

# Ananda Vārtā

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



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Annual subscription (postage free) India—Rs. 6/- only  
Foreign—(By Sea Mail) Rs 7.50 or 15 shillings or \$ 2.00  
(By Air-mall)—Rs. 17.50 or £ 1-10-0 or \$ 4.50.

## CONTENTS

### English Section

1. Matri Vani	...	1
2. Pages from my Diary—Gurupriya Devi		3
3. A Life in Zen—Takashi Hirata	...	12
4. Birthday Celebrations at Almora—Kali Prasad		21
5. The Mother's Call—Prof. Batuk Nath Shastri M.A.		24
6. Modern Science and Indian Philosophy— Dr. B. L. Atreya M. A. D, Litt.		31
7. Old Diary Leaves—Atmananda	...	42
8. Matri Lila	...	46

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*The Self, self-contained,  
calling to Itself for its own Revelation—  
this is happiness.*

## **MATRI VANI**

Is it not wonderful to be a pilgrim on the Supreme Path? This is indeed the path to be taken. The ultimate Goal is reached when the Supreme Path has become revealed.

Everything is His doing. HE alone IS; your sole duty is to remember this at all times. So long as the sense of "I" and "mine" remains, there is bound to be sorrow and want in the life of the individual.

HE alone knows to whom He will reveal Himself under which form. By what path and in what manner He attracts any particular man to Himself with great force is incomprehensible to the human intelligence. The Path differs indeed for different pilgrims. Very often He destroys misfortune by misfortune and annihilates sorrow by sorrow. To advance

in this spirit means for everyone to tread his own path. One's own path is the path that leads to Self-realization, to the Supreme, ultimate Goal Itself.

Man must aim at the superhuman, at real greatness. The traveller on the Supreme Path may hope to attain to ultimate Bliss. This is man's main duty.

The spiritual practice that will cleanse one from the dross accumulated life after life and that has for purpose the uncovering of one's innate, radiant, illumined Self that lies latent deep within—this has to be fostered and served. What does service signify? Action that purifies the mind.

Always bear in mind that food, sleep, walking, standing, sitting—in fact your entire conduct has to be strictly controlled for the sake of liberation. Further, whatever spiritual exercise, ritual, and so forth is engaged in, should be carried out with faith and love. No ritual should be performed irreverently. He Himself has come in the guise of spiritual practice. The suffering which patience, endurance, forbearance entail is a manifestation of Him, the destroyer of suffering, for the purpose of its destruction.

## Pages from my Diary

GURUPRIYA DEVI

(Translated from Bengali)

*Poona, 9th June 1961.*

Mataji arrived here today from Bombay. She had already been here on May 13th to inaugurate the Ashram. It is a beautiful place situated in the I. C. S. Colony, on Ganeshkhind Road, quite close to the Poona University and also fairly near the Government House. Sri Bhagwan Das Nangpal, a local devotee and his wife have donated this newly built house to the Ashram. By the joint effort of Poona and Bombay *bhaktas* a large piece of land in front of the house has been acquired for the Ashram.

Sri Haribabaji Maharaj also reached here soon after Mataji. A spacious pandal has been erected in the Ashram grounds for the purpose of daily *satsang*.

*Poona, 14th June 1961.*

Two or three days ago Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj was discharged from hospital. He arrived here this morning and is staying in a house opposite to Sri Dilip Kumar Roy's Ashram.

*Poona, 23rd June 1961.*

The President of the Indian Republic, Dr. Rajendra Prasad has been in Poona for the last few days, residing in the Government House. This morning one of his secretaries came and announced that Dr. Rajendra Prasad as well as the Governor of Maharashtra, Sri Sri Prakash desired to come

and see Mataji this evening at a boat quarter to six. Since they wanted to meet Mataji informally, it was arranged that they should be received by her, not in the pandal, but in her own small room.

They arrived in the Ashram a little after half past five. Sri Sri Prakash had brought his daughter-in-law and a few of his grand-children with him. Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj was also present. The Governor has great regard for him.

No sooner had they taken their seats near Mataji, than Dr. Rajendra Prasad said to her : "Please give us some instructions that will help us on the spiritual path !"

*Mataji* : Pitaji, this body does not give instructions. Nevertheless, quite often in the course of conversation something is said in a very informal and unconventional manner. (Pointing to Dr. G. Kaviraj) These learned men will be able to explain everything to you in beautiful and appropriate language.

Kaviraj Mahashaya said : "Please, put some questions."

Thereupon Sri Sri Prakashji asked : "Mataji, I have a problem which I put to every wise or learned person whenever I get the chance. We encounter so much fraud, deceit and dishonesty. How can the spiritual life develop in the midst of all this ?"

Mataji gradually warmed up to the reply. "Pitaji, this reminds me of something that occurred years ago. This body was then in Mussoorie. One day, while going for a walk, it saw lots and lots of children playing in a games field. Suddenly, at the sound of a bell, they all stood as still as stones wherever they happened to be. This was an example of self-control. So long as the Brahmacharya Ashram is

not lived fully as it should be, day after day, man's life cannot be moulded according to proper laws and regulations. If the first of the four Ashrams is not lived in the right manner, then, just as when the foundation of a house is not well built, the house is in danger of collapsing, so also when the foundation of human life is not properly laid, lots of difficulties keep on arising."

Dr. Rajendra Prasad asked: "How is one to acquire love and devotion for the spiritual life?"

*Mataji*: By the yoga of practice. By sustained practice love and devotion for the spiritual path are developed.

About 45 minutes were spent in this kind of interesting and useful conversation. Then our guests were entertained to some light refreshments. Dr. Rajendra Prasad is suffering from asthma and therefore would not partake of anything. But he tied some fruit and sweets into his handkerchief to take along with him as *Mataji's* present.

Sri Haribabaji, who had gone out for his daily evening walk, returned at that moment. He was invited to join the party in *Mataji's* room. *Mataji* asked him two or three times to talk about some spiritual topic, but he could not be persuaded. Dr. Rajendra Prasad said: "Babaji is not gracious today."

At about 6-30 p. m. all did *pranama* to *Mataji* and took their leave. When they had gone, *Mataji* with a number of the people present paid a visit to Sri Dilip Kumar Roy's Ashram and remained there for some time. Then, after dropping Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj at his place, *Mataji* returned to our Ashram.



Poona, 24th June 1961.

In the beginning of May a French couple, Mr. Arnaud Desjardins and his wife Denise, came to Mataji at Allahabad. Since then they have mostly travelled with Mataji. However, for two weeks in between they visited Swami Ramdas at Kanhangad in South India and the Ashram of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Now they have again returned to Mataji at Poona. Mr. Desjardins is a well-known camera-man at the Television in France. Both he and his wife are very spiritually minded and, have great faith in Mataji. They had their first *daršana* of Ma in Benares during Durga Puja in 1959. Staying with Mataji for some time they produced a film of her which was shown in several places in France and North Africa. Innumerable people were immensely impressed by Ma's film and eager to see more. Mr. Desjardins is therefore trying to produce another film. However, Mataji does not take the slightest interest in such matters. Therefore he has to be always alert and on the lookout for moments when he can get exposures, out of which he will piece together his new film.

This evening Mr. Desjardins showed some fragments of his would-be film to Mataji, Sri Haribabaji and to all present at the Ashram. Sri Dilip Kumar also came with Indira Devi and a few of his devotees to witness the performance. Although no adequate projector was available with which to project a technicolour film, the entire audience enjoyed and appreciated immensely what they were shown.

Mrs. Desjardins has to return to Paris already tomorrow to be with her small daughter, while her husband is

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staying on for another week or so, hoping to get a few more shots for his new film.

*Poona, 30th June 1961.*

H. H. Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior is here at present. In spite of his indifferent health he comes almost every evening for Mataji's *daršana*. Daily pure cow's milk is sent for Ma by car from his private dairy farm. At first only Maharani Vijayaraje used to come to Mataji, but after some time the Maharaja also began to feel drawn to Mataji. This was a surprise to many, since the Maharaja was reputed for his indifference to religion and spirituality. There is no knowing who may change in what manner and at what time by Mataji's grace.

*Poona, 2nd July 1961.*

Since this morning it has been raining heavily. In the midst of this downpour Sri B. K. Shah came from Bombay together with his wife Lilaben, their daughter Sunayana and her baby boy. In Bombay, when Mataji had seen the baby for the first time, she remarked that he had very extraordinary ears. Today, as soon as he was taken to Ma, he tried to leap into her lap. Every time an attempt was made to straighten him, he would incline his head again towards Mataji's feet. He is just five months old. Everybody present was quite amazed to watch how powerfully he felt attracted to Mataji. There were a number of people in the room, but the child took no notice of them; his attention was exclusively occupied with Mataji. Suddenly Mataji stood

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\* Sri B. K. Shah is the Managing Director of the New India Assurance Co. and a well-known personality in Bombay. He and his family are greatly devoted to Mataji.

up, lifted the baby into her arms, and touching both his cheeks with her head, she fondled him. Again and again she stroked his forehead, and the baby seemed tremendously delighted. It was a unique sight, for one does not ever see Mataji take a baby into her arms. Everyone present felt that the child was extremely fortunate. Who he may have been in his former birth, Mataji alone can tell.

Poona, 30th July 1961,

Sri Kaniabhai has arrived here from Bombay together with his wife, a woman of a very sweet and gentle disposition and a fine singer. In the course of the conversation she said to Ma : "Surely, I am bound to fulfil my duties as a wife and mother. These are also a gift of God."

*Mataji* : Most certainly. All is His, all is He. Whatever work you do in your home, always carry it out as a service to Him. In every shape and form is He alone and therefore everything can be done as His service. The important thing is to be ever aware of Him, to think of Him in everything one does.

Last night Mataji related many interesting things to Kaniabhai. The following happened several years ago, once at Bundh, Sri Haribabaji took Ma out in a special procession on an elephant. A howda had been placed on the back of a huge elephant. It was difficult to climb up to it. Sri Haribabaji told one of his devotees to bend down low, so that Mataji could use his back as a step to get up to the litter. But Mataji was not willing to agree to this. Not

\* Sri D. I. Kania is a well-known businessman from Bombay.

knowing what to do. Haribabaji suggested that Ma should step on his two outstretched hands. Needless to say Mataji refused to do this either. Suddenly she had the *kheyāla* to climb up on the elephant without any help as nimbly as a mouse. All who watched were speechless with amazement. When Ma has the *kheyāla* nothing is impossible.

Another incident was also mentioned. After the death of Sri Uriababaji, Mataji once went to Vrindaban at the invitation of Sri Haribabaji. Mataji had the *kheyāla* that Sri Uriababaji was all the while present near her. A carpet had been spread below the wooden couch on which Mataji was seated during the *satsang*. Mataji had the carpet removed. A few stains of blood were then discovered on the carpet. Everyone was dumbfounded. It became clear that Sri Uriababaji must have sat on that very carpet when he had been murdered in public during the *satsang*. Up till then nobody had noticed the stains and Mataji drew people's attention to it in this manner.

This evening Sri Dilip Kumar Roy and Vidira Devi came to see Ma. Sri Dilip Kumar asked: "Mataji, why have excellent people and even supermen to suffer so much physical pain? Sri Ramana Maharshi, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa died of cancer. Why did Sri Gopinath Kaviraj also have to suffer from this terrible disease?" Mataji replied with a smile: "What does Gopibaba himself say about this?"

*Dilip Kumar*: "We want to hear what you say! Your words sound very sweet to us." Mataji smiled: "Whatever Gopibaba says is what this body would say." Mataji then explained that men of Sri Gopinath Kaviraj's learning and spiritual experience were extremely rare in this world. To find

another person who united a teacher as well as a student of such profundity in himself was difficult indeed.

The famous singer Srimati Hirabai Barodkar came for Ma's *daršana*. With deep feeling she sang two songs to Mataji. Mataji said: "Through melody, tune and rhythm the One who is all can be contacted. Just as Ram Prasad found the Great Mother through the intensity of his songs, so you also should dedicate your power to sing to Him. Try to realize Him through music."

Poona, 11th July 1961.

Today Mataji was taken to the famous National Defence Academy. The Principal himself had invited Ma and drove her in his own car. A reception was given to Mataji and her party on the veranda of the guest-house. First Pushpa sang two or three songs, then, at the urgent request of everyone, Mataji herself also sang for a short while. The place is of extraordinary beauty, facing a large lake surrounded by hills. In the distance Emperor Shivaji's fort can be seen. On the way back, stopping the car in various places, Mataji was shown round the Academy by the Principal who explained everything to her and to us. Amongst other sights Mataji visited the dining-hall in which about 2000 students take their meals together. The whole trip was most interesting.

Poona, 12th July 1961.

For the last fifteen days there has been continuous rain in Poona, such as has rarely been experienced before. The news has been received that the dam at Kharakvaala has burst and that a large part of the town is under water. Since the Ashram area is very high, nothing can be noticed of the

flood here. But a little further down the road everything is submerged by water. Thousands of people have had to vacate their homes, many bridges are broken, schools and colleges, the court, offices and shops are all closed. No one knows how many men and animals have lost their lives. We are happy to hear that all of Mataji's devotees are in safety.

Mataji told us : "When we got the news that the flood was rising with terrifying speed, this body had the *kheyāla* to say to the water : 'Now start receding gradually.' And really, from that moment the flood began to subside bit by bit." Who can tell how much disaster was prevented by Mataji's grace ?



*[The following text is extremely faint and illegible due to heavy noise and bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

## A Life in Zen\*

TAKASHI HIRATA †

( Translated from German )

### II

I shall now give a translation of the famous Chinese text named '*Zazen-gi*' (the Zen posture), which may prove helpful to the practice of Zen by Westerners. It was written in the 10th century by a Chinese Zen Master Chang-I-I. The work is to this day the instruction for beginners in *Zazen*.

#### *Zazen-gi*

( in Chinese "Tso-Shan-I." )

( in English "The Zen Posture" )

"O disciples of the Supreme Knowledge !

"If you want to master the Supreme Knowledge (*Mahā Prajñā*), you must first of all awaken in your heart the 'Great Compassion.' First of all concentrate earnestly on the 'four pledges' and then attend carefully to the practice of meditation. You should take a solemn vow to seek liberation not for yourself only, but for all sentient beings.

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\* The following is the second instalment of an essay that appeared in the German book "HOHLEN, KLOSTER, ASHRAMS" Published by U. W. Barth Verlag, Weilheim Oberbayern.

† Professor Takashi Hirata was born in Kyoto, Japan, in 1924. After 10 years of strict training and meditation in a Zen monastery he received the title of "Zen Master."

