

Contents

ENGLISH SECTION

	Page No.
1. Matri Vani	211
2. Mataji's Amara Vani	214
3. Words of Inspiration—Swami Ramdas	219
4. Japa Yoga—Swami Sivananda	220
5. Mother in South India —From the Diary of Sja. Guru Priya Devi	223
6. Faith and Doubt—Vijaiananda (Dr. A. Weintrob)	234
7. From the life of Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee—Dr. Bithika Mukerji, M.A., Ph.D.	241
8. Matri Lila	247
9. Notes and Comments	255

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

MATRI VANI*

Replies to letters from different people at different time.)

129.

Nobody can possibly be superior to God. Whatever is done, is done by Him Himself. No one else has the power to do anything, bear this in mind. Depend upon God. So long as you feel that someone may do something that may harm you, practise the repetition of the Name of your Beloved (*Ishta*) a little more often than you would do otherwise. To place your reliance on your *Ishta* is the one thing to be done under all circumstances.

130.

Such is the nature of this world. Generally speaking people are born in order to enjoy and suffer the fruits of their past actions. When desires linger one has to come into the world, to have them fulfilled. The world, its happiness and enjoyments are fleeting ; consequently all kinds of sorrows and troubles come in their wake and confuse the mind. This is why great saints, sages and saviours ever point out the path that leads through desirelessness to Eternal Bliss. The quest for THAT which is Eternal is indeed man's duty. He should

* The Bengali original and its Hindi translation appeared in *Ananda Varta*, Vol. VI, No. 2, p. 81.

direct his yearning towards the realization of the state in which he cannot be bewildered anymore by worldly suffering. In the traveller's inn (which this world is) everyone has to stay only for the short time that has been assigned to him. It is the One who appears in the guise of the world. He is making you serve Him in this manner. Keep wide awake ;—in every living being there is Shiva and in every woman Gauri. Remembering that everyone is but an expression of THAT be ever engaged in service. It is only natural that one's mind should wander to the needs of one's loved-ones, but one must forcibly pull one's thoughts away and contemplate the Lord's Lotus feet. By so doing your loved-ones will find peace and so will you yourself, bear this in mind.

131.

Since you are living the lives of *sadhus*, you should try to ignore the cold as much as possible. If one moves about and takes exercise one feels it rather less. By leading a strictly regulated life one becomes firmly anchored on the spiritual path and then one does not have to suffer so much. You might exert yourselves a little more in this direction. If the cold is extreme, do not bathe early morning, but later in the day ; on rising from sleep change your clothes, sprinkle some Ganges water on your body and then proceed with your morning worship (*sandhya* and other spiritual exercises). Brahmacharis must completely shun sarcasm and frivolous jokes. It is therefore important to observe silence as much as possible. Brahmacharis are forbidden to sleep during the day. Rising early, they should take great pains not to fall asleep during the day. If for a prolonged period of time one makes a special effort in this direction, the habit will be established. Do not lose courage and be persevering in your *sadhana*.

132.

Write to the father some of this little girl's unconventional talk : "This small child (Mataji) is ever near her father. The mind's agony, listening to people's talk and speaking oneself—all happens within oneself. Near and far are also but within oneself. You should not only be a *sadhaka* at the time of your

spiritual exercises—although everything is contained in everything. The capacity for uninterrupted *sadhana* is also potentially in oneself: it will be discovered by wise discrimination. One should continuously be immersed in the particular *sadhana* which will enable one to become possessed of the Supreme Treasure which is by its very nature one's own. At all times it is the Self that plays within Itself as ego and as intelligence. Use the present with great skill. The One who manifests in the (impure) actions of the I-ness, He Himself also appears in Pure Action. In order that this may be revealed, intelligence becomes aware of stability in motion, where in the movement of Self-action wise discrimination should realize its own true Nature. When this happens then, in stupidity as well as wisdom, He is recognized, the One who becomes reavealed, who IS. He is infinite and also with end. Towards Him one should try to advance steadily without ever halting, having become free from obstacles and obstructions. When one has entered the *stream* any form that is perceived by the purified mind and intelligence may be accepted as an experience on the way to Self-awareness.

When one has become still, that is to say when one has become established in a state of tranquillity, then the activity of nature which continues at every moment in sleep and in waking and is part of the movement of the pilgrimage from birth to death, this and the thinking mind become caught in that Stream and eternally remain floating in it. Ever to keep the mind poised in the Self, wide awake in the current of Reality, where the Unfathomable, the One without end is ever revealed in His Infinity—this must, with the intensity of a possession, be your one and constant endeavour.

133.

Trading* (giving something in exchange for something else) means that deliverance has not yet come. This world is the place of trading. Try to cross to the other shore. Your one and only work is the contemplation of the Lord, where all affliction is conquered and sorrow finds its end.

* Here Mataji uses a play upon words which cannot be rendered into English. *Bepar*=trading, business; *be-without* and *par hona*=to be delivered.

MATAJI'S AMARA VANI

(27)*

Mataji : Someone received a *mantra* in a dream : he had a vision of some great Being who gave him a *mantra* or rather he had a vision of the *mantra*. On waking the experience of the *mantra* remained with him pure and simple—in fact in the waking state also he continued to be under the influence of his vision. With what consequence ? A dilemma of many day's standing was dissolved ; he became free from conflict and began to live in this transformed state of mind. He had no more wish to take initiation. Is it necessary even for a person in this condition to accept initiation again in the physical ?

A sadhaka : Depending on the capacity and the spiritual state (*adhikāra*) of the aspirant it may or may not be necessary.

Mataji : That is to say not everything is the same for everybody. Let me relate someone's story. I shall not disclose his name. He had taken *Sannyasa* according to the proper rites (*viraja homa*), as prescribed by the Shastras, and had adopted the staff of the homeless wanderer. But no realization or spiritual experience of any kind was vouchsafed to him. In his intense despair he finally gave up his pilgrim's staff and turned into a kind of sceptic. He was so profoundly depressed, he had no desire even to move his limbs. Then suddenly one day he had an experience—he realized : "All is contained within myself." His despondency vanished together with his suffering.

When after having abandoned the order of *Sannyasa* and all his spiritual practices he had a realization of such a high order, should it still have been necessary for him to take initiation again ? It does of course also happen that someone even after receiving a *mantra* in a dream, takes initiation again in the waking-state.

* The Bengali original and its Hindi translation appeared in *Ananda Varta* Vol. VI/No. 2, page 84.

experience. It is of course difficult to judge whether a person has the capacity to do so. Generally speaking, one may find that in some cases people only outwardly occupy an elevated spiritual position. However if the aspirant is completely sincere and has become as pure as gold, he will himself come to understand in time (whether his experience has been genuine.)

The transmission of power that constitutes the initiation, it is this imparting of power which is the important factor whether the Guru's power is revealed in a dream or in the waking state. If the manifestation of power has actually taken place then the need for an external giving does not exist anymore.

A sadhaka : What is the sign of this ?

Mataji : Having been blessed with this power inwardly, even if to begin with a sense of its lack is still felt, this will disappear as one progresses. It depends on various factors working together. In some cases for instance the power may not have been felt inwardly, but later one becomes aware of it. Or else the realization of it may grow only little by little gradually—this also is a possibility. Then again the result of the initiation may not be felt either at once nor even at the close of a long life. On the other hand one may find someone transformed immediately by virtue of the initiation : its action has in this case borne fruit instantly. If this be so, there will of course be no problem. But even where no effect of the initiation is noticeable for a very long time, even then the power is undoubtedly acting within.

Concerning the dedication* of one's japa (to one's *Ishta*) Mataji said : "After doing japa one should dedicate it to the Object of one's worship. If this is not done and it is stored up by oneself, there is fear of its being lost since one is not aware of the great value of what is in one's keeping. Just

* The Shastras insist that japa, like every other similar act of merit, should be performed in a spirit of dedication and that its fruits, however imperceptible which under the law of causality would inevitably follow, should be immediately offered to the *Ishta* (Beloved). The idea is that these fruits when accumulated from day to-day will be integrated in due course and reveal Siddhi or Perfection. This is possible only when the fruits are dedicated to the *Ishta* for safe custody as it were and not stored up within oneself in a selfish mood. In the latter case the evil acts and thoughts of the *Sadhaka* are likely to act adversely on them and neutralise their beneficial effect.

as when a priceless jewel is left in a small child's custody ; not understanding how precious it is, he may throw the treasure away. Even by keeping the *japa* stored up oneself one will also gain something, but the full benefit of its accumulation cannot be reaped in this way. The whole and entire fruit of the *japa* that is obtained by dedicating it to the Supreme Object of one's devotion cannot be had if one keeps it stored up within oneself. For this reason *japa* should be offered (to one's *Ishta*).

When a child receives something, he brings it to his mother, for he does not know the value of what he has received. No sooner does the mother see it, than she understands how invaluable it is. She therefore takes it at once from the child's hand and puts it safely away. But when the boy has grown up and learnt to understand, then his mother returns the precious object to him, saying : "I have preserved your treasure for you, now take it back."

When one has acquired the capacity (*adhikara*) necessary for it, that which could not be understood formerly is fully grasped. With age and wisdom understanding comes in its fulness. By regularly offering one's *japa* to one's *Ishta*, slowly and gradually light comes : what is the Name and He whose name it is ? Who am I ? What does Self-realization signify ? When all this is revealed then the purpose of one's *japa* has been wholly fulfilled. Nobody can foretell at what particular instant this may occur, therefore ever continue with your *sadhana*.

Infinite are the *sadhanas*, infinite the spiritual experiences, infinite is manifestation—and yet He is unmanifest. By practising *japa* one proceeds along one's own line of approach. Why did I use the term "infinite" ? The leaves of a tree are infinite in number and although they are all of the same general pattern, yet there are countless changes within that pattern. Viewed from this angle also variety is infinite. Finally, when enlightenment occurs, this will be the end and at that very instant He will be revealed in the midst of endless variety. Just as the seed is all right and the boughs and branches are all right, there is still infinity in everything. Similarly in the field of *sadhana* also everything is infinite. As one goes on and on practising a prescribed number of repetitions of *japa*, at some moment or other no one knows when the fire will be set ablaze. Fire exists everywhere at all times, only one

cannot tell at what instant the friction will kindle a flame. Therefore be ever prepared ! Of course some Yogis may be able to state after how many repetitions of a Name or Mantra Realization will come.

For this reason engage in *japa*. It will be fully preserved for you as if kept safely with your mother. The moment may come any time when you will realize the many in the One and the One in the many. When will the number of repetitions be completed and what will then be found ? That the Name and the One whose name it is are indivisible ; thus what you have offered will come back to you (as the Realization of Him whose Name you repeated.),

A sadhaka : Suppose the *japa* is not offered to the Guru but kept by oneself, will its fruit be lost ?

Mataji : If it is the Guru's instruction not to offer the *japa*, it will be in his hands even so—for did one not act according to this order ? He may bring it to fulfilment either by storing it up himself or by leaving it to the disciple. He alone knows how it will be brought to completion. Moreover nothing whatsoever is altogether lost. If *japa* has been practised continuously it is bound to bear fruit some day. But on the other hand it may also be fruitless—if for instance the *mantra* is incorrect or when the *japa* is not done according to its inherent rules—no possibility can be entirely excluded.

It may be found that some one practises *japa* and austerities with faith and regularity and yet there is no response. In deep despair he drops all his practices. The agony of his suffering will not let him either sleep or eat. Here his eagerness is so great although he has abandoned all effort ; if he is completely singleminded in his thirst for Enlightenment—it must come then and there.

WORDS OF INSPIRATION

Swami Ramdas

God's name is a wonderful charm that did away my darkness and pain and brought me the full blaze of light and joy. In other words, the Name granted me the awareness of eternal Truth and joy. Now for me there is no death.

× × ×

Freed from desire, I live with the spontaneity of a child, playfully active, which is the sign of one who has God-vision or liberation.

× × ×

Spiritual perfection is to realize God, world and I are one. This is the aim of life by attaining which I got immortal bliss and peace.

× × ×

Freedom means to know that I am not the body but that I have a body. Body passes away but I live for ever.

× × ×

I searched and searched and I found myself and my quest ended.

× × ×

Even though I am He, I posed I am not He. I gave up the pretention and lo! where am I? There is only He.

× × ×

When I beheld the world other than me I was caught in the meshes of desire. Now the world is I, I am free and happy.

× × ×

True devotion took me from the relative life to God the absolute and then I realised that the relative is not different from the Absolute. To see the world apart from God is ignorance. To see world as God is knowledge. So for me God is at once within and without and whatever exists is God.

× × ×

Grace is nothing but God within me willing to reveal Himself.

JAPA YOGA

Swami Sivananda

Japa Yoga is an exact science. Japa is the repetition of any Mantra or Name of the Lord. In this Kali Yuga or iron age when the physique of the vast majority of persons is not fit for rigid Hatha Yogic practices and their gross intellect not fit to grasp the subtle Vedantic truths, Japa is the easiest, surest and safest way for attaining God-realisation. Tukaram, Dhruva, Prahlada, Valmiki, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and many others have attained salvation by uttering the Name of the Lord. In Gita you will find 'Yajnanam Japa Yajnaosmi' 'Among Yajnas (sacrifices) I am Japa Yajna'. In this Kali Yuga by practising Japa alone one can attain eternal peace and communion with the Lord.

A Mantra is a holy formula, by the constant recollection or repetition of which one is protected or released from the round of birth and death *Mananat trayate iti Mantrah*. Mantra is Divine Power manifesting in a 'sound' body. Mantra itself is regarded as the Deity invoked by it. Such is the glory of a Mantra. The constant repetition of a Mantra brings the Deity to the consciousness of the

Sadhaka. By Japa of a Mantra, the Sadhaka awakens the Shakti latent in the Mantra, and then the Mantra Shakti strengthens the Sadhaka's individual shakti, takes him up the spiritual ladder and reveals to him the Deity embodied in the Mantra.

A Mantra accelerates and generates creative force. It produces harmony. Spiritual life needs harmony in all parts of our being. The whole being must be in perfect ease and in tune with the Divine, then only the spiritual truths can be realised. Mantra has the power of bestowing cosmic and super-cosmic consciousness. The repetition of a Mantra or Divine Name removes the dirt of the mind such as lust, anger, greed, etc., purifies it and makes it fit for reflecting the higher truths, even as a mirror which is cleansed of its impurities acquires the capacity to reflect clearly the things placed before it. Mantra or Divine Name is, as it were, a spiritual soap to cleanse the mind. Just as fire cleanses gold of its impurities, even so a Mantra cleanses the mind of all vasanas and desires. All sins too are destroyed by the repetition of a Mantra or Divine Name.

Japa should be practised regularly, every day. Mental Japa should become habitual and should go on even during work. Japa should be attended with Sattvic or Divine Bhava, Purity, Prem and Sraddha. While you are doing Japa, think that you are really praying to your Ishta Devata, that your Ishta Devata is really listening to you, that He is looking at you with merciful eyes, that His grace is flowing to you, that you are becoming purer and purer, and that God with open hands is giving you full protection (Abhaya-dana) with a view to giving you your desired object. Do Japa with a spirit of self-surrend to the Lord. Offer your very being to the Lord when you repeat the Mantra or His Name. Know the meaning of the Mantra and do Japa with feeling. Draw closer and nearer to Him when you repeat the Mantra or Name; think that He is shining in the chambers of your heart, He is witnessing your Japa, He is witnessing your mind. When you do Japa, you must have the same flow of love and devotion in your heart as you will naturally have at the time of His actual Darshan. You should have full faith in the purifying, divinising, God-vision giving power of the Name or Mantra.

Japa is a great help to meditation. Japa leads to meditation. You should combine Japa with meditation. Japa

accompanied by meditation on the form of the Lord is much more efficacious than Japa done without meditation. As you advance, Japa will drop off by itself and meditation alone will remain. This is advanced stage. You can then practise meditation separately. If, however, you find it inconvenient to combine Japa and meditation, you may practise them separately. Unless the mind is purified by the practice of Japa, it will be very difficult to practise successfully meditation or concentration. Even a little recitation of a Mantra or Divine Name with faith, Bhava, one-pointedness of mind and an understanding of its meaning will destroy all impurities of the mind.

One should have at least two sittings daily for Japa, one in the early morning, preferably in Brahma-muhoorta, and the other at sun-set or night. If one can do two hundred Mālās of hundred and eight beads (i.e. twentyone thousand six hundred repetitions daily) it is all the better; the mind will be purified quickly. Otherwise, one should practise as much as possible, fixing a minimum limit for daily practice and sticking to it. On holidays one should do more Japa than on other days.

Sattvic food, observance of the principles of Ahimsa (non-injury),

Satyam (truthfulness) and Brahmacharya (celibacy), freedom from malice, cunningness, crookedness, backbiting, vilification, greed and laziness, and Tapas or austerity are aids to the quick fruitioning of Japa Yoga.

O man, scorched in the fire of Samsara, take refuge in God's Name,

repeat the Divine Name incessantly and attain everlasting bliss and Divine communion. Let Name be your boat to cross this formidable ocean of Samsara, lodging in its bosom innumerable crocodiles and whales of worldly desires. May you all attain eternal bliss, freedom and immortality by the practice of Japa Yoga.

MOTHER IN SOUTH INDIA

(OCTOBER '52—JANUARY '53).

(From the Diary of Sja. Guru Priya Devi).

For a considerable time a proposal had been under consideration at the instance of some Mahātmās, particularly Sri Sri Hari Baba and Sri Avadhutji, that they should visit the sacred places and temples of South India in the company of Mother. During the Dusshera celebrations at Allahabad in the last week of September, 1952, it became generally known that Mother would accordingly leave for the South shortly after.

Banaras, Calcutta & Puri, 30th Sept. to 20th Oct., 1952.

Immediately after the Dusshera celebrations at Allahabad which were carried out with great éclat and which evoked general admiration for the excellent manner in which the whole affair had been managed, Mother left for Banaras on 30th September. Next day She proceeded to Calcutta where She stayed till the 6th October, paying a flying visit to Nabadwip for a day on the 4th. From Calcutta Mother went to Puri (7th Oct.) where She remained till 20th October, during which She

visited Bhuvaneshwar and Cuttack in the company of the Mahātmās.

Waltair, 21st to 23rd Oct.

From Puri, Mother set out on 20th October for Waltair. Our party included besides Mother, Sri Sri Hari Baba and his four followers, Sri Krishnanand Avadhutji, Swami Paramananda, Brahmacharis Kamala Kanta, Kusum Kumar and Bibhu, Kumari Juthika Guha ('Buni'), Misraji (cook) and myself.

We reached Waltair in the morning of 21st. A professor of the Cuttack University who belonged to Madras and some other local gentlemen had made excellent arrangements for Mother's stay at the Dharamshala. Shortly after reaching Waltair, Mother suddenly went out in a Rickshaw without informing others, with only one gentleman who had joined us for a short while in course of his official duty or business. After visiting several places, She finally went to Shanti Ashram where originally arrangements

had been made for Mother's stay. Mother had cautioned the gentleman who accompanied Her not to disclose Her identity ; but it was not long before the inmates of the Ashram discovered the fact and their joy knew no bounds. After a short stay there Mother walked along the road in the neighbourhood where fishermen lived, singing 'Jai Ganesh and also 'Hey Bhagawan'. The people there flocked round Her and followed Her, repeating the names. She then returned to the Dharamshala, having been out for nearly 2½ hours.

In the afternoon, a number of the fishermen came to the Dharamshala where Mother was staying and 'prasad' (sweets etc.) were distributed among them. Later in the day (21st Oct.) many persons including some professors and students of the Cuttack University gathered at the Dharamshala to see Mother. After some Kirtan, etc., Mother went out for a stroll along the beach.

Next morning i. e. on 22nd Oct. Mother went to the temple of Narasingha on the top of a hill. It is said that this was the site of the capital of Hiranyakashipu and Prahlad was hurled down from the top of this hill at the command of his father. We learnt that once a year only on Akshay 'Tritiya day in Baishakh, the deity is exposed to view in this temple. We,

however, were allowed to go in and have our 'darshan'. What struck us was the neatness of the place and absence of clamouring greed on the part of the priests or Pāndās, which is such an ugly feature in most famous places of pilgrimage. There were some 1120 steps, we were told, to reach the temple on the 'hill but we did not feel any strain or fatigue either on our way up or down. We returned from the temple at 9.30 A. M. We left Waltair next day at 11 A. M.

Bezwada, 23rd Oct.

We reached Bezwada at 8.30 P. M. A number of people including some members of the family of late Kanti-bhai Munshaw were at the station to receive Mother. After passing the night there we set out next day in the afternoon for Guntur, which we reached in about an hour.

Ramakshetra (Guntur) 24th to 27th Oct. '52.

Mother was taken to a place known as Ramakshetra, which appeared to be an attractive spot. The usual 'Satsang' (Kirtan and discourse by Sādhus) took place from 7 to 9 P. M. Although the people there could not understand our language, they were keen on serving Mother devotedly and repeatedly expressed their joy and gratitude for this.

visit. We visited several temples there. At one place we were shown a tank with many huts and structures round about for Sādhus to stay in. When a member of our party expressed surprise that there were no signs here of the drought we had heard so much about, we were told that for some time past the tank and the adjoining well had been dried up owing to drought.

When the people heard about the probable visit of Mother, they began to pray saying "What shall we do, O Mother,? Have pity on us". Then shortly after it rained abundantly for three days and we found that the tank and the wells were all full.

On 25th October we proceeded to Amaravati on the bank of the Krishna, 20 miles off. Here also we visited several fine temples. Next morning we went to Mangalgiri, about 18 miles away. There Mother was taken to the temple of Narasinghaji, situated at a height and reached by 400 steps. It is said that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had been to this place and his foot-prints were still preserved. The deity is offered gur-water. We were told in Satya Yuga it was Amrita or nectar that used to be offered, in Treta honey, in Dwapar milk and now in Kali it is gur-water. The silver image of Sri Narasinghaji was dimly visible in the

dark interior. This is one peculiarity we noticed generally in the temples of south India. The image of the deity is usually kept in semi-darkness and only dimly perceived when arati is performed with burning camphor etc. The gur-water, when offered to the deity, was poured down the mouth of the image from a conch by the priest. When the 'prasad' of gur-water was offered to Mother, She opened her mouth and asked the priest to pour it down, which was done amidst general laughter. In the afternoon we visited the temple of Rama and the Math of Sri Shankaracharya. We returned to Ramakshetra where many people had assembled to have 'darshan' of Mother. The same evening we left for Madras.

Madras, 27th Oct. to 3rd Nov.

We reached Madras at 7-30 A. M. Mrs. Taleyar Khan and a few other prominent persons had formed a committee to make necessary arrangements for Mother's visit to the city. She is a pious Parsee lady from Gujrat who had been with Sri Ramana Maharshi for a considerable length of time. We had met her before in the company of H.H. Rani Saheba of Mandi (Himachal Pradesh). Sri Kanti Bhai Munshaw of Ahmedabad had also sent some persons to look after the convenience of the party (in fact he did so throughout Mother's present tour in South India).

Arrangements for Mother's stay had been made in the residence of Sri Tarapore at Mount Road, where She was received with elaborate ceremony including music, recital of the Vedas by ten Brahmins, etc. etc. All arrangements had been made with great care and everything went off very smoothly. Several Bengalee families residing there offered their assistance particularly regarding cooking and the meals. Mother stayed in Madras for eight days and made excursions to different places to see the temples, etc.

We visited many temples far and near during our stay in Madras. The committee had sent word about our visit to the temples and so everywhere we went we were received with great courtesy and ceremony by the priests and the temple authorities, and offered every facility and attention in our Darshan. In this way we visited the temple of Kapaleshwar at Madras and also Venkateshwar. At Conjeevaram (50 miles) we saw the Shivakanchi temple (with its finely carved huge gates) and also the Vishnukanchi. We also went to Mahavalipuram (55 miles), and saw near the sea side the fine images of Vishnu and Siva etc. Next we proceeded to Pakshitirtha (45 miles) where two Rishis are said to be engaged in Sadhana in the form of birds. Daily at 11.30 A. M. sweet rice is offered there and as the priest stands

with folded hands, two birds swoop down and after making a meal of the rice and a drink fly away.

During our stay we also visited the local Ramakrishna Mission centre, the Theosophical Society at Adyair (with its spacious compound, fine library and statues of Olcott, Madame Blavatski, Annie Besant) and the Gaudiya Math.

At their pressing request, Mother was also taken for a short time to the residence of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer, Ex-Dewan of Travancore who, we were told, had flown to Madras to see Mother. We also went to the place of Sri Rama Rao, a disciple of Sri Ramana Maharshi, where once a month the saint's picture is worshipped and the Vedas recited as in a temple.

All these days and throughout our tour the daily Satsang was observed whenever possible, at the usual time i. e. 7 to 9 p. m. (including 15 minutes' silence or 'Mauna'). The gathering at last firmly but respectfully protested that whether in Satsang and Kirtan or during Mother's excursions to temples, they had very little opportunity to hear Mother speak for which everybody was very keen and eager. It was pointed out that Mother did not speak formally before gatherings by way of lectures and discourses. However, it was arranged that Mother would sit for

sometime after Satsang in the gathering.

One day someone put the question "How shall we realise God?"

Mother—Weep for Him and you will find Him.

Q. —I cannot weep at all, tears simply won't come. What shall I do?

Mother (laughing)—Seek the company of those who weep. Keep the company of pure and God-minded persons.

Q. —In order to realise God, how much should one put forth one's own efforts and how much should one rely on God?

Mother—Even in relying upon God, you will be able to do it only when He wills it and makes you do it. What is 'Purushakar' or individual will-power and effort? What He wills and causes to be done is 'Purushakar'.

Q. —Why should there be such tremendous attachment for impermanent and perishable things and not for what is real and eternal?

Mother—All this is but His Leela (playful activity). It is only

He playing with Himself. Is it not said in Chandi (Saptashati) that She also exists in the form of Delusion? But what happens when one is attached to worldly things is that one is dragged down; but if drawn towards Him, there is joy and emancipation. If one gets entangled in worldly things, one gets the return ticket—to come and go.

At this there was laughter in which Mother also joined.

Mother continued—Everything is Infinite, there is no finality, no end. That is why one is counselled, do not leave off taking His name. Do it on the quiet, it need not be seen by anybody. Being blessed with this rare human birth, do not waste it. As you breathe so should you keep repeating His name. The body is constantly undergoing changes. Once you were young, now you are grown up. Turn this process to your benefit and welfare. Otherwise it is a case of suicide.

The people present expressed their delight at Mother's words and repeatedly requested Her that She should speak to them. Mother replied "Your

little daughter can neither lecture nor preach. As you beat the drum so do you hear. This is the fond request of this little daughter of yours that you should constantly try to keep the company of His name and bow to Him with folded hands."

In the afternoon Mother was taken to an assembly of Gujratis numbering about 7 to 8 hundred people. They sang songs composed for the occasion.

We left Madras on the 3rd Nov.

Pondicherry (Sri Aurobindo Ashram) 3rd Nov. '52.

At the request of some of the inmates of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, who were known to us, it had been decided that Mataji* and the mahatmas with the rest of the party would pay a visit there on 3rd Nov., 1952. Sri Dilip Kumar Roy, the well known writer, singer and disciple of Sri Aurobindo had sent us a Bengali poem written for the occasion (a free rendering of which is given below).

"Ma Anandamayee ! You have come to this remote part, O pure and holy one, so that we may see you. You will speak with accents of love, charged with joy and sweetness. We will touch the dust of your hallowed feet and sing

our songs before them. We offer our devout salutations, O Mother, with fervent gratitude."

We reached Pondicherry at 9 A. M. on 3rd November. Some of the inmates of the Ashram who were known to us, had helped to make arrangements for our stay. Our party was accommodated at the guest house near the sea. At 11 A. M., Mataji and the rest were taken round the Ashram. We went first to the Samadhi of Sri Aurobindo and seated ourselves by its side. It was a very beautiful spot. The Samadhi had been finely decorated with flowers. A branch of a nearby tree overhangs the Samadhi as if forming a canopy over it. A number of people had gathered there to see Mataji. Shortly after, some one came along to take us to *Mother*. We were first led to Sri Aurobindo's room and seated there. Then we were escorted to another room where Sri Aurobindo used to sit. As we entered moving aside the curtain, we saw *Mother* standing there. As Mataji approached her, *Mother* stood gazing at Her fixedly, occasionally smiling a little. Mataji too stood there looking at her steadily. After a while, *Mother* placed in Mataji's hands a rose and a 'beli' flower with two pieces of chocolate. Mataji gave her back the

*In this account of our visit to Pondicherry Ashram, Mother (Ma Anandamayee) will be referred to as "Mataji" to avoid confusion with the *Mother* of the Pondicherry Ashram.