

# Ananda Vārtā

A quaterly journal dealing mainly with the divine life and teaching of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee and with other religio-philosophical topics



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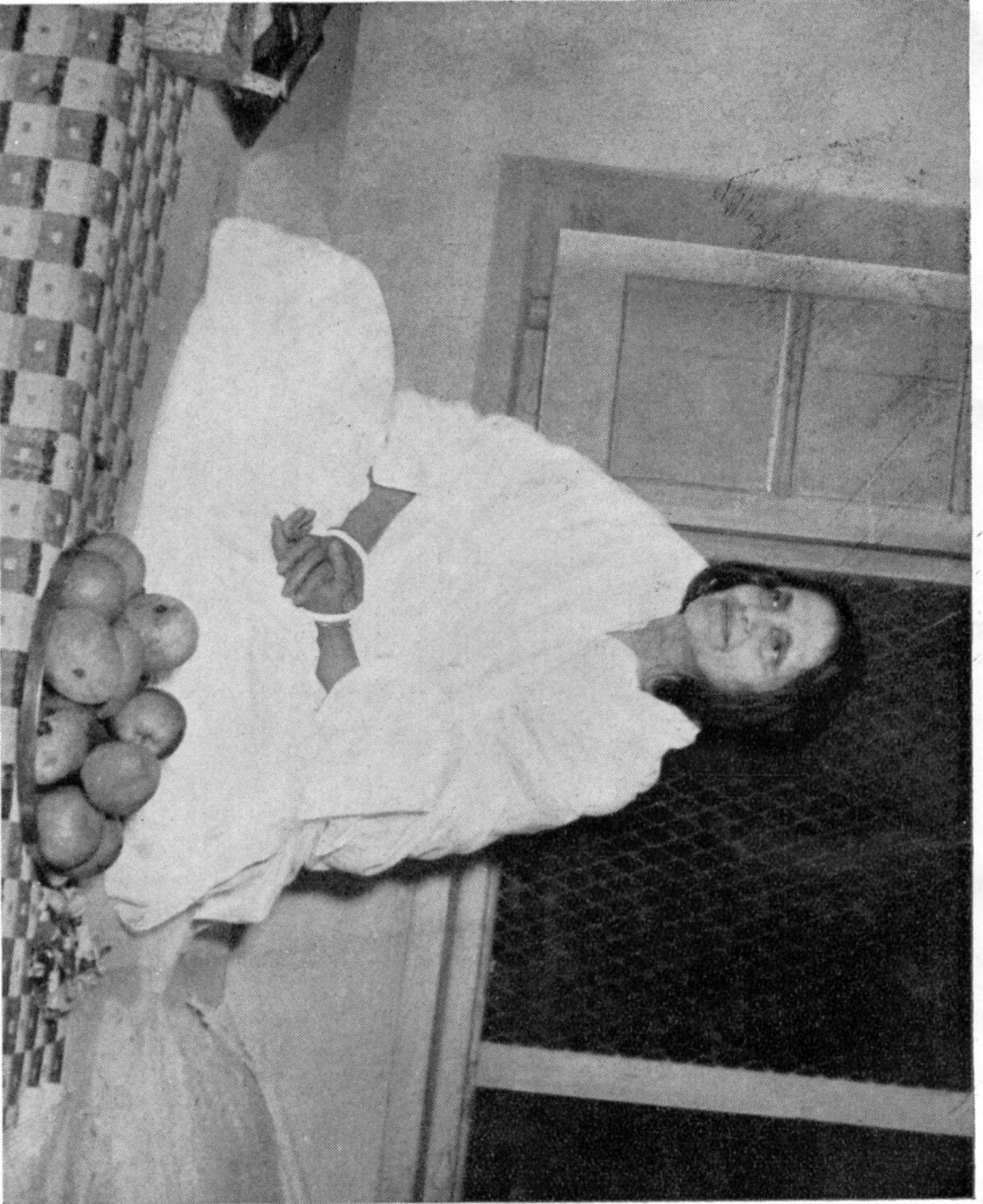
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—Dehradun, May, 1962.

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

## MATRI VANI

*Svayam Bhagavān* † is nameless and formless ; again, when viewed in His other aspect, He is of infinite names and forms. Always bear this in mind !

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Whatever comes to pass by the will of Him who is Will Itself, is beneficent. In a life that moves within worldly considerations, conflict is natural. To persevere with steadiness in the movement that ends in Self-realization is man's duty.‡ A glimpse of one's own essential nature

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† *Svayam Bhagavān* The supreme Ātman Itself, conceived as the Supreme Lord, endowed with infinite power, boundless compassion, unlimited knowledge, love and beauty, The term *Svayam Bhagavān* occurs for the first time in the *Srimad Bhāgavata*, in connection with *Sri Krishna*.

‡ On another occasion *Mataji* said : "...it is said that there are two kinds of currents in human life : the one pertaining to the world, in which

gives bliss. The mind that aspires after bliss is really aspiring to its own Self, which is its mother—even though the view that the mind is the child of its own Self may be imaginary. Whose, after all, are the movements of the mind? Mine of course—in fact, I myself. If one remains ever steeped in the rhythm of one's true nature,\* how can one possibly go wrong, or experience misfortune, or lose one's way? Where is the chance to even think of these possibilities? When one treads the path, in other words practises *sādhana*, is it not one's duty to keep one's gaze constantly fixed on one's chosen ideal? It has to be admitted that without the taste, the experience of inner joy, one does not find the energy to forge ahead; yet, if *sādhana* is one's purpose in life, one must not allow it to become shrivelled and emaciated: to keep it well sustained by nourishing food is man's unceasing duty. It is interruption that produces ill-health. Although it is true that without His touch the child *sādhana* cannot reveal itself, nevertheless one must keep one's winkless gaze fixed on the light one has obtained so far. Every moment is pervaded by Him, by His contact, His touch, His advent, His acceptance, His victory.

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want follow upon want; the other of one's true Being. It is characteristic of the former that it can never end in fulfilment—on the contrary, the sense of want is perpetually stimulated anew. Whereas by entering the latter man will become established in his true nature and bring to completion the striving which is its expression. Thus, if he endeavours to fulfil himself by entering this current, it will eventually bring him to the perfect poise of his own true Being." (Words of Shri Anandamayi Ma, p. 30.)

\*"...man's true nature flows towards God alone." (Words of Sri Anandamayi Ma, p. 67).

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# Conversations with Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma

PROFESSOR B. GANGULI

( Translated by Atmananda )

(10)

Ranchi Ashram,  
23-5-1958.

*Question :* In the *Chandi* †, the Great Mother is sometimes described as benevolent and gracious, again at other times as wrathful. Is She then sometimes merciful and sometimes full of fury ?

*Mataji :* As the destroyer of evil forces She appears wrathful and as the preserver of the gods, full of grace. Her appearance is in keeping with the individual *karma*. Do not expect this body to comment on the *Śāstras*.‡ There is a way to realize Her as benevolent ; again, where greed, anger, delusion and so forth prevail, She is perceived as wrathful. In the world also, if a mother is unable to mould her son by loving-kindness, she resorts to slaps. There are mothers who fake anger to put fear into their children ; others rule by love and affection. Whatever she may do,

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† *Chandi* or *Durga Saptasati* deals with the descent of the Supreme Power that manifests to conquer the evil forces that invade not only humanity but also the realm of the devas. It is part of the *Markandeya Purāna*. It consists of three sections, representing the victory of the Divine Power in three different ways over three destructive evil forces on three memorable occasions taken from history.

‡ Śāstras—The sacred Hindu Scriptures'

a mother behaves according to the needs of her child. Just as a mischievous boy has at times to be taught by punishments, similarly men of demonic nature have to be improved by making them afraid. A mother does exactly what is best for her children. The Great Mother manifests in all guises and appearances. She is both with attributes (*saguṇa*) and beyond (*nirguṇa*).

*Question* : When God is invoked as the mother, why is there no response ?

*Mataji* : There surely is ! Great souls have shown this by their experiences. Invoke Her in any way that will make Her respond. When a child, absorbed in his play, weeps, the mother does not come to console him. But if the child cries disconsolately, she will certainly hasten to her darling's side. At times, even when the child does not cry, but leaves his play and stands aside, the mother comes to him. By play is meant the play of life in the world (*saṁsāra*).

*Question* : Is the Mother more compassionate towards an ill-natured child ?

*Mataji* : The Mother's compassion is equal for all. Your own nature will dictate you what to do. A "Mother" is called one who forgives, and apportions to her child exactly what is most beneficent to him. The great Mother is all-pervading and full of goodness.

*Question* : Suppose an atheist lives an ethical and righteous life ; is he nevertheless on a lower level than the faithful devotee ?

*Mataji* : An ethical life purifies the mind. Even though one may have no faith in God, if one believes in some Superior Power or has a high ideal, this also will serve one's purpose. By living an ethical life one progresses towards the realization of the Divine. If one believes in supermen, can it be said that one does not believe in God ? To believe in God under a particular name is also a way.

*Question* : In the age of science it is difficult to believe in God.

*Mataji* : By studying science the thirst for knowledge is aroused, and thus one will awaken to the search after Truth. But the truth that denies God and all deities, is a partial, one-sided point of view—it is not comprehensive vision. An integral, complete vision unites the point of view of science with that of faith. In a full vision, the standpoints of the believer and of the non-believer meet. To lay stress on righteousness and ethics will educate your character and eventually lead to perfection. A complete, unobstructed vision will open out. By accepting your own line wholly and with all its implications, you will finally realize all lines of approach.

*Question* : Having accepted something as an axiom, why should questions still arise ?

*Mataji* : So long as one has not attained to direct knowledge, questions are bound to crop up. As long as you dwell in the realm of the mind, there will be questions. Here, there is time and death. Time and death are of the mind, of that which can be taught and learnt. Beyond the

mind there is neither space nor time or death. On attaining to final equilibrium, the axiom will become irrefutable truth.

*Question :* If I live depending on God's Grace, what will happen. ?

*Mataji :* At every instant you are changing. As you go on being transformed more and more, you will reach a state where there are no more questions, no more change, only Grace and Grace alone.

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“When thinking, think of Him, when working, do His service. Pilgrims must keep on advancing on their journey. To spend one's days practising the presence of God means to progress on the pilgrim's path.”

—Sri Anādamayi Ma

## With Mataji at the Hardwar Kumbh

BY KRISHNANATH

The *Samyam* and *Bhāgavata Saptahs* at Shuktal last year were not succeeded by Mataji's stay at some quiet retreat where one could follow Her as on the Gomati Bank after Naimisharanya.\* Back in the worldly atmosphere, the hurly-burly of life in Bombay and Poona, whatever spiritual strength one had acquired at Shuktal was soon dissipated. As one friend put it, the battery got exhausted and was in sore need of being recharged. Swami Akhandanandaji in his final exhortation at Shuktal had told us, in his inimitable way, that God's name 'Narayana' was the clue to His address ; it means 'one who resides in the heart of man' and certainly one must always try to search for Him there. But intellectual understanding of this truth is not enough ; there has to be actual realization and this is an achievement possible only for a few rare souls. Ordinary mortals need spiritual nourishment at the feet of saints from time to time. Where could I seek such sustenance better than in the presence of Mataji ? Where was She ? Could I go and be with Her for a few days ?

With these thoughts in my mind I happened to visit Mataji's Ashram in Poona one evening towards the end of March 1962. There I learnt that Mataji was at Hardwar for the holy festival of Kumbh, which is celebrated there

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\* Vide the article 'With Mataji on the Bank of the Gomati River' in Nov. 1961 and Feb. 1962 issues of *Ananda Varta*.

once in twelve years ; that Sadhus from most of Her Ashrams had flocked to join Her there to be present on the great day, the 13th of April, on which it was most auspicious to have a dip at Har-ki-pawari. I had heard of the great sanctity attached to *Kumbh snān* (bathing in the Ganges during Kumbh), but had never attended it. It had also unfortunately become associated with the great tragedy that had taken place at Allahabad some years ago, when four or five hundred people got trampled under foot in a stampede, and had thus acquired the character of a dangerous adventure. But with Mataji there could be no risk and I felt a strong urge to go.

As I was revolving in my mind how to set about this project, I got help from all sorts of unexpected quarters. This is worth relating as an illustration of what I have always looked upon as assistance, which invariably comes from Mataji when you desire a good thing ardently. A notice came announcing that an official meeting which I had to attend was to be held in Delhi on the 2nd of April. This would bring me close to Hardwar at the right time. On its heels followed a letter from Dr. Pannalal offering to share with me a room in Hardwar, which he had rented from the first of April in a dharmasāla next to Raja Solon's of Śiv Temple where Mataji was staying. That was a god-send because accomodation was most difficult to get in Hardwar at this time. Dr. P. had stated that it was necessary to get inoculated against cholera before entry into Hardwar would be permitted. Someone mentioned a Municipal Dispensary close-by and I had only to walk in there to get the prick. Thus the trip to Hardwar for Mataji's *darśana*,

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of which I had not even thought a few days before, was arranged for me.

Even so, everything was not such smooth sailing as I had expected. The first shock came in Delhi when Dr. P. expressed his inability to keep the Hardwar tryst as, not being too well, he was feeling unequal to braving the dangers of infection inevitable in a place invaded by a horde of pilgrims. I had relied on his company and local knowledge to take me safely to my destination, but now I had to go all by myself ! The next hurdle was to get reservation on the night train. Here there was a complete block for several days. There was no alternative but to pull strings and a high railway official managed to get me a reservation for the fifth of April.

My good luck followed me to Hardwar where, but for it, I would have found myself stranded right in the beginning. Not realizing that Hardwar is the home of temples, I had thought that the Rajah of Solon's Śiva Temple would be so well-known that anybody could direct me. But Dr. P. had taken the precaution of giving me full instructions and even drawing a sketch map for locating the place where I was to stay.

In Mataji's Ashram I traced Swami Paramanandaji who showed me Dr. P's room in the Champadevi Dharmaśala next door. The room was occupied by two Swamis who vacated it for me. Thus I found myself the sole occupant of a fair sized room and an adjacent bathroom. This was indeed a luxury because all the other rooms were filled to capacity and pilgrims were occupying every available space

outside. It was only during the last three days that Dr. P. and three other members of his family joined me but then, though I had less space, I had more comforts because of their company and the servants they brought with them. What made Dr. P. change his mind? When I went to offer my *pranāms* to Mataji, She enquired about him and I told Her that he was afraid to come. "What is there to fear in this place?" She said, and asked me to write to him to come. Who can resist when Mataji calls like this?

I must apologize for making myself the central figure of this long introduction when one of our main objects in going to Mataji is to forget our ego and cease to think about 'I' and 'mine'. My object, however, is to show how, when one desires to be with Ma, help comes unsolicited from everywhere. I experienced this again and again during my stay as will be seen from the later part of this narrative.

The Śiva Temple in which Mataji and Her entourage were accomodated was built by the Rajah of Solon in fulfilment of his father's long cherished ambition to erect a temple of Lord Śiva at Hardwar. Its frontage consisted of small rooms on both sides, just like those in the *dharma-sala* next-door in which I was staying. In the middle was a porch-like passage which had to its right a two storied building, on the top of which the Raja himself stayed. One of the lower rooms was occupied by Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj. The porch led on to a court-yard. On the right was a fountain and a platform, behind it the cook-house. The space on the right, which was open, had been enclosed to serve as a dining place. Next to the platform was the Śiva Temple with a corrider all round for circumambulation.

Beyond the temple was a fairly big hall for *kīrtana* and religious discourses. It had two stories of rooms all around. Above the hall were over-looking balconies on three sides. Mataji and her mother, Didima, were staying in two adjoining rooms upstairs, just behind the balcony on the left.

This temporary Ashram of Mataji was all agog with activity, not so much in connection with the Kumbh mela, as with the celebration of Didima's *Sannyāsa Utsava*. It appears that Didima had been initiated into *Sannyāsa* at the last but one Kumbh, in Hardwar, i.e., 23 years ago, and I had unwittingly come to participate in these celebrations, which were starting the next day, the 7th of April, ending on the 13th. These were of special significance to those inmates of the Ashram who had received *dīkṣa* (initiation) from Didima, and so they were carried out with great enthusiasm. Hiruda officiated as the priest. What a contrast to the mechanical, lifeless, laboured worship which one usually sees performed by professional priests! Every morning at 5-30 A. M. there used to be an *āratī* in Didima's room, which Hiruda performed with great devotion. We would then all troop in and do *praṇām* to her. As Ma's room was next door, we were privileged to go in and offer our *praṇāms* to Her also. After this we all came down to the hall for the daily morning *kīrtanas*. Here Hiruda had introduced an exciting innovation. After the *Mātrikā-dhyāna*, when we came to the "*Jai Śiva Śankara*" *kīrtana*, he would spring up with the harmonium slung round his shoulders, and start moving or rather dancing, round the Śiva Temple. We all followed in procession, singing and keeping time, with Munindra playing the drum, Dasu the

gong and some others the cymbals. The remaining *kīrtana* and the *Guru pranām* would be finished in the hall by 6-15 A. M. We were then free to do our morning ablutions.

At 7-50 A. M. the soul-inspiring chant of *Satyam Jñānam Anantam Brahman* would be sung by Vibhuda, as during the *Samyam Saptahs*, in preparation for the silent meditation from 8 to 8-30 A. M. This was followed by the chanting of the *Gita*, *Chandi*, *Upanishads* and a discourse on the *Bhāgavata*. Then from about 9-30 A. M. for an hour was performed a very elaborate puja of Didima in the corridor of the Śiva Temple. Vibhuda or Chhabi Banerjee generally sang melodious *bhajans* during the ceremony. But what enthralled me most was the statuesque pose in which Didima sat throughout and the extreme fervour and meticulous attention to detail with which the whole ritual was performed. The *mudras* (signs that the priest made from time to time, the delicate gestures with which he offered flowers, water, etc., the loving care and tenderness with which he washed Didima's feet and dried them, gave her sweets and fruit to taste and then delicately wiped her mouth, the abandon and elaborateness with which he did the *ārati*, all was carried out with such exquisite grace and devotion that made a deep impression on everybody. The memory of it will ever be treasured by me as the ideal way of doing worship. Mataji usually watched from the balcony or the hall and came in towards the end to offer a garland. *Prasāda* consisting of fruit and sweets would then be distributed. On the last day i.e., the 13th, Didima gave everyone a handkerchief with some dried fruits tied in it.

In the afternoon, from 4-30 to 5 p.m., Narayana Swami explained the *Yoga-Vasishtha*, and from 5 to 6 or sometimes till later, visiting Mahatmas spoke on various spiritual topics. The blind Swami Sharananandaji, in answer to a question, exhorted us smilingly to cease worrying about the difficulties of others in realizing God and to concentrate on our own efforts. He explained how the loss of his eyesight had been beneficial to him. Sri Krishnananda Avadhutaji spoke on *Sannyāsa*, which meant not only giving up all possessions but also the ego, which was most difficult. One Swami from the Bombay Sannyāsashram, who had come in place of Mahamandaleshwar Maheshwaranandji, told us the story of *Ghantakarna*, the monkey who had stolen a temple bell with which he frightened all those who went to the jungle. Being hidden in the trees and invisible to them he was believed to be a terrible ghost. In order to exorcise him, all sorts of rites, *yajñas*, etc. had been performed without avail, till a fearless *sādhu* spotted and caught him by enticing him to the ground with gram and jaggery.

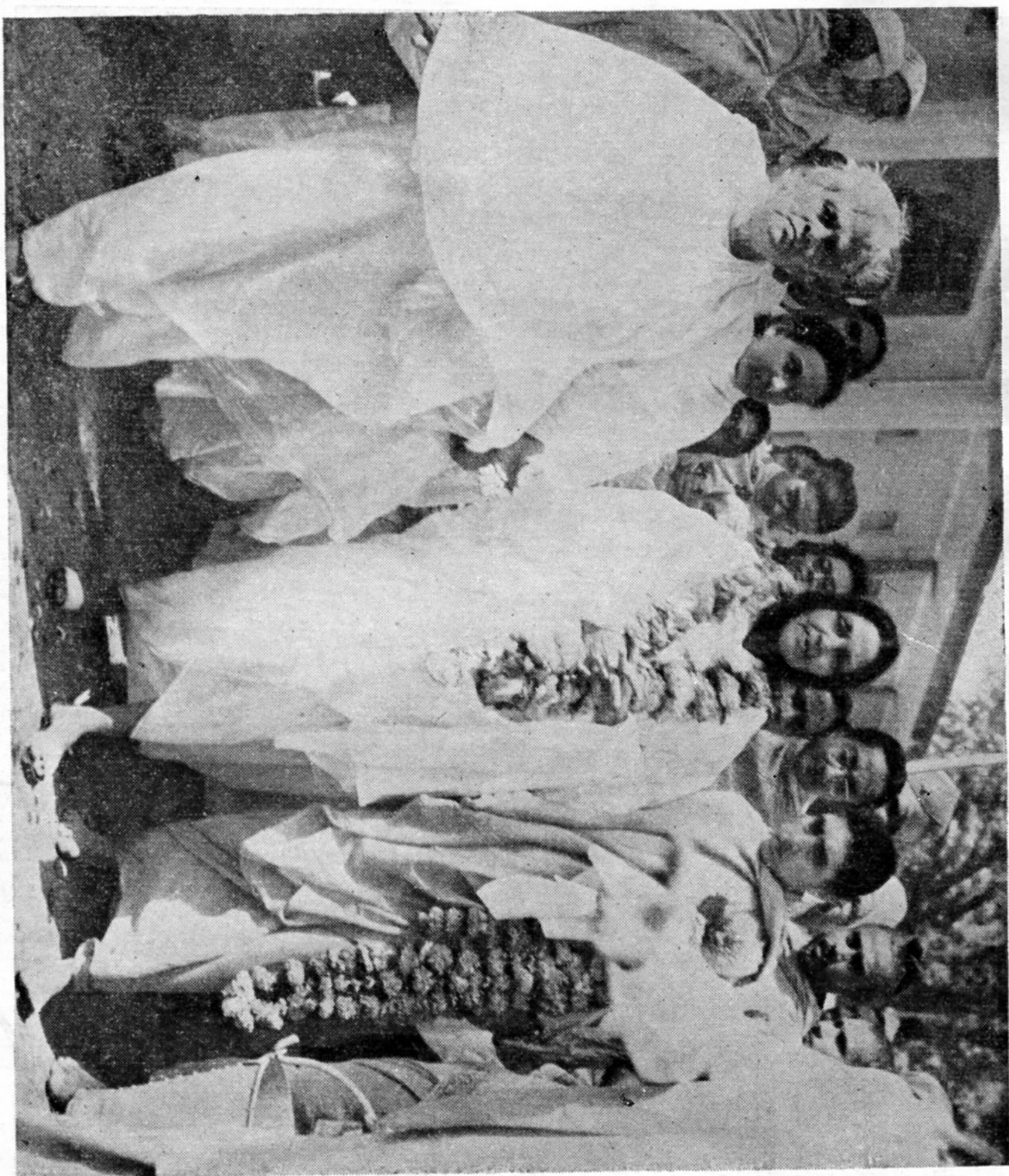
Another Mahatma spoke about God in our heart playing hide and seek because we search for him outside. He told the story of a disciple who was instructed about this truth by a fish that complained of thirst though it was in water and had its mouth open, till the disciple asked him to turn over which enabled it to drink water. He was told by the fish to do the same (turn his gaze inwards) to realize God. He also said that when we feel impatience at not realizing God after a few years of effort (*sādhana*), we must not forget the millions of lives we have spent without *sādhana*. He exhorted us not to pull out the seed from

the ground every now and then in order to see if it had taken root, but to give it sufficient time and chance. One day, Tapan, who is now Nirmalananda, spoke about the efficacy of taking God's name, how reciting the name brings enlightenment about its meaning by cleansing your mind, leads you to Supreme Knowledge and Bliss. He brought out graphically the need for persevering in the method of approach once adopted, instead of shifting to ever new ways. He illustrated this by the simile of how water is struck if one keeps on digging at the same place, but not if one goes on moving to different spots after digging only one foot deep. Swami Vishnuashramji elaborated on the meaning of the verse in the Gita about the relationship of objects, senses, mind, intelligence and God. He explained the three things we should aim at in this life, namely : (1) to look on another man's wife as our mother, (2) at other persons wealth as dust, and (3) at other peoples pains and pleasures as our own. The three things which we should know : Brahman is Truth, this world is ephemeral and the individual is in actual fact nothing but Brahman.

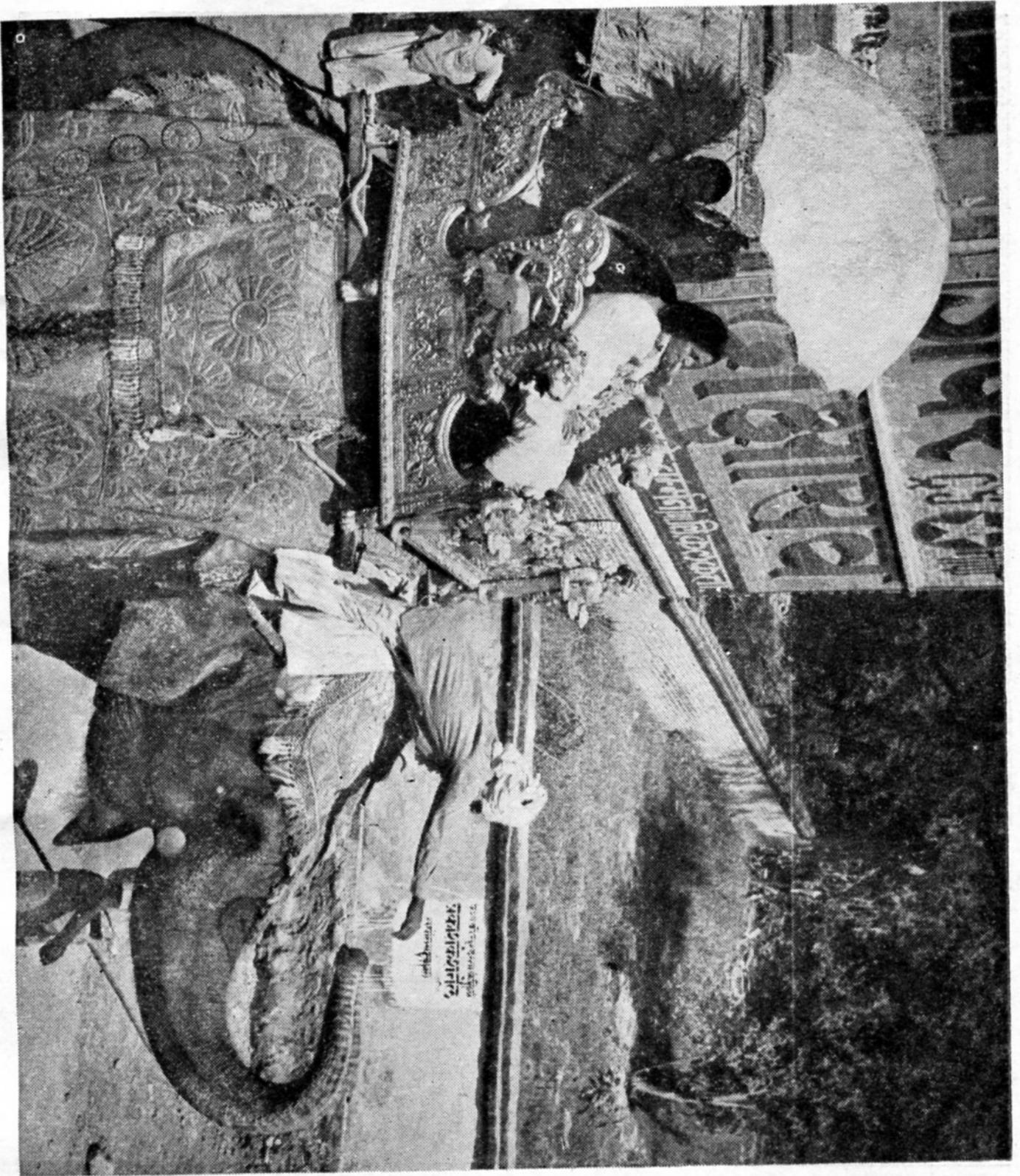
Sri Mahamandaleshwara Chaitanya Giri gave a series of discourses in the mornings which were greatly appreciated by everybody. He had given similar illuminating addresses on the Kathopanishad at Naimisharanya. The first day he spoke on *Brahma Vidyā*. His talk was full of humour. He started by pointing out how in this world the ability to live in luxury without doing any physical work is considered a sign of greatness, but how the so-called great men have neither peace nor happiness, but are constantly haunted by fear. He gave the example of Hitler whose food had to be tasted by

several persons before he could eat, who could not sleep in the same place for two successive nights, and whom nobody was allowed to see until first examined and screened by a host of his officers. Whereas a person who has mastered *Brahma Vidyā* is fearless and leads an impersonal life. In *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* he does not even move an eyelid and is filled with bliss. In the second discourse he explained the nature of *kevala anubhāva* and *kevala ānanda* (pure experience and unadulterated bliss), by pointing out how the pleasure we get from sense enjoyment is not on account of the external objects but due to our *Ātmā*. If we had the knowledge of the object without its physical presence then it would be its *kevala jñāna*, and the joy we get from our *Ātmā* is *kevala ānanda*. In the third discourse he explained how by the realization of God all our sorrows vanish. When we can withdraw our mind from outer objects then we can realize our Self *Ātmā*. That Self is even subtler than the sky, which is never affected by heat, dust, etc. It is the mind through which our soul comes in contact with *samsāra*. To wean it away from things of this world we have to realize that they are perishable and only lead to sorrow. Once we know that what we mistake for a serpent is actually a rope, it has no longer any dread for us. It is all a mental condition—आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुगत्मैव रिपुरात्मनः। As an illustration of how the feeling of enmity creates enmity, he told the story of a man sleeping by a fire in the jungle in mid-winter. A lion comes attracted by the warmth and sleeps peacefully by his side, but the man on waking up, is terrified, hits it with his tongs and as a result the lion kills him. Our prayer should be that we should look upon all creatures as our friends. We must also realize that everything is ephemeral and must follow its own course,

like passengers in a train who get down at different stations and cannot be with us till the end. Do not get attached and you will not feel sorrow. In his last discourse Shri Chaitanya Giri explained how the *Bhāgavata* is an allegory, particularly how *Vrindāvana* stood for our own mind and *Rāsalīlā* was symbolical of the play constantly going on between our proclivities (वृत्तिः = गोपीः) and our self (जीवात्मा). *Krishna* as reflection of *Paramātmā*, thus forming one *Gopī* and one *Krishna* in the *rāsa* dance, with one *Krishna* = *Paramātmā* in the centre reflected in hundreds of mirrors all around as *jivātmās*. The main story of the *Bhāgavata* was itself symbolical : the serpent Takshaka is the worldly life (*samsāra*), the king Parikshita is the *jīva* whose fear of the dream snake is sought to be removed by the *Yogī* Shuka Deva by awakening him to the truth of *Advaita* (non-dualism). He related how Kabir cried when he saw grain being ground between two grinding stones, but was reassured when it was pointed out to him that the grain which stuck close to the pin in the middle was unharmed, signifying that those who take refuge in God remain safe. We must therefore always be anchored to God with one hand. This is what *Bhagavān* has said in the *Gītā*: तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युद्ध च । To forget Him is to go away from Him. He is always in the *Vrindāvana* of our heart. He is all-powerful. To illustrate how even death has to obey God's behests, the story was told of several workers in a forest being caught in a storm taking refuge in a deserted house. Finding that the lightning would every now and then almost fall on the house but recede at the last minute, they thought that one of them was doomed to die and the lightning was trying to save the others; in order that every one should not share his fate, they decided that one person at



—Mataji during Kumbh Mela.



—Mataji being taken in procession.

a time should go out and come back after doing a round of the house. When all except one had done this without the lightning striking anyone, the last one, convinced that his hour had come, refused to go out to what he thought was sure death but was pushed by the others who threatened to kill him otherwise. The man ran for his life. When he had ascended a nearby hillock he looked back to see the lightning strikes the house with a big flash and crash, killing all in it ! This could not happen until the one man whom God had not ordained to die was out of the way.

The above is an inadequate summary of the soul-inspiring and illuminating discourses to which we listened in Hardwar during Didima's *Sannyāsa Utsava*. There was an evening *aratī* in her room and then the usual *kīrtana* in the hall ending with fifteen minute's silence from 8.45 to 9 p. m. Mataji generally did not come down for the silence but we knew that She was just above us. There was also no time fixed for Mataji to answer questions—may be because it was Didima's *Utsava* and Mataji wanted to keep in the background ?

While thus engrossed in the Ashram programme, I paid hardly any heed to the tide of pilgrims in Hardwar and made no attempt to go to the holy of holies, Har-ki-pawri and Brahma-Kunda. Some years ago I had visited Hardwar and witnessed the evening worship of the Ganga and the beautiful sight of floating lights over the water at Har-ki-pawri. This time, since I was living so far away and Didima's *Utsava* was going on in the Ashram, I thought I would postpone my visit till the important day for bathing, viz. the 13th of April. Only one evening after the *āratī* I had wan-

dered about a little with a friend to get an idea of how the influx of such a large crowd of pilgrims—it was estimated to be two millions—was being managed. What I saw filled me with admiration at the elaborate arrangements made by the U. P. Government and the extreme efficiency that was being displayed. Temporary bridges had been constructed at several places over the river and thus alternative routes were made available to avoid congestion. Even so the pedestrian traffic was strictly regulated by making people walk only on the left side. To enforce this rule volunteers were posted in the middle of the road all along the route. During rush hours and on the main day, all roads became one way roads. On that day, all vehicular traffic, including tongas and rickshaws, was completely prohibited along the main route, but to facilitate going from one end of the town to the other, a round-about diversion road had been specially constructed along the hillside for motor cars and buses. Large vacant sites had been utilized to accommodate the pilgrims. Religious institutions and Mahatmas from all over India had their special camps where *bhajan*s, *kīrtan*s and discourses were going on most of the time. Some had loudspeakers installed. It was most touching to see the millions of pilgrims braving all sorts of hardships to be in Hardwar for the Kumbh. Quite a large proportion were Sikhs and Panjabi Hindus. There were tents in most camps, but the majority of the people slept in the open spaces, which were only enclosed all round for *kīrtan*s and public meetings; they could have hardly slept because of the *kīrtan*s, singing and music going on most of the time. What was most striking was the complete absence of dirt, evil smell, flies and mosquitoes. This

miracle was made possible by excellent organization and an army of sweepers. All honour to the U. P. Government and the administrator in particular for this and the efficient handling of the crowds. The very sight of the crowds and their fervour was thrilling. One realized how innately and intensely India was still religious in spite of all the misleading and mistaken talk about our having become a secular state without understanding its real import of tolerance for all religions. Here in Hardwar the artificial distinction between Hindus and Sikhs had disappeared and their essential cultural and philosophical unity was brought out. There was certainly no place for rivalry between different Hindu creeds and everybody went to all temples. Apart from the permanent temples, a number of images could be seen in temporary structures. The Gaudiya Math had a particularly attractive display of tableaux from the lives of Lord Krishna and Gauranga Prabhu. Whatever merit there might be in the dip in the Ganga during Kumbh (and I do not know why repentance wrought by faith should not have the effect of washing away sins), I have no doubt that most pilgrims, by listening to the religious talks and *bhajans* and by the very arduous exertions of the journey and their religious fervour, had got purified to some extent and gone back all the better as a result of the pilgrimage.

But where is Mataji in all this? The incidents with which She was directly connected occurred towards the end of my stay in Hardwar and therefore so far there is little mention of Her. These occurrences, starting with the grand procession of Ma in a silver *ambari* on an elephant with *chhatra* and *chāmar* over Her head, were all very interesting

and significant but as I have already reached the limit of what can be published in one issue, I must defer their account to the next instalment which will take the story to the first few days in the Kishenpur Ashram at Dehra Dun, which was quiet at that time and where one got Ma's *darshan* for hours together both in the morning and evening. But in the present narrative too, even where Mataji is not specifically referred to, it must be remembered that it was Her presence in Hardwar that had brought me there and that it was because of Her that I was able to attend Didima's *Utsava* and the Kumbh Mela. She was always in our thoughts and the glimpses that we caught of Her from time to time sustained us. As I have already stated, we did our *pranāms* to Her early in the morning in Her room; we then watched for opportunities throughout the day to have Her *darśana*. Generally She came down in the course of the morning to visit Sri Gopinath Kaviraj or Gurupriya Didi and sat in one of the rooms below. She made it a point in particular to attend the talks given by Mahatmas. Every Mahatma who spoke was given presents of baskets of fruit and sweets along with some cloth, and an *ārati* was performed of him at the end of his discourse. Mataji behaved like a perfect hostess, always seeing the visiting saints off to the gate. Besides those who spoke, other Mahatmas who had come for the Kumbh used to pay Her visits. Among them were Naradananda Swami from Naimisharanya whose eulogy of Herself was cut short by Ma; Sri Kalyan Deva from Shuktal, who, though making all arrangements for us during the Samyam Saptah there, had completely effaced himself till the last night when, being asked to speak by Mataji, had lashed out at us for not doing our *sādhana* with sufficient

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austerity, yet had presented me with large packets of *gur* when I touched his feet before leaving; and lastly Tanpurevade Baba from Pandharpur who came one night with his band of *warkaris* (pilgrims) and did the typical Maharashtra *kīrtana* with loud bangs of cymbals. For me at least, in all that happened at Hardwar, Mataji was the pivot.

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“For the offspring of the Immortal it is imperative to become a traveller on the path of immortality. In a pure and harmonious atmosphere one must mould oneself, in order to make the journey successful.”

—Sri Anandamayi Ma

# Beatitude By Accent

ELWOOD DECKER

A garbage can full of lilies always excites me. Like the cosmic dilemma of man, poor creature, so often no more appreciative of the lilies of spiritual perception within, than an uncomprehending garbage can.

Thinking that a trip to the dump would improve my outlook, I said to the garbage man, "Hi Pete, how about a ride to the dump?"

"O. K.", answered he, extending a hand to help me up to a vantage position where it soon became evident that one must rise above conventional limits of sense preference, to enjoy new ranges of proximity, free from any kind of utility other than mental utility.

It was not so much what the things were or had been. Something new appears every few moments in unexpected association, or disassociation, either way you want to think about it. Here is something like cubism or surrealism, so refreshing to the consciousness seeking to free itself from the dominance of its own sense faculties trapt in socially acceptable habits of comfort.

It is even fascinating to the garbage man to explore a fresh load for brass and other precious metals, bottles, clothes, useful-yet articles, things saleable...a half sack of perfectly good cement, a picture frame, some linoleum, a golf bag, a medicine ball, gunny sacks, toys, etc, etc...and for the

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helper who is young, love letters, magazines, jigsaw puzzles, and a course in aeronautics. I would not give you a full list if I could, for all this sort of thing is merely a delay, a ludicrous lingering in outworn tradition.

Perhaps the best of its endless variety is the unaccountable, awakening wonder in the soul. At rare—oh very rare, intervals, a pleasant odour would prevail for a moment,—just a fleeting breath of alluring loveliness.....perhaps a broken vial of perfume, a well-cooked fish, a nice ripe fragment of something, may be face powder, or a few strongly scented flowers scattered among the debris of less appealing objects, that is, less appealing in themselves to the uninitiated senses.

Arriving at the dump, the mind is soon set free to contemplate the rhythm and worth of dissolution for its own sake, uninterrupted by any trifling possessiveness. After throwing the wire and other unburnable stuff out, we empty our collection into a massive stone incinerator eight feet high and supported with iron. A blazing fire inside leaps to purify the forms, dancing through the rolling tumbling trash, inviting all to rest, rot, decay, ..rebirth..., sparks and ashes flying through the heavy wire mesh cage at the top, thin columns of smoke following more slowly, as if reluctant to leave the magnetic illumination below, wherein the material cause loses its soggy and is transformed. Gone are commercial considerations. Yet the fire keeps pulling at the heaped volume of things until all curling inessentials have been consumed, and the volume harmony attains its plenitude.

How graceful and delicate now are the last flames, treading softly like angels, in the magnificent setting of tin

cans and ashes. The moving airy drama inside is contrasted with the large boiler set outside, below a gaping hole in the stone foundation, to catch the skeletal cans dropping from the fire, full of the dull splendor of subtle gradations of color, borrowed from the flames. They will keep this color until the sun takes it back in the flameless fire of rust. Meanwhile the bent boiler, full burnt tinware, is like a geometrical dream, spacious, abstract,—the very soul of knowledge in the severe curves and straight lines that form a quiet rosette in its much used hollow.

Here the thought of man and his basic need for order is apparent, in unusual simplicity. It is like going up in a plane and seeing the incredible beauty of a big city at night with all advertising forgotten, the unintended beauty of man's thought, where limited purposes are magically merged in a vision of what man might become, escaping small desires. I remember a last brief glimpse of the still-fresh lilies, conveying a final suggestion of the innate purity of all garbage. What is all garbage, or all anything but a mental potentiality? Like money, it becomes for us what we think it to be.

I watched cartfuls of ashes and cans hauled away from the sturdy incinerator and used to form new levels in the growing creation of the dump itself, slightly below the road on the side of a hill. The long sweeping lines of its banks and the broadness of its flat areas gave this particular dump an austere attractiveness that matched a glowing field of wild mustard, a long low rambling barn, a smooth silver tank half-hidden in the pines, and far below, a view of the ocean, stretching out to the contour of the world. The

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rhythm of dissolution here was as enjoyable and instructive as the upbuilding of growth. The pliant green bunches of grass, that waved their little flags of victory over where the straight lines and severe curves of tin and iron had crumbled into rust, seemed an anticlimax.

Far more interesting to me were the banks being made, where no vegetation had yet gained a foothold, where myriads of can-like forms in sizes and shapes, from tanks to compacts, created a remarkably human sculpture, without the slightest reference to the human form. There was a vague reminder of other stark objects such as bones, rocks, icebergs, and shells, and there was a wonderful yielding peace about it all, like soft dry sand...a destined acceptance of whatever was to come. Today it was one thing, tomorrow another. If you liked a certain phase, you concentrated on it. Next day it might be covered; there was no protection. I favoured a section where tangled masses of wire had been wildly thrown down the bank, suspending unwary horseshoes and more irregular shapes of cut left-overs in an unconsciously effective third dimensional form of abstract expressionism.

It would be useless to try to further describe what I saw on the surface. Actually it was the whole place with all of its unseen layers, tier upon tier of the ever-recurrent fires' understructure of abandon, that most deeply affected me with its predominant accent of dissolution. Hardly anyone I know wants physical dissolution, but a controlled dissolution of outworn feelings, thoughts, and habits, could be the most precious thing that might happen to us. The ordinary accent of our interest in formation causes us to be unaware

of the mechanical nature of our deliberate limitation of Consciousness.

We need to be at a distance to be properly aware of a physical phenomenon. To get a deeper insight into the mind itself, a similar balance is necessary; while material unattachment provides adequate distance, there must be enough mental adventure in us to seek out sufficient stimulus to jog the mind out of its rut.

A fully aroused interest in dissolution, as not merely inevitable, but important, awakens the mind to its deeper inner Nature, before the Word was Spoken and Formation followed. While uncontrolled physical dissolution may be most painful, controlled mental dissolution, particularly of unwanted thoughts, is the way to permanent Bliss. It is the way beyond the heaving sea of the I-thought, and beyond even the radiant vibration of the holy mantra, into silent undivided BEING. It is also the way to clear thinking; for only in the essential Oneness of Consciousness, is the secret of infinite perfect expression Revealed. As great as the Power of the Word, is the Power of Silence. It is the Same Power. **WE CAN NEVER UNDERSTAND THE ONE WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING THE OTHER.**

Shivaya nama ! Jai Ma !

## Talks with Mataji at Sukhtal.

A DEVOTEE.

Today is the 10th November 1961, the second day of the *Samyam Vrata*. The program includes as usual two hours daily of silent meditation in Mataji's presence, namely from 8-9 a. m and 2-3 p. m. After the 15 minutes' silence from 8:45-9 p. m., Mataji replies to questions for about half an hour.

*Dr. Pannalal* : Mataji, why don't we have any realization ?

*Mataji* : The aspirant, the perfect man, the yogi and the mahayogi—all are potentially within man. Even the transcendental *Krishna Līlā* is contained within you. Man himself has created the covering veil of ignorance and he himself wants to destroy it. He desires what is already present in his true nature. To practise *sādhana* means to aspire to one's real wealth.\* Mahabīr is supposed to have said: "In essence Rāmachandra and I are the one Self; seen from a different angle, He is the whole and I am part of Him; then again, He is the Master and I am His servant." The whole as well as the part—both are He alone. Is not the fire one with its sparks ? Everything is contained within oneself. This is why one wants to rend one's own veil. To find Oneself means to find God, and to find God means to find Oneself. The rigours of the *Samyam Vrata* are endured in order to

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\* A play upon words : *sādhana* and *sva dhan* : *dhan* means wealth.

realize one's Self. The fast on Ganges water serves to cleanse the system. It also helps to purify the mind, and by God's grace one conceives the desire to find Him. The desire to find Him is good and beneficial, while desires for the fleeting things of this world bring sorrow and trouble. Those who have learnt to discriminate will choose the former. Sense enjoyment is slow poison. If at the moment of death one is full of desires and longings, one has to take a "return ticket," which means further birth and further death. One who feels helpless is a female (*abala*)—whether a man or a woman. Perfect manhood is potentially contained within you. So long as you have not woken up to it, you are intrinsically a woman. Once you are roused to it, you become a real human being. As the saying goes: "Wherever a man is, there is *Śiva*, and wherever a woman, there is *Gaurī*." Identification with the body results in constant wanting. In order to overcome this false identification, you have to remember constantly the Supreme Father, the Supreme Mother—in other words, seek refuge in the Beloved (*Iṣṭa*). The Beloved is He who can never harm you, who on the contrary takes you to your highest good. Call Him *Rāma*, *Krishna*, *Śiva*, *Śakti*, Heavenly Father or the Great Mother—He must become revealed. To practise yoga means to engage in that which aids this revelation. The purpose of all *sādhana*s, *kriyā*s, austerities, self-control, is to find unconditional, eternal happiness. All these exercises have for aim your growing into perfect manhood. How painstaking you are in order to acquire knowledge and wealth! You are a *yogi*, a *sādhaka*, an asectic. In order to help you to find yourself, this week of rigorous self-restraint has been devised. Perfect manhood cannot be attained except by a life of strict self-control. You are desirous of

deliverance—this is why you asked: “Why don’t we have any realization ?” This is a wholesome craving, since it is directed towards spiritual progress. *Pitājī*, if you had remained in Delhi, this question would not have occurred to you. It is the special atmosphere of this place that made it arise in your heart.”

Mataji became silent. The meeting was over. All bowed to Mataji from their places. Many reflected :“Yes, it is true, if we had remained at home, we could not have listened to this enlightening talk; the desire for realization, for deliverance would not have arisen in our hearts.”

*November 11th, 1961.*

After the silence, at 9 p. m., Mataji sang “*He Govinda, he Gopala*”, at the request of Sri Krishna Avadhutaji. When the *kīrtana* was over, the conversation turned to the efficacy of God’s name. Mataji said :

“By completing 4½ crores of *japa*, all the obstacles on one’s path, accumulated birth after birth, are obliterated. This is what great men and also the *Śāstras* say. The *Mahamantra* consists of 16 names or 32 syllables. Each repetition of the *mantra* counts for 16 *mantras*. The name, the *mantra* are God Himself, they are indestructible and purely spiritual (*cinmayī*). The Name is inseparable from the One whose name it is. A *mantra* is that which brings deliverance to the mind.<sup>1</sup> As an aid on the path to Self-realization the *Guru* chooses the most suitable *mantra* for each disciple.

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\* *Mahamantra . Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Hare, Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama, Rama Hare, Hare.*

1. A play upon words : *man* mind, *trān* deliverance.

The Name is identical with God, who is Supreme Knowledge, the Self, glorious all-pervading, *Hari*. *Hari* is indeed the world, and the world is nothing but *Hari*." This is what you say, is it not? God and the world are not apart from one another. To repeat God's name, to meditate, to invoke Him with heart and soul is the bounden duty of the individual. The *Riṣis* had immediate vision of mantras. You are God's own children. Your calling is to become established in the Self, in the *Brahman*. You must engage in actions directed towards that goal. *Mantra japa* is practised so that the ego mind may be dissolved."

"A long time ago, this body had the *kheyāla* that everyone without exception should dedicate to God at least 15 minutes out of the 24 hours of every day. Do you know when this occurred? Long, long ago, when this body first came to Dehradun. The late Kamala Ma<sup>2</sup> then used to come to this body very often. You cannot imagine how fond Kamala Ma was of this little girl. Whenever there was an opportunity, she would go for a walk with this body. She used to be all attention and veneration. Once she wished to have a *yajña*<sup>3</sup> performed. It was accomplished in the *Ambika Mandir* at Rajpur. Just as the girls of your Ashram wear silken clothes that are magnetically pure when engaging in ceremonies, so also did Kamala Ma not wear anything that was stitched. Attired in holy garments, she accomplished the *yajña* with great faith and devotion. Many people offered oblations of lakhs of *japa* into the sacrificial fire. Just as at your Kashi Ashram, where each lakh of *japa*

2. Sri Jawaharlal Nehru's wife.

3. Sacrifice.

is gathered into one offering and dedicated to the Lord of Sacrifice—in a similar manner. For a long period of time the fire was kept alive and oblations of *japa* were poured into it. When Kamala Ma's *yajña* was over. Mataji came from Rajpur to Dehradun. There (it was the time of the *Harijan* movement) this body had the *kheyāla* that since all are essentially the one Self, God Himself, God in the shape of man, irrespective of religion, race, caste and sect, how would it be if everyone, just because he is a human being, dedicated to God at least 15 minutes, the fourth part of one hour out of the 24 hours of every day.

“The drop is contained in the ocean, and the ocean in the drop. Therefore, if it be anyone's good luck, this tiny bit of time dedicated to God may result in one's being caught in the stream of *sādhana* throughout the 24 hours. That is why all this is now being related to you. Regarding those 15 minutes there is no question of purity or impurity. All you have to do is to observe silence and to sustain the remembrance of God. The animals and birds of the forest also call at their own definite times. It is man's duty as a human being to make an effort in this direction. (What you hear depends on how you play the instrument. The instrument is yours, you yourself play it, and you yourself hear your own words.) Very many have fixed 15 minutes for meditation in this way and kept it up with great regularity—so much so that someone, even while attending a funeral stuck to his rule. God's name and His *mantra* are ever pure and holy. Have you not heard what *Mahaprabhu*†

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† Sri Chaitanya Deva, the great apostle of Vaishnavism, born in 1485 in Bengal, who taught the path of divine love for the realization of God. He is also known as Lord Gauranga.

said about the great power and efficacy of the Name ? Thus you should regularly engage in *japa* or meditation during those 15 minutes.

*Question* : Suppose someone forgets to observe his appointed time, is there no way of atoning for it ?

*Mataji* : No, for this there is no atonement. When you have missed the train you can't catch it anymore. Of course, in case you fall unconscious or are disabled, God Himself will make up for it. 24 hours are at your disposal to do your own work. Only a quarter of an hour give to God daily without intermission for the rest of your life. There are no rules in this, such as to bathe or to fast before completing the *japa*, nothing of the sort. What is alone binding is the particular time. The Name itself purifies the individual as well as his tongue. You may repeat the Name anywhere at all, it can never be polluted, for He is eternally pure. Even when you happen to travel or have to move about at that time, or if for example you have to nurse a patient, observe silence and keep up the remembrance of Him by *japa* or in any other manner, while attending to your work with your hands. But this device may be resorted to only in special cases. As a rule, you should at your fixed time sit still and practise *japa* or meditation. Here, what is of supreme importance is to adhere strictly to the appointed hour. This is why atonement is not possible if you miss it. Nevertheless, to increase *japa* and meditation in order to make up for missed time will no doubt bear its fruit. Make a special effort so that the thread of regular practice may never be broken consciously. Do not ever wilfully break it. However, if due to some mistake this should happen, start again

anew, keeping a specially careful watch so that nothing similar should occur again throughout your life. You yourself are choosing the time. Think it over well, and select right from the beginning the hour that suits your convenience best. You are dedicating it to God for ever and ever. See that there is no gap in your giving. He Himself is whole, there is no gap where He is concerned. It is your duty to see that this tiny little offering at His Feet is made regularly, without interruption. If you are unable to do this, it is vain to hope for the realization of Him, who is whole, complete, unbroken. By sustained practice man can master anything. Whatever is done for God, that indeed is called *yoga*. No matter what is done and in what way, the fruit will be reaped accordingly. The *mahayogī*, the *mahasādhaka* are within you by your very nature. Try to bring them to light by suitable practice. However small your power may be, use it for this purpose. So long as the One has not been fully revealed, you should spend your life in practice, effort and self-restraint.

A number of other questions were raised that evening. In reply, Mataji enlarged on *Guru* power, *mantra* power, the sacred syllable *Om*, and some other topics. At the end, Mataji said : "All *sādhana* serves the purpose of undoing the knots that constitute the ego. If you persevere in your *sādhana*, the knots will be untied. This is achieved by *Guru* power, *mantra* power, by using the *prāṇava*\*. The austerities that are endured for the sake of finding God are called *tapasyā*. For whose sake ? For Oneself,

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\* *Om* is called *Prāṇava*

12th November.

After the silence, at 9 p. m., Sri Narayana Swami asked the following question :

“Mataji, many are complaining that they find it irksome to sit still at the time of meditation. Their legs are aching and their mind becomes preoccupied with their bodily discomfort. After a while they are just longing to hear the song that marks the end of the hour of silence.

*Mataji* : To begin with, this is a problem for most people. In the first stages, to sit for meditation causes uneasiness or pain in one's limbs. When small children start to learn reading they cannot concentrate. How many books they destroy, how many they tear to pieces and throw away. They do not understand their value. But slowly and gradually, as they acquire fluency in reading, it gives them joy. At first people study in the hope of becoming rich, but later they come to understand the value of knowledge. By labouring hard, practice is acquired. With how much zeal you learn in order to pass your examinations. Finally you become B. A.s and M. A. s. But here we are concerned with Supreme Knowledge (*Brahmavidyā*). At first the mind does not become steady and one cannot find any delight in the repetition of the Name or in meditation. The mind is concerned with bodily comforts, just as children spoil their books. By *japa*, meditation or other spiritual exercises one's thinking has to be brought under control. By practice the mind becomes steady. Then also it is greatly influenced by the food one eats. There is a close connection between the quality of the mind and the kind of food one consumes. Fasting, Ganges water and pure food, which are part of the *Samyam Vrata*, are all meant to be an aid in one's spiritual endeavour. Within

the 24 hours you are attempting to keep the mind still for merely 2 hours ! When people attend the cinema or a dramatic performance, for how many hours they are able to concentrate ! You have become used to giving your mind to momentary pleasures. As if paralysed your thoughts are attracted towards worldly enjoyment. Pleasure is indeed misfortune. Actions done because God is far away, with the consciousness that He is distant are due to wrong understanding, which leads to misfortune, to misery, to further birth and death. The idea that God is remote brings sorrow and trouble. God alone exists, He is everything: this thought is indeed the cessation of all pain. You have become wedded to the search for sensation, this is the very reason for your unhappiness. This is why the mind cannot settle down to meditation, why you find it so uncomfortable to remain sitting in one position. It is necessary to learn to sit absolutely still. So long as the *yogī*, the *śādhaka* within you does not become revealed you will experience uneasiness and discomfort. If you find it difficult to remain in the same posture, change the position of your legs very quietly. But throughout keep very calm within. Until you have been caught in the current that will take you<sup>u</sup> to the revelation of Your Self, this kind of trouble is bound to continue. All depends on the body's power of endurance. His Grace is always there, but because you are turned outwards you find it so irksome to remain steady in one posture and this is why you long to hear the song that marks the end of the hour of meditation.

When a child takes interest in his studies, he will keep his books neat and tidy. When you have become accustomed to look within, you will experience inward joy; the greater the

happiness, the more will you be drawn within. Then you will be able to sit quite still and be full of bliss. Without experiencing a certain measure of bliss, one cannot proceed on one's journey. The uneasiness you complain of, is the result of your being attached to outer pleasures. When your thinking becomes directed towards *yoga* ( union ) you will feel happy; pleasures will seem dull and insipid, nay even distasteful to you. When meeting a renunciate, you will feel he is your companion on the journey, your kith and kin.

Many people come to this body and complain that they cannot concentrate their minds on *japa* and meditation. This body advises them to observe *Samyam Vrata* ( self-restraint ) at least once a month. Potentially, self restraint, spiritual aspiration, the capacity to practise *yoga* are contained within you. But the fact that you are outward turned holds you as if paralysed and helpless. This is why a life of self-restraint is necessary. Practise it 4-5 times a month if possible, or at least twice. If even this is impracticable, then once a month at the very least. Great men say: "The world is not apart from God." In this spirit engage in service all day long.

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## The Background of our Letters\*

U. C. Dutt (III)

When *Ichha* is intensified through forceful vibration, it becomes *Ishan* ईशान with ई as its symbol. Now *Ishtam* becomes the immediate object of desire and reveals itself at the next step as the object of knowledge. Then *Ichha* takes the form of *Jñāna* (knowledge). An other name for *Jñāna* is *Unmesh* उन्मेष which is symbolised by उ.

Knowledge as *Unmesh* makes explicit its own known stuff. As desire and the object of desire are not different but appear to be so, in the same manner knowledge and the thing known seem to be apart. They may be compared to water and ice. If उ is the symbol of knowledge, ऊ is that of the object of knowledge, an intensified form of the former. The technical name for it is *Urmi*, उर्मि.

It is evident that knowing and the object known are not different, but appear to be so due to ignorance (*Avidyā*). With the cessation of *Avidya* the distinction vanishes. *Avidyā* that causes delusion is another term for *Kriya Śakti* (operative force). Under the pressure of *Kriyā* knowledge and its object are separated. In our letters this operative force is expressed as ए ऐ, ओ, औ. These four vowels are four states of *Kriyā*: (1) *Ashfuta* (unmanifested), (2) *shfuta* (manifested), (3) *shfutatarā* (more manifested) and (4) *shfutātama* (most manifested). *Kriyā* stops only after its full play.

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\* Based on talks by Dr Gopinath Kaviraj, M. A, D. Litt., a great authority on this subject.

Thus we see that outward vibrations bring into being different forces known as *Kalas*. Apparently these *Kalas* are five—*Chit*, *Ānanda*, *Ichha*, *Jñāna* and *Kriyā*. They have been considered as the five powers or faces of Lord Śiva. The first two—*Chit* and *Ananda*—are considered as esoteric and the last three—*Ichha*, *Jñāna* and *Kriyā*—as exoteric powers of *Sat-Chit-ananda*. The esoteric powers constitute a triangle which represents *Mahāmāyā*, the divine creative womb. All the five are powers, at bottom lies the inscrutable stuff of pure existence. “It is said as existence, how to perceive it elsewhere ?” ( Sruti. )

The outward flow of powers from अ to उ creation *Pravritti* is gradually exhausted with the full play or perfection of *Kriyā*. Then the current of creation is turned into one of destruction ( *Nivritti* ). It stops and recedes inward, pulled by the inward force of vibration. As a result all the *Kalas* ( powers ) are reduced to one point called *Bindu* ( . ). When *Bindu* comes into being it expresses itself with the help of अ. *Chit* ( light ). “Lustre of this ( Light ) illumines everything.” *Bindu* ( . ) in conjunction with अ becomes अं. Now creation will proceed from अं, not from अ. Creation from point or *Bindu* is *Baindava*. Then one point divides itself into two and takes the form of *Visarga* ( : ). The creation that follows at this stage is *Vaisargic*, better known as the creation of consonant. According to the Tantrik Terminology it is the creation of *Tattvas* ( *Tattva sristi* ). All consonants from क to ह indicate different *Tattvas* or principles though not in regular order. The letters are all mere symbols. With the creation of ह *Tattva Sristi* comes to an end.

As in the *Baindava Sristi Kalas* at the end of their outward journey turn back and retrace their steps to merge

collectively into a single point, here too in the same manner, the outward flow from अ to ह turns its course backward till it is reduced to अहं ( *Aham* ). Now in consequence of *Kala Sriṣṭi* and *Tattva Sriṣṭi* ( Self I or subject ) makes its appearance for the first time. This *Aham* is one without second. All *Tattvas*, *Kalas* and their basis are behind this perfect *Aham* or *Parama Śiva* with whom is inseparably joined *Para Śakti*. What we call creation projects from this *Aham*.

*Aham* has two states—subtle and gross. To us creation means this endless cosmic order. It becomes possible when *Idam* ( This, not-self object ) emanates from *Aham*. Prior to the appearance of *Idam* *Aham* reveals itself as infinite *Aham*. Then *Idam* appears first as *Mahākāśa* ( Super-space ) in the form of utter void and the infinite *Aham* takes shape in the void as the second or duplicate. This is the creation of *Idam* ( not-self ). But it is a total collection of constituent elements beyond time. Preliminary notions of time are found in super-time ( *Mahākāla* ). So there is no actual succession as we understand at this stage of creation. Naturally, past, present and future do not operate, nor does the Law of causation. There is infinite variety no doubt, but everything merges in every other thing. Special distinction too does not exist, only a sense of differentiation becomes apparent. From this collective elemental creation ( *Mahāsriṣṭi* ) follow individual creation ( *Khanda Sriṣṭi* ). These creations are infinite in variety. They are controlled by the supervising agencies and become subject to time, space, causality, birth, death, etc. They are different from the total elemental creation in being which is free from birth, death, action, creation, destruction and change characterizing 'becoming'.

There are fifty letters in all, 16 vowels and 34 consonants. The term *Akṣara* is significant meaning अ to क्ष. Their letter-hood (*Akṣarata*) is said to be due to their being divided into different parts beginning with अ and ending क्ष. As symbols of the casual and subtle elements of the stuff of creation these letters have been used to indicate the relevant facts associated with them. They are *Tattvas*, *Sat-Chakras*, *Nakshatras*, *Varshas* and parts of the body.

With the help of these 50 alphabets the Rīṣis have established a wonderful relation between the conception of self and the Universe. In the central triangular vacant place in the brain called *Shunyasthan\** (Cavum Septum pellucidum) is the seat of Self, *Maha Bindu*, the great eternal Point. It is here that the first transformation of Potential into Kinetic takes place, as described in the *Pradhanik Rahasya* of the Durga Sapta Shati. At the moment of this conversion a sound is produced. This sound is represented by the letter Om. The sound fills the vacant place and hits the sides of the triangle. As a result of this impact 50 different sounds are produced. They are represented by 50 letters of the alphabet.

*Sat Chakras*—Generally the available texts are placed under two heads: those before Buddha and those after Buddha. The Vedas, the Upanishads and some of the Tantras, specially the Rudra—Yamal Tantra and the Vamakeshwar Tantra belong to the first group and the rest to the second group. The most widely known description of Sat Chakras is found in the *Sat Chakra Nirupana* by Purnananda. He flourished after Buddha. The book has got 57 slokas.

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\* It is also called the *Guru Pada Padma*, the lotus feet of the Guru.

On the outside *Meru* there are three *Nadis*—Nerves called *Ida* on the left, *Pingala* on the right and *Susumna* in the centre line. *Susumna* looks like a flower of *Datura Stramonium* and extends from the Perineum to the centre of the brain. Within the *Susumna Nadi* there is a fine *Nadi* called *Vajra* and within that again there is a third *Nadi* called *Chitrani*. *Chitrani* extends through the centre of all *Chakras* located in *Susumna*.

The first *chakra*, *Muladhara* at a level with Perineum has four petals and the letters व श ष ह are located on them. The *Kula Kundalini Sakti* or the serpent power is there. There is a triangular space between the petals called *Yoni*, inside the triangle there is a *Linga* phallus, called *Swayambhu Linga*, oval in shape and of the size of a small plum. *Kula Kundalini* lies on the top of this *linga*, called up like a serpent and closing the passage called *Bramarandhra* leading up to the *Sahasrara*.

The second *chakra* is *Swadhisthan* at a point in line with the root of the penis. It has six petals with six letters ब भ म य र ल on them.

Higher up at level with the umbilicus is the third *chakra*, *Manipur*. It has ten petals with ten letters ड ढ ण त थ द ध न प फ on them.

Further up at a level with the heart is the fourth *chakra*, *Anahata* having twelve petals with twelve letters क ख ग घ ङ च छ ज झ ञ ट ठ on the petals. *Van Linga* is there.

The fifth *chakra* is *Vishuddha* at a point opposite to the Adam's apple in the throat. It consists of sixteen petals and the sixteen vowels are located on them.

Near the end of the *Susumna*, in a line with the point between the eye-brows near the root of the nose is the sixth

*chakra*, *Ajnya*. It has two petals with letters स दा on them and in between the petals there is a silent letter.

Thus in six *chakras* there is a total of 50 petals with 50 letters on them. *Kula Kundalini Shakti* is the creative force of the universe. She is said to be sleeping in a trance sleep, the *Yoga Nidra*. When she is awakened from the slumber by Yoga practice, she ascends to the *Sahasrara* which is her real abode and joins with *Atman* or *Brahman* whose manifested energy she is.

*Nakshatras*—The words Astronomy and Astrology are derived from the Greek root “Astron” meaning star. The word Jyotish is derived from the Sanskrit root “*Dyuti*” meaning light. All are made of the stuff of which light or sound is made—50 rays or 50 letters. They influence their products, So there is some difference.

*Nakshatra* has been translated as a collection of stars, but it has a far deeper meaning. There are 27 *Nakshatras* and they are used frequently to predict results according to the rules of Jyotisha. They have been used in Tantras also, and it is this aspect which is described here.

Everything in this world being made up of sound, the *Nakshatras* are no exception.

The tabular form below shows the composition of different *Nakshatras* as described in the Vama Keshwar Tantra (sl. 30, 32, ch. 8).

1. <i>Aswini</i> अ आ	6. <i>Ardra</i> ऐ
2. <i>Bharani</i> इ	7. <i>Punarvasu</i> ओ औ
3. <i>Krittica</i> ई उ ऊ	8. <i>Pushya</i> क
4. <i>Rohini</i> ऋ ॠ ल ल	9. <i>Ashlesha</i> ख ग
5. <i>Mrigashira</i> ए	10. <i>Magha</i> घ ङ

11. <i>Purva Phalguni</i> च	20. <i>Purva shada</i> व
12. <i>Uttar Phalguni</i> छ ज	21. <i>Uttar shada</i> भ
13. <i>Hasta</i> झ ञ	22. <i>Shravana</i> म
14. <i>Chitra</i> ट ठ	23. <i>Dhanistha</i> , य र
15. <i>Swati</i> ड	24. <i>Swati</i> ल
16. <i>Vishakha</i> , ढ ण	25. <i>Purva-bhadrapada</i> व श
17. <i>Anuradha</i> त थ द	26. <i>Uttar-bhadrapada</i> ष स ह
18. <i>Jesthya</i> , घ	27. <i>Revati</i> , अं अः ञ
19. <i>Moola</i> , न प फ	

*Bithis*—Nakshatras are divided into nine *Bithis* or groups. Their names are as follows :

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (1) Nag Bithi—2, 3, 15.         | (2) Gaja Bithi—4, 5, 6.         |
| (3) Airavat Bithi—7, 8, 9, 10.  | (4) Arshavi Bithi—11, 22,       |
| (5) Go Bithi—25, 26, 27, 1      | (6) Jaradgava Bithi—22, 23, 24, |
| (6) Mriga Bithi—13, 14.         | (8) Aja Bithi—16, 17.           |
| (9) Avika Bithi—18, 19, 20, 21. |                                 |

*Varshas* or regions of the Earth—With the help of *Nakshatras* Rishis have divided the earth and the sky above. If we substitute the letters for *Nakshatras* we have a division to the surface of the earth as well as the sky in relation with the letters of the alphabet.

The surface of the earth is divided into nine *varshas* and each *varsha* is under the influence of letters forming these stars.

*Varshas* have been identified with the help of descriptions in "Adouta Sagar"—

1. *Ilavrita* ... Europe minus Scan-dinavia
2. *Bharata* ... Whole of Asia
3. *Kimpurusha* ... Australia.
4. *Bhadraswa* ... Africa.

5. *Hari* ... Antartic.
6. *Ketumal* ... S. America.
7. *Ramyak* ... N. America.
8. *Kutu* ... Scandinavia and British Isles.
9. *Hiranmay* ... Canadian Archipelego and Greenland.

*Parts of body*—A worshipper on the line of Tantra performs *Matrika Nyasa*. In this one directs his mind or certain parts of the body where one letter of the alphabet is imagined. The parts are as many as the letters, as for example :—

On the forehead	अ,	on the whole face	आ
On right eye	इ,	on left eye	ई
On right ear	उ,	on left ear	ऊ
On right nose	ऋ,	on left nose	ॠ
On right cheek	ल,	on left check	ॡ
On upper lip	ए,	on lower lip	ऐ
On upper gums	ओ,	on lower gums	औ
On <i>brahma randhra</i>	अं,	on mouth	अः

and so on till all the letters are exhausted. As the whole universe is the outcome of sound, these 50 letters are called *Matrica*, the mother of the world.

It follows from the above considerations that *Nada* or *Shabda* is the cause of all sounds. This *Nada* is eventually divided into all the particular letters and their compounds in words and sentences on the one hand and the subtle elements and objects with their compounds on the other. Both the lines of speech and of objects have ultimately the same origin—*Brahman Parama Siva* or *Para Sakti*.

Like an architect who makes designs before giving them concrete shape in brick and mortar, the Divine

Architect keeps His plans and designs in the divine mind before the grand scheme is executed as the marvellous world systems. Here the Architect is not only the efficient cause but also the material cause of the Universe, projecting it from the subtle to the gross plane through various stages of creation—*Nada, Bindu, Kala, Tattva, Aham, Idam*—by a mechanism that defies human understanding. In this process the letters of the Indo-Aryan stock play a very significant role. They are regular symbols of systematically arranged concepts suggesting constituents and functions of the Divine in the realm of Pure Being. The letters are not so simple as they appear to be. They tell tales of secrets hidden under the screens of time and space and hint at the necessary pre-conditions of the cosmic order.

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## Matri Lila.

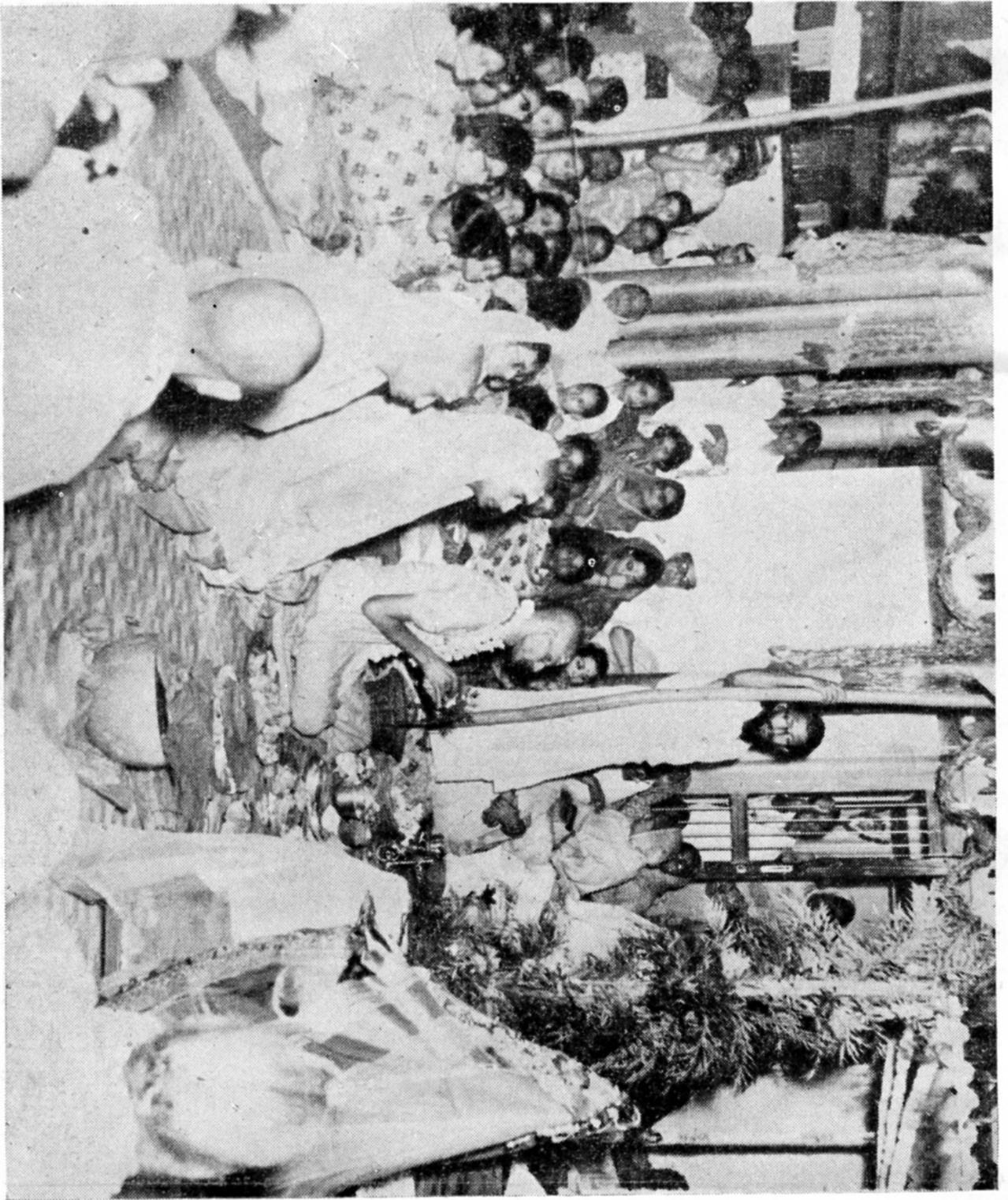
( April 6th–July 15th, 1962. )

The article "With Mataji at the Hardwar Kumbh" published in this issue gives a detailed description of Swami Muktananda Giri's (Didima's) *Sannyāsa Utsava*, which was celebrated from 6th to 13th April. The last day, *Chaitra Sankranti*, represented the climax of the whole function. It started at 3 a.m., when Didima conferred *Sannyāsa* on 3 Ashramites in Mataji's presence near the Ganges. A few *Brahmacharis* received the gerua\* cloth and new names. The chief item of the day was bathing in the Ganges. Fortunately Government had made excellent, well thought out arrangements, so that in spite of the terrific crowd, everyone got his turn of immersing his body in the holy waters and emerging purified and blessed.

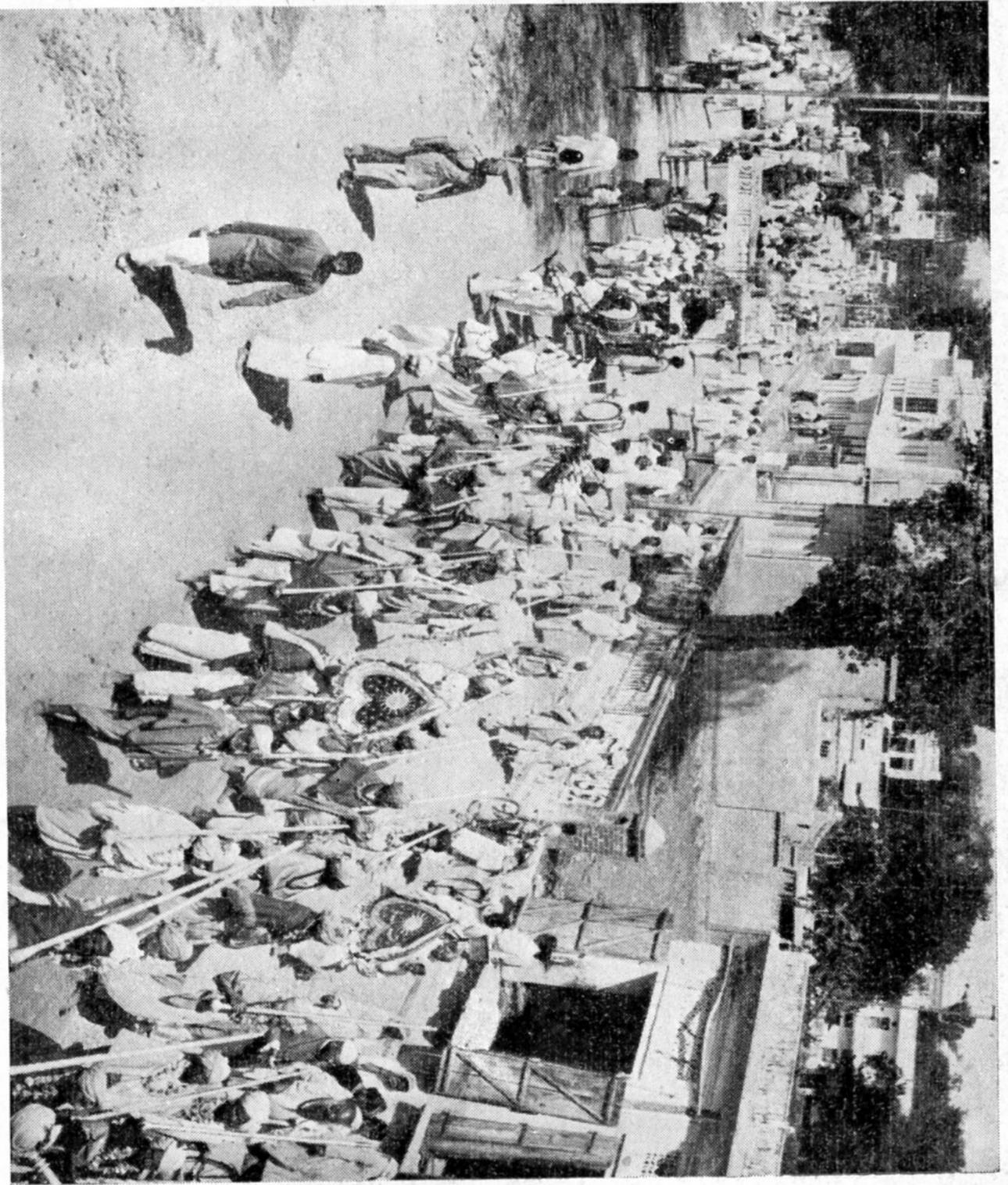
In the afternoon Mataji suddenly walked out of the compound, crossed the road and proceeded straight to the Ganges. A large group of Ashramites and visitors accompanied Her. Everyone was asked to sit on the steps leading to the Ganges. A ceremony was in process at the neighbouring burning-ghat. We saw military and police march in formation, saluting the blazing funeral pyre. One of the leading officers of the Bharat Seva-Sangh, who were doing devoted and very efficient service throughout the Kumbh, had died of heart failure while on duty. The deceased had probably never even had

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\* The ochre robe, worn by *Sannyasis*, may also be worn by *Brahmacharis* who have decided to lead a monastic life for good.



—A scene from Maraji's Tithi-Puja.



—A scene from Mataji's procession.

Mataji's *darsana* during his life time, but Mataji obviously had the *kheyāla* to give Her blessing while his body was being consumed by the flames. It was a significant and deeply moving incident. Everyone was aware of the hush that descended on the whole assembly.

All traffic had been suspended for the whole of that day and night, to give a chance to the pedestrians who streamed to and from the Ganges in thousands. However, after 9 p. m. some police officers came and offered to take Mataji by car to *Brahmakunda*. Mataji consented, although She did not descend the steps down to the river but watched the bathing pilgrims from the top. The whole day was certainly unforgettable.



On April 15th, Mataji proceeded to the Kishenpur Ashrama near Dehradun with a large party. About 23 students of the *Kanyapith*, the girls' school run by the Ashrama had already arrived with their teachers to spend the summer at Kishenpur. Preparations for the forthcoming birth day celebrations had begun, and so the Ashram was buzzing with joyous activity.

On April 27th, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru paid a visit to Mataji, together with his sister, Srimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit. Mataji received them in Her room on the upper floor. They remained closeted with Her for about half an hour. After being shown round the hall, where Kumari Chhabi Bannerji was singing beautiful *bhajanas*,\* they had *darsana* of the temples and then took leave.

\* *Bhajana*—religious song.

From May 2nd—23rd, Mataji's birthday was celebrated in great style. As usual, devotees gathered from far and near and joined in the functions with great enthusiasm. Owing to dearth of accommodation in houses nearby, about 20 large tents were pitched in a neighbouring garden. Men and women braved the heat and other hardships of camp life without a murmur. Others stayed in Dehradun, several miles away. A few foreigners, who had specially come for Mataji's *darśana* all the way from America and Holland, chose to put up at Mussoorie, motoring down once daily to spend a few hours in Mataji's presence. How many people were accommodated and catered for in the comparatively small Ashram, and how many activities carried on simultaneously and smoothly in the very limited space is something that one must have witnessed for oneself. Mataji was here and there and everywhere, ever radiant, ever joyous, giving suggestions, encouragement, guidance, inspiration. Right in front of our eyes she seemed to perform the miracle of transcended space and time here and now.

The *daily satsang* continued without interruption from early morning until 9-30 or 10 p. m. At times two or three meetings proceeded simultaneously, in the hall, the temples and on the platform in the open that had been given a temporary canvas roof. There was something for every taste and temperament. Sri Haribabaji Maharaj arrived on May 4th and with him the *Rāsalilā* party from Vrindaban. Scenes from the lives of Sri Krishna and Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu were enacted by the *Rāsalilā* party every morning from 6-30—9 a. m. attracting and delighting amongst others villagers and children who flocked from all directions, some

from considerable distances. At 9-30 a. m. followed the usual recitation from the *Gītā* and other *scriptures*. Whenever possible a visiting Mahatma would deliver a talk from 11-12 midday. The interval between the morning session and the afternoon *satsang* at 4 p. m. was filled in by *kīrtana*. Sri Haribabaji and often other Mahatmas as well, spoke until 6. p. m. or longer. Again at 7-30 Sri Haribabaji performed his Kirtan and then related stories from the lives of saints. This was followed by silence from 8-45 to 9 p. m. and finally *ārati*. Simultaneously perpetual meditation was kept up day and night in the *Siva* temple; the *chandi* was chanted throughout the morning in the Matri Mandir. On fullmoon day and night the whole of the *Rāmāyana* was read aloud in about 30 hours.

One of the features of the celebrations was a feast given to all the lepers ( about 200 ) of Dehradun. The food was prepared in the Ashram itself, transported to its destination by jeep and served by ashramites in the open space near the Leper Hospital.

A set of rooms has recently been built on the upper story of Kalyanvan house. It was inaugurated one morning by *pūjā* and *Rāmārchana* and the evening *satsang* was held that day on the large platform in front of the house.

A similar ceremony was performed a few days later to open a set of rooms for Mataji's use that had just been completed on the roof of the *Sadhan Ashram* at Jakhan.\* The evening session took place on the roof of *Sadhan Ashram*, which commands a magnificent view of the surrounding hills. Mataji stayed on for the night, sleeping in Her new room.

\* Our new Ashram, about half a mile below Kishenpur, most generously gifted by a devotee of Mataji, Sri R. C. Sood.

Many well known Mahatmas attended the final *pujā* in the night of the 22nd May. Also some high officials such as the Lt. Governor of Himachal Pradesh with his wife and several officers of Dehradun. All available space on the platform, in the temples, on the verandas downstairs and upstairs, was tightly packed, yet perfect order and silence prevailed throughout. The decorations were superb and the music exquisite. No sooner had all done obeisance and Mataji retired to Her room in the morning, than the stage was prepared for the performance of the *Rāsālila* at 7 a. m.

About 1000 people partook of the feast that it is customary to serve all who care to come on the day after the final birthday *pujā*.

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It would be a mistake to presume that Mataji's birthday is celebrated only in India now a days. The numbers of those who love and adore Her are swelling rapidly also in Europe and even more in the U. S. A. The following is quoted from a letter by an American devotee.

“.....On Wednesday, 2nd May, at Ananda Ashram in La Crescenta, California, services were held in the Temple to celebrate Anandamayi's birthday. I think there were three services during the day. My wife and I arrived in the evening just after the last service. One of the young sisters saw us coming and reopened the shrine and let us see Ma's smiling photograph on the altar, surrounded with lights and flowers. We sat in meditation for a few moments, then joined about 20 people in the living room of the headquarters section, gathered to sing and talk about Anandamayi Ma.

“Jadu Ma, who was the Head of the Ananda Ashram at Dacca, told us how she met Ma when she was staying with Her husband at Shahbag Garden. Jadu Ma, a lover of the great Rama Krishna, had heard that an unknown girl had the habit of going into *Samādhi* also, and she was eager to see Her. On their first meeting she had her heart’s desire fulfilled. Anandamayi Ma’s father and Bholanath sang a song and our Beloved Mother went into *Samādhi*.

We were all thrilled to hear this as if we had been there.

As far as I know this was the first public celebration of Mother’s birthday in America.”



After the Birthday celebrations were over, Sri Chakrapaniji Maharaj delivered talks for a few days during the morning *satsang*. At his request Mataji sang each day after his lecture. On one occasion She got into an extraordinary mood and continued singing for 50 minutes without ever stopping, improvising new songs and new tunes. The whole audience was electrified. It was unique and quite unforgettable.

Haribaba’s evening *satsang* was now regularly held at Kalyanvan in the open air. One day Mataji related to us about a vision She had had many years ago, of numberless *Risis*, *Munis* and other Great Beings of every kind of description, populating the garden. The name ‘*Kalyanvan*’ came to Her spontaneously on that occasion.

One day in June, Jagadguru Shankaracharya, Sri Shantanandaji of Joshimath, visited our Ashram and gave a very fine talk.

At the request of several devotees, Mataji very graciously consented in the beginning of June to give one hour daily ( 11–12 midday ) to “questions and answers” meetings. Dr. Pannalal and Pandit Sundarlal being present, there was no dearth of questions. Gradually many others, men and women, lost their shyness and joined in the animated discussions, which ranged over a great variety of subjects. At times Mataji’s incomparable sense of humour roused the whole audience to peals of hearty laughter. As it became known that Mataji was replying to questions, more and more people collected and soon the available space proved quite insufficient.

On July 9th Sri Haribabaji and the *Rāsālila* party left. Mataji moved to Kalyanvan that very night. A *Bhāgavata Saptāha* started on July 9th, Pandit Nityanandaji of Vrindaban officiating as the reader of the Sanskrit original in the mornings and also giving Hindi explanations in the afternoons for over 3 hours daily. The function proceeded with great concentration and solemnity. Mataji would come twice daily from Kalyanvan. The much coveted ‘questions and answers meetings’ had to be shifted and reduced to half an hour, namely 9—9—30 p. m. One evening a devotee said, she had read in two different Scriptures that *bhakti* did not come without fear. She failed to understand this. Mataji explained that life in the world was full of fear : tear of death, sickness, old age, poverty, public opinion, etc., etc. When people become conscious of intense fear they turn to the Almighty for help and succour. Mataji then related that when She was very young, namely at Astagram, She used to repeat ‘Haribol’ and once had the *kheyāla* that there should be massprayer and invocation of God’s name, all

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over the world, millions and millions joining. During the recent *ashtagraha*, the so called disastrous constellation of planets last January, February, Her *kheyāla* was fulfilled. Here also it was intense fear that made people invoke God with farvour and concentration.

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On July 17th Gurupurnima will be celebrated in the Kishenpur Ashram. On the 18th Mataji is expected to leave for Hardwar after a sojourn of over three months in Dehradun. Her further programme is as yet uncertain.