
The sense of want arises spontaneously —
it is the Divine that awakens it.

To lose all is to gain all. He is merciful
and compassionate. Whatever He does at any
moment is all-beneficent, though certainly
painful at times. When He manifests Himself
as all-loss, there is hope that He may also
manifest Himself as all-gain. To pine for the
One Who helps towards the light of Truth is
salutary, for it kindles the awareness of Truth.

Verily, He is everywhere at all times.

The endeavour to awaken to his real nature
is man's duty as a human being.

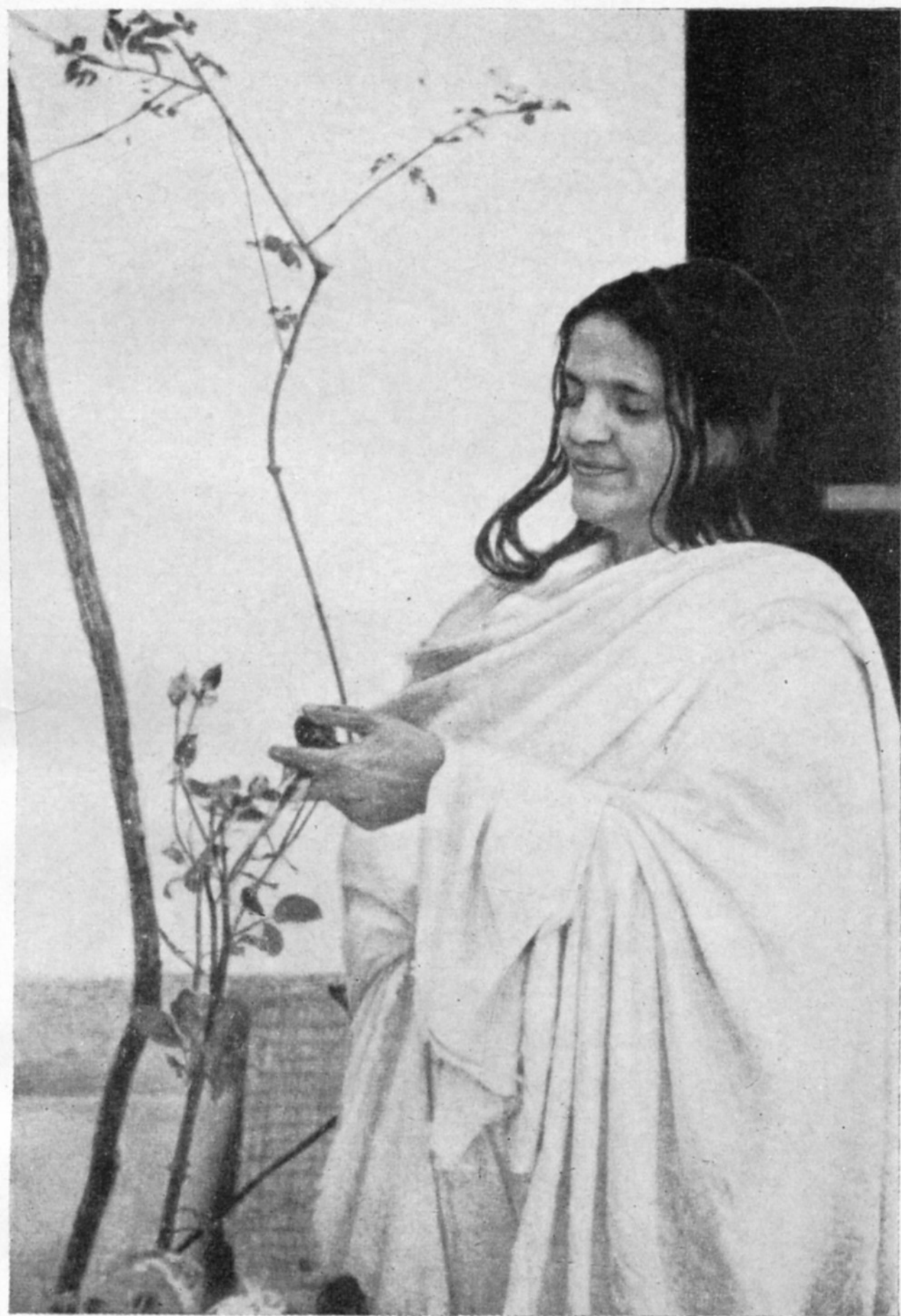
—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ

*A quarterly presenting the divine life and teaching of
SRI ANANDAMAYI MA and various aspects of
Universal Dharma*

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ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ welcomes contributions on the life and teachings of Ma and reflections and personal experiences of Ma's devotees and admirers. Articles on religious and philosophical subjects as well as on lives of saints and sages of all countries and all times are also invited. Articles should as far as practicable be typed with double spacing and on one side of the page.

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ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ

*The Eternal, the Ātman—
Itself pilgrim and path of Immortality
Self contained—THAT is all in One.*

Vol. XXXIV

JANUARY, 1987

No. 1

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Man may find himself in all kinds of surroundings, yet he must not allow himself to be driven hither and thither helplessly under their influence. It is his duty under all circumstances to preserve his individuality and strength of character intact. To drift with the current is easy enough, but to stand.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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New Delhi-110 001

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Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

(Translated from Bengali)

A Sikh saint from Punjab said to Ma, "Ma, do give us that fulness of bliss which is in you. You are so brimful of bliss ! — that is why so many of us, come to you and receive a share of your peace and bliss."

Ma said with a smile, "Pitaji, if you really do not know anything about that bliss, then how is it that you are looking for it? Your desire shows that it *is* already present within yourself."

Ma stopped here, but on being requested repeatedly to throw more light on the question, she said, "Look, one-pointed aim is the way. For realizing that *One*, you must have just *one* aim. You see, Pitaji, we put morsels of food *one* by *one* into our mouths while eating, we take steps *one* by *one* when we walk, we take *one* direction when we go anywhere, we write words *one* by *one* — so, you see, we are, after all, clinging to the *One*. Moreover, there is everything — the unmanifest, the Infinite, within ourselves."

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A gentleman was talking with Ma about the *intranquillity* of the mind and several other problems. In a certain context, Ma said, "Although the head is the principal centre, yet joys and

Srimati Gurupriya Didi once held a mirror before Ma, and said, "Ma, just look, what a bright face you've got! With those two eyes of yours you are really causing devastation to everyone." Ma also started gazing into the mirror at herself and said, "Indeed! there is no longer that look of illness!" Then she added, "You people say there is something in my eyes, but I don't find anything." Saying this, she began to look at her reflection holding the mirror at different angles, and went on smiling. Didi went on repeating, "By these very eyes you are really causing total devastation to all people." Ma said smilingly, "Am I really causing total devastation? If you people really underwent a total devastation, *that* would be something extremely good."

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A gentleman was once saying to Ma, "All these superstitions should be absolutely discarded, shouldn't they? For repeated practice of them, such as, casteism etc., pushes one into greater and greater ignorance."

To this Ma replied, "The same rule does not apply to all. A person may have particular *Samskaras* which would oblige him to proceed through all those things (casteism etc.), for if he does not go through these practices, he will never get rid of the fetters of *karma*. Hence, he is instructed to observe all those disciplines. All people have to reach the same destination, but each one has to proceed from the point at which he is

stationed. That is why the same route is not for all, though the destination is one and the same. In fact, there is nothing but the One.”

The gentleman added to this, “We are also part of the Undivided One.”

Ma said; “Why only part, Baba, — you yourself are the Infinite, Undivided One. For if you had not inherited the experience of the Infinity, then why should you desire for infinite joy, infinite peace? Does anyone crave for anything he has never tasted of? Moreover, Baba, you see, you *do* live in that *One* — one by one you take your steps, one by one you write words, one by one you take morsels of food.” Saying this, Ma began to laugh.

Another query from the same gentleman: “Well, is it necessary to accept a *Guru*?”

Ma: “Yes, since everything requires an incentive.”

The gentleman: “How can one recognize a *Sad-Guru*?”

Ma: “To tell you the truth, can pupils ever recognize their teacher (before being actually taught by him)? That is why some people say that one should select one’s *Guru* after having lived in his company for one year. Even then, can one really know whom to select? But there is another thing — it suffices to receive from a person whatever little bit one is destined to receive from him. Incidents take place according to *that*. Also, after taking initiation from a *Guru*, one may feel repentent afterwards; one may not like it anymore

— that is also possible. In that situation it is said that whatever little bit the disciple was destined to receive from the *Guru*, he has got just that much. There is something more, — you first hire a horse-cart to catch the train ; after you have got inside the train, you should not belittle the horse-carriage, for it is the horse-carriage that has taken you to the railway station. Again, first you go to study at a primary school. When you have completed your studies there, you feel desirous to study at a secondary school, and even after completing secondary education, you wish to enter the college. Hence, nothing is useless. It is possible that the primary school is unable to quench your thirst of knowledge ; but it is the education received at that very school which kindles in you a desire for higher education ; — therefore, nothing is wasted. Moreover, the *Sad-Guru* Himself appears in order to take the disciple under His care, and He also makes the disciple look for the *Guru* in the right place. This Grace is natural of the World-Teacher. In fact, *Ista*, *Guru* and *mantra* — all these three are just one — that is why it so happens.”

Let 'I cannot' be eradicated from your vocabulary. Time is gliding away swiftly : for a few days only lasts this reunion with friends and kinsmen. Gather up your possessions, brother, no one accompanies you on your final journey.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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In association with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Sri Amulya Datta Gupta

(Translated from Bengali)

(*Continued from the last issue*)

Friday, 30th May, 1941—Dehradun

The Benefits of Samyam.

We were due to start from Dehradun this morning. Ma came out and sat down in the hall by 8 a.m. and reverted to the subject being discussed the day before. She said, 'During the course of conversation yesterday, I had mentioned that qualities such as anger etc. that usually reside within human beings, did not always manifest themselves, but nevertheless there is no doubt that they do exist. In fact, the signs of *anger* and lust that sometimes appear in a being, prove that the seeds of such passions did possibly exist within. All these qualities are bound to lie dormant inside a human being, otherwise life is not complete.' — All these matters were discussed previously with Gopi Babu (Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj), who used to say that attributes that existed as dormant seeds could indeed manifest themselves on certain occasions. In reply, this body had asserted that 'Yes that is possible, but it is also possible that in

a particular case the person could attain such a high stage that many of these qualities could remain unmanifested and at times even disappear altogether.'

I : I have so far understood that if we harbour certain passions for enjoyment within us, then we can never be free from these until they are satisfied. Because I have heard that nobody can be rid of this debt we owed to nature. But from your words it would appear that if through Samyam such passions can be suppressed through leading a spiritual life, to that extent in time they may even be permanently destroyed by the force of true knowledge.

Ma : : Yes, that is possible. There are same kinds of longing that have to be fulfilled before being ended. But there are other types of longing in seed form that may not be manifested in this life. Of course if the guru incites these qualities, then they may even appear outwardly. If you examine yourself thoroughly you will find that when you have a longing to eat something, by inner judgement and effort you may succeed in refraining from eating it for sometime, then these very efforts may lead to outward expression of this greed. Thereafter there will no longer be any longing. At other times this greed is so strong that even if you try to repress it, you can not succeed in mastering it. Your effort or exercise of your judgement will be of no avail. In such cases there is no alternative but to give way and enjoy it. That is why you are advised from time to time to restrain your greed.

For those who are tried to do so, you will realise that the time has come to expose the reason for their longing. At other times you are advised to enjoy something and then reject it. In such cases mere samyam can not result in the longing from disappearing entirely.

The reason behind establishing Kishenpur Ashram

During conversation, the subject of Jyotish Babu arose. Ma said, 'One day I was walking with Jyotish along the roads in Mussoorie. We were sitting near Laudoun Bazar. There I sighted a number of small boys playing and shouting in the compound of a neighbouring school. The whole place resounded due to their shouting and clamours. At this moment the school bell was rung. At once the boys stopped playing and quietly entered their class rooms. The place that was resounding owing to the noise created by the boys so long, became silent and deserted as if in a dream.

On noticing this, I exclaimed 'Well, Well this is very nice. Let us imagine that the bells herald the approach of prayer time, so that the boys stopped playing in order to pray to God by entering their classes quietly. How beautiful this would be!

On hearing these words of this body, Jyotish had a holy instinct to build an Ashram for this purpose. When I got to hear of this, I told Jyotish, 'We already have several Ashrams, why build a new one?' Jyotish replied, 'No, this Ashram will not be like the others. It will not be the object of this Ashram to develop Sadhus, it will be run purely

with the idea of service. If we can get hold of a few boys between 8-10 years of age, then we can train them to follow in the path of religious learning. Even if this does not happen and they enter household life, what harm is there? Because if once they are steeped in the belief of true religion from a tender age, then, if they enter a household, they are bound to be much better householder than the present ones. In fact, we will not take on the responsibility of running their lives, but only help to serve their needs for following a religious life. "With this thought in mind, Joytish tried to start building this Kishenpur Ashram."

Pure thoughts are never wasted.

Various other topics came up for discussions. Some days earlier Ma had asked me, "A very long letter was written to you, did you not receive it?" I had replied, 'I do not remember receiving any such letter from you.' Ma had remarked, "Then you could not have received it." I had replied, "Ma, you wrote me a letter, yet I never received it, how can this be possible?"

Ma now raised this topic and said, "You had referred the other day to the fact that I had written you a letter, but if you had not received it — how is this possible?" Actually there does exist a certain line of thought according to which you would certainly have received this letter had this been written with such a thought in mind. But if the thought was not so directed, but merely confined to the writing of the letter, then with the completion

of the letter, this feeling tended to disappear. It is uncertain whether or not you will receive such letters. At other times, when Paramananda has written a letter to my direction, it has been subsequently torn up. You may say that such letters are useless. But in reality it is not so. Whatever communications has been sent to any body in the letter reaches him in some other fashion. The information that was submitted to you in the letter under discussion, you have already received from some other sources. So the writing of the letter was not in vain. The matter came up for discussion precisely because the letter was previously written. In another sense, suppose there was merely the thought of writing the letter without actually having done so, even then the same information would be sent in another manner instead of being contained in the letter. A pure thought can be communicated even without a medium. Because your doors are shut, you may not actually behold the manifestation. Yet the results are received by you."

"You may have noticed that from time to time your hearts seemed to be gladdened and tears may have appeared in your eyes. Why does this happen? There may be three reasons for this; one I have just mentioned in as much as pure thoughts may give rise to such a feeling; again the instincts inherited by you from a previous birth may be responsible, or the remembrance of a certain incident may be responsible. In whatever way you may analyse this there are infinite possibilities. So nothing is actually wasted."

After our meal we again sat down near Ma, who praised Gopi Babu and referred to the way in which his mind was always turned inwards. Ma said, 'You may or may not have noticed that Gopi Babu's eyes were directed towards you or that he was laughing at something you had said, but in reality his glance was not so directed. In fact it was directed towards his inner possessions (namely thoughts about God).

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At 4 p. m. while we were sitting near Ma, Khukuni (Didi Gurupriya) raised the subject of Bholanath. Didi said, "Ma, at Vyas (a place of holy pilgrimage on the banks of the Narmada), you had mentioned some facts about Bholanath, but this referred mostly to misdeeds of Bholanath. But yesterday, you praised Bholanath in front of Amulyada with no end. How do you reconcile these two opposite views ?"

I said, 'Ma, I have read in Didi's Diary what you have said to her about Bholanath. On reading this I had forbidden Didi to publish it because Bholanath has quite a number of disciples. To the disciples the guru is akin to God. When the Baba's disciple read Didi's book and see their guru being so disparaged, their anger will be directed towards Didi. That is why I consider it preferable not to publish all the facts.

Ma : What you say is true. From your point of view it may be preferable not to publish it, but the matter can be looked at from another angle.

In actual fact I am neither asking to you to publish anything nor am I stopping you from doing so. You are free to do so as you like. By holding steadfastly with true devotion to Truth you can make everything public whether it is nice to hear or not. Moreover there are some people who will realise that whatever has been said of Bholanath's character, is not all that bad. Because you have also heard of a number of Mahatmas about whom similar things can be said but for that nobody loses their respect for such Mahatmas.

I : What you have described to Khukuni Didi is full of fault finding, this is nothing to be proud of !

Ma : (Laughing) I often speak after considering various aspects of the subject. At other times I speak from a certain fixed aspect. When Khukuni raised the topic of Bholanath's private life, then only his defects in this connection had been highlighted. When I was speaking to you, I was concentrating on his good qualities. So I could not but praise him, but at the same time I reminded you that people would state that this body had praised him so much merely because he happened to be this body's husband. 'People are bound to imagine things according to their own inclinations. Why should people find fault with this, or dispute this ?'

You have heard how people in Dhaka spread untrue rumours about me when Jyotish's and my pictures were published, even to the extent of circulating a lying life story of this body. In that pub-

lication it was mentioned that this body had been married previously and had become a widow. Subsequently that it was married again to Bholanath. You know that this body was born and married at Vidyakut. It was rumoured that they had obtained these facts from Vidyakut. There were various other similar lies published but in the end nothing remained. What was a lie was destroyed in the lie itself. Whatever it may be when slanders were being spread about this body, Jyotish was struck with remorse and one day told me, 'Ultimately a stigma has been attached to you because of me. I cannot show my face to anybody. I will now go elsewhere.'

I then explained to Jyotish, 'What is the reason for this grief?' So far no disgrace has been attached to this body, but this has now been added. Whatever is fully complete, should contain something of everything. Why should there not be a trace of disgrace included in this? I am the blame itself, I am the one who blames me, and whoever is blamed is I myself. There will not be any other like this.'

Bholanath became afraid in noticing these feelings in Jyotish and asked Kamalakanta to keep a close eye on him.

You have heard a lot of things about Bholanath's character and perhaps you imagine a lot of things about his behaviour towards me in his family life. It is difficult to understand the real inner feelings from outside behaviour. I am recounting to you the incident of a particular day. One day Kushari Mahasaya, Bholanath and I were talking together

in Kushari Mahasaya's house (Bholanath's brother-in-law). At this juncture I said to Bholanath 'I would like to lie down for a while with my head on your lap.' I thereafter went to lie down in his lap. But Bholanath hastily moved away a couple of feet. But I went and lay down on the ground which I had indicated.

On beholding this Kushari Mahasaya was somewhat surprised and asked Bholanath the reason for his behaviour. Bholanath said, "This is how our life has been proceeding right after our marriage. Obviously you see her as my wife, but I have never behaved towards her as one does towards one's wife. I have always looked upon her as a Devi and have tried to behave as such towards her."

When Bholanath proceeded to Uttar Kashi after leaving this body in the care of Joytish at Mussoorie, he thereafter wrote a long letter to Jyotish from there. In it he wrote, 'I have been observing your mother from her childhood. I know you are completely pure and in full control of all your faculties, that is why I have not had the slightest qualm or hesitation in leaving her in your charge, etc. etc.'

Jyotish read the letter and then tore it up, saying, 'What nonsense does Pitaji write to me?' Although what I have mentioned so far is quite true, yet the outward behaviour of our married life was, to start with, something like that between husband and wife. I used to look upon Bholanath as my protector. Bholanath also accepted this body as some one to be protected.

Now a days you read and hear so much about us. After hearing and reading about all this, you may say that intimacy with a body may lead to loss of one's balance, but Bholanath has frequently touched this body, yet he has not suffered from any derangement. He has slept in the same bed with me but even here there was a different type of feeling. He has slept with this body exactly as he has slept with Marani (his adopted daughter).

How can normal people understand this relationship? It is not as if Bholanath was not tempted from time to time ; after all he was a human being, so his feelings were bound to be human, but here again often this was due to the evil advice of his companions. After noticing no passion in this body sometime after marriage, he used to declare from time to time that he would have this body examined by a doctor. But even this restless feeling never lasted long. After noticing this various bhavas expressed by this body with his own eyes, he always used to look upon this body as a Devi. In his middle years due to evil advice from his friends, and his own aspirators, the desire to establish his own supremacy did arise from time to time, but well before his death, all these desires faded and his previous instincts were re-established."

The Temples of South India

R. K. Banerjee

(Contd. from previous issue)

In view of the late Breakfast, we arrived at the temple entrance just before 11-30 a.m., which we did not know was the usual time for closing the sanctum-sanctorum.

My son and I were not dressed properly for entry, but my wife was immediately escorted inside by the kindly disposed Priests.

While we were waiting outside, a Government appointed Executive Officer in charge of the temple saw our predicament from his Office, and immediately came to enliven our brief wait by regaling us with a complete history of the temple, and the ways and means of current worship.

I mention this incident to show the extreme courtesy and efficiency with which temple Executive Officers throughout Southern India carry on their daily duties, because no forward arrangements had been made for our visit, and no dignitaries had been warned in advance.

My wife came back very satisfied with her worship, and it was a pity that I could not on the spot procure a printed leaflet giving the history of the place, which according to the temple authorities had just gone out of print.

We duly arrived in Cochin for Lunch at the Malabar Hotel, where we were booked for two nights in rooms overlooking the harbour entrance.

Our stay here was of necessity fully occupied with the fascination of watching the shipping, and was further enlivened by two very long and enjoyable excursions on the backwaters around the harbour by motor launch.

On the 15th morning we left Cochin after a very early Breakfast intending to break journey at Trichur and Guruvayur, before Lunch. Benefitting from our experience when visiting the Padmanabhan Temple, we had made full arrangements in advance both at Trichur and Guruvayur.

The Rest House at Trichur, where rooms had been booked for our halt and lunch, used to belong to the local nobility, and so is of more magnificent proportions than the average travellers' bungalow.

We drove straight to the Trichur Rest House to have a quick wash, and immediately left for the famous old Shiva Temple situated on the top of the highest point in the city, surrounded by a well laid out compound.

Like the temple at Vaikam, this temple also is built along traditional Travancorean lines, with sloping pitched timber roofs more or less like a Pagoda.

The Shivalingam here is composed of solid ghee, which has been piled up for well over 2000 years, and appears to retain the remarkable property of not melting even in the height of summer.

Worshipping is simple, and the Holy Trinity is again represented in adjoining temples of Brahma and Mahavishnu, while there is a beautiful temple of Parbati Devi at the back of the temple of Shiva, who goes here by the name of Parameshwar.

Just by the main entrance of the temple compound a small temple has been constructed, obviously at a later date, to the Lord Krishna.

In view of our commitment to be at Guruvayur, 21 miles away, for midday worship, our visit to Trichur had perforce to be hurried, and after a long and dusty journey over indifferent roads, we arrived at Guruvayur just in time to be received by the temple authorities who had been anxiously awaiting for us from 11 a.m.

The temple of Guruvayur is considered to be one of the holiest shrines to the Lord Vishnu in the whole of the West coast of India.

Its origin goes back to the time of the epic Mahabharata. According to the Narada Purana when Dwarka was flooded by the ocean waters just before the passing away of the Lord Krishna, he is said to have rescued the family deity of Vishnu from the waters, and entrusted the idol to the care of Uddhava, his trusted friend and a staunch Yadava.

Uddhava sought counsel of Guru Vrihaspati, the preceptor of the Gods, and Vayu (the wind God). It is said that the Guru and Vayu went South along the coast from Dwarka, carrying the precious image with them, until they came to the site of the present temple, where there was a crystal lotus lake, and a

cocoanut plantation, as well as a temple of Shiva and Parbati.

It is said that Shiva here commanded them to rest Lord Vishnu on the bank of the lake, and worship him by building a temple there. The origin of the name Guruvayur is thus derived from the names of the two that were mainly responsible for installing the deity there — Guru and vayu.

The waters and airs of this place are well known for their healing and curative powers. It is said that King Janmejaya — the great grandson of the Pandavas of Mahabharata fame was stricken with leprosy after the sacrificial Yajna he performed to destroy all serpents, and was advised to come and do penance in the temple of Guruvayur, where he was subsequently healed.

Coming to more modern times, the famous South Indian writer in the middle ages — Malpathar Narayana Bhattathiripad was stricken with practically an incurable disease, and spent a life time in the temple precincts composing his famous Bhagavad Geeta or Narayaneem. He also was subsequently cured, and found salvation here after death.

The present building owes its origin to a Pandyan King — who lived about 500 years ago, and who was also miraculously cured of a Cobra bite on this very spot.

The temple is surrounded by very strong walls to keep out invaders in the medieval times, and has two Gopurams,

The Dhwaja Stambha or the Flagstaff pedestal in front of the temple is plated in gold, and the top carries a single teak wood tree, 70 long, as its Flagstaff.

There are fine artistic paintings inscribed on the front walls of the sanctum-sanctorum.

The sanctity of the temple originates from legends which have been handed down from generation to generation. The great sage and devotee of Vishnu — Vilwamangal from Orissa, mentioned in the ballads of Bengal and Orissa — stayed in this temple for very many years, and was concerned with several miracles.

It is said that the original Sankaracharya in his pilgrimage around India once passed along this temple without paying homage to the Lord of Guruvayur, when he suddenly felt his limbs paralysed, and thus realised his mistake. In penance he codified the whole of the worshipping rituals of this Vaishnav temple, in spite of being the incarnation of Saivism in India.

The story is also told of Tipu Sultan's attempt to plunder the temple during his conquering marches, when a thundering voice emanating from the temple commanded him to stop and beware.

Tipu was so impressed that not only did he observe this order and withdraw, but in addition he also arranged for a daily sum to be paid to the temple authorities for conducting worship.

This award was continued even by the British Government after the downfall of Tipu's dynasty.

From Guruvayur we collected our prasadam and returned for a late Lunch at Trichur.

Leaving Trichur the road winds over hill and down dale to Coimbatore, during which we crossed from Kerala State to Madras, and eventually drove into the Coimbatore Club compound as daylight was just about to fade.

I was unfortunately fully engaged the next day, but my wife took the opportunity, accompanied by a friend with local knowledge, to visit the famous Chidambaram Temple nestling in the foothills some miles away, which can be compared very favourably with the more well known Chidambaram Temple near Tanjore.

On the same evening, that is the 16th, we entrained for Madras, because it was felt that by that time we had had sufficient travelling over long stretches of road. But we still had a last week end up our sleeve on the 18th/19th January, for which arrangements had been made for our stay at Tirupati.

We left Madras for Tirupati on Saturday the 18th January after Lunch, and within a couple of hours were climbing the foothills of the Tirumalai range, an offshoot of the Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh.

The Tirupati hills comprise seven hills, and the peaks have been likened to the seven hoods of the mythological serpent Adishesha, who is said to be connected with the start of creation.

Mention is made of the Lord of Tirupati, i.e., Venkateshwara, in the Rig Veda, and one of the

incarnations of Lord Vishnu of this period, i.e., the Sweta Varaha is still worshipped on the banks of the temple tank known as Swami Pushkarini. This temple of Sweta Varaha is much older than the main temple of Tirupati.

The Lord Vishnu is worshipped in the main temple as Venkateshwara, that is, the Lord of the Venkatachala Hills.

The temple is situated 2800 foot mark above the sea level, and as many as 5000 pilgrims visit it daily. Famous Alwars and Acharyas have sung of the glories of this temple from the distant past.

Sri Chaitanya and Nityananda Prabhu from Bengal came here on pilgrimage during their journeys in the Deccan plateau.

The great Ramanujam reformed the rituals and mode of worship of this temple during his lifetime.

Turning now to historical times, the Pallava Kings in the ninth century, the Cholas in the tenth century, then the Pandavas, and finally the Kings of the Vijayanagar dynasty in the 14th/15th century have left their unmistakable stamp on the temple buildings.

The statues of King Devaraya and his consort of Vijayanagar adorn the entrance of the temple.

It is said that the eyes of the Lord Venkateshwara are so piercing in their intensity, that they have to be covered to avoid danger to pilgrims, and so we could only see Him with his eyes covered.

The roof of the sanctum sanctorum or the Vimana is covered with gold, and so is the Dhwaja-Stambha at the main entrance.

We were housed most comfortably in a very modern Guest House on top of the hill overlooking Vijaynagar, 7 miles away on the plains. Most bungalows in Tirupati are equipped with electricity and hot and cold running water, which are a great boon to pilgrims who have to rise and wash very early in the mornings before performing worship in temperatures which are quite cold compared to the plains of Southern India.

The temple authorities own the whole township and run it most efficiently. They own all the buses that ply between Tirupati town at the foot of the hill and the temple. Food available in temple Guest Houses is excellent in quality, and sufficient in quantity.

After visiting the temple that evening, and sitting on the open Courtyard outside the bungalow overlooking the twinkling lights of the Vijayanagar in the distance, I could not help imbibing the calm, peaceful, and sanctified atmosphere of the place, much as must have been enjoyed by the Vijayanagar rulers and their families several centuries ago.

We paid another visit to the temple next morning, and again enjoyed excellent Darshan, before returning to the bungalow for Breakfast prior to our departure from Tirupati on the 19th.

(To be continued)

Ma Anandamayee's Essential Message

Jitendra Chandra Mazumdar

1. In this complex modern world in which man's survival needs and other desires are so dominant and numerous that his living needs often remain neglected and unrecognized, and release of tension rather than peace and joy is man's sole and all-time concern. Carrying a great load of the things of the world in his mind he remains shrunken and starved in his soul.

2. That is why a saint like Ma Anandamayee never tires of repeating that all the twenty-four hours of our day have been given to us for seeking our inmost soul and God and we should spend all our energy that we can save for God and salvation, and we should devote all such time that we can gather after serving things of the world and "duniyar kaj" (worldly affairs) for God and self-finding ; and her words startle us by their stark simplicity and austere truth.

3. Desire for God is the same as the desire for the absolute good and the secret of salvation lies in detaching ourselves from the things of the world and worldly business for the sake of desiring the absolute good, paramartha. And desiring the absolute good is the same as possessing the absolute good.

4. Simone Weil says that in respect of false goods that is goods other than the absolute good, desire and possession are two different things ; but for the true good there is no difference between desire and possession. It is impossible to really desire the true good and not to obtain it.

5. Ma Anandamayee has said that if you earnestly desire God you must get him. “Chāilei pāwa jai tave, mane mukhe sarva bhāve ek kare chāwa chāi. (Bangmayi Ma para 10). Mane rekho chāwā and pāwā ekee sthane” (Bangmayi Ma para 245). Whenever we shed tears uttering the name of God, God enters us, whether we know it or not.

6. Reciprocally it is impossible to receive the absolute good when one has not desired it, as has been said by Simone Weil. Simone Weil has said that there is something mysterious in the universe which is in complicity with those who desire nothing but the absolute good. For awakening Ma prescribes japa, meditation, company of holy men and women, study of holy scriptures and books, prayer, puja and self-abandonment.

7. Ma Anandamayee, like Simone Weil, has repeatedly reminded us that the real thing that matters ultimately is desiring God ; “tānr janya tānke chāwā and kāndā. (Bangmayi Ma para 325). What is wrong with most of us in the world is that we do not really desire God which is the absolute good. We lay waste our powers in running after relative and temporal goods.

8. The religious life commences with the firm understanding of this truth that things of the world

that we desire are by nature such that they will never satisfy us without giving rise to other and more desires. And our being needs something which will give us eternal joy and peace. Discontent is divine because it makes us aware of this flaw or shortcoming in worldly desires.

9. Being a pilgrim and seeker of the absolute Ma Anandamayee does not believe in hasty innovations and violent changes in society and social structures of our country. In a sense she is the best of the conservatives, the best of the liberals and the best of the revolutionaries. She had the courage to change the things which she could change.

10. Ma calls us to bear with fortitude and grace all the sufferings and afflictions which come to us in our life as our good. God, she says, hurts us as well as consoles us. Like Julian of Norwich she says that all things shall be well. Julian also says that all manner of things shall be well. Ma also would have said the same thing.

11. In this mad age of god-men and god-women, pitajis, matajis and dadajis, well-dressed, well-fed and well-looked after who are building empires in foreign countries with enormous money-power and high-pressure propaganda and teaching the practice of presence of God to countless fans through faultlessly organised centres by paid agents, saints like Ramakrishna, Shyamacharan Lahiri, Lokenath Brahmachari and Ma Anandamayee (even though she also had a well-knit organisation) look so strangely simple, straight and unsophisticated

that they have to be classed apart for understanding their message.

12. Foreseeing the imminent doom of mankind by the rise and dominance of hard technology, the ecological devastation, the nuclear proliferation and the consequent economic inflation all the world over, Ma Anandamayee's persistent call to mankind has been to cease dreaming about limitless (material) growth and to turn within, to look inwards and understand the inner world which is timeless and beyond dualities. She has warned one and all with whom she came in contact to heed their inner resources and to love and cherish non-material values which alone are capable of infinite and limitless growth. True she has not spoken expressly about doom, but the significance of her insistent call can be truly understood only when we look around and see how the world is being shaped and shrivelled by the various sinister forces.

13. She asked everybody she met to spend some time everyday thinking, reflecting and meditating on God, which is the essential inner being of man and the universe. Her attempt has always been to persuade men to withdraw their gaze from the things and pursuits of worldly life and to slow, dim and dampen their preoccupations with the world; there is not, and there cannot be, any peace in the world unless we also learn to live within ourselves, drawing sustenance from non-material values.

14. How should we behave in life? Her answer has been essentially that we should so shape

and conduct ourselves that we act in conformity with the will of God. We are kartas or free agents partly and almost all the circumstances and components of our life are determined for us by Nature and they constitute the "daivam."

15. Things which have been determined for us have been permitted by God to be what they are in accordance with certain laws. Most of us exercise our freedom in pursuit of objects which detract us from God and place us at the centre of the universe ; and divert and amuse us by sensation and excitement. This freedom we have and God does not prevent us from exercising our freedom against or away from Him. But there is no real and staying satisfaction in this diversion and digression. We are always seekers of something more or something else.

16. "Nitya Vastur sandhān-i mānuser kartavya. Jekhāne Jagater dukkha vivrater sthān nei, sei lābh-i mānuser bānchaniya. (Bangmayi Ma para 365). Forsaking ego's free will we have to mould ourselves into an instrument, a channel of God's free will. We have to be a machine in God's hands. We have to learn to do His will as against our will and later to love to do His will and ultimately to cease to have any will of our own. Rising above the three gunas and dualities of this world our ego has to die within the Purusottama to permit his Para-Prakriti to act for ever.

17. Julian of Norwich says whatever is done is done for well, for Lord God doeth all. Says Ma Anandamayee : tiniī sav karen, karān. Jā havār

havei. Jakhan jā hachche tini kare, tini karān, tinni sonen, sonān, sarva visaye tānr opar keval nirbhar. (Bangmayi Ma para 49). Māgo tumi eso tomāke chhāra din ār chale nā. (Bangmayi Ma para 3). Here Ma is not teaching fatalism. She is saying that God doeth all for him who depends entirely on Him and feels that he cannot carry on without God, as William James used to feel.

18. What man does, motivated by worldly interests by his ego's free will is done by him and Lord God does not do it. We should always bear this distinction in mind. Whatever is done by God is done for good and this excludes things done by man by his ego in exercise of his free will. The whole secret of religious life lies in growing into a spontaneous self-giving-in God. Self-abandonment is not easy, it is not a mere pose, a mere art ; it is a kind of mysterious growth of being. Ma has warned us not to go about prattling that whatever is done by us is done by God. One acquires the right to say this after much cleansing, understanding, self-scrutiny and moral control. (Sadhana).

19. Elaborating what has been stated in para 18 Ma Anandamayee has said : "ichchāsunya avasthār janyai sakale chesta kare ; nijer ichchā thākite sānti nei. Sānti takhanai hai jakhan nijer ichchāke tānhār ichchār sange milāiyā dewā jāi. Takhan tānhar ichchā nijer ichchā baliyā mane hai evang ichchār janya kona asānti āsite pare nā. (Upadeshamrita-samgraha para 71). In the ultimate analysis this means God's will acts only in a state of total and entire self-abandonment and

negation of ego. Everyone is, therefore, not competent to indulge in the glib talk that he does as God moves him to do. That kind of talk is mere hypocrisy. You will be competent to say that only after you have known what God is and you have investigated your relationship with God and established a genuine permanent link with Him (Upadeshamrita-Samgraha para 209).

20. It is easy to say : "Thy will be done on earth as it is heaven." But unless God teaches us to do His will it is not in man's power to act in conformity with God's will. This is a truth on which Ma Anandamayee emphasises often.

21. A question arises whether Ma Anandamayee's philosophy is life-denying or world-denying. Ma Anandamayee is a god-intoxicated saint. But she has said that without first discharging properly the duties of a house-holder it is difficult to find the absolute Reality. Nowhere has she asked men to withdraw from the world. Nor has she characterised the world as an utter illusion like a Sankarite. She has not asked us to lead the life of lotus-eaters or ivory-towerists. There is no real peace in the world (duniya). This she has said repeatedly and what she has said is unimpeachable. Her stress has been on learning self-control and practising periodic cut-off or switching-off from the worldly life for stilling or emptying the mind to find within God which is the absolute good. Amongst her admirers and devotees the largest number consists of eminent citizens occupying very responsible positions in life. Her greatest message for the

toiling, restless and world-preoccupied men and women who went to her was that they open their eyes to that dimension of being which, though it is of the highest value, is mostly neglected and under-nourished. It is by turning to and cultivating this dimension of being beyond the four-dimensional world that man can and will save himself from the danger of total annihilation which he is facing in this nuclear age. And what message can be more appropriate today than this and truer ?

“O Lord ! There is no difference between Thou and me ; Thou art simply at play ! My form is Thine, I am verily Thyself ! I am in Thee, Thou takest service through my body ! I am static in Thee, Thou art active in me ! Thou art talking through my mouth ; I am reposing happily in Thee ! O Lord ! How incongruous is all this so says Tuka.”

—Sri Tukaram

The contemporaries of Sri Krishna Chaitanya and their successors

R. K. Banerjee

Sril Rupa Goswami

Born in 1493 A. D., Sril Rupa Goswami spent 22 years of his life at home, and 53 years outside, mostly in Vrindaban.

He was perhaps the most famous of the six Acharya Goswamis sent by their Lord to Vrindaban, and was a doyen among all the Acharyas there until his death.

Due to his keen business ability, he soon rose to the position of Dabir Khas in the court of the Pathan Sultan of Bengal, Hussain Shah, and together with his elder brother Sanatan, first met Sri Chaitanya at Ramkeli, where he soon came under the magic spell of Mahaprabhu.

He was more successful than his brother in escaping from the tasks of his court work, and managed to leave Bengal on foot for praying with his younger brother Anupam in secret of Sri Chaitanya. There he managed to meet Mahaprabhu under favourable circumstances.

Sri Chaitanya gave him an intensive course of education in the Vaishnav Shastras for 10 days, during which he met Ballavacharya who had arrived there specially to consult Mahaprabhu.

On his way to Vrindaban from Prayag, Sri Rupa came across his old friend Subuddhi Roy, at Sri Dhruba Ghat, in Mathura. The latter was one of the first Bengalis to migrate to Brajadham, and by that time was already well established there.

Sri Rupa spent only one month at Vrindaban during this first visit as his education under the feet of Sri Chaitanya had not yet completed, and soon started on his way back along the Ganga via Prayag.

Having heard that Mahaprabhu was in Nilachal, he proceeded there first, and put up with Thakur Haridas, as he considered himself an outcast having served and lived with the Mohammedan court of Ganda.

But Sri Chaitanya introduced him to Sri Advaita and Sri Nityananda and asked for their assistance in extending all possible help towards Sri Rupa during his Sadhana.

Sri Rupa had composed a play in Sanskrit called Lalita Madhava, and inspired by Sri Chaitanya, he wrote a separate play, "Bidagdha Madhav."

During this period Sri Rupa composed a number of slokas which became very dear to Sri Chaitanya. He was too shy to show or recite these slokas before Mahaprabhu, who of course was fully aware of this and compelled Sri Rupa to divulge them, to the utmost satisfaction of all.

Sri Rupa spent the whole of Chaturmashya with Sri Chaitanya and his followers at Nilachal, and stayed on until Dol Purnima, when he left for Ganda. Here he spent nearly a year settling all

his extensive properties among his kith and kin, as he was to depart for Vrindaban thereafter, never to return again.

At Vrindaban his mission in life was to compose books which were to become famous in due course, to be incorporated among topmost Vaishnav literature, and also to discover the most glory of Brajabhoomi.

Among the more famous books written by him are :

Ujjal Nilmani
Rasamrita Sindhu
Daskale Kaumudi
Uddhav Sandesh, etc.

His sadhana and Bhajan used to take up nearly 24 hrs. of the day, and he was the acknowledged leader of all the Vaishnavas at Vrindaban, to be consulted with deep respect by all visitors.

The story of the discovery of the presiding deity of Vrindaban, Sri Govinda, is as follows :

According to the orders of Sri Chaitanya, Sri Rupa was searching for an image of Sri Krishna, and was worried in not finding anything inspite of his best efforts and Sadhana.

One day he was sitting under the branches of a tree in the banks of Jamuna, tired and despondent, when a resplendent Brajabasi appeared before him and asked him for the cause of his sorrow. When Sri Rupa narrated all his woes, and Mahaprabhu's instruction, the Brajababasi took him along to a high spot called Gowa Tila, and told him that each

morning a sacred can come along there, and poured out its milk over a certain spot of its own accord. Saying this, the Brajabasi disappeared, and Sri Rupa lost his senses when he realised the miracle of the Lord's appearance. On regaining consciousness, Sri Rupa called all his associates together, and digging deep at that very spot, subsequently named Yogapith, he discovered a beautiful image of Sri Govinda. Sri Rupa at once sent word of the discovery of the image to Mahaprabhu at Nilachal, who sent his disciple Kashiswar to Vrindaban to help Sri Rupa with the regular worship of Sri Govinda. Knowing of Kashiswar's grief in parting from him, Sri Chaitanya presented him with an image of Sri Krishna found in the Jagnamath temple, informing him that his body was identical with that of the image. So Kashiswar gladly took the image with him, and it is this image that is installed besides Sri Govinda at Vrindaban as Sri Chaitanya.

The story of how Sri Radharani's image came to Vrindaban is as follows. A Brahmin called Brishabhanu (the name of Sri Radha's actual father) used to live in Radhanagar in South India. He was devout worshipper of Sri Radha, whose living image he worshipped daily with great faith.

After Brishabhanu's death, king Pratapaditya, having heard of the fame of Sri Radha's image, came to visit Radhanagar, and at night dreamt that Sri Radha was asking him to place her next to Sri Jagganath at Puri. Pratapaditya carried out these instructions, and the image soon became known as

Sri Lakshmidēvi, and was regularly worshipped at the Jagannath temple.

In due course, the young prince Purushottam Jana had a dream wherein Sri Radha appeared to him and expressed her wish to go to Vrindaban. It was this image that was later installed besides Sri Govinda at Vrindaban.

The original Govinda temple was constructed in about 1590 A. D., and had such a high spire, that a light that used to be let at the top was said to be visible from Delhi, much to the chagrin of emperor Aurangzeb, who ordered its destruction when his troops sacked Vrindaban.

But the temple servants had come to know of this beforehand and had removed the original image to Jaipur, where it is still being worshipped today by the followers of the original Bengali sevaitis installed by Sri Rupa.

Towards the end of his life, Sri Rupa became immersed in the Leelas of Sri Govinda, so much so that he never used to set foot on Govardhan hill, as he looked upon it as part of Sri Krishna's body.

Sri Rupa was rewarded with Sri Gopalji's service in Mathura, during which he was engaged in worshipping Gopalji in the home of Vitalnath, the son of Ballabacharya.

Sri Rupa finally entered into his Maha samadhi in the Sukla Jhulan Dwadasi Tithi of Sravan in 1568 A. D., the day on which Jyotish Ch. Roy (Bhaiji) also breathed his last at Almora in 1937.

Sri Rupa was buried in the courtyard of the Sri Radha Damodar temple at Vrindaban, in the

close proximity where also his nephew Sri Jeeva was later buried.

Sri Rupa will always be remembered as the greatest Acharya Goswami initiated and installed at Vrindaban by Sri Chaitanya to re-establish the ancient glory and pomp of Brajadham as well as to rediscover the Lila kshetra of Sri Govinda and Sri Radha.

The following interesting story about Sri Rupa and Mira Bai is prevalent in Vrindaban. When Sri Rupa was at the height of his glory as head of the Sri Chaitanya sect in Vrindaban, perhaps his ego had reappeared somewhat, so the Lord thought it advisable to reduce it !

When Mira Bai arrived there on self-banishment from the court of Chitore, she sent a communication that she wished to pay her respects to Sri Rupa. The latter replied that it was part of his asceticism not to meet or talk with women any longer.

On having this Mira exclaimed, "Since when has Sri Rupa become a Purush in Vrindaban, where Sri Krishna is residing as the only Purushottam, the rest being all Gopis ?"

On hearing this rebuke, Sri Rupa bowed in acknowledgement of the truth of Mirabai's verdict and it is said that the two met amicably thereafter on an appropriate occasion.

Ma and Ma Alone

3. *Towards Attaining Identity with Ma*

Ma Das

Dissolving the Ego

At a Matri-satsanga at Vrindaban during the Samyam Mahavrata in 1969, a question put to Ma was, "How can the knots of the ego be undone?" And Ma had replied,

"By carrying out the Guru's instructions without arguing. That is not the place to use one's knowledge and intelligence. Here knowledge and intelligence will not do. They are useful up to a stage. They provide you with information. The Shastras have been read, studied and committed to memory. One has acquired knowledge along a particular range. This is but the knowledge of ignorance"¹

What is ignorance other than absence of knowledge of truth which is beyond thought? So long as knowledge is imparted and acquired in words the medium of thought continues, and what is thus communicated and received is naturally through the mind and not directly and being not beyond thought, it is only knowledge of ignorance.

"When even this knowledge leaves one, then only can realization come"¹ says Ma. This is because this knowledge is a flow of thoughts

and the knowledge of the self, which is thought-free, can be gained only when this flow ceases. Here one is reminded of two couplets from the Masnavi, the celebrated masterpiece in Persian of the world renowned Sufi saint Jalauddin Rumi. The couplets in Devanagari scripture :

सत किताबो सत बरक दर नार कुन ।
जोनो दिन रा जानि दिलदार कुन ॥

(Throw into fire hundred books and hundred leaves of books, i.e. destroy all the books you have and direct your life and heart towards the beloved)

and जुस्तजु कुन जुस्तजु कुन जुस्तजु ।
दर दुस्त को के बेह नेस्त ऊ ॥

(Search, search, search. See within yourself, for He is not outside of you).

That is why Ma concludes, "Follow the guru's instructions without arguing. As long as the reason of the individual is in power, how can the knots be undone?"¹

Why not? Because it is through arguments that reason operates and arguments are a flow of words by which views are expressed, accepted or rejected, since all those words come from the mind, they keep one there. To dissolve the ego, one has to go beyond the mind. And as Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj, the famous saint-author of the well known work 'I am that', puts it, "To go beyond the mind, you must be silent and quiet. Peace and silence, silence and peace — this is the way beyond. Stop asking questions."

In this connection, Ma says, "What does entering into one's true being (svarupa) signify? To realize what is : that He, the self-effulgent one is all-pervading, present in all shapes, states of mind and modes of existence. There, speech or words have no place. For, can essential form (svarupa) or formlessness (arupa) be described in any language? He and He alone is".²

So it is hundred percent perfect, loving obedience, born of total silent surrender at the lotus feet of Sri Sadgurudeva (Who is the Lord Himself in human form) with absolute unquestioning faith in his words that can undo the knots of the ego.

It would be relevant to quote here a well-known couplet of Goswami Tulsidasji Maharaj from his Ramacharita Manas. The couplet is :

मातु पिता प्रभु गुरु की वाणी ।
बिनदि विचार करे शुभ जानी ॥

(Accepting the words of one's mother, father, God and guru as auspicious, one should act implicitly in accordance with them without any Vichar i. e. deliberation).

The Right Drishti (Perception)

The correct bhava (inner feeling), which has to be cultivated through abhyasa (constant practice) to proceed successfully to the goal of self knowledge was clearly enunciated by Ma at a *Matri-Satsanga* held in Dec. 1947. The English version of suitable extracts from what was then recorded in Hindi as Ma's words is given below : ³

Ma said, "So long as you keep your mind on worldly things there will be no end to your desire for worldly objectives. When the mind will receive real food, then only will you get peace. When you will get the highest treasure of God-attainment, then only will you secure complete peace."

"Only one Bhagavan alone is everywhere, only He, only He, only He. The only duty of man is to give pure food to the mind...where is our home? Our true home is that of Bhagavan. Who is ours? only Bhagavan is ours.

"Always keep this bhava in your mind that whatever is happening is due to God's will. From now onwards, I shall perform only good actions. Take such a firm decision. This is one thing.

"From the point of view of Reality, however, there is nothing good or bad. But as long as you have deha-atma buddhi (identification with the body in ignorance), till then you should never indulge in any wrong action. Thinking otherwise is only drishti-bhram (deluded perception). Bad actions result in suffering. One's drishti should ever be clean. If you can understand that all this is the Lord's play, then nothing at all is bad.

Question: How to effect a change in our outlook?

Ma: "How to effect the change? By thinking of God. In a bad man and in the sadhu, Bhagavan alone is playing in all. The wrong drishti is wrong. Correct the drishti. The bad is also His form.

"Where the drishti is auspicious (right), there nothing at all is bad. See all forms with *Bhagavat*

bhava. Where the *bhava* is of duality, wrong *drishti* is there. Wrong *drishti* results in suffering. As the *drishti*, so the *srishti* (creation).”

No birth no death

The unreal is illusory—a mere passing appearance like a dream or a snake in the rope. It does not in fact, exist and therefore, for the unreal, there is neither birth nor death. As for the real, there can be no question of birth, as being eternal, it has a permanent existence. So there is neither birth nor death.”

Ma's teachings couched in Bhaiji's language forms the authoritative contents of the widely-known publication 'Sad-Vani'. At one place, it states, “This world may also be likened to a vast ocean. How many myriads of beings are born and die every moment, and where they go when disappearing from our sight is beyond the grasp of human understanding. This constant flux in nature illustrates the fact that, in reality, birth and death do not exist. There is only One Supreme Being that manifests itself in countless forms in numberless modes of life.”⁴

A similar thought is found in the commentary on Verse 12, Chapter 2, of Shree Bhagavad Gita, by one of the extraordinarily blessed saints Sri Jnanadevaji Maharaj.”⁵ The English version of the Verse is :

“It is, indeed, not the case that I, ever before, was not, nor thou, nor these lords of men ; neither is it the case that hereafter, all of us are not going to be,” And the commentary reads :

Commentary “Arjun, verily I say to you further : It is the merest delusion to feel certain that you yourself, myself as well as all the kings whom you see assembled here will live eternally, or would as surely be dissolved into nothingness ; these are utter unrealities. The generative creation and decay are appearances caused by Maya, Brahman (the supreme) assuredly in itself being indestructible and immortal.

“Just tell me whether anything really is born when the wind causes ripples on water. Consider further if any real thing is destroyed when the gust of wind gets calm and the ripples disappear into the original stillness of water.”

“The Mandukya Upanishad, as interpreted by Sri Adi Shankarcharya’s grand guru Sri Gaudapada, in his memorable Karika, asserts conclusively in a verse which appears twice—once in Ch. 3 (Verse 48) and again in Ch. 4 (Verse 71).⁶

English version of the verse

“No jiva—the ego-centric separative creature—is ever born. There does not exist any cause which can produce it as its effect. This is the highest Truth where nothing is ever born.”

Like the proverbial snake and rope is the analogy of the ghost and the post. So Swami Chinmayanandaji says in his commentary on this verse “Having had the vision of the post, the post-wise one will have to decry the delusory agitation of the ghost-seeing fool. Delved in consciousness, revelling in consciousness, living in consciousness, the

great master of every heart (Gaudapada) — reigning the Realm of All — in his vision has no world of objects separate from himself. If, however, one sees plurality and seeks after a cause for it, he shall be seeking (the cause) for the footprints of the birds in the sky.’... Plurality could rise only from some cause ; but nothing exists other than the highest truth ; Therefore, nothing has ever been born.”

Ma is All and All is Ma

The universe is Ma’s Self-revelation, and everyone, in reality, is Ma’s very image, both revealed and unrevealed. Although, according to Her own words, as mentioned above, Ma Herself is the Supreme Reality, she has often preferred the term Bhagavan to refer to that reality. Others have called it God, some, Self, while still others just He. That this Reality is all, and all is that Reality has been brilliantly set forth with amazing wideness including some delightful wit in the following words of Sri Yogi Krishnaprem, the highly talented Englishman who had turned an orthodox Vaishnava — a devoted disciple of the well-known lady saint Yashoda Ma :

“I tell you, all is phantom unless He is seen, who is the only real. See Him and all is His garment ; see Him not and all is the merest phantom, “What is Maya, you ask ?” To see anything whatsoever apart from Him : that is the illusion — the source of sorrow. There are no ‘emanations’, no ‘creations’ — no things at all apart from Him.

All these are so many words which describe deluded ways of seeing. See them and you do not see Him. See Him and you see that all is Him — Nothing has vanished, nothing is lost, nothing is rejected : seeing Him you see that all is Him and He is all.”

“What we call the beauty of the sky, the great spaces of air, the life-giving flow of water, the bright power of fire — all these are Him. See them as separate and you find yourself in the arid desert of scientific nonsense. See Him and they are seen to be ever living gods who form His limbs, eternal as He is eternal.”⁷

Thus Ma and Ma alone — the Uncreated — is all the time the sole eternal entity. She is our Real Self — the One Atma — of everyone, ever-free, immutable and beyond mental realm. The scriptures call it Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). In ignorance of this truth about what we are really, we identify ourselves with the unreal (Changing) waking state of consciousness as body-mind entity, while ignoring the factual significance of the other two states of dream and deep sleep.

But attachment to any aspect of the unreal — a mere passing appearance — is naturally a womb of sorrow, pain and misery, because of its being impermanent. Against this, the ever-present — the eternal, which can never vanish — is peace, bliss and wisdom. A clear mental discrimination between real and unreal results in *vairagya* (renunciation), i. e. absence of any involved interest in anything unreal. The real as a living experience,

then becomes the single aim of the life of the earnest seeker. He knows that except for our own matchless Ma, all else is illusory, including his own name, form and individual personality as a separate concrete entity.

Understanding all this clearly, he joyfully welcomes the dissolution of his false entity — the ego-sense — in the infinite divine bliss of Ma — the One Indivisible Whole. Such is the rare earnest aspirant for union with Ma, and he alone reaches, with Her Grace, the goal of Self-realization.

Ma's special Directives for Aspirants

It would be useful to include here the following highly inspiring words of Ma that are so relevant in the context of the subject of this paper :

1. "In order to advance towards Self-realization, it is absolutely necessary for an aspirant to yearn constantly for his sublime goal. He should practise sadhana regularly, whether he feels in a mood for it or not."⁸

2. "An aspirant should not indulge in useless conversation or gossip, but speak only when it is really necessary, which means that he must be a man of few words."⁹

3. "To criticize people or to feel hostile towards anyone harms oneself and puts obstacles into one's path to the Supreme. If someone does something bad, you should feel nothing but affection & benevolence towards him or her. Think, 'Lord, this is also one of Thy manifestations. The more kindly and friendly you can feel and behave towards everybody,

the more will the way to the One, who is goodness itself, open out.”¹⁰

4. “Take care not to be contented at any stage. Some aspirants have visions, others realizations. Or someone experiences bliss, great happiness and thinks he has himself become God. On the spiritual path, before true realization supervenes, one may get caught in supernatural powers (vibhūti). To become entangled in this kind of thing constitutes absolute.”¹¹

5. “Try and try again to reach the goal you have set before yourself. So long as realization does not come, you must never relax your efforts. Let this be your firm resolve.”¹²

6. “The positive proof that the aspirant is centred in God is that he ceases to hate any person or object, and that good qualities such as love, forgiveness, patience, forbearance go on increasing in him.”¹³

7. “When this change takes place in an aspirant, he will come to see that the One Brahman pervades each and every form, all sects, creeds and religions, just as the same person is addressed by his son as father, by his nephew as uncle, by his wife as husband and by his parents as son.”¹⁴

Love, the crucial factor

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that in the quest for Self-knowledge, Love is the crucial factor. Says Ma, “Whether it pleases you or not, you will have to make the Eternal your constant companion, just like a remedy that has got to be taken.

Without loving God, you will not get anywhere. Remember this at all times.”¹⁵ Again “If you are able to love God really — This is the consummation of all love”.¹⁶

We think we are very clever when our mind actively makes incisive appraisal of people, praising some and condemning others critically. We forget that in all such haughty discrimination, the operator is the ego and the hidden purpose is indirect self-praise. Love resides in a motherly heart. It does not discriminate, it accepts unconditionally. As Bhaiji puts it, “Love never claims, it ever gives ; Love ever suffers, it never resents and never revenges itself.”¹⁷ It is such love which leads to union with the One in all forms.

Swami Vivekananda, ever the loving idol of all India, says in his unique style, “Let nothing stand between God and your love for Him. Love Him, love him, love him, and let the world say what it will ... Love is higher than works, than yoga, than knowledge.”¹⁸ And he insists : “Never ask that foolish question : What good will our love of god do the world ? Let the world go. Love, and ask nothing ; love and look for nothing further. Love and forget all the ‘isms.’ Drink the cup of love and become mad. Say ‘Thine, O Thine for ever O Lord’ and plunge in forgetting all else. The very essence of God’s love ... The highest expression of love is unification.”¹⁹

And so love for our Divine Mother is the way to identification with Her, whose attributes in the peerless words, again of Swamiji, are : “All-

merciful, all-powerful, Omnipresent.” She can show Herself to us in any form at any moment ... A bit of mother, a drop was Krishna, another was Buddha ; another was Christ. The worship of even one spark of mother in our earthly mother leads to greatness. Worship Her if you want love and wisdom.”²⁰

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Ma, We Remember Thee So Much !

A. P. Dikshit, I. A. S. (Rtd)

(Translated from Hindi by Prof. G. D. Shukla)

(Continued from April '86 issue)

Defence Minister Mr. Chavan & Ma

The 1962 invasion of India by China had caused a great upheaval in the country. The entire nation felt uneasy and turned hostile to Mr. Krishna Menon. Even the Prime Minister — Nehru — was not spared. Under the circumstances, Menon had to resign and Y. B. Chavan was given the Defence portfolio. During this critical juncture Mr. Chavan paid a visit to Dehra Dun and expressed a desire to have Sri Sri Ma's darshan. Ma was then at Hardwar in Raja Solan's Baghat House. Sri Chavan wanted to keep this visit a secret. It was a difficult affair because whenever a VIP visits, newspapermen hover around him all the time. Accordingly, I went to Hardwar a day earlier to see Ma and after doing *pranam* to her apprised her of the reason of my visit. Ma gave her consent to receive Mr. Chavan.

Next day the Minister left for Hardwar. I was in attendance on him. The District Magistrate of Saharanpur and the Superintendent of Police

(Hardwar comes under Saharanpur district) were on duty at the Dam Inspection House to receive the Minister. Mr. Pradhan, IAS the Minister's special assistant and his wife were also in the retinue, though he had come in his own private car from Delhi.

As already arranged Mr. Chavan got into Mr. Pradhan's car. The D.M. and the S.P. of Saharanpur gestured to me to enquire where he was going as the security of the Minister was their responsibility. Their anxiety was natural. I told them not to worry.

Without any prior official bandobust we made for Ma's place. Pradhan was at the steering wheel and I and my wife sat alongside of him. The Minister, his wife and Mrs. Pradhan were on the back seat. We proceeded through the crowd on the roads like ordinary people. When we reached Baghat House we found that a recitation of Sri Bhagavat was going on in the original Sanskrit without any commentary.

There were only a few people in the hall, we also took our seat there. Nobody knew who was this man in a Gandhi cap. The entire atmosphere was quiet and restful. Ma was in her room upstairs. I came out and told Panu Dada that Mr. Chavan had arrived. Word was sent to Ma. Ma had arranged to receive Mr. Chavan in the verandah of the Shiva temple. So we went there. Mr. Chavan and his wife bowed before Ma with great devotion and humility. Mr. Pradhan, his wife and we followed the suit. Mats had been

laid out on the floor for our use and we took our respective places there.

Taking a cue from Ma, Pushpaji started singing a bhajan in a sweet and entrancing tune. For a while we felt divine happiness, enveloped as we were by Ma's blessings. The feeling that we were at the famous pilgrim centre of Hardwar which is washed and sanctified by the sacred stream of the Ganga gushing forth from the vastnesses of Himalayas and that we were in close proximity with the universal Mother enhanced our joy several times over. Ma herself was sitting in a completely serene and quiet state. We imbibed the charm and glory of that scene to our heart's content. Such a happiness and such a peace were just beyond our reach elsewhere and at other times.

Pushpaji concluded the bhajan with Pranav Mantra. Perhaps, it was done at Ma's instance. Mr. Chavan asked Ma for permission to leave. She gave it. Chavan folded his hands and said, "Ma ! I have been given the charge of the Defence Ministry at a critical time. Kindly bless that all may be well." Ma looked at Mr. Chavan affectionately, and chanted, "Narayan ! Narayan !! Narayan !!!" We bowed before Ma and left for the Dam Inspection Bungalow.

Construction of my residence 'Anand Bhawan'

In 1964 some highly placed officers decided to buy land for building houses for themselves in Dehra Dun. In this connection I also bought an acre of land in village Dharampur situated in Dalan-

wala area. It is now known as Teg Bahadur Road.

The members of my family were eager to have this land sanctified by the touch of Ma's feet at the time of the laying of the foundation of the house.

Accordingly a request was made to Ma which she graciously accepted. On the appointed day and time we went to Kishenpur Ashram to bring Ma. Ma was waiting for us. It was all the more fortunate that Hari Baba, Didi, Prakashanandji, some brahmacharinis who were residing then at the Ashram and several other ladies and gentlemen also came.

A shamiana was erected for the Pooja associated with the foundation laying ceremony. A learned Pandit, himself a devotee of Ma, conducted the Pooja. Right in front of the Pooja site a seat was arranged for Ma. Others of the party were accommodated on the lawn below. The ceremony of installing the *Kalash* and invoking the presence of the gods had already been gone through. The chanting of the Mantras, singing of bhajans and kirtan had created the same atmosphere which is found in the Ashram in the presence of Ma. How delightful, how attractive this atmosphere becomes is a matter to be just felt and beyond words. All devotees of Ma have experienced this according to their capacity and ability to respond to it. I myself was so much overpowered by feelings that I had become insensitive to everything else. As a matter of fact, other members of the family were also in

a similar state. What can be more joy giving, more blissful than the realization that the Universal Mother, Durga, Narayani, Vishwa Swarupa was herself present on this occasion at the house of a mere householder ! How many persons can boast of such good fortune ? We were puffed up with joy — overpuffed.

Shastriji was instructing me to go through the various formalities of the Pooja as enjoined by the Shastras. When it was over, I got up and proceeded towards Ma to do *sashtang pranam* to her. Ma understood my inner feelings but signed to me to stop. I was startled and dumb founded. I could not make out what Ma wanted. Ma was watching the entire proceedings from her seat, and right opposite her was the Pooja *Kalash*. She asked me to do *pranam* to that seat of the Gods before going to her. I realised my mistake. Although Ma herself is a manifestation of the Divine, an incarnation of Brahma yet in her human form she never oversteps her limitations. Besides this, the gods who come in their invisible form at invocation and cannot be seen by us, and sit in and around the *kalash* were very much present for Ma. She wanted that first obeisance should be made to them. I realised my mistake and did *sashtang pranam* to them and thereafter to Ma.

The programme of bhajan and kirtan continued for long, and divine joy rained as it were from heaven on that spot where the foundation laying ceremony was performed. The Sadhus, Brahmacharis and the Brahmacharinis who came along-

with Ma were sitting in their respective places. Who knows what gods and goddesses had come in their shape on that occasion ?

Ma directed us to place a copy of the Gita and other religious books below the foundation and laid the foundation stone of the house with her sacred, tender hands. The sky resounded with the blowing of the conches and the beating of the musical plates.

Gradually the whole ceremony came to an end and the foundation of our residence in Dehra Dun was laid by the sacred hands of Ma. This part of the land was sanctified by the touch of her feet and we felt blessed.

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Griha Pravesh (House Worning) at 'Anand Bhawan'

The foundation of the house was got ready in the summer of 1964 but work was stopped during the rainy season as it rains very heavily in Dehra Dun. Work was resumed after the rains and by the summer of 1965 the house was ready.

By sheer good luck Ma was at Dehra Dun then. Naturally, therefore, we felt that if Ma agrees to grace the Griha-Pravesh ceremony by her presence and sanctify the house by the touch of her feet, it will be a fitting conclusion of the ceremony. Accordingly, we went to the Ashram at Kishenpur and made the request to Ma. She agreed.

I should like to make it clear that Ma does not ordinarily agree to such requests. It all depends upon her 'kheyal'. Many a persons know that if this *Kheyal* does not occur to Ma she remains un-

moved. Nobody is great or small in the eyes of Ma. Sometimes she would go to the house of a very lowly, helpless person and that too uninvited and eats with relish the most ordinary and homely fruit (like the plums offered to Sri Ram by Sabari) given to her. At other times she would refuse the invitation of the richest Rajah or the highest official or even the head of a great monastery. The most learned men too have experienced such refusals. Ma is under no bonds of a worldly nature. Hence, it is a matter of sheer good fortune if Ma would give her consent to such requests. Whatever the reason behind her actions, it is only known to her. We can only guess. Possibly, it is the result of the past accumulated merits of the person making the request or just her grace and compassion which she confers without any thought of self interest.

At the time appointed we alongwith Gopal, went to the Ashram. Waves of joy were rising sky high in the ocean of our hearts.

Ma was found ready. So I took her with me. Others of the Ashram followed in other cars.

The car with Ma in it pulled up in front of the newly constructed house. The house was named after Ma.

According to the rules then prevalent one house could be built in one acre of land. An annexe was yet to be constructed. A year before it was a deserted piece of land. Today by the grace of Ma a charming Anand Bhawan is standing there, and Ma herself was present to perform its Griha Pravesh (house worning) ceremony.

To the accompaniment of the blowing of the conches and the beating of the musical instruments Ma entered into Anand Bhawan and sat down on her sit in the dining room. Others sat down on the floor. The *pooja* of the gods started under the supervision of a learned Samvedi Pandit. We were overwhelmed with joy. Everything went on according to a pre-planned programme in the presence of the holy Mother. It seemed as if all the sanctity of the world, enthusiasm and joy had squeezed themselves in that spot at the moment.

An incident is worth recording at this place. It relates to the period of the construction of the house. A scaffolding was erected for the labourers to climb to the roof. One day unexpectedly a world famous Yogiraj, namely, Devraha Baba came to Dehra Dun. First he called at the Collector's residence where I used to live and thereafter at this Bhawan. As soon as he reached there he climbed up the scaffolding mentioned above. Nobody knows the age of the Yogiraj. Some say he is 300 years old. Old but sturdy, with matted locks on his head and an impressive beard, he looks like Bhola Nath. He does not go to the house of the householders in the city. But this time he broke his rule. From the roof he looked downwards and then spoke to an elderly Mahatma who was standing below, "Vaishnavdas, this kothi under construction is my own." Saying this he looked all around and climbed down.

The inauguration of the Bhawan by Ma and the visit paid by Devraha Baba are not to be forgotten

events. Both shall live down the memory lane for ever.

After the pooja of the gods Ma's *arati* was performed. The words of the *arati* song "Om Jai Jagdish Hare" are still resounding in this Bhawan.

There is no doubt that any place which has been visited by Ma, which has received the touch of her feet and which has been thus sanctified is just blessed.

It was time for Ma to go back and the Arati song concluded. Thereafter began an uninterrupted recitation of the 'Ramayan.' It was finished the next day.

The construction of the annexe was taken in hands afterwards and above the stairs a small area was set apart for Ma. It was my wish that sometime or the other I shall bring Ma there, but this wish could not be fulfilled. Now there is a Pooja room, with a photograph of Ma installed there. It is there that I sit for an hour and a half of worship and meditation which is a source of support for the rest of my life in this world and hereafter. The grace of Ma raineth down over the whole Bhawan. The vessel of my life is overflowing with that grace. According to the directive given by Ma at Vindhyachal I devote an hour for the study of scriptures and I receive great strength from the words of Ma. I can hardly believe that an ignorant man like me can acquire so much wisdom.

Where again shall I find such a holy Mother ?

Ma, I remember you so much !

(To be continued)

The Key to Self-knowledge

Dr. K. M. P. Mohamed Cassim, Ph. D., CEYLON.

We are all aspiring for happiness. The question is whether it can at all be attained by the mind. The mind is apt to mistake mere pleasurable sensations for happiness. And yet we find from experience that although gratified desire produces such sensations they only intensify the desire for further similar sensations. The most important fact that we must understand is that we cannot have real freedom by indulging in emotional excitements. If we observe our minds we will find that innumerable desires rush in, in confused manner. The best method to eliminate the contradictory emotions is to watch the activities of our minds with meditative awareness. We must also understand our mental reactions and psychological conflicts all the time, by the simple method of self-observation. Further, to watch slowly the inflowing breath brings not only harmonization of mind, but also vitality and strength to our nervous system which keep our physical bodies healthy, pure and clean.

The process of divine healing is purely a spontaneous act which takes place quietly and sweetly when we are in deep silent meditation in tune with the Cosmic Consciousness of Divinity. The healing aspect of prayer can be conceived not by mere intellectual ability, but through the communion with that Supreme Power which operates full of

spiritual magnetism. The physical light that we see through our eyes can be defined, but the Divine Illumination which we intuitively perceive while we are in deep contemplation could not be described. By turning our minds towards the Divine Light we can actually transform and spiritualize the material aspects of life. To dwell in the abode of meditation is the only ladder that will lead to liberation and happiness.

The fundamental problem is that we cannot run away from our own mind which is the real culprit. The mind can be understood and unconscious desires can be exposed only when we are confronted with tempting circumstances. At this juncture an aspirant must understand his reactions by watching the sensational activities of the mind silently. This quiet passive concentrated awareness is meditation and this detached observation provides the spiritual lift to go beyond the mind. Worldly outward attraction cannot touch our minds if we constantly adopt the method of self-observation. The disturbing elements of distracted thoughts are completely negated by the process of self-knowledge which means our mind is always magnetized through spiritual divine vibration. It is very important to ask ourselves why our mind is so much distracted. The distraction is due to the contact of sensations that the physical world provides. The inter-action of matter and mind is the main cause for the conflict and the mind is much excited by the pleasure that it derives in its relationship with the material world. The mind is always

attracted toward outward sensations because the mind is extremely mechanical in following the habitual excitements which produce in the end dissatisfaction. To contact Reality the mind must be still and in this process of silencing the mind alone we can attain happiness.

It is very necessary that we should have the ability to discriminate between the real and the unreal. We must also have the spirit of renunciation which does not mean dissociation from people and things. Asceticism is really an attitude that holds that everything is permeated by the Godhead. When human energy goes out into different directions in the form of thirst for gratifications, it inevitably leads to frustration and sorrow. When life is viewed merely from biological stance it is only a story of birth, disease, old age and death. The biological and conditioned man is the victim of bondage and ignorance when he is not enlightened. Needless to say, that craving is the failure of the mental state to rest on the absolute Reality owing to the ignorance brought on by psychological impressions due to attachment. Attachment is always the auto-defensive reflex of an unconscious fear. Any attitude of dependence is an obstacle to the attainment of Absolute. Self-contemplation is essentially divergent by turning inward away from the flux of phenomena by putting aside all worldly desires. The necessity of observing our mind all the time is strongly stressed because of the fact that by this self-awareness alone can we unfold the entire layers of our mental make-up and thus pave

the way for the attainment of transcendental state which is the key to open the treasure of SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

The secret of pure life consists in constantly discovering the inner workings of the mind and this state of self-observation is possible by keeping our minds clean without desires. The main defect in man is his inability to implement his decision of spiritual importance in his day-to-day affairs. The mind is the chief cause for all worries and tribulations as the tendency of the mind is to chase the sensual objects for its satisfaction and then after enjoyment the very same mind will put contradictory questions and opposite suggestions. Man is leading a horrible and terrible life, not due to lack of understanding, but because he is unable to get away from worldly temptations. The possibility and the utter necessity to unfold the life in totality comes only when we are confronted with various problems and sufferings. During this period of spiritual test, our task is to maintain the stability of mental equilibrium.

The main cause for the contamination of one's heart is not only the utter ignorance of spiritual living, but also the wrong attitude of clinging to carnal pleasures. One should not forget the important point that just as food is indispensable for keeping the body healthy and fit, in a similar manner meditation is also essential for the purity of the soul. It is to be realized that the physical body by itself has no validity or utility without the co-operation and co-ordination of the soul energy.

Needless to say, the nature of the physical body is such that it deteriorates in course of time but we must keep our minds absolutely clean and calm. Through meditation alone we can purify our minds. When our physical bodies and mind are purified by constant meditation, then they become good and useful instruments to express the divine energy. The beauty of mental health consists in liberating our minds from the clutches of emotional complications. To live in the state of higher meditation is really a great service to humanity because of the fact that this state emanates the sweetness of serenity and spiritual magnetism for the good of all.

By meeting people who are also interested in the pursuit of Reality, we can develop and broaden our knowledge in the path of self-realization. The magnetic vibration one feels in the presence of an advanced soul is very inspiring and helpful to merge deeply into meditation. The secrets of inner spiritual mysteries are revealed to us in contemplation and that wisdom will guide us all. When one is in deep meditation, one is extremely sensitive to external influences, but the mind is not distracted by the attraction of sensual pressure because of the spiritual magnetism one draws while one is in meditation. Any movement from outside has not the power to disturb the person who is well attuned in meditation. Life is such that we are unable to predict anything definitely. But every major change in life is for good and one has nothing to worry or bother mentally. A sad state of affairs is that many people give top priority in

the matter of providing all their bodily requirements, but neglect completely the needs of the soul and spiritual comforts.

In deep sleep we are aware of some inner urges, but we have no control over them because we have not properly penetrated into the working of our unconscious minds. It is very essential to observe the emotional modes of our minds if we want to master the devil of deception. It is a tedious task to observe our mental activities during sleep because that state of unconsciousness suggests its incomplete impressions as a dream. The psychological hindrance is to realize the dream, but we normally identify ourselves as actors and thus we are affected by the consequences of the dream. The simple truth is that the stability of mental alertness is lost while we experience the dream and in which state the dreamer is unable to observe his thoughts correctly without deception. Alertness of mind with sensitiveness opens the avenue to continue further in the discovery of unconsciousness.

Another problem which we are facing is attraction and repulsion. As we are unable to free ourselves from this dualistic complex which distracts us, we must choicelessly observe our minds in the mirror of relationship. Let us realize the fact that the most useful lesson one can learn by undergoing bitter experiences repeatedly in life is that nothing in the world can produce real happiness except one's own mind which is purified through meditation.

Nachiketa's crucial question to Yamaraja and its answer.

Nirmal Chandra Ghosh

Long long ago, say about five to six thousand years back, there lived a Brahmana called Uddalaka, son of Vajashrava, in Aryavarta, Northern India, the country where the Aryans lived. He performed a sacrifice (Yajna) called Vishwajit and gave away all his belongings. He had a son named Nachiketa. When the presents to the invited Brahmanas were being brought, the boy saw that his father was giving very old, useless and milkless cows as gifts to the Brahmanas. Nachiketa was very righteous. He was overwhelmed with veneration. He thought that his father by making such gifts would not get any benefit from his sacrifice but would rather after death go to those regions where unhappiness prevailed. In order to draw his father's attention and prevent him from making such gifts, Nachiketa asked Uddalaka, "Father! To whom are you giving me, as you are to give all your belongings in this sacred sacrifice, and I am also yours?" Uddalaka did not answer. Twice and thrice the boy repeated the question. Uddalaka became angry and said, "I offer you to Yama".*

* The god of death, whose messengers bring the souls of the dead after death to him, and who sends them to earth, heaven or hell or other regions by judging their action, good or bad or mixed. He is also called Dharmaraja or Mrityu (Death).

In order to make his father's utterance true Nachiketa went to Yamaraja's palace called Samyamani and found that Yamaraja was not there. He waited there for three days without any food or drink. After three days Yamaraja came and felt very sorry to know that the Brahmana boy Nachiketa had been waiting for him without any food and drink for the last three days. He served him with water, food and drink, and asked him to take three boons from him, one for each night he stayed in his palace without food. At first Nachiketa asked for two boons and those were granted by Yamaraja. Then Yamaraja asked Nachiketa to tell what boon he wanted as the third.

Nachiketa said,

“येयं प्रेते विचिकित्सा मनुष्ये ऽ स्तीत्येके नायमस्तीति चैके ।

एतद्विद्या मनुशिष्टं स्त्वयाऽहं वराणामेष वरस्तृतीयः ॥”

“In respect of a dead person there is a doubt. Some people say that his soul * exists and does not die, while others say that nothing exists. Being instructed by you I would know the correct position. This is the third boon I ask.”

Yamaraja heard the very intricate question put to him by Nachiketa for a decisive answer, which he was unwilling to give thinking that the boy was still young and not yet fit to be a recipient of knowledge about the soul. So he tried to dissuade Nachiketa from asking for this boon and get another instead, which was very alluring from the material point of view. He said to Nachiketa,

* Atma (आत्मा).

“Even the gods in the days of yore entertained doubts about the existence of the soul, which being very subtle is difficult to know and understand. You should not therefore press me for this boon, rather ask for a boon which will give you very long life, sons and grandsons living for centuries, many cattle, horses, elephants, chariots, gold, wealth and riches, a vast territory over which to rule, beautiful sweet singing dancing women and girls, who will entertain you with dance, music and melodious songs.”

Nachiketa could not be allured by the hopes and prospects of great material gains which mortals could never get. He stuck to his point and said to Yamaraja,

“श्वोभावा मर्त्यस्य यदन्तर्कं तत्सवेन्द्रियाणां जरयन्ति तेजः ।

अपि सर्वं जीवितमल्पेव तवैव वाहास्तव नृत्ययीते ॥

यस्मिन्निदं विचिकित्सन्ति मृत्यो यत्साम्पराये महति ब्रूहि नस्तव ।

योऽयं वरो गूढं मनुप्रविष्टो नान्यं तस्मान्नचिकेतो वृणीते ॥

“The immense material gains and enjoyments that you want me to ask for are all transitory and would not last for ever. They waste away the vigour and energy of all senses, and life, however long it may be, is very short compared to infinite time, and is bound to end one day. Let the chariots, dances and songs all be with you. So kindly tell me that wonderful thing about which people entertain doubts as this is very subtle and difficult to know and understand. Nachiketa does not want any other boon.”

Yamaraja was very pleased to hear Nachiketa:

He appreciated his intelligence, keen interest for knowing the truth, and above all, his power of renunciation. He thought him to be fit for receiving the knowledge of the soul. He said to Nachiketa, "In this world there are two types of men. One type pursue worldly gains, which are very pleasing at the beginning, do not last long but lead to miseries. Another type seek after that which is really beneficial and lasts for ever. The former type of people are short sighted and ignorant. They get cut off from the real and perpetual gain of human life, while the latter, who are really wise, achieve the real objective of human life, viz., perpetual peace, happiness and freedom from all bondages.* Nachiketa, you are very wise. You have got the right power of reasoning to discriminate between the real and unreal and therefore you have discarded the immense material gains that I offered to you. I would therefore enlighten you about the knowledge of the soul. Many do not get the chance of hearing about the soul. Moreover one cannot acquire this knowledge by hearing only.

The expounder of this knowledge is a wonderful man, so the recipient of this knowledge, and wonderful also, is he, who knows about this soul by being instructed by a wonderful instructor. The wise concentrating the mind and meditating on the mysterious, all-pervading and immortal soul, dwelling in everybody's heart, rise above the temporary joys and sorrows of worldly life. After

* शान्ति, आनन्द, मुक्ति ।

listening to the discourse on the soul, assimilating it and discerning the supreme soul from the unreal and transitory you will be delighted and you will derive infinite and everlasting benefit and joy.”

Listening to Yamaraja, Nachiketa became very eager to know about the soul and again requested Yamaraja to tell him about that very wonderful soul, which is beyond virtue and vice, beyond the three ‘kalas’, i.e. the past, present and future, and different from cause and effect.

Yamaraja then began his discourse. He said,

“सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति तपाँ सि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति ।
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण ब्रूवीभ्योमित्यतत् ॥
एतद्वये वाक्षरं ब्रह्म एतद्वये वाक्षरं परम् ।
एतद्वये वाक्षरं ज्ञात्वा यो यदिच्छन्ति तस्य तत् ॥
एतदालम्बनं श्रेष्ठमेतदालम्बनं परम् ।
एतदालम्बनं ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्मलोके महीयते ॥

“All the Vedas proclaim again and again about the soul, all the austerities lead to the knowledge about the soul, and the celibacies and the penances observed by the aspirants are for acquiring this divine knowledge of the soul. In short, I tell you, the soul, the knowledge about whom, is the supreme goal of man, is called ‘Om’. ‘Om’ is written by the letter or symbol ॐ. This letter is supreme. This letter is Brahman. The supreme is called Brahman by the followers of the path of reasoning, Atma (soul) or Paramatma (supreme soul) by the Yogis and Bhagavan (God) by the followers of the path of devotion. The following verses from Shri-

madbhagavata (1st. skanda, 2nd. chap., verse II) may be noted.

“वदन्ति तत् त्वविदस्तत्त्वं यजज्ञानम् द्वयम् ।

ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्दते ॥

(The knower of Truth tell that Truth is the supreme knowledge without a second and is expressed by different words, viz., Brahman (the Absolute), Paramatma (Supreme soul) and Bhagavan (God).

By knowing through meditation of this letter and repetition of the sound ‘Om’ one achieves whatever one wants. The method of realising the supreme by meditating on ‘Om’ is the best method, the final method, and by following this method one is glorified in the region of Brahman.

The soul, embodiment of knowledge, is not born, does not die, did not originate from anything and is not the originator of anything. The soul is eternal, permanent and primeval, and not slain when the body is slain. If one thinks that he can kill the soul and if one thinks that the soul kills, then both are ignorant and wrong. The soul cannot be killed and does not kill. The soul is subtler than the subtle, grater than the great, and due to His grace can be realised by a desireless conscientious person having serenity of mind, keen intellect, strong faith and leading a pure life. The soul is within the heart* of every being. While sitting, the soul travels far and wide, while sleeping He goes everywhere. The Glorious remains in the body as

* It is not the physiological heart. In Sanskrit it is called Hriday (हृदय). It is below the neck and vertically above the

permanent in the impermanent. The wise meditating on Him and knowing Him never grieve. The soul cannot be realised by studying and by talking about or through intellect or by much hearing about Him. Only he alone can know the soul, whom He favours and to him He reveals His real nature. One who has not desisted from doing bad deeds, who has not controlled his senses, not concentrated his mind and is not free from anxiety can never know the soul even through keen intellect.

The knowers of the Supreme soul say that in the cavity of the heart within the human body, which one gets as a result of good deeds after many births, there are two, one is Atma (the soul)* and another is Jeevatma (Individual soul).** They are different, like light and shade. The former is free from worldliness, but the latter is tied in worldliness***.

naval at a distance equivalent to about twelve times the thickness of the finger of a man when he stands erect. It is like the bud of a lotus hanging downward.

अधो निष्ठ्या वितस्तान्तु नाभ्योमुपरि तिष्ठति ।

हृदयं तद्विजानीयाद्वि श्यस्यायतनं महत् ॥

सन्ततं शिलाभिस्तु लम्बतयाको शसन्निभम् ।

अस्यान्ते सुषिरं सुवष्मं तस्मिन् सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

Narayanasuktam, Taittiriya Aranyaka 10.11-12.

Verses 7-8.

* Also called Paramatma or the Supreme soul.

** Jeevatma (जीव × आत्मा = जीवत्मा). Jeeva means animal or creature and Atma denotes soul. Jeevatma is sometimes called Atma also. The sense in which the word is being used is to be understood from the context.

*** The latter becomes free from worldliness (विषयस्तक्ति संसारासाक्त) by knowing the former by acquiring the knowledge of the soul i.e., self-knowledge.

O ! Nachiketa, know the body as a chariot, the Individual soul as its master, the intellect as the charioteer, the mind as the bridle, the senses as the horses, and the worldly objects as the grazing ground. The Individual associated with the body, senses, mind and intellect is the enjoyer.

A man, who is not conscientious and whose intellect cannot discern between right and wrong, good and evil, real and unreal, cannot control the mind and make it pure. As a result the senses of that man cannot be controlled and like untamed bad horses, which go amuck and carry the chariot out of the way in the wilderness without reaching the destination, the uncontrolled senses of that man take him towards transitory enjoyment of worldly things, away from the real gain and goal of human life. Such a man cannot reach the Supreme Goal i.e., attainment of the knowledge of the soul, but undergo repeated birth and death.

A man, who is conscientious and whose intellect discriminates between right and wrong, good and evil, real and unreal, can control the mind and make it pure. With such a mind the senses can be controlled and like tamed good horses taking the chariot towards the destination without going astray for grazing in the field, the senses of the man enable him to reach the Supreme Goal and get free from repeated death and birth.

The worldly objects are superior to the senses, the mind is superior to the worldly objects, intellect is superior to the mind, and the great Jeevatma is superior to the intellect, the Illusory Power of

God is more powerful than the great Jeevatma and the Purusha is more powerful than the Illusory Power.* Nothing is more powerful than Purusha.** Beyond Purusha there is nothing. He is the final and supreme goal and the highest attainment. Purusha is the most secret. He does not reveal Himself to all. Only through very sharp and keen intellect and purified mind may He be realised by those who understand very subtle subjects due to the grace of God (Purusha)."

Yamaraja now tells about the process for the realisation of the soul by a conscientious man with keen and discriminating intellect.

"In order to realise the supreme soul the wise man should first control and purify the mind and refrain from allowing his senses to run after worldly objects and then merge them into the mind, so that the mind does not think of worldly objects. Then he should merge the mind in the intellect, so that the restlessness of the mind vanishes. Then the intellect should be completely concentrated on the thought for realisation of the soul, and finally that thought also should be merged in the supreme soul.†

* This Illusory Power of God is called Vaishnavi Shakti, Vishnumaya or Adya Shakti or the Goddess Mahamaya. She is inseparable from Brahman. It is also said that unless she gives way no one can realise Brahman.

** Purusha here means God, Brahman or Supreme soul.

† The last stage of the process is difficult to understand and perform without the grace of God and practical instruction from the preceptor (guru). The successful one goes in trance

One gets free from the jaws of death by knowing the supreme, who is soundless, touchless, colourless, undiminishing, tasteless, odourless, eternal, without beginning and end, and which is superior to Jeevatma. He becomes immortal after leaving his mortal body and enjoys infinite bliss, happiness and freedom from all bondages.”

“Arise and awake, approach the wise and get enlightened about the knowledge of the soul. The wise describe that the path for realisation of the soul is like a sharpened razor’s edge, which is difficult to tread on.”

The intelligent one is glorified in the region of Brahman by narrating and hearing about this ancient episode said to Nachiketa by Yamaraja.

If any one, after purification gets this greatest mystic episode recited with explanation, to a congregation of Brahmanas, or (during the performance of the funeral ceremonies for a departed soul) to the Brahmanas invited for the feast, then that yields eternal result†.

and merges in infinite bliss and joy. This state is called ‘samadhi’. He becomes जीवमुक्त (Jeevanmukta, i.e. free from all worldly bondages even when alive). Sometimes such a person does not regain his outer consciousness. The soul leaves the body and does not come back. The person’s worldly life ends. He becomes विदेह मुक्त (Videhamukta, i.e., completely free from all bondages, even the bondage of the body).

† From Kathopanishad Part I.

Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj's Birth Centenary Celebrations.

A memorable seminar was held on the 17th & 18th Nov. at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture under the auspices of Sahitya Akademi acting in close collaboration with the authorities of the Institute of Culture.

Sri Jagadish Pal and Dr. Indranath Chaudhuri the Secretary of the Sahitya Akademi were the main inspirations behind the very successful seminar at which many eminent scholars spoke from their profound knowledge.

The dates chosen were immediately following the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha's Samyam Saptaha celebration at Kankhal and therefore only a sprinkling of Matajis's devotees left behind in Calcutta could attend.

Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj was born in 1886 and died at the Shree Shree Anandamayee Ashram at Varanasi on Sree Panchami day in 1976, after spending the last 7 years of his life at the Ashram as directed by Ma.

He was one of the greatest Savants and philosophers produced by India in recent times, and the devoted band of his disciples, accociates and admirers honoured him by paying a most fitting tribute to his memory during the seminar.

The opening speeches at the Vivekananda Hall of the Institute lasted from 5 p.m. to 6-30 p.m. on the 17th Nov. The proceedings, all in English, commenced with a deeply moving sonorous invocation in Sanskrit by Dr. Govinda Gopal Mukherjee, followed by an interesting life sketch of Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj by Dr. Indranath Chaudhury.

Swami Lokeswarananda spoke with deep feeling and learning on Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj's achievements although he confessed he had unfortunately never met him in his life in spite of being in Varanasi simultaneously from time to time.

Dr. Pandurang Rao of Andhra admirably filled the breach created by the last minute inability of Prof. Vidya Niwas Misra to attend due to ill health, and delivered the key-note address. Dr. Ramaranjan Mukherjee, Vice-Chancellor of Rabindra Bharati summed up the proceedings with thanks giving address.

The working session commenced at 10 a.m. under the chairmanship of Dr. Margaret Chatterjee of Delhi University.

Dr. Sukumar Bhattacharya traced the progress of the various Darshan Shastras in India from the Vedic ages to the Saita-Agam Philosophy of Abhinava Gupta of Kashmir in the 10th Century, in pointing out its influence on Pt. Gopinath Kaviraj's Aesthetic theories.

Then Dr. K. Krishnamoorthy continued with a dissertation on studies in Aesthetic theory during the post Abhivasa Gupta period.

Prof. Bishnupada Bhattacharya spoke ably on the Vaishnav Aesthetic theory, particularly in Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings and Sri Rupa Goswami's writings.

The afternoon session was presided over by Dr. Gourinath Shastri, and here Prof. Asok Chatterjee (Shastri) spoke very learnedly on the Akhand Mahayoga philosophy advocated by Pt. Gopinath Kaviraj — vis-a-vis the more orthodox systems of philosophy.

Prof. K. V. Sharma from Adyan also spoke on the innovations preached by Pandit Gopinath on practical religion and Dr. Govinda Gopal Mukherjee spoke at length from his first hand experiences, sitting at the feet of his Guru at Varanasi over several years, illustrating the wonderful creative mind of Panditji whereby he expounded new theories of philosophical research while speaking on any subject with deep learning to anybody who approached him for elucidation.

Finally, Dr. Gourinath Shastri summed up the proceedings throwing more light on Pt. Gopinath Kaviraj's doctrines as he also had been long associated with the Pandit during his long tenure of office at the Varanasi Sanskrit College.

We congratulate Sri Jagadish Pal, Dr. Indranath Choudhuri, and the organisers of the Ramakrishna Institute of Culture for presenting to the public of Calcutta under admirable surroundings such a fruitful seminar on the life and teachings of one of the most eminent scholar and philosophical thinker born in India in recent times.

An Appeal from Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha

This is a fervent and urgent appeal to all those who have come in contact with Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma, and particularly those overseas readers who have so far not contributed with articles for "Ananda Varta."

It is now our earnest wish to bring out another voluminous souvenir called "Ma as seen in our life" recording the unique experiences of all those devotees who have had contact with HER or have been associated with HER during HER long span of life of 86 years so rich with Lilas which were manifested at every moment of HER mortal existence.

Your language is not important, so long as there are no exaggerations and the articles represent your own true experiences as understood by you, or as revealed to you by Ma.

It is suggested that you may include all events connected with how you were brought within Ma's orbit, how you came in contact personally with Ma and what were your experiences as manifested to you or those near you to the best of your knowledge. Your articles may kindly be sent as soon as possible to :

The General Secretary,
Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society,
Matri-Mandir,
57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road,
Calcutta-700 019. Phone : 471993

Ashram News

Kankhal

As in previous years, this year too due to Shree Ma's Kripa, Durga Puja, Lakshmi Puja, Kali Puja and Annakut were performed very successfully. Many devotees from distant places came and participated with great joy at these festivities. Satisfactory arrangements were made for Kirtan, songs, reading of Shastras, and prayers, Arati and offerings and distribution of Bhog.

On the day of Maha Navami, nine Kumaris were worshipped with clothes, ornaments and offering of food. On the day of the full moon for Lakshmi Puja, as there was a lunar eclipse, Sri Sri Lakshmi Puja was performed in the evening, followed by Satyanarain Puja etc., and after the partaking of prasad, from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. there was Kirtan, Japa, Dhyana etc. At the end of the eclipse, bathing in the Ganga was completed.

The 37th Samyam Saptaha Mahavrata was held from the 9th to the 16th November, i.e. from Gopastami to Ras Purnima, in strict accordance with Ma's instructions.

Over 200 Vratees assembled at Shree Ma's Holy Samadhi from distant corners of the country for the successful performance of this Mahavrata. The wise and learned Mahatmas and Mahamandaleshwaras who used to congregate at Ma's feet in the old days, all gathered together and regaled the audience

with their knowledgeable talks so as to encourage the Vratees in their Sadhana. On the final night after the midnight meditation, the Ranchi devotees together with Chhabi Banerjee staged a musical play called Matri Lila. The function concluded with pranams of the entire assembly at Sri Ma's Samadhi. That very evening there was adhivas of a Nam Yagna which took place from sunrise to sunset the next day, and concluded in the presence of Mahantaji after Bhog, Puja and Nagar Sankirtan.

On the 13th and 14th Nov. at the General Meeting of the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, several matters were discussed.

Delhi

On Sunday the 31st Aug. in order to show veneration and respect to the departed soul of an Ashram inmate Bhupen Choudhuri, a special Nam Kirtan was held from sunrise to sunset. The late Bhupenda was very popular and served the Ashram for a long time, hence many joined in this Kirtan. Special arrangements had been made to feed Sadhus and Brahmins on the occasion.

On the 23rd Sept. there was a special reading of Hanuman Chalisha at which a large number of devotees gathered. Puja was performed to 8 Kumaris, one Batuka, and a married lady, and thereafter a Yagna was performed.

This year Durga Puja was celebrated on the Ghata, and a special Puja was performed on Mahastami day. Over 300 devotees assembled for this Puja and were treated to prasad.

On the 1st and 2nd Nov. special arrangements were made to celebrate Kali Puja and Annakut. Brahmacharis and Brahmacharis from Dehra Dun and Kankhal participated in making the celebrations a success. In company with Delhi devotees Chhabi Banerjee regaled the assembly with inspiring Shyama Sangeet. At 3 a.m. after the end of the Puja the entire congregation of about 300 devotees sat down to partake of prasad.

The next day Annakut was celebrated with pomp and ceremony. In the Dhyani Kutir at the Panchabati, an elaborate puja was carried out of Sri Radha Govinda and Shree Ma, and large quantities of offerings were displayed picturesquely just as it was done in the days of Shree Ma. Over 800 devotees sat down to eat, including a number of special invitees. Ma used to say, "This body is always with you," the truth of this statement can be truly appreciated in such Ashram festivals.

Varanasi

Each year Kashi Ashram celebrates Kali Puja and Annakut in special style. Shree Shree Annapurna is worshipped with all the full paraphernalia, 1½ mds. of rice is offered together with 108 types of dishes, which are conspicuously displayed in the temple. Hundreds of local devotees throng the Ashram on that day to see the elaborate arrangements and partake of prasad. During Geeta Jayanti, the brahmacharinis of the Kanya-peeth read 6 chapters of the Geeta per day for the first three days and on the 4th day the whole Geeta

is read out. On the 5th day Purnahuti is offered at the concluding Yagna, and as part of the Puja of the 18 chapters, 18 lamps are lit and 18 kinds of fruit offered in 18 thalas, Payosh is offered in 18 vessels and water in 18 glasses, and all this is elaborately decorated with flowers and garlands.

Bhopal

Kripalji informs from Bhopal that Durga and Lakshmi Puja were well celebrated there. A Kali Murti was fabricated and Kali Puja was performed for the first time in the new temple, and Annakut was celebrated the next day. Local devotees gathered together for these celebrations and enjoyed the prasad distributed.

Ranchi

As in previous year Durga Puja, Lakshmi Puja and Kali Puja and Bhai-Dwitiya were celebrated in the Ashram, and hundreds of devotees treated to prasad with the co-operation of all local devotees. All these festivals were concluded in a fitting manner.

Vrindaban

In this Ashram housing Shree Krishna Chhalia as the presiding deity, Jhulan Utsab and Janmas-tami were duly celebrated with pomp and ceremony. On this occasion the Srestha family staged a 12 day long Sri Krishna Leela there. A certain devotee managed for a 3 day Nam Kirtan and many assembled joyously for the purpose. After

Nandotsab, Brajabasi 31 Mahantas and a Mahamandaleshwar were invited to partake of prasad.

On the day of Durga Astami and Mahanavami Rasleela was performed in the Nat Mandir by a celebrated Group.

Uttar Kashi

Kali Puja was duly celebrated under the supervision of Swami Akhandanandaji and in the presence of Swami Bhaskaranandaji. Celebrated Sadhus from Ujeli sang Kirtan all night at the Ashram, and next morning all were entertained to an elaborate prasad. As in other Ashrams, daily Puja and offering of Bhog and Arati is carried out here, and local devotees read the Geeta, Chandi, Bhagavata, etc.

Agarpara

The annual Nam Yagna of the Ashram had been fixed for the week-end 20th and 21st December, and the Sangha took this opportunity of fixing Governing Body and Executive Council Meetings in the Ashram on the 20th and 21st. Ma's marble statue was also to be inspected and approved at the sculptors, so Swami Swarupananda and Br. Nirvanananda arrived in Calcutta in good time to visit the premises of the Calcutta sculptor on the 15th December and another visit was planned to Shantiniketan on the 17th to inspect an alternative proposal there.

For the meetings at Agarpara, the Monks in-charge at Ranchi, Delhi and Dehra Dun were to attend and our Chief and welcome guest was to be

the Mahant Maharaj Shri Shri Giridhari Narayan Puri of Daksheswar Mandir, Kankhat. The Sangha President Sri B. K. Shah was also expected to arrive ; several senior Brahmacharinis had also arrived to participate in the meetings. The presence of all Delhi Kirtanias made a tremendous difference to the Nam Yagna on the 21st.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Dear Brother/Sister,

This is to inform you with pleasure on behalf of the Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram, Tarapeeth, that on the occasion of Maghi Purnima day, the 13th February 1987, a Matri Puja will be performed at Tarapeeth Ashram.

Your presence and cooperation is earnestly requested for this special Puja.

If you wish to join in the celebrations, you should please write to the address mentioned below at least a month in advance, so that adequate arrangements can be made to provide accommodation and fooding for you.

The address for booking :

Matri-Mandir
402/4, Prince Anwar
Shah Road,
Calcutta-700 045.

Programme :

12.2.87 - 6 p.m. Adhibas
13.2.87 - 7 a.m. Puja
Evening Arati
14.2.87 - 5 p.m. Joyous
Gathering



Sailen Brahmachari—a few days before his demise in Mata Anandamayee Hospital,
Varanasi.

Obituary

I. Brahmachari Sailendra

Brahmachari Sailendra, the Addl. General Secretary of the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, passed away at Varanasi Ashram on the 31st October after suffering from a long illness. He was conscious right up to the end, when he mingled with the lotus feet of Shree Ma.

His name was Taran Kar Chaudhuri previously, and he was a brilliant scholar.

He first met Shree Ma at Raipur Ashram in 1941, in company with Swami Chinmoyananda, just prior to departing for Mesopotamia. While he was in the battle front there, several times he felt Ma saving him from death in the midst of heavy gunfire, and there and then he vowed to spend the rest of his days in her service.

He spent some years in Sadhana in Gangotri and then served in Bhimpura, Naimisharanya, Puri, Ranchi and Kashi Ashrams. Eventually he was appointed Addl. General Secretary and in this capacity helped Swami Paramananda from Kashi and finally Kankhal.

At Naimisharanya Ma not only placed him in-charge of all the Ashram cows, but in spite of being a Non-Brahmin, asked him to take over worshipping duties, in the absence of a suitable Pujari for some time.

When he was finally declared as suffering from cancer at the All India Institute of Hygiene at Delhi,

he decided to spend his last days in Kashi Ashram. He realised when his end was near, and quietly bade good-bye to Panuda before breathing his last.

He had sometime earlier been initiated into sannyas by Ma, and given the name of Gnanananda, so his body was consigned to the holy waters of the Ganga. In him, the Sangha has lost an able administrator and a single-minded devotee of Ma.

II. Sm. Lily Ghosh

It is with regret that we have to report the death of Lily Ghosh, the daughter of one of Ma's most devoted followers in the original days of Dhaka, the late Nishi Kanta Mitra, and the mother of another close devotee Sm. Ranu Ghosh.

Lilydi suffered from a long standing illness for a long time, but this did not deter her from living at Kankhal to be near Ma as long as Ma was alive. She passed away peacefully in her bed at 7 a.m. on the 29th October. We pray humbly to Ma that her spirit may rest in eternal peace at Ma's lotus feet, and offer our heartfelt condolences to her bereaved family.

III. Lachmidi of Kashi Ashram

On the 10th December last passed away at our Kashi Ashram Lakshmi Shome, who had for several years done service as a doctor in serving the needy under Ma's instructions.

We are sure Lachmidi has obtained eternal rest at Ma's feet after her dedicated life in Kashi.