal its essence. To know Oneself means to know God. Thus one should proceed by constant practice. Just as after passing one's examinations one automatically becomes a professor or an engineer, so by engaging in *sadhana*, Realization will come of itself. But it is incumbent to set to work according to the Guru's instructions.

Question : Will it be effective if one has found the Guru in a dream ?

Mataji : Yes, it will. Is not that which is known as the waking state of the world but a dream ! The only difference is that the one is the dream of sleep and the other the dream of waking. If one has received a *mantra* in either of these dreams there will be no more doubt (as to one's having been initiated). However, the *mantra* that has been received in the dream of sleep must be practised and brought to fruition in the dream of waking.

Question : If this world is God's own manifestation, how can it be dismissed as a mere illusion ?

Mataji : When this question has ceased to exist, this is the manifestation called Self-revelation (*Swayam Prakash*). Where the Realization is of the One-Brahman-without-a-second, there can be no question of dismissing anything.

When the triunity of knowledge, the knower and the act of knowing has merged into one there is the One Brahman—not unless this has happened. So long as the world is perceived this triunity will continue to exist. Action, acting and the actor although one, are each apart from the one another. The same man is indeed father, son and husband. Similarly there is only One Brahman without a second. On the other hand when the world is perceived these three appear different from one another ; in the realm of action there is bound to be difference. The world is in the grip of perpetual motion, it changes continually ; that which is changing can surely not be eternal—motion implies impermanence. What then is Truth ? That which is not subject to change ; yet when only the One *Brahman* is perceived nothing whatsoever can be excluded.

PAGES FROM MY DIARY

GURUPRIYA DEVI

(Translated from Bengali.)

12th June 1957.

Sri Sri Ma was staying in Poona for a time. One day, when a number of us were sitting in Her room, the conversation turned to Mataji's visit at the Pondicherry Ashram. A Brahmachari of our Ashram who had spent some time in Pondicherry was among the people present. He told us that while there, he had questioned Satubhai* about Mataji's meeting with the Mother of Pondicherry and Satubhai had told him that when the Mother saw Mataji for the first time, the Mother perceived a huge light resembling lightning and on either side of that light there were what seemed to be dark clouds. When asked about the meaning of the clouds the Mother said they might perhaps signify obstacles.

During this conversation Professor Jyotish Das Gupta, the brother-in-law of Sri Nalini Sen, who is an inmate of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, was present. He said : "Ma, I also have been to Ponicherry. There someone told me that the Mother looked straight at you with a steady gaze and you, unable to bear it, lowered your eyes." Professor J. Das Gupta related more of the kind and wanted to know what Mataji had to say about it all.

*Sri Satyendra Thakur, an inmate of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

Mataji listened to everything and then said with a smile: "She is the Mother and this (pointing to Herself) Her little daughter. What more is to be said about it?"

But some of us including myself begged of Mataji: "Should not the actual facts be disclosed? Do please speak, Ma! For in this case it cannot be as it would with ordinary people like ourselves."

When we went on pressing Mataji to explain to us what had really happened, She laughed heartily and at last responded: "As you know, Sri Haribabaji took this small child with him when he went on a pilgrimage to South India. This is precisely how this little child went to see the Mother of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. This body did not approach the Mother in quest of spiritual experience or the like; a little girl is simple and natural in the presence of her own mother. You well know that the behaviour of this body is quite unpredictable (*'el melo'*): here there is no question of giving or receiving power, of finding anything bearable or unbearable—whatever comes to pass at any time is as it should be.* As this body feels here with you now, just exactly the same it felt at Pondicherry. What is the difference between this body, the Mother and you all? From your angle of vision only they are different one from the other.

"Very well then, since you are eager to hear, listen! When the Mother came and stood before this body, this body out of its own *kheyal* looked straight into the Mother's eyes

* *'Jokhon ja hoye jai'* is an expression frequently used by Mataji.

for a moment, just as it looks at all of you ; but then the *kheyal* came that the *sadhus* who had come with us were all being kept standing and so this body for a second looked in their direction ; then again there was the *kheyal* to respond fully to the blinkless gaze of the Mother. Thus this body of its own accord did look directly into the Mother's eyes for some length of time, did it not ? Then the Mother herself lowered her glance and put a flower into my hand ; an exchange of flowers followed."

Turning to us Mataji added : "You all witnessed this yourselves. The Mother's eyes did not even radiate intense light while focussed on this small girl. In other words did my Mother attract and hold the eyes of this small girl with her glance as is done in the case of others ? This is the exact truth of the matter."

After pausing for a while, Mataji spoke again. "Some years ago, when this body met Satubhai, he talked about the Mother of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and said that when one goes for her *darshan* she gazes straight and steadily into one's eyes. At that time this body had the *kheyal* : "Very well, if ever circumstances bring about a meeting of this body with the Mother, this body will behave quite naturally according to its *kheyāl* ; whatever happens is as it should be."*

Mataji laughed and then continued : "If someone had told this body that at the Pondicherry Ashram it was a rule to respond from the very beginning to the Mother's gaze and

*'Ja hoye jai.'

look straight into her eyes, this body would have had the *kheyāl* to do accordingly. Every place and every condition, wherever and whatever they may be, are but the ONE. If the *kheyāl* had come, this body would spontaneously have acted (to whatever extent it might be) as consistent with the demands of that particular place. Where this body was made to stay, there it stayed. When and where it was taken to see (someone or something) it did go and see at the appointed time and place. Further it sat down or stood up, etc. for precisely the length of time and at any particular spot that was in keeping with the ritual of the place, so far as it had been made known to this body. From your worldly point of view there are no doubt a great many different ways of expressing things. So long as the individual is what it is and has not been freed from its knots, how can a correct solution of any problem be arrived at? Suppose the Mother's gaze had been met by the gaze of this body from beginning to end, this might have given you the chance of saying : 'Look, Mataji held the eyes of the Mother with such power that the Mother was incapable of averting her eyes.'

Here Mataji broke out into ringing laughter and then remarked : "This is the kind of thing you might have said, is it not? Look, all forms are but the expressions of the Power of the One Lord; at different times He manifests in different ways."

We had heard various reports about Mataji's meeting with the Mother and we had also heard all kinds of other things in this connexion. But so far whenever questioned on the subject, Mataji would just laugh it away. This time,

however, in response to our eager request the truth of the matter was disclosed through Mataji's utterances.

All this reminded me of something that happened long, long ago, perhaps even more than twenty-five or thirty years back. Once in Dacca Mataji had come to the house of my father (the late Swami Akhandānandaji). In the presence of over a hundred people Mataji's eyes for hours and hours remained fixed in a blinkless stare like that of a statue. My father who was a Civil Surgeon at first felt very anxious and then said : "How can such a thing be possible in the world ? It is indeed most amazing !" When afterwards we took Mataji on foot to someone else's home, I found that Her eyes still remained fixed in exactly the same way. Since this was our first experience of seeing Mataji in that state I began to feel apprehensive as to what was going to happen to Her. The people who were present could observe all this with their own eyes ; some of them are still alive.

On another occasion at Kashi, also a number of years ago, Mataji's eyes began to be fixed in various kinds of ways (*tratak*)* in the presence of Mahamahopadyaya Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj and many other persons. Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj has preserved a number of photos that he had taken of Mataji in that condition. Later when he discussed these phenomena with Her, She declared : "There is an endless variety of fixed gaze." We quite frequently are able to observe this kind of stare which comes naturally to Mataji.

* *Tratak* is the art and science of fixed gaze. This fixed gaze is supposed to be uniform in character, but for the person who has specialized in this art, it is of practically infinite variety, differing in nature according to the object on which the eyes are fixed.

In this connexion something occurs to me that Mataji tells us on occasions : "It is not possible for you to understand every condition in which supermen, sages and saints may be at any time and what they may do for what reason. This is why you should not engage in idle talk about them ; although, needless to say, they are indifferent to praise and blame. Your duty, however, is to try your utmost to carry out their instructions."

We can often hear Mataji say something like the following ; "He who is your *Guru* and *Ishta** is indeed the *Guru* and *Ishta* of the whole world ; and the One who is the *Guru* and *Ishta* of the whole world is verily your own *Guru* and *Ishta*. Infinite are His forms, infinite His Self-revelation, infinite His Self-concealment. He alone appears as the *Guru*, the *Ishta* and the *mantra*—there is only one all-pervading Self. He plays with Himself, He reposes within Himself, He alone is. In order to grasp His indivisible Form there are many ways. He allows Himself to be grasped by Himself and yet is beyond grasping. Again there is a state where the question of grasping or not grasping does not arise. This is the Realization that is wanted."

On another occasion Mataji said in reply to someone's question : "When you are in the company of *sadhus*, saints and sages you should make it a rule to adopt the excellent and abandon what merely appears pleasing ; you should not criticize or judge anything that a *mahatma* does. What saints and sages say helps one to cultivate the presence of one's

* a the Beloved, also one's chosen deity.

Ishta and therefore should be accepted and followed. Useless talk is harmful. Whatever you may say about anyone and in whatever spirit—all are indeed your very own. Thus you are but talking about yourself. So long as one has not realized one's true Being, one should be intent on fostering within one's heart the attitude that one's real Self, which is present in all, is none other than God. Embrace the excellent and relinquish mere pleasure. The whole world is one spiritual family. Therefore it is the duty of those who are out to find Truth to regard whatever a *sadhu* undertakes in search of Truth as one of the variegated manifestations of their own *Guru* or *Ishta*. This is the attitude of mind to be cultivated. For those who accept that He is mother, father, friend and beloved—everything in one—and also for those who think in terms of Ashrams, actually the whole world is one single universal Ashram. In this there is no question of boundary or limit—it is boundless, unlimited; all are of the One, *are the One*. Where two are there naturally will be conflict. It is the veil that causes blindness; you should understand that you yourself are the veil."

How I Met Sri Sri Anandamayee Ma

By

HIS HOLINESS SYEDNA HAZRAT TALATTUF HUSSAIN SAHIB

Meeting with the Lama.

From the early days of my life I was inclined towards Sufism. For this reason I always went to see every mahatma, sadhu, faqir, saint or divine I heard of. But none of them could pacify my soul. When I felt very uneasy I left my home in Dehra Dun and travelled to Bhootan, Nepal and Tibbet. In 1919, at Lhasa in Tibbet, the land of *lamas*, I met Græ Lama. I felt some spiritual comfort in his company and requested him to make me his *chela* (disciple). He refused, put a *tasbih* (string of beads) into my hand, held one end in his own and remarked : "Both of us are beads of the same *Tasbih*".

Turning point in my life.

After this disappointment I went to Assam to pay homage to the late Hazrat Shah Jalal Sahib, a great Divine. One night when I was near his tomb I was advised to go to Baghdad Sharif.

My journey to Iraq.

With great difficulty I managed to reach Iraq and then the dargah of Piran-i-Pir, Dastgir Ghausul Azam Hazrat Mohiuddin Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (the greatest Muslim

Divine). Then I began to look for a *Pir* (spiritual guide) and at last met Sheikh Sayed Sahib. I decided to stay in Baghdad for ever and requested the Sheikul Islam to make me his *murid* (disciple). But he refused saying: "You cannot stay here and should go back to India, as you will have four more children. You will come across some lady with great spiritual power and derive much benefit from her".

I came back to India and began to look for *Majzooḥ* (women who are absorbed in the love of God to such an extent that they seem mad). I met many such women, but realized that I had not yet found the right person.

My first meeting with Sri Sri Ma.

In 1936 in Dehra Dun when I was going somewhere, a man came running to me and said: "You are wanted by Mataji." I responded to the call. She received me at the door and enquired whether I had been to Iraq and whether the Sheikul Islam had refused to become my spiritual guide. I replied in the affirmative. She then advised me to correct my pronunciation of the Arabic words I used in the *wazifa* and to start offering *ishraq* (after sunrise prayers). This was my first meeting with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee.

After that I used to visit her off and on and in view of my old age she always addressed me as "Pitaji". After some time I began to have visions of gods, goddesses, prophets and divines while I was awake. I owe all this to Mataji.

Distribution of prasād.

Whenever I happened to be in Mataji's room and somebody brought sweets, Mataji asked me to distribute them to all present.

One day an orthodox Hindu gentleman was present who did not like to take sweets from the hands of a Muslim. I sensed his feelings although he did not utter a word. I reported the matter to Mataji and She explained to the man that She did not follow any particular religion and that all were equal in Her eyes. This impressed me very much and consoled me to a great extent.

My early meetings with spirits.

Once I complained to Mataji that although I could see spirits, observe their lips moving, yet could not hear their voices. She advised me to be patient and wait for some time. I followed Her advice and the faculty to converse with spirits was vouchsafed to me at last.

The Function at Solan.

In 1946, the Raja of Solan held a big function which was attended by sadhus and mahants from all parts of India. At the request of Mataji I also was invited.

One day the sadhus began to ask each other what they had achieved in the spiritual field. Somebody said: "Let us also ask the only Muslim in this congregation." The question was put to me, but I said I was not allowed to disclose my secrets. When almost all of them including the Raja insisted that I should give an answer to their query and Mataji also

asked me to do so, I related some of my experiences. I told them that Rama Chandarji, Krishna Kanhaiya and Durga Mai (Hazrat Rabia Basri) a divine lady of repute etc. etc. were all present before my vision. I told them what sort of clothes they wore, that Kanhaiya was standing under a tree and playing on his flute and that Durga Mai was wearing a crown. On hearing this I was greatly cheered and applauded by the audience. Everybody looked with appreciation at me. I would have never given away these secrets, had not Mataji asked me to do so.

Separation.

Physically I am far away from Mataji now, but spiritually I am not, I am always by Her side and recite the following verse every now and then :—

O' Mother if I could get near Thee
 I would praise Thee day and night,
 I would touch Thy feet and worship Thee,
 O' Mother ! O' Mother ! O' Mother !

شری ماتا اگر میں تجھ کو پاؤں * ترے گن دن رات بیتوں کو گانا
 میں یوجا تیری کرتا ترے چہرے کو چھونا * اے ماتا - اے ماتا - اے ماتا

Psychic Control in Education*

U. C. DUTT

The present system of Education gives a lot of information but little strength. Knowledge properly assimilated and guided by an ulterior end is power; otherwise it defeats its own purpose and runs riot in the brain. Knowledge (Shiva) divorced from power (Shakti) is considered to be dead (Shava). It degenerates into a dead mass of unrelated information. No conscious effort has been made to vitalize and co-ordinate the education imposed on us by an alien ruler.

Centuries ago the old system evolved a method to energize knowledge by awakening the latent power in man. The method known as psychic control or yoga was regularly practised by pupils to develop extraordinary power and free the Self from the bondage of matter. Psychic control took different forms in different parts of India. It was systematized by Sage Patanjali in about the Second Century B. C. The entire system of yoga proceeds on the assumption that each soul is divine in essence and the goal of life is to manifest the divine fully. Swami Vivekananda who is regarded as a great yogi and an apostle of modern India, says :

“Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest the divine within, by controlling nature, external, and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic

* Based on Raja-yoga by Swami Vivekananda and Yoga Aphorisms by Patanjali.

control, or philosophy, by one or more or all of these—and be free”.

Here Swamiji refers to all the four methods of Yoga—*Jnana* (Knowledge), *Bhakti* (Devotion), *Karma* (Action) and *Rajayoga* (Psychic control) leading to the union of the individual with the universal by removing the obstacles. Nature external and internal serves as an obstacle, a barrier, a bondage to the spirit. It has got to be controlled by either of these methods. Here we are concerned with psychic control.

Let us think of an ocean with big waves, small ripples and tiny bubbles. Waves and bubbles are different in name, size and shape, but all of them have one and the same ocean as their substance. They rise and fall and melt in the ocean. They cannot be separated from it. In fact everyone of them is potentially the ocean, though as finite forms they go by different names. Similarly we consider ourselves to be finite beings with a small body, a limited mind and a stubborn ego. My real nature which is neither body, nor mind, nor ego transcends all of them and is one with the whole—the unlimited ocean of eternal Life and Light. All powers are mine. Why do I look so weak and helpless? Simply because I do not know those powers and cannot draw on them.

Everything that we see or feel is a form of matter and every form of matter composed of electrons, protons, and neutrons is but a form of energy. The external nature is a gross form and the internal nature is a subtle form of energy. The whole world which is in constant flux is an expression of energy. It is one and undivided. Every individual object is, as it

were, a whirlpool—a mode, a bubble in the flowing stream of energy. The subtle form is the cause and the gross form is the effect. They vary in degree, not in kind. As body and mind this energy conceals our true nature and makes us forget that we are masters and not slaves to it. Body and mind are our instruments. If we can control and make proper use of them, we can control the whole of nature whose integral parts they are.

I see a book. Does it exist outside? Is it an exact copy of what is really outside? No. What exists outside is unknown and unknowable. The unknown element stimulates my mind through the eyes as suggestion and the mind gives out the reaction in the form of a book. In the same manner when a stone is thrown into water, the water reacts in the form of waves. The world that we see is the reaction of our mind, caused by the outer suggestion. Let us take for example an oyster. A parasite gets inside the shell and causes irritation, and the oyster throws a sort of enamelling round it, and this makes the pearl. The world of experience is our own enamel and the real world is the parasite serving as a nucleus. So we gain neither knowledge nor power.

Is true knowledge then a fruit of the forbidden tree? Apparently it is so. But a calm scrutiny reveals two kinds of energy—(1) *Vidya* or bright force and (2) *Avidya* or dark force. *Avidya* (ignorance) or dark force hides our true nature and keeps us in bondage, while *vidya* (knowledge) or bright force reveals it and restores to us our freedom. A yogi moves towards the goal by renouncing the evil forces.

Renunciation in the true sense of the term means not to allow any modification or disturbance of the mind stuff in spite of the presence of sense objects. The mind stuff is composed of various parts called the sense organs (*Indriyas*), the mind (*Manas*), the determinative faculty (*Buddhi*) and the ego (*Ahankara*). They are all forces and form the internal instrument (*Antahkarana*) which resembles a lake with waves of thought. A man of renunciation keeps the lake calm and undisturbed in order to see what is at the bottom. He knows his true Self by distinguishing it from the not-self—(*Purusha*) from (*Prakriti*). Psychic control is the process by which our mind stuff (*Chitta*) is made free from the various modifications (*vruttis*).

With a view to gaining full control over Nature which is the store-house of all forces or powers, Sage Patanjali prescribes eight limbs or steps of yoga. They are *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi*.

The first two *Yama* and *Niyama* are the moral basis of the other processes. *Yama* involves (1) non-violence (*Ahimsa*), (2) truthfulness (*satyam*), (3) noncovetousness (*Asteya*), (4) Continence [*Brahmacharya*], and (5) non-receiving of any gift (*Aparigraha*). *Niyama* indicates (1) cleanliness (*Shoucha*), (2) Contentment (*Santosh*), (3) mortification (*Tapa*), (4) Study (*Swadhyaya*) and (5) Worship of God (*Ishvara Pranidhana*). A moral attitude and moral discipline are essential in order to build a higher life. *Asana* is posture. It is necessary to find a posture in which one can remain still for long. A good deal of activity goes on in the body. The

nerve currents have to be given a new channel. The main part of the activity will be along the spinal column, so one thing necessary for the posture is to hold the spinal column free, sitting erect, holding the chest, neck and head in a straight line. With the chest in one cannot think very high thoughts. An easy, pleasant and natural posture suiting the aspirant is necessary.

Pranayama means controlling the breathing. It consists in drawing in, holding and expelling breath in a regular measure. Breath is like the fly-wheel of the machine called the body. As such it supplies and regulates the motive power to everything in the body. *Prāna* or the vital force, the manifestation of which is the breath, sets the whole engine in motion. It causes the nerve currents to move all over the body. The mind is also set in motion by different nerve-currents. So by restraining the *Prāna* one can gain perfect control over the body and the mind and thereby over the universal *Prāna* or Cosmic Energy. This opens the door to almost unlimited power. When the yogi becomes perfect in *Pranayama*, there is nothing in nature that is not under his control.

Pratyahara literally means "gathering towards", i. e. checking the outgoing powers of the mind that are lured away by the senses and freeing it from their slavery. By doing this one develops character through self-control. To control the mind, which is compared to a restless monkey that is drunk and stung by a scorpion, is a tremendous task. One can succeed only after a determined and continuous struggle.

*Dhāraṇa** is concentration, holding the mind to certain points, forcing it to feel some parts of the body to the exclusion of others. When the mind stuff or *Chitta* is focussed on a certain point, this is called *Dhāraṇa*. A popular method is to concentrate the mind on a lotus that is full of effulgent light in the heart. The Yogi must practise regularly in a solitary place. He should avoid much talking or overwork. Such practice will tone down nervous excitement, bring about calmness and improve health and temperament. For rapid progress strict diet is necessary.

Dhyāna means meditation. When the mind is trained to remain fixed on a particular external or internal point, it acquires the power of flowing in an unbroken current as it were towards that point. This state is called *Dhyāna*. Meditation must begin with gross objects and then slowly rise to finer and finer, until it becomes objectless. Every act of perception involves three processes; (1) the external causes of sensation, (2) the internal movements in the nerves and the brain and (3) the mental reaction. Various powers come to the yogi, if he succeeds in perceiving any one of these processes as distinct from the other two.

“If he is strong enough to reject these miraculous powers, he will attain the goal of Yoga, the complete suppres-

* *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi* are one continuous process called *Sanyama*. It consists in fixing the mind on an object, keeping it there for long and separating the form of the object from its meaning which remains in the mind as internal sensation. When a person succeeds in this *Sanyama*, all powers come under his control. (Yoga Sutra, 3/34,5).

sion of the waves in the ocean of the mind." Then he will find in himself the essence of knowledge, the immortal, the all-pervading.

Samādhi is a super-conscious state of mind. When we take food we do it consciously, when we assimilate it we do it unconsciously. We are not conscious of many involuntary and automatic actions within the body, nor have we any control over them. But by practice we can know them and bring them under control. Almost every action of this type can be brought to the plane of consciousness. On the conscious plane all work is always accompanied by the feeling of egoism, while on the unconscious plane this feeling is absent. This unconscious work is called 'instinct' where animals are concerned. In man conscious work prevails. There is a still higher plane on which the mind can function. As unconscious work is below consciousness, so there is another kind of action which is above consciousness and which is not accompanied by the feeling of egoism. When the mind functions above or below the line of consciousness, there is no feeling of "I". The state above the line of consciousness is called "Super-consciousness" or *Samādhi*.

When a man goes into *Samādhi*, he comes out enlightened, a sage, a prophet. The field of the conscious working of the mind is narrow and limited. Reason moves within a narrow circle. All metaphysical realities such as Soul, God, the Absolute, etc., are beyond the scope of pure reason, which leads to the despair of Agnosticism. The deeper truths of life that inform and inspire are revealed by an instrument

superior to reason—namely Intuition, *Prajna*. What reason is to the conscious or the mental, intuition is to the Superconscious or Supramental. Intuition does not contradict reason or clash with it. It fulfils reason. A yogi discovers this extraordinary sense after *Samadhi*.

The eight steps of *Yoga* presuppose a Psycho-physical system which serves as the background. There are two nerve-currents in the Spinal column, called *Pingala* and *Ida* and a hollow canal called *Sushumna* running through the Spinal cord. At the lower end of the canal is the "Lotus of the *Kundalini*" in which a power called the *Kundalini* lies coiled up. When *Kundalini* awakens, it tries to force a passage through this hollow canal. As it rises step by step, layer after layer of the mind opens up and wonderful visions and powers come to the yogi. When it reaches the brain, he becomes detached from body and mind; the Soul becomes free from the bondage of matter. According to Sri Aurobindo even body and mind become transformed and divinised. The canal is closed at the lower end that is situated near the sacral plexus and is triangular in shape. Different plexuses with their centres in the Spinal canal can stand for different lotuses of the *Yogi*. He conceives of several centres, beginning with the *Muladhara*, the basic, and ending with the *Sahasrara*, the thousand-petalled lotus in the brain. The intermediate centres are *Svadhithana*, *Manipura Anahata*, *Visuddha* and *Ajna*. To open the *Sushumna* canal, which is closed in the case of an ordinary man, is the prime object of *Yoga*. When the *Sushumna* opens and the *Kundalini* rises through Psychic control (*Rajayoga*) the *yogi* rises beyond the

senses and his mind becomes superconscious. The *Kundalini* may be awakened by other methods as well, such as intense devotion (*Bhakti Yoga*), selfless work (*Karmayoga*) or searching discrimination (*Jnana Yoga*). All the paths lead to perfection—union with the Divinity.

According to *Yoga*, power (*Shakti*) sleeps at *Muladhara* and Knowledge (Shiva) at *Vishuddha*. On their awakening the Power rises and rouses knowledge. Both join at *Ajna*, the centre of illumination, when the process of unification begins which culminates at the *Sahasrara*. Then the Yogi acquires infinite knowledge, infinite power and liberation (*Kaivalya*)

There is hardly a child who has not been told, “do not steal, do not tell a lie”, but nobody tells the child how not to steal and how not to tell a lie. We can really help the child only when we teach him to control his mind. Every child should be taught self-control in theory and practice as a compulsory subject. A regular syllabus should be drawn up with the help of experts arranging lessons on *asana*, *pranayama*, self-restraint, concentration, meditation, etc. Moral discipline on the line of *yama* and *niyama* should be a matter of every day life to be introduced by example and precept inside and outside of school. Childhood is the best time for the formation of habits. Generally people learn when it becomes too late to translate into action and they do not know when to do so. Thus human life is like a rich plot of land that remains uncultivated.

Progress in every sphere of life depends on concentration and character. Interest and will-power help concentra-

tion. But strong will is generated by perfect chastity—chastity in thought, word and deed. Men leading impure lives lose mental vigour and moral stamina.

Of all the energies in man the highest is said to be “*Ojas*”: It is stored up in the brain. The more *ojas* a man has, the more powerful is he, the more intellectual, the more spiritual. All the forces working in the body become transformed into *ojas* in course of time. It is said that sex-energy, when checked and controlled, easily becomes changed into *Ojas*. So the *yogi* pays special attention to *Muladhara* which guides these. Only chaste men and women can make the *ojas* rise and store it in the brain. Every student should know this secret of success in life

In order to develop a balanced mind in a balanced body one must purify the nerves and practise concentration. Some rules prescribed by *Yogis* :

1. Let your seat be firm and easy.
2. Breathe in a measured way, in and out.
This will harmonise the system.
3. Then join to it the repetition of “Om” or any other sacred word. Let the word flow in and out with the rhythm of the breath and you will find the whole body becoming rhythmical.
4. After a few days take up regular *Pranayama* under the guidance of an expert. “Slowly fill the lungs with breath through the *Ida*, the left nostril and at the same time concentrate the mind on the nerve current. You are, as it were, sending the

nerve current down the spinal column, and striking violently on the last plexus, the basic lotus, which is triangular in form and the seat of the *Kundalini*. Hold the current there for some time. Imagine that you are slowly drawing that nerve current with the breath through the other side, the Pingala, then slowly throw it out through the right nostril.

It is better to begin with four seconds and slowly increase. "Draw in four seconds, hold for sixteen seconds, then throw out in eight seconds. This makes one *Pranayama*."

5. Concentrate the mind on some outer or inner object.
6. (or) Meditate on the lotus of the heart with an effulgent light inside that lotus.
7. (or) Meditate on the heart of some holy person whom you know to be perfectly non-attached; it will calm your mind.
8. (or) Meditate on an inspiring object of knowledge that comes in dream, like an angel or a saint in a blissful condition.
9. (or) Meditate on anything that appeals to you as good.
10. (or) Cease to think of anything. Make your mind vacant.

The suggestions made above are intended to remove the bars that prevent man's nature from developing in the right way. The method is negative. Perfection is man's true nature. Education aims at the manifestation of the perfection which is already in every being. In the animal

the man was imprisoned but, as soon as the door was opened, out rushed the man. Similarly the potential god is in man. When true knowledge breaks the bar of ignorance, God becomes manifest. This Indian stand-point makes a world of difference in the outlook, approach and methods of Education. Psychic control as a potential method has evolved out of this philosophic concept and the practical experience of the race. Moreover, *Yogic* processes that can be verified as laboratory tests, are quite in keeping with the spirit of the modern age. So they should be introduced in schools and colleges to replace many unnecessary types of physical and mental exercises.

As a compulsory subject in the curriculum *Yoga* will vitalize education, energize knowledge and open up higher values of life.

The Malady of the Age—its Cause and Cure

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

Padmabhusan, Knight Commander, Darshanāchārya.

(4)

Epistemological Analysis of Man by the Advaita Vedanta, which takes note of all the aspects and forms of human experience, and of all the epistemological factors involved in it, is, therefore, capable of doing greater justice to the understanding of man than any science so far has done. Vedantic analysis of human experience is thoroughly systematic, rational and comprehensive. Taking the entire human experience in view, the Vedantist discovers and points out four distinct *types* in it, namely, Waking, Dream, Deep Dreamless Sleep (slumber) and Mystic Trance (Samadhi). In the waking experience the subject of experience (Self) is associated and identified with the physical body which functions in the physical world. In this state he is aware of external objects as existing independently of him and of himself as one of the objects of the world, all governed by the laws of nature operating in objective and stable time and space. When a man is physically tired and goes to bed, his waking experience vanishes and he begins to experience a world of dreams. Here he has a different body to use and a different world to live in. Although the dreamer does not know it, the stuff of the dream world is thought. Everything therein is ideal in structure. The space order of the dream is

quite different from that of wakefulness. The stability, identity and causality of dream are quite different. Objects and persons, time and space, cause and effect change in no time in a dream. The body experienced in dream is quite different and performs different functions and acts from the physical body of the wakeful experience and its functions. In the third state of experience, namely in deep dreamless sleep, both the worlds and bodies of dream and wakefulness pass into nothing, vanish from the experience of the sleeper. Still there is some experience, for on waking we remember to have been in deep sleep when we experienced nothing objective. There we are aware of nothing. This experience is characterised by intense pleasure, and every person desires to enjoy it. We do not cease to exist or to be aware in sleep. Quite different from and perhaps superior to all these states of experience is the fourth state *turiya*, Samadhi or mystic trance. The deepest state of Samadhi is that of objectless and thoughtless experience characterised by supreme delight. Time, space, objectivity, duality, plurality and individuality—all vanish, leaving awareness (consciousness) alone shining in its pristine purity and native joy. There is a feeling of infinity, fulness and satisfaction, which is beyond all description.

Having discovered that man is capable of experiencing these four states of existence, the Vedantist tries to understand the necessary epistemological and metaphysical implications of human experience. Despite variations and changes in the states of experience and their objects, the ultimate experient (subject of experience) remains identically and

unalterably the same. It is one and the same subject who experiences all the states and objects or the absence of objects therein. Otherwise how could it be said that all the four states are those of the experience of the same subject? That which changes not and remains identically the same in the midst of changing circumstances and environment must certainly be regarded as something different from and independent of them. It is, therefore, clear that the witnessing Self (awareness or consciousness) is something different from the witnessed states and their objects, and exists in its own right. It is always the subject, and never an object, for to know it as an object, we have to presuppose it as the subject of our knowledge. The Self cannot be a mere series or stream of changing ideas and feelings, for in that case the feeling of personal identity and sameness from birth to death would not be experienced. Consciousness of succession implies a non-successional principle. To experience all the changes from birth to death an unchanging witness is necessary. A continuous and identical principle is presupposed by the fact that we remember past experiences of our life. The consciousness of personal identity and continuity that we all have implies the existence of an identical and unchangeable Self. This Self cannot be identified with any object experienced in any of the states nor can it be said to have any objective quality, for in the fourth state (*turiya avastha*) it exists as bereft of all objective contents and qualities. The objects and their qualities changing with the change of states, how could the unchanging Self be identified with any one of them. The real nature of the Self, therefore, can only be that which persists unaltered throughout the

entire experience. But as we are too much engrossed in the objects and have established identity with some of them, our own existence and nature are thrown out of focus. It is only when we try to discover it by analytic thinking and when we have a glimpse of it in samadhi that we come to know what we really are.

From the above mentioned considerations we come to the conclusion that the Self in us, whatever it be in its own nature, is one and the same throughout our existence from birth to death and throughout the changing states of experience. But the question of all questions, namely : "Does the Self come into existence at the birth of the body and does it perish at the death of the physical body ?" still remains to be answered. The Vedantic epistemology gives a very clear and convincing reply. It says there can be no proof of the birth and death of the Self, for nobody has ever experienced them. Births and deaths of physical bodies alone are witnessed by us, but never of the Self. The Self not being a physical object, nobody can perceive it being born or dying. The Self alone can be a witness to what happens to Itself. It cannot witness its birth for it must pre-exist to witness the event. It cannot witness its death for it must exist at the same time when it is dead. The Self has never intuited its birth and death. Its existence has never been touched by myriad changes in its experience. So the Vedanta concludes that the Self, the ultimate Subject of our Experience, is eternally present. It transcends time. That the Self is the immortal witness of all the states of experience and of all the changes in the physical body, and that in its purest existence it is

characterised by joy, is the least that can be said about it. Its real nature in its fulness remains beyond our present state of knowledge. The powers and potentialities of the Self are incalculable and unimaginable, as the yogis who are able to withdraw into the Self by meditation and contemplation come to possess many miraculous powers, some of which have come to the notice of Psychical Research.

The Vedantist further points out that the deeper we go into the experience of the Self the nearer and closer we are to one another (as some of the paranormal experiences indicate) and in the deepest state of Samadhi all differences and distinctions of individuality are obliterated and a feeling of fulness and perfection is enjoyed by everyone. This indicates that ultimately we are all rooted in the same Self which is the very root, heart and core of the entire world-experience, the Universe. Thus in Samadhi we touch the Ultimate Reality in which we are all rooted. It is possible to make this realization perpetual in our every day life.

MATRI LILA

(15TH OCTOBER 1959—15TH JANUARY 1960.)

After the *Durga Puja* celebrations had been successfully completed, Mataji left for Vindhyachal with a large party of Ashramites and guests on October 17th. Only six short days were spent in that blessed spot of solitude and natural beauty. On October 23rd Mataji was again at Varanasi, where at the suggestion of Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj and others a special week of individual sadhana, named *Matri Saptah* was observed from October 24th—30th. It was of a kind that was new to our Ashram. Fixed types of concentration and meditation had to be practised at fixed hours of the day by those who wished to take part, each one remaining in his or her own room. There were no special gatherings. Throughout this week Mataji, whose health was indifferent, remained upstairs in Her room on the 2nd storey of the *Kanyapith**. Three times daily people were allowed to go there for *Darshan* for a short while.

On the night of *Diwali*, 31st October, *Kali Puja* was performed in the *Chandi Mandap* on the groundfloor of the Ashram and to everybody's delight Mataji descended and was present until the early morning when the *Prasad* was

*The *Kanyapith* is a residential school, where girls are educated according to the ancient ideals of the Brahmacharya Ashram. At the same time they are taught all the subjects of the modern curriculum.

distributed. It is customary all over Bengal to celebrate a special *Kali Puja* in the night of *Divali*, which is the festival of lights.*

The *Annakut* festival followed on November 1st. On that occasion not less than 108 different preparations of food are offered to *Annapurna*, the goddess of plenty, who has a temple in the Varanasi Ashram. On that day everyone who cares to come is welcome to partake of the feast. Needless to say hundreds of people avail themselves of this opportunity, especially when Mataji happens to be present.

On November 3rd Mataji left with only a few companions for Hazaribagh, a hill-station in Behar, while most of Her party proceeded directly to Calcutta, where Mataji alighted on November 5th evening. On arrival in Calcutta She received a tremendous ovation and it took hours until She reached the Ashram. A gate had been erected on the main road at Agarpara, where the lane leading to the Ashram branches off, and from there Mataji's car was led to its destination in procession with *Kirtan*.

Most of the next day was spent in Calcutta proper, where Mataji visited the residences of a number of devotees. From November 8th—14th the *10th Samyam Saptah* was held at Agarpara. Not for the first time did Calcutta witness a function of this kind, for the *3rd Samyam Mahavrata* that took place at Ballygunge, Calcutta in November 1953 is still fresh in the memory of its participants. It was not an ordinary event to observe a week of concentrated *sādhana* including

*See Ananda Varta Vol. VII, No. 3, P. 146—150.

2½ hours of silent meditation daily in the midst of the roaring city. Nevertheless it proved a full success and roused the devotees of Calcutta to such enthusiasm that a whole issue of this magazine had to be devoted to reports and reflections about that unique week.*

In the pages of this journal we have reported at length about every single *Samyam Saptah*, which is one of the most popular functions of the year, in spite of its rigorous diet, which consists of two fasts on Ganges water for about 42-48 hours each at the beginning and end of the week and of one meal only on each of the five days in between, while tea, coffee, smoking and betel chewing have to be abstained from altogether. The whole of the week is spent in individual *sadhana*, *satsang* and collective meditation in Mataji's presence, which leaves neither time nor opportunity for worldly thoughts and occupations; this gives an inward exhilaration equal to a change in the rarefied atmosphere of high mountains. The function at Agarpara was so different from the 9th *Samyam Mahavrata* last April at Rishikesh, which in an ideal setting marked a climax never to be forgotten by those who attended. Nevertheless the 10th *Samyam Saptah* had undoubtedly its own beauty and perfection.

Agarpara like Rishikesh is situated right on the banks of the Ganges and from every seat in the spacious pandal one could have a fine view of the sacred river. Thus the inspiration of its sight was added to that of Mataji's presence and

*See Ananda Varta, Vol. I, No. 5, called "*Samyam Saptah Mahavrata* Special."

of the discourses and songs we were fortunate enough to listen to. It goes without saying that the large number of bhaktas of Calcutta came at all hours for Mataji's *darshan* and to participate in as much of the function as they were able to. Over and above, huge crowds, including several whole schools, flocked into the compound and the pandal at certain times. However arrangements were excellent, so that the *vratīs* could not be disturbed by the invading flood of visitors; the collective meditations proceeded in singular silence. The grounds of the Agarpara Ashram are extensive and further the adjoining property of Sri Ramkrishna Dalmia with its large houses, outhouses and lawns had been put at the entire disposal of the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha and provided us with ample living accommodation, kitchens, dining halls and a car park. Several hundreds of men and women had enrolled themselves as *vratīs*.

Each day some of the discourses were in Bengali others in Hindi, so that everyone got his due share. Swami Sri Vishnu Ashram, a well-known mahātmā and also a great scholar, delivered a series of fine talks in Hindi on the significance of *Samyam Vrata*. He encouraged the *vratīs* by saying that they had obviously already obtained what the *Shastras* declared to be the three greatest boons, namely: birth in a human body, the desire for liberation and the grace of a *Sad Guru*. During the last two or three days we had the privilege to listen to the words of Swami Sri Sharanananda, a greatly revered saint of North India. The short interludes of congregational *Kirtan* led by Swami Sri Krishnanandaji of Bombay are always enjoyed by everyone.

Among the very learned and brilliant speakers from Calcutta, who very kindly addressed the gathering, were Dr. J. B. Choudhury and his wife Dr. Roma Choudhury, both outstanding Sanskrit Scholars; Sri Tripurari Chakravarty, Professor of Calcutta University, who every night very lucidly expounded the Rāmāyana in Bengali; Dr. Gourinath Shastri, Principal of the Sanskrit College, Calcutta; the well-known Philosopher Dr. Nalini Kanta Brahma.

As usual the last half hour of the daily programme was called *Matri Sanga*, when Mataji either replied to questions or sang. We should like to quote here (in translation) a few words she uttered one evening concerning *Samyam Vrata* : “.....He who aspires to the Highest (*mahān*) is called a *Mahātma*. To engage in *sādhana* means to observe *Samyam*. *Samyam* has to be practised so that real *Samyam* may come about spontaneously. A patient goes to hospital; the *Samyam Vrata* is meant to cure one from *bhavaroga* (the chronic disease of being born again and again as an individual apart from the All, and the sorrows and afflictions that such existence entails.) The *Mahatmas* are the doctors, the *vratis* the patients, religious discourses the remedy. Instructions that help towards Self-realization are the remedy that must be used to the full. A whole day’s programme (of the *Samyam Vrata*) is one dose of medicine. So as to gain strength for your search you should listen to what the *Mahatmas* say : For your sake only have they taken the trouble to come from great distances. Try to digest their teachings and to put them into practice.”

As on previous occasions the function concluded with

half an hour's midnight meditation on the 14th night. *Kirtan* commenced almost immediately and was sustained without interruption until the evening of the 15th November. On November 16th Mataji visited some more houses of devotees in Calcutta, returning to the Ashram only at midnight. Even at that hour visitors who had come from Calcutta in cars were waiting patiently for Her *darshan* and to talk to Her.

On the 17th early morning She left for Jamshedpur, reaching the same evening. From there She proceeded to Bombay on the 20th. Already last January Mataji had been expected to go to Bombay for some time, but due to Her indifferent health the programme had been changed at the last moment. As during several of Her previous visits, Mataji stayed in a house that had been specially erected for Her use at Ville Parle in the compound of the residence of Sri B. K. Shah, the Managing Director of the New India Insurance Co. Ltd. Mataji's party also were put up in Sri B. K. Shah's house and as on former occasions the master and the mistress of the house vied with one another to provide all possible comforts and conveniences for Mataji and all their numerous guests and to make everyone feel at home. *Satsang* was held daily and people would come for *Darshan* at fixed hours. During Her sojourn in Bombay Mataji paid a visit at the *Jnana Yajna*, a celebration in memory of the late Swami Sri Prem Puri. When Mataji was requested to address the large audience that had collected, She uttered Her well known sayings : "*Hari Katha hi Katha*" etc. "Of Thee alone must be the spoken word, all else is but futility and pain" and, "In *Ram* there is *aram*—rest and ease ;

where *Rām* is not, there is *vyarām*—discomfort and disease.” She also sang : “*Satyam Jñānam Anantam Brahman* etc.” She further visited the *Sannyāsa Ashrama* at Vile Parle, where She charmed everyone present by singing : “*He Bhagavan.*” The *Mahamāndaleshwara* of that Ashram, Swami Sri Maheshwarānandji has known Mataji for many years and has on various occasions very kindly responded to invitations to deliver discourses at functions arranged by the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha. Mataji had stayed at the *Sannyāsa Ashrama* for about a fortnight on returning from South India in winter 1952. In 1954, immediately after the *Samyam Mahāvratā* in Bombay a *Bhagavata Saptah* * was held at that Ashram, which Mataji used to attend daily.

On December 4th Mataji left Bombay for Ahmedabad, where She put up as usual at the residence of the Munshaw family. A *Bhagavata Saptah* was celebrated from December 7th–14th for Shri Kantibhai Munshaw, who had passed away just two years ago. Sri K. C. Munshaw had been a devotee of many years’ standing, who excelled not only in great efficiency, but also in a rare spirit of service. On countless occasions he had put his services at the disposal of Mataji and the Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashrams with their various needs and activities. To mention only one instance : it was he who was responsible for most of the arrangements during Mataji’s tour to South India in 1952.

* *Bhagavata Saptah* denotes the ceremonial chanting in Sanskrit and the explanations in the vernacular of the whole of the *Srimad Bhagavata* in seven days. This is usually arranged by the relatives of someone who has passed away recently, for the purpose of helping the deceased person on his or her upward path.

A *Bhagavata Saptah* in Gujerat is observed in a different way from that of Northern India ; namely the Sanskrit recitation is performed in a separate room by a different person, so that the rendering into the vernacular may take place simultaneously, both in the mornings and afternoons and consequently be far more detailed.

At Ahmedabad also Mataji responded to the invitations of a good number of devotees to their houses, (that is to say gardens or courtyards, since Mataji does not enter the houses of *grihasthas*). She further visited the *Vedanta Ashrama* of Swami Sri Mādhava Tirtha. On December 16th She motored to Utkantheswar, a beautiful and solitary spot about 35-40 miles from Ahmedabad. She and Her party were accommodated for three days at the Yogāshrama, where Mataji had already stayed on several previous occasions. Utkantheswar is a sacred place with a famous Shiva temple. It derives its name 'Utkantheswar' from the Shiva Linga, which resembles the hump of a camel.* Sage Jabala is supposed to have practised *tapasya* there in ancient times. The legend has it that the *vibhuti* (sacred ashes) of his sacrificial fire solidified and formed into the surrounding hills, which add considerably to the charm of the landscape.

On December 20th Mataji returned to Ahmedabad to be present on the 2nd anniversary of Sri K. C. Munshaw's death, which was commemorated by perpetual Kirtan throughout the day and the chanting of the whole of the *Bhagavad Gita*. A number of *Sadhus* and *Mahatmas* were entertained to a feast.

* Uṭ means camel.

The next day Mataji left for Baroda, where She and Her companions were put up in a school near Tarakeshwar temple. On December 23rd Mataji proceeded by car to Bhimpura. Our Ashram there is situated on a hillock on the banks of the sacred Narbada and commands a wonderful view over the river and the surrounding highlands. It is a quiet and isolated place, about a mile's distance from the village and therefore specially suited for the contemplative life. Three Brahmacharis hailing from three different provinces, namely Gujerat, Bengal and Andhra are the residents at present.

Just as to die in Kashi on the banks of the Ganges is considered to be the most fortunate death, so the banks of the Narbada are said to be most congenial to the performance of *sadhana* and more especially *japa*. Moreover the river bank has been sanctified by the presence of some of the greatest *Rishis* (seers) and *Munis* (sages) of ancient times. The famous *Muni Vyasa* who was the author of the *Mahābhārata* is supposed to have lived there and one place is named after him. Also his son *Sukadeva* who related the whole of the *Srimad Bhagavata* to King Parikshit and further Anusuya, the wife of *Rishi Atri* are said to have practised meditation and austerities on those sacred shores. In recent times as well many great seekers after Truth have chosen this place for their abode, such as for instance Sri Bālānanda Brahmachari of *Baidyanāth Dhama* and his Guru. Every stone there is said to be a *Shiva Linga*; in fact the *linga* installed in the Shiva temples in our Ashrams at Vrindaban, Hardwar and Kishenpur, etc. have all been procured from the banks of the Narbada. Mataji had not been to Bhimpura for several

years. After a stay of only about three days Mataji motored to Baroda on the 27th and the same day She and Her whole party boarded the train to Vrindaban, where She remained only for two days. Bhaktas in Delhi had hoped that She would spend a few days there, but suddenly She decided to leave for Varanasi, where She alighted on the 31st December early morning. Devotees at Varanasi deemed themselves fortunate to be able to end the old year and start the New Year in Mataji's presence. However Mataji motored to Vindhyachal on January 1st afternoon. Just a few companions were allowed to go with Her, while Didima, Didi and the rest of the party remained at Varanasi. On January 5th morning Mataji arrived in Varanasi quite unexpectedly, only to leave again about two or three hours later in the company of Didima, Didi and several others. The car which had taken Her to Vindhyachal was going on to Allahabad at about 5 p. m. At a moment's notice Mataji decided to pay a flying visit to Allahabad and the site of the Kumbh Mela, where Swami Paramanandaji was making arrangements for the Camp. She returned to Vindhyachal the next day. During Her stay there not only *bhaktas* from Mirzapur, Varanasi and Allahabad used to come for Her darshan, but also a few from Lucknow, Delhi and Calcutta. On the last day of Her stay even four European ladies belonging each to a different country arrived in a taxi from Varanasi, spent the day at the Ashram and had private interviews with Mataji. In the early morning of January 13th She drove by car to Allahabad. A large party from Varanasi and most of Her companions at Vindhyachal had gone ahead already on the 12th.

January 14th is the day of the winter solstice and

supposed to be especially auspicious for bathing in the Ganges and even more so at the *Triveni* near Allahabad. *Triveni* is the confluence of three rivers, namely : Ganga, Jamuna and Saraswati. The Saraswati however is not visible any more. This is the place where the famous *Kumbh Mela* is held. Thousands of *sadhus* and *sannyasis* gather on such occasions, camping in huts and tents ; and millions of men and women from all over India avail themselves of this opportunity of purifying mind and body by plunging into the waters of the *Triveni* and by basking in the atmosphere of the holy and wise.

A special camp has been prepared in the Kumbh for Mataji's devotees, but Mataji Herself is putting up at Allahabad, in a house that has been specially built for Her use about two years ago at George Town in the garden of the residence of the late Sri N. N. Mukerji, Retired District Judge. He, together with his wife and children are amongst Mataji's oldest and most sincere devotees. Sri N. N. Mukerji was one of the foremost organizers of functions at Allahabad connected with Mataji. He was greatly respected by all. The news of his sudden death on November 12th 1959 was communicated to Mataji by phone during the Samyam Vrata and came as a great shock to everyone. His loss is mourned by his countless friends, in fact by all who had the privilege of coming in contact with this rare soul.

At the moment Mataji is in Allahabad. She visits the Kumbh daily and spends many hours in Her Camp. On the 14th She remained there for the night and at 4 a. m. on the 15th, accompanied by the great majority of Her party, which included one American and one European, She went to the Ganges and bathed. At present Mataji is at Allahabad, where She will most likely attend Saraswati Puja on February 1st and then leave for Varanasi.

Notes and Comments

In response to Xmas and New Year's greetings received from all over the world, Mataji has given the following message for the New Year :

“Travellers on the PATH must strive to attain to the aim of their pilgrimage. The revelation of one's own Self is the sole aim of this pilgrimage.”

মহাপথের যাত্রীদের যাত্রা সফল করবার চেষ্টা করা। নিজ স্বরূপ প্রকাশই যাত্রা সফল।

The secretary of the Sri Anandamayee Ashram begs all who have very kindly sent seasonal greetings to forgive him for being unable to reply and thank everyone individually. He requests them and in fact all readers of Ananda Varta to accept his sincere good wishes for the New Year and for success in their search after Truth.

* * * * *

Mataji's programme in the near future is still uncertain. However we hope that She may Stay in Varanasi for a few days early in February. She is expected to be in Vrindaban for the 'Holi' Festival in the first half of March. There is a probability that Her birthday celebrations will take place in Bombay in May. It is planned to hold the 11th *Samyam Saptah Mahavrata* next November in Naimisharanya near Sitapur, U. P. Naimisharanya is a famous place of pilgrimage, situated on the banks of the holy river Gomati.

* * * * *