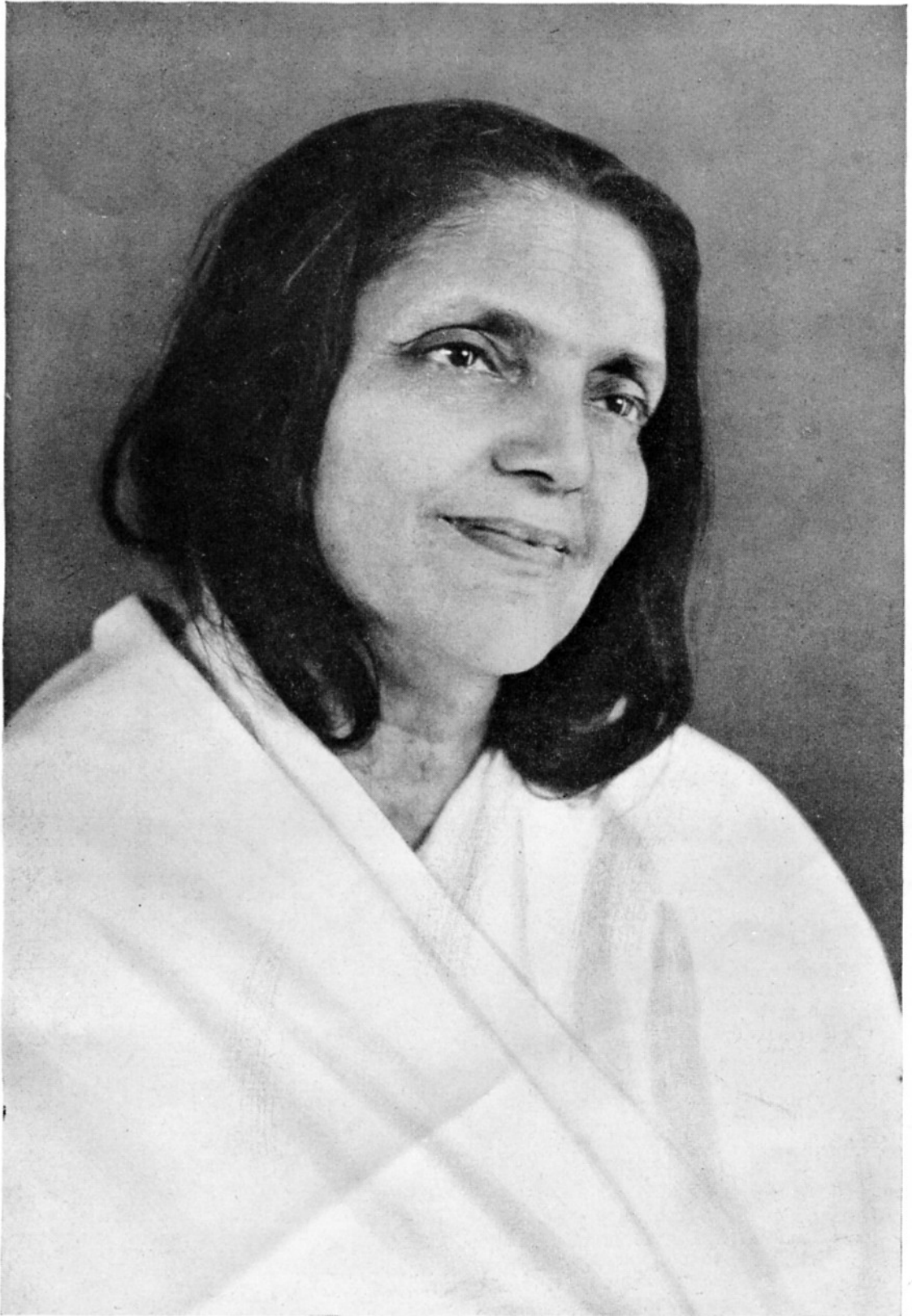


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The ONE who is the Eternal, the Atman,
He Himself is the traveller on the path of Immortality,
He is all in all, He alone is.

MATRI VANI

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 چرنوں 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

