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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

THE EDITOR of this Book is Sadhu Arunachala (Major A. W. Chadwick, O.B.E.). His letter dated 12th September, 1960 and his Foreword explain the circumstances under which this book was written twenty years ago, in 1940, when the author, Swami Prabudhananda was residing in the Asram of Bhagaban Raman Maharshi and also why this book could not then be published. The devotees of Mother are indeed grateful to Sadhu Arunachala and to late Swami Prabudhananda for enabling them to understand Her Teachings.

Swami Prabudhananda (S. K. Ghosh, M.A., B.L.) had been my College friend at the Presidency College, Calcutta, in 1913. Since then we did not meet till 1930. He began as a lawyer, later entered business and visited London, other places in Europe, Hongkong, etc. In January 1930, I met him accidentally in Calcutta and on 18-1-30 I went to him for business. In answer to his queries, I told him at first that Mother was ill, living near his house and I often came to see Her. I also said that She was not my own mother but my Guruma, and that I had received Her Grace since 1913, *i.e.* the year after Her Self-realisation and She was my Guide and Protector in all matters. His mind was at that time much disturbed owing to serious illness of his younger brother. He was eager to meet Mother and came with me to Her house. He was introduced to Mother as a friend. He talked with Mother and from that time on he frequently came to Her and even accompanied Her to Deoghar and other places as an attendant. Eventually he took the garb and the name Prabudhananda on his own initiative, and was the principal attendant of Mother till She passed away. This has been described in his Memoir in the book.

In our younger days we did not possess religious

inclinations and were influenced by the prevailing religious customs and were disinclined to think and reason independently. The advent of Ram Krishna Paramhansa and Swami Vivekananda and the introduction of the English education and the writings of Burke, Mill, Spencer, etc. were the principal causes of India's awakening. India in 1913 was full of prejudices and bigotry. During the summer vacation of that year I met Mother in my brother's house at Sachar—Dist. Tippera, and was amazed at Her discourses—fearless, free from prejudice and full of reason. That night in our presence She related to Her illiterate female friends the stages of Her Self-realisation (Shatchakra) and changes in Her body, the snake-bite, cancer in the breast and the Open Sesame of Self-realisation, viz. Concentration and Brahmacharya and Her condition of absolute Bliss and Joy. I was charmed by Her talks and felt none but a Person who passed through these stages could relate them in details in the simplest Bengali without any reference to any religious book. I was convinced that She possessed the highest Power and would give us anything if She desired. She asserted that Brahma is the only Reality and all else is illusion. She was indifferent and would not listen to worldly talks. Some young men with Western education were attracted to Mother at the time and received Her blessings and were permitted to attend Her and went with Her to different places and at last to Her native village where She remained till the middle of 1928. During this period, She stayed in Calcutta on several occasions and at times She came and lived with us in our hostel, and She sometimes lived in the houses of my relations or rented houses and all along the favourite devotees were all in Her Service. The Divine Grace of Mother has descended like sun shine freely and equally on each and every devotee; in the degree one has faith, sincerity and surrender and in that degree he feels the Grace of Mother and is elevated in mind.

In 1928 I was passing through the greatest crisis in my

life. At this time I was informed one day that Mother had come to Calcutta for treatment of Her teeth troubles and wanted me to see Her. On hearing the news my heart leaped up with joy. I felt sure Mother had come to save me. This proved to be true indeed. I met Mother and she came to my house and lived there for some time and Her teeth were extracted by doctors. Since then She moved from one place to another till She passed away. When She came to Calcutta sometimes She remained in my house. She was particularly affectionate to my wife and also my children who used to look upon Her as their Grand Mother (Thakur-Ma). By Her Blessings they all are Her devotees. In February 1932 when my eldest son Sri Santi Sen Gupta (Mahabir Sen) was only twelve years old, Mother told me that we should leave worldly matters to this boy when he would be fit to take charge of affairs and live separately. By Her Blessings the boy took charge of my affairs and of his brothers and sisters without my telling him to do so and we are now living at Deoghar, S. P. Bihar.

When Swami Prabudhananda was the principal attendant, I had to arrange the movements of Mother as desired by Her. It was at this time that a Muslim Sanyasin was the cook of Mother as related in the Memoir.

Part I contains the Introduction and the Memoir by the author. Some changes have been made regarding the arrangement and in omitting occasional repetitions.

Part II is the translation of the Bengali Book 'Brahmajna-Mayer-Katha', which was published by me in 1932 as desired by Mother. Mother dictated a few lines about Her life which is contained in the Publisher's Foreword of that Book. A few approved sayings of Mother from my diary, are given in the Appendix.

I am grateful to my nephew Sri A. B. Gupta, B.Sc., Publicist, and Shri B. K. Ghose for assisting me to publish this book and to the Trustee of Nirvan Math, Swami Omananda and to my son Sri Santi Sen Gupta for taking charge of the

publication. I am also grateful to my friends who have helped me in many ways. I am ever grateful to my wife who gives me inspiration to serve Mother.

D. N. SEN.

SADHU ARUNACHALA
(MAJ. A. W. CHADWICK, O.B.E.)
Hon. Administrator.

SRI RAMANASRAMAM
VEDAPATASALA
TIRUVANNAMALAI
Sept. 12th 1960.

DEAR MR. SEN,

I have retrieved my own copy of the Life and Teachings and have copied for you the Foreword I wrote some years ago when Prabudhanandaji hoped to publish this book. It explains the circumstances under which it was written and the part we both played in the production.

I hope it will meet your requirements.

Yours sincerely,
ARUNACHALA, S.

To
MR. D. N. SEN, M.A., B.L.,
Santi Asram, Bela Bagan,
P.O. Deoghar, S.P. BIHAR (INDIA)

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

When I first met the author he was observing silence and so was unable to answer my many questions about his Guru. Then for a while he was taken ill and more or less confined to his hut and it was during this time of leisure that this "life" was written, not as a consecutive whole but a page or two at a time scribbled on odd sheets of paper; sometimes in reply to some questions of mine or else as the ideas came into the author's mind. This will account for the unconventionality of the life as well as for its very personal nature. It was never intended for the public but was a purely personal document written by someone for his friend. This too will account for its great charm and spontaneity. As will be seen in the book itself "Mother" was always against any life being written of Her, so in observance of Her wishes this has been substituted to give the public some idea of Her antecedents.

The above was written some years ago at the request of my friend Prabudhanandaji who was hoping to publish this book with the help of a friend. Unfortunately this attempt fell through. Now again an effort is being made to print a record of Mother and Her Teachings. May I be allowed to congratulate those responsible and to wish them every success.

SADHU ARUNACHALA,
(MAJOR A. W. CHADWICK, O.B.E.)
Editor

INTRODUCTION

SRI BRAHMAJNA-MA was born during the early hours of the 21st of February, 1880 A.D. at Bitara, a small village near Sachar, in the District of Tipperah, East Bengal. She was named Kadamvini Devi by Her father Abhaya Charan Chakravarti, who was a landholder of modest resources. She was a little over eight years of age when She was married to a Brahmin young man of Putia, a village nearby; but became a widow before ten and passed the early years of Her life mostly in these two villages till She got self-realisation.

The Hindu inhabitants of the neighbourhood were either Saktas or Vaishnavas, but she, strangely enough intuitively followed the Jnana-vichar-marga (i.e., the path of Knowledge and Discrimination). We do not hear of any other woman attaining Self-realisation by following this path

FOOTNOTE:—She used to say that besides the blue, infinite sky over the head of everyone everywhere, nothing that She saw during Her travels impressed Her as an object of interest, except (1) the spacious, solemn sea with its vistas of roaring waves receding to the distant horizon at sunset, and (2) the majesty and magnificence of the lofty snowclad peaks of the Himalayas, especially when the golden rays of the rising sun flood them on a cloudless day. Health permitting, She would sit for hours looking at them, forgetful of surroundings, in a sort of trance. The descriptions or pictures of man-made so-called wonders of the world such as the superb Taj Mahal, the splendid-temples of South India, the beautiful Pagodas of Burma, the awe-inspiring Sphinx or the gignatic Pyramids of Egypt were of very little interest to Her. Her predilections were altogether out of the ordinary; for example, she preferred the sombre quietness of a pitch-dark and cloudy midnight with thunder and lightning to the delightful and buoyant splendour of a glorious moon-lit night, the sad, heavy and depressing atmosphere of a cremation ground to the mirth hilarity and melodies of a social gathering.

in modern times. Even in ancient times followers of this path were very rare amongst women. This is a unique feature of Her Sadhana.

After Realisation in 1912 Mother was taken to crowded localities, towns and cities and she became for some years a centre of attraction for the educated and religious public, but thereafter She preferred to live a quiet and retired life. During the last few years of Her life, She was practically an invalid and lived—principally at Puri (Orissa), Baidyanath-Deoghar, Ranchi, (Bihar) and Calcutta, occasionally visiting Her native village. She left Her body at Deoghar on the 5th of November 1934, and an Ashram, named Nirvan Math was erected there to Her memory where some of Her disciples and devotees are living. Besides the places already mentioned, Mother also visited Dacca, Benares, Vizagapatam and some places in the District of Manbhum, made a pilgrimage to Sitakundu (East Bengal) and lived for some time at a small place in the Himalayas, near Darjeeling. She was not fond of travelling and all Her travels were under physicians' advice for the benefit of health.

Mother did not want Her life to be written and it seemed that the public would never have the benefit of knowing about Her. When the first edition of—"Brahmajna-Mayer-Katha" was in the press and we thought of giving in the introduction of the book a short sketch of Mother's life, none of us venturing to write it, Mother was approached to tell us what should be written. She asked me to take down a few lines which were put in the introduction of that book. Translated into English, they are:

She was naturally given to discrimination and was engaged in the search for Spiritual Truth. From her childhood, she used to think—(i) where does a human being go and in what state does he remain after death, and whence does he come? (ii) In nothing can peace be found in this world; what, then, is real peace? In such thoughts she would then become immersed. And lastly, such thoughts as (iii) who

am I, what is this body, mind or Atma—used to engage her. These are the three stages of Her Sadhana. Without the help of books or Gurus, by dint of pure discrimination and search for Truth, she tore asunder the meshes of Maya, overcame all doubts and attained Self-realisation.

The memoir in the first part of this book was written by me only for its Editor, Sadhu Arunachala of Ramanashram, Tiruvannamalai (Madras) when I was residing there at the holy feet of Shri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. I never had the least idea that what I write would even be made public. Later on while the memoir was still being written, my friend said that he would show what I had written to Sri Bhagavan and began typing it. After I heard this, my pen got checked and I finished by writing the supplementary portion. Nothing has been added since then. Sadhu Arunachala then requested me to translate into English 'Brahmajna-Mayer-Katha', a Bengali book containing her instructions and teachings. This I did assisted by my friend Brammachari Bhumandaji, a disciple of late revered Swami Purnanandaji of Hrishikesh, who collaborated with me wholeheartedly without grudging time and trouble. The whole thing was then corrected and edited, the songs and poems being put in blank verse and then typed and beautifully bound in book form and eventually presented to Sri Bhagavan by Sadhu Arunachala through me. But for him this book would never have seen the light of publicity, he is the Socrates who brought about its birth.

At that time I had not the faintest idea that it would ever be printed. Many visitors and inmates of Shri Ramanashramam read the typed book and liked it very much and some suggested that it would be worthwhile to print it. But as I had neither time nor money, I did not take any notice of the suggestion. At this stage Monsieur Jalaluddin a Sufi Mohamadan Englishman, a visitor at the Ashrama, read this book. He was very much impressed by the personality of Mother and Her sayings and borrowed the book of which

I had a copy, to get copies for himself, his Sufi Guru and friends. He had the book lithoed and very kindly sent me a dozen copies. This helped a further circulation later on. My late lamented friend Mr. Ratanshaw Koyaji, advocate, a Parsee gentleman of Surat, who had formed a very high opinion of Mother from a perusal of this book, with the object of giving publicity to her sayings, published some portions of the book in the "Vision", a journal published from the "Ananda Asram", Kanhangad, Mangalore. This book has also been translated into Telugu by my friend Mr. Venkata Krishnaiah, Vakil of Nellore, but not yet printed. The second part of this book is the translation of the second edition of the Bengali book "Brahmajna-Mayer-Katha". Mother's instructions, opinions, sayings, letters, poems, and songs were collected by many of Her devotees, and so this book contains instructions especially for those who have made Self-realisation the only aim and ambition of their life. It was never expected that She would allow such a book to be published as She would often say, "There are many books full of instructions but only a few read them and none follow them. What is the good of adding another book containing the instructions of a person like me, illiterate and unversed in the Shastras?" But one gentleman, a follower of Sri Nimvarkacharya, persuaded Mother to give Her consent to the publication, a few days before I left my worldly pursuits and came to live with Her. Collections were received from various devotees and out of these the selection was made by Mother.

The Bengali book has been divided into seven chapters Teachings, Poems, Letters, Questions and Answers, Maya, Reconciliation of Jnan, Bhakti and Karma and Shatchakra (six centres of concentration in the body). Excepting the questions and answers, which were mostly written by me and corrected and altered by Her on the spot, the contents of the other chapters were collected long before the actual

publication. They were altered by Mother Herself and so may be said to contain Her Teachings faithfully.

In the second edition of the book a few questions and answers were added which were taken down by me and these were included with Mother's previous permission. I intended to publish some of Her songs as well but She would not allow it.

The translations which follow are free, but attempt has been made to retain the sense and spirit of the original as far as it is possible. No attempt has been made to condense or systematise them. So the readers will come across some repetitions and other defects which they are requested to tolerate.

Lastly, I thank the friends, some of whom have been mentioned above, who helped me in bringing out this publication and shall consider myself amply rewarded if readers derive any benefit from this book. I have no other personal interest in it.

PRABUDHANANDA.

THE LIFE AND TEACHING

OF

SRI BRAHMAJNA MA

PART ONE

MEMOIR

MEMOIR

By SWAMI PRABUDHANANDA

Sri Brahmajna Ma was born in a village in the District of Tipperah (East Bengal) on the Ekadasi day of the bright lunar fortnight of the month of Falgoon (corresponding to the middle of March) sixty years ago. She was born in a Brahmin family of moderate means but highly respected in the village and neighbourhood on account of their piety and goodness as well as their social position. She was, like our Bhagavan, the second child of Her parents and was their pet. Her father regarded Her from Her birth as a Goddess dislodged from Heaven by some curse or other (Shapa bhrasta Devi). She was married at the age of eight and Her husband died within one and a half years of their marriage. She continued to live with Her parents generally, but when She grew up, She mostly lived in Her husband's house all alone, as the brothers, who were living together as a joint family, separated and She was given a separate hut. Her husband's brothers looked after Her landed property. Her ways were entirely different from those of the ordinary run of people and She was unable to remain long in the company of girls of Her own age and position. She was of a meditative mood and grown up men would be struck by Her conversation, which was like that of a philosopher even before Her marriage. Two instances are given of this.

Once a terrible hurricane passed over the village and all the men of Her house were very much afraid, fearing that the huts would collapse and that great damage would be done. While it continued they had spent all the time praying to God, while She stood by, watching quite unconcerned. When once the hurricane was over, all became happy once more and

returned to their daily occupations quite cheerfully. She was very much struck by their now taking life so lightly and asked Her father:

"How can you be so happy when you know that a similar catastrophe may happen at any moment? Is there no way to go beyond these troubles?"

Her father was unable to give any adequate reply.

On another occasion an old lady died and when she was being cremated Mother was sitting within sight. Others were standing nearby talking about the old lady. Mother asked,

"Why do you say 'She passed away?', If she is not the body who is she? Where has she gone? Whence did she come?"

Bystanders were surprised at such precocity.

Goddess Kali used to be worshipped in the house at the time of Dewali (Deepavali). Mother could not understand why men should worship an idol made of clay according to their own imagination and then take it for a deity. She could not be induced to bow down before the idol. She never had any devotion to a personal God. She was a thorough *Jnanapanthi*. In the same way as Sri Bhagavan says "Know thyself," She used to say, "Know your ownself or get hold of your ownself." (Nij or Apan—own, words often used by Her in early days).

She learnt the Bengali alphabet and read a few elementary books before She was married. Long after Self-realization, when people came to Her, she learnt from them the vocabulary of religious literature such as Atma, Brahma, etc. When some of the Upanishads and Vedanta literature were read aloud to Her she liked them very much and said, "They seem to me like the sayings of friends with whom I once travelled, about what we all saw on our journey." She was so confident of Herself that if anybody should say, "Shankaracharya or Buddha says just the opposite to what you say"

She would reply, "I can't help it—What I know and see for myself I believe. They must have been misunderstood."

She liked Shankara and Buddha very much and also Asthavakra, and She never had reason to differ with them on any important subject. But She was more liberal than Shankara.

She has described the stages of Realization in Shatchakra, a chapter in the book Brahmanja-Mayer-katha and it is believed that She had the fullest Realization at about the age of 32. Thereafter She used to mix with others and discuss with them ordinary subjects also so-called religious customs. Several photographs were taken of Her between 32—40. She was at that time quite indifferent. But thereafter She would not sit for one at all. The college students and intelligent and educated men of the neighbouring villages used to come to Her and all became Her devotees, and some of the educated young men never took up any temporal activities and are now either Brahmacharies or Sannyasins. It is a peculiarity of Her life that She used to have a favourite disciple always with Her, on whom She used to depend very much. But they would change one after the other like the British Prime Ministers. After I came to Her I became Her favourite and for four years remained Her personal attendant till She passed away five years ago. Some months before I came to Her She used to say, "One more man will come to me and then my work will be finished."

She came to Calcutta several times and seemed to be waiting for some body. Many visitors came to see Her but She said that none of these was the man She was looking for. After I met Her She said, "This is the last man to come to me." I knew nothing at all of all this at that time but when I took the garb, after renouncing my temporal activities within a year after I met Her, I was informed all about it.

Mother was credited with wonderful powers and when I went to Her native village with Her, many people related

stories of these. I questioned Mother but She replied, "I did not do anything. I am always in the same condition. Others get the benefit of their own faith and wonders are worked through the faith of the people concerned. I do nothing but ever remain like the Sun."

After I met Her she became very retiring, and would not receive any visitors; we also had instructions not to talk to anyone about Her, and we lived in places where no one knew who She was. Many thought She was my own mother and as She used to wear the white cloth usually put on by Bengali widows, no one used to take Her for a Saint. When anyone came and talked to Her she would carry on the conversation without giving any hint of Her speciality, as when travelling in a train. But everybody would be struck by Her intelligence. When visitors came and asked questions, Her attitude of putting counter-questions was very much like our Bhagavan's. She had a wonderful memory. A song which She liked She could remember with intonations if She heard it sung but once, and She could repeat it months afterwards. I composed some songs and sang them to Her. Sometimes She would ask me to sing a particular song and if I could not remember She would always help me. She was also a poet by nature. She could dictate songs and poems as if She was quoting from memory.

She seemed to be of opinion that a man who sought Self-realization should give up all other pursuits and devote his whole time and attention to this alone. That is why happy-go-lucky aspirants could never find favour with Her. She was a strict disciplinarian and would not tolerate anti-Sannyasin tendencies. She never encouraged reading. She would say, "The Gita and Vivekachudamani are enough," She would also say, "Mere reading is good for nothing. Get hold of some passage and translate it into action. If knowledge of books could do anything, all the Pandits would have been liberated long ago. But they are still where they were,

and some of them go downwards because they develop the additional sin of pride."

While describing the stages through which She passed, She said that at one time She developed the power of seeing what was in other people's minds. No one could hide anything, but She was very much disturbed by this. Her mind would not be still and She found Herself spending Her whole time studying the thoughts of others, whether She liked it or not. After some time this stage passed and She was glad.

At another time She found Herself always in a state of happiness. She liked this stage for a few days, but She soon thought, "This happiness is being felt by the mind; so it is in the region of duality; so I don't want it." Thus She passed beyond it.

When we discriminate and reason our conclusion does not make a permanent impression and we have to go through the process many times before it becomes a part of our nature. Not so with Mother. Once She reasoned, the impression was lasting.

When She came home after Her husband's death She became very meditative and people thought it was on account of Her husband's death that She was worried. But that was not the case. Actually She was quite unaffected by it. One day Her father asked Her what She would like to do in order to be happy. She said, "I would like very much to keep on looking at that big palm tree over there." None understood what She meant by this. She told us later that She had meant that She wanted to keep Her mind fixed on something still.

Even when She was a child, sometimes She would have visions of the future, and She was always confident that there was no possibility of mistake. When Her husband was going away from home for the last time a sudden thought flashed across Her mind that he would never return. After a few days a telegram came to say that he was seriously ill. A letter went to him but She told the others, "What is the

good of going? He will not recover and probably he is already dead." This proved to be only too true.

Once Mother was bitten by a snake. Afterwards She would often see snakes coming to bite Her. Hearing Her call-out, others would run to Her aid but were unable to see anything. She would say, "Don't you see the snake binding my hand with its tail? Oh! there it is biting me." But the others could see no snake at all, though strangely enough the marks of the snake's tail would be visible on Her hand as also the marks of the bite, from which blood would ooze out. This continued for some time, but the bite never poisoned Mother. We asked Her later what was the reason for all this. Mother said it was the solidification of Her imagination. At first She had had no idea what it was, but when She found the reason it stopped. From that time onwards people would call Her Manasha Thakurani (the presiding Goddess over snakes). A separate hut was erected for Her and they started regular pooja. The pooja was still being carried on daily when I went to visit the place, at Her husband's house, eight years ago. Mother remained indifferent to these demonstrations but from that time She commanded great respect and was also called "Siddha Thakurani," or the lady who has been successful in her Sadhana. Thereafter She would remain sometimes within closed doors for several days at a time, never coming out at all. Nobody would venture to disturb Her on these occasions.

When I met Her She told me that She had been during these long years in a state of trance. This trance would sometimes become deeper and she would fall into "Samadhi". But I only saw Her in this state of "Samadhi" on three occasions, and then not for long. Physicians would be surprised on feeling Her pulse. We noticed one peculiarity in Her fingers, on both hands the thumb would come across the palm until it touched the base of the ring finger. When she passed away, slowly the thumbs began to bend towards the same place until they finally became fixed.

Mother would say that when an aspirant becomes desirous of powers it clearly indicates that he has forgotten the object of his activities. His object was originally to go beyond the world of *maya*, but powers are in the domain of *maya*, and in striving to get these he must of necessity want to remain where he is already. She would also say, "How foolish people are to strive for some of these powers which are possessed by some of the lower animals and birds. A special kind of spider can walk on the water, birds can fly, so if a man wants to obtain these powers, where is the wonder in them? It may impress fools but does no good to the seeker after truth except to drag him down."

At Deoghar once a Sadhu came and said he could tell everybody's thoughts by looking at their faces. I told this to Mother and suggested to Her that he might be asked to tell Hers. She did not say anything and so I called the Sadhu to Her room and said, "Let us know what is passing in Her mind." The Sadhu stared at Her eyes for a very long time and as Mother did not turn Her gaze he himself eventually closed his eyes and said, "She is not an ordinary lady. I cannot tell what is passing in Her mind."

Once a palmist came and Mother's palm was shown to him. He looked at it for a few moments and then prostrated before Her, saying, "She is a great Sadhu—I never saw such a hand before in my life."

Mother had a very strong sense of humour and sometimes She would relate stories with gestures and keep us laughing for hours together. Generally however She was reserved and would only listen, rarely speaking.

When a visitor came to visit Her She would talk to him and listen to him for some time. Within a short time She would know him so thoroughly that he could hide nothing from Her.

Within a year of meeting Her I gave up my temporal pursuits. During that year I used to visit Her as often as I could. At Benares She told me one day, "You have some

good minor qualities suitable for a Sadhu but the principal quality (viz-Brahmacharya) is wanting". She said "For you the path cannot be expected to be very smooth, as you dedicated the best portion of your life to Satan for Mammom worship, and God may not easily accept your offer. So you must be prepared to fight hard." A few months after I took the garb, one day she said suddenly, "The sex impulse is very strong in you even now."

I said nothing and began to search in my mind for the explanation of this remark, but failed. Next day, when I was alone with Her, I said that I could not find out the reason of Her previous day's remark. She replied, "It is clear. I see that you become angry sometimes. What is anger? When desire is checked, anger takes shape. As you become angry you must still have desires, and when you have desires the strongest, namely the sex impulse, must also be in you, though it may be in a latent state. The three principal enemies to the pacification of the mind are, sex impulse (Kama), anger (Krodha) and the feeling of want (Lobha). The first is the last to go, so when the second and third are visible it is certain that the first is also present."

From that time I started the habit of looking upon any and every woman I had occasion to meet as an image of the Divine Mother and if I had occasion to talk or write to a lady I would address her as mother. This has helped me a good deal.

We had one great difficulty with Mother. She would not tell us specifically what to do and what not to do. She expected us to be guided by Her general instructions, adapting them to specific cases by discrimination. She said one day, "This is a very slippery path, you must be wide-awake and be guided by discrimination, keeping the goal always in mind. What is the good of my telling you now what to do and what not to do? I shall not be with you always. Stand on your own legs!"

She was dead against the mode of living of modern



Sannyasins, and She would for hours together tell them how they had forgotten the object of Sannyas and were busy with temporal activities—how some wanted a large number of disciples, some the reputation of a *Jnani* without becoming one, while some wanted to impress upon others how much religious literature they knew. She would say, "All these are self-created wants and bonds whereas the Sadhu's goal is to conquer want and go beyond it." Mother would say, "If you want emancipation in this life, give up all other activities and devote your whole time and attention to Self-realization."

She did not encourage part-time activities and this was the reason why the ordinary person could not take up the ideal. She would say, "I don't want many sons, let there be only one son, but let him be a true son."

One day an elderly villager came to Her and said, "My son is leading a profligate life. Mother, why don't you turn him in a good direction?" The son came to see Her and She began to talk to him. He was so much impressed that within a few days he became Her devotee and wanted to take sannyas. The father got scent of this and came to Mother and said, "Mother, I did not want you to make a Sadhu of my son—he is my only son—who will look after us if he becomes a Sadhu?"

The son left the village and took the garb and is still a Sannyasin. Most of the brilliant boys of school and college of the neighbouring villages were Her devotees. And some of them did not marry, and though some of them have not actually renounced, they all try to live a life of plain living and high thinking.

In the selection of men Mother never cared for caste or creed or sex. An illiterate Mahomedan used to come to see Her and eventually became a sannyasin, and when I met Her She said, "He is the best of the lot". During the last few years of Her life he and myself were always with Her. He was the cook. When Mother became very weak and could

not move without assistance it was suggested that a lady devotee might come and help Her. She enquired, "Why?" "Can you not help me yourself?" She asked me. I said I was ready to be of any assistance I could, but as help was necessary at the time of answering the calls of nature also, a woman might be better as She might otherwise feel some delicacy. She smiled and said, "What is the difference between a man and a woman? If I am going to feel delicacy I shall feel it even if the attendant is a woman. So there will be no necessity for a woman if you take charge." So I used to help Her in answering the calls of nature, and had to apply an enema when necessary. I noticed that She never felt the slightest delicacy, but She forbade others to come whether a man or a woman. I had never attended a patient before but I found that I could attend to Her like an expert and She would not even accept a drink except from my hands, as She would say others could not give it properly. I was very diffident before I undertook the task and others were sure that I should fail to satisfy Her, as I was so inexperienced, but probably Her blessings made me efficient, for I would myself be surprised at my own expert ways of attendance.

When I first came to Mother I had a part-time job in the Government Commercial Institute, where I had to work in the evenings for about sixty to eighty hours a year giving lectures, for a salary of nine hundred rupees a year. Some people suggested that if I kept the job I could then maintain both myself and Mother. She was very much annoyed at this suggestion. She said, "You have to beg for food, clothing and other necessities if you become a Sannyasin." So I tendered my resignation and gave away all my money and clothing, and whenever I required anything I had to beg for it. It was very difficult for me at first but gradually I learned to put up with insulting remarks and bad treatment from people whom I had to approach. Mother was of opinion that begging helps a good deal in checking the ego, and She always wanted me to beg for my necessities. Some of my

friends and relatives suggested that they would like to pay a monthly contribution for me, but I refused to accept.

Mother used to be asked whether it was not neglect of duty on the part of a son to become a Sadhu, leaving his parents to shift for themselves in their old age. She replied that if such a sense of duty was predominant it was not the time for the son to renounce. She would say, "To a man seeking Liberation there is no duty to anyone. To liberate himself is his first and last duty to himself and to mankind as well."

Congressmen would often come to Her and suggest that young men ought to try and improve their countrymen and free their country from bondage. Mother would say, "Certainly it is very good to work for one's country and countrymen, but the real Swadesh is Atma and no work is nobler than finding that Swadesh."

I was fortunate to hear Her meeting the arguments put forward in favour of Vaishnavism and Dwaita-Adwaitaism. She was almost illiterate and had read no books, but Her arguments and reasoning were so sound that everyone was struck by them. She would say, "I am sure my predecessors must have advanced some such arguments in support of Adwaita. If you look you will certainly find it recorded in the literature."

Many religious organizations try to get intelligent and educated men to preach their creed in India and abroad. They become talkers but have no knowledge of the practical side. Mother used to say, "These preachers will only waste their time and energy and no effect will be produced. They are like the blind trying to lead the blind. It is a pity that all this is being done in the name of religion." About the disciples of Saints, Mother used to say, "Chaitanya-Dev had some very good disciples. Saints come and go, but there are very few to reach the goal by following them. Men are eager to pass for Sadhus but do not like to *be* Sadhus. After a Saint departs his followers sometimes form themselves into

a sort of mutual admiration society and advertize their greatness, but it is very difficult, to hide the truth."

Some of Her first disciples wanted to start another organisation like the Ramakrishna Mission and preach about Her teachings and enroll followers. She was very much against it, and this strong attitude of Hers put an end to the enthusiasm. She said, "You are always with me, you are always hearing my views and getting instruction—how far have you profited by these? Why do you expect others will be highly benefited by getting second-hand and sometimes distorted instruction from you? Do good to yourselves first."

Mother generally liked only two people to live with Her at one time, and would not tolerate more than three of us. The usual practice was that when household duties did not cause us to be busy elsewhere we would all sit in Her room. Sometimes there would be no conversation but occasionally we would have very interesting ones. Mother had an unending stock of anecdotes and stories to illustrate and impress any point. Her object was always to make it clear to us how in spite of the fact that there were innumerable Sadhus, only a very few were in earnest; how they would forget their object only to wander down into byelanes, passing the whole of their lives in slumber, as it were. She would say, "I always tell you about the pit-falls so that you may avoid them. If a seeker proceeds along the right path, however slow he may be, he will surely reach the goal—it is because he keeps on wandering down the bye-lanes that his journey never ends. It seems to me that these Sadhus are like pilgrims who intend to go to Benares, but instead of taking the road to Benares put their luggage on their heads and roam about in the streets of their own city. All this is *maya*." Mother would never criticize outsiders except before a chosen few. She would say, "A religious organization on a big scale is bound to fail because good aspirants are not as cheap as blackberries." She also said, "There are many Gurus but a very few good disciples. I rarely

come across a Sadhu who seems to be following the correct path. All Sadhus are moving in the domain of *Avidya* but no one can be called a Sadhu if he is not earnest in getting beyond this domain."

A very well-known Sadhu in Bengal—a highly educated Sanskrit Pundit clothes himself like a female, puts on ornaments and calls himself a female friend of Krishna. One gentleman went to see him and on his return related all that he had seen and all that he did there. After his departure Mother laughed at this ludicrous and unnecessary way of Sadhana adopted by this Sadhu. She said: "So much energy is being directed to foolish fancies. It is generally with the object of creating an impression on others that most of these people while away their time on such absurdities."

Sometimes people would come and tell us about something well-worth seeing. Mother would ask me whether I would like to go and see it too. I said to Her once, "Mother, I have seen enough of the world—probably I have spent more than twenty-five thousand rupees in travelling and living abroad far beyond the means of a man of my position; so no object of curiosity can impress me any more, but if you are going I would like to accompany you. On my own, or in the company of others, I do not want to go." When I was alone with Her afterwards, She said, "I am very glad that you have no longer any curiosity. Why should a Sadhu want to see anything but Brahma?"

When I went with Her to Her native village (that was on Her last visit) one elderly mahomedan accosted me and said: "Babu Sahib, I have heard all about you but I am sorry for you. Our Thakurani (meaning Mother) is a miser. She never gives anything to anyone. Some people served Her for years but got nothing. They sacrificed but in spite of it were unable to obtain Her favour. I am afraid that you will also suffer the same fate." At night when no one was nearby, I related this story to Mother. She laughed

and laughed. "Are you dejected?" She asked me. I replied, "I am sure that there will be no injustice in this case. To be successful I shall have to work. No work—no reward". Mother said "Proceed honestly, nothing can make you fail. Even if you commit mistakes, sincerity of purpose will make you detect your error. A man can not even die if he is determined to reach the goal in this birth."

During the period that I was in principal charge of Mother's camp, I was always in Her favour. I was the oldest of the attendants and probably the worst *adhikari* but She used to give me so much preference that I considered myself very fortunate. When Mother fell ill, for want of funds it was decided that I should go to Cuttack, leaving Mother at Puri, and try to raise funds. I had an intimate friend (an M.L.C.) at Cuttack in whose house I stayed for about three weeks while I raised some money. When I returned I found that Mother would not even look at me. I began seriously to ask myself what mistake I had committed but could not discover. The others could not help me either. My mahomedan friend was in sympathy with me, He said, "Mother did not like your going away from Her to raise money. Mother always likes Her favourites to remain beside Her. Your going was a mistake." However in a few hours I was restored to favour, but she never told me why She had been annoyed with me.

Mother used to say, "Personal service and attendance on a Saint elevate the mind of the devotee and can be regarded as a good form of Sadhana. There are three classes of attendants. The first and best class act according to the wish of the Master by studying His mind; the second and intermediate class act according to the wish of the Master from His tacit or verbal hint or instruction; but the third or last class never try to follow the Master's instructions even if distinctly given. The second class will gradually rise up to be in the first class, but the third class gain nothing

by the so-called service and attendance and in all probability go further from the goal."

She would say, "You attendants want me to act according to your wish, forgetting that thereby you want to play the role of my master. This is no service. It is rather lording it. The spirit of surrender must be in you if you really want to profit by doing personal attendance to a Saint."

After I came to Mother I tried to be guided in everything by Her and within a short time I found I did not have much trouble. My practice was to confide in Her all my physical or mental troubles and never give a thought to them afterwards. I found that She would do what was necessary Herself or direct me to do or not to do something, which instruction I would unhesitatingly follow. When she fell seriously ill and we all knew that She would not live long, I asked Her, "What shall I do when you are no more here to help me to get over my troubles and difficulties?" She smiled and said, "If you sincerely want direction you will get it somehow or other."

Two years after She passed away I was very much worried over a personal matter, but could not decide what to do. I went to the room in which Her photograph was placed and where She used to be worshipped daily and submitted my difficulty to her. After an hour or so it seemed to me that Mother was telling me, "When I was alive I used to help you by verbal advice, but now I have given up the body and you have put up a photograph to represent me, why do you expect me to guide you? Take your advice from the photograph. Look at it, it is indifferent to whatever you may do and taking the hint, be indifferent to whatever may come to you according to your *prarabdha*, always keeping your mind fixed on your real purpose. Do not worry, it won't help you at all." I was very much comforted that day and from that time I have tried to follow the advice I then got. It has made me more indifferent than I was, and I am far better for it.

Many would ask us point-blank, "Please tell us some episodes in your Mother's life so that we may have faith in Her too." I could never reply to these people, as my faith was not based on any miracles she had done or extraordinary material powers displayed by Her in my presence. On two or three occasions I received some personal benefit from the very touch of Her hand, but when I tried to make the touch responsible for the benefit, Mother would not have it at all. She said, "I am always the same, I do nothing, like the Sun—others get the benefit according to their capacity and receptivity".

Once a gentleman came and accused Mother of not helping us all to be like Herself. Mother replied, "You are like a boy who tried to collect all the water of the ocean in a tea-cup, and when he found the cup could only hold a few drops accused the ocean of niggardliness; whereas the remedy was to come with a bigger container so that he might be able to hold all the water of the ocean in it. The Saint is here to give, but alas! where is the deserving person to take? One Saint can help millions to get Liberation but can scarcely find one fit to receive the benefit."

I met Mother at the beginning of my thirty-eighth year. From the very first day I wanted to be of service to Her though I felt diffident of offering myself. However I never missed an opportunity of trying to do something for Her and when I found anything for Her was waiting attention I undertook it and did it as carefully as I could. Sometimes Mother would say, "There's no hurry, they will do it." But I would reply, "I am not of any use here, please let me do something." This would silence Her. As time went on I began to relieve others of work when I was there and took upon myself the responsibility of some petty service. When I was nearby I would keenly watch how others attended on Her and would wonder whether I could not improve on the way they attended to Her. Mother was an invalid at that time but would not ask for any

any service if She could do it Herself, and it was always my aim not to allow Her to do anything for Herself if I could do it instead. So when I renounced, a year after I met Her, I took upon myself some jobs which She had formerly done Herself, such as cleaning Her false teeth, preparing betel leaves, cutting betel nuts etc. To keep Her room neat and tidy was also my work. Gradually I was pleased to find myself foremost of Her personal attendants. I had never cooked in my life; so preparing food for Her was left to others, as I thought that I might not be able to prepare it properly. I found She liked my work and if for any reason I could not do it She would do it Herself.

When She fell seriously ill, if any service was necessary and I was not nearby, She would send for me. About a month before She passed away She became so weak that She could not turn over without help, and as I knew that She did not think others could help in these matters to Her satisfaction, I made it my first duty to be nearby day and night, always at Her beck and call. I used to sleep in the next room, but my ears would be always in Her room, as it were, and the slightest noise, a sneeze or a cough, would awaken me and bring me to Her side.

Long after She passed away I would wake up at the sound of a cough or a sneeze and would imagine that I was wanted, but would soon realize that She was no more. But this habit of noticing want of attendance has not disappeared entirely. When I sit in the Hall I notice sometimes that some service for Bhagavan awaits being done and I feel very uneasy, but yet do not venture to do it myself. One attendant seems to be always watching these things, and I find that when any service is necessary he does it. However, as soon as it is done I feel much happier.

Mother had sometimes pain in Her legs, particularly the left one. Occasionally She used to press the muscles of Her legs Herself. One day I offered to massage them and declared that I was an expert in the art during my boyhood, as

I had liked to do that sort of service for my father; Mother would not let me do it, but on several occasions afterwards I insisted on Her giving me permission. She agreed. Thereafter I would very often be at the job when I had nothing else to do. Mother sometimes used to sit on the bed with Her legs hanging down. This I would take as an invitation to massage Her legs, and I would be quickly at work. Though I was the oldest of the attendants and had known Her for the shortest period, of all of us none could be so free with Her as I ventured to be. When travelling in trains ladies would come to the conclusion that She was my own Mother. In this connection I have to admit that my relationship with Mother was two-fold. I lost my own mother at two and though all my relations tried their best to compensate for the loss by showing extra-favours and attention to me, I had a secret feeling of want in the core of my heart which nothing could satisfy. Mother bestowed on me the attention a son receives from his mother and so She played with me, as it were, the double role of Guru and mother. So when I joined Her after leaving my relations, their attraction could not divert me much.

Mother had some favourite pithy sayings which She used to repeat as occasion required. One of these was → 'Guru is *suru* (beginning).' She would say that unless a man can find a Guru in whom he can place the fullest faith he can not be said to have begun a religious life. Of course this is for ordinary people, not for those extraordinary people who reach the goal naturally without the help of any Guru. Many would come to Her and request Her to give *diksha* by *mantra*. Mother's reply would be, "I do not know any *mantras*." One person who was Her devotee since childhood insisted on having some *mantra* and refused to be put off. So Mother said, "Tell me which *mantra* you like." So he went through a booklet containing *mantras* for *diksha* and selected one. Mother said, "Very well, go on with this

mantra, if you like it." This is the only instance of Her giving a *mantra*, if it can be called such.

Another favourite saying of Mother's was, "First the association of a Guru and then absolute dis-association." She would say that devotees leave their previous associations on renunciation and then form a new association. So She would suggest that *sadhakas* should practise alone. —

To a *sadhaka* Mother would say, "You will have to court death sooner or later. When it is certain that you must die one day, why don't you die now when you are still alive, (*i.e.* let all your likes and dislikes be dead to you and remain as you really are, devoid of all *vasanas*). If you do this you will not have to die hereafter, and you will be in perpetual Bliss and Existence."

One favourite disciple of Mother fell seriously ill and when Mother went to see him, he said, "Mother, you asked me to die while I was still alive, but I could not. Now I am going to die at death. What a pity I did not follow your advice in time."

On many occasions the usual question about the comparative strength of Predestination and Free-will was put to Her. She would always reply with special reference to the mentality of the questioner. So I found it very difficult to understand what Her opinion really was. Once I questioned Her, saying, "Your answers to different persons have confused me." She replied, "Tell me what you think about it yourself." I said, "I look at it thus: In order to make an earthen pot both potter and clay are necessary. Clay is predestination and the potter is free-will. If both are good, the best results will follow, but the excellence of one can only partly make up for the deficiency of the other".

Mother said, "Yes, you are right. But you see all these questions—in fact all questions—relate to, and are only possible in the domain of *Avidya*. This matter-of-fact world is no better than a dream. So what can be the standard of truth here? All questions have to be answered

so that the questioner may be helped to disillusion himself and extricate himself from the region of *Avidya*. So direct your energies to knowing and finding yourself." Questions about Creation etc. would always be tackled by Mother in the same way without troubling to go into details.

Shortly after I met Mother I passed one month with Her at Benares. While returning and waiting for the train at the station I received my first lesson in Self-enquiry. Mother asked me, "Tell me who you are." I replied, "You know all about me, what more do you want me to tell you?" Mother said, "I know all about you, but do you know who you are?" I paused, understanding that the question was not of the common run, and with some hesitation and after a few minutes' deliberation, I replied, "I am a *Shakti*." "What is the nature of that *Shakti*?" She asked again. But I was unable to reply. Mother said, "You are a grown-up man and are given credit for being an educated and intelligent person; is it not a shame that you do not know yourself?" I pleaded guilty of ignorance. Mother said, "Pursue the enquiry and find out yourself." This set me thinking for a few days, but after I returned to Calcutta and became once more absorbed in various material pursuits I forgot. So the enquiry was not seriously taken up before I became a Sannyasin.

A few months after my taking the robe, one day Mother asked me "What do you do when you sit for meditation?" I replied, "I try to realize that in the world there is nothing to deserve my attention, so that I may thus obtain peace." Mother said, "You are attached to the world, and this *asakti* must be put an end to by *viraga*. This is the second stage. But you must not stop here, you must not be attached to *viraga* either, it is but a means to an end. You must go higher up and beyond both these and observe indifference. The object in view is to make the mind waveless so that on the calm mind you may find the image of *Atma* reflected."

Mother used to say, "*Vichara* and *Vairagya* must go hand-in-hand, the object in view being to make the mind calm. Sometimes Sadhus make the show of *Vairagya* the be-all and end-all of their lives; they do not pause and reflect where all this is leading them. A Sadhu, though he may be looked upon as full of *viraga*, may be attached to some new object of attachment such as clotted hair or flowing beard or even the orange robe. If these make him proud and he becomes fully occupied with the thoughts of these things, he is no nearer the goal in spite of his so-called renunciation."

In order to make the mind quieter Mother would advise us to avoid temporal topics of conversation and would not tolerate us reading newspapers. She did not even encourage much reading of religious literature. She would say, "You are all self-realized, only a veil is obstructing the view. There are and may be thousands of ways of removing this veil, but one way is good enough for you. Take your hint from the *Guru* and follow one path alone. Knowing how to proceed to the goal in a dozen ways does not take you any nearer. You would be nearer by following one path alone. Read one or two books and follow the instructions contained therein."

The Bengali word "*parah*" has a double meaning, "to read" and "to fall". She would pun on this word thus: "You are always falling (or reading); is not the time ripe for you to rise up now?"

Some Saints are credited with practising different kinds of practices for reaching the same goal. Mother would say, "There may be many ways from the plain leading to the summit of the hill, but if anyone goes by one path to the top he can discern all the other paths from above. So a Saint will be able to tell all about the different *Sadhanas*, but it is not necessary that he should have practised the others in order to be able to advise on them."

Mother used to teach different ways of *Sadhana* to

different people. She would, however give prominence to *Jnanamarga*, the path of Self-enquiry. One of Her first devotees, after having received his first lessons, went to the Himalayas and on his return said: "I am He, who will practise and what?" When this reached Mother's ears She sent for him and took him to task for trying to pass for a realized soul and thereby defraud people. Mother would never tolerate any of Her devotees trying to pass for a *Jnani* and would at once expose them. She used to say, "Now-a-days Sadhus read a few pages from the standard authors, commit to memory some verses and with this stock-in-trade start a campaign for making disciples. There is no hope for such cheats."

Mother was a strict disciplinarian. She would not so much mind devotees in temporal pursuits doing something wrong, but would not at all tolerate it if we, who had renounced the world for Self-realisation, should violate Her definite instructions. It is for this reason that very few devotees could remain in Her good grace for long. She would say, "People do not come here for Self-realization, they come for other objects, and if you study their habits you will soon find that sincerity is wanting." To an aspirant for Self-realization She would say, "Make up your mind and *jump*; do not look to the left or right, but *swim straight* to the opposite bank, which is your goal." Sometimes aspirants think that after Self-realization they are going to do this or that thing; for these, Mother held out no hope. A favourite disciple of Mother's once said to Her, "Mother, your standard is very high, this will attract very few, you are not likely to have many followers. Like the shrewed peasant you should mix some oil-cake with the straw to make it seem attractive to the cattle." Mother replied, "If any one asks me I tell him the truth unalloyed. I don't care if I have a following or not. I know this much, that if any one is desirous of Peace he has no other alternative but to follow the path chalked out by me."

What I have related above cannot be said to be a few pages taken from Mother's life, it is rather an unsystematic statement of my impression of Her. She used to say, "How can anybody else write the life of a Saint? A Saint's life is the history of how his mind gradually merged in Brahma. The Saint alone knows this, so there can be an autobiography but no life written by another."

An attempt was made by a disciple to write Her life and when this came to Her knowledge She tore the mss. to pieces, remarking, "You are trying to imitate the disciples of—. His life is full of absurd statements. In trying to make Him look larger they only succeeded in making Him a pigmy. You need not preach or tell others about me. If only one of you realize, that will be better than hundreds of preaching campaigns."

In the booklet containing Her sayings, it was suggested that a short sketch of Her life should be included. She Herself dictated* a few lines, saying afterwards:

"This is in short my life. Never attempt to write the life of a Saint before you realize the Self. You are sure to commit mistakes and only mislead others. The end (*i.e.* period after Self-realization) of a Saint's life comes to the notice of the public and His previous history is related, principally from conjecture or imperfect information. This is the reason why a Saint's life is full of misrepresentation."

May my Mother forgive me if I have made any wrong statement herein.

* See page 27 para. 2.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mother was a poet by nature and She could dictate poems and songs as freely and as quickly as if She were reciting ordinary compositions. Of course some of them would not stand the test of grammar or metre, but at the time of dictation nothing would be noticed. On request She would also sing the songs correctly without reference to what She had dictated already. She had defective eye-sight when I met Her and could hardly read or write though she wore glasses.

It is a pity that these songs have not been preserved. They were unadulterated versions of Her opinions on many subjects. After I met Her I collected those composed in my presence during the last few years of Her life, some of which are given below. The occasion for the composition of a song would arise generally when giving advice to a devotee. For example one devotee wrote that in spite of coming in contact with Her he was still engaged in removing hunger and thirst and the other material wants of his family. Mother dictated the following song in reply:

"Ponder deeply and there will be no hunger.

'You are in reality the great Brahman and exist as the Whole.

You exist ever free, you are never bound, you are always fully conscious—look at your true nature.

You have no desire, anger, avarice, hate, shame or even fear of death—you are pure *Atma* full of knowledge.

You have lost knowledge of Self in duality—your ignorance is your own creation and you are in it.

You have got no work to do, there is no virtue, vice, *dharma* or *adharma* for you, neither birth nor death, because you are changeless.

You have no mind, no intellect, no spite nor ego, you have no father, mother, wife, son nor family;

You are befooled by the shadow of your mistake, and forgetting yourself by your own mistake you have kept your ownself away from the Self."

Another disciple wrote to Her that he had been passing his days in a monotonous domestic life, having neither courage to give up these duties nor to take them up in right earnest and forget Her teaching. To him She replied;

"See and judge for yourself what you are doing in this wilderness of *samsar*, finding no pleasure in it;

Day by day the end is drawing near, what have you done to prepare for it?

You have read the *Vedas* and *Shastras* have heard about the Truth,

But your mind, illusioned by *maya*, is not yet awake and you have forgotten your own Self.

By your own mistake you are playing the role of *Jiva* and courting birth and death times without number.

Know for certain that you will surely die if you are born,

No one lives eternally.

So when there is yet time, be acquainted with your own Self and put an end to fear and death.

Day is ending, give up play, and by disclosing your own nature destroy the darkness.

There is no pleasure in desiring sense-object,s; fame, position and wealth are all sapless.

Touch the real source of happiness and thereby destroying the monotony; drink the nectar of contentment which is your Self.

There is an abode of *Shanti* where you can have rest.

March on and on—Now is the time."

In reply to a song by a devotee which says that the "I" is always eluding his grasp, Mother dictated the following song:

Ascertain who you are—

Always you are speaking of yourself as "I", "I", "I".

Are you the five elements, including the *akasha*, or mind, intellect, body or the vital force?

What is your name, what is your form and where do you reside?

Tell me whether you are desire, anger, avarice or illusion;

Give me your acquaintance—are you *purusha* or *prakriti*, who is playing on the dramatic stage of *maya*? It is yourself who is playing and creating other players, father, mother and relations.

Always the insatiable fire of desire is burning, hope is not quenched by sprinkling on it the water of enjoyment, the fire of *tritaṇ* is always ablaze.

You are pure, conscious, free and always exist; body, intellect and ego are your illusory imaginations,

You are yourself Brahman by nature—see it by opening the eyes of knowledge.”

THE LIFE AND TEACHING

OF

SRI BRAHMAJNA-MA

PART TWO

Translation from
BRAHMAJNA-MAYER-KATHA
(Words of Self-realised Mother)



*Nirvan Math—Deoghar
(Erected in 1935 after the demise of Mother)*

PART TWO

BRAHMAJNA—Mayer—Katha
(*Words of Self-Realised Mother*)

(*Translation from the edition published in Bengali
during Saint's life and approved by Her.*)

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

She whose instructions (upadesha) and words about the Truth (Tatvakatha) are published in this book was born, on Friday, the 9th Falgoon, the 11th day of the bright fortnight (Shukla ekadashi) in 1286 B.S. (corresponding to 1879 to 1880 A.D.) at Bitara (P. S. Kachua, P.O. Sachar) in the District of Tippera (Bengal) as the 2nd daughter of late Abhaya Charan Chakravarti. Kadamvini Devi was the name given her by the parents. She was married when she was 8 years 4 months of age and became a widow within a year and a half.

She was naturally given to discrimination and was always engaged in the search of spiritual Truth. From Her childhood She used to think: (i) "Where does a human being go and in what state does he remain after death, and whence does he come?" (ii) "In nothing can peace be found in this world; what, then, is real peace?" In such thoughts would she become immersed. And lastly such thoughts as (iii) "Who am I? What is this body, mind or *Atma*?" used to engage Her. These are the three stages of Her *Sadhana*. With out the help of books or Gurus, by dint of discrimination and search for Truth She tore asunder the meshes of *Maya*, overcame all doubts and attained Self-realization."

She was not keeping good health now and so resided mostly at Deogher (Baidyanath Dham in Bihar). In the winter she remained at Puri (Jagannath Dham in Orissa) and occasionally went home also.

"Brahmajna-Ma", "Devi Ma", "Thakurani", "Ma", etc., are names by which she is known in different places. Her

instructions pregnant with sound meaning (Saragarbha upadesha) have done good to many. For the benefit of seekers of *Dharma* some of these are collected and printed. If any one is benefited by them, I shall consider myself amply rewarded. Sri Brahmajna Ma's knowledge of the language is poor Bengali. Her language has not been altered much, so there is no elegance of style in this book. It is hoped the wise reader will excuse this defect turning the mind towards the spirit and sense.

DHIRENDRA NATH SEN,
Publisher.

13th Aswin, Thursday,
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CHAPTER I

TEACHINGS

1
Brahma is the only Reality—all else is unreal. Men are eager in their search for happiness in unreal worldly objects and do not want to know the truth of the Self, though in that alone lies real happiness and bliss, for man's mind is infatuated with desires.

2
The wonder of wonders is that though men see that all men are mortal they are not brought to their senses.

3
The world is like the shadow of trees reflected in water. The world is as unreal as this shadow. To realize that this world is unreal is *sadhana* or religious practice.

4
The foremost and fundamental means of realizing the Self is dispassion. Without dispassion true realization cannot be had.

5
It is correct reasoning and true knowledge that are required. When true knowledge dawns, there remains nothing to give up or to get hold of. Without knowledge there can be no salvation. Knowledge is essential for real peace.

6
From the standpoint of knowledge there is 'One', from the standpoint of love (*prema*) 'Two' and of desire 'Many'. In the 'I' feeling only One exists, in *prema*—Two—Bhagavan and the devotee, and in desire Many exist in the form of 'my' body, 'my' relations and 'my' house, etc.

7

By the term *dharma* I understand the effort to cross the sea of this world of creation. That one has come into this world is a wrong notion; to give it up and return to the origin is *dharma*.

8

As bubbles rise in water, so in the mind one idea after another floats to the surface and draws the mind from one object to another. When desire for objects disappears the mind gradually becomes quiet. When the mind becomes quiet, it becomes possible to approach the Self.

9

Men say—we practise *dharma*—yet they don't dive deep and see what they are really doing in its name. They do not try to and cannot understand whether by what they are doing they are practising *dharma* or getting any benefit. Throughout their lives they observe some rules of actions and prohibitions, but never examine how far they have progressed by these practices. For want of discrimination they cannot do it. Without reasoning and discrimination dispassion does not grow and without dispassion there can be no *dharma*.

10

Earnestness alone is what is wanted. All religious rules and practices are for getting that. Without such sincere earnestness everything is useless.

11

We should realize that the world is unreal. Without giving up desires no one can purify the mind, and without purification of the mind that conviction cannot grow.

12

Why is there the fear of death? This is because of *samskaras* (notions in seed form) left over from previous births. In previous births we experienced death many times and suffered thereby. These notions are in the mind in a latent state and this is why the talk of death rouses fear. •

13

No happiness is equal to that of *Samadhi* and no sorrow greater than death. As the bliss of *Samadhi* cannot be described, so the pain of death cannot be put into words.

14

Too much sleep is not good. Already there exists the sleep of ignorance, so why court sleep? Men pass away peaceful and beautifully calm nights in sleep alone, when night is especially suitable for meditation on the Self.

15

Enjoying sexual pleasures is like taking a sweetened ball of poison. Nothing covers the Self as much as this. The more this desire fades away, the thinner will be the cover.

16

Men think they understand and know everything, but what is this understanding of theirs when they still lack the power of fine reasoning? By correct reasoning the bondage of the mind is cut asunder then and there.

17

Men consider sexual instinct as bad in its gross manifestation. Decrying it in this way is not going deep enough, for they still enjoy the inclination inwardly. As long as this state of mind continues sexual impulse will not be checked. To understand that there is no real pleasure in it is the correct understanding.

18

As long as it is thought that an object is pleasurable it cannot be given up. When sense-objects are regarded as dangerous and distasteful, like snakes and poison, none will feel sorry to give them up. When it is understood by correct reasoning that far from being pleasurable the sense-objects cover real bliss and peace, then they will be regarded as poison and it will be an easy affair to give them up.

19

Anticipation of the fulfilment of desire does not allow men any rest, it seduces men by promising pleasure but can-

not give it. Happiness cannot be had unless anticipation of the fulfilment of desire is given up. Renunciation of hope alone can lead to peace. The more one gives up anticipation, the more one's mind becomes relieved from bondage.

20

What an error of reasoning! 'I' takes credit for good actions and throws the blame on 'you' for wrong actions, or in other words, when a sin is committed, God is made responsible as the doer, but when a good act is performed, the credit is claimed by 'I' as doer. Either say God is making you do all acts, good and bad, or say all is due to your *karma*.

21

Even an iota of sincerity is good. There is no double-dealing in sincerity. Many a man says, "I had a mind to take to religion but could not do so because of such and such a person." If there is a thirst for truth, this kind of self-deception cannot occur. If the real thirst for truth grows no one can throw obstacles in the way. The fact is that sincerity of purpose is totally absent; otherwise would a man take poison to comply with the request of another?

22

In childhood how eager men are to get dolls! But when they grow they lose this eagerness. Similarly when the eye of knowledge opens, the sense-objects of *samsar* are looked upon as silly dolls. The mind gets no peace from them. This *samsar* is a place for fun and jokes but there is no permanent happiness in it.

23

The more one gives up the more one gets. When all is given up, ALL is achieved.

24

"*Jiva* comes and goes divested of everything except virtues and vices". At death a man does not take with him anything gross, but his mental predilections go with him; in the mind the seeds of the desire for sense-objects remain.

25

Impelled by the idea of duty what beastly and mean actions are done by man! In reality man performs actions according to the inclination of his own mind, and in these pretends to be doing his duty. On account of attachment this deceit is practised, and from attachment springs this sense of duty.

26

Will is at the root of everything. Be it a virtuous or a vicious deed, will is at the root. That you want to know the Truth is your will and that you are occupied with unreal things is also your will. Where there is a will there is a way.

27

A *Jiva* can be a *Shiva* by will. If one is earnest about the attainment of Truth one is not afraid of misery and hardship and no impediment is felt.

28

The thought of death brings about renunciation. For an aspirant the thought of death is a means of advancement.

29

It is said that hate, shame, fear, esteem and nobility are to be given up. A lunatic has none of these, but is he a *sadhu* for all that? The meaning of the saying is this—that while following the religious path, an aspirant should be indifferent and feel no shame at what others say, be afraid of no one and be indifferent to esteem and social position.

30

Always ponder over the transitoriness of the world. This will cut asunder *maya* and ignorance (*moha*).

31

Man is so fickle-minded and so much engrossed in desire for sense-objects that he cannot even for a moment look at the future. He does not know what will happen next and is always busy with the present. If he could think with a quiet mind, he could understand something—but where is the

time for it? His mind is so unsteady because of desires that he cannot think coolly for a moment.

32

What a world of indiscretion! This *samsara* is the playground of ignorance.. In it men are like so many kinds of animals. For, as amongst the animals there are different species such as horses, sheep, etc., so also amongst men there is a difference of dress and environment, but the beastly element predominates in the majority of the human race.

33

✓ To understand really the transitoriness of the world is knowledge. Budha had this knowledge, so he could give up a kingdom, but for want of this knowledge a naked man cannot give up his kaupin (loin cloth.)

34

Though you are the real owners of the treasure, through error you have lost it. For want of the knowledge of the Self all your belongings are in the possession of others. In what hope are you passing your days? How can you be content without having your belongings in your own possession?

35

Always you think—"I exist". Every moment your body and mind are changing, but in the midst of all these changes the unchangeable notion—"I exist" persists. You never think 'I do not exist'. This awareness of 'I exist' is the reflection of the real 'I am'.

36

When children play 'turning round', they see the house, hut, door, etc., revolving. Your mind is unsteady on account of your desire for sense-objects, so you cannot see the True Reality. Be steady and you will find the Truth.

37

Renunciation is peace. Some say—renunciation is of the mind so it does not matter if renunciation is not carried into effect materially; but this is a want of straight-forwardness. If renunciation is in the mind why should it not be

carried into practice? Those who have got renunciation both inside and outside alone can be said to have real renunciation.

38

What is the power of *kundalini*? If closely examined it is found to be nothing but a strong desire to realize the Self. The awakening of *kundalini* is to make the desire intense; when this desire becomes strong a change takes place in the flow of the breath and working of the nerves.

39

By faith everything becomes possible. Sincere faith is wanted. If a man believes in the Truth of the *Atma*, then he finds no difficulty in making an effort for it. But where is this faith? If some one gets fever he does not take diet forbidden by the physician; for this trifling body there is so much eagerness and for its good you require so much faith. Similarly if any one should be convinced of the existence of *Atma*, could he remain without trying to realize it? Men believe in transitory sense-objects but do not believe in the same way in the everlasting reality—*Atma*.

40

Error is the cause of all grief. In the case of grief if the cause is understood grief disappears. But inability to find the cause is at the root of grief. So the more the error, the more the grief.

41

"The more you keep it a secret the stronger it will grow" The more you keep your attainment of the realization of the Self to yourself, the more it grows in strength. By disclosing it to others, its intensity diminishes.

42

Many say—"we can't renounce *samsar*." What is this *samsar*? There is nothing that is *samsar*—it is an illusion of the mind built on desires. In the absence of desires *samsar* ceases to exist.

43

The spider spreads its web and becomes ensnared and consequently suffers. Similarly, man also builds his *samsar* by his desires and predilections and suffers because he is bound to it.

44

Through enjoyment, the desire for enjoyment never ceases. When clay sticks to your foot can it be cleaned off by rubbing on more clay?

45

What is renunciation or possession? When you realize, you will understand that there is nothing to give up or get hold of; what exists always exists. Only one 'Grand I' exists.

46

If there is want of discrimination and dispassion in the mind scriptures or books are of no avail. Those who have the thirst for knowledge alone can be benefitted by these.

47

The condition of many is like that of a poor and mean beggar. Whatever little he gets, gives him satisfaction. In the hundred different kinds of distress of this *samsar* a little enjoyment of pleasure makes him content. Having the birthright of limitless bliss he is content with a little—what delusion!

48

When one desire becomes strong, the minor desires are forsaken. When the gaze is fixed in one direction, other directions are not seen. All other desires are checked when it is understood by dint of discrimination and dispassion that *Atma* is the only reality and the desire to realize it becomes strong.

49

Men say, "This is necessary, that is necessary," but to me it appears that nothing is necessary except salvation; other

necessities are only so-called, but the necessity for Self-realization alone is true.

50

Men could not walk if the earth were not there to support their feet; still they have no attachment to the earth. Similarly though money is necessary for the sustenance of life, it is not proper to be attached to it.

51

You hear different opinions from different *sadhus*. This is because one man can only tell you as far as he has understood and for him that is the true standard. Actually the final Truth is neither *dwaita* nor *adwaita*, but devoid of both. ||

52

What seems true in the dream state is found to be unreal on waking. Similarly what is regarded as real in the waking state is known to be unreal when the mind becomes still and knowledge of Truth is achieved.. This is the evidence to prove that the waking state is as unreal as the dream state. .

53

Renunciation of material objects is not real renunciation. Giving up of attachment is true renunciation.

54

Many men think that as the *sadhus* have renounced everything they should have no necessity for food and clothing. This is a mistake. It is not correct to think that by the very fact that one is a *sadhu* one's body will be immune from decay and growth—the characteristics of a body. Of course the *sadhus* have no connection with the decay and growth of or attachment to the body, but as long as their bodies exist the characteristics of bodies will also remain with the necessity for food, rest, etc.

55

A devotee while taking the name of God (Hari) but close-listed on occasions of charity". Many men like to be

known as virtuous but they find themselves in an awkward position when any suggestion of renunciation is made.

56

Dualism is a step to Monism. Those who are unable to understand the Adwaita doctrine can reach that knowledge through Dualism.

57

✓ 11 Many say that it is necessary to work for one's own country. This cannot be denied. But there is no greater work for one's country than to meditate for Self-realization, as the Self is the true 'native land'.

58

Reason the Truth of the Self by the brain and feel it by the heart. The heart is the place for feeling.. The idea of Truth automatically grows in a pure mind.. Cordial earnestness is the means. For this purification of the mind is necessary.

59

Purity in talk, deed and thought, and good company are the means to develop the thirst for Truth.

60

The narrow mind is broadened by renunciation alone. Mind becomes narrow and weak when it is overpowered by spite, blame, fame, honour, sex impulse and anger. Know it for certain that the power of renunciation is the great power. Giving up the homestead and house is not renunciation; it consists in giving up spite, blame, fame, honour and desires.

61

Habit ensnares a man and habit releases him. By only talking as an Adwaitin, one cannot attain the Adwaita state. If one wishes to attain that state one must die while alive: unless one dies to the world, one cannot realize it.

62

When wave after wave rises on the water, one's reflection is not distinct. When water becomes waveless it can reflect

clearly. Similarly, if the mind becomes still, all delusion disappears and the roots of all doubts in the heart become torn, and the Self is realized. Then no doubt can destroy the realized Truth. In the sea of mind the breeze of desires creates waves. If this breeze can be stopped, the sea of mind becomes calm.

63

Some men, say, "One who can conquer death for himself can surely make another conquer his death." This is surely correct; but he can make only such an one conquer death, who has sufficient earnestness for it, and not others.

II

P O E M S

I

Supreme lustre am I, I'm everlasting, good;
Fully aware am I, devoid of death, decay;
I have not any fear. I am eternal, whole,
And free from throbs of thought. No intellect have I,
No body nor a mind—my real nature's Bliss.
No hunger, neither thirst, nor ego have I got;
No wish have I—I am free from every sort of change;
No father, mother, son or family have I;
No duty, birth no death doth appertain to me.

2

In this wilderness of *samsar* 't is for whom
That you are looking? No relatives
Are really yours, who caught within the net
Of this false *maya* have forgot the Truth
Of your own Self. Just find out who you are!
You wanton with the billows of desire
Thinking that they are yours. But never once
You think of who you are, whence you were born,
And what are parents, what are relatives,
And what your friends? When in this dream, woven
By false desires, the actor's part you play,
You have forgot the knowledge of the Truth;
In this dark mire of grief now lying drunk
You never try to find out your own Self.

3

Who are you who are wandering about
Lost in *samsara's* forest? Pray enquire
Who are your parents and where is your home.
For ever busied with fame, honour, wealth,
Your life is no more steadfast than the drop
Of water that to lotus leaf would cling.

This moment you may die and have to leave
All that you now hold dear. Then pause and think,
Try to remember where you were before.
There, in your beloved home, you always found
Tremendous love and dearest mother's care.
You had one day this mother to forsake
So you might lie in the cremation-ground.
When death's victim you fall, where then will be
Those sweet discourses with your lady love?
You've lost your true awareness because you
Have fallen victim to the influence
Of anger, lust, illusion, and now lie
In darkness that's created by desire.
Lost in the mirage of unreal hope
You have forgotten your own Self and have
Been suffering from the pangs of sorrow, birth
And agony as well. The pride of wealth,
Honour and youth and body, all will be
Crushed in between the jaws of frightful Death.
Persons as dear to you as your own life,
Like dream will vanish utterly away,
You'll never see them more. For 't is the truth
That you had families many times before.
Whither have they now gone? Just think of this!
Within this sleep of ignorance you dream;
Friends, parents, brothers, these do not belong
Unto your real Self. They only are
As long as you a body shall possess
And in it dwell within this seeming world;
But all will be entirely forgot
As soon as it is utterly destroyed.
While acting in this playhouse of *samsar*
They seem to play the roles of friends and foes,
Then suddenly they vanish quite away.
Along the path of Truth go forward straight
To your own home. Why wander you in vain

Within this forest of black ignorance?
 By pouring Wisdom's water on the fire
 Of your desires you may put it out.
 Let knowledge and dispassion go with you
 And be your guide. Pushing off *maya's* pall
 Kindle the lamp of knowledge to give light
 Unto your heart. Immediately throw off
 The rubbish of this world, then only can
 You rest for ever in the home of Peace.

4

Deeply absorbed within that place which is
 Ever-existing, in *dhyana* sit
 And sing unto your ownself your own song;
 In that essence of bliss remain immersed
 Looking at all the tricks of your own Self.
 Yourself search for your ownself and then be
 Enamoured of yourself, taking firm stand
 Yourself upon your own legs all the while.
 There's no one that exists except yourself,
 This *samsar's* nothing but a magic show;
 You are the ocean playing with its waves;
 Calming these waves seek your own Self and then
 Turn back again to look on your own Self.
 Being entrapped within the magic coils
 Of nature's meshes you forgetful are.
 Now, be acquainted with your real Self.
 In thought invariable, the *Atma* you,
 Devoid of every change by nature worked.
 Be, then your Self, your own!

5

Submerged in darkness of the Ignorance
 Of honour, fame and wealth you have mislaid
 The knowledge of the Truth. Your wishes are
 Never fulfilled, sadness ne'er disappears
 And expectations never at an end.
 Within the dreadful meshes of *maya*

You are ensnared, lost in oblivion,
 You never pause to find out who you are;
 Whence to the world you've come, and where you'll go
 That time when body ceases to exist.
 Full many times you have been born before
 In the *samsar*. Parents and brothers, friends,
 And also wives, who and where are they now?
 In fetters of a slave your legs are tied
 And by the sense of duty you are bound;
 What duty have you got within this world?
 And for whose happiness is it you roam
 With many tears? Who'll take you 'cross the sea
 Of this Creation? In *samsar* you play
 The role of actor. No one's really yours!
 Those whom you now so lovingly bring up
 With money earned, when once you come to die
 Will put the fire at last within your mouth.
 On him who's firmly bound within the net
 Of *maya* of his *family*, the Sun
 Of Knowledge never will pour forth its light;
 For under the control of anger, spite,
 Desires and malice and all such is he;
 And on his neck for ever remains bound
 The seal of dreadful Death.

6

Your wanderings in *samssar* all are due
 To the allurement of expectancy.
 Remember who you are and whence you come.
 Forgetting your real home, lost in the dark
 Of Ignorance, for sake of wealth, men, youth,
 All transitory things, and though the end
 Of all must come in the cremation-ground,
 O erring *Jiva*, still you do not come
 Unto your senses. Always wavering
 Beneath the influence of your desires,
 Of anger and of covetousness, you

Place poison's bitter cup unto your lips
In preference to the nectar that is there.

7

You, who are born to Karma's ties a slave,
Who are you, whence do come and whither go?
Desire and anger, avarice and love,
Enchanting youth, fame, honour, wealth are all
The dream of expectation. Know for sure
That certain death doth stare you in the face.
Wife, son and family resemble naught
But stray acquaintances that you've picked up
Upon the way. The knowledge of Truth lost
You have forgotten your own Self and are
Enduring weal and woe and pangs of birth.

8

Oh, thou who art an ignorant *Jiva*,
Give up men, money and expectancy!
By lighting up the lamp of knowledge bring
Enlightenment within. Be quick to rise
Up from the darkness of black ignorance;
Seek the abode of Bliss where there exists
Not a distinction between "mine" and "thine",
And throw away all hate, and shame, and fear!
And for your ignorance there's not a doubt
Others will make a laughing stock of you.
He who is under influence of ire,
Desires and avarice can never be
Free from his bondage. Father, mother, wife,
Brother and family and also son—
All ties by *maya* wrought—cut them away
Using discrimination's keen-edged blade.
The body-idea you must first give up,
Humiliate the ego, lift the veil
Of darkness and proceed along the path
That leads to Peace. Then some will welcome you
While others as a weakling will despise.

Don't look to anyone—remain unmoved!
There at your goal is found no happiness,
No misery nor any turmoil there.
'T is always quiet, calm—seat of pure bliss.
Religion, irreligion, birth or death,
Virtue or vice, the threefold bondage of
Dark misery, the scope for more than one
Or absence of this scope, besides knowledge
Of all duality, there don't exist.
The Supreme Self alone, 't is That that is!

III

LETTERS

1

Ranchi, 8th Falgoon, 1335 B.S.

To expect anything is the cause of misery; to expect nothing is peace. There can be no misery where you love without expectation. As far as you think somebody your own, so far you suffer sorrow from him. If you regard some one as your own without expecting anything, there can be no cause of sorrow. The closer the relationship with any one the severer the sorrow through him. The cause of sorrow is the expectation of happiness—so renunciation itself is peace.

Those very pleasures of sex and wealth which seem to be so full of nectar to the indiscriminating man are regarded as nothing but the droppings of a crow by a wise man. The same thing becomes poison or nectar with the change of circumstances.

What I am writing to you is my mistake—*maya*. Who are you? Who am I? I am what you are and you are what I am. The reason for the assumption of different forms is oblivion of the reality of Self. Creation originates from Me and merges in Me.

Tell me who is the Cause or Doer of this Creation; And why the phenomena of creation, preservation and destruction are evidenced:—

Who dies and who is born?

Why disease, grief, decay and agony are suffered?

Also who is it that works? Who is it that enjoys happiness?

And who becomes contented? Who suffers misery?

And who wanders in the current of expectation?

And who is known as *Jiva*?

Who are you?—Give me your identity!

Who are the mind, intellect and ego?—tell me!

2

Weakness is the cause of all unhappiness. Give up this weakness and proceed to get freedom. Man becomes weak by thinking repeatedly that he is weak. You have forgotten the real state of your freedom and have submitted to weakness. You may think you have not already got that ever-free power (*shakti*), but in reality it exists in you always. You are free, so who can make you weak? Taking shelter in cowardice and weakness you have become weak.

The true purport of this freedom can not be realized by reading books, treatises or *shastras* or from verbal instruction; it is one's own innate nature and one must realize it by one's own meditation. It cannot be found in anything lying outside. According to his *karma* a man gets his power, knowledge and intellect. The manifestation of knowledge and intellect varies according to one's *karma*. Limited *karma* manifests only limited knowledge and intellect. Man limits himself, who can, himself, be infinite. Do not consider want of discipline the same as freedom. They are not synonymous. Strength alone is the way to develop unshackled power. Because man has forgotten his ownself he has become weak. If he turns his vision from outwards to his ownself, all weakness will end and freedom will be manifest.

Karma is the cause of birth and death. Man gets bound by *karma* and gets liberation when *karma's* sway disappears. Expectation ensnares a man—his full contentment is on the other side of hope and despair. (i.e. indifference to both.)

3

Man cannot be quiet and so cannot think over a matter—cannot even form an idea. If he could think over a matter calmly he could understand and form an idea of everything. The reason for a man's mind being unstable is the waves of desires. So renunciation is the means of being quiet. Man is unable to conceive of a state beyond that which he is in. •So he thinks it to be his true state. The boy thinks

boyhood to be true, the young man also takes youth to be equally true, whereas the old man considers senility in the same light. In reality, however, not one of these states is true—they are mere changes of the same state. If that state, which is beyond the three stages of wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep, be fully known to a man, he goes beyond birth and death. It is true that man sometimes hankers after that state, but he cannot get at the desired object as he wants it while remaining bound to his present state. Just as a man who is looking to the front has to look behind if he wishes to see things lying behind him, so the mind cannot form an idea in another direction unless it is withdrawn from its existing engagements. Man's intellect and knowledge are dependent on his state. When he is dreaming, does he consider his dream as such? When he is awake the dream becomes unreal. While awake this state alone is regarded as true just as while dreaming the dream state alone appears to be true. The question is—which of these two states is true? The fact is that man regards that one to be the real state in which he is at the time, but the same state appears unreal as soon as it is finished. Argument and reasoning are dependent on his state, one course of reasoning sets him free while the other binds. Reasoning of the controlled mind liberates whereas that of the unbridled mind binds him.

If a man can meditate on, What am I? What is the body? What is mind? Then he can get beyond the darkness of ignorance and know the Root Cause. Just as a well—frog wanting to know what the sea is like while still stopping in his well, fails to do so, refusing to believe in the very existence of the sea, so also an unliberated man fails to understand salvation and thinks it a figment of the imagination. If one wants to know one's ownself, that is to go beyond the cycle of birth and death, the thing can not be achieved by mere argument, that state can only be obtained by stilling the mind.

Once a drunken man, who was trying to push a road

with his head, said, "This road is curved. I am making it straight." Another drunkard, a ploughman, while making movements of his limbs as if swimming on a field, said, "I am swimming across a big river." As a result the first had a pain in his head and the second his body full of bruises, but neither was the road curved nor was there water in the field. Similarly, due to ignorance, man considers this *samaar* to be real and so courts the pain of birth and death over and over again.

Some are of opinion that it is impossible to conquer death. This is wrong. It is quite possible to conquer death. In some a particular power manifests itself whereas in others it does not. The reason for this is that one's power is manifested in proportion to one's efforts. The greatest efforts awaken the greatest power which alone can conquer death and take one beyond the cycle of birth and death. Many men think thus, "As I do not possess this power, then no one else can have it." As a crow when it wants to hide food closes its eyes and thinks, "As I can't see it no one else can", so these men devoid of powers consider all others powerless like themselves. But it is highly improper to judge others according to one's own standard. The state which is beyond the imagination is regarded by some as nothing but imagination. How can a person caught in the net of imagination form an idea of the state beyond the imagination?

Man does not think even once whence he came and whither he is going; who has come and who is going; what is birth and what is death; what is expectation and what is frustration; what am I and what is my ignorance, weakness and fears; what is that power which comes and goes, sees and hears? One can only say definitely whether it is possible to conquer death or not after one knows the root cause of all these, (i.e. when these questions have been solved satisfactorily). To venture an opinion before this is done, is like the incoherent talk of a lunatic. Or as in a dark room where the presence of snakes, frogs, and a hundred other things is

imagined, but when the room is lighted all these ghosts vanish.

4

A mother loves her son and wants his good. Even if the son happens to be stupid the mother's love remains the same, though the mother feels sorry at heart for the son's stupidity.

1

When I remain away from my own Self
Then I look upon you as a son,
But when I dive deep into my own state
I consider you nearer than 'mine'—
(As) then distinctions like 'I' and 'You' no longer remain,
And you merge in me and unite in one whole.

2

On rolls the day, the night and Time—
Thou art man, yet thou dost not come to thy senses.
How often am I to repeat (the same thing)?
Alas! Thou dost not wake up from thy midnight dream.
Thou art senseless in the darkness of ignorance—
Thy boyhood has passed and thou art in youth.
All of a sudden senility and death will come—
Hast thou ever thought over these problems well?
Otherwise how art thou passing they days in (improvident)
happiness?

3

Open your eyes but once and see
How long will this life of youth last?
You have been forgetful of your ownself,
Spell-bound as it were in the enjoyment of material objects.
Fleeting like a dream is the sun of your happiness;
It will in its turn be eclipsed by Time.
When the mirage of illusion ceases to appear,
Birth, death and fear will be your slaves.

4

When will that auspicious day dawn
That will awaken in you discrimination and dispassion?

5

In this pitch darkness, the darkness of *samsar*, your mind has sunk

Yet the thirst remains unquenched, only kindling (further) desires, (while you) forget your ownself.

In spite of its recurrence many times,

Alas! the darkness of your ignorance does not yet disappear.

In a certain place a man lived in a hut. This hut was small and the man's job was also small. His mind, intellect and knowledge were all narrow and his mind with its limited intellect could form no idea of the existence, outside his small hut, of so many spacious localities and huge activities; nor could he think there could be great feelings beyond the narrow limits of his mind. He used to think it his prime duty in life to be confined within these narrow limits.

This man of meagre intellect did not even think once whether it was his duty to remain within the limits or to go beyond them. Living as he was within the narrow precincts of his dark hut, where could he get the power of thinking? If he could once get out of his dark hut, only then would the great expanse of sky fall within his vision. If any one should come to him and ask him to look at what lay beyond his set limits he would say, "I am now very busy with the many activities in my hut, how can I find leisure to go out to see and think?" He would always be afraid of this thought lest he should fail in his duty to his circle, and would not agree to go out on any account.

(He) does not understand what is good or bad for him, And if told, takes just the opposite view.

In what sort of plight is he? He is like the bee on the lotus in a picture. Neither is his thirst quenched nor is he (otherwise) satisfied.

He has not got renunciation to strengthen him, nor indifference to sense-objects to help him.

And is in the chains of slavery,

Where will he get peace, and where contentment,
When his mind is being consumed with insatiable desires?
Tell me what is the good of such a petty life,
Which never leaves room for feeling for the Universe?

The mind that feels for a small circle (i.e. relations etc.) why does it not feel for the world at large? The mind which takes a small circle as its own, why does it not consider the world as its own? The affection which is confined to a small circle, why does it not spread all over the universe? The sense of difference is the cause of all sorrows. Should a man confine himself to this small circle?

Self-knowledge will not dawn by mere study of books on religious science if one still remains in the darkness of ignorance. Without Self-realization no one can even be content. Self-realization is the only peace and contentment. Just think over and ascertain whether there are peace and contentment in the state in which you now are or in what you are now doing. You are a physician, you treat others in their illness, have you treated yourself in your disease of birth and death? Engaged in the attempt of removing the insatiable desires of this small circle, what else are you doing? Just as other serpents, through force of her hypnotic spell, enter the mouth of the she-serpent named Shankhini, so are you also gradually entering the jaws of Death. There is no certainty when Death will fully devour you. Even at this very moment Death may swallow you up. I am surprised that you should be quite indifferent to this.

Think for once of the great illusion you are in. Instead of advancing sophistical arguments, argue with yourself and come to the right conclusion. By arguing with others no one can realize his own (true) nature, which is the Infinite. Only after a fight with his desire for enjoyment and defeating it can a man realize his Self and shine as the Infinite. You are living in a great illusion. Try to save yourself from the grip of the enchantress Expectation.

QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

- Q. Who is a friend and who is a foe?
 A. Man himself is his own friend or foe.
- Q. Who is the nearest of the nearest?
 A. The *Atma* (SELF).
- Q. What is the ultimate good and what is material good?
 A. Knowledge of the Self is the ultimate good and fulfilment of desires is material good.
- Q. Who helps us along the path of Truth and who causes obstruction on the way?
 A. The Guru helps and relatives cause obstruction.
- Q. What shall a man do and what not?
 A. A man should realize the Self and should not be engrossed in fulfilling his (material) desires.
- Q. What sort of work should a Sannyasin do and what work is real work?
 A. That work which purifies the mind is real work and work for the maintenance of *samā^har* is not real work; rather is it the cause of bondage. Even the work done for one's country or for the public good does not help one to realize the Self. Purity in thought and word and meditation on the Truth, these are the real works which help the purification of the mind. As the object of a Sannyasin is to make the mind quiet he can have no other work but to serve the Guru and think or meditate (on the Self), for all other varieties of work increase the unsteadiness of the mind, they serve to do away with the disturbance of the mind in one direction but create fresh disturbance in another.

The real object of taking *sannyas* is to realize the Self by giving up the desire for sense-objects and by forgetting the unreal world. So the only duty of a Sannyasin is to renounce all other activities except thinking and meditating on the Self and serving and associating with the Guru. Whatever other actions besides these a Sannyasin may perform, far from pacifying the mind, they make the mind more unsteady.

Many men harbour the wrong notion that when a man cannot pass all his time in meditation on the Self it is desirable that he should devote the rest of his time to other kinds of work. Though a beginner cannot meditate on the Self all the time, still if he does not pay attention to objects outside his sphere, thoughts of other objects will not come to his mind. When a man is engaged in some work a stream of thoughts relating to this rise and fall in his mind and even when he sits down to meditate the pictures of that work keep on floating in his mind.

Men who are calm and sagacious live with the Guru after taking Sannyas, as He repeatedly instructs the disciples to enable them to obtain salvation from the pain of birth and death by getting rid of the darkness of ignorance. The Guru alone, and not any one else, is the guide on the path leading to reflection, meditation and realization of the Self. A stream of cravings is always flowing through the mind for brother, friend and wife, son and others. Sunk in the pit of ignorance they do not want anything except the security of their enjoyment and luxury. That is why as soon as a man sets his foot on the path of Truth they put obstacles like thorns in his way, whereas the Guru serves as a tool to cut asunder the meshes of *maya* in the form of nescience.

A Sannyasin should associate with his Guru at first, afterwards remaining all alone. Merely living in outward contact with the Guru cannot be said to be real association. The meaning of real association is to be attracted to Him at heart and indifferent to other objects. Without this inner element of love, outward service is no service, and association

no association. Service and association with due faith and love to the Guru can alone be called real service and association. A man imbibes the nature of one whom he constantly thinks of. As inclination towards material objects appears in the mind by thinking of them and by association with worldly men, so Brahmanhood gradually develops in one through constant remembrance of the Self-realized Guru. If a disciple stays with his Guru all his life and yet serves him carelessly, having no faith in Him and with his mind turned in other directions, he cannot possess even a drop of the nectar of Truth.

Q. Is Self-Realization possible without the help of a Guru?

A. He alone can realize the Self without a Guru's help in whose mind queries like, "Who am I?", 'What is the world?', 'Where was I before, and where shall I go?' and 'Where is Peace?' arise from his very birth and the thought of the futility and transitoriness of the world clearly manifests and awakens keen dispassion and leads him to self-enquiry. Such men are very rare.

But the man who does not find peace in the *samsar* and is unable to pursue the enquiry of the Self, cannot proceed in the path of self-enquiry on account of his innate habits of desires and cravings though he may truly hanker after the Truth to some extent. If such an aspirant goes to a Guru with this thirst for Truth, it gradually increases under the Guru's repeated instructions. The Guru shows him the path to Self-realization after first making him understand the Truth, so that he will then be able to grasp His instructions and realize the Self by following the path shown to him.

Both a worthy Guru and a worthy disciple are required. Men of first class calibre alone can realize the Self in one life by grasping the Guru's instructions on Truth and following them. Though the disciple of intermediate capabilities cannot grasp the real significance of the instructions fully, he gradually proceeds along the path. But a disciple of inferior

merit can neither grasp nor follow the path of Truth in spite of repeated instructions.

Q. What is the nature of a *sadhaka*?

A. A *sadhaka*'s nature is calm, quiet and gentle, and his mind always turns towards Divine objects.

His mouth is speechless and his eyes look tearful,

Full of feeling he tends to fall down when walking.

As long as a *sadhaka* does not realize the Self he cannot turn his attention in any other direction nor can he join in fun or merriment. His mind always runs on Self-realization (uniformly) like the flow of oil (from a pot). When anyone is very eager to get an object he cannot bring a smile to his face till the object is obtained, and forgetful of every other thing, he remains absorbed in that thought alone. Similarly a *sadhaka* cannot find peace in anything till he realizes the Self and he is unable to take an interest in any other work. If it is seen that a *sadhaka* is enjoying fun, amusement, laughter or jokes, or is deeply engaged in any other work, then it is to be understood that the thirst for realizing the Self has not truly awakened in him and he has not got true eagerness for Self-realisation. The more this thirst is kindled the more will he give up his inclinations to pleasures from sense-objects and the more will he retire from worldly activities.

Some come to saints and say that they are very eager to be liberated but that their mind does not turn in that direction. Those who say this do not understand at all the true import of liberation. They do not realize that liberation is the ultimate good which, according to their impression, lies in the enjoyment of desirable objects. A man's mind of itself tends to follow that direction which he knows to be good. As he regards fame, honour and wealth to be good, his mind turns in that direction. Those who say, "I want to, but my mind turns back", really do not want at all. Mind always follows the wish. Wish and mind are not separate in substance. A strong (good) desire, by virtue of its strength,

automatically obliterates the life-long habits and tendencies. As the *kumudini* (waterlily) flower blossoms with the rise of the moon and the lotus blooms with the sunrise, so the knowledge of the Self dawns with the desire for (the attainment of) Truth. As neither Kumudini nor lotus blossoms until the moon or sun has risen, so without the desire for Truth the knowledge of the Self cannot bloom. As the thirst of a lark is not quenched with any other water except rain, so a seeker after the Truth finds no peace and his mind is never engaged in any other work except meditation on the Self.

Q. How is it that the great personages (Saints) are merciful to some but not so to others, and sometimes more merciful to some and less to others?

A. The Saints always remain unmoved; they do not display kindness or cruelty to anyone. According to the results of different people's *karma*, their kindness or cruelty gets expression. As the Sun remains in the same (impartial) state but the rays shine on various objects according to their differences of quality, but it does not willingly shower more or less rays, so the Saints look on all, everywhere in the same way, and men get more or less mercy according to their *karma*. As the Sun's rays do not fall at all on a covered place, so a Saint's mercy never falls on one whose mind is fully covered by the ignorance of *maya*.

Q. Why is it that a man sometimes is deprived of a Saint's mercy after once having obtained it?

A. By virtue of good aspiration a man gets His mercy, but as a result of bad *karma* he loses it.

Q. If a Saint preserves his equanimity at all times why does he look pleased with reverence and enraged with disrespect?

A. He is never pleased or enraged with anybody, but always remains absorbed in the same Brahmanhood. No one can cause Him to waver from this poise either by reverence or disrespect. He always remains unmoved and

effortless. In the heart of one who reveres him, the holy state of the Saint's mind begins to blossom, but the disrespectful man recedes far from it. It is this which is superficially regarded as pleasure and displeasure. As fire is extinguished if water is poured on it, but the same fire becomes fully ablaze if ghee is poured instead, so by devotion (to a Saint) glimpses of the holy state of Brahman begin to manifest, whereas disrespect makes them disappear.

Q. If a person persecutes a Saint does He swerve from Brahmanhood?

A. If he is persecuted he is unmoved, remaining in his usual state, as he knows that he is not the body but the spotless self-same Atma beyond it, which can be oppressed by none. Feet are burnt when blazing fire is trodden on, but fire remains unaffected, so he who persecutes a Saint himself suffers the consequence.

Q. What is the state of death?

A. When desire, hankerings, intellect, body-consciousness and all other activities and functions of the mind become so much attenuated that though they do not cease to exist they seem to do so—that state is called death. Again, when these activities begin to express themselves, the state is called birth. This is not the full expression of the Self, it is only the expression of the desiring and hankering mind in attenuation. According to the result of actions (Karma) of the present birth the subsequent incarnation is shaped. According to karma one may be born as a god (Devata) in heaven (Devaloka), or in the world as a man or even as a beast in the animal kingdom.

During the transition from one state to another the *jiva* suffers pain, this suffering is (known as) the pangs of birth and death. Birth and death are illusions. As long as a man does not realize the Self he continues to suffer the agonies of birth and death. A man gets drunk and under

the influence of liquor he fancies that he is living in a beautiful and pleasant place and so feels happy, at another time he fancies that he has fallen into a dire hell and so suffers much; sometimes he considers himself short and at others tall, but when the influence of the liquor is gone he realizes that he is neither in heaven nor hell, nor has he grown short nor tall but is what he always was—that no change has occurred. Similarly, man has forgotten his own identity under the influence of the poisonous wine of sense-objects and fancies he is suffering from pain sometimes at birth and at others at death, sometimes he feels happy and at others unhappy, but in reality he is not experiencing birth, death, happiness or misery—all these are his mental imagination and none of them has got existence in reality.

As man is always passing through the three states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep, so also the two states of contraction and expansion in the form of birth and death are going on simultaneously. As long as a man is bound by the *maya* of ignorance he moves round and round in the whirlpool of different states, sub-merged in the darkness of ignorance. When man's thirst for sense-objects is quenched, and enquiry for Truth commences, the clouds of *maya* drift away from the sky of the heart and the sun of knowledge gradually shines forth. When he acquires knowledge in full, only then will he get Peace by going beyond the states of wakefulness, dream, deep sleep, birth and death. He will then realize that there was never any change in his state—he is what he always was.

Q. Is it possible to get salvation keeping the *samsar* intact?

A. When real understanding develops no one can remain in *samsar*. If there is no desire, what is the necessity to work for *samsar*? Those who say that they are in *samsar* but have no desire, really have desires. To say 'we are in *samsar* distinterestedly (*nishkam*)' is hollow talk.

- Q. Why is it seen that some men who are known to possess both intelligence and education are ignorant of religion?
- A. Spiritual knowledge is different from worldly knowledge. It does not necessarily follow that those who have worldly knowledge have also spiritual knowledge. Men who have attachment to sense-objects think this world is true, so they wander about in search of wealth, honour and fame. But spiritual knowledge is deep-endowed with inward vision. When that knowledge dawns it is well understood that wealth, honour etc., are quite unreal. Another synonym for this knowledge is dispassion.
- Q. When parents are alive and debts (of gratitude and service) to them have not been discharged, can a man become a sannyasin?
- ✓ A. Many say, one has to discharge the debts to one's parents. But there must be parents in every birth and if one has to be in *samar* in order to discharge the debts due to them, how can one be liberated? So without troubling about any debts one must proceed onwards on the path of liberation. And, judged from the correct standpoint, it will be evident that man is not indebted to parents at all—a seeker for liberation has no debt to discharge. Without looking in any other direction one should proceed on the way which will lead one to liberation.
- Q. Is affection of worldly men genuine or not?
- A. The love of worldly men is like their love for the *rohita* fish. When a big *rohita* fish escapes (from the hook) all say "*Alas!**" So when a man proceeds on the path of liberation his relatives and own folk begin to lament. **(Sorry from the standpoint of others—though it is good for the fish.)*
- Q. I would like to be liberated, but how will the *samsar* get on?
- A. When the real desire for liberation arises, no obstacle is felt in the mind. All these obstacles and impediments

arise in the mind of men at the time of proceeding on the way to liberation alone. When a man becomes an invalid for life or dies, does not his *samsar* get along alright? If a strong desire for liberation is felt, then no question arises in the man's mind as to what will happen to his *samsar*.

Q. Why is it so tiresome to concentrate and meditate?

A. A man's mind is always occupied with some thought or other, but he does not feel tired because of this as it has become part of his nature. So when a man becomes habituated to religious thought he does not feel tired.

Q. Whether our misery will ever come to an end and how?

A. There are antidotes to all diseases and remedies for all miseries. When a keen eagerness to get rid of the disease or misery overtakes the mind, one will then find out the means to do it. A strong urge is first wanted.

Q. What is the obstacle in the path of liberation?

A. Sex impulse and fame are the principal obstacles.

Q. If one's mind is inclined to earn money but in no other direction, why is it that the mind does not improve?

A. Though apparently a man has only a desire for one kind of enjoyment, in reality he has all kinds of desires (in a latent state). If one has a predilection to earn money, one must surely have sexual desires and love of fame as well. Money, sex-impulse and fame—all go together. These cannot be abandoned one by one. If one is really in earnest about giving them all up one has to try to relinquish them all at one time.

Q. In order to obtain Liberation what necessity is there to give up attachments to relations and one's own people? It is nothing but an insignificant tie.

A. Like sex-impulse and fame, attachment towards father mother, brother and sister is also a bondage of a sense-object, and a very strong barrier in the path of liberation. In many cases *maya* (this attachment) causes more disturbance than sex-impulse or fame. If a Saint should

say to a man who desires to take to the religious life, "Come let me destroy your sex-impulse," he would be glad, but if he should say, "Let me destroy your *maya* (attachment to relations)" he would become sad. From this it is evident that *maya's* fascination is such that a man is unable to perceive how harmful and destructive it is even when leading a religious life. Unless sex-impulse, fame and *maya* are given up entirely there can be no religious life at all.

Q. Why do men find fault with seekers after Liberation?

A. Those who are regarded as good from the standpoint of the material world are regarded as bad from the spiritual standpoint. What are esteemed as good qualities in this world are regarded as defects in the other. In this world those who have got more *maya* are praised, those who are much attached to their relatives and people are loved by all. But those who have more *maya*, more attachment, cannot easily cross over to the spiritual world. Men of the world regard those men as good who give name and fame a very high place and try to get them, but they alone can proceed along the path of Liberation who treat name and fame as trifles.

Q. What is the distinction between ego and 'I-consciousness'?

A. The distinction between the two is this: that when ego predominates in the mind a man in his vanity considers himself superior to all others and desires prominence in fame, honour and other things. The 'I' consciousness is just the opposite—when it comes the mind melts as it were and one's own self becomes all-pervading and none has a separate existence. It is then felt that 'I alone exist' and duality vanishes.

Q. Why does a man become weak in the mind?

A. Weakness is felt when he cannot give up expectation (of the fulfilment of desires). If expectation can be

given up then weakness cannot come. The phobia that expectation will be baffled brings weakness to the mind. When all expectation is given up, then mind becomes free from weakness. It is expectation which renders a man weak.

Q. What is the real nature of man?

A. When you know (your real nature) you will realize that you are all-pervasive—none limited. You have become limited by illusion. You remain limited because you consider yourselves as such. You believe you are the body, but in reality you are neither the body nor the mind but the infinite *Atma*. The body, the world, everything, these are all creations of your mind. You believe you are finite but will merge in an infinite being by means of *sadhana*—to begin with you have this idea—but in reality you are yourselves no other than the limitless *Atma*.

Q. Cannot a man be liberated without having to don the orange-robe (*gerua*, i.e., being a *sannyasin*)?

A. Religion pertains to the mind. A man can be liberated without donning the ochre robe—while a man though dressed in *gerua* may become bad. The first requisite is a certain state of mind, external accessories are secondary. If the mind is good, *gerua* is of some outward help, but it also increases hypocrisy if the mind is bad. He is really holy whose mind is pure, outward show is of no use.

Q. What is religion (*dharma*)?

A. To try to be dispassionate by getting rid of the impurity of the mind is *dharma*. Liberation is beyond the limits of both religion and irreligion (*dharma* and *adharma*).

Q. Is not retirement to the forest renunciation of the world (*samsar*)?

A. *Samsar* exists in the mind. If attachment to *samsar* remains in a man's mind even after retirement to the forest, then for him *samsar* exists in the forest also, while

in absence of attachment a busy locality is as good as seclusion.

Q. Then what is the necessity of shunning certain localities?

A. The other members of the family disturb those who want to carry on spiritual practices at home. They get an opportunity to remove their attachment to sense—objects by keeping themselves aloof from the disturbances and obstacles of the family and living in a lonely place. Gradually their attachment to sense—objects diminishes by the cultivation of good habits. Far from decreasing, attachment becomes more and more intensified by temporal activities, association with sense-objects, talking about and listening to discussion on worldly subjects. For this very reason after outward renunciation seclusion is necessary in order to cultivate renunciation in the heart.

Q. What is the duty of a householder?

A. Without busying himself to seek out enjoyment and luxury for himself, his wife and children, a householder should look after the peace and happiness of the whole family and help the neighbours to the best of his ability; without giving too much attention to wife and children he should help the needy and poor and feel happy and sorry with all. Far from doing any harm to others it is the duty of a householder to see that the thought of injuring others does not even find a place in his mind, and not to be jealous when others obtain peace and happiness. A (jealous) man suffers from his own jealousy and also causes others to suffer. Do not pay back malice nor harm any body in return for malice. A wrong-doer reaps the fruit of his own action. Always try to be free from pride. Never think that *samsar* is real and the abode of permanent peace. If you do not cherish this idea jealousy, spite and pride will gradually disappear. The more a man observes generosity the more will the narrow limits of the darkness of the

mind break open and so the mind will broaden more to usher in a glimpse of the true light. While in a family you should be respectful and reverential in your dealings with elders, and affectionate and loving towards those younger than yourself. Far from being disrespectful to images of gods and goddesses, house-holders should show reverence to them. The more a man's mind becomes endowed with magnanimity, and the more he possesses faith and reverence, the more will good accrue to him in the next birth. The more one is engrossed in the world devoid of the sense of religion, the more one sinks from dark to darker regions. As a big tree grows from a small seed, so from a little sense of faith and reverence a man may by dint of his efforts realize the Self and be liberated. So also a tiny seed of sin may gradually grow until a man falls to the lowest depth, making him a dung worm.

The householder should be kind to all, but the San-nyasins, who have renounced everything, should be neither kind nor cruel but indifferent, and thus work out their own liberation. Without thinking this transitory *samsar* real, all who lead a domestic life, should remain (in *samsar*) as strangers, keeping ever in view the fact that there is a permanent abode of peace, different from it. They should follow their pursuits taking care of the comforts and discomforts of all; and those who want to attain the knowledge of the Self should ignore and renounce everything and proceed in that way by which they can realise the Self.

Q. What is vice and what virtue?

A. It is vice to be subservient to the sex-impulse, anger, jealousy, malice, defamation and pride. Free from jealousy and spite, to do good to others and to make gifts and give charity without any expectation of return, and to sympathize with others in their weal and woe • without being puffed up—is virtue.

A seeker after liberation should shun both virtue and vice. By vice man gradually tends to be born in turn as beasts, insects, locusts, etc., whereas by performing virtuous acts he merits happiness and celestial abodes. Enjoyment due to meritorious deeds is not permanent. When the fruits are reaped he is once more plunged into the darkness of misery. By shunning vice and courting virtue the mind is purified. Those who proceed on the path of Self-enquiry forsaking both virtue and vice, alone can get knowledge of the Self and peace in exemption from the agonies of birth and death.

Q. By means of which religious practices and by worshipping whom can a man save himself from all misery and pain and gain perfect peace?

A. If through contemplation of the Supreme Brahman man can identify himself with Brahman he can free himself from all pain and obtain peace in the fullest measure.

Q. Keeping the *samsar* in tact and leading a life of enjoyment, is it possible to make any spiritual advancement?

A. Do you know what kind of religious attainment can be had by keeping the *samsar* and sense enjoyment in tact? (Let me tell you), Just as when a diamond is covered with ashes its lustre is not seen at all, similarly by doing so nothing more is done than to cover the eternal, pure Param Atman with ashes in the form of desires and cravings. Without giving up enjoyment and luxury and following the path of renunciation there is no other means of getting out of the dark pit of Ignorance.

Q. Is it not a sin to take to renunciation forsaking wife, son and others?

A. Being entirely intoxicated with wine a man joined the company of several other drunkards and began to supply wine to them. After a few days the fit of intoxication passed off. Then he returned to his natural state

and behaved in the correct fashion. The other drunkards began to wail over the loss of their companion and the supply of wine. Tell me, in these circumstances, should the man go on drinking and remain in the pit of folly, or should he return to his natural state? Which of these is virtue and which vice? In the circumstances, as he ought to go on in his own way without paying any attention to his companions, so when one's intoxication from the wine of sense-objects in *samsar* wears off it is not at all wrong—rather is it good—for one to give up everything and proceed on one's own way. Virtue and vice, dharma and adharma cannot produce any effect on a seeker after liberation. As happiness and sorrow in a dream cannot affect the dreamer when he awakes, so the wailings of the family to preserve the continuity of the (existing) happiness, derived from enjoyment and luxury, cannot cause any obstruction to the advancement of a man on his way to Self-realization.

A man caught in the meshes of attachment to wife, son and other relatives (*maya*) can never get peace and contentment, rather is he always scorched by the fire of desires. On the other hand, a person who has detached his mind not only from wife and children but from the whole universe, seeks no company or support but merges in Param Atma and ever shines in spotless splendour. There is no other way to attain this state but to give up all imagination in gross, subtle or causal form. The person who has known that Param Atma alone is Truth and that all else is unreal cannot be affected by the good and bad results of happiness and sorrow of wife, son or any other relations, who are but the creations of his imagination. As a person, who dreams of having committed a theft, when he awakes is no longer afraid of jail because he knows that the theft of the dream is unreal, so one who wakes from his unreal imagination cannot be distressed by the virtue and vice arising out

of the weal and woe of others which is due to their own Karma. Wife, son, brother, relations, foe and friends, and whatever is visible to the gross vision have no real existence. Being covered by ignorance through self forgetfulness man has created this net of imagination and bound by it is suffering from the cycles of births and deaths. When discrimination awakes in him, this shadow of ignorance is cast off and the rays of the light of Truth begin to fall on him. The more this Truth of the Self dawns on him the more are the nets of imagination torn and dispelled. And for this reason he has neither sin nor merit. What is false, fleeting and perishable must be doomed and so one can never really be swayed by either virtue or vice.

Q. How can both Dualism and Monism be true?

A. As long as man is in it the dream seems real. When he wakes up what he dreamt seems unreal. As long as a man is of a dualistic outlook he regards Dualism as true; but when the real nature of his own Self flashes forth the dualistic outlook is destroyed. As long as darkness reigns darkness is regarded as real, but with the advent of light darkness vanishes. Param Brahman alone is eternal, true, formless, changeless, beyond qualities and dependent on none. The dualistic conception consists of qualities and so cannot be real. Param Brahman alone is immutable. The state of duality is mutable and imaginary, so it cannot be absolutely true, but it may be conditionally true.

Q. How can real celibacy be observed?

A. In order to be a real celibate one has to deaden one's ears, blindfold one's eyes, still one's voice and render the mind free from the pulsation of thought. Let not the ear hear indelicate talk or obscene discussions on filthy subjects, or listen to the descriptions of the beauty and other qualities of any woman; do not cast your eye lustfully on any woman nor hold conversation on the beauty and accomplishments of any woman or any

other sex topic; even in imagination do not let the idea of female beauty arise in the mind. One who can conduct himself in this way alone can be a true celibate.

Q. Of vegetarian and non-vegetarian food which is best suited to an aspirant?

A. A man possessed of *satvic* qualities is by nature inclined to *satvic* vegetarian diet. One who wants to possess *satvic* qualities should take vegetarian diet because *satvic*, *rajasic* and *tamasic* food foster corresponding qualities in the person taking them. None of these three kinds of food can in the least affect one who is beyond the three qualities. The evil effects of food and touch work on the mind of man in a subtle way. Until the mind of a man reaches the state beyond the qualities, the evil effects of food and contact are likely to work in the mind. So purity of food is necessary.

MAYA

Q. What is Maya? What is its meaning?

A. Maya means delusion. That is verily Maya which has no real existence but yet appears to exist. In this sense Maya means error or unreality. This is the correct interpretation. Maya is a mere super-imposition on Brahman, like bubbles on the sea, the shadow of a body and the mirage in a desert. There is no answer to such questions as 'whence did Maya come?' or 'why did Maya come about?' Just as a tipsy man sees a multitude of objects under the influence of wine, but sees none of these when the fit passes off, likewise the *Jiva*, on account of ignorance, becomes enchanted with hopes, and, being made restless, sees this mirage in the form of the world. Along with Maya the feeling that it existed before also vanishes. So there is no answer to the question how it came about; still, Maya is seen, in illusion. In Maya—myriads of unreal things exist. In Maya alone is the presence of happiness and misery felt. In reality neither exists. The *Jiva* is wandering in quest of happiness. The thirst for expectation is never quenched. As the will-o-the-wisp seen at night cannot be caught, the effort only proves futile; so in the kingdom of Maya the *Jivas* are wondering about in expectation of happiness but they find no peace because Maya is unreal and imaginary. Peace can be had only when Maya is no more.

Let us understand the mystery of Maya still more elaborately. Each and every *Jiva* is born from Brahman—in fact every *Jiva* is Brahman; but owing to the illusion of Maya there exists the lingering conception that he is a *Jiva*. This is Maya. The *Jiva* always falls a victim to death, but still every man remains effortless as if he would never die.

—this is Maya. Man's body, limbs and parts of limbs always undergo change and after death the body vanishes into space, still there exists the conception that the body is real and that it is the fountain of happiness—such a notion is verily Maya. Similarly the visible world in all its varieties is Maya, because that is Maya which has no existence in substance (reality) and is the creation of the mind. This world is the outcome of imagination, whatever is seen, heard or enjoyed has its existence in the imagination of the mind. In the absence of the mind all these have no existence. At the time of (deep) sleep these do not exist (for the sleeper), so all these are unreal Maya. All varieties of objects, except *Atma*, which cause the belief that they exist, but do not continue to exist, are (creations of) Maya. The body is but an inert mass, so it cannot yield happiness to a man. The *Atma*, full of consciousness, alone is absolute peace. To think that the body gives happiness is Maya. Every sense-organ of a man's body is (inert) like bricks and stones, still man thinks they give happiness. In oblivion of one's own identity with *Atma*, with mind turned outwards, to form such an idea because of inherited and innate habits (tendencies) is Maya. Not a single *Jiva* is body, but the embodiment of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, still to have such an erroneous idea as "I am the body" due to congenital tendencies is Maya. Whatever is imagined by the mind is Maya. What cannot give, but holds out the promise of happiness to man is Maya. As the form reflected in a mirror, though not real, appears to be so, so the entire universe of five elements, and the happiness derived from them, are not real and do not give real peace, nevertheless in the mind of the *jiva* over-powered by desires, they seem to be real and conducive to happiness as the mirage to the thirsty deer in a desert;—this is Maya. That pacified person alone can get peace, conquer death and become Brahman who by dint of discrimination and reasoning can penetrate into the mystery of

Maya and cut asunder the meshes of Maya by realizing the existence of the *Atman* as the sole ever-present reality. In spite of the presence of the body and objects of enjoyment pertaining to it, as the possessor of the body is not aware of them while asleep, remains under the sway of sleep in the same way forgetting his own nature under the influence of the ignorance of Maya, it is Brahman himself who considers himself to be the possessor of the body, owing to delusive association with the body and feels the bondage though really not in bond. When consciousness dawns it is realised that 'I' am identical with Brahma, the creation of the world emanates from 'me', the world is 'my' imagination, as the bubbles on the sea are not distinct from the sea.

As everything, residence, house, men and trees appear to be revolving and their forms seem distorted to a person who spins round and round in the courtyard of a house, so the *Atma* witnesses the world of five elements as a result of unsteadiness due to imagination. In reality it grows from Maya, is created by the mind and is the offspring of the delusion of the mind, rendered unsteady by cravings. When cravings disappear through means of insight caused by discrimination the mind becomes steady and the *Atma* in its infinite vastness is realized. Then all illusions vanish and *Atma* alone in the form of Wisdom and Bliss persists. *Atma* is real—Its revolving and waving state in the form of of the world of five elements is distortion caused by Maya. The material body is the creation of the mind. *Atma* alone shines to the inward sight when the mental and physical vision is abandoned.

- Q. Who am I and wherefrom have I come and whereto shall I go? What is in the beginning, end or middle? What is the body and the mind?
- A. You are neither the body nor the organs of the body, because all these are inert. You are different from all these, for you are the infinitely vast *Atma*, the abyss of pure Consciousness. In illusion (you consider that)

you are confined in the body, in illusion caused by ignorance and Maya you have entered the chamber of the body and wander about there, thinking that there is happiness in it; you have created the body by the modifications of your cravings and remain there (content), with the idea that you are the *jiva*. But (in reality) different from the body, akin to the sky and brimful of consciousness you are the *Atma*, the only embodiment of Bliss. Just as a dog makes its mouth bleed by biting the dry bone of a cow and licks the blood thinking that the bone is very tasty, so are you yourself in truth the only embodiment of Bliss, who, enjoying sense pleasures, like the dog ascribe it to the senses and their objects, though, all the time you really derive them from your own self. Getting rid of this illusion and abiding in yourself alone you will realize that you are the *Atma*, the embodiment of Bliss. You are neither the body nor the mind, engaged in deriving pleasures from the senses, but you are yourself Brahman.

You have not come from anywhere, nor will you go somewhere else. You are motionless and all-pervading but in illusion because of body-consciousness you experience coming and going. When the body-idea is got rid of you will remain in your own real nature.

In the middle state alone do you consider yourself as a *jiva* and witness the world of creation. The middle state is seen differentiated, though you have really neither beginning nor end, and so no middle. As you did not previously experience the existence of the world of material objects, nor will it be in existence afterwards, so its existence at present is only an illusion. Why worry over an object which neither existed before nor will exist afterwards? What you were before, you are even now and will be later on as well—you are the embodiment of Brahman, beyond the limitation of time.

Your body is only an inert mass, insentient matter, created by the delusion of the mind. Owing to the vibrations of the mind some ideas take shape in a subtle form and they are then transformed into gross bodies. As a rope is taken for a snake because at the sight of it the snake is remembered, so, if some qualities arise in the mind, the material object is seen accordingly. The idea of a piece of wood is formed if length breadth, hardness and such other qualities are in the mind. Similarly when the qualities of the body occur to the mind and get condensed, they are seen as the body. Being deluded by Sexual and other pleasures of the body, the mind remembers the qualities of the body and the body assumes form, like the bubble on the water. It is the mind that has created the body. Mind is the unsteady state of *Atma* when engaged in external corporeal happiness. When this hypnotism of the body disappears and mind turns inward and thus becomes steady the Self is realized. You are the embodiment of that *Atma*. You are the *Atma* but in illusion consider yourself to be the mind, body, etc. This is *mohamaya* (the magic of maya).

Q. What is *Moha* (delusion) and what is the sleep of delusion?

A. To feel the existence of what does not exist is *maya*. *Moha* or delusion is to be unaware of the truth of the Self due to oblivion brought about by the influence of *Maya*. Not to understand that the world of the five elements, the body and the pleasures derived from it are but creations of the mind, and to take them as real—is called *Maya*. The illusory idea that unreal objects are real is called *Maya*. *Moha* is to be attached to them and *moha*, when intensified, is termed the sleep of delusion (*mohanindra*).

Q. What is the cause of 'I' becoming mind and body? What is it to be awake? What is the nature of the Self?

- A. You are neither the body nor the mind; you have no mind or body. In illusion you feel their existence. This has come about only because you identify yourself with the body and mind. If you give up the idea not a trace of them will be left. You are the embodiment of Brahman, Being-Wisdom-Bliss Absolute. You are the 'I' feeling, full of bliss. The ego and the 'my' and 'mine' feeling have come into existence as forms of limited consciousness owing to the perversion of the "I" feeling; by perversion out of the essence of your Bliss have grown the sex impulse and other distortions. Thirsting for sexual pleasures, etc. and thinking yourself to be the body, by imposing a limit to yourself you are wandering about in illusion, forgetting your own Self (true nature), like a thirsty deer in a desert. By gaining discrimination and dispassion to be established in the belief that you are the embodiment of Brahman, beyond all delusion, is termed 'awakening'.

When awakened the bodily cravings die out by (one's) immersion in the Bliss of the Self subsequent to the realization by religious practices that the Self is distinct from the body; and when by the continuous, undivided 'I' feeling the idea of separateness vanishes the ego disappears. Thereupon you shine by yourself as Absolute Bliss.

VI KNOWLEDGE, DEVOTION AND ACTION RECONCILED

From time immemorial the two words *dharma* and *adharma* have been in current parlance. What do they mean? They convey the idea of two states of being, reality and unreality. The idea of the state of reality is called *dharma* and that of unreality *adharma*. That which is eternal and permanent is *dharma* and that which is transient and transitory is *adharma*. Everybody at heart hankers in greater or lesser degree after that bliss which is everlasting, and whatever he does is to obtain happiness. But forgetting where that happiness resides, some are busy seeking fame, honour, wealth, etc., thinking that happiness lies there, where —as others are engaged in pilgrimages, making vows, gifts and rewards. The aim of all is to get the nectar of bliss, and the various activities of all are directed towards the same everlasting truth. All are desirous of performing *dharma*, but forgetting the right path leading to it, they are wandering about in all directions. Not being able to ascertain by reasoning the true import of *dharma* and *adharma*, virtue and vice, peace and unrest, happiness and misery, men are wandering about in various directions in search of happiness; caught up in illusion they witness so much misery in the world, otherwise no such thing as world would exist. What is experienced as happiness and misery exists only in illusion. In oblivion of his ownself man has fallen into and stuck to happiness and misery and in order to find out the Self has been following different paths in pursuit of different principles.

Here the question may arise—Where is that happiness after which a man hankers? Is he himself that bliss? In reality bliss can be attained in the Self alone and not in any external object. Happiness and misery being in one's self, as soon as the real Self is realized everything comes within

one's grasp. Man himself is the embodiment of Bliss. To obtain that Bliss so much ado and fuss are being created on the paths of *Jnana*, *Bhakti* and *Karma*. Some people give prominence to *Jnana*, some to *Bhakti* and still others to *Karma*. Men are busy merely reasoning over the superiority or inferiority of these. When real Knowledge dawns or real Devotion springs up there remains no scope for any discussion of the respective merits of Knowledge, Devotion and Action. Want of comprehension as to what is meant by *Jnana* or *Bhakti* gives scope for difference of opinion. *Jnana*, *Bhakti* and *Karma* have the same import—an attraction. What is *Bhakti*? It is to cherish an attraction to One by reaching Whom all wants are satisfied and perfect Bliss is obtained. Some call this attraction *Bhakti* and some *Jnana*, but the same attraction is at the root of both. It is necessary to know first whom to love so as to be devoted. Only when you know that there is One, will there be the inclination to be devoted to Him. This aspect of knowing is itself termed *Jnana*. So you see when knowledge is wanting devotion cannot grow. What is the object of action? To seek to please this One; when it is known that there exists One who is the creator and administrator of the Universe then only will there be the willingness to please Him. In the absence of Knowledge, Devotion and Action cannot come into play. In childhood no one can revere his parents because knowledge is wanting, with age knowledge grows and then devotion follows.

It is the same with *Dharma*. First it has to be known that there is one First Cause of all; then only devotion to Him follows. The state of intensified devotion is called *prema*. The closer the One, realized as existing, comes, the more intense becomes the love and this is called *prema*. So, indeed, there is no scope left for quarrelling over *Jnana* and *Bhakti*. Knowledge is to know an object. Surely He is to be known to whom devotion is to be shown. The more one knows, the greater the knowledge. If one ponders over what leads one to feel devotion or to do work there remains no

more doubt. It is only because men never care to think over these matters that there is so much controversy about Knowledge, Devotion and Work. How is it possible to develop devotion in the absence of knowledge? How can you feel an urge towards an object unless you really understand it? Therefore knowledge is first wanted. With the growth of knowledge devotion will grow and action will take shape. So where is the room for dispute? As long as right understanding does not manifest such controversy will continue; once understood, knowledge and devotion will not be regarded as either superior or inferior, then all will be seen as the same thing. They are the three stages of the same mental state, first knowledge, and then devotion and work.

In the earlier stage of knowledge comes devotion and work; devotion may be called the first stage of knowledge and is in no way different from it.. You have come to know that God exists. He is the dispenser of your happiness and misery. No sooner do you know this than you want to show devotion to Him; unless you know, devotion does not grow. In proportion to your knowledge will devotion develop. At first man gets this much knowledge, that there is One God, who is the dispenser of happiness and misery; if we pray to Him our enjoyment and happiness will remain intact. Men become afraid to do wrong deeds when they learn that wrong deeds will bring punishments. When knowledge grows a little, men understand that there is God and that devotion should be rendered to Him. He alone can free us from vice and suffering. When men reach this stage of knowledge they forego the pleasure derived from sense-objects and resort to devotion in order to escape from sin and affliction. Even then knowledge has not attained perfection. The nearer He comes, the more intense becomes the love of the devotee towards God—this is *prema*. While in this state of *prema* a devotee experiences ecstasy, melancholy and thrills. What is the cause? By constantly meditating on the One Person a form becomes visible. One sees the sort of image which one imagines while meditat-

ing. When the mind becomes a little quieter it is then that the form becomes visible and the devotee smiles; but when on account of the unsteadiness of the mind the form is not seen the devotee cries in sorrow. When the idea deepens still more, the image appears closer still. Overwhelmed by feeling, the devotee cannot remain quiet; it is then that he gets thrills. These states of ecstasy, dejection and so on may come to the devotee even before he sees the mental image. When the devotee believes in the existence of God and develops a very keen longing to get into communion with Him, even then he may experience these states. Gradually the idea gets condensed and then the thought—image becomes visible. One is the state of ecstasy, dejection, etc. due to intense longing and the other is due to the sight of the mental image; one is shallow while the other is deep.

Gradually the state deepens more and more. By degrees, with the advancement of Knowledge these stages of seeing forms pass away. Then it is understood that nothing has separate existence—I see all these through illusion. Nothing exists as *samsar*, its so called existence is due to a superficial outlook only. When this outlook gives place to insight, it becomes evident that *maya's* play has been going on, in which all such forms were visible—all these are my imagination, I am steeped in illusion. I am the Absolute Bliss, the Changeless. As long as I am experiencing Dualism I am in the land of illusion. Such truths are realized by degrees.

The various stages as described here need not necessarily be the same for every devotee. Some become enlightened gradually and some all of a sudden. Those who get knowledge of the Truth by degrees pass through the above mentioned stages. But such visions do not occur to those who at the very outset initiate such enquiries as the following: Who am I? Where was I before and whence have I come? What is the world? Where is Bliss to be found? They always meditate on the Self. By constant meditation on the Self its real nature will shine forth in full glory.

Knowledge and devotion are but different aspects of the same sentiment. Devotion comes at the outset of knowledge and then by the practice of devotion knowledge gradually reaches its culmination.. Devotion to God grows as soon as one is convinced of His existence. By continued meditation on Him all illusions are shattered.

Men look at the last stage of knowledge and never care to look at the beginning, so this dispute over (the comparative superiority) of knowledge and devotion arises. Renunciation grows as a result of faithful practice. Why should you care to perform a work without knowledge (of its utility)? You will only be able to execute a work properly when the understanding develops in you that it is necessary for you to sacrifice self-interest. Neither devotion nor action comes into play without a slight element of knowledge. Right comprehension of the Truth followed by steady and continued work at it, leads to complete knowledge. One works so far as one is able to understand. No one can do anything without knowing what it is for. Knowledge, devotion and action, all supplement one another. In order to follow the path of Truth all three are required. Knowledge is sure to be followed by devotion with action. As long as the stage of knowledge lasts devotion and action will continue too. In the case of some this devotion with action manifests outwardly, while in the case of others it is felt within. This is the difference. Those who practise outward ceremonial, believe in a personal God and render devotion to Him by means of prayer, love and meditation. On the other hand those having devotion within do not pray to God but they think and meditate on the Supreme Self. For them there is no external work to do. There is only one thing—meditation. Some pray to God thinking that there is a personal God, while others who do not believe in a personal God meditate on the Supreme Self, the only one in existence. One understands as far as one's knowledge extends. Those who meditate on the Self alone and know nothing but the Self, are superior to those who

practise ceremonial devotion. They have understood that no (personal) God exists, only the Self exists and must be realized. A time will come to those who call the Self God, when they too will meditate on the Supreme Self. So also, a time will come to those who meditate on the Self when they will not meditate on any one, but will meditate on their own Self alone. At this stage the illusion of the existence of any one else besides his own Self will disappear; he will then realize that his own Self is all-embracing, nothing has a separate existence. The further one advances, the more one becomes disillusioned.

Whatever is seen to exist is unreal, there is no peace or bliss there, peace abides within one's own Self; to realize this is called Knowledge. On the other hand there is no peace in what is seen, there is God, peace can be found if we find Him, this kind of comprehension is termed devotion. So it is now evident that no scope is left for controversy about (the comparative superiority of) knowledge and devotion. He who learns that God exists will in course of time realize that God has no separate existence—"The All is no other than I". Those who have not real knowledge, as also those who have not real devotion, alone dispute like this. There is no reason to decry devotion. The more one's knowledge grows the more one understands the Truth. To comprehend by gradual steps is better than to be altogether without comprehension. What is there blameworthy in that? Similarly devotees cannot blame those who have understood that God has no separate existence (apart from myself) and I am entangled in illusion created by myself. Blame only finds place where neither correct knowledge nor devotion fills the heart. What else are knowledge and devotion than the serene and ruffled stages of the same attitude? The quieter you become the nearer you find your own Self to be; and the farther you remain from this, the deeper the dualistic conception will be enrooted. In fact, people of a slightly unsteady temperament cannot think that 'I and Brahman are one'.

When they, in their turn, grow serene and see the Self at close quarters then this illusion of theirs vanishes.

Some like devotion, whereas others like knowledge. What does this mean? The self-same bliss of Brahman alone exists. Man cannot give up his taste for the joys to which he is addicted, he cannot conceive the possibility of still greater joys, for he has a predilection for the joys he knows. Those who understand that even the delight derived from the vision of deities and such experiences is not eternal and that there is a distinct eternal Bliss which abides within oneself, alone take to the path of Knowledge and their mind is ever busy with reasoning and enquiry until the dualistic conception held by them finally disappears. These are real *Jnanis*. So also are they real *Bhaktas* who do not pay heed to anything but God, think of Him alone and do not even cast a glance at the enjoyment of sense-objects. Those are not real *Bhaktas* who pray to God to keep their enjoyments intact; it is such people who argue about the merits of knowledge and devotion. Perfect knowledge will soon dawn for those who give up everything and meditate on God alone, not wanting anything else.. But salvation is not to be obtained quickly by those who pray to God for enjoyments; however, this state of theirs will not last. As they are far away from the Self they are unable to see anything but enjoyments. The closer one comes to the Self, the more one renounces. What is enjoyment? It is to like that state in which one already is. What is renunciation? It is not to like that state in which one already is. Some like enjoyments while others like renunciation. The seeker of enjoyments considers this *samsar* to be real, but from the point of view of the renouncer it is unreal. The renouncer is the *Jnani*. (Complete renunciation and *Jnana* are the same).

The world seems to be real only if the Self seems to be distant; as soon as the Self is felt to be near it is realized that the world is unreal. Only as long as the mind remains unsteady will duality appear. The steadier the mind the deeper

the feeling of unity. What is the difference between a *Jnani* and a *Bhakta*? One seeing unity is a *Jnani*, and one seeing duality a *Bhakta*. Fundamentally they are the same. The steadier one becomes, the more one realizes. Those who are unsteady believe that the world is real, they cannot conceive of any step in advance of this. Their belief is based on the depth of their conception. Those who have become slightly steady believe that the *samsar* is real, God exists and He will bestow happiness here and hereafter if He is prayed to. Men holding this view pray to God while still leading a householder's life and looking after wife and children. When a steadier stage than this is reached it is believed that God cannot be found while maintaining a family, everything must be renounced. They give up all and meditate on God and by constant meditation visualize materialized images. These, indeed, are the real followers of the path of devotion. Those who become steadier still realize that the so-called world has no real existence, that man is entangled in his own illusion and Brahman alone is real. They always meditate on Brahman and become one with Brahman through constant meditation. These are called real *Jnanis*. *Bhakti* is nothing but a lower stage of *Jnana*. The more one's knowledge extends, the deeper one's conception becomes and one realizes accordingly.

If men would only think a little there would be no room for controversy. "Who am I?" "Who is God?" Such enquiry removes all illusions. It is the tranquil mind alone that can carry on such enquiry, which overcomes all doubts; whereas for the unsteady, high thinking cannot occur, it is these people who busy themselves with arguments.

What is the meaning of the Self being nearer or farther as mentioned above? When the mind becomes steady Self comes near, but when it is unsteady Self remains at a distance. The more the mind becomes unsteady—the farther the Self recedes. Mind is merely a wave on the Self, it has no separate existence. The Self is always near, but on account of the sense of separateness it seems at a distance.

Bhakti is nothing but knowledge with limitations. The Self is an undivided whole without a second.. The all-pervading Self exists everywhere. Those only who have a sense of separateness manage to see it as limited. Beyond the sphere of mind Self is one whole. When the Self is dynamic, mind, intellect, ego and the feeling of 'I-ness' spring up. In the static state the Absolute Brahman alone shines. Desires and cravings come into existence simultaneously with the feeling of 'I-ness'. Desires hold the mind in a state of unsteadiness, then man forgets the true nature of his own Self, and oblivious of his own blissful nature seeks pleasure outside. The 'my' and 'mine', feeling binds the 'I' to the body, mind and ego. The conception that 'I am the body' is formed in oblivion of the fact that 'I' is not the body. As a step further arises the idea 'I have got a mind and intellect.' By degrees the illusory imaginations grow. First my mind and intellect, next my father, mother, brother, sister; next my hearth and home, my country and so on. At this stage instead of seeking for happiness within oneself one expects it from the mind, intellect and ego. Disappointed, one seeks it from others. Gradually the sense of 'my' and 'mine' deepens. From Unity diversity is thus brought into being. Then, oblivious of the true nature of his own Being, in a distorted state man begins to witness this (world of) diversity..

In reality the Self is indivisible by nature and apparent separateness is a distorted state. When unsteady this undivided Unity appears as diversity. When it is once again steady then will Unity alone be realized. In order to reach the state beyond the qualities from the limited state, one has necessarily to pass through the latter. With the help of imagination one has got to get rid of imagination. The bonds of action are cut asunder by action itself. The state beyond thoughts must be reached through thoughts themselves. One has to take hold of forms in order to reach the formless state. Those activities which cut asunder the knots of action must not be regarded as temporal activities.. Wor-

ship, sacrifice, pilgrimage and vows, all these are performed for the sake of having one's desires fulfilled. Men perform them in expectation of still more material prosperity in the next life. Expectation itself is bondage. Impelled by expectation men perform temporal activities also. Man earns fame, honour, learning and wealth in expectation of pleasure from wife, son, relations and other folk. As happiness is in one's Self, one cannot get it even if one seeks for it in ten different directions. To withdraw the scattered mind from diverse directions to one point is the only real secret and right objective. What are temporal activities? They are to spread activities in ten (diverse) directions—to seek pleasure outside. As happiness abides in nothing external, man cannot get it by performing worldly actions. That which causes bondage cannot liberate. All these actions are one and all impelled by expectation. Then, which kind of action does lead one to salvation? First one has to perform virtuous deeds such as associating with saints, discussing truth and performing *Japa* and *Tapas*. In other words, one has to give up diversity and do such actions as are to be performed in order to reach unity. By worldly activities the mind has become scattered through all the points of the compass, it is brought to one point by performing righteous deeds over and over again. Without seeking happiness from any one (else), to keep one end in view and in pursuance of that object to perform *puja*, *japa*, *tapas*, etc. is action for (the attainment of) Truth. What is the end to keep in view? At this juncture (i.e. while selecting means) some believe in God and meditate on Him, whereas others meditate on the Self with the belief that none but the Self exists and God has no separate existence. Some, on the other hand, hold the view that 'I am the Self—I am in illusion and shall realize Absolute Bliss, my true nature, by meditation on the Self.' They always meditate on the Self. Men of this view are few. The majority are followers of the path of devotion, while the number of followers of the path of knowledge

with an element of devotion mixed with it, are less. There are followers of every kind of view, but, of these, the three principal views current are: *Advaita*, *Vishishtadvaita* and *Dvaita*. (Monism, Qualified Monism and Dualism). Of these *Advaita* is the highest.

VII

THE SIX MYSTIC CENTRES

(Of Concentration in the body)

Brahma alone is the Truth. What is evidenced as the world by men is but a creation of thought. Just as a thirsty deer, through illusion, sees a mirage in a desert, so sentient beings, decoyed by expectation, behold the mirage of the world in their own imagination. As soon as desires perish the imagination of the mind ceases and consequently vanishes the illusion in the form of the world mirage. As in the deep dreamless sleep state activity of the mind is suspended and the world no longer exists, so the world must be created by the mind itself, which is no other than waves (on the ocean) of *Atman*.

As soon as it becomes as it were slightly unsteady the Self passes into oblivion, and assumes the role of the mind. How and why the Self appears to be unsteady cannot be expressed in words. With the help of analogies like a bubble on the sea and such, man can only form a vague notion about it. The Self being slightly perturbed the consciousness that 'I am like the sky' takes form. Then one feels 'I am the all-pervading Universal Form'. Thereupon come into being two limited states, namely 'I' and 'What my nature is'. At the sight of an earthen elephant the idea of an elephant occurs though it is in reality nothing but earth. Similarly in the state of Self-awareness 'I alone exist by myself', there appears the consciousness of 'I' and 'I am', whence proceeds the conception of duality. The very consciousness of mine, that 'I witness that 'I exist', starts the limited state. Thus step by step unsteadiness alone causes illusory creation, owing to vibration, commencing with the idea that 'I am the Universal

Form which alone exists', and from this rises such **other** ideas as 'mind', 'intellect' and 'ego'. By these alone the **world** is created, and the *Jiva* having created the illusion of **body** and senses, etc. with the help of the ego and desires becomes bound by the meshes of cravings. Though the body, etc. have no real existence, on account of restlessness of the mind, disturbance comes into existence propelled by desires, etc., and thereby body, etc., are created. This is how the magic show of the world becomes visible. In fact the body is unreal, being only an effect of imagination and this again is due to the want of equilibrium of the mind. Likewise the mind appears to exist because of restlessness alone. The mind is no more than waves on the Self. The mind has no existence, the Self alone shines, all else is but the product of imagination.

According to the difference in intensity, imagination appears subtle or gross. The stronger the vibration of the mind the more vivid the imagination. If the mind vibrates mildly it assumes subtle forms and by degrees, as the vibrations become intense, it assumes gross forms. Subtle imagination itself gradually assumed gross forms. The difference between subtle and gross lies only in degree.

The mind always indulges in subtle thoughts. The more these imaginary ideas are repeated, the grosser they become. This body of five elements is but a gross manifestation of thought. In proportion to the unsteadiness of the mind thoughts increase or decrease. When the mind becomes more unsteady thoughts increase in number and assume visible forms. Imagination, hopes, desires, etc., are all mere projections of the same mind; according to the increase of the projection of the mind material objects multiply.

The mind modifications by mere solidification assume gross forms; it is in this way that one considers oneself to be the body. Forthwith bodily actions, such as eating and sleeping, and all forms of I—consciousness, such as my body, my house, my work and so on, become deep-rooted and thus illusion is confirmed. At this state one cannot remember that there

is any such thing as the Self, and through illusion or *Maya* thought after thought arises in the mind, and the *Jiva* rotates like a whirl-pool. Thus though there is no existence of anything in reality, by the fancy of the mind the world mirage becomes visible. The current of such mental fancies flows unceasingly. Hope after hope comes into being and the mind becomes bewitched by the magic charm of hope, and knows no respite. As the sun is not visible in a sky overcast with clouds, likewise the Self cannot shine so long as the mind is shrouded with the fleeting clouds of hopes and desires. When false hopes are exterminated by the power of knowledge the real nature of the Self manifests itself.

It is only after the inception of the notion that the mind is under the sway of delusion, that *Jivas* attempt to get rid of the delusion. One cannot try to correct an error until one recognises it. As soon as a man realizes that he is submerged in delusion, he desires to extricate himself and wakes up to consciousness. The *Jivas* caught up in the meshes of *samsar* go on spinning round and round in the whirl-pool of pleasure and pain, and immersed in delusion, smart under the threefold misery of disease, death and grief. When the agony of sorrow is felt, then alone comes the attempt to overcome delusion. In the cycle of *samsar* sorrow succeeds sorrow and one feels there is no peace in the world. The man realizes the hollowness of hopes and desires and endeavours to achieve eternal peace. Generally, senility, death, etc., alone are sufficient to convince a man of the emptiness of worldly desires and so bring him to his senses. Then dispassion grows in the mind of the *Jiva*; knowing that worldly enjoyment cannot yield peace, he feels repulsion for such gratifications. With the advent of such repulsion man sets aside the current of desires from his mind by dint of spiritual practices, and is at pains to try for the attainment of eternal Truth. Consequently the range of the pictures drawn by the imagination gradually dwindles and the mind becomes quieter step by step. The more the mind becomes quiet the

higher it soars and the less becomes the inequilibrium of the mind. The mental state changes gradually with the calmness of the mind. In accordance with the degrees of mental calmness one has to pass through many states, and in the end the state of absolute tranquility is reached. According to the difference of mental quietude imagination or mental inequilibrium varies. Along with its increase the mind goes downwards and with its decrease the mind soars upwards.

According to the different degrees of mental quietude the mental states undergo definite changes corresponding to which the *Yogins* have imagined certain different centres in the body and they also notice which kind of mental state appertains to each. Thus according to the difference of the mental plane the "six centres" have been imagined within the body corresponding to their respective subtle attitudes of mind. These six centres are nothing more than modifications of the mental state. The six centres are mere imagination; in fact they have no existence. When the mind abandons the outward play of Nescience (*Maya*) and gradually goes upwards, the inward play of *Maya* which is then noticed along with the changes of mental state, has been termed the "six centres."

Between the anus and the root of the sex organ is "*Muladhara*", between *Muladhara* and the navel is "*Swadhisthana*", above *Swadhisthana* at the navel is "*Manipur*" between *Manipur* and the neck, in the region of the heart, is "*Anahata*", in the neck is "*Vishuddha*", between the eyebrows is "*Ajna*" and inside the head "*Sahasrara*" has been conceived.

The mind of ordinary beings having been engaged in eating, sleeping and such other pursuits, sinks into *Maya* or the darkness of ignorance and becomes addicted to abnormal enjoyments. The mind of such creatures is very much attached to sense-gratification. Owing to attachment to sense enjoyments the mind becomes abnormal; in such condition the mental fancies speed on swiftly; and because the

mind roams about in the domain of *Maya*, busy with objects of desire, it fails to comprehend Truth. The mind of such beings generally moves about all the time in the lower part of the body—in the region between the anus and the sex organ. In such state of mind it may be said to be abiding in *Muladhara*. The extremely sensual and depraved mind loiters in *Muladhara*. As long as the mind is in this portion of the body it is very restless, it cannot conceive of the Truth and remains submerged in imaginary enjoyments.

At this stage man becomes intoxicated with cravings for sense—objects and wallows in the mire of sensuality and becomes devoid of reason and discrimination. The shadowy images of the world appear to the mind as realities and it has not the power to give up fancies and meditate on matters related to Truth. The will power remains with a downward tendency and the *Jiva* cannot soar upwards. Because this will-power, which the yogis call *Kundalini*, lies asleep, the mind is not endowed with the power to conceive the Truth. Just as in deep (dreamless) sleep the existence of the world is not felt, similarly in spite of the One Infinite Power permeating all, because the mind is steeped in the darkness of ignorance, *Kundalini* remains asleep, and consequently the conception of matters beyond the sphere of the world cannot arise in the mind.

When the mind catches a slight glimpse of Truth the person will listen to discussions on discrimination and dispassion, at the same time remaining steeped in the enjoyment of sense-gratification; such is the state when the mind rises to *Swadhishtana*. On reaching this centre the mind becomes comparatively composed, and the mind takes delight in listening to discourses on Truth and religious subjects. Now the mind, though unable to give up sense-pleasures, yearns to listen to still higher topics. Above *Muladhara* the place where the mind becomes a little calm, is the seat of *Swadhishtana*. Discriminative knowledge peeps into the mind as soon as it reaches this centre. Having gradually

attained a calmer state here the mind proceeds in an upwards direction towards *Manipur*. But in the case of the mind again becoming restless and attached to sense-objects at this point, it has to come down again to *Muladhara*. While the mind dwells in *Muladhara* the world alone seems to be the only reality. Man cannot conceive or believe that anything else besides the world exists. He believes that worldly pleasures alone are real. That the world is the outcome of imagination and therefore impermanent; this knowledge does not dawn up on him. But when the mind reaches *Swadhishtana* man attains discrimination to a certain extent. Though he believes the world to be real, he believes moreover that there is a Creator who is the root-cause of the world and faith in God grows in him. Then discrimination between right and wrong comes into being and man can see into the difference between good and bad desires. He now even feels a feeble inclination to give up desires. Even if the mind is still engrossed in enjoyments man discriminates between right and wrong. Such is the state of mind in *Swadhishtana*. The mind of ordinary beings plies between these two centres.

When the state of the mind is a bit calmer than that of *Swadhishtana* the mind dwells in *Manipur*. In the physical body the navel is the seat of *Manipur*. The mind having reached here, bright effulgence is felt within. This is known as mental vision of light and so forth. If the mind continues here it gets separated from the world and the desires for worldly objects are wiped out. Now the mind becomes detached from things mundane. Even then the world is visible but it looks as if it were reflected in a mirror; it does not appear to be permanent. Then the mind of the aspirant longs to keep aloof from the world. Anything pertaining to this world does not appear to be good. The mind hankers after listening to and discussing good topics and talking about the ultimate reality. Now the mind discards the taste for the material world and begins to dive into the bliss of the

world within. Thereupon the fancied objects of the external world gradually disappear and images of gods and goddesses shine and play in the inner chamber of the mind. Whichever form the aspirant contemplates while meditating on the Self, that very form becomes visible to him; a seeker of devotional temperament visualizes the deity he worships; while the follower of the path of knowledge gets a vision of his own Self. These visions are not like the pictures of the imagination seen superficially in ordinary life, the forms are quite distinctly vivid. The mind absorbed in such effulgent forms enjoys a feeling of very intense bliss. At this stage thoughts turn inwards. The mind wants to shun material thoughts and spend its time in inward contemplation. At the *Manipur* centre such an imaginary and inwardly manifested play of *Maya* continues. Here each individual can see exactly the form which he longs to see.

The forms which are thus visible do not appear like external scenes, they are realized within. All these are but the play of the imagination, so, different seekers realize these states differently. The *Jnani* aspirant feels very little of these. Here again according to the decrease or increase of mental vibrations variations occur in the visions of divine forms. The aspirant, who is captivated by the charms of this state, notices visions of forms, etc., in plenty, whereas he who has been convinced of the imaginary nature of these visions, in order to go beyond them directs the mind upwards through proper discrimination and does not pay heed to them.

When the mind reaches this level the aspirant, who having had a vision of the deity he worships, takes that itself to be the real state of God-realization, becomes submerged in these enjoyments and achieves thaumaturgic powers of various kinds. Those who are lacking in their keenness of reasoning powers, when their mind rises to this level, amuse themselves and become absorbed by these thaumaturgic powers and become taken up by all sorts of curiosities furnished by the mind. Now fancies related to the outer world

simply yield place to those of the inner world. The seeker of keenly rational temperament is able to see into their fanciful nature, so through discrimination he rends them to pieces. As the mind gradually soars higher it attains still calmer states. While dwelling in the *Manipur* centre the mind likes to abide in the bliss of imagination all the time and no sooner does it begin to contemplate than the vision of the same effulgent one appears.

The mind having steadily attained a state of still greater calmness gets a lift to the *Anahata* lotus. That is to say, being certain by reasoning of the imaginary nature even of this stage, to overcome it and gradually attain the state of a higher degree of mental tranquility is termed *Anahata*. When the mind arrives at this point the resplendent form which was visible while in *Manipur*, (be it the form of his own Self or that of his favourite deity) multiplies in number and is visualized all around. The belief that the world is real and lasting ceases to exist and the mind is absorbed in inner joy. The manifold forms beheld in *Anahata* may be called "vision of universal form". On reaching this point, if the mind abides, for sometime in the same state, a sort of hide-and-seek is played and this is what is said to be the "sport of love."

When here, at one time the mind occasionally has the resplendent vision of the universal form but loses it hereafter. Then the mind pines for it; as the mind goes on longing for it, it appears again. The mind having ascended the *Anahata* plane, the form of one's own Self is seen within all, the consciousness that all objects on earth are not separate from Brahman, is realized.

While the mind abides in *Anahata* it is felt while seated in meditation, as if the universe were visible within oneself. One's interior seems to inflate like a football in which the Universe alone is afloat. At such times movements of beings in subtle bodies (coming and going) can be discerned and

happenings at remote places can be precisely known at will. Here similar extraordinary powers can be achieved, but these are also the offspring of the illusion of *Maya*. A wise aspirant remains quite indifferent to these. But all of these are witnessed only by those who strive to attain them.

The mind having overcome all such abnormalities goes up higher and higher by degrees. It enjoys considerable peace as soon as it reaches *Vishuddha*. At this stage there exists nothing as objects to be seen and at a great height within the abyss of limitless empty space, it is only felt that I exist by myself. The mind having attained a further state of poise, a feeling begins to develop that I am the universe and that my will has been directing it. Such a state of mind may be termed abidance in *Vishuddha* centre.

Steadily the mind acquires a state of still greater calmness and proceeds towards *Ajna* centre. In order to go from one centre to another, the mind must be extremely earnest. Immediately after the *Vishuddha* is crossed, there is no more death; there remains no body consciousness now and therefore no death. When the mind rests in *Ajna*, no such thing as the world exists. Conceptions such as the world etc. disappear. Thereupon such knowledge manifests itself as "I alone exist", as if I alone occupy the whole world, as if I shine as the gigantic universal form. But even such a state is illusory.

While the mind is in *Ajna*, though 'I' have no form, the consciousness that I am "*virat*" (vast without measure) persists. That "I am conscious of my all-pervading vastness", so much sense of duality lingers still. The *samsara* originates from a consciousness of duality of the subtlest type; again through a gradual process of disillusionment when this stage is reached, man becomes liberated and finally attains the formless "*Nirvikalpa*" state, (which is entirely free from the slightest vibration of thought waves). This is indeed what goes by the name of *Sahasrara*.

The different states represented by the phrase "Six Mystic Centres" which have been just described, vary according to the trend of the seekers' mind. Those who are really illumined, realize simply "Brahma alone is real and the world is unreal."

APPENDIX

Translation of a few extracts of Mother's sayings from my diary as read out to Mother and approved by Her is recorded here. These are Eternal Truths as coming from the mouth of the Self-realised Mother.

1. 10-10-28—"You are God. Will-power should be awakened."
2. 20-1-29—(i) "In difficulties, courage, strength of mind and patience are necessary. A man can be a hero if the strength of mind is permanent. Sometimes strength of mind or weakness of mind predominates and this struggle in mind goes on in life".
(ii) "Do the work that lies before you. Strength of mind arises from pursuing truth. One should be fearless and free from pride."
3. 10-2-29—"In the greatest crisis in life, there is the seed of the greatest good. In difficulties, if one loses hope he also loses strength of mind. Whether one lives or dies he should fight the battle of life. One should cultivate the 'I can, I will' thought."
4. 5-4-29—"One should not take refuge in cowardice, weakness and narrow-mindedness. A man can be great by the power of the mind. By the power of mind one can see God and also be at one with the unseen Infinite Power. A man should work and give up work according to circumstances. Lord Shree Krishna advised Arjuna to work and to fight a battle according to his circumstances. Those who think that a person of renunciation should not mix with worldly people and advise them, should consult religious literature to find that those who are Self-realised may come down to the ordinary level of men and do all works and that They are always on the side of truth and justice. You know that I give up world consciousness and again descend and assume human attributes and play with you all. It is very difficult to understand this condition of mind. I do not even understand my own condition but I do it."
5. 21-12-29.—(i) "Weakness is sin. Those who are weak suffer greatly. The minds of wrong-doers are weak. Those who follow truth and justice have strong minds—they are not

depressed by any event. They possess the courage to stand alone against the whole world."

(ii) "In the state after Self-realisation, *i.e.* Praravdha, people cannot understand us. The condition of mind varies at different times. We talk to persons according to their condition of mind. Our thought is limitless. There is no attraction to anything and there is no body—consciousness. Like children We feel no delicacy. Sometimes We act like wholly worldly minded people."

6. 26-12-29—"The Self-realised persons can do everything. The mind has to be contracted and therefore They do not desire."

7. 9-1-30—(i) "The delay in the fulfilment of desires is due to the conflict of desires and the time needed for preparation."

(ii) "Self-confidence is necessary in every work."

(iii) "There may be conflict of desires, *i.e.* one may desire one thing and expect another. But the desire must not be given up."

✓(iv) "Doing good to others is the same as doing good to one-self."

(v) "Those who have attained Self-realisation do nothing with the object of doing good to others, They only have their desires fulfilled."

(vi) "In the degree a person remains unmoved and maintains equilibrium of mind, in that degree he gets mental peace. This depends on following the righteous path."

(vii) "One should not deceive himself."

8. 10-1-30—(i) "What We desire must happen though it may take time."

(ii) "My mind was very firm before. Nothing could move it. I suppressed all worldly powers. But during this state after Self-realisation, *i.e.* Prarabdha, these powers are at work and this would benefit others."

9. 13-1-30—"If a Self-realised person gives or says anything to a person it must come true—it is called Transmission of Power. The words of a Self-realised person do not easily come and when they do come they are as true as the Vedas (eternal truths). What are the Vedas? They are only the words of the Self-realised persons."

10. Different dates of 1929-30—(i) "I speak to Suresh (Paramananda) and others, what is your fear? I am at your back. Do your work depending on Me entirely. There are ve

few in this world among millions who get this unique opportunity of getting a Self-realised Guru."

(ii) In reply to a question regarding the stage of Her Realisation, Mother said, "Last stage, *i.e.* *Nirvikalpa* which does not last long as life passes away if it lasts long. Suddenly this stage is reached and *Prarabdha* brings the mind down—but from that highest stage I move about like ordinary men. The mind is like the sky."

(iii) The next question—"We would understand it if the name of any Saint is mentioned who had the same state of Realisation like you."

Mother's answer was "Like Buddha, Sankar and Ramkrishna Deb".

11. 18-1-30—"I do not like to practise religion by losing my freedom. If anyone tells Me that he would give Me Self-realisation if I agree to lose My freedom, I do not want such Self-realisation."
12. 8-3-30—"God can bear everything except pride and jealousy."
13. 8-7-30—"All that is required of you is to serve your Gurn. The rules are all there. But where is the self-realised Guru to be found?"
14. 2-2-31—"Prophecy—The Sanyasins of today are like Brahmins. A sacred thread is the badge of a Brahmin and a red cloth is the badge of a Sanyasi." "I say, considering the condition of Sanyasins you will see that their condition will be like that of the Brahmins. Now-a-days the sign of a Sanyasi is his red cloth. They have full desires for enjoyment and they only lack a wife and a child. What I have said will come true even after My passing away."
15. 3-2-31—"Work (Karma) is everything. Work can overcome the effect of previous bad work. But it may take time."
 - (ii) "To depend on Mother is also work (Karma) and to think is also work (Karma)".
16. 8-2-31—"Those who have a strong desire to Realise God should not run after Sadhus, but should try to find out the ways themselves and then act."
 - (ii) "One should absolutely surrender to God and to nothing else."

- his mother and sister-in-law in this world? He can certainly do it if he has the desire to be good."
18. 20-2-31—"Know it for certain that I have not given name to any of our Sadhus or asked them to wear red robes."
19. 22-2-31 Q.—Is it possible to get Self-realisation without the help of a Guru?
A—"Generally it is not possible. It is extremely difficult."
20. 27-2-31—(i) "It is a mystery that a Person of Self-realisation, if alive, has no body-consciousness."
(ii) Q.—Does a person of Self-realisation forget His Knowledge even for a moment?
A—"No. 'It' is never forgotten. That Person is in the same state always whatever he does." "That" is never forgotten. That Pleasure and Bliss cannot be expressed in language."
(iii) "I do not believe that it is impossible to do a thing, if one tries."
21. 28-2-31 Q.—Is there any death to a person of Self-realisation?
A—"What is death to a Person who is above life and death?"
"Death is contraction and life is expansion of mind."
22. 21-8-31—"The more sincere you will be the more you will find me as your own."
23. 23-7-32—"Dhiren, I doubt if there is a true Sadhu among one hundred thousands of them. Don't trust Sadhus easily."
24. 25-1-33—(i) "It is the general belief that Sadhus continue to practise counting the beads of rosary even after Self-realisation, as they think that having attained their goal by this means it should be continued. But this is entirely wrong. For, to a self-realised person all this is mere illusion. How can any one stick to a practice that has been realised to be unreal? Likewise worldly people have this weakness and diffidence that they do not like to give up the place of business where their business flourished lest it brings misfortune on them. Counting of beads and worship become superfluous after Self-realisation. Those who continue the practice have not attained Self-realisation at all."
(ii) "We see the mind. None can deceive us."
25. 3-9-33—"Self-realised persons are not guided by traditional rules for teaching people. They even cease to worship God. Whom would they worship after Self-realisation? Just like persons who have passed the M.A. Examination and do not