

Just as there is a veil of ignorance for the individual,
So there is also a door to Knowledge.

N.6.

VOL 15 NO 6

Mātri Vāni

Without God, where are you ? That glimpse does occur
in some form, in some condition or other.

★ ★ ★ ★

Although lacking nothing that the world can provide—
is there peace ? Your true being is Knowledge, Peace—so
long as you do not find if there can be no peace. It is the
nature of the world to keep the sense of want burning. From
the world you receive the things of the world—never supreme
Peace. Therefore the awakening of your true nature is impe-
rative. You cannot remain in the realm of want.

★ ★ ★ ★

Is peace possible in the domain of want ? Ever new
desires will arise. Sense objects that only generate poison,*
never give real peace. Caught in the round of coming and
going, can one be at peace ? As long as there are two, there
will be sorrow. Duality breeds conflict, pain. Sorrow arises
from want. So long as you are not established in your true
being you cannot possibly be at peace.

★ ★ ★ ★

Everyone must strive after the revelation of Eternal
Truth. Endeavour to go to your own home. To live in ano-
ther's house, in the company of another causes conflict and

* A play upon words : *Vishay* sense object; *vish hai* is poison.

suffering—that is to say, where two are there is darkness : darkness signifies ignorance.

* * * *

Action is subject to one's own free will—and yet again it is not. What does "subject to one's own free will" signify? His Will alone is Will. The will by which you carry out your work, this very same will must be applied to the contemplation of God. Then only will you discover the Great Will. What is needed is the Supreme Will that takes one beyond willing and not willing.

* * * *

*Prārabdha karma** exists. But there is also a state of achievement which is beyond *prārabdha*, where the question of capacity and incapacity does not occur. When the flood comes, it washes away everything.

* * * *

Having made contact with a great spiritual being (*Mahāpurush*) there can be no more downfall. To go near fire without being affected by its heat is impossible. Those who cultivate the company of a *Mahātmā*, do so in order to be liberated from the round of birth and death. The question of birth and death does not even arise anymore. If there is birth there will be death and if there is death there will be rebirth.

* *Prārabdha karma* That portion of one's past actions which is bound to fructify and cannot be averted.

Conversations with Sri Anandamayi Ma

RECORDED BY PROF. B. GANGULY

(Translated from Bengali)

Question : Can man become absorbed in the worship and contemplation of God with every part of his entire being ?

Mataji (addressing Narayan Swami) : Where is the seat of the mind ?

Narayan Swami : The physical mind is in the heart. But the mind is also subtle. The mind is invisible.

Mataji : So long as one moves in the kingdom of the mind, whatever one may say is all right.

Narayan Swami : Names, forms, the world, are all illusory. If Reality is to be found one needs something imperishable. In order to do *sādhanā*, a special subtle body has to be created.

Mataji : The subtle body that is capable of doing *sādhanā* is created during *dīkṣā* (initiation), at the time when the Guru transmits power to the disciple. "My whole being cries for Him whose whole being is mine" says Rādhā. Real *sādhanā* is practised with every part of one's whole being simultaneously.

Saswatananda Swami : When all the different parts of one's being have been made still, then there is worship. After the whole body has been fixed, *sādhanā* can be performed, this is what the Upanishads teach us. Those whose mind dwells on the body, by stilling the body, can concentrate the mind on God.

Mataji : What do you take from the Ganges ?

Narayan Swami : *Brahmavāri*.*

* *Brahmavāri* is another name for *Ganājal Ganges water*.

Mataji : In that water one becomes immersed. *Brahma-vāri* gives liberation. Who says all this ? Thus, can any part of one's being be omitted ?

Saswatananda Swami : The ideal is to go beyond mind, intelligence and Iness. Few are capable of this. The average aspirant's duty is therefore to practise *sādhana* with all the parts of his being.

Narayan Swami : The differences between *svajāti*, *vijāti* and *svagata* are vedantic. In the Brahman there is no distinction whatever.

Mataji : Once, on receiving cardamoms as *prasāda*, Swami Akhandananda asked : "What is this ?" This body replied : "Brahman." Cardamoms, their seeds, their husks—should they not be called "Brahman ?"

Narayan Swami : Ma once said, one who has realized the Brahman does not see many, he sees one.

Mataji : If someone is established in that state then, in cardomoms, here, there, in this and that, in achievement and non-achievement, in the individual, the world, the *sādhaka*, and so on and so forth—wherever these may be, in whatever state or condition, there itself he sees the One. Realizing the Brahman, the one Self, there is THAT and nothing else, there is no second. There, what I say and what I hear is He in that shape. One Brahman without a second. Manifestation and non-manifestation, within, without, are that one Brahman. If one's doctrine is that there is only one Brahman, then there can be no question of being able or unable to do anything. Thus : One's whole being with all its various parts can be applied to one's *sādhana*. Where questions arise, there, whatever may be said is all right; everything is possible. Theory and practice are forms of Him. You alone are and none else. Understanding† (standing under)

† A play upon words : *Bhoja* means both burden and understanding.

means exchanging one burden for another. One must go beyond understanding, in other words beyond intelligence. By understanding with the mind nothing will get straight. He Himself is present in this form. Wherever a man is, there is Siva, and wherever a woman there is Gouri. You are your own manifestation and within yourself you are indeed unmanifested. In this misery His play goes on—He Himself the *līlā*.

Whoever speaks, what he says and to whom, all is indeed the Brahman. There is no contradiction. Everything is true. In division there is the one Brahman, and in non-division also He Himself, you. *Brahmamaya*, *Brahmamayī*, *Brahmgopal**, everything is right, nothing is excluded. There is one *Ātmā*. If a problem arises, then also.

Question : A mother does everything for her baby. Ma, you also do everything for us, please !

Mataji (laughing) : Clever baby ! Trying to teach the mother ! If you become a real child you will entirely depend on the mother and let her do as she pleases. So long as you are not truly childlike, go on doing. Tread the path to the revelation of Him.

* *Brahmamaya* Pervaded by the Brahman stands for the Vedantic doctrine, *Brahmamayī*, the all pervading *Śakti*, for Tantra, and *Brahmgopal* is spoken of by the *Vaiṣṇavas*.

Mātri Satsang

Recorded by Swami Bhagavananda Giri

(Translated from Hindi)

Prayag, Ardha Kumbh Mela, January 1st, 1943.

Question : If I go to Europe, should I not eat meat and fish ? If it seems necessary, then also not ?

Mataji : If you believe that it will help you towards God-realization you may eat it.

The Questioner :—I fail to understand what you mean.

Mataji : What you do and how you do it determines the result you get. If you are not used to taking meat and fish, do not take it. If foreigners eat meat, let them do so. When the climate of a country makes meat diet advisable and its inhabitants take to it because they have been born and bred there, they are doing well. There is no objection so far as they are concerned. But you should abide by your own rules. Have there not been great men in the countries where meat and fish is eaten ? Whatever food and drink helps you in your search of God, of that you should partake. When you travel abroad, it does not mean that you are bound to adopt a non-vegetarian diet. If God's devotees visit foreign countries, there also they offer their food to God before eating it. Those who, going abroad, start taking meat and fish, do it out of greediness, to please their tongue.

While this discussion was going on, Swami Sharana-nandaji arrived. With great reverence he was offered an *āsana* and sat down.

Question : While walking about, is it not necessary to take care that no ant or other little creature be trodden on ?

Mataji : To feel this way is very good indeed. Still better will it be to remember that all creatures are manifes-

tations of God. If any living being is crushed under one's foot, one should do obedience to it as a form of God.

Mataji : (turning to Swami Sharananandaji) :

Pitaji, now you say something !

Swami S. : (with the voice of a child) : Ma, Ma, Ma !

Mataji : *Pitaji*, this little girl says : Namō Narayana, namō Narayana, namō Narayana !

Swami S. : People who abstain from meat are called vegetarians. What really matters, is one's attitude of mind. Someone may not eat meat, but devour human beings. Great rulers start a world-war—is there no violence in this ? From one point of view, even to pluck a flower is an act of violence. On the other hand, people join Parliament or the Legislative Assembly and make laws by which millions of men are annihilated. What sort of non-violence is this ? One should discriminate carefully between what is beneficial and what harmful. What does beneficial signify ? You may be a general in a righteous war and put to death thousands of people without incurring sin. Yet, if out of selfishness or for pleasure you kill one little ant, there is violence in this. The man who earns money for his livelihood commits violence; the one who subsists on whatever is given to him is non-violent. From violence men gradually move towards non-violence. Someone who is really non-violent loses his pride and self-conceit. Vegetarian diet is preferable to non-vegetarian. In polar regions, where there is always ice and snow, people are forced to take fish since no other eatables are available. One should reduce grains and eat more vegetables.

Question : Milk is also a form of blood.

Mataji : One may tend cattle and drink cow's milk. One should not take milk without doing service to the cow. Drinking milk does not involve violence.

Questioner :—Violence is a very great sin.

Mataji : Great sinners are those who regard their body as their real self. *Pitaji* (Swami S.) quite rightly said that man harms himself.

Swami S. : If *Mataji* tells you not to indulge in violence you should obey her. But if the desire to hurt someone remains in your heart, it is not right. If you say : "If *Ma* tells me to be violent, I shall be", this is certainly wrong.

Dr. Pannalal : It is mostly sick people who come to *Mataji*.

Swami S. : After being cured they also come to her.

Mataji : This is a nice thing to say ! This body is your small child and so you affectionately address her as "Ma."

Swami S. : Those who are not good people, will not go near saints and sages. Those who seek the company of the holy and wise are good and sound people—otherwise, why should they come here ?

Mataji : When someone harbours a fault in his character he feels afraid. Faults must be destroyed from their root. When error and delusion are completely destroyed then Truth will shine forth.

Dr. Pannalal : We do not consider a fault to be a fault. When we come to *Ma* once by mistake, we, by mistake, come again and again to her.

Swami S. : When the moth flies to the light it is burnt to death; and yet, no sooner does it see light than it hurries towards it.

Mataji : *Pitaji* knows everything. This body is only a little child—what does it know.

Dr. P. : *Mataji* wants to call us all to herself.

Someone : We are all hungry.

Mataji : This is excellent. When the child is engrossed in his play, the mother calls him. At times she also

slaps him. If he is dirty she washes him and takes him on her lap. The mother knows that the child will get ill if he remains dirty. She will certainly remove all impurity from her child. The child likes to wallow in filth but the mother lifts him out of it and scrubs him clean.

Question : We can neither free ourselves from our worldly ties nor do we love God; so, what will be our lot ?

Mataji : Remaining in the jungle, one has to clear it. Start clearing from where you are. By lighting a small fire the jungle will be burnt up. By coming to the Guru everything is achieved. If the disciple is patient and alert everything becomes possible.

Question : At times the mother leaves the child to himself and then again she plays with him full of affection.

Mataji : This is indeed God's play. All that you perceive is nothing but God's play. Turn your gaze towards yourself. Who are you ? I am one and I am also many. He stages the play with Himself alone.

Someone : It looks as if God has invented such a play in order to bind us all.

Mataji : Everywhere only God's play is being enacted. This should be your attitude of mind. You are yourself the One and you yourself are the uncounted many. Try to find yourself ! Seen from another angle of vision : "Lord, you are whole and I am a part of you. You are the Master, I the servant." Try to know yourself. "Who am I ? Where am I ?" Try to realise first the part and then you will be able to find the whole — the *Parmātmā*. Without knowing yourself, how will you find God ? What is to happen the next moment, whether you are aware of it or not, leave it to God's Will. Decide to follow Truth. When one resolves to follow Truth, this sometimes bears fruit. To speak of God is the only real talk, all the rest is vain and futile babble. Where Ram is there is rest and ease ; where Ram is not there is restlessness and disease. (Mataji starts

laughing heartily and everybody present joins in). Once upon a time sin asked God : "Lord, you have assigned their rightful places to all creatures. Please, tell me also where to dwell !" The Lord said : "Where God's name is not, there is your place !"

Question : How can one sustain the remembrance of God throughout the twenty-four hours ?

Mataji : By practice. By constant practice anything at all can be accomplished. Those who meditate, whether their mind is able to concentrate or not, they continue their meditation. Whether you like to do *japa* or not try to adhere to the practice of it all the same. Make an effort to let your mind be filled with God's name at all times. Be it at home or anywhere else, remember that nothing exists outside of God. The idea of duality is itself sorrow. Feel that you are an instrument in God's hand. To do what God makes one do is best. Truly, God alone is the manager of the whole world.

Question : Why do we fail to remember God's name ?

Mataji : You forget to remember God's name and this is why you do not find God. Always bear in mind that whatever happens in this world happens according to His Will. Everything is indeed God's. While in the waking state sustain the constant remembrance of Him. Do good works. Pray. One should practise the repetition of God's name, prayer and austerities. At night before falling asleep, think over everything good and bad you have done during the day. With a prayerful attitude of mind dedicate all your actions at the lotus feet of the Lord. Ever pray to God to bless you with the spirit of dedication. Do not think : "It does not matter if I do anything blameworthy, I shall ask God to forgive me." On the contrary, you should endeavour to engage only in the most commendable, praiseworthy deeds. You must never even give a thought to any bad or reprehensible work. Pray—surrender yourself totally at the lotus feet of God.

Question: Should office-work, business and the like also be dedicated at the Lord's lotus feet ?

Mataji: Endeavour to do all work in a spirit of dedication. The attempt to surrender, and surrender coming about effortlessly are two very different things. Just as doing *japa*, and *japa* occurring spontaneously, are not at all identical. By the constant practice of surrender, surrender will finally come about.

Question: Why is the mind unsteady even after taking *sannyāsa* ?

Mataji: Your indifference to worldly enjoyment is not yet mature, that is why ! Spend every bit of your energy and strength in the attempt to realize God. Whatever God does, He does it very well. Having been blessed with a human body, use this body to attain to God-realization. Try your utmost and you will surely be successful. Many people, while advancing are in the habit of looking back. Do not again and again turn your attention to the past, for this will arrest the speed of your progress. Go on with your work and do not keep on looking for results. Neither should you repeatedly beg from God. The fruit of your labours you will reap without a doubt. If you meditate with one-pointedness, God will certainly be revealed to you. Employ your mental powers and the power of you ego in the performance of *sādhana*. Quickly, quickly engage in spiritual exercises—light will come to you. Do not worry about the fruit of your endeavours. Just as when cooking dal, if you keep on stirring it, it will be spoiled. You must give the dal time to get boiled. Burn your desires by discrimination and dispassion or else melt them by devotion. Do one of the two !

Question: Which is the better of those two ?

Mataji: It depends on what suits each particular person. What is consumed by discrimination and dispassion can also be melted by devotion.

Question : This brother does not want to either burn or melt. What is to be done ?

Matiji : He who says he does not want, really does want. It is man's nature to want. Why do you get caught in bondage ? By bondage your want will not be appeased.

Questioner : Whatever pleases God most, that should be done.

Matiji : That's right. You ask God for something and you receive it. Obtaining some thing you get nowhere. God is whole, indivisible. If you want to beg from God, beg for complete Realization. For the Realization of THAT which is whole, unbroken, you must make a complete, uninterrupted effort. What does Enlightenment mean ? Real Enlightenment is the realization of God. Sorrow and suffering are where the vision of God is not.

Vedantic Conception of Mind

DR. I. K. TAIMNI

A tremendous amount of research material about the nature of mind and its working has been collected by modern psychologists and loosely incorporated in the so-called science of psychology. Much of this knowledge is concerned with the expression of the lower concrete mind through the human brain and the behaviour of human beings under ordinary and extraordinary conditions. Although it throws some light on the working of the human mind and has been utilized for solving some superficial problems of human life it suffers from the fundamental defect that it is based upon a very partial and hazy idea of the mind itself. This is due mainly to the superficial approach of modern psychology which tries to study mind only in its physical expression and through physical instruments. As mind is an independent principle and can be expressed through the physical brain only very partially and imperfectly, it has necessarily to be studied and investigated by mental methods if we are to know its real nature and the tremendous potentialities and realities which lie hidden within it. It is only Yoga which has studied and investigated mind systematically in this manner and therefore it is only yogic psychology that gives correct and reliable knowledge with regard to the nature of mind and the methods by which it can be controlled, purified and investigated.

From a critical and careful study of the *Yoga-Sutrās* of Patanjali one can piece together the elements of yogic psychology and gain some comprehension of the real nature of mind and its function in the manifested universe. This yogic psychology is really an integral part of the philosophy of Occultism which is based upon the experiences of the highest Adepts of Occultism and gives us a total view of the

universe both in its visible and invisible aspects. But we shall not attempt to consider here the nature of mind and its working as it appears from a study of the *Yoga-Sutrās*. We shall consider the vedantic conception of mind instead. This conception, though not fundamentally different from that of Yoga, formulates the essential facts which are involved in a different and simpler manner and enables us to understand the nature of mind more clearly. It also enables us to apply our knowledge in observing and controlling the mind in meditation more easily.

According to the vedantic conception, mind has four aspects, all of which are involved in its working under different conditions. These four aspects are called *chitta*, *mana buddhi* and *ahamkāra*. Let us see what is the significance of these four well-known Sanskrit words in this context and what light they throw on the anatomy of mind. We shall try to understand these things at the lowest level and in the simplest terms so that we can correlate our knowledge with our ordinary experiences and also apply it if necessary to the difficult task of inhibiting the modifications of the mind.

Chitta may be considered as the image making faculty of the mind. In its higher aspects the content of the mind, at any moment, can be anything which occupies the field of consciousness and is called *pratyaya* in yogic terminology. But it is better to consider this content as a mental image for our present purpose. Our ordinary thinking is done through mental images and the mind is really never free from such mental images. Even when we are engaged in abstract thinking, as in mathematical deduction, these mental images are always present in the background and continue to change with the processes of thinking. They are not really essential for pure abstract thinking but somehow the ordinary man working through the lower concrete mind will find it impossible to eliminate them altogether and do his thinking without them. This aspect of the mind which

enables it to form these mental images either through direct contact with objects or through memory or imagination is called *chitta*.

It is necessary to note here that in vedantic terminology, mind in its total aspect is called *antahkaraṇa* and this word therefore means practically the same thing as *chitta* in yogic terminology. It is also necessary to remember that the *pratyayas* of the subtler planes cannot be imagined on the physical plane because they involve higher numbers of dimensions. That is why in books dealing with Yoga no attempt is made to describe the phenomena of the subtler worlds. We can deal only with general principles according to which the mind functions on those planes and cannot comprehend the *pratyāyas* which occupy the field of consciousness at different levels.

Mana is that aspect of the mind which underlies the succession of mental images. A continuous stream of mental images is passing through the mind of every individual and no two images in two successive moments are exactly the same. Even when they appear to be the same as in *Ekāgratā Parināma* (*Yoga-Sutrās* III-12) they are not really the same. The fixity of mental image under these conditions is due to the reproduction of exactly similar images. That aspect of mind which has to do with the relentless succession and change of these mental images is called *mana*.

Buddhi is the light of consciousness which illuminates the mental images present in the mind. Mind in this system is considered to be *jaḍa* or insentient and it is only when it is illuminated by the light of consciousness that these mental images acquire meaning and significance. That is why mind is symbolized by the moon which shines by reflected light and the *Atmā* by the sun which shines by its own light. It should be noted that the word *buddhi* is used here in a somewhat different sense, as the illuminating light of Consciousness behind the mental images, and not in the sense of

viveka or the faculty of discrimination. But on deeper thought the two functions will be seen to be essentially the same, *viveka* being merely perception working at a deeper level and so seeing the deeper significance of things.

Ahaṁkāra is the egoic centre from which the light of consciousness which illuminates the mind is projected. We generally refer to it as the 'I', the pivot round which our mental life revolves. *Ahaṁkāra* is generally associated in the mind of the common man with egotism or pride but this is not its real meaning in philosophy. If we examine our mental life we find that all our mental images and experiences centre round an egoic centre which relates and coordinates them into a harmonious and integrated whole. Without such a centre of consciousness there could be no meaningful and continuous mental life. All our mental images and experiences will remain scattered in a haphazard manner with nothing to bind them together into an integrated individuality. It is true that the contents of this individuality change constantly but the 'I' which binds together the memories, experiences and anticipations etc. always remains. It is this 'I', rooted in the centre of our consciousness, which illuminates our mental images and coordinates our experiences, which is called *ahaṁkāra* in Hindu philosophy. Behind this centre is the whole of Reality existing in layer after layer of unimaginable splendour.

It is necessary for the student to understand clearly the nature of *ahaṁkāra* and its real function in our mental life. It is really the centre of individualized consciousness, the very basis of our life as a separate individual. It is through this individualized centre that the Universal Spirit or *Paramātmā* expresses Itself as an individual Spirit or *Atmā*, or *Puruṣa* as He is called in yogic terminology. This dual character of *ahaṁkāra* must be kept in mind if we are to grasp its essential nature and not to confuse it with its lowest and frequently undesirable expressions in the form

of pride, selfishness etc. On the one hand it constricts and limits the unbounded and infinite Reality which exists in its background, and on the other, it provides the very basis for the life of the Monad as a separate individual. If there were no *ahamkāra* or 'I' ness of the subtlest kind there would be no Monad or individual Spirit.

If we examine our mental life and analyse our mental operations we shall be surprised to find that these four aspects of mind—*chitta*, *mana*, *buddhi* and *ahamkāra* are present in every mental expression and the vedantic conception of mind is correct at least as far as our ordinary experiences are concerned. We are always dealing with mental images in our mind. These images are changing continuously. It is the light of our own consciousness in the form of awareness which illuminates these ever-changing images and imparts meaning and significance to them. All these mental images which constitute the basis of our experiences are centred in and are coordinated by our 'I', the centre of our individuality. This is the anatomy of our mind in a nutshell.

Our mental life can be compared to the projection of a cinematographic picture on a screen. Let us note briefly the correspondences between the different aspects of the mind referred to above and their counterparts in cinematographic projection. We see that in both cases we are perceiving images, mental images in our mind on the one hand and photographic images on the screen on the other. In both cases there is succession of images, each successive image being different from the previous one and separated from it by a gap. But the succession is so rapid that it gives an illusory impression of continuity and smooth life-like movements. In both cases the images are illuminated by an external source of light, by the light of consciousness in the case of the mind and the light within the projector in the case of a cinematographic screen. In both cases the images are projected from a centre, the centre of egoism in