

Mahamahopadhyay Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj

## **In Memoriam**

**Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Gopinath Kaviraj  
M. A., D. Litt. Padma Vibhusana**

**[ September 7th, 1887—June 12th, 1976 ]**

On June 12th, at 5<sup>30</sup> p. m., the world has lost one of the greatest men of our century. There have no doubt been remarkable saint-scholars in the past as well as in modern times, but the universality of Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj's vision and learning remains unique. It is no exaggeration to say that he was a living encyclopedia of all religions and philosophies, ancient and modern, eastern and western. One of the most eminent Sanskrit scholars, he was well versed not only in several Indian languages but also in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish, which enabled him to make a thorough study of the literature of the world. His momentous interpretations of the Agamas, Tantras and Yogasutras have illumined the minds of earnest seekers all over the globe. To mention only a very few of his great books: "Bharatiya Sādhana and Sanskriti", "Tantra Sahitya", in Hindi and Bengali, "Memoirs" in English and Bengali.

With all this profound and prodigious learning he combined a childlike simplicity, all-embracing loving-kindness, incredible humility. His vision and personality were those of our ancient Rishis. His life, totally dedicated to sādhana and service, will remain a source of inspiration for generations to come.

Born on September 7th, 1887 in a village in Mymensingh, East Bengal he graduated from Dacca University and went for post-graduate studies to Jaipur. A brilliant student from the very start, he often surpassed his teachers. In 1914 he became the Librarian of the Varanasi "Saraswati Bhavan Library", a veritable treasure-trove of ancient Sanskrit manuscripts. In 1928 he was appointed Principal of the Govt. Sanskrit College, Varanasi, but resigned in 1937 in order to devote himself wholly to his spiritual pursuits. He chose Varanasi, the spiritual capital of India, for the venue of his sādhana and refused lucrative positions, offered to him by the Calcutta and Lucknow Universities. He also turned down a proposal to become the first Vice-Chancellor of the Varanasi Sanskrit University. He was a disciple of the famous Swami Vishuddhananda, known as "Gandha Baba." His house in Sigra, Varanasi where he lived for many years, became a place of pilgrimage for scholars and seekers after Truth hailing from all countries, for research students of philosophy, for persons in need of spiritual advice.

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The Viswabharati University, Santiniketan honoured him by the highest distinction and the Government of India by "Padma Vibhusan" and a number of other awards.

In his domestic life he was subjected to severe blows of fate. His only son died young, leaving behind a widow and three children, his only daughter is a widow. His wife became blind a few years before she passed away in 1959. He bore all these trials and tribulations with faith and fortitude.

He had his first *darśana* of Mataji in 1928 at Varanasi and was at once indelibly impressed and irresistibly attracted. Subsequently he came in ever closer touch with Her. Whenever Mataji stayed in Varanasi, he used to visit Her regularly and had countless private and semiprivate sittings with Her for hours on end. On occasions he accompanied Her to other places such as Vin-dhyachal, Dunga, Dehradun, Almora. In 1961, Mataji Herself took him to Bombay and made the best possible arrangements when he underwent an operation for cancer of the rectum at the Tata Memorial Institute. She then took him to Poona to convalesce. After his next serious illness in 1968, for which he was treated at the hospital of the Benaras Hindu University, Mataji asked him

to stay in our Varanasi Ashram where he remained under Her special care for the rest of his days. He was kept under the constant medical supervision of Dr. U. N. Mathur of the Anandamayee Seva Hospital and lately also of the Medical Superintendent of this hospital, Commander Dr. Chatterji. During the last several months his health gradually deteriorated. Every possible device was employed to prolong his precious life. When, a few days before the end, he had to be transferred to our hospital, the best doctors of the city were also called for consultation. He was 89 years old when he breathed his last.

His body was taken in a decorated van in solemn procession first to his house at Sigra and then to '*Charan Pāduka*', a special part of the Manikarnika Ghat, which is reserved for very distinguished personalities only. It so came about that the cremation fire was lit exactly at midnight which had been the hour of his chief meditation ( *Mahanisha\* Dhyāna* ) throughout his life.

After Bhaiji, it was Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj who took the initiative of acquainting the world with Mataji's divine life and teaching. The Forewords he wrote, in Bengali to Gurupriya Devi's "*Ma Anandamayi*" and in English to "*Matri Vani*," as well as his Introduction to '*Mother as Seen*

by Her Devotees" ( a book compiled by him ) bear witness to his profound understanding of Mataji's true being and to his boundless veneration for Her. He was indeed the dynamic force behind the publications of the Anandamayee Sangha. We owe him an immense debt of gratitude for the guidance and help he extended to us unstintingly for many years.

He may well be called the father of this journal. It was he who named it "Ānanda Vārtā." He actually was its Editor-in-Chief. He chose the conversations with Ma to be published and himself wrote elaborate commentaries on Mataji's sayings, calling them "Amar Vani" ( Immortal Words ). They subsequently appeared in book form together with his commentaries, in Bengali, Hindi and Gujarati.<sup>1</sup> ) As long as his health permitted he contributed an article in Bengali that was translated also into Hindi, to every single issue of the quarterly. For several years no article was included in "Ānanda Vārtā" in any of its three languages without his approval. If the English translation of Mataji's words does justice to the original, it is solely the merit of this great seer and savant. Not only did he check and correct every passage, he also for years took infinite trouble to train the

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1. The English translation ( without his commentaries ) bears the title "Words of Sri Anandamayi Ma."



translator so effectively that the standard could be kept up when his help was not available anymore.

We find no words to express our profound grief over the departure of this wonderful and irreplaceable human being. The heritage of the illuminating writings he has left us and the example of his immaculate life of dedication to the Divine, will inspire seekers after Truth for ages to come.

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*“What is really needed is to feel that She (Ma Anandamayi) is Mother and we are Her children and that as mere children we cannot be expected to know Her as She is but only as She shows Herself to us in response to our crayings. It really becomes us to behave as infants crying out in the night and invoking Mother with an inarticulate language for Her actual descent and benediction.”*

Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj



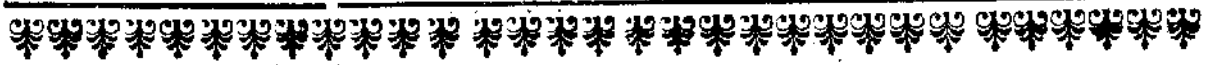
# Ānanda Vārtā



Vol. XXIII ]

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[ No. 3



*The One who is the Eternal, the Atman,  
He Himself is the pilgrim on the path of Immortality,  
He is all in all, He alone is.*

## Mātri Vāni

Within the realm of birth and death (*samsāra*)—the world of individuals (*jivā-jagat*)—many human beings have indeed to undergo all kinds of suffering. Yet, all this is but God's dispensation—part of His play. Try to remember : "It is He Who has come in these various shapes and guises." Pray : "Grant me patience, endurance." If

the mind ever abides in the atmosphere of the Divine the path to Self-realization becomes easy. Work with your hands, do japa in your mind and speak only when necessary.

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To the limit of your power try to keep your heart and mind plunged in japa and meditation. Body and mind should as much as ever possible be kept in an atmosphere of Reality ( *satparivesh* ), engrossed in actions directed towards Truth ( *satkriyā* ). A traveller must forge ahead with great velocity to accomplish his pilgrimage. Whether you feel inclined or not, constantly sustain japa or meditation or remembrance ( of God ).

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Do what the Lord makes you do. At an auspicious moment He will surely shower His grace on you. With single-minded devotion remain pledged to your spiritual practice. Often the Guru prescribes some *kriyā* (spiritual exercise) to make the disciple competent. Vigilantly look out for the auspicious moment. To receive the touch that will direct you Godward is obviously your aim. So long as no response is felt, continue your own efforts so as to become worthy and to receive a response.

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Those who are intent on real and lasting intoxication do not require artificial intoxicants. Indulging in false things will only increase falsity for everything is indeed in-

finite. Those who desire the truly genuine Thing proceed of themselves with great intensity so as to advance in their sādhana.

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The Ātmā of this body (Mā) is everybody's Ātmā—that somebody is not Ma's very own is impossible.

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In order that the lives of aspirants who are here (in the Ashram) for the realization of God or Truth, may become well regulated and ideal ; if anyone wishes to present them with clothes, money or other goods, they should straight-away tell him : "We are forbidden to accept anything in this manner, the aim of our lives being to receive solely God's *prasāda* and nothing else."

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Karma, accumulated for ages and ages, sins and desires, are wiped out by God's sacred name. Just as lighting a lamp illumines a cave that has been in darkness for centuries, even so the gloom of numberless births is annihilated by the power of a divine name.

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# Mātri Satsang

( II )

( Translated from Bengali )

Swami Bhagavatananda Giri

New Delhi, November 26th, 1955.

In course of conversation Mataji pointed towards all present and said : "Everyone who has come here is my father or mother. Sometimes this little girl asks you to try and practise *Samyam* (self-restraint) for eight days or at least for one day a month. The idea of observing such a week of collective *Samyam Vrata* first occurred to Jogibhai (Sri Durga Singh, Raja of Solan, M. P.). He felt that once a year at least a *Samyam Saptah* should be held. Since then the *Samyam Mahavrata* has become a regular yearly function."

*Question* : One of the Mahātmās said that it is not necessary to restrain the mind in order to achieve *dhyāna*, *dhāraṇa* and *samādhi*.<sup>1</sup> Others declare that the mind should be restrained. Which is correct ?

*Mataji* : *Bābā*<sup>2</sup> has said it is not necessary to restrain the mind. Thou alone art manifest in every shape

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1. Retention of the object of contemplation before the mind's eye is called *dhāraṇa*, when the stream of attention is broken up (like drops of water). When the stream is constant (like the flowing of oil), it is called *dhyāna*. When the distinction between the meditator and the object of meditation ceases to exist, it is called *samādhi*.

2. *Bābā* Father.

and appearance. Each person has a different path. What *Bābā* has said is correct. A mother gives to each child what he is able to digest. (Mataji laughs while saying :) Have I made myself clear? The mother says to the child: "Whatever you are capable of assimilating that exactly I have given you." The mind is like a child. Give it pure food, i.e. *satsang*. This is why *Bābā* has said: "Do not restrain the mind-child."

*Swatantranandaji*: Just as a child crawls to his mother and does not listen even if he is forbidden to do so.

*Mataji*: Where does he go? Watch attentively. Does your statement hold good? The mother doles out food in accordance with the child's capacity for digestion.

*Question*: Śivāji burnt *Madan*<sup>1)</sup> to ashes, while Sri Krishna vanquished him by bringing him under his control. Which is the correct method?

*Mataji*: Both methods are correct. After all, they are merely methods; so you have yourself stated. There are as many paths as there are sages. Every sect advocates a different path. All this I have heard from your lips. The path indicated by one's own Guru is the straight and simple road.

*Question*: Why do we come here for the *Samyam Saptah*?

*Mataji*: Each of you have come of your own accord. Nobody has dragged you here on a halter. Each one is

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1) *Madan* Cupid.

himself sitting on his own seat in his own place. Why? Because full revelation has not yet occurred; for this reason he is sitting here so that complete revelation may come about. One way is faithfully serving one's own Lord and another way, to be poised in one's own Self, that is to say, in the *Ātmā*. Therefore endeavour to realize the *ānanda* (bliss) which is your very nature. Be immersed in your own play. You are not satisfied with His manifestation as name and form\*, this is why you have come here. This body always repeats: "Oh Lord, all these men and women are expressions of Thy own presence. All are Thy own *vigrahas*. \*\* Exert yourselves to discover your own Self."

At this juncture a devotee exclaimed: "I come here only to see Mataji!" On hearing this, everybody burst out laughing. But Mataji said: "There is only one Brahman, no other. The *Ātmā* is whole and complete in itself. As long as this perfection is not realized, so long will a sense of want persist. Behold the nature of His *vigraha*, all the time one wishes that this *ānanda* should continue for ever. Why? Is it not your very own? It pervades the whole universe. It is God Himself. He Himself is staging a play with Himself alone. You may speak of *darsana*, whatever you may say, it is all the same.

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\* The world is His manifestation as name and form.

\*\* *Vigraha* Concrete External Presence as Form.



**Question :** What is the aim ?

**Mataji :** Full, integral Knowledge is the goal. Just as it lies in the nature of the individual to desire to be very rich. You have come here to become established in your real, essential Nature. You listen, join in satsang and choose your own path. Why do all these pilgrims on the road of Immortality come here ? To give *darśana*. To whom ? They themselves to their own selves.

**Question :** What exactly is *samyam* ? If the palate craves for *rasagollas\**, should we satisfy it ?

**Mataji :** This kind of attitude will not help you at all.

**Swatantranandaji :** It is written in Yoga Vaśiṣṭha....

But at once Mataji interrupted, saying : "It lies in the nature of this body not to comment at all times on what mahātmās have said. I am referring to your own words : if you do not adopt this line you will be incomplete. Until and unless there is a comprehensive knowledge of all lines of approach, wholeness cannot be achieved.

**Question :** Does Mataji cause us to speak ?

**Mataji :** I grant your point. How wonderful is God's kingdom ! Just as "infinite" means "in-(not) finite", so the Brahman is one without a second. One single seed contains innumerable trees, infinite in variety, in growth, in appearance. Everything is contained in everything. Bābā has stated that this kind of thinking

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\* *Rasagolla* A famous Bengali sweetmeat.

also points to a path. How should one control the sensory organs? Who has created them? For instance—the idea not to restrain the mind is derived from the interplay of the senses. One way is to strictly restrain the mind. A certain *krtyā* exists to stop the mind. Another way is not to interfere with its simple, natural movement. If you continue to watch the mind as an impartial spectator it will not stop but become concentrated; just as seeds can emanate from the root of a tree as well as from any of its parts. Make the mind one-pointed. Watch where your mind goes. If you continue to do this, just as Bābā has said, your mind will become concentrated and will not indulge in frivolous thoughts. Keep an eye on the mind-child. This does not mean just paying cursory attention. If you observe your mind with full concentration, then there is hope that this will eventually lead you towards your ultimate Goal.

*Question* : When I sit down to meditate, all the jumbled concoction of thoughts inside me comes to the surface. What am I to do ?

*Mataji* : You sit down with the jumbled concoction in your thoughts, don't you? If you sit and keep on watching as an impartial spectator, then it is the natural tendency to become calm. If you do not attain to this stillness, you remain within the cycle of birth and death, of coming and going. Continue to watch as a silent witness.

*Swatantranandaji* : A lunatic killed a man. The magistrate who was dealing with the case, asked : "Who committed the murder ? Who witnessed it ?" The insane man burst out : "When I was myself being attacked, how could I see what others were doing ?"

*Mataji* : Here something has to be pointed out : Different persons view things differently depending on what they have experienced.

*Questioner* : If you take sides with Yoga Vaśiṣṭha or the Mahātmā who has just spoken, then this is another matter.

*Mataji* : Why do you raise this point ? Something else may also be said : Suppose your mind is getting depressed. You may watch where your mind is leading you. Just as you have acknowledged the possibility of letting the mind have its own way a little and of restraining it a little, so you should also accept that the mind may be completely controlled. Once Gopal Thakur spoke to this effect and this body also said the same.

Father, if you permit, I shall tell you a story. If you say 'no', I shall not do so.

When this body was in Bajitpur, one day a severe cyclone broke out. Bholanath had taken his family (Ma) there. However, there was no family life because the play of *sādhana* started. But I am now going to tell you quite an ordinary story. In the courtyard there were weeds which when removed would grow again. Until

the cyclone occurred, the courtyard adjoining the house was walled in by thick mats. These were all blown down by the storm and remained lying over the open yard for a number of days. When after some time this body took up the mats, not a single weed was to be seen. On noticing this, this body spread all the old mats over the ground and so the weeds were automatically destroyed ; no need to use any spade. All the neighbours thereupon raised a hue and cry. "How is it that her yard has become so clean ?" It was simply because the yard was covered. Thereafter all of them followed suit. By hiding and suppressing your desires and passions continuously, they also die at some stage.

Thus there are two ways : one is not to restrain the mind and the other, to control it. Both are correct. One is not better than the other, whichever method appeals to one may be adopted. Whatever anyone affirms from his own level is correct for him. On reaching the ultimate state all roads are seen to be equal. I alone exist. The path is also you yourself. This holds good when speaking of different paths. For instance, somebody was doing Gopal Puja and another image of Gopalji belonging to a *sannyāsi* happened to be nearby. Once the householder's Gopal said to him : "The *sannyāsi*'s Gopal has touched me, so I could not take my food." Do you understand ? They were worshipping with a sense of separateness. He did not look upon the other Gopal as his own and this created a boundary. What is required is an all-

comprehensive path. Everyone should proceed along the road indicated by his Guru. All names, all attributes are Thine. At the same time Thou art without name and form, just like water and ice. There is nothing but water in ice. Similarly, He who is formless also assumes various forms.

November 27th, 1955.

*Question* : Is God attained by His mercy or by man's own efforts ( *Puruṣārtha\** ) ?

*Mataji* : What do you yourself believe ?

*Questioner* : Is He then realized by His mercy ?

*Mataji* : Effort directed towards the realization of the Supreme Being alone may be called *Puruṣārtha\**.

*Question* : Nobody desires sorrow--so why does it arise ?

*Mataji* : Listen, father! If you are in a state in which sorrow arises, it is natural for it to come. In God's creation all kinds of things happen. From the sense of duality originates sorrow as well as conflict ( *dvandva* ) which is due to blindness ( *andha* ). You have got something which I do not possess. "You" and "I"--from this separation arises conflict and blindness ( ignorance ) and in blindness there is always the danger of stumbling and coming to grief.

*Question* : Who has created this duality ? Has He Himself become divided into two ?

*Mataji* : If He was one--why-- even now there exists only the one single Being. But you perceive duality by

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\* *Puruṣārtha* Object of human pursuit, also self-exertion.

remaining in a state where sorrow arises. If there are not "two", how can there be sorrow? The ego is the real cause of suffering.

*Question* : From where has egotism come? How can misery be relieved by searching for Him?

*Mataji* : Now you have touched upon the root of the problem. Once you get to know Him, there can be no more suffering. He Himself is, He and no other.

*Question* : Suppose someone strikes us with a stick, should we consider that it is God who is belabouring us?

*Mataji* : Who strikes whom? The stick only falls on the ego—in order to reduce it. God is merciful, very merciful. He has to be revealed and the ego has to cease. He alone IS.—I AM, I and no other. If you can keep up the contemplation : "I alone AM", then the ego may cease to exist. He is, He and no other. "Neti, neti, not this, not this", is also a spiritual practice. Who am I? To realize this is the only purpose worthy of human exertion, the supreme object of life. Call out : "Thou, Thou only, oh Lord!" and surrender everything at His feet, die, that is to say, let what is mortal die—namely the senses and passions. Or sink the "Thou" in the "I". There is yet another approach : birthless BEING, that is to say, birth (creation) has not occurred at all. Who causes suffering to whom? There is only one Brahman without a second. Here there is no question of any activity. He alone IS, the One Ātmā. Burn away your desires and passions

by the fire of discrimination and renunciation (*vairāgya*) or melt them by the flood of your devotion. In order to accomplish this melting process, seek the company of other pilgrims. You have not taught me any learning, so I speak in this higgledy-piggledy fashion. Resort to satsang, take refuge in mahātmās, that is to say, sit under a tree. Who is a tree? What does a tree do? The tree never invites anybody neither does it chase anyone away. It is its nature to give shelter and shade. Thereafter it gives its own self away, i. e. it bestows its fruit. Go and seek the shelter of mahātmās.

*Question* : How will I know what kind of mahātmās they are ?

*Mataji* : If someone is a real mahātmā this will be discernible just like a lamp which is lit. If the mahātmā does not allow himself to be recognized, then nobody can discover him. Where there is fire there is bound to be a display of fire. If he is a true mahātmā it just cannot happen that this does not become apparent. By the clemency of the mahātmā he is recognized. If we keenly desire to have *darśana* of a mahātmā then such a desire will also lead to its fulfilment.

*Question* : It is said that mahātmās roam about appearing childlike, witless or impish. How will I recognize them ?

*Mataji* : You have yourself answered your question !

*Question* : Then who is a true mahātmā ?

*Mataji* : He who is great (*mahān*) in all respects is a mahātmā.

*Question* : Why then do they remain hidden ?

*Mataji* : It is their nature to shine forth at all times. They do not hide themselves. But you lie hidden, hence this is how it appears to you. Incidentally, why does God hide Himself ? He conceals Himself so that you may search and discover Him. If gradually you study about Him, if you reflect on Him more and more—just as it is the inherent quality of fire to burn and of ice to cool, so does the constant contemplation of God ultimately lead to His revelation. Cultivate satsang, read sacred books; whether you engage in worship or study, continue to spend all your time wrapped up in Him. By doing so, you will reach a stage in which His presence will no longer remain secret. If you seek God in all sincerity, He cannot but reveal Himself to you.

*Question* : Sometimes one is overcome by despair.

*Mataji* : You must always keep your hopes alive ; never give up seeking. Feel : “Krishna, Durga, Ma—they are all my very own and I am theirs.” It is man’s essential nature that he cannot desist from searching, he cannot help wanting to discover his own real Self. If he realizes that it is his *own* Self he is looking for, then his search will become spontaneous. It is natural that delight and bliss should be experienced in the process. It is a feature of God’s play that when something has been lost one tries to recover it and



eventually it is found again. If you know that something belongs to you then the desire to possess it is bound to arise. The sense of want is nothing but the desire to search for one's own Self and to realize it. This body does not deliver lectures but converses with its fathers, mothers and friends. Father, smallness begets suffering. Why smallness? You are THAT itself; or from a different point of view "The Lord is mine and I am His serf"...just as Mahabir \* said: "Seen from one angle Ram and I are one from another, Ram is the whole and I am a part of Him; from a third angle, Ram is my Master and I am His servant." First one learns to be a true server (*dās bhāva*) then, when the *ātma* stands revealed, infinitude is realized. As long as there is no enlightenment on this line, keep on searching. To be a seeker, to aspire to Self-realization is man's fundamental nature.

What is the object of acquiring wealth? To enjoy it. You study in order to be able to accumulate wealth, you gain it and feel happy. To fulfil his want is man's nature—therefore, he must realize his Self. The desire to remain in the realm of birth and rebirth is the certain road to death. Why don't you move towards Immortality? Man is constantly in a state of want. So long as you keep on wanting, you will never escape from the cycle of birth and death. Do not be a traveller on this road. "Now I shall become a pilgrim on the path of Immortality;" let this be your firm resolve. To observe *Samyam* means pursu-

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\* Hanumān in the Rāmāyaṇa.

ing the path of Immortality in order to realize one's own Self. Why are you so absorbed in the world, in eating and drinking and experiencing pleasure and pain? In this realm there is nothing but sorrow and misery; supreme bliss can never be attained. Why should you deny God and embrace death? This body constantly reminds you: "Become a traveller towards Immortality." If you wish to avoid taking a "return ticket," take the road of Immortality.

*Questioner*: I have one question.

*Mataji*: Do you mean to say all your questions have been solved and only one now remains?

*Questioner*: I feel that attending to my duty towards my family is an impediment to worshipping God and similarly to sustain devotion to God creates obstacles in performing one's work for the family.

*Mataji*: Well, this body always speaks in a higgledy-piggledy manner. The *mahātmās* are advising you again and again that, wherever you may be, try to regard everyone and everything as manifestations of the Supreme Being. Thus, who is your little son? Think of him as an incarnation of Gopal. "In every form it is Thou, oh Lord, that dost appear! In every person and in the impersonal art Thou alone." Become His servitor, become the manager in the house of the Lord. Do all your work as before, only do it in a spirit of service. You earn and you may enjoy the fruit of your labours. In the Supreme State, which is in-

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comparable, there is no question of duality, there is ONE. In inaction and activity, in death and in life, in motion and stability, it is He alone that exists. To realise Him means to become one with Him. This body says: "Think of THAT in everyone." Serve your sons as the child Krishna, your daughters as *Kumari*\* and your husband as the Supreme Lord. If you serve THAT in everyone then THAT will by its nature become revealed. Talking about Him is the only topic worth the while, all the rest is futile and painful: Where Rama is there is rest and ease; where Rama is not—discomfort and disease.

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\* *Kumāri* The eternal immaaculate Virgin, divine by nature. *Kumari* is the Mother of the entire creation.

## **From the Life of Mataji**

**Bithika Mukerji**

*(Continued from the last issue.)*

*(January-May 1939.)*

Mataji had very few companions with Her, while travelling in Gujrat: Ruma Devi and Abhaya, and at times Sadhan Brahmachari. But, as was only to be expected, it took just a short while for people to come to know that She was in town and to gather at whatever place She would stay. She put up at the Rambagh Dharmaśāla in Dakore. Didi was sent away by Mataji to see to the affairs of the Kanya Ashram, since it was not proper to neglect a project after initiating it. Mataji knew that Didi's naive faith in all people doing their utmost to carry out any work which was started in Mataji's name, was not justified. Didi was obedient to Mataji's suggestions regarding her own responsibilities for the institution she had started, but could not be convinced by Ma or by anybody else that she (Didi) could serve any good purpose anywhere, away from Mataji. However, with a heavy heart, she left, in order to be with the girls for a little while at Allahabad where Kanya Ashram had been accommodated in a garden-house near Daryaganj.

Mataji passed through Baroda and Ratlam and came to Mathura. The people who were most concerned about Her whereabouts and welfare lost contact with Her

after Mathura. Sadhanda and Abhaya had both been sent away and they wrote to the dismayed devotees that Mataji had expressed Her wish to remain incognito for some time. There was nothing for them to do but to abide in patience till Mataji should have the *kheyāla* to return into their midst again.

Mataji, it transpired later, had travelled right across North India and visited Navadweep, accompanied by Ruma Devi only. For about thirteen days they lived on a boat on the Ganges, belonging to a man called Ramraj. He was at first a little wary of his unusual passengers. Unobtrusively he would keep watch over their activities. Soon word travelled regarding the presence of a striking lady and her companion, on a boat on the Ganges. The local Police Station sent a constable to make enquiries about these strange visitors. Ramraj had a long talk with the constable. He said that, as far as he could see, Mataji was no ordinary human being but surely a devi. The constable himself was likewise impressed, and enjoining on the boatman to look after his passengers carefully, went away.

During the day the boat was rowed away from the crowded shore and during the night it was brought back again to the riverside. Ramraj and his fellow boatmen became self-constituted guards and care-takers of Mataji. This was not at all unusual for Her. It can be seen very easily that wherever She goes, She evokes this response of care and concern in people. It is not necessary for Her to speak. As a matter of fact not many people could understand Hindi in Gujrat, where She had travelled extensively.

