

MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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with the divine life and sayings of
Sri Anandamayi Ma

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MATRI-VANI

Man must go out in search of That which is concealed behind the world. He should choose an abode that will make it easy for him to proceed to his true Home.

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The word '*Manus*' (man) itself gives the clue to what man should really be : a being who is self-aware. Even if he has slipped and fallen, is it not his bounden duty to use as a lever the very earth to which he has tumbled, and raise himself up again ? Besides, one does not fall so often. As a man, constant effort is his duty.

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

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Try your utmost never to succumb to anyone's influence. In order to become firm, calm, deeply serious, full of courage, with one's personality wholly intact, pure and holy out of one's strength, one has to be centered in God.

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Force of character is man's great strength. If he uses it in his dealings with the world he will indeed be victorious in most directions.

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Worldly life is no doubt a battle-field. By becoming conscious of one's spiritual wealth one must strive to emerge triumphant from the battle.

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If you do not allow your thoughts to stray from His Lotus feet there is hope of your being saved from all manner of temptations. Man's duty is to awaken to true

humanity and to cast aside his animal propensities; to choose what is excellent and to relinquish the merely pleasurable. Let your mind be like a beautiful flower that may be offered to the Lord in worship.

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To remain calm and at peace under all circumstances is man's duty. To form a bad opinion of a person just because one has heard some gossip about him is wrong. Hostility, condemnation, abusive language, ill-feeling and so forth, even if kept concealed within one's mind, will and must fall back on oneself. Nobody should ever harm himself by harbouring such thoughts and feelings.

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When a tree dies it leaves the seed and another tree springs forth out of the seed. Thus there is the end and also the eternity at the same time. The path of God is endless. The revelation from the mantra (seed) is also eternal. As in a tree no two leaves are exactly identical, no two fruits are exactly similar, death and eternity co-exist. There are endless paths of realization. There is no one save God alone. There is a stage when realization happens effortlessly. The entire universe is one's preaching area. One should preach to others only with guru's orders.

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God is not far away from you, not also apart from you. The longings and desire are all within you. So, try to proceed on the path of self realization. If you still have worldly desires there will be death and re-birth. But you are the scion of immortality, the eternal divinity, the eternal Servant of the Lord. So turn towards Him, turn away from worldly longings back to your own home. This constant coming and going, birth and death entail great suffering and misery. One is redeemed by knowing one's own self.



SIDELIGHTS ON MATAJI'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

—VIJAYANANDA

My intention is not to give an account of the celebrations—this will probably be done by persons who are better qualified for the task than myself; I just want to write about a few points that struck me on those occasions.

1

Many people have noticed and some have even complained that there is apparently no organization to see to the welfare and discipline of the people who take part in the large gatherings around Mother. It looks as if there were no one to direct and no staff to carry out the orders. In fact to a mind trained in the western way it may at times even seem somewhat disorganized. But this is mere appearance, due to viewing the situation superficially. If we observe carefully and with an unbiased mind, we shall soon discover that in reality everything is proceeding as it should, that every person gets what he or she needs; that in spite of the apparent disorder nobody comes to harm, no harsh words can be heard (except, may be, on the rarest occasions); that most people look smiling and contented.

How can this be possible ?

If we look round and watch the actions of our daily life and the ways of Nature, we shall find that there are two different methods of working, that actions can be performed in two different ways : the way of the human mind and that of Nature.

The former has its origin in the intellect, the ego fully conscious of its possibilities. Let us consider for example the building of a house. The plan of construction has been devised by the mind of the architect. Before starting on the building work, every detail has been thought out and calculated : the amount of the various materials needed, their cost, the number of workmen required, etc. The architect's calculations are done with extreme care, for if the house collapsed it would be disastrous.

All this shows the functioning of a power, namely that of the intellect, the ego—conscious of its capacity no doubt, but aware also of its limitations; a power capable of perceiving only its small circumscribed sphere of activity, but not its relation with the universe.

The way of Nature is quite different. Let us take for example the growth of a mango tree. If we go into details we can notice that branches, twigs, leaves and so on are growing without symmetry. There may be a huge branch on the one side and a very small one on the opposite side. Some branches yield an abundance of flowers and fruits, others almost none. Thousands of blossoms fall down that will never bear fruits. Many unripe mangoes are shaken off by the wind; and when finally the fruits have the chance of producing a new tree? Very few indeed—although, this is surely the ultimate aim of the fruit.

In this way a power acts that is conscious of its infinite wealth, of its omnipotence. The apparently irregular growth of the tree puzzles the intellect used to geometrical forms and to symmetry. But the ultimate result is the majestic beauty of a gigantic tree.

The huge waste is the token of a power that has a storehouse of infinite riches at its disposal. In actual fact there is no waste, but only circulation of matter within the oneness of the universe. The flowers and fruits that fall from the tree are not lost. They will enrich the soil and help other plants to grow, or nourish birds and insects. The power that causes the mango tree to grow does not only see this limited part of its functioning, but knows its relation with the Whole.

A higher aspect of that very same power arranges for welfare of the hundreds of people who collect around Mother. It is the power that pervades all beings and moves them from within. This power is aware of the needs of every single individual and knows the measure of his capacity to receive according to the results of his *Karma*. It is conscious of the relationship between all beings and of the Oneness behind the appearance of diversity, whereas the power of the ego sees only the superficial diversity, the splitting up into individuals.

During the last night of Mother's birthday celebrations (or rather in the early morning) at the end of the *Tithi Puja* everyone is allowed to go near Mother to do obeisance and offer flowers or anything else of his choice. This can only be done one by one and as hundreds of people are present it is bound to take a good deal of time. The mind would naturally wish that there should be some efficient organization keeping people in a queue and making them recede by a different way after doing their *pranams*. But in Mother's presence discipline and organization from outside may be out of place and perhaps even harmful, for by it the free play of the Diving Power might be hampered through the rigidity of the human will. In fact on most occasions, without any organization, people walk upto Mother one by one in perfect order and in complete silence, but on one occasion this was not the case.

I was present during that holy night and as every body else, I also tried to approach Mother when the *Puja* was over. On that night Mother usually lies on a couch, absolutely still and to all appearance far removed from bodily consciousness. As soon as She returns to the normal state, offerings and salutations are stopped and Mother is led back to Her room.

I had brought a beautiful bouquet of flowers, intending to offer it to Mother. I tried first to follow one queue, but another one had formed from a different direction. After several unfruitful attempts I at last managed to come near Mother with only three or four people in front of me. But at that moment a few ladies rushed in and we were obliged to stand back. I then reflected that one should after all take things as they came on all occasions and thus remained aloof.

At that very moment Mother sat up. A human semi-circle was formed around Her to protect Her from the crowd. Offerings and salutations had to stop. It looked as if the bouquet I had brought would not fulfil its purpose of existence.

A few minutes later Mother rose. On those occasions it takes some time until She fully recovers body-consciousness and She is led to Her room, supported by several persons. Two human walls are formed on both sides of Her way to enable Her to walk, undisturbed by the intruding crowd. Strangely enough, the spot where I stood aloof was just on Mother's way and between the human walls. Mother advanced, facing exactly in my direction. I deposited the bunch of flowers at Her feet, made obeisance and stepped out of Her way.

When afterwards I mused about this incident, I realized that in that holy night, notwithstanding the dense crowd and the apparent confusion, I had had the chance to present my offerings to Mother in a unique and exceptional way, in fact in precisely the manner that I preferred. Probably many other persons had similar experiences.

2

During that holy night I had the good fortune of being able to observe closely Mother's countenance almost immediately after She got up from the state of absolute stillness. It is well known that during the *Puja* of the last night of the celebrations, She usually lies with Her face covered entirely or almost entirely by Her sari. She appears to have left body-consciousness. I do not know whether any one has until now been able to ascertain whether Her pulse and breathing stop on those occasions. The reverence we all feel for Mother, keeps us from attempting such investigations. But even if pulse and breathing are not completely suspended, they must at any rate most likely be almost imperceptible.

