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

## MATRI VANI

“With this body it is like this : it does not talk to anyone, nor go to see anyone, nor eat at anyone’s house.”

• • •

“What is *Satsang*? *Sva*\* means He, God, Being-Consciousness-Bliss (*Saccidānanda*), the *Ātma*—call it what you will. *Sva* is *Svayang*—THAT ITSELF, He in Person. *Sva-ang*† signifies that God is eternally revealed in every part of Creation. This is why it is said : Seek *Satsang*‡ so that you may know yourself to be *Sva-ang* (His own limb), know that He is ever revealed in every atom of Creation.”

• • •

“If one can love God there is no more sorrow. Even *viraha*, the deep yearning towards Him is happiness, for only

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\* *Sva* = self, own and *Sa* = He are pronounced alike in Bengali.

† *Ang* = part, limb.

‡ *Satsang* = the company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth ; also a religious meeting and in its widest sense the practice of the presence of God.

when one loves God is one able to feel that burning longing for Him. What does 'viraha' signify? *Viraha*,\* the intense pining for the Beloved can awaken in him alone in whom God dwells in a very special way."

\* \* \*

"It is obvious that doubt lies at the root of the desire to know. If you had the firm conviction that God does everything, the desire to find out why things happen as they do, would not arise in you."

\* \* \*

"That you are making an effort to arrange for medical treatment is also the expression of His Will. Verily, He, the One is everything. Thou in truth art the disease, Thou art the remedy and the power to heal—in all shapes and forms art Thou alone."

"So far as this body is concerned nobody ever commits an offence against it and therefore there can be no question of asking this body's forgiveness. Nevertheless, you will most certainly have to reap the fruits of what you have done."

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\* A play upon words: *viraha* literally means separation, *vi*=apart, *raha*=dwelling. But *vishesh*=special, *rahna*=to dwell; thus '*vishesh rahna*'=to dwell in a special way.

But this body does not feel even the faintest shadow of anger concerning it."

\* \* \*

"The performance of *japa* has a beneficent result of its own. When a person practises *japa* and dedicates its fruit to God, this fruit can never be destroyed or lost. When the time is ripe God will return it to the aspirant. When the latter begins to notice that his desires and passions are growing weaker and weaker, he should understand that God is in this way bestowing upon him the fruits of his practice. This is what is meant by *japa samarpana*. (offering one's *japa* to one's *Iṣṭa*)."

\* \* \*

"Whether happiness or pain is experienced depends upon what one believes and how one views whatever happens. If one wishes to go beyond beliefs and points of view, one must have faith in God."

\* \* \*

"The ceaseless, never-ending current of Divine Mercy and Compassion ever flows forth : in that current one should bathe."

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## Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

K. G. AMBEGAOKAR, I. C. S. (RETD.)

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi, who is generally referred to lovingly, simply as Ma or Mataji ( the Mother ), sometimes employs the following simile, when asked what it means to realise God. 'To a person who has never eaten a *Rasagulla* (a Bengali sweet), it is impossible to convey by words an exact idea of its taste.' I find a similar difficulty in expressing what I feel about Ma in such a way as would give a clear picture of her to those who have never met her. It is not only that she is a sublime being before whom one feels so humble as to become almost spellbound. I labour under the further handicap that while I feel the greatest reverence for her, I do not belong to the inner circle of her devotees and am merely a silent worshipper from a distance. I feel most hesitant and diffident to write about her and somewhat like "a fool rushing in where angels fear to tread." All the same it is perhaps just as well that an outsider like me should put down his thoughts about Mataji. Sometimes an observer from a distance can get a clearer view than those who are too near. He can at least give a better general outline although he is bound to miss the beauty of the details. So, short as is my acquaintance with Mataji, I am venturing to send this contribution to "Ananda Varta" in the hope that it may give to its readers who live far away some idea of Ma's personality and the great and beneficent spiritual influence she exercises over all those who come in contact with her.

There is no doubt that Ma Anandamayi is the greatest living saint. In fact her devotees look upon her as Divine, God incarnate. To Western readers this may sound sacrilegious and difficult to understand. Ma herself is never tired of reiterating that there is only one God and no second ( एकं ब्रह्म द्वितीयो नास्ति ). That is also the basic tenet of Vedanta philosophy and the essence of Hindu religion. The popular belief in Ma's Divinity may seem inconsistent with this conception of one God and Ma's own utterances. Vedanta however, also holds that God, who has created everything exists in all His creation and to a greater degree in the human being. Man is not the body but the soul within, and that soul in its pure state can be like God himself. The spiritual aim should be to purify the soul which has got contaminated by its associations and to elevate it again to the level of God. Once it has reached that stage there is no difference and it acquires the state of God—becomes one with God ( ब्रह्मी स्थिति ) Therefore there is no profanity involved in looking upon a saint who has attained to "Self-realisation" as God. Hindu philosophy is also based on the theory of *Karma*, according to which the soul, which never dies, is born in new bodies in accordance with its actions in previous births so that spiritual development is not arrested by death but continues from where it had reached in a previous births. Thus the *Karma* theory explains not only the ordinary inequalities in life but also why some people are born spiritually advanced and can make further rapid progress. So we get saints like *Tukaram* and *Ramdas* and more recently, *Ramana Maharshi* and *Sri Aurobindo* who, having started life in the ordinary way, blossomed forth as great spiritual

forces and came to be looked on as Divinities. But there is even a higher category of saints who are "realised" beings almost from their birth. *Gauranga Mahaprabhu & Ramakrishna Paramahansa* were of this type and *Ma Anandamayi* belongs to this class. Those who have read her life know that she gave indications of divinity from her childhood and though she outwardly seemed to lead the ordinary family life, she was constantly going into trance. Though she was married at an early age and at that time did all the household chores, her husband, realising her godliness, respected her, treated her as his mother and became her first disciple. Though she has had only elementary school education, she is wiser than the greatest scholars in religion and philosophy. Though she herself always stresses the need of a spiritual guide, (गुरु) she never had any such preceptor and all her knowledge is spontaneous. True to her name, Anandamayi, which was given to her by one of her early devotees, she is the embodiment of joy and happiness. She leads a pure, unruffled, serene life and radiates peace and divine love. When she is listening to prayers sung by her devotees her eyes are either glistening with tears or closed in meditation but, when she speaks or looks at you they are smiling and appear to be giving you hope and encouragement. She is full of mirth and by her frequent sweet and hearty laughter she creates an atmosphere of cheer and happiness about her. There is such an aura of love, light and laughter about her, she moves in such a rarified atmosphere, surcharged with goodness and godliness, that one instinctively and involuntarily feels that one is in the presence of Divinity. It is not therefore blind faith that brings devotees to her, but some inner urge, an inner compulsion



like that of a child to go to its mother. Not only to her followers but to all those who come near her, she does appear like the Divine Mother.

For those who have not yet had the good fortune of seeing Mataji, I think it will be best if I give a brief account of how her sixty-fourth birth-day was recently celebrated in the first fortnight of May in Bombay. A big *shamiana* was erected in the compound of a school in Vile Parle. A large concourse of people of all types gathered there every day. Great spiritual leaders came to pay homage to her and to give discourses to the people. Princes, big business magnates, intellectuals, rich and poor, young and old, women and children, all used to flock to the *shamiana*. In spite of the best efforts of the organisers to prevent people from going up to the dais where Mataji sat along with the saints, people would rush up to fall at her feet and offer her flowers. Everyone approached her with great reverence and I have seen one lady so overcome with emotion that she swooned. When Mataji was leaving, everybody would crowd round her. She was followed everywhere by people wanting to worship her, to talk to her or even to have merely her sight or be near her and she had hardly any time to herself. From early morning till late at night there were Bhajans and Kirtans (singing of hymns and prayers), reading of holy books, discourses by *Mahatmas*. Once there was even an all night session of Bhajans by women and another day the name of God was sung continuously for twelve hours. Mataji spent a lot of time attending these various programmes. A constant feature were the Bhajans and talks on the lives of saints given in the evenings by Sri Haribabaji

Maharaj, an intensely holy man, who is devoted to Mataji and to whom She gives great respect. The most popular session was from about 8-30 to 10 every night, which Mataji regularly attended. Punctually at 8-45 the lights were put off and everyone was expected to observe complete silence for 15 minutes. It was an inspiring sight to behold night after night hundreds of people sitting motionless and solemnly, in silent meditation. Anyone who has tried to practise meditation, knows how difficult it is to concentrate on God even for a minute or two without the mind wandering off to all sorts of irrelevant and irreverent thoughts. But here in the presence of Mataji, some of us at least were hardly conscious of the passage of time and heard the bell announcing the end of the quarter hour almost with a shock. After the silence or *Mauno*, as it is called, there would be *Arati*, the waving of lights, incense etc. and then for half an hour Mataji answered questions asked by anyone in the audience. These ranged over a wide field, from simple queries by women and children about how to approach God, to metaphysical problems posed by savants. To all Ma gave the simplest and most satisfying answers and every night one learnt something about God and the way to reach Him. Very often, some questions, you had thought of, got answered by what Ma said in reply to somebody else. At the end there would usually be devotional singing and music by some great musician who had of his own accord come to sing before Ma.

On the 13th night when Ma's birthday was observed, there was a ceremonial worship of Ma in the most elaborate and orthodox style from 3 A.M. to 5 A.M. which was witnessed by a large crowd. We in the audience could only see that

she was lying covered and absolutely still on a Divan and it was only when the worship was over and we were allowed to go up to the dais to pay our obeisance that we realised that she had all the time been in deep trance. I learnt from her devotees that she does not like to be worshipped like a God and goes off into a trance before the ceremony starts. In that state she seemed to have grown in size and looked so sublime and majestic as to be almost awe-inspiring, though her face bore an expression of bliss and peace. To me, looking at her seemed like having a peep at Divinity.

People have often asked Mataji who and what she is and her usual answer is, "whatever you imagine". She never says "I" but refers to herself as "this body" (यह शरीर) or "this little girl" (यह छोटीसी बालिका), while she calls all men "father" (पिताजी). And yet, let alone the ignorant mass, great saints and scholars feel the deepest reverence for her. They listen eagerly to every word that falls from her lips and her speech sounds like sweet music. She does not preach sermons or deliver discourses but by her mere presence she leads people's thoughts to God. And this is her mission in life, to make people God-minded. If we look upon her as an *Avatar* I think we are justified, because she does fulfil the criterion laid down in the Gita—

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ।

(The Lord says, "When religion (righteousness) declines

and irreligion (wickedness) gathers strength, I create myself. I take birth in every age to establish religion)."

I would say unhesitatingly that it is the Divinity in her which draws people to her and through her to God. Even those who may not believe in the Hindu philosophy and even those who are sceptical about notions of God, find that she has something in her which makes them revere her. My own experience is that in her presence all impurities in one's mind get washed away. A little girl whom I asked what she felt in Ma's presence told me that she obtained great peace. An intellectual said that he had felt something like an electric current passing through him when he first saw Mataji. Mataji's very presence has this effect, but when she speaks or sings Bhajans in her most melodious voice one literally feels transported.

The account I have given of the birth-day celebrations in Bombay may give an idea of the way in which Mataji leads people to God, because wherever she goes she leads a similar kind of life. Mataji has more than 20 regular *Ashrams* all over India but she visits many other places as the spirit moves her. During her stay there are always Bhajans and Kirtans, recitation of the *Gita* and *Stotras* (prayers), and the invariable 15 minutes of silent meditation followed by Mataji's answers to questions. She makes herself accessible to every one and is never tired of seeing people. She is always cheerful and has superhuman energy. She wins everyone's heart by her charm and sweetness. She has brought cheer and solace to persons grief-stricken by the loss of their nearest and dearest, or overwhelmed by other misfortunes, to

those who are unhappy in spite of their wealth, position and learning. There are highly educated young men and women who have given up everything and live in her *Ashrams*, doing whatever they can to serve her, in their search for God. But she does not ask anyone to renounce the world, she only wants them to perform their duties in life in such a way as would please God and asks them to remember God always. According to her, God is everywhere and in everything and you have to realise God in your own heart in order to attain to perfect peace of mind. Like the teaching of the Gita, she recognises that there are various ways of reaching the goal and she advocates that everyone should try in his own way and as instructed by his Guru (religious guide). The Guru will appear if you are an earnest seeker after God. But you must first strive for God yourself. Her first advice to seekers after God is to chant the name of God regularly. She says that the taking of God's name itself gradually creates faith in God and love for Him and purifies your mind. She considers the rituals of worship laid down in the scriptures as a method of attuning one's mind to God and so she encourages and is present at religious ceremonies. "Meet saintly people and spend as much time as possible with them and listening to them" is her constant advice. By the public observance of 15 minutes *Mauna*, she brings home to people the benefits of silence, meditation and concentration on God. When people ask for guidance on how to concentrate, she advises them to learn first to sit absolutely still and empty their minds of all thoughts. She further says that to succeed in meditation, one must lead a good, virtuous life, speak, act and think rightly, love

everybody and be kind to them. She is quite emphatic that the vision of God in whichever form you seek Him must come and whatever name you may give Him it is the same one God. Once that inner light shines forth, all differences, all notions of, "you" and "I"—even of "devotion", "devotee" and "God" will disappear and you will become one with God. That is what has happened to Mataji and what she is.

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# Conversations with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

RECORDED BY PROFESSOR B. GANGULY

(Translated by Atmananda)

( 4 )

Ranchi Ashram,  
17/5/1958.

*Question :* How can the sense of distance be overcome?  
How can the eternal sound be heard?

*Mataji :* The sense of distance is overcome by realizing THAT which IS. All time and space lie within you; for instance you also hold Europe within you. Sounds are perceived according to world measurements. With the aid of a special apparatus sound can be heard from a great distance. But by means of the apparatus that is no apparatus the eternal sound becomes audible. When the eternal sound (*Shabda Brahman*) discloses Itself, the distinctions between me and you, mine and yours cease to exist, since there is no longer any division. In the universe inner and outer sounds exist. The eternal sound is contained in the world of forms as well as in the formless: THAT abides in the qualities (*gunas*) of matter and beyond them, in form and the formless.

*Question :* How can one attain to Peace?

*Mataji* : By hankering after it ; when one becomes fervid for Peace, it will be gained. One has to call out desperately to the One and devote oneself to *sadhana*, yearning ardently for Peace, then it will come.

*Question* : What is meant by *Prarabdha Karma* ?

*Mataji* : *Prarabdha* means *pore* (later) *labda* (acquired). The action that has been done before will later bear fruit. Just as when having overeaten one has afterwards to bear the consequences ; there is no way out of it—this is how it is.

( At that moment it was a quarter to nine and the bell rang for silence.† )

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Jogada Satsang, Ranchi,  
18/5/1958.

*Question* : In what manner should we live in the world so as to be able to view happiness and misery with equanimity ?

*Mataji* : Here one thing has to be noted : Of Him alone must be the spoken word, all else is but futility and pain.

*Question* : Please express this in a way that seekers after Truth, who still live in the midst of wordly affairs, will be able to understand

*Mataji* : Cultivate a spirit of service. Let the wife

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†In all Shree Anandamayee Ashrams and also wherever else Mataji happens to be, silent meditation is observed daily from 8.45 to 9 p. m.



serve her husband, regarding him as the Lord ; let the mother serve her son looking upon him as *Gopal* (the divine child Krishna). If the home is pervaded by a spirit of service there will be bliss rather than toil and weariness.

*Question* : How can the agony of the threefold suffering ( *tritāpa* ), which is man's lot, be overcome ?

*Matangi* : While engaged in the service of the family it is befitting to set apart some regular time morning and evening for meditation or japa.

Prostrating oneself before God with intense feeling and putting one's heart and soul into the recitation of His holy Name are means by which man may be delivered from this threefold suffering. HE takes away every kind of suffering, be it *adhibautic*, *adhidivic* or *adhiatmic*. This is why He is called '*Hari*'. It is right to perform one's *pūjā* (worship) regularly twice daily, at dawn and dusk, just as it is imperative to wind a clock at set intervals. If the work of the householder is not thus interrupted, a spirit of service cannot be developed. In place of serving God one will minister to one's personal pleasure or satisfaction and consequently be forced to endure the threefold suffering that is man's lot. Whenever time permits one should, over and above the fixed periods of daily prayer or meditation, lift up one's heart and mind to God so as to become ever closer to Him.

*Question* : What is one to do if while sitting for prayer or meditation the mind wanders off to worldly affairs ?

*Matangi* : By persevering in the constant and regular practice of daily meditation the mind will finally become of

itself calm and steady. Even if in the course of one's best endeavours one slips and tumbles to the ground, one will have to rise again by supporting oneself on that very ground.

*Question* : If we regularly meditate twice daily will our mind become conditioned by this practice in a way similar to that of Dr. Pavlov's dog, concerning which by prolonged experiments of modern psychology the fact was established that it had been trained to clock-work punctuality ?

*Mataji* : Yes, this also is an example of the efficacy of sustained practice ( *abhyāsa yoga* ).

\* \* \*

Govinda Bhavan, Ranchi,  
19/5/1958.

*Question* : Are changes produced in our subtle bodies by the regular practice of *mantra japa* ?

*Mataji* : So long as there is form there must be change. God alone is changeless.

*Question* : Does *mantra japa* result in some realization ?

*Mataji* : Do not concern yourself with 'some realization.' To begin with let God's Divine Form be revealed and then the realization of the One *Brahman* will follow. Which particular form of God is revealed depends on what particular Name is constantly invoked.

*Question* : Can one by the repetition of *mantras* get access to other worlds or states of consciousness ?

*Mataji* : Certainly ; however one's aim should be the Self-revelation of THAT which is beyond all worlds and states of consciousness.

*Question* : Is it possible by the practice of a *mantra* to attain to the actual realization of the Brahman ?

*Mataji* : Why do you doubt this ?

*Question* : Is the *Shabda Brahman* (the eternal sound) also realized ?

*Mataji* : It ought to be so. While the mind governs there is always duality and thus one experiences happiness and sorrow ; it is man's reason that decides whether anything is joyful or painful. In this world of perpetual motion the individual is that which is bound. As stagnant water becomes foul but can be purified again by a filter that kills the microbes, likewise it is with the individual and liberation. The *Paramatma* may be compared to pure water and the individual to a stagnant pool. But in essence water is everywhere, in individuality as well as in the *Atma* : "Wherever a *jiva* ( individual ) is, there *Shiva* is present." Man's Divinity is eternal, but his everchanging nature cannot endure for ever.

*Question* : How can the mind be made content ? By what method can the operations and processes of the mind be controlled and the Self seen face to face ?

*Mataji* : By aspiring to the Realization, to the Knowledge of one's own Self—the *Atma*. It is necessary to proceed along some definite line of *sadhana* : be it by regarding oneself

as the eternal servant of the Lord or as His child or by adoring Him as one's Beloved, be it by adopting the method of inquiry into the nature of the Self or any other path. Whatever be your approach, it is right for you. The sages of ancient times pointed out the way. A stage will come where all paths join together. The method indicated by one's *Guru* is the one to be chosen; at the end every path becomes straight and simple. On reaching the Goal one will realize that there are innumerable ways leading to it. To accord with the different inner qualifications of the aspirants there is a variety of paths or methods of spiritual practice. To find God means to find one's Self, to know the *Ātmā*; then one awakens to the Knowledge that the ONE is the sole Reality underlying the world. The mind can be made content only when one's real treasure, the *Ātmā*, is found.

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# THE MYSTERY OF THE BODY

U. C. DUTT

In spite of our big boasts, our knowledge of physiology and pathology is still poor and incomplete. The ancient Indians tried to know the mystery of the human body, not so much by observation and experiments as by psychic control and inspiration. The body is a fathomless mystery. It is as mysterious as the spirit. It has visible and invisible aspects. The gross body is visible. The subtle body (**Sukshma Sharira**) and the causal body (**Karama Sharira**) are invisible to the naked eye. All of them are material trappings or sheaths of the spirit (**Chaitanya**). The Vedanta recognizes five sheaths. They are physical (**Annamaya**), vital (**Pranamaya**) mental (**Manomaya**) psychic (**Vigyanamaya**) and blissful (**Anandamaya**). The first three covers consist of material stuff and the other two of non-material or conscious stuff. Yoga helps man to know and cross the different planes of existence in order that he may realize his true Self, pure Existence-Knowledge-Bliss (**Sachchidananda**).

A comprehensive knowledge of the entire being is needed to assess a part or phase of it. The visible body is a means to a higher one, not an end in itself. It is the base of a splendid structure. A Yogi must have his body free of disease and the infirmities of old age. He makes it the basis of a highly developed mental, moral and spiritual life. To start with, a body is the means to spiritual realization.

Very often the purpose of physical existence is defeated by minding the body only. A giant with strong muscles and wild passions will go down fighting before long. The doors to a higher life will ever remain closed to him. His egotism, and false sense of superiority, his uncontrolled emotions and passions will not allow him to rise above the animal in man. This is why the great sage Patanjali prescribed moral training (Yama, Niyama) before physical culture (Asana, Pranayama) in his system of Yoga with eight limbs or steps (Ashtanga Yoga).

There are various kinds of Yoga—Hathayoga, Layayoga, Rajayoga, etc. All of them start with the body and pass on gradually to the spirit or soul. On the way supernatural powers descend upon the Yogi to misguide him. If he surrenders himself to the temptations of powers (Vibhuti), he is ruined. None, but the brave, the fearless, the selfless reach the goal. But every Yogi must have a sound mind in a sound body. So he practises Asana (posture), Mudra (pose) and Pranayama (breathing exercises) to keep the body sound. Yogashastra and Ayurveda are considered to be twins as they have their origin in the Vedas. The final treatise of Ayurveda is the Brahma Samhita which is a compilation of numerous verses from the several chapters of Atharva Veda. The book deals with the system of cure, various drugs and their respective properties. Many subsequent Ayurvedic treatises were based on the Brahma Samhita. The well-known medical works like the Charak and Sushruta were composed sometime prior to the era of the Mahabharata. Because the extensive scope and popularity of the Ayurveda, it is styled as the Fifth Veda ( Pancham Veda ). Yoga means union—the

union of the individual soul with the universal or the Supreme Soul. The Vedic sages achieved communion with the one that pervades the whole universe, though they called it by various names. They were strong, straight and healthy people. So from time immemorial Indians provided for an all-round development of the body. Mr. Colebrook and others give us particulars as to how extensively the Indian system of medicine influenced those as practised in ancient Egypt and Greece.\*

Without a deep knowledge of the mystery of creation it is not possible to understand the mystery of the body or the science of physiology. And without a grasp of the principles of physiology it is not possible to find out the causes of diseases or a faultless system of their prevention and cure. The Yogic treatises like Patanjali's Yoga Darshan, Shiva Samhita and commentaries thereon deal with the theories of creation. Most of the Yogic writers have adopted the Samkhya views of Kapila. Some of them have accepted the cosmology as laid down in the Vedanta or the Tantras, and some have tried to harmonise the theories of the Vedanta and the Samkhya.

According to the Samkhya system the primal matter is called **Prakriti**. It is the eternal unconscious principle and is the unity of the three **Gunas** (forces or principles) of **Sattva**, **Rajas** and **Tamas** held in a state of equilibrium. As a result of commotion in the equilibrium due to the presence of **Purusha** (soul) the world of things springs into existence step by step. The self-luminous, active and the formless forces vibrate and shape

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\*It is on record that Alexander the Great utilized Hindu doctors for his army about 330 B. C.—*Editor*.

into some form. **Prakriti** produced **Mahattattva** (the principle of the great one or intelligence) then evolved **Ahankar** (the ego or the universal will power). Then on the objective side appeared **Pancha-Tanmatra** or the five subtle elements—sound, touch, colour, taste and smell—having the five gross elements such as earth, water, fire, air and ether as their inherent properties. Broadly speaking the whole range of creation is spread over seven strata or planes. They are, **Mabat, Ahankar, Pancha** (five) **tanmatra** or **Panchamahabhuta**. These seven strata resemble the seven divisions of the universe as envisaged in the Vedas and Puranas. They are **Bhuh** (abode of mortals), **Bhuvah** (abode of the dead), **Swah** (abode of the qualified), **Mahah** (abode of the demi-Gods), **Janah** (abode of divine souls), **Tapah** (abode of the enlightened) and **Satya** (abode of the Highest with Supreme Knowledge).

Our body is the miniature universe ; whatever exists in the universe ( **Brahmanda** ) is found in the body ( **Bhanda** ). "Everything is present in anything," (Sarvam Sarvatmakam-Yoga Sutra). "The macrocosm is in the microcosm." There are seven planes in the universe, the body also consists of seven planes. Each particular plane of the body is the centre of activity of a particular principle. These planes or operation centres are called **Chakras, Granthi**s or **Gland** centres. The Yogis name them **Muladhara, Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishudha, Ajna** and **Sahasrara**. They are the **Chakras** or **Gland** centres of **Prithvi, Varuna, Agni, Vayu, Vyoma** or **Akasha, Aham** and **Mahat**.

The main glands in the body are capable of producing internal secretions, which get mixed with the blood and help



to build up the body and keep it healthy. The five parts of these internal secretions mould and nourish our mind. All the glands in co-operation engage themselves in building up body and mind of an individual. In spite of the close co-operation of the glands some glands become more active in some body systems. This predominance of a particular gland gives special significance to the nature of the individual and shapes his or her personality.

**Prithvi-Granthi (Muladhara)**—The operation of the Prithvi-Granthi forms the physical structure consisting of bones and flesh. Coming into contact with this centre all forces are rendered inert and inactive.

Persons with a predominance of Prithvi-Granthi usually have a heavy body with an excess of blood, flesh and fat. By nature they are liberal and patient. They are not eager for anything and keep away from all conflicts.

If a disorder occurs in the working of this gland the person becomes a bit selfish and addicted to personal enjoyment.

**Varuna-Granthi (Swadhisthana)**—kidney, male-testis, prostate gland, Cowpers gland, female ovary, Bartholins gland, Skenis gland are all compressed in the single term of Varuna Granthi. Semen or spermatozoa produced out of the secretions of this gland centre maintain the unbroken series of procreations. Nerves, tissues, cells, marrow, etc. grow out of the semen or the vital fluid.

Persons with a predominance of the Granthi are of

amiable disposition and pleasant manners. They prosper in everything they undertake and maintain peace in the family. In case of derangements in the activities of these glands, persons both male and female become selfish, envious, capricious, lustful and short tempered.

**Agni-Granthi (Manipura)**—Fire operates mainly through five principal glands, namely the spleen, liver, pancreas, suprarenal glands, etc. The centres of activity which produce the digestive juices spread all over the stomach region.

The internal secretions of this **Granthi** produces fire juice or acid like nitric acid or sulphuric acid. This fire keeps the body temperature and makes the other organs active. It digests food and transforms it into blood and other vital fluids.

Persons with a supremacy of this **Granthi** are very vigorous, persevering and untiring workers. They have a wonderful capacity for leadership. In case of disorders in the functioning of these glands, persons indulge in anti-social wranglings. Even their friends and relatives become disgusted with them. They become extremely restless and impatient at the slightest physical pain. Usually they suffer from stomach trouble, blood pressure, etc.

**Vayu-Granthi (Anahata)**—The chest region is the seat of the **Granthi**. It includes five principal glands, namely the lungs, the heart, the thyrus and the cell-making glands. Heart and lungs can never stop working. As long as these glands function properly, there can be no disorder in any part of the body.

Anybody having the **Vayu-Granthi** in a healthy condition, acquires self-control, a balanced temperament, purity of mind and heart and a spirit of selfless work. When the **Granthi** gets deranged in a body system such a person becomes unsteady, talkative, ungrateful and prone to injure his benefactors. He generally grows lean and thin and hasty in his movements.

**Akasa-Granthi ( Visuddha )**—The chief centre of operation of the principal of **Akasa** ( ether ) is the throat, that is the space between the collar-bone and the nape of the neck. The **Granthi** comprises five principal glands, namely the thyroid, para-thyroid, tonsil, salivary glands, etc. The internal secretions of these glands eliminate the poison of diseases and help to keep the body strong and healthy. With the essence of these secretions our mental life is nourished. In this region the principle of **Sattwaguna** is the predominant element. Therefore a person having a supremacy of this **Granthi** possesses a mind full of goodness like that of Gods. This **Granthi** is much stronger in the case of women than in the case of men. So a healthy woman has such endearing qualities as affection, love, unselfishness, etc. In the case of any disorder of this **Granthi** one loses placidity of mind and the capacity for high thinking. Despondency, inertia and indolence become settled traits of one's nature.

**Aham-Granthi ( Ajna )**—It is situated in the region of the forehead and represents the universal will power. **Shiva-Shakti-Granthi** ( the pituitary glands ) and the four principal glands that regulate our capacity for sight, hearing, discrimination and memory are the main centres of operation of this

**Granthi.** As **Aham** or ego controls all our activities in life so also this **Granthi** rules over the five other **Granthis**. As far as possible it goes to rectify all faults and failings in other **Granthis** or glands.

Persons with a predominance of this **Granthi** are geniuses, poets, scientists, philosophers, lovers of mankind, saints and supermen. In the event of derangements in the working of this gland there develops in one's nature meanness, cunning, heartlessness, mischievousness and wickedness.

**Mahat-Granthi (Sahasrara)**—The five glands, namely **Soma Granthi**, **Devaksha-Granthi** (Pineal glands), **Rudra-Granthi**, **Trikut-Granthi** and **Sahasrar-Granthi** are located in the region of the head. All those are included in the **Mahat-Granthi**. These centres are like the factories producing a series of sublime sentiments whereby a man becomes endowed with divine feelings and qualities. The secretions of this **Granthi** are called **Soma-Dhara** (nectarean fluid). The fluid helps to keep all the glands and the entire nervous system strong, healthy and vitalized.

Persons with a predominance of this **Granthi**, are really Gods on earth—supermen or incarnations of God. They are embodiments of great wisdom and love.

Just at the top of the **Granthi** is the **Brahmarandhra** which maintains the link between the bodily sky (**Dehakasha**) and the heavenly sky (**Divyakasha**), the region of **Sahasrara** is beyond the scope of three "gunas" and like an ocean of pure consciousness. In the midst of this very ocean stands the Mount Kailasha of the **Yogashastras**, which symbo-

lizes crystallized consciousness, the seat of Supreme Good or Knowledge ( **Parama Shiva** ) coupled with the Supreme Energy ( **Parama Shakti** ).

Physical suffering,—sorrow or weakness can in no way influence the working of these glands. In the common run of people the operation of this **Granthi** or supernatural glands remain quite indistinct.

In order to understand the mystery of the body ( **Deha-Tattwa** ), the knowledge of the operations of **Vayu** (air), **Agni**, (fire) and **Varuna** (water) is indispensable. These three elements sustain the material world. In case they are irritated or get out of gear, the world will perish. These three elements inside our body-system maintain our life breath, the body temperature, etc. They build and nourish the body with the help of blood, secretions and other fluids produced in the body. A slight upset in them causes diseases and an acute upset causes death. In the **Ayurveda** they are known as **Vayu**, **Pitta** and **Kapha** or **Shleshma**. They represent the forces of **Sattva**, **Rajas** and **Tamas** respectively.

**Vayu** (Air) is life itself. It keeps going every part of the body. This vital air under five different categories is called (1) **Prana**, the air in the heart, (2) **Apana**, the air in the rectum, (3) **Samana**, the air in the navel region, (4) **Udana**, the air in the throat, and (5) **Vyara**, the air that permeates the entire body system. Each of them has a function of its own.

**Pitta** (bile and acid secretions) are the secretions of the fire glands. According to **Charaka** "it is the function of the

unaffected and healthy **Pitta** to regulate our capacity for sight, to provide strength for our body, to keep up the body heat, to induce hunger and thirst, and to maintain the suppleness of muscles and loveliness of complexion. Further it helps the thinking and discriminating power of our brain." **Pitta** under five different names carries out the consuming function of **Agni** (fire) in the body. They are (1) **Pachaka Pitta** (digestive bile), (2) **Ranjaka Pitta** (colouring secretions), (3) **Sadhaka Pitta** (energizing secretions), (4) **Alochaka Pitta** (sight producing secretion) and (5) **Bhrajaka Pitta** (complexion-making secretions). When irritated **Pachaka Pitta** causes indigestion, constipation, diarrhoea; **Ranjaka Pitta**, anaemia, jaundice; **Sadhaka Pitta**, fainting fits, apoplexy, brain disease; **Alochaka Pitta**, defective vision, cataract and **Bhrajaka Pitta**, skin diseases, pale complexion.

**Kapha or Shleshma** (vital fluids or alkaline secretions). It is the essence of the fluid part of the five basic elements. Blood flows through the arteries. But side by side with them there is a system of narrower arteries that carry **Rara Dhatri** (lymph) the essence of the blood fluid, which nourishes the glands and other basic elements of the body. By a physio-chemical process this **Kapha** (mucus) is converted into the saline fluid from which blood acquires and maintains its alkaline property. This mucus is known as "**Ojah Dhatu**" the basic element of vigour. **Ojah** indicates all the seven basic elements-fluid or secretions, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen. It brings happiness, energy and an all-round development of the body.

**Shleshma** (mucus) takes five forms in sustaining the body. They are called (1) **Kledana** (the digestive secretions), (2) **Avalambana** (the lubricating secretion), (3) **Rasana** (the salivary secretion) (4) **Srehana** (the endocrine secretions or the soothing mucus and (5) **Shleshana** (greasy mucus). If they get vitiated diseases like indigestion, lethargy, loss of appetite and taste, loss of memory and eye-sight and gout or pleurisy occur.

The various exercises provided in the Yoga Sastras such as **Asana** ( Postures ), **Mudras** ( poses ), **Neti**, **Dhouti Nooli** ( internal washes ) and **Pranayamas** ( breathing control ) offer an unfailing means of maintaining these three elements (**Vayu**, **Pitta** and **Kapha** ) inside the body in a state of perfect equilibrium. This state of balance helps the proper secretion of glands. Different **Asanas**, **Mudras**, etc. have been devised to produce different effects on the physical system to cure or prevent diseases of various kinds. So the Yogic system serves as the master key, not only for our spiritual uplift but also for building up a sound body free from diseases and infirmities as well as a sharp and sound mind.

With a view to gaining full control over Nature which is the store-house of all forms of powers, Sage Patanjali prescribes eight limbs or steps of Yoga. They are **Yama**, **Niyama**, **Asana**, **Pranayama**, **Pratyahara**, **Dharana**, **Dhyana** and **Samadhi**. For physical culture we are directly concerned with **Asana** and **Pranayama**.

**Asana** means posture. A good deal of activity goes on in the body. Nerve currents have to be given a new channel.

The main part of activity will be along the spinal column, so one thing necessary for posture - is to hold the spinal column free. An easy, pleasant and natural posture - suiting the aspirant is necessary to help concentration of the mind. All postures help to keep the basic elements of the body—**Vayu**, **Pitta** and **Kapha** in a state of equilibrium and prevent or cure diseases. **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, the body. As such it supplies and regulates the motive power to everything in the body. **Prana** or the vital force sets the whole engine in motion, the manifestation of which is the breath. It causes the currents that move all over the body; the mind is also set in motion by different nerve currents. So by restraining the **Prana** one can gain perfect control over the body and the mind and thereby over the whole **Prana** 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.

**Pranayama** should be practised under the guidance of an expert. The method is "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** (divine energy). Then 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 sixteen seconds, then throw out in eight seconds. This makes one **Pranayama**.

"Yoga Aphorisms" of Patanjali is a treatise on **Raja Yoga Mudras** (pose) and internal washes like **Neti, Dhouti, Nouli**, etc. are taken from Hatha Yoga.

Some **Asanas** (postures) **Mudras** (poses) and **Dhoutis** (internal washes) are illustrated below, stating briefly the benefits they confer—prevention and cure of diseases, general tone of the body and prophylactic power.

(1) **Angusthasana** (Finger Posture) strengthens nerves and muscles, makes the hands and legs very strong, relieves rheumatism and removes constipation.

(2) **Akarna Dhanurasana** (the Archer Posture) builds the body, makes the liver strong, increases appetite and removes rheumatism and sciatica.

(3) **Ardha Chakrasana** (Half-Wheel Posture) retains youthful beauty, prevents old age, develops the chest, reduces fat and removes constipation, indigestion and lumbago.

(4) **Chakrasana** (Wheel Posture) more effective than no. 3.

(5) **Kukkutasana** (Cock Posture) revitalizes the nerves and muscles of the hands as well as of the chest and shoulders and makes the wrists fit for any strenuous work.

- (6) **Bhujangasana** (Serpent Posture) keeps the spine flexible, tones up the nerves and muscles of the heart, abdomen and back, cures female diseases like Leucorrhoea, Menstrual difficulties, etc.
- (7) **Sahaj Shirshasana** (Easy Head Standing Posture) less effective than no. 8.
- (8) **Shirshasana** (Head Standing Posture) prevents all kinds of diseases and relieves pyorrhœa, myopia, vertigo, hysteria, neuralgia, liver and spleen diseases, nocturnal emissions, etc.
- (9) **Matsyasana** (Fish Posture) is complementary to Sarvangasana (no. 14). All the nerves and tissues connected with the thyroid and para-thyroid glands get stronger.
- (10) **Matsyendrasana** (the Spinal Twist) rejuvenates the spine, removes rheumatism, constipation, indigestion and cures defects of the liver and spleen.
- (11) **Baddha Padmasana** (Cross-legged or Lotus Posture) rectifies curvature of spine and removes obstacles to physical and spiritual uplift, indispensable for meditation.
- (12) **Mahamudra** (Pose) checks fistula, or literine dropsy, removes liver troubles and constipation and cures wet dreams in the case of young men.
- (13) **Viparit-karani** (Pose) restores a decayed body to health and vigour, and maintains youth in old age.

- (14) **Sarvanga-Sadhana Mudra** (shoulder standing pose) resists ageing and decay, evades the attack of cholera, small-pox, typhoid, pneumonia, colic or leprosy and cures menstrual troubles and displacement of the uterus.
- (15) **Uddiana-Bandha Mudra** (Pose) protects the body against the attack of hernia, appendicitis, duodenal ulcer and abscess etc. cures female diseases and prevents cholera, small-pox, etc.
- (16) **Sahaj Agnisara Dhouti** (Wash) is a sure prevention of dysentery, diarrhoea and cholera and an infallible curative of cholera.
- (17) **Barisara Dhouti** (Wash) prevents biliary troubles, acidity, colics, neuralgia leucoderma, leprosy, tubercular infection.
- (18) **Nouli** (Abdominal Exercise) checks hernia, appendicitis, intestinal T. B. duodenal ulcer, peptic abscess, indigestion, colics, etc.
- (19) **Yoga Mudra** (Pose) cures enlargement of the liver and spleen, vitalizes depleted nerves and glands and prepares the body for Yogic practices.

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For detailed study the reader is referred to the book. "Yogic Therapy" by Swami Shivananda Saraswati, Umachal Ashram, Kamakhya, Assam. In writing this article I have made free use of the materials contained in the book. The writer.

# New Diary Leaves

ATMANANDA

( 3 )

Vindhyachal,  
19th February 1960.

A young European lady who was touring India visited Varanasi. She had never heard about Mataji. Putting up in one of the big hotels at the cantonment she happened to meet there one of Mataji's admirers, who advised her, not to leave India without having Mataji's *darshan*. She took a taxi and came to Vindhyachal for just two hours. The following is part of the conversation she had with Mataji.

*Question* : Is it one's duty to act according to the wishes of one's parents or should one live one's own life ?

*Mataji* : If it is a life dedicated to the search after Truth (*paramartha jivan*) nothing else need be considered.

*Question* : Well, it is not exactly a life of this kind. I am asking on principle : is it my duty to conform to my parents' wishes or should I live my own life ?

*Mataji* : I have already told you ; this body speaks of the Supreme Quest. There are two kinds of seekers : the one who wants to dedicate his life to the search of Reality and for him there are no other duties. The other one would like to lead a religious life, but there are obstacles. If you choose to tread the Path to Self-realization but have a bad

conscience for having left your parents, your thoughts will wander away to them and you will not be able to meditate. One must make a definite decision one way or the other. Even so there will be difficulties at times, but if one has made up one's mind once for all, these can be overcome. If on the other hand one feels pulled in two directions, one will not be able to proceed.

*Question :* Shall I ever find peace and happiness ?

*Mataji :* Peace and happiness are found on the path to God, never in the world, where one gets a little happiness, which is invariably followed by its shadow—sorrow.

On parting the young lady said : "I shall never forget this day and I shall never forget what you told me !"

*Mataji :* Forget ? This is not enough. You must meditate. Meditate at least for five minutes daily along the lines prescribed by your own religion. Not less than five minutes, but the more time you can give the better. Try to dedicate at least fifteen minutes out of every twenty-four hours to meditation, no matter what kind of life you may choose—and do not forget your friend ! This (pointing to Herself) is your friend. Think carefully before acting, do not act thoughtlessly only to repent afterwards !

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Kishenpur,  
23rd April 1960.

During the *satsang* two blind men came to talk to Mataji. One of them asked : "How can I get the vision of God ? Please tell me the easiest way to it !"

*Mataji* : Seek Him for His own sake.

*The blind man* : Which is better, the path of devotion or that of knowledge ?

*Mataji* : Adhere to God's Name. Repeat His Name day and night and get engrossed in its sweetness.

*Question* : When I still had some eye-sight I used to read many books. But now this is impossible. How will I gain understanding ?

*Mataji* : Turn to God, He will give you understanding.

*The second blind man* : Mataji, give me your blessing !

*Mataji* : Pray to God and you will feel His blessing.

*A lady from the audience* : You said : Seek God for His own sake. Well then, if I seek Him with selfish motives, will I not find Him ?

*Mataji* : Of course, if you seek God with whatever motive, you will get something of Him and if you pray for anything of this world you will also obtain it. Yet the things of this world are not worth praying for. One should seek God, not with any motive but solely for His own sake. Neither should one feel concerned about one's spiritual progress, for this is also not unselfish. Seek God because it is your nature so to do, because you cannot remain without Him. Whether and when He will reveal Himself to you rests with Him. Your duty is to call out to Him constantly and persistently and not to waste your energy on anything else. It is not fitting to compare and reason, saying : 'Such and such a person has been engaged in *sadhana* for so many

years and yet has not reached anywhere'. How can you possibly judge of what is happening to anyone inwardly? At times it occurs that a person while practising *sadhana* appears to have changed for the worse. How can you tell whether certain undesirable tendencies had not been hidden within him and have now been brought to light through his spiritual endeavours? To say: 'I have performed so much *sadhana*, but no transformation has been effected,' is also not the attitude to be taken. All that you have to do is to call out to Him unceasingly and untiringly and not to look for the results of what you are doing. Who can tell whether you may not by any chance be the fortunate one among millions who will succeed!

*Question*: Sometimes I feel quite desperate, because I do not seem able to succeed.

*Mataji*: You feel desperate when you have desires and they remain unfulfilled. But when one aspires to God for His own sake, how is it possible to feel desperate

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Kishenpur,  
22nd July 1960.

In the course of the conversation Mataji said: "It is well to keep in mind that whatever one enjoys of worldly happiness, be it good food or anything else, uses up some of the merit (*punya*) that one has accumulated. It is therefore commendable to remember God at all times and to enjoy whatever comes as coming from God. Similarly should one try to bear in mind that any suffering or adversity that one

has to go through expiates one's accumulated *papa*, wrong or evil actions and thoughts."

Mataji then related the following story :

"A very rich man died leaving his wealth to his son. Before closing his eyes for ever, he told him that if ever he got into very bad straits so as to be utterly helpless and destitute, he should open a certain cupboard in the house. However the cupboard was not to be opened under any other circumstances. The son was a spend-thrift and soon had exhausted all his wealth. At last he was virtually penniless, there was not even enough to provide the barest necessities for his family; moreover there was illness in the house besides all sorts of other troubles. He remembered the cupboard and managed to open it with great difficulty. To his utter disappointment he found it empty. It was an ordinary black cupboard, so he threw it outside into the compound and started to dig and search everywhere for the hidden treasure—in vain. In his despair he finally went to solicit the help of a *mahatma*. The *mahatma* agreed to come to his house and see what could be done. On arriving there he looked around and then said : Give me a seat near the black cupboard. He sat down and scraped the varnish off the old piece of furniture and lo and behold it was found to be made of pure gold. "Similarly", Mataji concluded, "the gold is to be found in everyone's own heart, where the One sits enthroned on His lotus seat. But unless one is completely empty the gold cannot be found."

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## Conversations with Mataji at Gujerat

SWAMI MADEHAV TIRTHA

Shri Shri Anandamayee Ma attended the Bhāgavata Saptaha function arranged at Ahmedabad from 7th—14th December 1959 in memory of the late Shri Kantilal Munshaw. This gave an opportunity to many of Mataji's devotees to come in contact with Her, after an interval of over two years. Swami Vishnu Ashram delivered fine spiritual discourses every night for one hour. He accompanied Mataji from Bombay to Ahmedabad, and being learned in religious scriptures, the audience greatly appreciated what he said.

On the 5th December, 1959 Mataji remarked : "There are still two days left before the Bhāgavata Saptaha begins and all must pray and invite Lord Shri Krishna to be present during that week." She asked me to give a talk. I began to narrate the life of Rukmini who had written a letter to Shri Krishna, asking Him to come to her father's place in Kundunpur for her marriage and take her away to Dwaraka.

The next day Mataji attended the Yajna ceremony at Chinubhai's residence. The *arati* was done according to the special method taught to all of Mataji's devotees i.e. it was moved round all the people present. This is meant to create the cosmic presence of God at that place.

On subsequent nights, Mataji replied to questions as follows :—

**Question :** How can the restlessness of the mind be conquered ?

**Mataji :** By intense love for God.

**Question :** What is the nature of the mind ?

**Mataji :** To make man aware of his imperfection.

**Question :** Why does *Prārabdha* not vanish ?

**Mataji :** Because of the want of the fire of discrimination (*Viveka*) and dispassion (*vairagya*).

**Question :** Why does not God bestow His grace on all ?

**Mataji :** For God there are no others.

**Question :** But He is called *Dinadayāl*, one who bestows His grace on the humble ?

**Mataji :** Yes. He is *Dinadayāl* for those who become humble before Him, i.e. those who surrender to Him

**Question :** We do not want unhappiness and yet it comes. We want real and lasting happiness and it does not come. Why ?

**Mataji :** Your desire for true happiness is not intense enough. Take the help of Guru.

**Question :** Where to find the Guru ?

**Mataji :** Search within yourselves.

**Question :** How to search ?

**Mataji :** If your child is lost, how do you search for him.

**Question :** If I am the *Atmā*, why have I to make an effort to find Him ?

**Mataji :** The questioner has not realized his *Atmā*.

**Question :** Why is the mind restless ?

**Mataji :** Your mind is so much absorbed in the world that it does not like to leave it. It has found rest there. If it becomes completely restless, it will realize the *Atmā*. Arjun had become desperately restless and he realized the power of God.

**Question :** What is the way to self-knowledge ?

**Mataji :** *Satsang*.

**Question :** What is the nature of *Samādhi* ?

**Mataji :** It is a state where no question arises, there is complete equanimity, complete solution of everything.

**Question** We repent of our sins and yet people criticise us. What is the remedy ?

**Mataji :** Their criticism will free you from your remaining sins.

**Question :** If the *Atmā* is immortal, why does it take birth ?

**Mataji :** That which is immortal does not take birth. He who takes birth dies.

**Question :** Can a man advance towards God, by doing social service ?

**Mataji :** Yes, if he does not do it with a view to publicity.

**Question :** Why should one not enjoy worldly happiness ?

**Mataji :** What is perishable is not desirable.

**Question :** What is sin (*papa*) and virtue (*punya*) ?

**Mataji :** Forgetfulness of God is the greatest sin, His remembrance is the greatest virtue.

**Question :** Is it possible to see God ?

**Mataji :** Try persistently and you will see Him.

**Question :** What is the aim of man's life ?

**Mataji :** To love God and realise his oneness with Him.

**Question :** Where is God ?

**Mataji :** Where is He not ?

**Question :** What does He eat ?

**Mataji :** Man's ego.

**Question :** When does He laugh ?

**Mataji :** When a man before birth resolves to remember Him continuously after birth, God laughs because He knows that the baby will forget Him as soon as it is born.

**Question :** What does God do ?

**Mataji :** He humbles a king and makes a poor a king.

*Question* : Does God see us ?

*Mataji* : He sees us as His forms.

*Question* : If we try to see the One in the many, is it a correct knowledge ?

*Mataji* : The knowledge of many is not correct knowledge. He alone is.

*Question* : If we keep the mind steady and quiet while witnessing the various thoughts, is it a correct position ?

*Mataji* : The mind will not be quiet when it witnesses various thoughts.

*Question* : Why should we do *japa* ? I want to surrender my *māla* (rosary) also to God.

*Mataji* : If you give up *japa*, the mind will dwell on worldly thoughts. Division will not disappear unless you surrender your ego.

*Question* : How can we avoid the fruits of our previous *karma* ?

*Mataji* : Burn the *karma*.

*Question* : How to burn it ?

*Mataji* : Follow the advice of the Guru who has burnt His own *karma*.

*Question* : How to avoid the disturbances caused by wife and children ?

*Mataji* : Find a way of pleasing them and of praying to God.

**Question :** What is the fruit of remaining silent for 15 minutes at night ?

**Mataji :** It controls speech and preserves your energy. If the mind also becomes silent at that time, truth shines forth.

On the 12th December, 1959, Mataji visited my Ashram at Valad, about 12 miles from Ahmedabad. She liked the Ashram and said that it was a good place for retreat. I presented her 101 copies of 'Anand-Mala', a small printed book in which I had collected 108 sayings of Mataji. On leaving the Ashram, Mataji said to me : "This Ashram belongs to me, you are my guest and therefore I must garland you." I accepted respectfully the garland given by Her.

Next day during the *satsang* at Munshaw's house at Ahmedabad, Mataji answered the following questions :—

**Question :** Why do we have ups and downs in our spiritual practices ? What should be done ?

**Mataji :** Do not give up your *sadhana*.

**Question :** A man wants to keep *satsang*, but his wife refuses. What should he do ?

**Mataji :** If he gives in to her it means that he attaches more importance to his wife's advice than to *satsang*.

**Question :** What is more necessary, education or *satsang* ?

**Mataji :** Education is necessary for earning one's livelihood ; if the income is well used, it will create a *Satvic* atmosphere.

*Question* : Why does not God come to the world as an *Avatāra* in the present disturbed times ?

*Mataji* : He will come at the right time and people will recognise Him.

*Question* : How can we progress while leading family life ?

*Mataji* : Regard your husband as the Lord, your wife as the goddess Lakshmi and your children as the Bal Gopal or as Kumari.

*Question* : Which was first ? Karma or body ? Which existed first Seed or tree

*Mataji* : Both are simultaneous : the tree is only another condition of the seed.

*Swami Vishnu Ashram* :—If we write a letter on *Maya's* paper with *Maya's* ink, everything is simultaneous.

*Swami Madhantirtha* :—Causation is continuous in related systems.

*Question* : Whether effort and self-reliance (*Purushartha*) is true or determinism (*Prarabdha*) is true ?

*Mataji* : Effort directed towards the attainment of the Divine is *Purushartha*.

*Question* : What is the difference between the worship of gods and goddesses, and the meditation of the soul ?

*Mataji* : The worship of deities yields fruit according to the *Karma*. Meditation of the soul removes the veil of ignorance.

*Question :* What is the nature of the witness ?

*Mataji :* When some object appears to exist apart from the subject, there is no experience of the witness.

*Question :* What is the greatness of the Sanskrit language ?

*Mataji :* It is *Devabhasha*. All languages are God's languages because He is infinite.

The next day, *Mataji* visited *Yogashram*, about 70 miles from Ahmedabad. As part of the road was bad, I asked her whether She had suffered any inconvenience ?

*Mataji :* Not in the least, if a father's finger is injured, he does not cease to be a father. In the perfection of God, no part is bad.

*Question :* When can we get the grace of God ?

*Mataji :* It will come whenever necessary.

*Question :* How can we know it ?

*Mataji :* When you have eaten, you know that your hunger has been appeased. Similarly, God's grace is known.

*Question :* What is the nature of *Vairāgya* ?

*Mataji :* Love of God or *Anurāga*.

*Question :* What should be done to develop memory ?

*Mataji :* Repeat the name of God.

*Question :* Why are there many versions of God ?



*Mataji* : These are different points of view.

*Question* : Can women take *Sannyasa* ?

*Mataji* : Pitaji will reply.

*Swami Vishnu Ashram* : Women cannot take *Sannyasa* but they can develop renunciation.

*Swami Madhavtirtha* : I think, the time has come to give *Sannyasa* to women. In the Christian, Jain and Buddhist religions also women are given *Sannyasa*.

On the bank of the Narmada river, at the Bhimpura Ashram, *Satsang* was renewed, *Mataji* told me : "Just see, how God has given *Darshan* in this form." One woman placed a few flowers on *Mataji*'s head. Some devotees became annoyed but *Mataji* said : "My mother has given me blessings by putting flowers on my head." On another occasion, three *Sadhus* were sitting by *Mataji*'s side. A man arrived with some garlands. *Mataji* said : "Place the garlands round the necks of these saints, I am there". After the *sadhus* were garlanded, She said : "Now there is an appearance of three *Mataji*'s".

The following questions and answers ensued :

*A young married woman* :—I am very unhappy in my domestic life.

*Mataji* : It is foolishness to believe that there is happiness in worldly life.

A man asked for *Mataji*'s autograph on *Mataji*'s photo

purchased by him. Mataji placed a dot on the photo and said—"The ocean is contained in the drop and the drop in the ocean. In this dot everyting is contained".

*Question* : If obstacles come while repeating God's name, ~~hat~~ should be done ?

*Mataji* : They will be removed by repeating God's name.

*Question* : If everything is done by God, why should we do nything ?

*Mataji* : To have such faith is itself a great work.

On the 27th evening, when *Mataji* left Baroda for Mathura and was standing in the corridor of the train, She asked all the devotees gathered there to accompany Her to Mathura but none of them accepted Her offer because they had worldly duties to perform.

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## MATRI LILA

( 15TH JULY—15TH OCTOBER 1960. )

In the last issue of Ananda Varta we have already mentioned that Mataji had arrived in Kishenpur, Dehradun from New Delhi on July 11th. The devotees of Dehradun had great hopes that Mataji would remain in their midst for a good long time and spend *Jhulan* and *Janmastami* with them, but at the urgent invitation of Swami Haribabaji Maharaj, Mataji left for Vrindaban on August 1st. While at Kishenpur She suddenly one evening went away by car with only 2 or 3 companions, leaving behind Didima, Didi and all the others at the Ashram. Fortunately She returned the next morning to be present at the reading of the *Ramayana*, which is performed regularly once a month at the Kishenpur Ashram. It takes about 24-26 hours or sometimes more of uninterrupted reading (done by turns) to complete the whole of Tulsidas *Ramayana*. Only after returning Mataji disclosed that She had spent the night at the Kali temple at Ananda Chowk, Dehradun, where She had put up many years ago, long before the Ashrams at Kishenpur and Raipur had come into existence. During Mataji's stay at Kishenpur many interesting discussions ensued at *Darshan* time twice daily.\*

Mataji reached Vrindaban early morning on August 2nd in time for "*Jhulan Ekadasi*. *Jhulan* means 'swing festival.'

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\*See also "New Diary Leaves" on p. 147-48 of this issue.

Every night beginning from *Ekadasi* ( the 11th day of the phase of the moon ) until *Purnima* ( full moon night ), the images of Krishna and Radha are placed on a profusely decorated swing and worshipped to the accompaniment of songs in praise and adoration of these deities. The day before fullmoon *Mahajhūla* was celebrated in the very spacious hall of our Vrindaban Ashram. Not less than eleven swings had been provided and on each of them were placed images of Krishna and Radha. Many *Mahatmas* graced the function with their presence. On full-moon night *Maharasa lila* was performed by a professional troupe of *Rasulila* players. As usual it drew an enormous crowd of spectators who witnessed spell bound and with interest.

*Jhūlan Purnima* is the anniversary of the memorable night when in August 1922 exactly at midnight Mataji all by Herself went through the actions of a spiritual initiation (*dikṣa*). She Herself was the *Guru*, the *Iṣṭa*, the *mantra* as well as the neophyte. This event that came about spontaneously masked the beginning of a period of intense and uninterrupted *sadhana*, although it must be borne in mind that it was, like everything else in Mataji's life, a mere play, part of Her *Līla*; for since, as she frequently declares, she does, inspite of all apparent changes, always remain the same, there never was for Her anything to be attained and consequently the need to engage in spiritual practices of whatever kind did not arise for Her. It seems obvious that all the innumerable types of *Japa Yoga* and meditation that were gone through subsequently, were meant for the benefit of all seekers after truth. The hour of Mataji's unique *dikṣa* was as

canal very solemnly commemorated by Kirtan and silent meditation. Since *Jhulan Purnima* is also the festival of *Bakha Bandhan*, this was observed immediately after, namely between 2 and 3 a. m., when Mataji with Her own hands tied bracelets of silken thread round the wrists of everyone present.

On August 10th Mataji left for Varanasi to spend *Janmastami* surrounded by the girls of the *Kanyapeeth* (the school for *Brahmacharinis* at our Ashram there). We have on several former occasions reported in great detail about those very charming celebrations. On August 17th Mataji motored to Vindhychal to have a short rest before the next function which was the *Srimad Bhagavata Japanti* that was observed from August 28th to September 4th at Varanasi. On September 6th Mataji returned to Vindhychal with a large party, remaining there until 17th September. Breaking journey for a day and a night in Patna, She reached the *Agarpara Ashram*, in the outskirts of Calcutta, on September 19th. *Novaretri* began on the 20th and *Durga Puja* was celebrated with great fervour and enthusiasm from September 26th—30th. Needless to say that the crowd that flocked to the Ashram, over and above the many visitors from far and near, was quite overwhelming. Several buildings have been recently constructed in the beautiful grounds of the *Agarpara Ashram*, among them a *Shiva Temple* and a guest house, consisting of about a dozen rooms with bathrooms etc. The new buildings were inaugurated in Mataji's presence soon after Her arrival at Calcutta. The devotees there had hoped that Mataji would

remain with them for *Lakshmi Puja* which falls on the full-moon night after *Dassehra*. However Mataji took the train to Varanasi on October 1st and after a night's rest there proceeded to Dehradun where She alighted on the 4th October morning. *Lakshmi Puja* was observed that very night in a new room upstairs, that had just been constructed. After the *Puja* when Mataji sat down with everyone else on the platform in front of the Shiva Temple to partake of the *Prasad*, a light shower of rain gave an additional and unexpected blessing to all. No one stirred from their seats until they had finished their meal. The quite untimely rain became very vigorous the next day and the following two or three days after which it cleared up. We received the news of the floods in Lucknow and all along the Gomati river with apprehension, wondering whether it would be possible to observe *Diwali* on Oct. 19th in Lucknow as planned and even more doubtful it seemed whether Naimisharanya would dry up in time to complete the arrangements for the next Sanyam Mahavrata, which is to begin on October 21st. During the floods the site of the *satsang* Pandal was waist deep under water. Nevertheless Mataji appeared supremely unconcerned and was urging everyone who happened to approach Her to take part in the function at Naimisharanya, remarking with Her usual radiant smile that the whole place had been specially purified by the water in preparation for our meeting and also how lucky it was that the camp had not been erected before the floods broke in.

One evening at Kishenpur Mataji was requested to relate something about Her first visit to Raipur in 1932. In

Her inimitable delightful way She told us some details of how She went there by tonga from Dehradun with Bholanath and Bhaiji. Now there is a broad motor road and a regular bus service, but in those days Raipur was nestling peacefully in the midst of jungles. There was only a rough path leading to it and moreover a river had to be forded; the bridge was built much later. Mataji was quite unknown at Dehradun at the time. Bholanath used to sit in meditation for hours together in front of the Shiva Temple. While Mataji remained in the dilapidated room. With great humour Mataji related how the villagers wondered, whether he had perhaps left his home in order to do *tapasya* and his wife against his wish had followed him with their servant (Bhaiji). Bhaiji dressed in a dhoti and walking barefoot was then doing every kind of menial labour such as cooking, cleaning vessels, etc. Gradually however letters began to arrive for him and thus the news leaked out that he was really a high Government official. At that time Mataji used no bedding, only one thick cotton cover, half of which served as a mattress and the other half as a blanket. She did not comb Her hair and it became matted. When subsequently She caught fever, a barber was called to cut off Her hair, which had become inextricably intertwined and resembled a crown. The barber took great pains to cut off the whole of the crown in one piece and succeeded. Only with the greatest difficulty could he be persuaded to part with it, as he was eager to use it for *Ramlila* performances.

On October 16th Mataji entrained for Lucknow where *Divali* is to be celebrated at the residence of Sri Rameshwar

Sahai, I.F.S., Chief Conservator of Forests, U.P. On October 20th She is due at Naimisharanya where the 11th Samyam Mahavrata is to take place from October 21st to 27th followed immediately by the recitation of 108 *Srimad Bhagavatas*, up to November 3rd. Swami Akhandanandaji Maharaj of Vrindaban has agreed to be responsible for the daily explanations in Hindi. Many distinguished *Mahatmas* have accepted the invitation to grace the function with their presence and a very large number of participants are expected to arrive from all over India.