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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

Repeat the name of the Great Mother, contemplate Her, try to see Her in everything. Aspire to become ever more permeated by Her.

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The pilgrim on the path of Immortality never contemplates death. By meditation on the Immortal the fear of death recedes far away ; remember this ! In the measure that your contemplation of the One becomes uninterrupted, you will advance towards full, unbroken Realization.

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The mind's suffering and its problems, its perceptions and creations are all within Him. What is termed near and

far is also contained within Him, the Self ; and likewise is the sustained effort of the aspirant. One should endeavour to remain constantly immersed in the stream of the *sadhana* which has the inherent power to make one possessed of one's Supreme Wealth. At all times He alone plays His play, disguised as ego and intelligence. The One who appears as the action of the ego, He and no other manifests also as pure action. In order that this may be realized, intelligence becomes aware of rest in movement—when by the movement of Self-action the Essential Nature (*Svarūpa*) of pure intelligence is to be revealed. Thus, ignorance, intelligence, as well as the knower of both, are none but He, who, ever Self-effulgent, yet becomes revealed. He, the Self is infinite and finite. Holding on to Him, without flinching, unimpeded, one must endeavour to forge ahead ceaselessly. Having entered that current, any form in which He allows Himself to be grasped by the purified mind and intelligence may be accepted as an aid towards Self-realization.

● ● *

It is man's duty to try and cultivate faith and devotion. Blows are characteristic of life in the world ; thus man is taught to understand what the nature of the world is, and then detachment from pleasure and enjoyment ensues.

● * ●

When there is a choice between the pleasurable and the elevating, one should always choose the latter. By

practising renunciation in the endeavour to draw nearer to God, one moves but towards one's own Self. Truly, the striving for his own perfection is man's duty as man.

* * *

One who serves God can never be helpless. The more ardently one seeks communion by engaging in *japa*, His service and contemplation, the fuller will be His revelation.

A person who knows that he is ignorant must be credited with having most certainly attained to some measure of knowledge.

“Ma”

INSPIRED SAYINGS

SWAMI RAMDAS

You should not forget God. Remember Him by taking His holy name, This will enable you to live a balanced life.

* * *

Concentrate upon *Ramanama* as your main *Sadhana*. *Ramanama* alone is all-sufficient. This will grant you perfect purity of mind and enable you to realize God.

* * *

You can spiritually advance even when you are living with your family, provided you spend some time exclusively in the remembrance of God and meditation on His divine attributes.

* * *

If you stick to the name of God with all love and devotion you will achieve anything and everything. Principally you should aim at God-realization. Concentrate on the Name and you will be saved.

* * *

When you are always thinking of God, you will realize Him. God-realization comes by surrendering your little self to the higher Self—God. For this, what is needed is the unbroken remembrance of God.

* * *

Everyone meets with disappointments in life. This is the common lot of mankind, but the man who trusts God and remembers Him constantly is free from worries. He reconciles himself to every situation that falls to his lot. 'Contentment is a continual feast'.

* * *

If you attune your mind with *Rimnam*, your intelligence will be awakened, your senses will be controlled, and your life blessed by the revelation of the Divine within you.

* * *

Depend upon God in all things. Surrender to Him is the only way to inner freedom and peace.

* * *

The real beauty of life lies in beholding the Divine everywhere. The whole nature before you is His manifestation. In this supreme vision lies your real freedom, peace and bliss.

* * *

God dwells in the hearts of us all and you are not separate from Him. In fact, God and you are one. God is all, and all-in-all.

* * *

A man who is aware of God is a great force for good in the world, whereas a man who is not, lives in vain.

* * *

God is your life and soul. If you recognize this truth you can lead a life of fulness, freedom, bliss and peace. Then divine power reveals itself in all your thoughts, feelings and actions.

* * *

How grand is the Self! It is still grander to know that you are the Self. Let your life be radiant with this supreme Realization.

Prajna—The Light of Intuition

PROFESSOR MADAN GOPAL, M.A. (ALLD.), B. LITT. (OXON),
C. P. E. S. (RETD.)

(Continued from last issue.)

Enough has been said to give some idea of what this faculty of *prajñā* means. It is an inner light different from the light of the mind, because it does not rest upon logical conclusions and reasoning, but upon a sort of inner feeling. Instead of being ethically neutral, as the intellectual principle largely is, it is essentially dependant on an ethical view of life. Instead of being proudly arrogant and self-assertive, it rests upon humility and a passive acceptance of the light that comes from within. It is best cultivated by quiet meditation and practice of true virtue. It is generally awakened by the influence of some spiritually advanced person ; this is the best way in which it can come to us. So it is evident that it is different from the intellectual principle and not a mere extension of it into a higher dimension.

In *yogic* training this kindling of *prajñā* plays a central part. In ancient Indian education great stress was laid upon *prajñā* (often under the name of *buddhi*) and the *Gurus* directed their attention to the cultivation of this faculty much more than the intellect. The *Gurus* carefully examined their pupils as to their fitness for this kind of development, and insisted

upon an austere course of life, including strict truthfulness and chastity in order to prepare their disciples for the reception of this higher light. Their courses of instruction appear strange to us, but if we examine them carefully we shall find them full of psychological significance. They did not aim at giving clear definitions and principles, but only placed problems before their pupils and expected them to solve them problems by their own inner light. Instances abound in the Upanishads where the *Gurus* led their pupils from one stage to another by compelling them to think out and guess the nature of the truth they were asked to investigate. Sometimes this process took years and would hardly be submitted to by modern aspirants after knowledge. But the Gurus knew that they had to build up a faculty and this could not be accomplished easily or quickly. Hence they utilized every device, including the intricacies and ambiguities of the Sanskrit language, to compel their pupils to go through the strenuous exercise of learning to walk in their inner journey, by the light that comes from within. This, combined with the ethical discipline insisted upon, and the personal influence of the Guru, it was expected, would lead to the opening up of the intuitive faculty. Like all systems, this also came to be abused when it fell into weaker hands, and it is true that in its later stages it led to mere vacuity and useless hair-splitting. But originally the idea was sound, and even now has great possibilities under right conditions.

It may be asked then, how it is that even people who can be expected to possess this light, often make mistakes? It has to be understood that this light is perceived in its purity only

in the higher regions of the psyche, and the problem of bringing it down to the earth, so to say, is beset with many difficulties. The intellectual mind begins to operate on it, our hopes and prejudices begin to colour it, our fears and inhibitions arise to modify it, and by the time a practical decision can be taken, its original nature and force are much diminished. I have often observed that religious people with a highly developed ethical sense and nobility of character, react *rightly* to certain problems at first, but soon lose themselves in a mass of sophistries. This happens even with people of unblemished religious and spiritual antecedents, who yet cannot adjust themselves to the social problems of today, which have to be considered in a light independent of the ancient *S'āstras*. Here it is evident that the guidance of *prajñā* gets mixed up with intellectual ideas and even prejudices, and so the result is not the true reflection of the principle of *prajñā*. We must not blame *prajñā* for not giving us the correct guidance if we do not obey its commands, either on account of mental cowardice or laziness.

It must also be remembered that, like everything else that takes place deep in the psyche, the light of *prajñā* can only be interpreted correctly after long practice. So the aspirant after the inner Light has to learn to obey its commands and to carry out its injunctions as fully as possible. The strict practice of truthfulness is very important in this connexion; because even slight concessions to conventional untruth (so difficult to avoid in practical life) can lead to serious distortions and then this faculty refuses to act. The psychological problem involved is of great delicacy, and it

requires much moral courage and persistence to handle it properly. Any deliberate refusal to see the light on account of social pressure or for the sake of ease and comfort, will create a permanent blind spot. Any prejudices and fixed ideas that get mixed up with it will lead to a distortion of the truth. Only a very resolute and pure attitude can succeed in arousing this faculty in such a manner as to act as a reliable guide.

Here a few words may be said with regard to a very interesting question that arises in the minds of many inquirers. Most people who aim at a religious or spiritual life realize the importance of faith. But what is this faith? Many seem to imagine that it is some kind of a rigid attitude of the mind, supported by an iron will to keep the mind fixed on certain truths or a certain attitude, and not to allow any doubts to arise. This can be done by some people, but only at great cost. For, as modern psychology shows, the sub-conscious or 'depth-mind' is not so easily amenable to the will; and doubts, if forcibly suppressed, can lead to a serious distortion of the personality. By forcibly suppressing our doubts, we weaken the faculty of clear thought and that opens the way to all sorts of foolishness, mental vacuity and a general lowering of the intellectual powers. This is often seen among people of a pious and devout temperament, who lose the faculty of critical thought because they have fallen under the deadening influence of some dogma, which has given them temporary peace, and consequently they dare not question it. The emptiness of many religious practices, the deadness that they show in actual manifestation, the ridicule and ribaldry

that they often provoke, is just due to the fact that they are performed by people who have never thoroughly purified their minds, and in spite of all pretences, doubts are corroding their mind from within. This danger is specially marked in traditional civilizations like that of India.

Now True Faith does not arise from an attitude of the will or the forcible suppression of doubts, but from a vision of *prajñā*. It is only possible when the mind has been purified by the practice of virtuous conduct and does not demand any forcible suppression of thought. It is well known that sometimes people are prepared to make great sacrifices for a principle, which they can neither clearly define nor fully understand. This is really the rising of *prajñā* in its earliest form ; for, as has been said before, *prajñā* depends more upon an ethical attitude than anything else. Hence, even if the rules of *yama* and *niyama* (Truth, Self-control etc.) are followed dogmatically, they lead to a clearing of the inner consciousness and soon one begins to see the reasons for them and their relationship to the fundamental Law of Harmony (*dharma*). This does not need any suppression of the intellectual side of the mind. The dangers pointed out above arise mainly because people want to achieve rapid results. In my opinion it is much better to live with one's doubts, and to defer religious practices until the mind has cleared up through the observance of moral rules and sincere thinking.

I shall say only a few words about the next step - what Buddha calls Right Meditation. This is a powerful aid in arousing the *prajñā* when rightly done. Briefly, meditation

can be about (1) a divine form or personality, (2) a principle like Truth or Harmlessness or (3) the problem of life itself, i.e. trying to understand sincerely and directly the significance of all that we see around us, and trying to relate it to the supreme law of harmony. These three kinds of meditation are arranged in ascending order of difficulty and do not naturally contradict one another. The first is only possible to those who can accept a divine form or personality, i.e. in whose minds such a faith already exists on account of their past *samskaras*. This is the meditation most common amongst Hindus, but there are many people of Western origin or with a Westernized mind who cannot do it. For them, meditation on an abstract principle (type 2) may be possible and can yield very good results if followed sincerely and persistently. The third type is the most difficult, because here there is nothing for the mind to cling to, and the necessary intellectual elasticity is a rare virtue. But for keen intellects this is in some ways the best type of meditation, especially if some strength has already been gained by the practice of ethical discipline.

Thus Faith, which is necessary for any advancement in inner life, is seen to be but a partial manifestation of *prajñā*. When *prajñā* is fully aroused, the question of faith recedes into the background, for the harmony of life is felt so strongly that no doubts with regard to the fundamental realities upon which spiritual experience is based, can arise. It only shows us *our own path*, but it does this with complete clarity and inner authority. A man in whom *prajñā* is aroused may become a philosophical thinker also if his

intelligence is strong, but that is not always the case. However, at any rate he will have a firm grasp of ethical principles, and will have no doubts about what I have called the fundamental Law of Harmony (*dharma*). Equipped with this, he will be able to face life with courage and equanimity under any circumstances and will stand out amongst his fellow-men by his sincerity and courage. What his religious views may be will depend upon the circumstances of his birth and education, etc., but he will never be found wanting in charity and understanding for others with different views. Such a man may manifest great variations of religious opinion, but will show sincerity, steadfastness, clarity and courage which raise him above the common level. Rightly understood this is the firm foundation for any of the higher spiritual experiences.

Of course, these things must not be understood in a rigid sense, for the various kinds of knowledge overlap, and ultimately all knowledge becomes one. The intellectual view as well as the perceptions of the senses and the instincts have a place in a completely balanced psyche; and when the *prajñā* has been awakened, the intellect can become a keen and useful tool under its guidance. The bodily functions and sense activities too can be transformed marvellously under the influence of wisdom. But without this wisdom, the human psyche remains incomplete. However brilliant the intellect may be, it does not become truly creative nor lead to inner peace. *Prajñā* is a faculty that is just dawning in humanity and consequently its nature is not well understood as yet. The intellect, with its brilliant achievements in

certain directions seems to dazzle most modern minds. But *prajñā*, which is often compared in mystical literature to Moonlight, as against the sunlike quality of the intellect is far more satisfying and peaceful.

Nothing very much need be said about the higher faculties, because they are only accessible to yogis and sages. The nature of the *Mahat* is said to be like the break of day after a dark night, when the whole landscape can be seen in its entirety. At this stage soul knowledge arises, and the true nature of the human psyche begins to reveal itself. Man begins to understand what he is in reality and therefore problems like those of re-incarnation, birth and death, the true purpose of life, freedom and predestination, begin to be seen in a true perspective. Before this stage, howsoever clearly we may grasp these problems by the intellect, they will not convince completely the inner mind, and an element of doubt and uncertainty will remain. When the *prajñā* is aroused, one will begin to feel intensely that these problems are capable of solution and that a higher Truth does exist. But one will not be able to define what that is exactly, even to oneself. Yet when the light of *Mahat* (the Great Principle) has dawned, all these problems become clear, and no question or doubt can arise in the mind. The whole problem of existence lies before one like a landscape on a bright day. So at this stage, self-knowledge becomes a reality, and through that self-knowledge the laws of the cosmos are perceived in their fulness. That is why this faculty is called '*Mahat*'. Hence the man who has learnt to function on this plane is truly called a *Mahatma*. But it must be understood of course

that he may be unable to communicate this knowledge to lower minds in the way they desire it. The conclusions of mathematics are completely clear and convincing to the trained mathematician, but cannot be explained to a child. It is important to understand this as the question is often asked: 'If there are such higher intelligences, why don't they explain the problem of life to us?' The real reason is that an idea cannot be understood apart from the experiences that lie behind it. The modern views of physics seem contradictory and paradoxical to a layman who approaches them without the necessary preparation. It is only after a full understanding of the mathematical and experimental basis of modern science that these conclusions seem to be inescapable. Similarly, but to a much higher degree, the knowledge of a sage is based upon experiences which are real only to one who has gone through them. For example, the idea that all sense perceptions are mental and that it is the mind that lends colours and qualities to all things, seems a manifest paradox to the ordinary mind. But to the trained *yogi*, who has learnt to create and uncreate things by his mental powers, it is an experienced reality. Similarly, the doctrine that all life is joy seems a cruel paradox to us, immersed as we are in personal sufferings and struggles. But to the sage it is an ever present verity. These things could be stated as bare aphorisms (as has often been done in the Upanishads) or could be expressed by symbol, myth or story, as is the way of the *Puranas* and the *Tantras*, but they can at the best only stimulate the imagination or lend some help to the dawning *prajñā*. In their fulness they can only be understood by the experience referred to above.

I shall say nothing about the two next higher faculties or planes of consciousness *Avyakta* and *Purūṣa*, (*mahatat paramavyaktam avyaktat purūṣopara*). In so far as I have been able to investigate, it appears that there are creative stages in which the individual soul is united with the Supreme Source and begins to exercise Creative powers. This of course is a very high stage, and few are capable of really discussing it. This is very inadequate attempt to describe something that is both important and ilusive. Even the ordinary faculties of man like connotation, emotion and the intellect are difficult to describe or to separate one from the other. The still higher faculties of intuition (which is being recognized in European psychology) and the faculty of clear vision (*Mahat*), which is only beginning to be guessed by advanced thinkers, are naturally much more subtle. Here, in Eastern psychology, their names and natures briefly indicated but no detailed descriptions are available. Whenever Eastern thinkers of the past tried to delve deeper into these problems, they adopted the language of symbol and myth as the one most effective for their purposes. But the modern mind is analytical, and wants concepts that can be clearly understood and related to other branches of knowledge. This could only be done by minds of an extraordinary quality, combining yogic experience, the faculty of clear exposition, and an understanding of the modern map of knowledge. I have no doubt that such minds will arise in time, for when the spirit of the age needs a certain expression, it finds its embodiment in appropriate human personalities. But at present the task largely remains to be done. It is in order to point the way to this that the present essay has been attempted.

Conversations with Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma

PROFESSOR B. GANGULY

(Translated by Atmananda)

(7)

Ranchi Ashram,
20th May, 1958.

Question : May it not at times happen that the *japa*, overpowers the one who practises it, and forces him to continue with it ?

Mataji : Yes this also is a possibility.

Question : Does God Himself sometimes perform the *japa* of some individual ?

Mataji : Of course ; for who are you in essence ? Practise your own *japa* ! Again, seen from a different point of view : is there any need to engage in *japa* ? Who actually does the *japa* ? Within the sphere of God's *Lila* everything is necessary—Sita, Lakshman, Mahavir all are wanted so that the Play may proceed. But in Reality nothing at all is needed.

Question : Why is the Play so full of tragedy ?

Mataji : Everything happens according to His Will.

Question : How much longer shall we have to weep ?

Mataji : So long as you do not realize Who you are.

Question : God feels pleased when His Name is repeated, does He not ? Therefore may one not call Him selfish ?

Mataji : It is you who find happiness and bliss in repeating His name. God is not a trader. It is you who say : "I am doing *japa*." God in His Grace has shown you the path of the repetition of His name, so that you may realize Him.

Question : How much of His Grace does He bestow in punishment and how much in compassion ?

Mataji : God does not calculate. Whatever is necessary for the real good of His children, that He does.

Question : If our heart is full of faith, is it necessary to practise *japa* and meditation ?

Mataji : The fact that you ask proves that you have no faith. If you had real, genuine faith, these practices would be unnecessary.

Ranchi Ashram,
21st May, 1958.

Question : In the *Chandi* we read that *Mahāmāyā* cast a veil even over the consciousness of *jñāni*. Does this apply also to *Brahmajñānis* ?

Mataji : It applies only to men of ordinary knowledge, not to those who have attained to Supreme Knowledge. In the state that is beyond knowledge and ignorance, there can be no question of delusion.

Question : In the *Gītā* it is said : "Supervisor and permitter, supporter, enjoyer, great Lord•....." etc. Does this imply that He is realized gradually by stages

Mataji : Yes, the possibility of realizing by stages also exists.

Question : What does '*Guru krip ā hi kevalam*' signify ?

Mataji : That everything can be made possible by the *Guru's* Grace.

Question : Is there a difference between the *Guru* and the *Ista* (Beloved) ?

Mataji : From the viewpoint of the world they are different ; but actually they are one. It is the Beloved Himself who appears as the *Guru*.

Question : Suppose an aspirant does not feel inclined to practise the name or *mantra* received from his *Guru*, but otherwise engages in good and meritorious deeds ; how will he fare ?

Mataji : He will reap the fruit of his meritorious deeds ; but he will not get the benefit that results from carrying out the *Guru's* orders.

• *Srimad Bhagavad Gītā*, chapter XIII, verse 22.

Question : Where *sādhana* is concerned, does one's strength count for more than the *Guru's* ?

Mataji : Everything is possible by the *Guru's* Grace ; whereas for the ego, not everything is possible. Thus the *Guru's* Grace has greater power. Three things are required—the *Guru*, the *mantra* and the practice. To engage in *sādhana* means to have mercy upon oneself. Upto a certain level one needs one's own mercy—and later the *Guru's* Grace.

Question : In what sense are the Name, the *Guru* and the *Ita* one ?

Mataji : The Name and He whose name it is are one ; the *Guru* is said to be *Brahma, Viṣṇu, Śiva*—in this sense they are one ; that is to say, in the state of perfection they are one, but on the level of *sādhana* they are each separate. The *vigraha* (image) must be looked upon as God Himself. Likewise it is considered a sin to regard the *Guru* as a human being. "My Beloved has come to me as the *Guru* and the *mantra*, so that I may realize Him"—this is how you should comprehend it.

The Background of our Letters*

U. C. DUTT

Every letter of any language is a symbol of sound. Each letter combines with others and forms a word. A combination of words constitutes a sentence. Corresponding to these three aspects of language the linguistic science has got three distinct lines : (1) *Shabda* (sound) or voice, (2) *Artha* (meaning) or object, (3) *Pratyaya* or *Jñāna* (mental apprehension or knowledge). Here we are concerned with the sound aspect only.

Western scholars generally trace the origin of such sounds to natural phenomena like cries of animals, murmuring brooks, howling storms, dashing waves, rushing torrents, a clap of thunder and so forth. They do help no doubt, but Indian experts place all these audible sounds under one class called "*Vaikhari*". Whatever is uttered or heard originates from throat, *Vishuddha Chakra* or plexus at *Kantha*. The stage behind *Vaikhari* is *Madhyamā* which takes the form of light, a diffused and diluted light of dawn about to burst into sounds. It is located at the heart at *Anāhata Chakra*. Beyond *Madhyamā* is *Pashyanti*, a pure strong light of the meridian sun, melting all duality. It rests below the navel, called *Swādhīsthan Chakra*. It emanates from the unspeakable, unknowable, primal source of creation suggested as *Parā*. As the ultimate source of light and sound (the former being the

* Based on talks by Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj, M.A., D.Litt.

subtle form of the latter), *Para* pushes *Jyoti* and *Nāda* outward due to its creative urge, so to speak.

The dynamic aspect of consciousness (*Chitshakti*) as *Para* vibrates from *Muladhara* plexus at the bottom of the spinal chord near the rectum and goes up. The entire process is the working of *Nāda Brahma* expressing itself in the reverse order as sound, light and pure forms of consciousness (*Swarup*).

A letter is called *Varna* (colour). Obviously sound has no colour, but light producing sound is made up of rays of different colours. Each letter represents a colour. Fifty letters express 50 colours or rays, besides symbolizing the constituents of the transcendental Reality and the *Tattvas*. Our sources of knowledge are senses, reasoning and imagination. Another instrument is instinct, generally used by animals, children and uncivilized people, even by civilized men. All of them work on the normal plane. There is a supernormal or supramental source of knowledge called intuition—*Prajñā* or *Pratibhājñāna*. When this faculty is developed in a man under certain spiritual discipline, metaphysical truths—truths beyond time and space—are revealed to him or her in a flash.” The whole man responds to it; the entire being is transformed, the past, present and future are reduced to a “specious present”. Such a knowledge is free from errors, while knowledge from other sources is true in its own narrow spheres only. Intellect knows by multiplying concepts that hide facts, but intuition eliminates concepts and is brought face to face with eternal truth. It is difficult for a rational man to accept intuition as a sure instru-

ment of knowledge. The West was reluctant to accept Bergson's Intuitionism after the waves of Intellectualism caused by Kant and Hegel. Seers in all parts of the world have got intuitional experience. Some of them gave us the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Agamas, the Tripitakas, the Bible, the Koran, etc. In words of Tagore, they speak the language of Personality, not of intellect.

Those who are acquainted with Indian Philosophy know that all top-ranking systems like the Yoga and the Vedanta have accepted the Samkhya Cosmology. The Samkhya system has 25 principles (*Tattvas*): They are *Purusha*, *Prakriti*, *Mahat*, *Ahankāra*, *Mana*, five senses of knowledge, five senses of action, five *Tanmātras* and five *Mahabhutas* (gross elements). To them the Yoga system adds God as one of the three eternal (*Purusha*, *Prakriti* and *Ishwar*). The Vedanta unifies all of them under one principle, *Brahma* and explains plurality with the help of *Māya*. The Gita subsumes all the changing and non changing aspects, *Kshara* and *Akshara Purushas* under the synthesis of *Purushottama*. It was left to the Agamas to supply the intervening stages beyond *Purusha* and *Prakriti* with 11 principles. The *Shaiva* and *Shakta* Agamas agree to these 36 *Tattvas* (25 + 11 principles). *Parama Shiva*, *Para Shakti*, *Purushottama* and *Brahma* point to the highest reality in *Shaiva*, *Shakta*, *Vaishnava* and *Vedanta* cults respectively with this difference that *Brahman* is impersonal and attributeless, while the other three are both personal and impersonal with and without attributes or powers at the same time. When *Parama Shiva* intends to project himself as creation, 36 *Tattvas* follow.

They are (1) *Shiva*, (2) *Shakti*, (3) *Sadashiva*, (4) *Ishwar*, (5) *Suddhavidya*, (6) *Maya*, (7) *Kala*, (8) *Vidya*, (9) *Raga*, (10) *Kala*, (11) *Niyati* besides the 25 principles noted above. *Shiva* contracts His powers of omniscience, omnipotence, etc. with the help of *Maya* (ignorance) and becomes *Jiva* or *Purusha* and His powers become *Prakriti*. These *Purusha* and *Prakriti*—conscious monads and unconscious matter—evolve 23 other principles. Thus the *Shaiva* or *Shakta* Agamas adopt 36 principles to explain the origin, process and product of the world system. The whole universe is a manifestation of *Shiva* and *Shakti*, the static and dynamic aspects of the ultimate Reality—*Parama Shiva*.

Time and space begin to operate with the creation of mind. Principles prior to mind exist in supertime and superspace (*Mahakal* and *Mahakash*). It is difficult for mind or intellect to form notions about such supertime-space existence that can be caught only through intuition. Intellect knows becoming in its time-space-causality setting, while intuition sees being prior to its functioning at a lower level as becoming—the world-order in motion. Hence arises the necessity of transcendent or pure logic as different from traditional or formal Logic. Perhaps in this sense Oswald Spengler uses “Organic” and “Inorganic” Logic in his famous book, *The Decline of the West*. While dealing with the problem of World History (page 117), he explains the idea of Destiny and the principles of Causality. “The Destiny idea demands life-experience and not scientific experience, the power of seeing and not that of calculating, depth and not intellect. There is an *Organic Logic*, an instinctive, dream-

sure logic of all the existence as opposed to the logic of the inorganic, the logic of understanding and of things understood—a logic of direction as against a logic of extension—and no systematist. no Aristotle or Kant, has known how to deal with it.” The former deals with the essence of things and its relation with the basic forms emanating in succession from the static and dynamic aspects of pure consciousness, revealing its world-longing, its desire to rise into the light, to accomplish and actualize its design. The latter discovers some laws of thought—Identity, Non Contradiction and Excluded Middle—and recasts the basic forms in the light of the Laws of Consistency as conceived by intellect and distorts facts as they are. So knowledge derived through senses and intellect are virtually different from that derived through intuition. One is impure, misleading Avidya (ignorance). The other is pure, luminous Vidya (knowledge). A pure form assumes masks at different levels of cosmic order and alters its shape to amuse the deluded spectators, so to speak. We have come down from pure light to pitch darkness by slow degrees and have to go back by retracing steps from the unconscious to the super-conscious. Stuff of the world is light, like fish of light we swim in the ocean of light unconsciously. Intuition, not intellect, is the sure guide to pure knowledge, and it can be developed under thorough spiritual discipline.

Intellect has its pragmatic value and works all right in its own sphere for practical purposes, but too much stress on it blocks the way to the finding of the deeper values of life, the return journey to Light. Even Aristotle, the father of

European Logic, had to admit that "God is the meeting-ground of all contradictions", and Schopenhauer exclaimed "Consistency is the great hobgoblin of human mind".

(To be continued)

At all times let patience be your stronghold. Say to yourself : "Lord, everything Thou doest is for the highest good !" Pray for the power of endurance. Nothing happens that is not an expression of God's Grace : verily, all is His Grace.

Anchored in patience, bearing everything, abide by His Name and live joyously.

"Ma"

With Mataji on the Bank of the Gomati River

KRISHNANATH

In the February 1961 issue of *Ānanda Vārtā*, an account was given of the *Samyam* and *Bhagavat Saptahs*, held from 23rd October to 4th November 1960. The functions were an uplifting spiritual experience, but still left a sense of disappointment in my mind; for my expectation that in Naimisharanya, being an out-of-the-way place, there would not be so many people and it would therefore be possible to have more intimate contact with Mataji, had not been realized. We could see Her sitting on the dais for long hours and occasionally had the good fortune of having her *darshan* from somewhat nearer in Her cottage, but the informal atmosphere that I longed for was impossible. It was rumoured that after the two functions, Mataji was likely to shift from Naradānanda Ashram to some cottage on the banks of the Gomati. Many of those who had come, would have liked to stay on, but they were discouraged from doing so by the dismantling of the tents, the severing of electric connections and the cessation of feeding arrangements. All this was costing a lot of money and could not be maintained any longer. It was also made clear that Mataji wanted to be left alone after the strenuous time during the two *Saptahs*.

So, with a heavy heart, I was resigning myself to leave, when I learnt that Dr. Pannalal, one of Mataji's oldest devo-

tees, was to be favoured with some accommodation and that Mataji had indicated that I could share it. If you wish for anything from Mataji very strongly, how readily and kindly She grants it! For three days Dr. Pannalal and I stayed together in the Prakash Kutir of Naradananda Ashram—a cottage which had been previously occupied by Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj, who seemed to have left in it an impress of his spiritual practices. When Mataji shifted to the cottage on the Gomati bank, Her host there, Shri Prag Narain Saigal, was so kind as to lend us his own big tent. And so it happened that I was fortunate enough to get another fortnight with Mataji, in just the conditions I had longed and prayed for. Not only were there hardly any outsiders, but even most of the Ashramites had been sent away one by one to their various places, and after a time only a handful of them were left. So there was nobody to keep a record of 'this solitary stay of Mataji in the most charming surroundings' (to quote from *Matri Lila*). It may not be out of place, therefore, if I narrate some of my recollections of this very happy period of my life.

During the three days that Mataji was still at Naradananda Ashram, we heard on the verandah of Her cottage the tape-recorded discourse of Swami Chetan Giriji who also gave one more talk on the *Kenopanishad*.

Mataji's silvery laughter is known to everybody, but I have never seen Her so convulsed with laughter as on one occasion. During the *Saptahs* a large number of dogs had gathered round our camp. They used to fight ferociously for leavings

of food outside of the cook-house. One day, while we were sitting round Mataji on the verandah, I heard a loud bang outside, and Mataji was laughing away with a most amused expression on Her face. One of the dogs had thrust its head into a big earthen pot ; it was stuck there and the dog, while running blindly, had hit against a wall ! The dog was now running even faster in fright, with the rim of the pot like a collar round its neck ! It was only when somebody hit the rim and broke it that the dog ceased its antics.

The place on the Gomati was a kind of small hermitage. Taking advantage of an old *ghat* (stone-steps leading down to the river), Shri Saigal had built alongside, a row of five small huts, like hermit cells, with a somewhat larger cottage at one end on a slightly higher ground, and a double-roomed cook-house at the other end. He had created these for the benefit of visiting *sadhus*. Mataji occupied the bigger cottage, while Gurupriya Didi and the Ashram girls were given the cells. Soldaries (small tents) were provided for the *sadhus* of the Ashram who had remained behind, while some of them continued to stay in Nāradananda Ashram, which was not far off. Besides our little hermitage, there were, further away, other temples and Ashrams built by famous saints, who had resided here in the past. The surroundings were very picturesque. On one side was the winding river with its broad sandy basin, its banks dotted with these Ashrams ; there was a railway bridge at some distance over which trains could be seen, and heard whistling and rattling twice a day. On the other side of our camp there was a small hillock called the *Hanuman Tila*, with a temple on top, containing a huge

image of Hanumān (about 18 feet high) carrying on his shoulders Rāma and Lakshmana, whom he had rescued from *Pātala* (the under-world). This hill was said to be the fort of King Virāta at whose court the *Pāndavas* had resided in disguise during the final year of their exile, which they were required to pass incognito. There are images (rather crude) of the five Pāndavas and Krishna in one small house, and of Draupadi in a separate little hut ; but these are obviously of recent origin. There is a cave with an image of a smiling Hanumān in front, which is said to have a subterranean passage leading from the fort to some distant place. The rest of the hill is wooded and some of the trees seem to be very ancient.

A few people occasionally dropped in to have Mataji's *dars'han*, but on the whole it was a very peaceful fortnight. For the first few days Mataji suffered from acute pain in Her joints. It looked like the result of the strain of the previous fortnight, but I suspect it was due to the troubles of other people She must have tried to lighten. But apart from taking it somewhat easy, Mataji showed no outward signs of what She was suffering, and in fact seemed very relaxed and jolly.

It was on the 6th of November that Mataji moved over from Naradananda Ashram to the Gomati bank. On that day *Akhanda Kīrtan* for twelve hours was arranged at Mataji's instance at Chakra-Tirtha by the *Pandas* of the place. Mataji was present there during the closing hours, when quite a large crowd had gathered.

The first evening Mataji made a tour of inspection

round the camp on the Gomati bank. When She came to our tent, Dr. Panna Lal was in a half-dressed condition and to the amusement of the people following Mataji, he simply prostrated himself before Her in that state. What Mataji noticed was not his scanty clothing, but the lack of a *durrie* (covering) on the floor in the front portion of the tent, which was then promptly supplied. What touched us was the way She looked over everything, the little cells, soldieries and the cook-room, to make sure that everyone was comfortable. She was here truly like the mother of a small household. Throughout the stay we all felt as if we were members of one family. It was so cosy and comforting to sit around Her mornings and evenings on the verandah of Her cottage. At night, when it was cold, some of us had the privilege of sitting inside the cottage near Her during the nightly *bhajans* and the 15 minutes *mauna*. How our silent meditation was helped by Her close proximity! But at other times also one felt Her presence, even when one was nowhere near Her.

Though Mataji had cured me of my habit of smoking, I was still fond of my cup of tea in the morning, which Dr. P.'s bearer faithfully provided regularly. It was a welcome warming up after the cold night and before the dip in the cold waters of the Gomati. The bathing in the river was invigorating and refreshing. After *puja* and breakfast in our tent, Dr. P. and I would wander for about half an hour over the hill or visit the nearby Ashrams and temples. At about 10 A. M. we used to join the very attenuated party for the daily recitation of scriptures on the parapet round a tree between the small huts, which also had a small shrine

of Shiva. After the recitation, the *Bhagavata* used to be read and expounded by Brahmachari Kantibhai. After his departure, Brahmachari Kusum was entrusted with this task. This would finish by 10.30 or 11, when it was time for Mataji to come out on the verandah of Her cottage, where we would gather round Her. One day, when for lack of time Kusumda had omitted the reading of the *Bhāgavata*, the very first question Mataji asked was, whether the *Bhāgavata* had been read. Thus it was made clear that even when She was not present, nothing was hidden from Her. There was another instance of this supernormal perception of Hers. Dr. P. and I, while wandering round, had discovered, at some distance from our camp, another broken down *ghat* and a big tree with a large parapet round it. We thought it would be an ideal place for meditation and decided to sit there every day between 3 and 4 P. M. The very first day, Mataji told us in the evening that She had seen us going with our *āsanas*. Then She went on to say that it was a *tapobhūmi*, a specially favourable place, and that we should do a lot of meditation (खूब तपस्या करो). This was a great encouragement to us.

The conversations that took place on Mataji's verandah every morning and evening were very informal. We all felt instinctively that there was no need to ask questions. Generally Dr. P. reminded Mataji of some incident of Her life, or of a story She had previously told and She would repeat these to us. (I will recount some of the stories later). In addition, Mataji made Dr. P. read to us *Naimisharanya Mahatmya*, a book on *Naimisharanya*, which one of the *pandas* had brought. Dr. P. also expounded the *Nārada Bhakti Sutra*,

which contains not merely very illuminating aphorisms, giving a most delightful exposition of the path of devotion (*bhakti*), but is also a lyrical composition written in very poetical language. Dr. P. after giving his own explanation, would every now and then appeal to Mataji, who added Her illuminating comments.

In the evenings Mataji sometimes walked a little near Her cottage. One evening a flock of birds flew over our heads in formation and Mataji asked Dr. P. how many birds there were in the flock. He quickly answered, 'Thirteen'. The flock wheeled round and again passed over us. Some of the people present tried to count. Some counted twelve and others fourteen. Mataji said, thirteen was right, and asked Dr. P. if he had actually counted them. Dr. P. admitted that he had given a number which just came to his mind. Mataji then told us that She had thought of the number 13 and that sometimes others spoke out Her thought. On another occasion—namely after the *mauna* in Her cottage—She asked what Avadhutaji had said. As She did not indicate to what incident She was referring, we did not know what She meant. She then repeated the question, adding, we had all been there, could no one remember it? Then Kusumda came out with Avadhutaji's remark about कुतर्क (wrong reasoning) and the illustration he had given of how someone had tried to disprove God's greatness by asking: "Can He create something greater than Himself?" and then saying: "If He could, He would no longer be the greatest and if He could not, that also would prove that He was not so great." This was the remark that Mataji was referring to. Perhaps She tries from time

to time to see which one of those round Her is capable of being a receptacle of Her thought-transfers.

Another thing I have realized during this stay was that Mataji like other great prophets and saints, often speaks in parables. She Herself told us the story of a rich man, whom She had advised to 'keep his mouth sweet'. When he met Her again after a year he complained that he had not yet had any experience of God even though he had followed Her advice of always keeping a piece of sugar candy (मिश्री) in his mouth. The only way in which he had benefited was the disappearance of his cough and cold. This man had taken Her literally and not understood that She was asking him to repeat God's name constantly. Another advice Mataji gives is, 'go and sit under a tree'. Here the tree is a symbol of someone who gives solace without making any distinction. What is meant is that one should seek the company of *Māhatmas* or *Sādhus* and, of course, ultimately of God, who drops the fruit automatically into one's lap. She once explained the allegory in the *Gīta*, about this life being an Ashwattha tree with its roots above and branches below (ऊर्ध्वमूलम् अधःशाखम्) by asking, "Is not your head, which is the seat *mūla*), of your consciousness on the top? You get your knowledge through your brain, just as water reaches the tree through its roots and that too not directly, but through the soil." At the end of our stay, when I told Her that I was returning to Bombay, She said, "How long are you going to remain in a *dharamśālā* (caravanserai)? You must now go home". I thought at first that I was being asked to renounce the world at once, but later, in another connection,

She explained that what She meant was that one should not remain attached too long to worldly activities and possessions, but turn one's mind to God, one's real home.

It is well known that Mataji has never been to school to learn Grammer, but She has evolved Her own practical etymology. Her derivations of words are quite unorthodox and yet bring out their meaning in a new way that hits you in the eye. Thus, according to Her, *Viṣaya* (object of sense), is *viṣ hai*, and so She calls it 'slow poison'—one of the English expressions She is fond of using. Similarly She explains *vasana* (desire) as '*vasa na*' where God does not dwell'. She adds : "When you cling to your desires you cannot reach God. Therefore give up those vain passions, which lead you away from God to the realm of death." One day a Brahmachari said to Mataji : "How can we love whom we have never seen ? Therefore we first of all want God to give us a glimpse of Himself." Mataji's reply was that this was *durbuddhi* (literally 'wrong idea') which She defined as *dūr-buddhi*, 'thinking that God is at a distance' and this is what leads to *durgati*, (literally, misfortune, meaning, according to Her, *dūrgati* 'going away from Him instead of realizing Him.' How beautifully this expresses the truth that God is within ourselves ! Ma went on to say that if one could not visualize a particular form of God, one should look upon the letters of the *mantra* itself as representing God. In Sanskrit the word for the letters of the alphabet is *aksara*, which also means 'imperishable' and is in this sense applied to *Parabrahma* in the *Gita*. The term '*mantra*' is ordinarily derived from *mannat trayate*, 'that which protects by

contemplation,' but Ma's derivation is *man tera* 'My mind is Thine—complete surrender !

Occasionally outsiders who came to see Mataji asked questions. A few of those, together with Her answers, may be quoted here. A student wished to know how to find time for *japa* (silent repetition of God's name), without interfering with his studies ; Ma said, "Spend less time in chatting and thus you can save at least ten minutes in the morning and ten in the evening." A man asked 'how to get rid of *kama krodha* (passion and anger)'.

"By repeating God's name".

"Even when one is impure ?"

"Yes. God purifies everything."

One man, who said he was employed in the Railway, wanted to know a simple way of reaching God without having to spend time of *japa*, *dhyāna* (meditation etc.)

Mataji : "Keep *Satsang*, meet saints."

"If even that is not possible ?"

"Then read *Sadgrantha* (good religious books)."

He asked how he was to earn his livelihood if, in pursuit of God, he left his job. Ma said, "God provides." Then She told a story of two friends who tried to test the truth of this belief by meditating in the jungle. After several hours, one of them got hungry and seeing no prospect of food coming to him, went back to town and had a hearty meal there. Then, feeling sorry for his friend, he took some food to him to the jungle where he was still sitting and meditating under a tree. To his taunt that God was not providing any

food for him, the friend replied that God had already sent some through the doubting friend himself.

The gentleman who was questioning Ma continued to express his disbelief and some of us were feeling annoyed at his conceited way of talking, but Mataji gave him *prasād*, spoke sweetly to him and asked him to try.

One old lady wanted to know how to find the Lord. Ma said : 'Do *puja*'. The lady replied, she did not feel interested in *puja* and would rather do *japa*, but found that her mind would not settle down to it. 'Compel your mind,' said Mataji. The lady had come to stay in the camp, and another day asked, which was better *jnana* or *bhakti*, since each was being praised at different times. Narayan Swami replied : 'They go together and one follows the other.' Mataji said : 'Try *bhakti* first', but the woman said जी नहीं लगता (I have no aptitude). Ma said 'Then first practise *Guru bhakti*.' Another day again the lady asked similar questions and from something that Didima said I realized that she was no idle questioner, but an earnest seeker who was finding it difficult to concentrate. Ma advised her to reserve a special place for meditation and to sit there doing *japa* for not less than half an hour at a time ; if she felt sleepy she should refresh her eyes with water. The sweet old lady ultimately said she wanted Mataji's blessing.

Another lady asked : 'What should a person do if she did not understand the *Gita*, *Bhagavata* or the *Puranas* ?'

'She should approach God directly ; pray and repeat God's name.'

‘Is not a Guru necessary?’

‘Yes. A Guru will appear when necessary; in the mean while make God your Guru.’

A man posed the problem: ‘What is better, *par seva* (service to others), or *bhajana*, (singing God’s name)?’

Mataji: ‘It is wrong to look upon service as *par seva*; that only enhances the ego. You must look upon everyone as God, (*Tat*) and thus do only His service.’

‘Should one get up while doing worship, if a person in dire distress wants help?’

‘Look upon the needy person as God and there will be no problem.’

A Police Inspector said he had to beat people in order to detect crimes and asked what he should do about it. Mataji requested me to reply. I said it was wrong to beat. ‘Then how is he to detect the criminal?’ asked Mataji. I said there was a science of criminology, fingerprints and other clues by which crimes were detected in other countries, where the Police did not resort to beating to extort confessions. The Inspector exclaimed it would take many years for our country to progress to that stage. For us there was no other way. He also felt that it was not he who did the beating, but some power within him. Ma said, *अपने कर्मफल तो भोगना ही पड़ता है*, meaning that he could not escape the responsibility for his actions.

On new moon day, when lots of people had come to bathe at the Chakra Tirtha, Mataji told us to go there and see *Bhagavan* (God) in the guise of the crowd. So Dr. Pannalal and I walked to the sacred pool, and looking with the vision suggested by Ma, we were truly touched by the sight of hundreds of men, women and children milling around and bathing. They had come walking, some as far as forty miles. We saw two boys measuring their length by prostrating themselves on the ground and proceeding in this manner towards the pool. Another interesting feature were the *Pandas* (Priests) sitting all around the tank either on small cots or just squatting on the ground with a basket in front of them in which the pilgrims deposited their clothes and belongings. They were given *kush* grass to sprinkle water as offering to God, and on returning after the bathe they placed in the basket as a reward to the priest whatever they had brought, mostly handfuls of grain or vegetables from their own farms. Whenever I shall in future see crowds at holy places, I hope I shall remember not to get annoyed, but to look upon them as manifestations of God.

During the *Samyam Saptah* one gentleman used to ask Mataji if She saw any divine beings in the air. Ma never satisfied this person's curiosity, but those of us who remained behind on the Gomati bank had the privilege of hearing some of her experiences in that sphere. On the night of the 19th November, Ma told us in Her cottage after the *mauna* that immediately after the *kirtan* was over, She first heard a kind of throbbing sound which gradually became louder and turned into a chant—'परमेश, शरणागतं शरणागतम्', and

then gradually faded off. She repeated the tune several times, but unfortunately when, the next night, She asked us to reproduce it, nobody could remember it precisely and She would not sing it again at the time (though afterwards I found that Sri Shobhanda had learnt it and sang it once or twice). It was suggested that the correct words might be शरणगतोऽहम्. Mataji at once agreed to this. She explained that somebody had chanted this hymn in the ancient days, and it had remained in the air.

(To be continued)

PAGES FROM MY DIARY

GURUPRIYA DEVI

(Translated from Bengali)

16th February, 1957.

Last night at about 12-30 p.m., Mataji arrived in Jaipur from Ahmedabad. Swami Paramananda, Buni, Udas, Shobha and a very few others were accompanying Her. A crowd of men and women had collected at the station, eager for Mataji's *darsana*. Mataji was taken to a large *Asrama* of the followers of saint Dadu. It is a fine place with extensive gardens. Sri Haribabaji Maharaj, Sri Krishnananda Avadhutaji and many other Mahatmas have come. They are all putting up at the house of Sri Madan Mohan Verma. He and his wife have known Mataji for many years. The whole family are devotees. Sri Verma was formerly the Registrar of Jaipur University and is now a member of the Rajasthan Service Commission. A pandal which serves as a *satsang* hall has been erected in the compound of his residence. Mr. Verma has made it a point to see in person to the comforts and well-being of all his guests. No one is being put to any inconvenience.

17th February, 1957.

This afternoon Mataji has been taken to the famous Govindaji temple. She wandered all over the place and

inspected everything in detail. The temple is really worth seeing. It is said that when the Govindaji temple at Vrindaban was destroyed during the Mohammedan invasion, the image was brought to Jaipur and installed there.

During the evening gathering, a gentleman asked the following question : "Mataji, from where does *māya* emerge ?"

Mataji replied laughingly : "*Pitaji*, to understand from where *māya* emerges, while one is right in the midst of it, is difficult. Try to realize Him; or, if you have no faith in Him, try to realize your own Self. To know your Self means to know Him, and to find one's Self, to find Him. When you have found your Self, all your problems will be solved."

Question : What is the means to Self-knowledge or Self-realization ?

Mataji : Endeavour to follow the path that the *Guru* indicates. Don't sit idle ! If you have not found a *Guru*, try to sustain the constant flow of any one of God's names that appeals to you most. Don't spend your time just eating, sleeping, and living a humdrum life. Having received the priceless boon of a human birth, do not waste it by keeping your mind occupied with petty thoughts and worries. Rather than remaining in a *dharmasāla*, try to reach your own real home, *Pitaji* !

18th February, 1957.

This morning at 8.45 a. m., Mataji motored to Kuchāman, after a sojourn of three days in Jaipur. The Raja Pratap Singhji of Kuchāman was extremely eager to receive the blessing of Mataji's visit. He came in person to take Mataji to his country and himself drove the car.

Kuchāman is about 90 miles distance from Jaipur. On the way, about 10-12 miles before reaching the border of Kuchāman, Mataji noticed two large forts on a hill. She asked to whom they belonged.

While driving the car, Raja Pratap Singhji related their history. These forts belonged to his ancestors. About 250 years ago, two brothers had a family dispute and one of them left his home. As he wandered on and on, he came to the hill in question, and saw smoke rise up from it. Out of curiosity, he climbed the hill and found an old *Mahatma* there. The *Mahatma* wanted to know why he had come. "In search of bread", was the reply. Wherever he could get a livelihood, there he would settle down. Thereupon the *Mahatmā* told him to live on the hill, in a place with 3 large rocks. In obedience to the *Mahatma's* command, he later built the fort at that very spot. This is how the kingdom of Kuchāman originated.

The old *Mahatma* was known under the name of *Siva-Visvambarnatha Baba*. Even at this time the *Mahatma's* wooden sandals, his staff and other belongings are being pre-

served with great care in the fort. In due course a temple was built there. The *Mahatma's samadhi* (tomb) is within the precincts of the temple.

While thus listening to the history of Kuchāman, we gradually approached the town. At a distance of about 3 miles from the city, Mataji and Sri Haribabaji rested on the border of a lake. From there Mataji and the whole party were taken in procession. Mataji was seated in a profusely decorated car. Closely behind it walked, on the one side, Raja Pratap Singh himself, fanning Mataji with a chowrie. He was attired in his traditional royal uniform. On the other side walked his youngest brother, holding a costly umbrella over Mataji. Thus Mataji was given a really royal welcome. Large posters with "Jai Ma" could be seen at intervals in the city and beautifully decorated gates had been erected in various places. Hundreds of men and women, who stood in lines on both sides of the road, showered flower petals on Mataji and the *Mahatmas*. Over a thousand people followed the procession. With the special permission of the Government, seven gun shots were fired in honour of Mataji. An enormous crowd of people had collected, so that the police could only with difficulty keep the path clear for Mataji's car. In this way we arrived at our destination at about 1. p. m.

Mataji has been accommodated in a large temple in the city, since She will not stay in a Raja's palace. The Rani of Kuchāman, Premaji Devi, has in person seen to all arrangements for Mataji's stay. We have known Premaji for many years. She is an extremely sweet and

simple-hearted person. In spite of having any number of servants at her disposal, she does all of Mataji's work with her own hands and is ever watching for opportunities to be of service to Mataji.

19th February, 1957.

To-day Raja Pratap Singh took Mataji in a palanquin to see the Kuchāman fort. He himself showed Mataji round. There were so many beautiful things to be seen. The decorated inner court is all coloured in gold. The colour still looks so fresh, as if it had just been painted.

The Raja and the Rani have arranged everything for Mataji and Her party with the minutest care. They requested Her and all the *Mahatmas* to remain at *Kuchāman* for at least one week. But Sri Haribabaji had already beforehand fixed a programme at Jodhpur for tomorrow, and so Mataji and Her whole party had to leave this evening at about 9 p. m.

13th March, 1957.

Mataji is at Vrindaban. This morning Sri Bhaktaraj Maharaj, an old *sadhu*, of the Ramakrishna Mission, came for Her *dars'ana*. He talked to Mataji for quite a long time. Before leaving, he bowed down, touching the ground with his forehead, and said to the assembled people: "This time He has come in the shape of a woman. In Her body everyone should recognize his own *Ista*, Our connexion with Mataji has not been newly established, it has existed from birth to birth, throughout eternity."

Raja Pratap Singh of Kuchāman is here. He met Sri Bhaktaraj Maharaj and said to him: "Regard yourself as Mataji's child. She will take everyone across the sea of becoming."

Sri Bhaktarajji is putting up in some *dharamasala* at Vrindaban. In the evening he came again, bringing with him a number of people to witness the performance of the *Rāsalilā* in our Ashram. Sri Bhaktaraj's spirit is wonderful; he is so simple and utterly childlike. For him no difference of creeds and sects exists. How much faith and veneration he has for Mataji!

Today a gentlewoman, named Kasturi Devi, came for Mataji's *dars'ana*. She is a disciple of Sri Kishori Das Babaji of Vrindaban. She related something most interesting.

One night, she was crying in her desperate yearning to win the Lord's Grace. None of her attempts at *sādhana* had brought the desired result. Later in the night, she dreamt of a woman dressed all in white, who was accompanied by a girl wearing the ochre robe. The girl took Kasturi's hand and said: "Why do you cry? Your Lord is here itself. Come with me, quickly!"

She dreamt the same kind of dream on two successive nights. A few days ago, she heard someone say that there was a *Devi* at Vrindaban, called "Sri Anandamayi Ma." Thus she had come for Mataji's *dars'ana* today. Udas* was sitting

*Udas is one of Mataji's attendants, who wears the ochre robe.

The Prophet of Islam and the Ideal of Common humanity

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The basic principle of Islam is a faith in all the prophets of the world. The great and liberal mind that preached not only love and respect for the founders of the great religions of the world but much more than that *faith in them*—could not shrink down to the level of utter intolerance for those very religions. Tolerance is not in fact the word that can sufficiently indicate the breadth of the attitude of Islam to other religions. It preaches equal love for all, equal respect for all, and equal faith in all. Not to compel the unbelievers to accept Islam, for it was against all the broad principles in which they had been hitherto brought up. No, it was to establish religious freedom, to stop all religious persecution, to protect the houses of worship of all religions, mosques among them. Here are a few quotations :

“And had there not been God’s repelling some people by others, there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and any synagogues and mosques in which God’s name is much remembered. (Quran 22 : 40.)

“And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion is only for God”, (2 : 193).

“Every student of Islamic history knows that the Holy Prophet and his companions were subjected to the severest persecutions as Islam began to gain ground in Mecca” (Introduction to the Quran by Muhammad Ali, pp. XVIII & CIX),

So from the first to the last, the Holy Quran allowed fighting only against those who fought the Muslim first : it allowed expressly only fighting in defence without which the Muslims could not live, and it clearly forbade aggressive war.

WAGING OF WAR ON UNBELIEVERS

Again intolerance could not be ascribed to a book which excludes compulsion from the sphere of religion altogether. “There is no compulsion in religion” (II 256) it lays down in the clearest words. In fact, the Holy Quran is full of statements showing that belief in this and that religion is a person’s own concern, and that he is given the choice to adopt one way or another : that if he accepts truth, it is for his own good, and if he sticks to error, it is to his own detriment. A few quotations from the Holy Quran are given below to prove the authenticity of these statements :—

“The truth is from your Lord so let him who please believe and let him who please disbelieve (18 : 29).

“If you do good, you will do good for your own souls : and if you do evil, it shall be for them.”

The Muslims were allowed to fight indeed, but with what object ? To compel them to accept Islam is a myth

pure and simple, a thing unknown to the teachings of the Holy Quran. The conception of God in Islam is the God of all mankind and His favours are not confined to any 'chosen' people. The Muslims are prohibited from running down the deities of non-Muslims. The Holy Quran says :—

“Revile not those whom they call on besides God, lest they in their ignorance spitefully revile Him” (VI : 108).

Every Muslim is enjoined not to make any distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim when he has an opportunity of serving a needy person. The Prophet says in unambiguous language

“The whole world is the family of God. Therefore, he alone is good in His sight who accords kind treatment to all His creatures alike.”

Further the Prophet says :

“Assist any person oppressed, whether Muslim or non-Muslim.”

“Whosoever goes with a tyrant to assist him knowing him to be a tyrant then verily he has gone out of Islam.”

It is not for the Muslim to ignore any one of the great teachers who have long since done their work and retired from this world : he dare not utter a word of disrespect towards them. On the contrary he is bound to show the greatest deference to each one of them (Quran IV. 150-152).

Speaking of the Prophets of the house of Israel, the Quran says, "Says ye, we believe in God, and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the other prophets from their Lord--we make no distinction between any of them ; and to Him we submit (Quran II-136, III-34).

And it is not only to Moses and Jesus and Muhammad that the Muslim owes allegiance, but to all the prophets of all the nations who have appeared in the different ages of the history of mankind. Thus along with a thousand others, Sri Ramachandra, Sri Krishna, Gautama Buddha of India, Zarathushtra of Persia and Confucious of China, have alike a place in the hearts of all the followers of Islam.

CONVERSION IN ISLAM

Forcible and unwilling conversion is repeatedly forbidden in the Quran. On the other hand it inculcates simple preaching through persuasion as the only permissible method for spreading the faith in Islam. The Holy Quran's injunction is as clear as day light. It puts it thus :

"There is no compulsion in faith." (II 256).

"You shall have your religion and I shall have my religion" (CIX : 109).

"And we have not sent thee otherwise than to mankind at large, to announce and to warn." (XXXVI : 27).

“(My) sole (work) is preaching from God and His message” (LXXII : 24).

“Obey God and obey the apostle but if you turn away, yet is our apostle only charged with plain spoken breaching.” (LXIV : 12).

IDEAL OF HUMAN FRATERNITY

In Islam all humanity is one vast brotherhood, with God as their creator and master who looks upon them all as equal.

All the barriers racial and others, raised against it by the self interest of man are destroyed, difference and division merely on the ground of religion are not recognised. Its teachings are directly opposed to sectarianism and are generally based on the broad principle of common humanity. “Be ye all worshippers of God and brothers to one another, like as God has commanded you.” (Sayings of Muhammad, 904, translated by Abul Faz). The service of man and the good humanity constitute pre-eminently the service and worship of God. “All creation”, says the Prophet of Islam.

“In the family of God, and of all creation the most beloved of God is he who does most good to His family.” “God is not merciful to him who is not merciful to men (Sayings 511). “The merciful God is merciful to those who are merciful : be ye then merciful to those who are in earth, so that He who is in heaven may be merciful to you” (Saying, 508).

“Ye shall not believe unless ye love one another”
(Sayings, 194).

“By him in whose hand my life is! No worshipper (truly) believes untill he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” (Ibid, 214).

The essence of religion according to the teachings of Islam, is the service of the *afflicted humanity*.

“Hast thou seen him who calls the religion a lie. That is (the man) who pushes away the orphan, and stirs not up (others) to feed the poor.”

“And woe to those who pray, who of their prayers are unmindful, who make a show, and refuse help to the needy.”
(The Quran CVI).

And what is the duty of man in Islam? “Verily”, says the Quran, God commands justice and the doing of good, and the giving to those of kind (their due): and he *forbids filthy actions* and inequity and transgression.” (Quran XVI 90).

“When one of you sees wrongdoing”, said the Prophet, “let him undo it with his hand: and if he cannot do this, then let him speak against it with his tongue, and if he cannot do this either, then let him abhor it with his heart—and this is the least of faith” (Sayings 235).

“Assist one another in goodness and piety, but assist not one another in sin and enmity: and fear God: verily

God is severe in punishing. And let not the malice of a people provoke you to transgress but act justly—it will be nearer to piety : and fear God : Verily God is informed of what ye do". (The Quran V 2 and 3).

RESPECT OF SENTIMENT

Wanton destruction of life is considered reprehensible :

"There is no moving thing on the earth, nor a bird that flies with its wings, but is a being like you.....to their Lord shall they be gathered. (The Quran VI-33).

"Who kills a sparrow for nothing, it will cry aloud to God on the day of resurrection, saying, O my Lord ! Such—and—such a man killed me for no good. (Sayings, 36).

"Take not things, which have life to shoot (arrows at)." (Sayings, 39).

The Prophet of Islam denounced the heartless act of men who burnt the abode of ants. (Ibid 46, 54).

He forbade the robbing of eggs from the nests of birds. (Ibid 55).

He forbade likewise, the capturing of young birds and distressing the mother-bird and would have them restored to their nests. (Ibid 54 and 55).

The Prophet would go up to any distressed animal, and stroke him and enjoin upon their masterly kindness against oppression and gatigure." (Sayings 53).

Regarding the value of human life the Quran teaches.

Who so kills a being unless it be for another being, or for evil doing in the land, it is as though he killed all mankind, and who so saves one, it is as though he saves all mankind.

In Chapter IV verses 15 and 18 fornication is strictly denounced. Similarly abduction of innocent women, and killing of helpless children are condemned. Once more we are clearly reminded by the Prophet that—

“He who helpeth his fellow creature in the hour of need, and he who helpeth the oppressed, him will God help in the day of Travail. What actions are most excellent? To gladden the heart of a human being, to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful and to remove the wrongs of the injured. Who is the most favoured of God? He from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures.”

MATRI LILA

(JULY 15TH—OCTOBER 15TH, 1961.)

We have to apologize for being unable this time to give the usual detailed account of Mataji's Līlā during the last 3 months. The following is only a brief report of Her movements.

On July 15th Mataji, Didima, Didi and a party of about 20 left Poona for Bangalore, at the invitation of Sri S.R. Das Gupta, the Chief Justice of the High Court in Mysore. Sri Das Gupta is a devotee of many years' standing. He made excellent arrangements and everyone enjoyed a comparatively quiet and restful time in the pleasant climate of Bangalore, surrounded by beautiful gardens full of colourful flowers. Needless to say that many people of Bangalore and Mysore, amongst them high officials, availed themselves of this rare opportunity to have Mataji's *dars'ana* and to listen to Her words.

On July 23, Mataji left for Madras, where She halted for a few hours on Her way to Calcutta. Mrs. Talyarkhan, who had especially come from Tiruvannamalai to welcome Mataji, received Her at the station together with devotees from Madras. Mataji was taken by car to a newly built house where She spent a couple of hours. To the regret of the

South Indian devotees, Mataji had to leave that same evening for Calcutta, where She alighted on the 25th midday, proceeding immediately to the Agarpara Ashram. It goes without saying that, from the moment Mataji arrived at Calcutta until She left for Varanasi on July 31st night, She had an extremely busy time. In fact the crowds that came from great distances, eager for Mataji's *dars'ana*, were often quite unmanageable. On July 27th, Gurupurnima was celebrated in the usual manner from early morning till late at night, with thousands trying to pay homage to Mataji on this auspicious day. During Her sojourn at Agarpara, Mataji visited the residences of several devotees at Calcutta, who arranged for *Kirtan* on these occasions.

From August 1st Mataji remained in Varanasi for a week. On the 8th She motored to Vindhyachal, where She stayed for one night only. Even so, a number of officials and other devotees arrived from Varanasi and Mirzapur for Mataji's *dars'ana* and She talked to them until late at night. On the 9th She proceeded to Allahabad by car. The same night, She boarded from there the train to Delhi where She reached on August 10th. Among the many distinguished visitors at the New Delhi Ashram were Ryhana Tayabji and the famous singer Hirabai Barodkar, not to mention the many Government officials and Ambassadors who come to see Mataji whenever She happens to be in Delhi. Sm. Indira Gandhi, the daughter of the Prime Minister, also paid a number of visits to the Ashram to meet Mataji. On August 20th *Akhanda Nama yajña* (uninterrupted *kirtan* for 24 hours) was performed at the New Delhi Ashram. On August 21st

Mataji left for Vrindaban, to be present at the *Jhulan* celebrations, which were observed in great style. We have on former occasions described in great detail this festival, when night after night Sri Krishna and Radha are placed on decorated swings and worshipped.

The *Jhulan Purnima* (full moon in August) has a special significance for us, being the anniversary of the night, when in 1922 at Bajitpur, Mataji went through the actions of a spiritual initiation. She Herself was the neophyte, the *Guru* and the *mantra* all in one. This marked the beginning of Her play of *sadhana*, when She, in an incredibly short time went through countless *sadhans* and forms of worship, not only Hindu forms, but non-Hindu rites and ceremonies as well. In Her play of a *sadhaka*, the minutest details of each faith were revealed to Her in their true significance. Referring to this period of Her life, Mataji has often declared that the question of *sadhana* did not arise for Her, since there was nothing to be attained. Therefore, what else should it be called but a play ?

On August 27th Mataji left for Hardwar with a very few companions only, while Didima, Didi and the rest of Her party remained in Vrindaban for *Janmastami*. At Hardwar Mataji put up as usual at Baghat House, Kharkhari, where *Janmastami* (Sri Krishna's birthday) was celebrated on September 1st. On September 2nd morning, Mataji motored to Dehradun, where *Nandotsava*, the riotous joy of the cowherds over Sri Krishna's birth, was commemorated with the usual frolics at the Kishenpur Ashram.

On September 4th Mataji boarded the train for Delhi, where She arrived on the 5th morning, when Her party from Vrindaban also joined Mataji. On September 17th, Mataji went to Jaipur for four days. From September 21st to October 7th, Mataji again remained in New Delhi. During that period She accepted special invitations to the Rastrapati Bhavan by the President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, and also to the residence of Sri Jawaharlal Nehru. On October 7th night, She left for Kanpur, where Durga Puja is to be celebrated from 15th—20th October at Swadeshi House, at the invitation of Sri Mangtaram Jaipuria and his son Sitaramji.

The 12th *Samyam Mahavrata* will be observed at Shukhtal, near Muzaffarnagar, from November 9th—15th, followed immediately by the ceremonial reading of the *S'rimad Bhagavata* for 7 days, namely, up to November 22nd. Swami Akhandanandaji of Vrindaban has very kindly agreed to hold the daily discourse in Hindi on the *Bhagavata*.
