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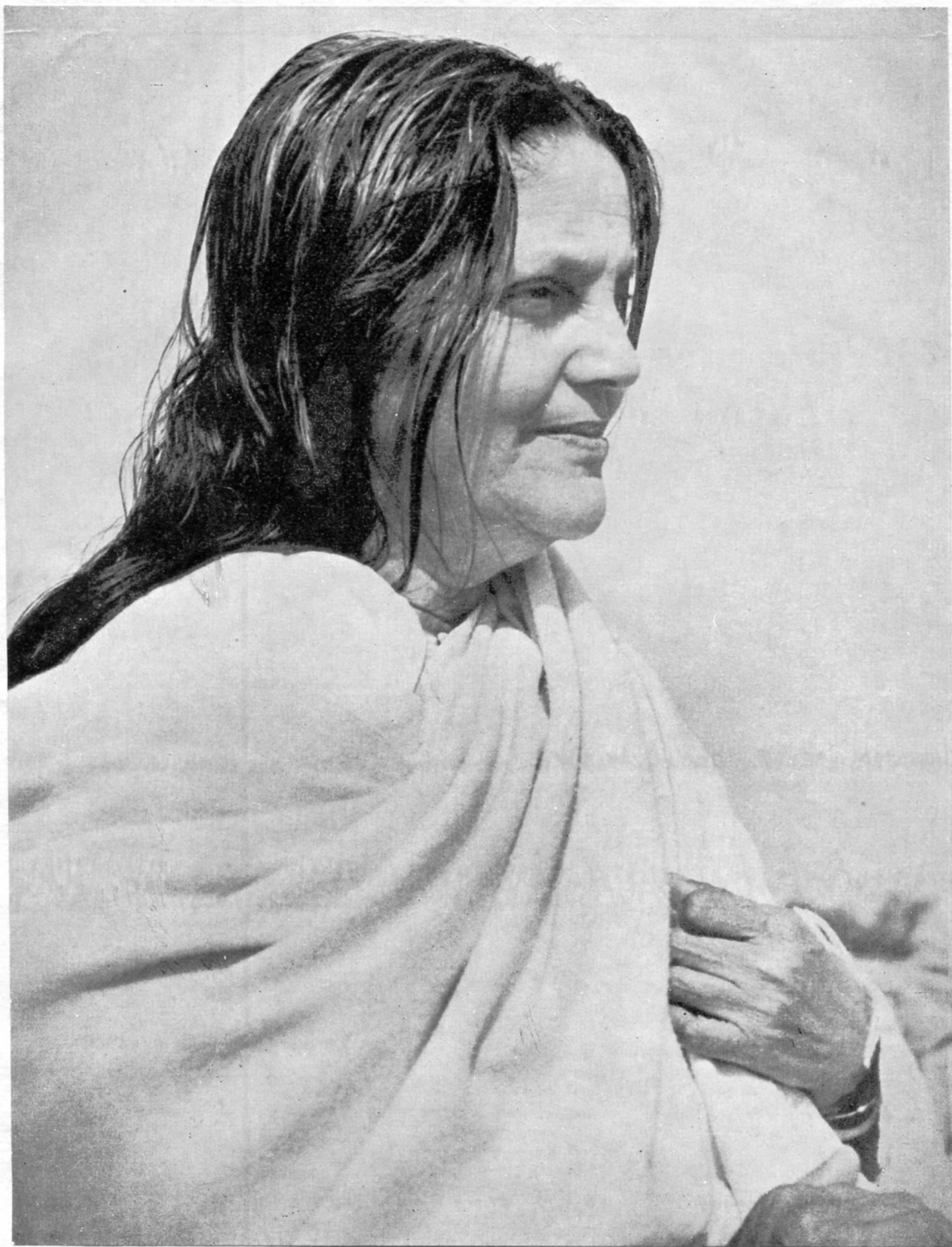
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The One who is the Eternal, the Atman,
He Himself is the traveller on the path of Immortality,
He is all in all, He alone is.

MATRI VANI

(Replies to letters from different people at different times)

92.

The word *manush** (man) itself gives the clue to what man should really be : a being who is self-aware. Even if he has slipped and fallen, is it not his bounden duty to use as lever the very earth to which he has tumbled and raise himself up again ? Besides one does not fall so often. As a man constant effort is his duty. If he does not awaken to the consciousness of his own self, what has he achieved ? He has but wasted his life. How many lives are frittered away, age after age in endless coming and going. Find out who you are ! Discover the significance of the round of births and deaths, its cause and to where it leads ! When man becomes a traveller on the path to his inner Being the distance that separates him from his Goal gradually vanishes. You will most certainly have to undertake this pilgrimage to Immortality, trampling under foot hundreds and hundreds of obstacles and impediments. This is the kind of manliness that has to be awakened. Why should you remain helpless as if paralyzed ? You only repeat over and over again that you cannot, cannot do *sadhana*. Why ? Why ? Why ?

93.

In all forms and conditions, in everything that comes to pass is He alone, He the self of all. Although you are mourning the loss of your father's physical form you should nevertheless invoke God's presence for the sake of

* *Man* mind, *hush*—conscious.

of him who has passed away. Whatever God does is for the very best. Your father's span of life was over. Tell your mother that this is the nature of the world. She will have to be courageous. According to God's will he carried out whatever service had been apportioned for him to do and now, by the Almighty's dispensation, he has been called unto Him. It is natural to be upset by bereavement. Sometimes it seems to us that He who is the Supreme Beloved of all is our enemy. Nevertheless what he sends will have to be endured. Dear mother*, listen to the request of this little daughter of yours : in these days of affliction and distress call out to God and cry for Him. It is but He who comes to man in the guise of a brother or a husband. Only by invoking Him can peace be found.

94.

My friend's† letter is filled with the expression of a beautiful spirit of love and devotion. This friend‡ is ever near her friends. Always remember that man has been born to do *sadhana* to perform actions that help him to realize God. Therefore dedicate yourself to Him, body mind and heart and endeavour to abide in His Presence at every moment of your life.

95.

It is the will of the Almighty that prevails. By living in harmony with this will and becoming an instrument in His Hands you should try to realize Him.

96.

To attempt to summon the spirit of the departed is not good. Very often some other being responds and the ordinary individual is not in a position to distinguish between a genuine manifestation and a fake. Therefore it is harmful. Some one who took part in spiritualistic seances became insane. Against his mother's wishes he continued to do so. To actually get into touch with the spirit of the dead one is difficult for the average person.

* Mataji addresses all married people as her fathers and mothers.

† Mataji addresses all children and unmarried people as her friends.

‡ Mataji refers to Herself in this way.

Do not let your mind be occupied with any such matter. On the level of the Self (*Atma*) you are one with Uma § In this world happiness invariably alternates with sorrow. Bear in mind that as the Self (*Atma*) she is with you—within you. This is the truth, not fanciful thinking. Birth and death happen in fulfilment of the Divine will. In all shapes and conditions there is but He alone.

97.

Inward *Sannyasa* is real *Sannyasa*. To become a *Sannyasi* is very fortunate, is in fact a matter of supreme rejoicing. But do you feel that the right moment to take such a step has come for you? *Sannyasa* signifies complete renunciation, the annihilation of everything; even the idea of annihilation has to become extinct.

98.

If one does not arrive at a state of stillness the agitation of one's whole system will manifest through every nerve and fibre of the body and render one inefficient. If one's energy is not retained the harmonious functioning of this energy in perfect tranquillity is not possible. Interest in the Supreme Quest and practices performed in search of Truth naturally have a calming effect. The preservation of energy is essential.

If he finds kirtan helpful, he should, at the time when Kirtan is sung, try to sit absolutely still in a fixed posture and concentrate. A disturbed state of mind and body is not favourable.

99.

The realization of Divine Power may be induced by any means that suits a particular person. If one feels inclined that way it may be brought about by initiation (*Diksha*); or else it may be effected by the Guru's touch. It is immaterial by which method one chooses to develop the capacity to live a life dedicated to God. The important thing is to remain ever immersed in the contemplation of Him and to derive bliss from it. Indeed this is a cause for great rejoicing.

§ The name of his deceased daughter.

100.

What is perceived in this world is in the nature of a dream, similar to that which one sees in dreams. The only difference is that the former takes place in the waking state and the latter during sleep. Albeit I am always with you, mother.

101.

In dreams all kinds of things may be seen : what the mind has been busy with ; also what has not been thought about, but has occurred in the past or will come about in the future. In any case everything that happens belongs to the realms of dream.

MATAJI'S AMARA VANI

(20)*

Questions : In the book 'Vichar Sagar† we read that a certain Raja's minister named Bharju who inspite of having gained direct knowledge of Truth, was still not free of illusion. Similarly that even though some one has through the Mahavakyas‡ attained to immediate Realization of the *Brahman*, should uncertainty and erroneous notions still persist in him this Realization would not bring about his liberation. I do not understand how when something has become revealed the question of obscuration can still arise ; further in such a case where does the need of instruction come in ?

Mataji : One thing is the full and final Realization of Unveiled Light; but quite another a realization due to some cause in which the possibility of its being obscured once more still exists. At the time when the play of *sadhana* was being manifested through this body it could clearly perceive those various possibilities.

You should understand that if the veil of ignorance has been burnt or dissolved as it were, you will for a certain period of time, have unobstructed vision. Afterwards it becomes blurred again. All the same—what will be the result of such a glimpse ? Ignorance will have become less dense and true knowledge gained greater prominence, in other words, by the momentary lifting of the veil the bondage of the individual will have been loosened. In this condition there is a semblance of the attainment of real knowledge, in fact it is also a state of achievement, although quite different from the state of final Self-Realization. By the power of the Guru the veil has here been suddenly pierced or consumed—just as in the story of the ten men when the Mahatma said : “You are yourself the tenth !”§ But there is a realization

* The Bengali original appeared in Ananda Varta, Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 271.

† 'Vichar Sagar' is a work on Vedanta written in Hindi.

‡ A *Mahavakya* is a profound utterance by the Guru expressing the oneness of the individual with the Universal Self.

§ Mataji refers here to the following well-known Vedantic parable : “Ten men had to ford a river by swimming. To make certain that they had all safely reached the opposite bank, one of them counted the lot and to his consternation counted only nine. To make sure that he had not been mistaken another one of them counted the men with a similar result.

after which the possibility of its being obscured again by a reappearance of the veil of ignorance simply cannot be, this is the true and final Self-Realization. Lightning comes in a flash, but the light of day continues steadily.

Question : How can anything occur that is not mentioned in the Shastras ?

Mataji : To expound reincarnation, Karma and similar doctrines is mainly the work of the Shastras. Whether anything may occur that is not mentioned in them, remember that He is infinite. Out of your union with this infinity—no matter what form He may be pleased to assume—spring your actions, feelings, and thoughts, at the present time or in the future. This you may not be able to learn from the Shastras ; nevertheless the Shastras are also infinite. Oh, how beautiful is the law of God's creation ! Do you not know the feeling of delight, of deep bliss, when in a new way you discern a glimpse of Him—the eternally new.

Just consider : For one who has entered the *Great Stream* the Infinite is contained in the finite and the finite in the Infinite, the whole in the part and the part in the whole. Indeed what can one enter but one's own Self ! It is not merely a matter of imagination ; through ever fresh channels He is perceived in ever new forms. When that unbroken 'Stream' has been entered it is only natural the *Yoga*, the hidden union of the individual with the All should become *Mahayoga* : the full awareness of this Union.

Look, everything is contained in the Shastras and yet not everything. Imagine that you are travelling by train to Dehradun. On your journey you will pass through large stations, through towns and villages. Everyone of these has been indicated in the guide-book. But what is seen between the different stations, can it all be described in full detail ? The trees and plants the animals and Birds, the tiny little ants that are met with on the way, could all these be delineated ? Looked at from this point of view not everything has been written down in the Shastras. Infinite is the diversity of Creation, infinite are its modes of being, its changing movements and its static

Each one of them counted in turn, confirming that there were only nine men left, although they could not make out which of them was missing. A Mahatma passed by and they told him what had happened. He made them stand in a line, hit each one with his staff and asked them to count as he hit. To their joy and amazement they at once realized that none of them had been drowned "Each one of you forgot to include himself." explained the Mahatma.

states that are revealed at every single instant. Besides it is impossible to put into writing all that a seeker after Truth experiences. Furthermore it is quite certain that Reality is beyond speech and thought. Only that which can be expressed in word is being noted down. But what cannot be put into language is That Itself.

When at certain stages you have realizations along your own line of approach, these will of course be within the confines of that particular line. In the event of complete Realization, in all its bearings, can such a thought as "It has not been mentioned in the Shastras" have any meaning? The main stages on the path that you think can be elaborated exhaustively are of course discussed in the Shastras, but the numerous things that you imagine are not set forth there are also included in the Shastras. In accord with the progress of the sadhaka spiritual experiences will occur of themselves. However, where Enlightenment is complete there is no more question of important or less important stages. On reaching the end of one's journey full Enlightenment is bound to take place. If someone has doubt about something because it is not contained in the Shastras, can he have attained to the goal of his pilgrimage? Affirmation and negation are of significance only while one is yet on the way, for there are paths without number, and they cannot be limited to what has been laid down in the Shastras. Where the Infinite is in question the diversity of approaches is equally infinite and like-wise are the revelations along these paths of endless variety. Is it not said: 'There are as many doctrines as there are sages'? Unless one has a view-point of one's own one will not be classed among the sages.

Very well, this is one aspect of the matter. Now to another: On the level from which it can be said that everything is possible it would be quite senseless to declare that because something is not to be found in the Shastras or in any of the scriptures, it therefore does not and never will occur. Surely all this eager searching has for its aim but the revelation of That which is—of Reality. Could there be such ardent yearning and pining for something that has no existence, that never was or will be?

Some one said: Repetition of the names of Rama, Krishna, Shiva, Durga or any other name is quite useless, with the one exception of the name "Ma" (Mother) and that only while thinking of not any 'Ma', but solely the special 'Ma' that a particular group of people is worshipping. Someone else

again said : Self-realization cannot be attained by the repetition of any name whatsoever, but only by understanding the processes of the mind. Every problem that arises in the mind has to be thought out in this connection and understood in all its implications and in this way dissolved. If a person be incapable of doing this for himself, he may seek the help of someone else, no matter whom. However by this the relationship that is considered continuous between Guru and disciple will not be established. Who essentially is the Guru, since all are one ?

In this connection Mataji asked : “*Pitaji*, (Father), when you give this teaching, do not those who are trying to put it into practice automatically accept you as their Guru ?”

The person addressed replied . “No, for when their problems have been solved, we are all again on an equal footing”.

Mataji : Quite so, thus we are also told that after the Guru has given *Sannyasa*, he prostrates himself at full length before the disciple in order to demonstrate that there is no difference between Guru and disciple, for both are indeed one.

There is a stage where one cannot possibly regard oneself as a Guru, nor accept anyone else as a Guru. Another stage exists at which there is no way of thinking of the Guru and the disciple as separate from one another. There is yet another stage where it appears as follows : Everyone who gives teaching or instruction in this world is regarded in the light of a Guru ; there are innumerable methods and forms, devised for the purpose of helping man towards Self-realization ; by using any one of them man may advance towards this Goal.

By concentrating on the problems that arise in the mind it may be possible to undo the knots that constitute the ego. For this reason the above method is not in contradiction to any other method. What has been said about being on an equal footing is also right, for in this world people have to assist and teach one another in many walks of life ; therefore it can be truly said that everybody is a Guru. From one point of view one may call one's Guru every person from whom one has learnt something, no matter how little. But the real Guru is he whose teaching helps one towards Self-Realization.

Suppose a person is walking in the dark and dog starts suddenly barking furiously quite close to him. What can be the matter? The man switches on his torch and finds himself confronted with a big poisonous snake. By taking great care the man is now able to escape the fangs of the venomous reptile. Will the dog in this case have to be called the man's Guru or not? One may certainly object to it, for the dog did not bark for the purpose of making the man aware of the snake. But He who bestows awareness may appear in the guise of a dog.

From the Life of Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi.

By

Dr. Bithika Mukerji, M. A., Ph. D.

(Continued)

(2)*

There were other obstacles also in the way of Mataji's education. The school was at a short distance away from Her home. Mataji was not allowed to go out anywhere alone; so on the days that Didima could not find an escort for Her, She could not attend school. She did not even possess a whole slate, but had to be content with a broken piece of one ! In spite of all these difficulties Mataji always stood first in Her class. There was no mystery about it. When She sat down to prepare Her lessons, the meaning of strange words would spontaneously occur to Her. Mataji relates : "Supposing I came across the word '*hasti*.' I would ponder about for a short while and it would occur to me that it meant 'elephant'. Her guardians hardly ever found time to help Her with Her lessons. So Mataji never really advanced beyond the elementary stage of education.

As far as religious practices were concerned the instructions She received were equally elementary. Her father taught Her to sing devotional songs and Kirtan and Her mother allowed Her to help with the preparations for the daily worship of the '*Narayana - Shila*.' Dadamashai's† teachings were simple enough. The first time She was asked to sing *bhajans* the following conversation took place : "Come and sing with me. We shall sing the praises of Hari."

"Who is Hari ?"

"The Lord of the Universe. He is very big and great. We are all His children."

"How big ? As big as this meadow ?"

"Much bigger. We all must worship Him and call down His mercy upon us. He is kind and takes care of us all. He has very many names ; Hari is one of them."

* See Ananda Varta Vol IV/4 p. 318.

† Her father.

This sufficed for Mataji and She became Her father's regular and faithful companion, whenever he sat down for his devotional singing.

It has already been said that Mataji as a child never seemed to express a desire for anything, neither was She ever unhappy or unruly. But there were occasions when She would cry too. The three small brothers who were born after Her, all died very young. While they were alive Mataji looked after them devotedly, missing school and play in order to take care of them. But when they passed away She not only accepted their loss without complaint, more than that She never let Didima have the chance to indulge in her grief either. Whenever She saw Her much enduring mother mourn the death of her children She broke out into such a torrent of heart-rending sobs that Didima perforce had to forget her own tears in order to quieten the little girl. Didima says that these were the only occasions on which Mataji cried during Her childhood.

Mataji had a happy knack of identifying Her own wishes with those of others ; or rather, since She did not seem to have any desires Herself the incentives to Her behaviour sometimes arose out of the wishes of Her close companions.

There is an auspicious day during the summer season on which people abstaining from cooked food eat only parched rice mixed with thickened milk and seasoned with ripe mangoes. Once Didima, unable to afford mangoes, was preparing the dish for her children with milk only and while busy with this task thinking how all the other children of the village would be able to enjoy the much loved summer fruit. Suddenly Mataji ran in from outside and gave her a large ripe mango. Didima asked Her sternly : "Did you steal this ? If so you must go and return it at once !" Mataji however replied that She had found it lying in the field near the cottage as if someone had just put it there for the purpose. Although it appeared rather inexplicable how the one mango could arrive there of its own accord, Didima felt obliged to accept and use it, because she knew that Mataji was an exceptionally truthful child.

Mataji at times relates the following story from Her childhood : "One night my father saw a snake curled round the rafters of our hut. It was raining outside and in the uncertain light of the oil-wick lamp, he did not like the idea of disturbing the snake. Still less did he feel inclined to go to sleep in view of the tantalizing possi-

bility of the snake dropping down on us during the night. So he gathered us children and put us under the bed. Then, having made sure that his family was safe, he himself took refuge behind some other shelter. The thought occurred to me at that moment that man is helpless indeed. He who would protect us could not protect himself, but needs had to seek the protection of something else."

Apart from the lesson Mataji derived from this Her way of reflecting as she did it also revealed the fact that she was something more than just only the simple, docile and lovable little girl Her parents took Her to be.

Another incident recounted by Her shows that Mataji Herself perhaps rather enjoyed the role of a simple little girl. Returning from the pond one day with a pitcher full of water balanced on her hip, She came and stood in front of Didima and said ! "You all call me straight and simple ; look am I not crooked now ?"

Mataji always maintains that there has been no question of development for Her. She always was as She is. The difference observed in Her are due to the understanding of the onlookers. It appears to people that she has passed through the stages of childhood and adolescence to maturity ; but these must not be

regarded as stages in the process of a gradual development. Development implies inadequacy and imperfection ; the least that can be said about Her conduct as a child and a young girl is that it was certainly adequate. The phenomenon of a perfect child is strange enough, but it appears even more strange that nobody remarked upon it. Mataji says that some of the characteristics of '*bhava*' and *samadhi* (which became such a prominent feature of Her life at a later period) were present even during Her early childhood. Most of the time these states passed unnoticed because the people round Her had no comprehension of such things. But sometimes when a state of that kind came upon Her during meal time, Her mother would feel perturbed thinking it could only be the symptoms of a weak mind. She would scold and shake the child and endeavour to draw Her attention back to the food in front of Her.

At a certain stage during Mataji's *Lila* of *sadhana* all places of worship exercised a magnetic spell on Her. She would enter temples and touch the Deities. She would even go into *samadhi* if passing near a temple, church or mosque or any other sacred place. Sometimes the people travelling with Mataji would suddenly see

Her withdrawing into such a state without any apparent cause (of course external causes were not always necessary to bring on Mataji's states of *samadhi*, but generally the strains of devotional music or the proximity of sacred places or objects of worship were influential in calling forth changes in Mataji's behaviour.) Later on Her companions would find out that they had been passing a temple which was not visible from the road.

During Her child-hood also this attraction sometimes influenced Her conduct. When She was cleaning the place of worship, somehow or other it would invariably happen that She accidentally touched the '*Narayan-Shila*.'

When Mataji was quite small She was once taken to a neighbour's house to listen to the performance of a Kirtan party. The atmosphere created by the religious music brought on a state of '*bhava*' in Her. Her aunt mistaking the inert condition for sleep, shook Her saying "Why do you sleep? Listen to the *kirtan*!" Didima recollected the incident perfectly when reminded of it by Mataji years later.

So it would seem that no definite line of demarcation can be drawn in Mataji's life anywhere denoting a change from one stage to another. Had there been anyone of capable understanding these supernatural manifestations, events might have taken a different turn, but this was not to be.

Thus mataji grew up in peaceful surroundings as a blithe and winsome little girl. Her sunny disposition earned Her many nicknames such as '*Hashi*' (smiles) or '*Khushir Ma*' (Happy Mother). When She returned to Kheora years later She was at once surrounded by the village folk who started talking and exchanging views most familiarly. They were not at all awe-inspired or embarrassed. Mataji also, in a moment seemed to become one of them. They welcomed Her back as they would a well-beloved daughter returning home after a long absence. In fact the earnest devotees who had accompanied Mataji did not know whether She was more dear to the hearts of the village folk or to their own.

(To be continued)

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF BUDDHISM

Akshay Kumar Datta Gupta, Kaviratna, M. A.

Not trying to be scrupulously accurate in the matter of terminology it may in a general way be said that the fundamental principles of Buddhism are three. These are : (in Pali) (1) *Dukkha* (Sanskrit *dukkha*) meaning sorrow, suffering, affliction and, in a minor key, worry, despair, "the heart-ache and all the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to" as the poet has put it ; (2) *Anichcha* (Sanskrit *anitya*) which implies the absence of permanence or an enduring character in anything ; and (3) *Anatta* (Sanskrit *anatma*) meaning the non-existence of a self. Of these the first, *dukkha* goes naturally with Religion, while the other two *anichcha* and *anatta* belong more properly under the rubric of Philosophy. All three are interrelated making, as some Westerners superiorly think, a dismal whole.

Affliction is a fact of universal experience. No life is without it, though in the discrimination of common people sufferings do not altogether crowd out pleasure. But the thinking few know that what the rabble call pleasure is but gilded sorrow.

Sankhara parama dukkha : life is unmitigated sorrow, says the *Dhammapada* XV.7, following the *Gita* V.22 : *ye hi samsparasaja bhoga dukkhayonaya eva te* : all experience born of contact of the senses with objects are sources of sorrow.

Buddha made suffering the cardinal principle of his religion. "One thing I teach : *dukkha* and its ending," said he, "Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, sickness is suffering, separation from that which pleases is suffering, contact with that which displeases is suffering, not getting that on which one has one's heart is suffering." And further "which do you think is the more voluminous: the tears that have flowed from the eyes of men in their long pilgrimage or the waters that are in the four great seas?" From an acute consciousness of the overabundance of sorrow in life comes the impulse to religion. It has been well said that religion does not prosper in prosperity. It is suffering that make people fumble for the remedy and material specifics do not often meet

the case. This is where religion comes in.

The omnipresence of *dukkha* is not a doctrine first propounded by Buddha. It is an inheritance from the age-old teachers of the race who had garnered a rich stock of philosophical lore. Two other such inheritances are the law of *Kamma* (Sanskrit. *karma*): deeds and the inescapability of births and rebirths (metempsychosis in philosophical phraseology). One must taste the fruits of one's deeds, however bitter or sweet, in this, and if not, in repeated births. The apparently unmerited afflictions (as well as fortunes) are to be attributed to deeds done in a past incarnation or incarnations and unrequited virtue as well as unpunished misdeeds are to be supposed to bear fruit in future existences. Buddha (and no doubt most of his audience also) took these views for granted and never argued about them. But the enlightened one always tried to make all people conscious of the preponderance of affliction in their and their neighbours' lives.

Many writers of the West at one time (due no doubt to a superiority complex) used to dub not only Bud-

dhism but all Hindu philosophy as absurdly and unhealthily pessimistic and the belief in a long succession of births and deaths as quite ridiculous. But saner writers and thinkers have not failed to notice that Buddha (I am immediately concerned only with Buddhism) not only emphasized the overabundance of sorrow in life, but pointed out its cause which is *tanha* (Skt. *trishna*), morbid craving for pleasures and possessions from which no man is normally free. He also firmly held and taught that it was possible to put an end to both the sufferings and their cause, and pointed out how. It was in fact the mission of his life to teach all people how the consummation so devoutly to be wished could be attained. Is this pessimism? Surely that is made of much blacker stuff.

The above doctrines viz suffering, its cause, the practicability of its ending, and lastly the means to that end, have been called *chatvari ariya sachchani* (Skt. *Chatvari ariya satyani*) the four noble truths. The fourth consisting of eight parts has been separately called *ariyo chatthangiko maggo* (Skt. *aryah ashtangah margah*) the noble eightfold way. *

* The eightfold way which I do not propose to elaborate here is composed of the following: *Samma ditthi* (right views), *Samma sankappo* (right resolution), *Samma vacha* (right speech), *Samma Kammanto* (right deeds), *Samma ajivo* (right means of livelihood), *Samma Vayamo* (right effort), *Samma Sati* (right meditation) and *Samma Samadhi* (right concentration

Kamma (Skt. *Karma*) is the law of cause and effect in the spiritual world. A quite recent American author* writing on Hindu civilization describes *Karma* as "the most terrible law of all". "This law of *Karma*", says he, "like the Greek *Moirā* or Fate, is above both gods and men; even the gods do not change its absolute operation; or as the theologians put it, *Karma* and the will or action of gods are one. But *Karma* is not Fate; Fate implies the helplessness of man to determine his own lot, *Karma* makes him (taking all his lives as a whole) the creator of his own destiny. Nor do heaven and hell end the work of *Karma*" for after a short or long sojourn in either place according to its deserts "every soul must sooner or later return to earth and live out its *Karma* in new incarnations."

But did not also Christianity teach, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"? Hindu teachers extended the law backwards holding whatever harvest a man reaps in this world he sowed it in a previous life or lives. How, it may be asked,

can one, without accusing God of cruelty and partiality, justify the all too glaring inequalities of possessions and opportunities which are the lot of men in society? "Believing in the operation of natural justice", says an ardent English admirer and follower of Buddhism;§ "Buddhism would say in reply to the Biblical enquiry: who did sin, this man or his parents that he was born blind? That it was this man who had 'sinned', that is, had so behaved in a previous life as to cause in the life in question the effect of blindness". He says further, "In the West we say that the child of a musical father is musical (if it be so) because of heredity. In Buddhist lands it would be explained that the child was born into a musical family because it (the child) had developed musical propensities in previous lives and was attracted to an environment suitable for the expression of those 'gifts', a reversal of the western view".

The insistence on *dukkha* together with its adjunct, the inexorable law of *karma*, had such a strong and universal appeal that the religion

They have also been called "the middle way" the golden mean between extreme austerity and down right epicureanism.

* Will Durant in "Our Oriental Heritage."

§ Christmas Humphreys, the founder president of the Buddhist Society in London, in *Buddhism*, a Pelicon book.

founded on them by the Enlightened One spread rapidly so as to cover nearly the whole of India in his life time. The fourth "noble truth", "the noble eight fold way" taught how to live a perfectly moral life as also how to train the mind to attain perfect peace. Practical morality was in fact raised to the high altar of religion. Unlike most religions there was not much stress laid on emotion in early Buddhism as represented by the Hinayana School now current in southern Asia. The element of emotion (*bhakti*) developed later under Mahayana which now prevails in northern Asia. Mind training (*yoga*) also became a more pronounced factor of the religion under the same auspices. In the earlier phase though gods were believed in as a superior race of beings, there was no belief in a Divinity as such. Buddha was yet no more than a *guru* or guide who had himself trodden the path and reached perfection. He claimed no inspiration from any higher source, but only enlightenment (*bodhi*) which he had attained by personal exertion.

So much about the first fundamental principle. As regards the second and the third we may at once say that Buddha did not borrow or adopt them from the orthodox speculations of his age, though changeable-

ness (*parinama* in Hindu philosophy) and therefore impermanence of the phenomenal world had been recognised but with a hard core of reality underlying it. Neither *anichcha* in the sense he taught nor *anatta* were, however, his "inventions". There were many non-conformists and free-thinkers in the Hindu fold in Buddha's time and before him, who swore by a probably mythical teacher, Brihaspati by name and a worthy disciple of his realistically called "Sweet-spoken" (Chārvāk = *charu* fair and *vak* speech) as a thorough-going advocate of epicureanism. They were the modernists of ancient India presumably as proud of their cult as some of the shining lights of the present day secular Indian State. Buddha had his differences with them. He fought and discomfited them in the person of Māra, the Tempter.

The absence of a permanent character in the phenomenal world is evident to every eye. All is changing constantly whether growing or decaying. Throw a handful of paddy on moist ground. It will change in one way in a few days. Keep it aside in a dry place for some years it will be found to have changed in another way. In the former case it will germinate, in the latter it will crumble if pressed between the fingers. In both

cases the change (*parinama*) has occurred imperceptibly, but surely moment by moment. Does not the modern science of physiology tell us also that a man's body is completely renewed in every particle in seven or eight years? Nothing endures except the law of change. The principle of *anichcha* as applied to the spirit is *anatta*. The earlier teachers taught the existence of an individual soul (*atma* or *jivatma*) in every living being. Buddha stoutly denied it.

In his view a man's personality is composed of five parts (Pali *khanda*, Skt. *skandha*) : (1) *rupa*, form, body, (2) *vedana* sensations, feelings, (3) *sanna* (Skt. *sanjuna*) perceptions and conceptions, (4) *sankhara* (Skt. *sanskara*) impressions, tendencies including will, and (5) *vinnana* (Skt. *vijnana*) consciousness. Beyond or behind them no self is recognised.

But if a man has no abiding self, what is it that undergoes rebirths? The question is undoubtedly an inconvenient one, and it is open to doubt whether all Buddhists were quite satisfied with the answer offered which was that of the five *kandhas*, although the first three might and in fact did perish at death, the last two would fling themselves into a body suitable to the fruition of the dead man's *karma*. The difficulty is that Buddha

sometimes spoke of a self; as e. g. to a young man whose female companion had run away when they were picnicking with some friends, and who asked Buddha coming that way whether he had seen the girl; "What do you think, young man, which were better for you; to seek for the woman or to seek for the Self?" and to Ananda, his dearest disciple, "Take the Self as a lamp, O Ananda, take the Self as a refuge"; also to his own son, Rahula, "Every form must be regarded thus, as it really is by perfect insight: "This is not mine; not this am I; this is not the Self of me."

However that may be, *vinnana*, the last of the five *khandas*, should not be confused with *vijnana* or simply *jnana* as taught by the Upanishads. It is really self consciousness, the *ahankara* of Hindu philosophy, the separatist belief; I am I. The delusion of a self called *sakkayaditthi* (Skt. *sakayadrishi*: the view that the body is a real thing) persists till by devoted religious practice the first stage in the upward progress called *sotapanna* (Skt. *srotah apanna*; one who has entered the stream) is reached. It is the first taste of *nibhana* (Skt. *nirvana*). The delusion of self is one of ten fetters which have to be gradually broken before an aspirant reaches the state of an *arhat*

or adept (answering to *jivanmukta* of Hindu philosophy) which is followed by *nibbana* at death.

The Upanishads taught the existence of two selves, individual and universal, called respectively *atma*, *jiva*, or *jivatma* and *paramatma*. The first has been variously held by philosophers as a part of or an emanation from or a reflection of the second and even as quite an independent identity. Buddha as we have seen denied the existence of an *atma* or *jiva* i. e. personal self. The Hinayanaists carrying the point perhaps too far held that according to Buddha there was and could be no *Paramatma* also. The fact, however, was that with regard to this last point, the Enlightened One maintained a "noble" imperturbable silence, neither expressly affirming nor denying it. The reason undoubtedly was that if there was such a soul it must (as also taught by the Upanishads) be inexpressible in words and inconceivable by the mind. What use then was it spending time and energy in speculating about it? Both would be better employed in following the noble eight-fold way and other useful precepts.

But in a country where philosophical speculation or discussion was almost a passion with the flower of the community, the lacuna could not

long have failed to provoke much adverse criticism, and so the giants of the Mahayana school hastened to fill up the gap. But in such a case a satisfactory authority must first be found or fabricated. There was good authority for a story that on one occasion the Enlightened One gathered some leaves lying under forest trees and said that just as those leaves were much fewer than those which were in the trees, so also the lessons he taught were a small fraction of the truths that he had not yet revealed. The Stalwarts of Mahayana said that the Hinayana scriptures which then held the field, represented only the teachings of the Master suitable for the masses that crowded about him wherever he went or stopped. To the elect and the tried he communicated some more doctrines which were of a metaphysical or esoteric nature and therefore beyond the intellectual reach of common folks. The idea at any rate was certainly not fantastic, for in Upanishadic times also great care was taken to choose pupils for instruction in the profounder truths.

Buddha was thus supposed to have taught his more deserving disciples that *vijnana* (Mahayanists wrote in Sanskrit) or individual consciousness was but a partial manifestation of a cosmic entity named *alayavijnana* repository cons-

