
One must endeavour to remain constantly engaged in the contemplation of That. All other thought engenders anxiety. He is holding your hand, so why worry? Do not allow your mind to be overwhelmed; be ever steeped solely in the contemplation of the Supreme.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

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ANANDA VĀRTĀ

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

Vol. XXXVI

APRIL, 1989

No. 2

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Name is God*

Swami Ram Das

Exalted Name divine
Few know Thy power.
Who has drunk nectar
Can alone its taste enjoy.
Thou Name of eternal splendour,
Song or word can ill express
Thy unique wondrous glory.
Take the Name, O Friend,
Name is immortal joy
That thrills in your veins.
Name is infinite love
That wells up from your hearts.
Name is cosmic vision
That dazzles in your eyes.
Name is Truth — Name is God.

Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

Ma : "Look, — You know how long one wishes to keep secrets ? One wants to guard secrets while there is the feeling of want. What is that feeling of want ? Well, that feeling arises in the mind of a seeker who is afraid that his *sadhana* may be hampered (if he gives out his secrets). And the common people are afraid of losing their prestige. Hence they have that wish to conceal facts. Again, when the *Mahatmas* sometimes do not disclose everything to others, it is because those people are not qualified for hearing everything. A matriculate, for example, will fail to understand if he is told what is learnt by an M.A. student."

Question : "Ma, some people say, Ma has not lived a worldly life like us, yet how is it that she understands our worldly joys and sorrows so much ?"

Ma : "Bah ! You know how it is ? Verily, *I am you. You yourself are myself* — that is all. Where is the question of not understanding ?"

Sadhan Brahmachari, a devotee of Ma of a very long acquaintance, once saw the manifestation of worldly mentality in an aged *sannyasi*. He came to Ma and asked, "Well, Ma, why do these worldly tendencies linger even after being in the discipline of a *sannyasi* for such a long time ? If it is like this, then where do we stand ?"

Ma replied, "Look, during one's youth, one has the capacity for maintaining harmony among various matters, of keeping diverse interests simultaneously intact, but in childhood as well as in old age, one's inner feelings and trends get clearly manifested even outwardly. Attachment, aversion — all that they have in their mind are expressed even in their outer behaviour. They can no longer keep them suppressed. Even then, he (the sannyasi in question) is living this kind of life — there is no doubt hope for him."

Now a days (Didi writes) Ma often says, "You people book a return ticket before coming here ; that is why you keep coming and going. Therefore I say, act in such a manner that there is no return ticket for you."

As a result of being in Ma's company for some time, the nature of an old lady was undergoing a positive change. Observing this, Didi (Br. Gurupriya Devi) said to Ma, "Are you pulling out all that is there inside (the lady) ?"

Ma said, "It is good if what is there inside a person is let out."

Ma quite often says, "Everything that happens is just what is needed, nobody can be blamed."

One day Ma said smilingly, "Finish all your work ; time is passing."

One day Ma asked an aged *sadhu* of a very tranquil nature, "Pitaji, what is the way to quieten the mind ?"

He said, "What can I tell you ? You are already sitting here with full realization of plenti-

tude." On this, all the other persons said to the sadhu, "Please say something for us." Then the aged sadhu said a few things which can be summarised as follows :

"The first spiritual discipline is *sadachar*, pure and virtuous conduct, not only outwardly, but both outwardly as well as inwardly one should observe good conduct. By regular practice of good conduct, the restlessness of the mind gradually decreases. I will not ride the horse, lest I should fall from it — this is not the right way of thinking ; I will ride the horse, and holding the reins tightly in my hand, I will control the horse — this is the proper attitude one should maintain. The mind can be conquered only by continuous practice of self control — this is what the Lord has said in the *Gita*. Those who are in your company — what need they worry about ? They have been fortunate to be associated with you. Such association is rare, inscrutable and infallible. It is rare as it is not easily available — it is a matter of immense good fortune. It is inscrutable, as it is not given to common understanding ; that is why again and again there are doubts, misgivings. It is infallible since such association can never go in vain. I do not usually go to any person, but as soon as I had my very first look at you, I felt that you draw all people towards you. I usually do not tell anyone about these things discussed in the scriptures ; but as you permitted me to do so, I have done it. But what will these words do ? There should be

realization in ones heart.” Saying these words, the old gentleman fell silent.

Talking about the yogic manifestations in the body, Ma once said, “When the *kriyas* manifest themselves in the body, it is distinctly felt how — a current is flowing even in the upper veins of the body, as the knots snap open. Some times it is seen that while Kirtan is going on, a few persons engaged in it experience a slight manifestation of ecstasy, and due to this, they are seen in a state of commotion violently jerking their hands and feet. It so happens because the knots in their body are not untied yet. Since nature’s forces are unable to move about in their normal course, a suppressed impulse agitates within them and, trying to come out, meets an obstruction. And as their knots are not open they knock about restlessly in that manner.”

Whatever is to happen to anyone, anywhere, at anytime is all fixed by Him ; His arrangements are perfect.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

In Association with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

Sri Amulya Kumar Datta Gupta

(Translated from Bengali)

(Continued from previous issue)

The visit of the Commissioner of Dhaka to Sri Ma :

Sunday, 3.6.45

Today there was a Mahotsab. When I arrived at the Ashram in the morning I perceived the Commissioner of Dhaka, Mr. Larkin and his wife, had come to visit Sri Ma. Sri Prafulla Ch. Ghosh had brought them along with him. Mr. Larkin asked Ma why she did not stay on in Dhaka. When we interpreted the question to Ma, she replied, "I do remain in Dhaka".

Mr. Larkin : Then why cannot we see you ?

Sri Ma : (Laughing) You have not the right glasses (every body laughs).

Mr. Larkin : (also laughing) Not in a spiritual sense, but if your body stays on in Dhaka, everybody can see you and thus derive benefit from you.

Sri Ma : I am indeed existing in Dhaka in my own body. It is also heard that at times when I stay elsewhere some people can see me here. Besides, this body has indeed arrived at Dhaka now,

but can all bhakta inhabitants see me ? Only those who are destined to do so can see me.

Mrs. Larkin : The women of Bengal do not know how to minister to people. The women of other countries have joined the Red Cross, and doing a good job in ministering to others. But the Bengalee women are not among them. If you advise them to join the Red Cross, I think many will do so.

Sri Ma : It is not true that Bengalee women cannot minister to others. They minister, even at the cost of their lives to their father, mother, brothers and sisters and other members of the family, and they consider this sort of seva as their religious duty. But they are not trained to minister to people outside their family. Moreover they consider that it is against their belief to mix with outsiders. That is why they cannot be found for work outside their homes. Now of course some are joining in outside work but not all, as they are not used to it. But their menfolk have joined in this type of work.

Mr. Larkin : They are working for monetary gain.

Sri Ma : Yes, the ideal should be to minister to others for the sake of seva alone.

After spending some time in this way the Commissioner and his wife took their departure. While leaving he again extorted Ma to revisit Dhaka. Sri Ma laughed and said, "I am a baby, I can come whenever you bring me here."

She added looking towards us, "Well, can I or can I not speak English ? (everybody laughs).

Should one pray to one's guru for material gain ?

Sri Promotho Bose was waiting to ask Ma a question. When the Commissioner left, he asked Ma, "Can one not pray to his guru for fulfilment of material benefits ?"

Sri Ma : Why not ? If you have to ask, you should pray to the guru only ; who is there to help you beside the guru ? But if your guru does not like these entreaties, then he will himself discourage them. If you start flinging your feet and hands about, your guru will pacify you.

It looked as if Promotho Babu was very much satisfied with Ma's answer. There was some more discussion after this, thereafter Ma departed to Siddheswari Ashram.

Meanwhile in the Ramna Ashram arrangements for the Mahotsab were continued in right earnest. Bhupati Babu, Nibaran Babu and others were looking after the work with great enthusiasm. Sachin Babu started to sing Kirtan in the Nam Ghar. The Kirtan gradually gained fervour. Sri Ma returned to the Ashram at about 1.30 to 2 p.m. Prasad started being distributed from 3 p.m. In the courtyard of the Ashram about 600 persons sat down to partake of prasad, irrespective of caste, creed and income. Sri Ma watched all this standing in the temple of Shree Annapurna. Those who were serving, or eating or were just the audience, were all expressing their joy. From time to time shouts of "Sri Sri Ma Annandamayee ki Jai" or "Baba Bholanath ki jai" filled the atmos-

phere. Sri Ma stood and watched this scene for a while and then went to lie down alone in the temple of Shree Annapurna.

This distribution of prasad lasted from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. But in the meantime I partook of some prasad and returned home.

Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Ma

At about 9 p.m. I returned to the Ashram with Manoranjan Babu and Jatin. By that time distribution of prasad had been completed. The workers had just sat down to partake of their prasad. Sri Ma was conversing in private with a few persons.

At about 11 p.m. Ma came and sat down in the open field. We also squatted down near her. Bhudeb Babu asked Ma, "Ma, we have heard you had once met Mahatma Gandhi. We wish to hear details of that meeting from you."

Sri Ma : I do not feel inclined to talk about it. Hariram and Abhoy were both present there. You can get the details from them.

Bhudeb Babu : It is our wish to hear it from your lips.

Sri Ma : Let them start, if I feel like it, I will join in. Saying this Ma asked Abhoy to speak on the subject. Abhoy started thus :

"Mahatma Gandhi had heard a lot about Sri Ma from Kamala Nehru. That is why he sent Sri Jamunalal Bajaj to go and meet Sri Sri Ma. Sri Bajaj originally desired to stay only 3 days with Ma. But once he met Ma, his desire to return became less rigid. He sent telegram after telegram

to Gandhiji requesting him to extend his leave and continued to stay at Raipur Ashram. In this way, in place of 3 days, 15 days elapsed and still he did not wish to return. He went and asked Ma if he should wire Mahatmaji for more leave. Ma said, "If you make such a request of Mahatmaji, he will indeed grant you such leave, but as he has already wired you to return, you should go back."

When Abhoy had reached this stage, Sri Ma herself took up the tale. She said, "Babaji used to request for half an hour daily to be private with the body, there was no conversation; he just wanted to sit in private in front of the body, who also used to sit quietly in front of him. Sometimes he used to lie down with his head in my lap or at other times he used to suck the big toe of one foot. This was his mode of having private speech (everybody laughs).

In order to visit this body from time to time, he expressed a desire to build a small Ashram on the waste land that surrounded Raipur Ashram and so he asked this body's opinion on this subject. This body said, "If you want to buy land, you can do so, but do not harbour any particular desire within yourself." As soon as he obtained my permission, he bought the land. This body had also told him that people did not know when they would breath from one moment to another, so it was best for him to be aloof from his household duties. He obeyed my suggestion to the last letter. When he returned to Ahmedabad he left his home and built himself a small Ashram nearby. In that

Ashram he arranged to keep and nourish cows and let Kumaris stay there. He himself arranged to live in a separate kutia. He accomplished all this within a very short time.”

(Looking towards Abhoy) She said, “Now you can continue.”

Abhoy : Sri Jamunalal Bajaj's great ambition was to arrange a meeting between Sri Sri Ma and Mahatma Gandhi. For this purpose he started sending telegram after telegram to Ma to visit that place. Furthermore, he started making such an elaborate arrangements for welcoming Ma that such lavish arrangements had never so far been made for any other top political leaders of the country. But Ma then had no kheyal to visit that place. Consequently during the life time of Sri Bajaj, Sri Ma did not meet Mahatmaji !

After some days when Ma was out on her travels, she heard in a station from Jamunalal Bajaj's son that his father has expired. This son kept on requesting Ma to visit Ahmedabad. He said, “My mother is now prostrate with grief, if you now come and give her your darshan, then she will derive some comfort and peace. The son was himself stricken with grief. Sri Sri Ma comforted him saying, “Why do you grieve for Babaji?” He is here in person, he is standing here near me wearing the dress and cap he used to wear while alive.”

“Sri Ma happened then to be on the direct route to Ahmedabad. So she had a kheyal this time to visit Ahmedabad, hence together with all

of us she arrived at Jamunalal Bajaj's Ashram at Ahmedabad. At her arrival, there was great joy in the Ashram. At this time Mahatmaji was residing at Sevagram. He was then very busy with some political matters. Leaders of the country were also present with him. So it was not possible for Mahatmaji to come to Ma to meet her. He kept on sending message after message to Ma to visit Sevagram. But Ma expressed no desire to go elsewhere. At this juncture a certain gentleman came and told Ma, "Mataji, if you do not now visit Sevagram, then Mahatmaji in his old age will have to bear the trouble of visiting you here". On hearing this, Ma at once started to make arrangement to visit Sevagram.

When Ma reached Gandhiji's Ashram, it was nearly evening. Gandhiji was seated in his kutia. National leaders were also present. As soon as Sri Ma's motor reached the gates of the Ashram, Gandhiji called out to Ma, "Ao Ao" in a very pleasant mood. Ma also ran to Gandhiji's side. Gandhiji clasped Ma in his bosom, and remained thus for quite some time. When conversation commenced, Gandhiji said, "I have heard from Kamala that you are her guru." Ma replied, "I have no disciples."

Here, Ma resumed the thread of Abhoy's report and said, (Gandhiji said) "Do you know who sent Bajaj to you? It was I who did so. He had said to me, "Mahatmaji, the peace and joy I have received from your company over 15 years, I have obtained from Mataji's company in only 3 days.

“Babaji (Gandhiji) tried his best to persuade me to remain with him, but I did not agree. Then Gandhiji pointed out the leading national leaders around him and said, “I am their leader. They all obey my commands implicitly, today if you do not listen to my bequest, what will they imagine? I said, “My father (meaning Gandhiji) does not care two hoots for it.” Then Gandhiji said, “This is a very obstinate girl”. I said, “Your daughter is bound to imbibe some qualities from her father.”

Abhoy continued his story. “This sort of conversation continued for some time. I cannot recall all the various facts, but I have noted all this down somewhere. Both were soft spoken, so their conversation was so interesting that I cannot describe it.”

Ma resumed her tale, “I told Gandhiji, Pitaji, I will one day quietly enter your room without anybody knowing it.” Gandhiji said, “That is the way of thieves and dacoits”. I said, “I will steal all your belongings”. Later I said, “Pitaji when the time is ripe I will come and take you away as well.”

At the earnest request of Gandhiji Ma spent that night at Sevagram, and departed early next morning.

Thus Sri Ma's meeting with Gandhiji was described in bits and pieces, but because we could not learn about all the important events fully, we felt somewhat dissatisfied.

The catching of a thief inside the Ashram.

At this juncture, there was a commotion inside the Ashram. Somebody came and shouted out to

Ma that a man had been half beaten to death. It was doubtful if the man would survive. Then Jatu Brahmachari came and told Ma, "It was I who beat him. Now let me suffer any punishment. You know last night during Arati somebody had cut off and stolen a necklace belonging to a girl. Today again at my father Bholanath's mandir somebody tried to snatch the ear ring from a sleeping girl. On hearing the girl cry out I went and caught hold of the thief red-handed, and beat him up mercilessly. This thief is no other than one of the temporary hands I had employed to do the Ashram's extra work. Tonight all the other cooks and servants of the Ashram had gone away, so this fellow had stayed behind so late for the sake of taking his chance in stealing. Ma said, "Then should we beat him up so mercilessly? We should have caught him and deal with him as we deal with others in similar circumstances." Having said this Ma went towards the Ashram. Outside the Ashram the man was brought and flung down before Ma. Ma had a look at the man and said, "No, he does not have any serious injury." But the man had pretended to have fainted. I saw something white like a piece of cotton lying near the man's hands. Ma removed it carefully. I could not realise exactly what it was although I moved quite near to Ma. The man was then assisted to his feet and taken towards the Ashram. Gopaldada was informed. When the latter arrived the man fell at his feet and asked for pardon. Gopaldada said, "Very well,

the necklace you stole last night and whatever else you may have stolen from the Ashram, restore them to us, we will then think of pardoning you." The man still continued to deny any theft on his part. At this stage I noticed a few feathers from a pigeon in Ma's hands, strung with a thin piece of wire. I imagined that the white feathers I had seen on Ma's crown on the night of the Tithi Puja would be some of those. Because when the crown was being removed from Ma's head I had noticed some feathers falling down loose from it. Ma said, "I have removed the feathers from the man's hands. When the man was brought and flung down before this body, I had noticed that something white was lying near his hands. As soon as I tried to remove these, I realised they were nothing else but a few feathers strung together with wire. As soon as I pulled the feathers, I realised that the other end of the wire was wound round the man's fingers. That is why I could not remove them easily. As soon as I pulled them, the fingers of his hand were lifted. He then of his own accord straightened his fingers so that I could remove the feathers.

Do you know what was these feathers are for? When somebody is asleep, in order to check whether his sleep is deep enough or not, he lightly touches some part of his face with the feather. If the sleeper moves at this touch, he realises that the person is not sufficiently deep in slumber, and so it is not safe to remove anything from his body. But when he sees that the person does not stir at all, then he removes ornaments etc. from his body."

I was flabbergasted at these words of Ma. So many of us were present but none had noticed any feathers. When Ma discovered them we still did not realise what exactly they were, or for what purpose they could be used. When Ma recounted all this everybody realised that this man himself had stolen the necklace with the help of the feathers. But the man still continued to deny any theft on his part. But the boys did not release him. When they referred to Ma asking what should be done with him Ma said, "Did you not promise to reclaim the necklace from him?" On hearing this, everybody understood that the necklace would be found on him. So he was brought outside in the field, and strapped to the pole of a tent.

We started exchanging our experiences sitting under the tent. After a while somebody came to us from inside the Ashram and informed us that Ma was dressed with a golden crown, any of us who wished to see this could do so. On hearing this we all went inside the Ashram, and observed that the blue sari and the crown with which Ma had been dressed previously had again been worn today. Sri Ma was seated in Bholanath's mandir. Ma had dressed thus for the sake of the girls, because, when she was dressed thus last night, none of the ladies were then present. As there was insufficient space, we remained there only for a short time and then came away.

In a little while Ma came outside. She had meanwhile removed her special dress. Ma went

towards the spot where the thief was roped up. On noticing his condition, Ma told, "Why are you making him suffer in this way?" On these words of Ma, we removed his bondage. Ma asked him to return the necklace. He said, "I have not stolen the necklace. If my words are not true let me be affected by a serious malady." He even denied that feathers had been bound to his fingers with wire. On hearing him lie so blatantly, Ma said no more, but asked us, "What do you wish to do with him now?"

Birendada : We will do whatever you tell us.

Sri Ma : You can hand him over to the police, but you will yourselves be implicated in red tape. You may even see subsequently that he would not be awarded any punishment. If you do not wish to keep him in the Ashram, then you are no longer responsible for correcting his ways of life. And he is not the type to be corrected. He who is born to steal will continue to steal. So I say just release him.

We carried out Ma's instructions. The man was returned his clothes still into Ashram. He left.

Sri Ma came and sat down in the field, and talked in private to Birendada. We went and slept under the tent. When we awoke, it was daylight. We tendered our pranams to Ma and returned home.

The Departure from Dhaka

Monday 4.6.45

Today Ma was leaving Dhaka for Calcutta. I went to the Ashram at about 8.30 a.m. At that

time Ma was approaching the Ashram by car after visiting Siddheswari Ashram and Dhaka Hall. But without entering the Ashram she went to Shahbagh. We waited for Ma out in the field. Ma returned from Shahbagh after about half an hour. Ma was at once taken for her Bhog. After partaking a meal Ma came and sat down on the verandah of the Smriti Mandir. Noticing a huge crowd of ladies surrounding her we stood at a distance. I was thinking I would return home as soon as Ma left the Ashram. At this juncture, somebody came and informed me, "Ma is asking for you." I strode through the crowd to Ma. But from Ma's appearance it did not look as if she had asked for me. I kept on standing inside the crowd. Ma pointed towards a lady and said, "The dead daughter of this woman has come to life again. (Looking towards me) I suppose you have heard the story."

I : I cannot recall anything now.

Thereafter everybody requested Ma to recount the story. Ma started saying, "Her 12 years old daughter had died. She was overcome with grief at her death. When I went to Tarapith she came to me and started crying piteously. This body had then advised her, "Ma you must not cry so much for a dead person, whose soul thereby suffers great pain. It is better to pray to God that your daughter should rest in peace. But if you do intend to cry then cry to God, saying, "Oh God, why did you take her away?"

At this advice, although she obtained temporary relief, she could not entirely forget the memory of

her daughter. Often she used to cry and address her daughter thus, "If I could only see you alive once, and know where you are, I would get some peace." When some days had passed thus, she dreamt one night that her daughter had come to her. She was dressed with flowers in such a fashion that it was not possible for any human being to be so dressed. The daughter came and sat down on the lap of her mother, who wrapped her hands round her daughter saying, "I will never let you go again." After a while she realised that somehow her daughter had slipped away from her. In the same dream she again saw that she had arrived at a large and beautiful field, where Rishis and little girls were singing hymns to the Lord. Her daughter was included among the girls. The place was beautiful and the songs were also very melodious. Narayan himself was present there disguised as an old Brahman. He came and placed his hands over her forehead, and at this stage her dream was broken. On waking up she started grieving, "Oh, I wish I could have seen such a wonderful dream a little longer."

Within a few days of this event the girl's father i.e. her husband experienced on dream where their daughter was saying, "Baba, I could not stay quiet for your continuous crying for me, so I have returned to you." The father took her in his bosom and gave her to his wife. The day this dream was experienced, the woman became pregnant. Later when this body went to Tarapith, the woman brought a one month old daughter to this

body and said, "Ma, I have got my daughter back." Saying this, she recounted the full story to me. The girl was then present in the Ashram and was about 6/7 years old."

After finishing this story Ma said to me, "Now hurry Khukuni to get ready for our departure, it will be better in the train." I went and requested Didi to hurry. The idea arose in my mind, did Ma ask me to accompany her in the carriage? When I spoke to Jatin, he asked, "Should I then attach my saloon to the Calcutta Mail?" I went to Didi to consult her and on hearing our proposition Didi said, "Good, that will be excellent."

On hearing this Jatin and I went along to the station at once in a Rickshaw. When Ma's car arrived at the station, we took her to the saloon. There was such a crowd in the saloon that we were compelled to stand with difficulties in Jatin's kitchen in order to arrive at Narayanganj. We had no opportunity of speaking to Ma. We helped Ma board the steamer, did our pranam to her and took our departure.

(To be continued)

Brahma Vidya — Para Vidya and Aparā Vidya

Nirmal Chandra Ghosh

(Continued from previous issue)

Again the great sage is telling Shaunaka about the nature of Brahman and what the wise realise.

One who is omniscient and knows all aspects of everything and every one, whose glory is manifested in this world, is seated in the luminous space, the divine abode of Brahman. The Supreme self pervading the mind is the leader of the vital forces and the bodies of all beings. He is in the cavity of the heart and continues there due to the food that every body takes.

Acquiring special knowledge in 'Nirvikalpa Samadhi' the wise see on all sides the immortal (Supreme soul), the embodiment of joy and bliss, who is shining gloriously.

When the aspirant realises the universal cause and effect, then all the knots of ignorance (which block the way to god-realisation) in the heart are untied, all his doubts are cleared and all his (fruits of) actions (karma) decay.

That Brahman, who is dirtless (without ignorance), and without parts, is enshrined in His luminous supreme abode. He is white (pure) and

He is the light of all lights. The knowers of the soul realise Him like that.

There the sun does not shine, nor the stars and planets, nor this lightning flashes there and then what to speak of this fire? Every luminous object shines because He shines. His glow enlightens all this.

This Brahman is immortal and nectar. He is in front of all, He is behind all, He is to the right of all, He is to the left of all. He extends both above and below. This entire universe is nothing but that Supreme Almighty Brahman.*

Jeevatma (Individual soul) and Paramatma (Supreme soul) live together in the cavity of the heart in the same body like two birds living as companions in the same nest of a branch of a tree. Whily Jeevatma enjoys and suffers the fruits of his actions, Paramatma, without enjoying or suffering any fruits of action, only looks on as a witness like one of the birds eating the fruits of the tree with relish while the other does not eat any fruit but only looks on.

Jeevatma is sunk in deep attachment of the body. Feeling his helplessness he is overwhelmed due to his inability to get rid of his sorrows and pains, which he is bound to suffer as fruits of

* The universe, as it appears to us, is illusion. In reality it is nothing but Brahman. The mistake we do, due to our ignorance, is just like mistaking a rope for a snake. Another example is that of mirage in a desert where an ignorant traveller mistakes the shining sands at noon as water in a tank. Another example is that of will-o'-the-wisp.

actions done without realising the Supreme soul. When due to the grace of God he realises the Supreme soul, who is worshipped by the devotees and who is, though different from him, and also feels His glory manifested everywhere, then he becomes free from all sorrows and pains.

When Jeevatma (aspirant) realises the Lord of all, who created even lord Brahma, the first of the gods, and who is of divine golden light, then he shakes off both virtue and vice, becomes pure without blemish and attains perfect equanimity.

He, the Supreme Lord, is the life of all. All creatures are His expression. One who realises Him does not do any tall talk, which ordinary people do due to egoism and ignorance; but he does work to please the Lord, playfully lives his life being absorbed in Him, and such a seer is regarded as the greatest among the wise.

The self-effulgent and very pure Supreme soul, who is in the interior of the body (cavity of the heart) and whom the sinless sages have seen, can be realised by always speaking the truth, by austerity and celibacy and by perfect wisdom.

Truth only becomes victorious, falsehood does not. The path (devayana) described as the road of the gods is strewn with truth like flowers. By following truthfulness the desireless sages, who have got all their desires fulfilled, go along that path and reach the supreme abode of Brahman, the Truth Absolute.

Here in the cavity of the heart the sages who have realised Brahman see that divine Supreme

Person, whose beauty is beyond imagination, who is the greatest of the great, who is the subtlest of the subtle, who is very far away and who is at the same time very near also.

He cannot be seen by the eyes ; He cannot be talked of by mouth ; He is not tangible by any other senses or organs and He cannot be realised by hard work or by austerity. Only an aspirant, who has purified mind, can aspire to realise, that Supreme Brahman, who is without any part or limb, through meditation and perfect wisdom.

This very subtle soul in the cavity of the heart in which the vital force as breathing system consisting of five 'pranas' (air in five forms sustaining life) exists and which is pervaded by the mind of all beings, reveals Himself with great glory when ones mind is purified.

A man of very purified mind and intellect has access to all the worlds and regions wherever he wants to go and enjoys all the enjoyments he wants to enjoy. So those who wants to have wealth and riches should worship and serve one who has realised the Supreme Self (so that by his favour they may get their objective).

One, who being desireless worships and meditates upon the Supreme Person, knows His Supreme Abode purely shining and knows also that in Him the entire universe is resting. Such a wise person transcends forever the possibility of rebirth.

He, who is full of desires, is born again and again and different regions and may be born as inferior animals and creatures to fulfill those desires.

But one, whose desires are all fulfilled, has no desire. For such a pure hearted person all desires vanish for ever even before his death.

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 this soul, whom He favours and to Him He reveals His real nature.

The Supreme soul cannot be realised by one who is weak, who is under delusion and who performs austerity and meditation without renunciation. But an intelligent aspirant, who tries to realise Him by shaking off all weakness and delusion and performs with renunciation the right type of austerity and meditation, enters the Abode of the Supreme Brahman due to His grace.*

Having realised the Supreme soul the sages of purified mind and intellect, who have no attachment to worldly objects and relations, and who have attained complete serenity of mind, become fully satisfied with their knowledge of Brahman. Know-

* The last word in the first line of the above verse is *Alingat* which means 'without sign.' The great Shankaracharya in his explanatory notes has taken this as 'without the sign of a monk' (such as the orange coloured robe and the marks on the forehead and other parts of the body indicating complete renunciation of the world and joining monastic life). Anandagiri differs from him since the Vedas mention about the realisation of the Supreme soul by Indra (king of the gods), Janaka (king of Mithila) Gargi and others who were not monks and did not renounce the world outwardly. Here in this note the word has been explained as 'without renunciation'.

Please see Swami Gambhirananda's *Eight Upanishads* Vol. II, fifth impression, page 153.

ing the all-pervading Brahman, who is all and everywhere, the wise get themselves absorbed in Him and merge in Him.

The great sage Angira is now telling Shaunaka about the importance of the correct knowledge of the Upanishads along with other means for realising Brahman and also what happens to the wise who have realised Him.

Those ardent aspirants who by understanding correctly and definitely the special knowledge of the Upanishads and by renouncing all desires of fruits of actions and attachment to worldly objects and relations, have got their mind and intellect completely purified, after leaving the mortal body go to the Supreme Abode of Brahman, become immortal and completely free from all bondages.

After the demise of such a realised person, his fifteen limbs* and (the presiding deities of) senses go and merge in their respective sources (gods in the universe). All his fruits of actions, his individual soul the embodiment of knowledge, go and merge with the Supreme Brahman Immortal.

Just as the flowing rivers go and merge with the sea and forsake their names and forms, so the Self-realised wise persons forsaking their names and forms attain to the divine Supreme Person.

Certainly, any one, who knows that Supreme Brahman, becomes Brahman indeed. No one in

* The fifteen limbs are faith, the five elements, viz ; earth, water, fire, air and ether, senses, mind, food, vigour, austerity for self control, sacred words, actions (recommended by the Vedas), the worlds and the names of all these.

his line of descendants is born, who does not acquire the knowledge of Brahman. He overcomes all sorrows and all sins and being free from the knots of ignorance in the cavity of the heart of the body, becomes immortal.

The great sage Angira is again speaking about the essential qualities that are to be possessed of by one, for being fit for receiving the Supreme knowledge in the following sacred words (mantra).

One, who does all work, recommended by the Vedas according to ones caste, without desire, who is conversant with the knowledge of the Vedas, who is devoted to Brahman, who has faith, who regularly offers oblations to the sacred fire called 'ekarshi' and who observes great austerities, is fit for being imparted the knowledge of Brahman.

The right knowledge of Brahman was narrated in ancient times by the sage Angira. One, who has not observed the vow of Brahmacharya, should not read this narrative. Obeisance to the great sages. Obeisance to the great sages.

Om. O gods! May we hear auspicious words with our ears. May we see auspicious things with our eyes while engaged in the performance of sacrifices. While reciting the praises of god with healthy bodies may we enjoy that and may our lives end while doing the work of god. May Indra, who is very famous, do good to us. May Pusha (god of the earth), who knows everything, do good to us. May the divine bird Garuda, who is the carrier of Vishnu, do good to us. May Devaguru (teacher of the gods) Brihaspati do good to us.

Manna from Heaven

(Translated by Sm. Swati Bhattacharya
from an article written by Sri Anil Chandra Ganguli)

Virtually the Mother has always been, and still is, with her children in their life or death. She knew her children as none did. She cared for them as none would. Mother's numerous wonders are mostly hidden from us. But then suddenly we sometimes bump on a case like Rahul's and we can have an iota of Mother's mighty love.

Rahul, undeniably, was exceptional in every way. I first met him in 1953 on the occasion of the *Samyam Saptaha Muhavrata* (the observance of continence) at Calcutta. He was a nephew of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, with excellent physique, booming voice, brilliant eyes and aristocratic bearing. He considered himself very fortunate, for his share of work on this occasion kept him close to Mother. But soon after the ceremony Mother moved from Calcutta. The greatest fear was then isolation. Rahul could not bear the separation. However he sought consolation at the *Mauna Milani* at Hazra Road. Even chanting of Mother's name could fill his heart with light. He got to the real treasure. But perhaps disasters frequent the lives of the good even more. And all disasters have a sunny side. The blessing may be disguised but it is always there. Betrayal of men, business failures,

terminal disease posed as ordeals. He remained unbroken by adversity. All these sanctified the soul and only strengthened his love for Mother. During his long term of illness at P. G. Hospital, he gradually understood that life was ebbing away. His sole wish was that at the time of his death, this favourite song of his be sung to him :—

Write *Harinam* upon me when I die

That with *Harinam* I may pass by.

Midnight, 19th June of 1960 was the hour of his demise. But at that time, none was there beside him. Who would chant *Harinam* in the hospital ?

It was Mother, then in Poona, (over a thousand miles away from Calcutta), who granted his last desire. In the eyes of a commoner, the whole episode would seem breath-taking and miraculous. The entire incident was described to me by Gurupriya Devi over phone from Poona and I quickly noted it down. In due course, I sent this note to sister Baby, Rahul's wife. She had filed the papers with much care.

The note reads (as dictated over trunk-call from Poona) :—

Yesterday, around midnight, Ma was lying on her bed, but she looked withdrawn. Suddenly she said, 'It has come, so bright it is !' Pointing to the cot where she would sit in *Satsang* she said, 'Do sit over there'. She called Puspa and started singing :—

Write *Harinam* upon me when I die

That with *Harinam* I may pass by.

Strangely enough, Mother had not been communicated the news of Rahul's death yet. She was informed as late as 8 a.m. next morning.

In that file of sister Baby, there is a long letter from sister Gurupriya. It reads like this :—

.....Mother was awake all that night. Time and again she said, 'How is Baby passing tonight !' — Ma said, I* saw a radiant shadow. I asked it to sit on the cot on which I sit in satsang'.

Today Ma was talking about night last. A grave silence reigned in the house. Even the ever-vigilant night watchman fell asleep. The form I saw was smoky white and scintillating. The clock struck two. Ma induced the girls with her to sit and do *japa* till the crack of the dawn.

On 20.9.60, Ma came to Calcutta and called sister Baby to her. Baby had noted down her words in a diary. A portion of it reads like this : "Look, how I sang the song 'Write *Harinam* upon me

Did I know he would love this song ? You've never told me. But just as I finished the song — he emerged. I said 'Sit over there'.

He came in the most diminutive form but made his ethereal appearance felt through vibration. The whole house was in sheer silence.

Sister Baby bemoaned that they could not sing the song so dear to Rahul at the time of his death. But Ma said, 'Your song could not reach him at that time. Only my voice could caress him —

* Generally she preferred to refer herself as 'this person' instead of I.

there was no way but for me to sing'. Indubitably, it was a departure in peace.

A true child of the Mother is never deserted of her affection ; be it in terrestrial life or beyond. Who can say enough of her supreme compassion, her soul-captivating love ? They are too warm for cold print.

**Statement Required under Rules of the Registration of
Newspaper (Central) Rules, 1956**

1. Place of Publication	...	Calcutta
2. Periodicity of its publication	...	Quarterly
3. Printer's name	...	Shri Baidyanath Dutt
Nationality	...	Indian
Address	...	The Eureka Printing Works (P) Ltd., 76, B. B. Ganguli Street, Calcutta-12
4. Publisher's name	...	Dr. Prafulla Chandra Dutt
Nationality	...	Indian
Address	...	78/5, R. K. Chatterjee Road, Calcutta-42
5. Name of Editor	...	Sri R. K. Banerjee
Nationality	...	Indian
Address	...	29A, Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta-700 019
6. Name and address of individual, who own the newspaper and partners or the shareholders holding more than one per cent of the total capital	...	Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society, Publications Division, Matri Mandir, 57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta-700 019

I, Dr. G. N. Roy (Misra), General Secretary, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dr. G. N. Roy (Misra)
General Secretary

Ma please let us remember you
in the nectar of our memories

Bramahacharini Chitra Ghosh

(Translated from Bengali)

The 1977 Purna Kumbha at Allahabad

6th January, 1977 — Today Ma started by car from Kashi for the Allahabad Purna Kumbha Mela, reaching the house of Renudi at 31, George Town in the morning. Achanchaladi (Renudi's mother) brought her down from the car, and let her enter the Kutia built for her alone by Binduda (now deceased), Renudi and Bithudi. Within half-an-hour of reaching Renudi's house Sri Chenna Reddy, the Governor of U. P., visited Ma, thereafter in the afternoon the Mahantaji of Nirvani Akhara came to see Ma; in the mean time the wife of Gopal Thakur (deceased) came to visit Ma.

I heard Ma say, "My body is rather upset"; So Ma went to lie down in a darkened room. After a couple of hours, when Renudi's brother Bindu entered the room, Ma got up in a hurry. As I was in the room I heard Ma say to Bindu, "Are there no trains?" Bindu consulted a Time Table and said, "Yes Ma, there is a train to Kashi at 9-30 p.m." Ma then said, "Call Puspa." I then realised that at the time of starting for Allahabad from Kashi, it was reported that Puspa's mother's

condition in the hospital was precarious, so I asked Puspa if she would accompany me to Allahabad, but she wanted to go. Ma said very sweetly to Puspa, "Your father and brothers want you there". When Puspa demurred a little at this, Ma said, "You must return to Kashi at once". She gave three garlands into her hands and said, "When departing from Kashi, I had the kheyal to present some garlands to your mother, but conditions were not rife then. Now you must take these three garlands with you. Puspa departed, a little later looking towards me (Chitra), Ma said, "Her mother has expired for quite sometime ; Bindu has received a phone message ; Puspa's health is weak, so the news was withhold from her, this body must save her life. She will have to travel for 3 hours in the night in the train, so the news was withhold from her". Speaking of Puspa's mother, Ma said, "It is fortunate for her to leave the mortal world with her husband alive at her age of 81."

Subsequently when Ma learnt from Puspa that her mother's last breath had conveyed through her eyes, Ma said, "Your Mother's eyes were visible to this body at the time."

7th January, 1977

Ma was in a gracious mood, in the sunny garden of Renudi's Kutia, Ma was strolling for sometime ; after a while Ma got up into a car bedecked with flowers and entered the poitals of Nirvani Akhara. Bindu was driving Ma's car. After going round Kapil Dev's temple Ma entered the hall of Nirvani

Akhara. At this juncture news came that a procession had started at 1 p.m. Ma's procession began in an open truck ; Chhabi, Mala, Shukla etc. went along singing kirtan.

In the meantime Mahantaji came along with Ma in front of the silver throne, which had a cushion of red velvet, and was nearly one storey high. Sri Ma climbed up the stairs easily ; Udasji sat near her feet. In the back seat was Swami Paramananda, in Bhaskarananda's hands was the huge white satin umbrella presented by the Raja Padmanabh (Trivandrum), decorated with silver trimmings (this was presented in the Purna Kumbha of Hardwar in 1985). At the sight of Sri Ma clad in a white silk dhoti, presented by Patalda (now deceased) the whole atmosphere was rent with a resounding sound of Conch shells.

In the rays of the midday sun Ma's face looked flushed with joy. Foreign tourists were busy taking pictures of Ma with plain cameras, movie cameras, T. V. Camera men were on the job, a team from the Calcutta T. V. Centre alongside other T. V. Camera men arrived soon. A Narayan (Shaligram) Shila was taken in a Palki in front of Ma's throne, flanked on either side by Nirvananandaji and Achyutanandaji. After traversing about 4 miles, Sri Ma entered the campus of Nirvani Akhara. Mahant Sri Giridhan Narayan Puriji very carefully escorted Ma down to the ground, and seated her in her asana. Sri Gita Bharatiji was behind Ma's throne. She is the Mahamandaleswar of Hariharananda Ashram. Subsequently arati was per-

formed before Ma and Gita Bharatiji, and then Ma entered the portals of Sri Anandamayee Camp in a flower bedecked motor car.

In this context it is worth while mentioning what Matri Bhakta Sri Tushar Kanti Ghosh wrote in the Jugantar — “In the Purna Kumbha Mela of Holy Prayag came the Mother of the Universe with her entrancing appearance. This extraordinary mighty Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee arrived with her entourage to light up the whole of Kumbha Nagar.”

In her Camp there is a continuous stream of visitors, looking for Dharma and liberation. For her darshan are sitting hundreds of devotees for days. Whenever Ma comes to give darshan, her already wonderful appearance become even more beautiful.

Earlier in the 1962 Purna Kumbha at Hardwar, on the 14th April (Chaitra Sankranti), the Nirvani Akhara people had taken Ma on the back of an elephant, on a Silver Howda and throne. This year also the request was made on behalf of the Nirvani Akhara that they would like to take Ma on the occasion of all the three main bathing days. During Didima's Mahaprayan in 1971 we became well-known to the Nirvani Akhara, and we had heard at that time that Didima's Sannyas guru was none other than the Sri Sri 108 Mangal Giri Maharaj, who was a member of the Nirvani Akhara. So, on hearing the proposal of the Nirvani Akhara, the Mahantaji of Nirvani Akhara said, “We will arrange for Ma's entry into the Kumbha Mela ourselves, but Nirvani Akhara may take Sri Ma along on the

auspicious bathing days of Makar Sankranti and Mauni Amavasya. On hearing this proposal of Mahantaji, the Nirvani Akhara gladly agreed.

12th January, 1977

This morning at 11 A.M. Sri Ma, accompanied by the Mahatmas in the Ashram, started from Saraswati Ghat in the Governor's motor launch and reached the Sangam of the Ganga and the Jamuna. At first Ma forbode the Ashram girls to accompany her, later they went along with Ma's boat in the Bajra provided by Nilimadi (Mitra). Chhabi, Bisuddha and Puspa jumped down into the water with Nilima Mitra with their respective clothes and began to proceed slowly towards Ma's launch. When the water reached up to their necks, Ma seeing from a distance a bundle of red gamchas on Nilima Mitra's head, signalled that they should get up on the Bajra with the bundle and send the materials for Puja to the launch. In this way the two saris brought by Nilimadi were utilised in the worship of Ganga and Jamuna.

Ma said, "In 1966, when the worship of Ganga was carried out, only one sari was used for the Ganga puja, this had been sent by Bhabanidi. Ma had then noticed that the mother Jamuna and mother Saraswati, immersed upto their necks in water, were glancing hopefully towards Ma. Ma then and there had the kheyal that worship of these two should also be carried out with new saris, but as there were no more saris in the boat, this worship of the Jamuna and Saraswati could not be

carried out at that time. It was thus that Ma's kheyal was fulfilled in the 1977 Purna Kumbha at Allahabad.

To participate in the first bathing day of Makar Sankranti from 5.30 A.M., the Brahmacharis, Brahmacharinis, Sadhus and householders all gathered together at the main gate of the Ashram wearing on their heads the saffron handkerchieves given by Ma. There was a huge banner in the hands of Dasuda ; at the top edge of the banner was a trident and a kamandalu (a vessel used by Sannyasis for carrying water). A few householder boys and a few Brahmacharis from the Vidyapith were standing with flags bearing Mata Anandamayee's name. Exactly at 5.30 A.M. Ma came out of her room decorated with flowers. She was wearing a White Silk Dhoti given by Patalda and had slippers on her feet. Santa (Purnananda) garlanded Ma with a huge garland made of Sandalwood. Ma's motor proceeded towards the Nirvani Akhara.

There were still a few stars visible in the sky; dawn had not yet arrived. It was bone-shakingly cold outside. Ignoring this, Ma's party proceeded forward. Arriving at the Nirvani Akhara Ma sat down with the Mahamandaleswaras in the dais for sometime.

In a little while Ma climbed up to a flower-bedecked Palki. In front of the Palki were seated Brahmacharis Nirvanananda and Bhaskarananda. Brahmachari Pranabananda held an umbrella over Ma's head. In the next Palki was the lady

Mahamandaleshwar of Nirvani Akhara, Ma Yoga-shakti. The two palkis proceeded slowly, Ma's girls were singing "Bhaja Ma Anandamayee's naam re, Prabhata samaye Mayer naam...". Ma descended from the palki near the ghat, and walked on foot with Nirvanda, Bhaskarda and Udasji upto the ghat. Ma descended into the Ganga. A few of us filled their bottles with the Ganga water washing Ma's feet. Ma sprinkled some water on her head with her hands, and then sprinkled us also. Thereafter, Ma returned slowly in the palki to her Camp via Nirvani Akhara.

15th January to 18th January 1977

Before the Amavasya Snan, for 5 days Ma was invited by some Special Akharas and Mahamandaleshwars to visit their Camps, and Ma fulfilled their wishes.

18th January 1977

It started raining from 3 A.M.

19th January 1977

It was rumoured that on the 19th on Somavati Amavasya day, the confluence of the Nakshatras was such that such an event had not taken place for the last 144 years. So it was expected that at this Maha Snan, about 1 crore 25 lakhs of people would gather together. The rain had not yet stopped at 3 A.M. when a girl from the Akhara came and told Ma, "Ma, please have the kheyal to reduce this rain". Ma laughed and said, "Well, let

us see what happens as a regret of your request." Gradually the rain was reduced to a few days only.

Ma left at 4 A.M. by car towards the Niranjani Akhara Camp. Bringing the huge banner of the Niranjani Akhara, the sadhus of our Ashram circumperambulated round Ma and the Mandaleshwars and proceeded towards the Sangam.

This time instead of a palki, a flower bedecked throne was used. Despite the rain Ma climbed up the throne, Swami Paramanandaji was seated behind Ma, and Bhaskaranandaji was standing with an umbrella, at Ma's feet sat Udasji. The road was muddy and slippery, it was difficult to walk along it. The feet completely stuck into the mud. In spite of all this, watching Ma's cheerful face, everybody in the procession kept walking. The air was rent with the recitation of the Vedas, and singing of Hara Hara Byom Byom. The Kirtan party under Chhabi Banerjee went along singing, "Brahmamaya Kumbhajal, Anandamaya Kumbhajal."

Chhabi later confessed that on that very morning Ma had called Chhabi to her room and taught her to sing this couplet. From time to time, Ma kept raising her hands to encourage the enormous crowd lining both sides of the road for hours. Ma later told us, "You have witnessed this huge gathering of Jana-Janardan due to your very good fortune."

Ma got down when she was near the ghat, washed her feet in the water of the Ganga, and sprinkled some of the waters on her head. There-

after the Ashram Sadhus had their bath, and last of all the ladies went in. Later we all gathered round Ma's chariot, Ma sprinkled the waters of Kumbha from a silver vessel over all of us. When returning, the rain had completely stopped, and even the intense cold was lost. Later Ma had a darshan of the Shrilinga in Niranjani Akhara, and entered her Camp in her car. On Ma's instructions on the day of Mauni Amavasya, Jaya and Gita, the two Brahmacharinis showed their heads.

22nd January 1977

Today Sailen Ghosh, Renu and their two sons have arrived in the Camp. A few days ago, Sailenda had suffered a heart attack, so his doctor was not agreeable to his going to the Kumbha Mela, but when Sri Ma wrote to them requesting them to be present for the last bathing on Saraswati Puja day, the doctor could not refuse any more.

Indira Gandhi was due to arrive in Ma's Camp at 12 P.M. by previous appointment. In the 1966 Purna Kumbha at Allahabad Indiraji had come to Sri Ma on 25-1-66, in order to immerse the ashes of her father Jawaharlalji. Indiraji entered Ma's Camp exactly at 12 P.M. in an open car. Swami Swarupanandaji met her car and brought her along to Ma. Chhabi, Puspa and Chitra (Ghosh) anointed her forehead with Chandan, and garlanded her with three different types of malas.

Half an hour before Indiraji's arrival, Rajivji's wife Sonia had entered Ma's room with their son and daughter, and left after receiving Ma's ashirbad.

Subsequently when Indiraji expressed a desire to be private with Ma, all of us left Ma's room and stood outside. In the meantime Nirvahanandaji took Indiraji's photo with Sri Ma. Chhabi together with Puspa set in the Kirtan Sabha outside, and sang "Sri Guru Saranam Namoh", and "Mujhe lagi lagana", these two songs repeatedly. In Ma's room Ma presented Indiraji with another Rudraksha garland, but later it was discovered that in her hurry she had left the Rudraksha garland beside Ma's pillow. Subsequently, Swarupanandaji went to the Circuit house in which Indiraji was staying and returned the garland to her.

24th January, 1977

Today was the last auspicious bathing day on the occasion of Basant Panchami. This time it was the duty of Nirvani Akhara to take Sri Ma to the bathing ghat in a procession. At 5 A.M. the Sobha Jatra started. This time under instructions from the Mahantji, Sri Giridhar Narayan Puri, the Chariot was decorated with flowers in the shape of a Peacock boat. By 2 P.M. Ma's Chariot arrived at the ghat. Before Ma descended into the water, the Naga Sadhus and other Mandaleshwars finished their bath. As previously arranged Ma went to the Ganga and sprinkled her head with the waters of the river. As today was Saraswati Puja, Ma at the request of the Mahantji did not return via Nirvani Akhara, but went straight to her Camp. In a short while Ma came and got down in the Mandap of Saraswati Puja. The Pratima had been

placed inside a Mandap decorated with flowers. Sailendra Ghosh and Ranu had arranged for the Puja. Before Ma went to the Mandap, Ranu dressed Ma in a yellow Benarasi Silk Sari, and flower ornaments. She had placed a Sola (Pith) Veera in Ma's hands. Nirvananandaji performed the Puja, assisted in the ritual rites by Shivanandaji (Saileshda).

Today, many people were initiated. After the evening Arati, Ranu again dressed Ma with a Sola crown and ornaments, and worshipped her.

25th January 1977

Today Ma departed to Modinagar from the court-yard of the Mela Camp. At Modinagar a year after Modi's death (R. B. Gujarlaji) his wife Damayanti Modi had invited Ma to a Bhagavat Saptah recital there.

In 1989 again there was a Purna Kumbha Mela at Allahabad. Sri Ma's Camp was established there again under Panuda's skilful supervision. Out of those Sadhus, Mahamandaleshwars, and Brahmacharis who had assembled there with Ma in 1977, many were no more, out of those left many were aged, still many of them had gathered together there again.

This year too, Saraswati Puja was performed in Ma's Camp. It is hoped to give an account of this in future. This year I (Chitra Ghosh) could not join in it.

But I have recapitulated in my memory from the torn pages of my diary of 1977 and sprinkled the

Sufism: A Path to Perfect Peace

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

We live in a society which advocates that happiness is the outcome of wealth and material acquisition. But when we analyse the main reason for our failure to achieve happiness, we find that happiness does not dwell in outward things. Since our minds are scattered and our hearts are cluttered up by various sorts of defilements, we are unable to establish harmony or happiness within us. Happiness comes when the mind and heart are kept in perfect unison. A person burdened with desires and ambition cannot enjoy the beauty of life because the freshness and newness of life can be experienced at every moment only through meditation as otherwise life becomes drab and disgusting existence. Sufism says that without first creating order in our mind it is impossible to bring happiness in our life. We must realise the fact that our mind is the maker of all mischief and misery. When the mind is utterly quiet, still and silent perfect tranquility prevails which is our real state. In other words, in the thought-free state of the mind alone we can attain real happiness, in that perfect stillness of the mind, there is pure bliss, a rare sense of joy and sublime feeling.

We are all members of one huge family called humanity with one common purpose and according to Sufism that one common goal is to attain God-Realization. Today the people in every land are faced with innumerable problems that were unknown to their ancestors because of the modern technological civilization. The modern man is so much involved in sensual activities his mental energy is wasted enormously hence, it is very essential one must practice meditation systematically then only there is the possibility of reducing the wastage of energy considerably. In other words by keeping one's mind in a state of stillness the quantum of energy that is dissipated through cerebro-spinal system and the ceaseless cellular activities in the physical body are substantially minimised. In meditation all the faculties with which the human mind is equipped are brought into full play and capacity. The state of meditation in no way brings about a lethargic condition of the mind or senses, but actually it creates an awareness full of dynamism and the optimum use of the mind and the senses.

Sufism stresses the importance of spiritual training and in this practice what is required is a discipline of the entire being of man of all the diverse faculties and not mere intellectual training since spiritual illumination is not dependant on scholarship and logical thinking. At the end of a long and sustained spiritual practice which involves severe control of the sense organs and the mind then there is the possibility of purging of all its impurities.

So long as there is desire in the mind, true state of FANA cannot be experienced because the carving of the mind for pleasures is always restless and unhappy. Actually FANA is a pure sublime feeling untouched and uncorrupted by thoughts or desires. FANA means die before we die as the heaviest burden of life is the ego and this self of man creates all sorts of tension, misery, mischief and conflict. FANA is complete only when one dies to every thought, desire, despair, hope and ambition in life. It is only by dying that one shall be able to find the joy of living. The Sufism interprets life as a long spiritual journey, one day it must come to an end, and when it does come to an end, paradoxically it is there at the point from which it started. Therefore, death in this world is not the end of existence. It is worthy of note that if we want to be without problems we must be thoroughly dead while living, which means spiritual renewal is impossible without dropping mental mechanism. Mystically speaking for both birth and death are unified and transcended if one melts in the blaze of Infinite Truth (HAQ).

Sufism is not a cold deliberate shunning of everybody and everything for the sake of one's own salvation, but the ultimate purpose of Sufism is the crucifixion of the egoistic personality and rising up into a new consciousness of our eternal oneness with the Supreme Reality—Allah. The state of BAQA implies the death of human ego and the resurrection into the divine consciousness and this spiritual awakening or divine elevation is achieved

after passing through the experience of FANA which means silence of the great void.

Today, we find people spiritually hungry in every corner of the globe and if there is a single point on which there can be no difference of opinion, it is that everyone of us wants happiness or peace of mind. If the world and society is in a chaotic condition, it is because there is no peace in the mind of man. Happiness comes only when our mind is perfectly clear and free from all confusions. We should enquire into the deeper aspects of the mind with ever increasing attention. It is also necessary to observe why the mind craves for sensual pleasures and how the same pleasurable enjoyments lead us to pain. Without such self-observation, it is impossible to have any kind of mastery over our mind. Whatever may be the pressures of problems confronting us, our mind should remain unaffected by circumstances. When it is necessary we must use our thinking faculty, but at other times we must be able to remain in our natural state of "perfect peace" without wasting our mental energy on unwanted thoughts and desires. The basic factor behind all human suffering is some sort of frustration and the reason for such suffering is interminable nature of desires which can be snapped only by abstention from desire altogether. Detachment in true sense of the term is an experience which liberates one's mind in overcoming distraction.

The world we live in is a wonderful place because of its perpetually changing nature. What a man hates most is monotony and hence the chang-

ing world in a way is a blessing to humanity. The world appears to men in different ways, according to their psychological constitution. To scientists it appears in one way while to ordinary men in another way. It is only to the Sufis that the world appears in its true form. The realm of spiritual liberation has always been a matter of great interest to the seeker or Murid because man physically finite being in an imperfect world aspires for the immortality. Every man (INSAN) in the heart of his heart feels an urge for unalloyed joy, absolute freedom, uninterrupted peace, perpetual life and cessation of misery.

Sufism makes a strong plea that lasting solution for human problems can be found only when the mind reaches the state of FANA because it constitutes not only the cessation of mental activities through choiceless awareness, but also the freedom from the known which means our mind have got merged in perfect silence. When we understand all about ourselves there is that emptiness and in that state there is wisdom and that wisdom begins when sorrow ends. Sufism emphasises the importance of leading a pure life and practising spiritual discipline so that the whole psycho-physical constitution of the Murid-seeker becomes changed and purified. This self discipline gives the seeker not only the necessary strength to bear the impact of mental agitation, but also saves him to stand the strains of inner struggle. Meditation (Muraqabah) means a state of alertness where no thought interferes and in that state we not only explore the various aspects

of the mind, but also the secret of self, which brings about ever new dimensions of supra-mental state on a level beyond the senses. Normally we act out of opinion, conclusion or out of speculative intentions but we must realise the fact that meditation is the action of silence. Meditation normalises the nervous system, increases orderly functioning of the brain, it promotes integrated thinking, regulated action, and behaviour. Concentration is the preliminary process by which the diversified rays of the mind are brought to a single point. But meditation which is the highest form of contemplation is the divine method by which our mind is ultimately rendered silent. This state of meditative awareness not only helps us to commune with Allah but also releases the mind from its restlessness. All forms of spiritual discipline aim at tranquillization of the mind, helping to rectify functional impairment, mental disease and structural alterations. Specialists in psychosomatic medicine and psychiatry have come to show a good deal of interest in meditation, as it attempts to eliminate psychological tensions and counteract bad influences that cause disintegration of personality. Relaxation both mental and physical is becoming more and more essential in the fast moving hurly-burly world in which we live.

Sufism holds the view that it is useless to look for peace or relaxation outside ourselves, it must come from within by leading a life of meditation. In the silent mind alone one can attain full spiritual satisfaction. The best way to attain freedom is by

egoless love, egoless work, egoless contemplation and egoless knowledge which means one has to surrender and sacrifice everything. In the present day world when crisis of character is eating into human vitals, it is our sacred duty to liberate the human consciousness from the grip of perpetual conflict by emphasizing the importance of spiritual life. It is to be realised that a man of meditation alone can perform the right action in which there will be no regrets, confusion or contradiction.

In meditation we live in this world without the images of pleasure or pain, and in that profound state of meditation (Muraqabah) we actually discover the origin of thinking then we enter into a new dimension where the division between the observer and observed does not exist and there alone the blessing of divine unification (TAWHID) can take place spontaneously and effortlessly. Free and happy indeed is the Sufi who lives in a state of perfect peace and in which state of egolessness he is able to understand and appreciate the un-ending beauty of life.

Doctor's Visit Given by Ma

Dr. Baren Guha Roy, Lt. Col. AMC (Retd.)

(Continued from previous issue)

Published in Bengali Ananda Varta

October 1984 to October 1985

Place : Naimisharanya Ma Anandamayee
Ashram Nov.-Dec. 1968.

I went as an escort to my old mother to attend the ceremony of 15 days Bhagavat Path and opening of "Vedavyas Mandir." After lunch I came to Swami Paramanandaji's room and after discussion it was decided that Kumari Basu would be sent to Lucknow by the afternoon train, because the renal colic may re-appear any time. Moreover a thorough investigation for the cause of the pain was essential. I had some Baralgan tablets with me and these were given to her to take three times a day. That would keep the pain subsided for the time being.

Again the Bhagavat discussion started from 3 P.M to 6 P.M. I had an intention to hear it ; so I came to the Pandal and found that everyone had kept his seating place marked with an "Ashan" and there was no room at all in the front side. With some Newspapers I was standing by the side of the side wall of the Pandal in the front and watching for any room to sit down. There I found two smiling elderly Bengali gentlemen came and sat

down in their respective seats. One of them asked me "Are you the Doctor ! Did you gave injection to Kumari Basu in the morning for her Kidney pain ?"

I understood that by this time the Ashramites had come to know about my arrival and activities.

"Yes", I answered.

"Then come forward and take your seat here". They called me and both of them moved a little to make a small space to accommodate me, inspite of their difficulties. For continuously three hours Bhagavat was read and discussed by Swami Akhandanandaji. It was so attractive and beautiful that it cannot be explained. Before this I had no opportunity to hear any Bhagavat discussion. After the function, I had a little talk with those two Bengali gentlemen ; they were Sri Anil Ganguly and Sri Ranjit Banerjee (Dy. Chairman I.T.C). They were staying in tents, pitched next to the Pandal.

"Again we will meet you in the evening in the Pandal", they told me and left the place.

For the local villagers and the Ashramites, there was arrangement every evening for some religious cultural programme in the Pandal. Ma Anandamayee used to come there and watch the programme. During my stay here for 15 days, I saw three religious drama's by the Sadhu's and their disciples ; Those I will remember for life-long.

(3)

At night after food at about 10 P.M. I came to Ram Panda's house for rest. Two devotees of

Haribaba came to call me as Haribaba was injured and his nose was bleeding. Swami Paramānandaji told those two devotees of Haribaba to call me.

Haribaba was staying in a room of the newly built Vedavyas Temple. On examining him I found that a little blood was coming out from both nostrils. One of his devotee was holding the nose with a piece of cloth which was soaked with blood.

“How has this happened” I enquired and came to know that Haribaba himself was trying to open a tightly closed window and got hurt as the window opened suddenly and hit his nose. Since then blood was oozing from both nostrils.

I had Adreline ampoules with me. I broke two ampoules and soaked a little gauge and packed both the nostrils. Gradually the bleeding stopped. I gave two tablets of a Painkiller drug and sleeping pills. When I was coming out Haribaba gave a box of good sweets and few apples and told smilingly, “Beta, take this doctor’s fee.”

Unexpectedly such a visit was welcomed. Later on one day when I was talking to Haribaba I came to know that he was also a student of Medical College and left due to attraction of this religious path.

(4)

Next day Dr. Gunen Roy (Misra), (the then Director of Niramoy Poly Clinic) came from Calcutta. One room by the side of our room in the house of Ram Panda was meant for him. We were introduced to each other and were happy and

delighted. Dr. Gunen Roy (Misra) was an ex-student of our Medical College, Calcutta and qualified 7 years earlier than me. He was in touch with Ma Anandamayee since long ago.

As my mother and I were staying a little away from the Ashram I was feeling unsecured at night. I told Dr. Gunen Roy (Misra) about my gradual medical practice and income. He smiled and remarked "Very good, keep it up."

By and by my medical practice went roaring up. Good fruits and sweets were coming as medical fee. Many people were suffering from common cold, influenza, fever due to the severe cold of the month of November in the open. Few cases of diarrhoea and dysentery were also found amongst the cooks and servants. I became busy in distributing medicine. As people were benefited, my name was spreading. One stationery cum grocery shop of the village used to keep some common medicines. The owner of the shop used to sell medicine and practice in the village. I told him to get necessary medicines from Lucknow. He got those medicines through the Public Bus Driver from Lucknow, which was about 100 K.M. away. The shop keeper took my service also for his private patients of the village.

(5)

In the meantime, daily in the morning and afternoon twice, I was attending the Bhagavat discourse, feeling extremely delightful. So long in my life this Bhagavat was unknown to me.

Medical practice was continued as required.

Plenty of fruits and sweets were coming. Some of them I used and distributed to others. Swarupda and Monida were in charge of General Kitchen. There I was highly entertained as I used to look after the workers of the kitchen more carefully than the sadhu sanniyasis. I used to say, "If these workers fell sick the whole camp people will remain without food. They are V.I.P's to me."

Due to severe cold Sri Ranjit Banerjee had high fever and chest pain. I was called. The treatment started. Ranjitda was advised not to come out of tent at night to go to bathroom. In the tent there was a small tea-table on which Ma Anandamayee's one photo was kept. Bhawanidi, wife of Ranjitda used to worship Ma's photo there.

So within the same tent, to keep bathroom arrangement at night was not accepted by Ranjitda. But Bhawanidi, a dutiful devoted wife, forced Ranjitda to obey the advise of the doctor. Thus Ranjitda was cured early from influenza and bronchitis.

(6)

Seven-eight days had passed. One morning I was called to Ma's bed room, to see something wrong in her right palm. On examination, I could make out that some foreign body, most probably a wooden splinter was embedded inside the palm. So that portion of the palm had become hard, inflamed and gradually pus was forming. Ma herself gave the history, that a few days back

when she kept her palm on the newly wooden door of the Vedavyas temple something went inside as she pulled out her hand. Most likely a thin wooden piece went inside the palm.

Until one or two days passed, nothing could be predicted. Ma does not take any medicine orally — there was no question of taking any injections. But the infection was gradually spreading upwards of the hand and fore-arm.

I gave my opinion that a little incision would have to be given to bring out the thorn ; otherwise there will be no remedy.

An operation to be performed on Ma's body — that too in such remote village — everybody became worried. Swami Paramanandaji, Gurupriyadi, Panuda, Dr. Gunen Roy (Misra), Chitradi, — all objected that there could be no operation in this place and condition. If at all an operation is essential, Ma will be moved to Lucknow or Delhi.

I came out. Next morning at 8 A.M. I was called again in Ma's room. Gurupriyadi told me that last night Ma could not rest at all due to severe pain of the hand.

I re-examined Ma. The infection of the palm was localised and pus was forming. Again the High Power Committee sat for a further line of action. Now what to do with Ma ? They all asked me whether I had all necessary things for the operation with me so that I could remove the pus and thorn.

“Yes, I am in possession of everything”, I replied.

Now Ma said quickly, "Baba, then you do something. All are insisting that I should go to Lucknow or Delhi. But I am not willing. I will not go anywhere leaving function of Vedavyas temple and Bhagavat discourse."

"Well, I am ready to do everything. But your Bhaktas are not agreeing" I replied.

Ma said firmly, "When I am willing, that will be done. Tomorrow morning before 8 A.M. you must come after your bath."

(7)

Gradually the Ashramites came to know that tomorrow morning the son of Santi Sudhadi will operate on the hand of Ma as she was unwilling to go to Lucknow or Delhi. Dr. Priya Ranjan Ghosh of Ranchi, one of the Ashramites since long, was my cousin uncle. He was a good dental surgeon with good practice. He had left his practice, donated his house to the Ashram and at present remains with Ma. When he came to know all, he called me and told, "Gouranga (my nick name) what was the necessity to take the trouble of operation here? If you were unwilling to perform the operation, then Ma had no other alternative, but to go to Lucknow or Delhi."

I replied, "Uncle, this is a minor incision on hand to drain out the pus, infected blood and the thorn. When Ma herself is willing and encouraging me to do the needful what is the worry?"

"Then go ahead; hope you have got all necessary things with you. If you need anything more,

come with me in my room", uncle assured and took me to his room. Uncle had some Surgical instruments specially meant for the dental treatment. One instrument, a probe was not with me — which was essential to detect the thorn after incision of the hand. I took that from my uncle.

(8)

During lunch time in the General Dining Hall, when I met many devotees of Ma, I had to face the same queries ; why I was going ahead to operate on Ma. I was perplexed when I heard different adverse comments of the devotees. So much so, that I could not concentrate properly to hear the Bhagavat discourse from 3 P.M. to 6 P.M. I was seated next to Anil Ganguly and Ranjit Banerjee. They also noticed my restlessness and enquired what was wrong with me.

From a distance, I could see Ma on the dias ; She was hearing the Bhagavat in a relaxed mood. I gathered some courage after watching her continuously for sometime. In the evening, I went to Swami Paramanandaji's room. He was surprised and asked me, "Well doctor ; What for you are here ?"

Quietly I sat for sometime and asked Swamiji, "Shall I do the operation on Ma tomorrow ? What is your personal opinion ?"

Swamiji replied immediately, "When you have got assurance from Ma, you do the needful without any fear."

Well, whatever was the dilemma, all were vanished from my mind.

(9)

After dinner I went to bed. My mother was also lying a little away. Dr. Gunen Roy was in the next room. It was approximately 12 midnight. I woke up due to pain of the abdomen. Gradually the pain increased. I tossed in bed. After some time I got up and took a tablet of Baralgan (pain remover tablet) and one Sonaryl tablet (sleeping tablet) and thought that pain will subside and I will fall asleep soon.

Fifteen to twenty minutes passed. Pain did not subside — rather gradually increased. I was feeling vomiting tendency. I felt an urge for bathroom. I came out in the open with the hurricane lamp and tried to pass urine; only a few drops I could pass; that urine was like blood. I felt burning sensation while passing urine. I could make out that the pain was originating in right Kidney region and going downwards. Is it renal colic like that girl Basu whom I treated on the first day?

I was feeling thirsty. I drank plenty of water. It came to my mind that I took less water throughout the whole day inspite of lot of movements. I was tossing in bed like a cut "Kai" fish. By this time my mother woke up and asked me what had happened. Then she took a piece of woollen cloth and warmed up over the burning hurricane lamp and gave compress to my Kidney region. Ten to fifteen minutes passed but no sign of relief, rather the pain increased.

Then my mother knocked the next room-door and called Dr. Gunen Roy and told in detail

what had happened to me. Gunenda examined me. It will be approximately about 1 A.M. What to do? I requested Gunenda — please push a Pethedrine injection which was available in my bag. Please give me the relief. Gunenda did the same and within 15 to 20 minutes I fell asleep. I got up at 7-30 A.M. when Gunenda woke me up.

Dr. Gunen Roy asked me, "How you are feeling now?" "A little better. No pain" I answered. Gunenda was dressed up after morning bath. He said, "Let me go to Ma and say that no operation on her hand can be performed to-day at 8 A.M. by Baren as he himself is sick."

I thought that my sudden sickness was good for all as most of the devotees were insisting me not to do the operation on Ma in this remote place of Naimisharanya. I fell asleep again.

(10)

At about 10 A.M. I got up after seeing a dream that I had operated on the hand of Ma and Ma was laughing. I was feeling far better and fresh. I took a dip in "Narayan Kunda's" warm water. Then changed into Dhuti and Punjabi and took the medical bag and went to the Ashram. I took my seat in "Vyasdeb's" temple. It was about 11-30 A.M. The Bhagavat discourse was continued and Ma was in attendance on the dias.

From a distance Ma could see me. As soon as Bhagavat was over at 12 Noon, somebody came and told me that Ma had called me in her room. I reached there. Ma asked how I was feeling and

when I will perform the operation. I was hesitating what to answer — when Gurupriyadi came and told, “Let Ma take a little food ; then you do the operation. You wait in the veranda.”

Later on I heard that in the morning at 8 A.M. when Dr. Gunen Roy came and told Ma that there will be no operation as doctor himself was sick — Ma smiled a little.

(11)

After sometime Ma called me inside her room. There were many devotees at that time. I told, “It is not possible to do the operation in presence of all. Only one is required to show me the torch light on the spot of operation.”

Gurupriyadi asked all to wait in the veranda and closed the door. Ma rested on the wooden platform and produced her right hand towards me. I took my seat on a mat on the floor. Ma's hand was cleaned with hot water, Savlon, Iodine and Spirit. I was ready to give incision on the right palm when suddenly I remembered that I had no local anaesthesia for application. In the medicine bag there was nothing of that kind. Who will think of carrying anaesthesia with the First Aid Kit ?

Then what to do ? Ma's pulse rate was slow and feeble. Such an incision without local anaesthesia may produce shock and there will be after effect. Will Ma be able to stand that in her weak health ?



Ma's Statue installed at Tarapeeth Ashram on 20.2.89.



"Nagar-Parikrama" with photographs of Shree Shree Tara Ma, Ma Anandamayi and 108 Shree Muktananda Giriji at Tarapeeth Ashram on 19.2.89 on the occasion of Ma's **"Murti Abhisek"**



Devotees singing Kirtan near the Mancha on 12.3.89 at Matri-Mandir on the occasion of Society's Annual Nam-Yagna



Devotees listening to Kirtan sung by a large number of ladies round the "Mancha" erected on the occasion of Nam-Yagna on 12.3.89

(12)

As I was quiet for two minutes Ma asked me "Well Doctor! Why you are quiet?"

I frankly admitted my problem to Ma. Immediately Gurupriyadi replied, "Then it is better not to operate on Ma."

Ma smiled and told, "Doctor you do the operation. I will bear out the pain."

Having the encouragement from Ma I incised on the palm of Ma. Pus and blood came out. Then I started to locate the thorn with the probe but failed. I thought within 4 to 5 minutes all will be over, but failed. Whereas Ma was showing no sign of pain or distress. I felt the pulse which was gradually becoming less and less in count and then no sensation of pulse—stopped? I became nervous. I examined my pulse which was too fast. I felt sweating over my forehead in the winter month of December in Naimisharanya. I was feeling like fainting.

Gurupriyadi asked, "Doctor what is wrong with you?"

I told fearfully, "Ma is behaving unusually. No pulse can be felt."

Gurupriyadi cried out, "Have you killed Ma?"

At that moment Ma opened both of her eyes half as if she was watching something from far away. I got courage and asked, "Ma, what is the wrong with you? Are you feeling pain?"

Ma nodded her head to indicate that she was perfectly normal.

Then I asked Ma, "Can I give a little longer incision in your hand? I am unable to hold the thorn."

Ma gave permission by moving her head. Immediately I incised a little more — profuse blood and pus came out; I could bring out the thorn with a forcep. I told Ma "All is over. Now I will give three small stitches and bandage your hand."

Gurupriyadi was relieved and uttered, "Oh God; you have saved us. Narayan! Narayan!"

Ma instructed and told, "Doctor keep that thorn in a cotton and show to all."

Gradually Ma's pulse returned to normal. Then Ma told "Didi, open the door and let all come. Doctor, do not go away — sit down."

As the door was opened, all rushed inside. Ma asked all to sit down and told; "Now you all hear a strange happening in my life."

(To be continued)

"Remember one thing. If you want peace of mind then give up fault-finding. If you would search for fault at all, find your own faults and shortcomings. Learn to accept everyone as your own. No one is alien to you, the whole world is yours."

—Sri Sārada Devi, the Holy Mother

What they say about Indra and Virochana

Nirmal Chandra Ghosh

Lord Brahma, the head of all beings, dwells in the palace called Aparajita in the city of Salajya in Brahmaloaka. Once he said,

“Atma (self, soul) is sinless, sorrowless, deathless (immortal), free from infirmity, thirst and hunger. Whatever He wills is sure to happen, whatever he wants to get He is sure to get. One should try to know about Him and search for Him. By knowing about Him (from competent teachers and relevant scriptures) and searching for Him (by performing austerities, penances and meditation etc) one realises Him and gets access to all regions and all his desires are fulfilled.”

The sacred utterance of Lord Brahma was heard by some people and they told about it to others, and in this way both the gods and the demons (asuras) came to know about the sacred utterance of Lord Brahma. They said among themselves, “It is very well indeed ! We shall try to know and search about this Atma and realise Him, so that we may have access to all regions and get all our desires fulfilled”. So the gods selected Indra (the head of the gods) for going to Lord Brahma for acquiring this knowledge ; and the demons selected

Virochana (the head of the demons) for the same purpose. Indra and Virochana went to Lord Brahma with fagots in their hands separately, one without the knowledge of the other, because the gods and the demons were bitter enemies. Indra and virochana lived there for thirty years by observing celibacy, austerity and penances and vows.

One day Lord Brahma asked them, "For what purpose have you two been living here for so many years?"

They replied, "Revered Sir! We heard from some people that you said, one should know that self, who is sinless, sorrowless, deathless, free from infirmity, thirst and hunger and whatever He (self) wills is sure to happen and whatever He wants He is sure to get. One should aspire to know about Him, search for Him. By realising Him one gets access to all regions and all his desires are fulfilled. We are living here for so many years with the intention of knowing about that self from you."

Lord Brahma said, "The supreme person, who is in the eyes, is Atma. He is immortal, fearless, and He is Brahma." They paused for a while, and without understanding the real significance of what Lord Brahma said, enquired, "Which of the two images of one's own self does one see in a looking glass and in a water vessel full of water, is Atma?"

Lord Brahma replied, "Atma is seen in all these. After seeing the self in a water vessel if you do not understand anything about him then come to me."

The two cast their eyes on water in a vessel full of water and each saw his own image of his body.

Then Lord Brahma asked them, "What did you see?" Both replied, "I have seen the whole of Atma, even the nails and hair. In fact it is my own image."

Lord Brahma asked them to get themselves cleaned and put on neat and beautiful garments and ornaments and look in the water in the vessel. They then got themselves cleaned, put on beautiful garments and ornaments and then looked in the water in the vessel. Lord Brahma asked them, "What do you see?" Both of them replied, "I saw my clean and beautiful image just like my own body, clean and beautifully dressed with clothes and ornaments". Lord Brahma said to them, "That is Atma. That is immortal and fearless. That is Brahma". Both of them were pleased to hear Lord Brahma and they left the place satisfied and with peaceful minds.

Lord Brahma seeing them going away, pondered within himself, that these two fellows are going away without knowing Self and without realising Him; out of the gods and the demons whoever will accept the knowledge of Brahma (Self) in the way in which they have so far understood (i.e. Self in the body), they will be defeated (become unsuccessful in attaining their objective) and perish.

Virochana, the king of the demons, returned to the demons highly satisfied with the knowledge of Atma, which he understood to be the body because its shadow was the image in the water, and he told about this to the demons. The secret knowledge (Upanishad) about Atma that he imparted

to the asuras is that Atma is nothing but the body. In this mortal world one should worship this body and serve this body. By worshipping this body and serving this body in this world, one will reap all benefits in this world and in other worlds". So the asuras followed up his advice. They cared only for the betterment, nourishment, dressing and beautifying of their bodies. They did not give alms to the poor, became faithless, did not perform any rituals and sacrifices and did not worship god. Therefore even today one who does not give alms, who is faithless, does not perform sacrifices and does not worship god is said to be of asura-swabhava (asuric nature), and the knowledge of such a person is called 'asuri upanishad'. Such persons believe that they will conquer the other worlds if they well-dress, nourish and beautify their bodies, and after death they carry the dead bodies to the funeral with great pomp and show.

On the other hand, while on the way, before returning to the gods, Indra, the head of the gods, thought within himself: "This image that I have seen in water looks clean and beautiful with nice dresses and ornaments. It will also look blind or one-eyed, lame and without limbs, and even dead, if the body is blind or one-eyed, lame and without limbs, and dead. I do not see any good out of this type of knowledge of self. It will not serve our purpose". So without going to his palace in Indrapuri in heaven he returned to Lord Brahma with fagots in hand.

On seeing him Lord Brahma said, "Dear Indra ! Being pleased and satisfied, you left this place with

Virochana. Why have you come back ?” Indra replied, “Revered Sir ! The image in water that I saw looks clean and well-dressed with clothes and beautified with ornaments if the body is clean, well dressed with clothes and beautified with ornaments. It will also look blind or one-eyed, lame and without limbs and even dead if the body is blind or one-eyed, lame and without limbs and dead. I do not see any good out of this type of knowledge of Self (image of the body in water). It will not give us the desired result.” Lord Brahma said, “Indra ! It is so, as you say. I shall again explain to you about Atma about which I told you before. You stay here for another thirty-two years by observing the vow of ‘brahmacharya’ (celibacy, austerity, penance and meditation).

After thirty-two years had elapsed Lord Brahma said to Indra, “The self that being glorified sees and wanders in dreams during sleep is Atma. He is immortal. He is fearless. He is Brahma.”

Indra was satisfied with the answer. He left the place in peaceful mind but before returning to the gods he mused within himself, “It is true that even if this body is blind or one-eyed the self that sees the dreams is not blind or one-eyed, if this body is lame and without limbs, the self that sees the dreams is not lame and without limbs, if this body is defective or deformed the self that sees the dreams is not defective or deformed ; but the self that sees the dreams sometimes becomes sorrowful, sometimes becomes afraid, sometimes he feels that he is being killed and sometimes he feels that some one is pur-

suing him, and sometimes he is crying. I do not see any good out of the knowledge of this type of self. It will not yield the desired objective". So thinking, the head of the gods, returned to Lord Brahma with fagots in hand. Seeing him Lord Brahma said, "Dear Indra ! You left this place after being satisfied with the answer. Why have you come back ?"

Indra said, "Revered Sir ! I do not see any good out of the knowledge of the self who sees dreams while asleep. It is true if this body is blind or one-eyed, the self that sees the dreams is not blind or one-eyed, if this body is lame and without limbs the self that sees the dreams is not lame and without limbs, even if this body is defective or deformed, the self that sees the dreams is not defective or deformed ; but the self that sees dreams sometimes becomes sorrowful, sometimes becomes afraid, sometimes he feels that he is being killed, sometimes he feels that some one is pursuing him, and sometimes he is crying. I therefore do not see the desired result out of the knowledge of the self who sees dreams."

Lord Brahma said, "Oh Indra ! It is so as you say. I shall again explain about self to you. You live here for another thirty-two years by observing brahmacharya."

As directed by Lord Brahma, Indra lived there for another thirty-two years. Then Lord Brahma said, "One, who is in the state of very sound sleep without dreams such that all the senses are calm and quiet and withdrawn from the outside objects

and activities, and who is devoid of all the fatigues in the state of awakening and sleeping in the midst of dreams, and in that state enjoys bliss, is Atma.”

Indra was happy to hear what Lord Brahma said and left the place satisfied. Before returning to the gods however he became suspicious about this knowledge of self that he received from Lord Brahma because he felt that the self in the state of very sound sleep without dreams does not know anything about him and others at the time of sleep and even after awakening cannot recollect what happened during that period of sleep as if he was dead during the period of sleep. So he did not expect to achieve the desired objective out of this knowledge. Indra therefore returned to Lord Brahma again with fagots in hand.

Lord Brahma asked him, “Dear Indra ! You left this place satisfied. Why did you come back again ?”

Indra said, “Revered Sir ! The self in the state of very sound sleep without dreams, about whom you instructed me does not know in that state that ‘I am so and so and I am such’ and also does not know about any of the beings around him. It seems that he is dead. I therefore do not see that the knowledge about such self will enable me to achieve my objective.”

Lord Brahma said, “Oh Indra ! It is so, as you say. I shall again tell you about Atma. I shall not tell anything about anybody else. You live here for another five years more by observing the vow of brahmacharya.”

Indra lived in Lord Brahma's place for five years more as advised by Lord Brahma. People therefore say that Indra had to live in Lord Brahma's place for one hundred and one years in order to acquire the knowledge of Brahma (Self or Atma). Now Lord Brahma began to speak about self, who is beyond the reach of the Individual soul, Jeevatma in the three states, viz., awakening, sleep in dreams and very sound sleep without dreams, who is the witness of the three states but unknown to persons who have not acquired the knowledge of Brahma.

He said, "Oh Indra! This body is mortal, sure to die. It is the abode of the immortal self which is formless. One who is attached and addicted to the body is subject to worldly sorrows and happiness and there is no end of his sufferings and happiness. One, who is not attached and addicted to the body, is not affected by worldly sorrows and happiness."

"Wind has no body, so also subtle cloud, lightning and thunder hidden in the sky. When the winter ends and summer begins, they rise from the sky and due to the heat of the sun manifest themselves in their own respective forms during the rains. Similarly this self in bliss, which is in every body, unseen and unknown due to illusion and ignorance, is realised in the body (cavity of the heart) shining with resplendant glow in His own real identity by observing 'brahmacharya' and acquiring the knowledge of Brahma from the competent teacher and by performing penances, austerities and meditation according to the advice of the teacher.

He (self) is the supreme person. He is Brahma. He is Atma and Paramatma. The individual who has been able to identify himself with supreme self, enjoys while laughing, playing, riding, and associating or mixing with women and kinsmen, getting rid of the feeling of the body, the mortal body that he got from his parents. Just as a chariot is drawn by a horse connected with it, so the body of such a realised person continues to function (live) due to the vital force which is manifested in the form of breathing system. So long as this self remains in the body, the sense of seeing remains active in the eyes and self in the eyes sees with the eyes. He knows that He (the supreme self, Atma with whom he has identified himself by realising the supreme self i.e., Brahma, Atma, Paramatma) sees ; the eyes are for Him (the supreme self) to see. Similarly one who knows that He smells, He is Atma. The sense of smelling is for Him for the purpose of smelling. Similarly one who knows that He utters speeches, He is Atma. The sense of speech is for Him for the purpose of speaking, similarly one who knows that He hears, He is Atma. The sense of hearing is for Him for the purpose of hearing similarly one who knows that He thinks, He is Atma. Mind is His divine (subtle, not earthly) eye. The aforesaid Self with this divine mental eye sees all the glorified regions, becomes joyful, and all His desires are fulfilled. The gods worship and meditate on the above mentioned self, about whom Lord Brahma instructed Indra, the king of the gods. They therefore get access to all the regions and

enjoy all the enjoyments there, and all their desires get fulfilled.

Any one, who acquires the knowledge of self from scriptures (the upanishads) and competent teachers and personal effort (e.g. brahmacharya, austerities, meditation, self control), realises Brahma (Self or Atma) and gets access to all regions, enjoys all the enjoyments there, and all his desires are fulfilled. Lord Brahma said so. Lord Brahma said so.

God's mercy pours down everywhere and at all times. One becomes aware of this by making oneself receptive to it. To pray constantly for His grace is man's duty.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Science and Sanskrit Scriptures

Dharamsinh M. Sampat

(Depicting the journey of commonsense to the essence, the journey of intellectual science towards the universal Order, the Order of Sri Ma, the mother Eternal. A comparison of Scientific technique with scriptural technique, for leading the finite to the Infinite.)

The most ancient and important historical fact about Sanskrit Scriptures is their spirit of enquiry. In Mundakopanishad, the disciple asks his "Guru" the seed question "What is it by knowing which, all of this becomes known". The question-answer sequence lies at the root of Sanskrit scriptures. In question, lies the spirit of enquiry. Science also, is based on the spirit of enquiry.

Both, Science and real philosophy are trying to find the essence underlying the entire Existence.

Sanskrit philosophy includes Vedic Philosophy with its branch YOGA which relates to pure experience as distinct from relative experience. There is a direct experience which is different from experience obtained from space-time relations, which are subject to the limitations of space and the fiction of time. Time is not real but a notion created by human thought to measure two relative concepts. Time on our earth is not the same as the time on Mars or Jupiter or Neptune. Our earth moves round the sun in about 365 days,

which constitutes the year on our earth. The year on Mars may be different depending on the movement of Mars around the sun and concept of time on Mars may be different from our time. There is no exact thing as time. It is something conjured up by human mind. Now in Yoga, the emphasis is on the mind, rather than on, the body or its postures. Actually, the word 'Asana' appears only twice in the entire Yoga Sutras of Maharshi Patanjali. 'Asana' may find place in Hatha Yoga, but in Raja Yoga, which prescribes the royal road to knowledge, the emphasis is thoroughly on knowledge and its various aspects.

Like the sound barrier or the light barrier, there is also a mind barrier, about which science has not made any study. Now this mind barrier has to be crossed, so that you can see what is on the other side of the conventional mind.

The ultimate Essence is infinite and is not bound by anything. In fact, it is 'free'. It is beyond the scope of earthly reasoning. Reason has its limitations. Our reasoning is based on values, established by earthly beings, from their findings, beliefs and assumptions, which do *not necessarily* have a universal application. Earthlings have a limited knowledge of the Universe. Our understanding of the universe is limited and so, our reasoning and its application are also limited, in the wider context of the universe.

The sense of limitation, the sense of 'conditions' including scientific conditions has to be surmounted, in order to understand infinity.

The infinite is not finite and not 'conditioned'. Finite means are not sufficient to grasp the Infinite. Scientific conditions are impediments, which impair the thorough understanding of the entirety of the unconditioned Reality. You cannot grasp the limitless with limitations. Therefore, you have to shed the limits as and when possible, so that you may be able to see BEYOND the limits — beyond the limitations of mind and even beyond the present-day scientific thought.

So, the 'beyond' actually does exist. It is beyond the mind barrier, and is reached by crossing the mind barrier. It is the field from where flashes come — from where Newton got the flash, from where flash came to Archimedes or from where flashed the Theory of Relativity in the mind of Dr. Einstein — the field from where you get your flashes.

When the 'beyond' opens up, there is a unique perception. It is something better than what an X-ray perception can be. It just flashes and goes and you have no control over it. Such perception is even beyond the domain of space-time-continuum. All along this experience goes parallel to science and not contrary to science, and what is more, it extends beyond the field of science into realms unknown to science at present, but this unknown is not unknowable.

Extending this scriptural idea of vision beyond the horizon, to scientific propositions, we may see how well it can blend with science in extending its vision in working out some of its scientific projections.

Science has often resorted to fantasy. In scientific experiments, anti-particles have been detected, indicating the possibility of an anti-universe, the 'how and where' of it is still under investigation. Scientists feel that there must be somewhere, somehow an anti-universe, which balances this universe of ours. Here science ventures into the realm of fantasy. This opens up innumerable options for exploration, and here scriptures can provide a guideline.

Sanskrit scriptures say that ultimately there is the only ONE without a second. Science may explore any number of fields, but ultimately there is one single unified field. Dr. Einstein hinted at the Unified Theory. Dr. Abdus Salaam and others were awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics for giving a progressive thrust to this Theory. According to modern science, there are four fundamental forces of nature viz. (1) gravitation (2) electro-magnetic force (3) strong nuclear force and (4) Weak nuclear force. At present they appear separate, but scientists feel that ultimately they may be inter-related. Physicists have worked out some inter-relation between electro-magnetic and weak nuclear force and they are trying to work out further unification. Scientists are expanding their investigations but also seem to be trying to converge in the results, towards a unified concept.

Following the scriptural line of thought, it may be deduced that ultimately everything should subside into the only ONE and absolute. The relative aspect should come to an end. In the stable ulti-

mate Reality, when 'Maya' starts operating, duality sets in and the concept of relativity is generated. And so, anti-universe, if any, can subsist in the field of 'Maya'. But where is it positioned in relation to our Universe ?

Similar question arises in relation to the particle and the anti-particle, and this leads us to the possibility that where there is 'existence' there exist also, the 'positive' and the 'negative' or the 'pro' and 'anti' together. There is a peculiar balance between the two and neither can exist alone or without its 'anti'.

AND — that leads us to the Cosmic Dance. — the RAASA of Srimad Bhagawata

One Gopi and One Krishna

One negative and one positive

Pairs, in groups and cycles,

Performing the Cosmic Dance.

This is not Krishna-Gopi Affair. It depicts how the stable ENTITY is activated into duality. Something like the 'Big Bang' of the scientists.

But Before that is (SHOONYA) — VOID, and does this VOID stand for non-existence ? No ; it stands for,

Existence,

In Statelessness,

Of timeless and formless meaningfulness,

Self-evident ;

Conscious, before consciousness was split in

finite minds,

True in itself,

Beyond all limits, Yet within reach,

The Ultimate Truth

The final answer to all queries,
Truth in infinity.

Scientists talk about the Big Bang and they are in two minds about what was before that. Some say there was nothing; some say there should be something before that. How can something come out of nothing? Our scriptures say, there was Existence (Asti) in Statelessness, self-contained, like contents without a container. 'Time' did not exist at that time; time was yet to be born. Then, form was absent; because formation had not started, but it did not amount to 'nothingness' because it meant something and meaning was inherent in it. You needed no evidence about it because your conscience was full of it before your consciousness broke into pieces in chasing the fragments of the totality. Truth, by itself, stood without a prop to make it stand. Truth everywhere, was unlimited but within the range of cognition, answering all your questions upto infinity. The key lies-in cognition.

This is the fact known to our Scriptures, and points out the avenue that science will have to explore, and sooner or later. Science will have to reformulate its method of exploration making provision for acceptance of unconditioned items like the mind and looking beyond the mind barrier. Parapsychology is knocking at the doors of scientists and it is to be seen how long it can be kept out of the scientific community.

If you refer to Geeta and interpreting it a little liberally, you will find that in Chapter XIII Verse 12, the Lord has said

“Now I tell you that, which is to be known,
By knowing which, one enters the realm of the
imperishable

Which is beginningless,
The Beyond — all immune, (PARA-BRAHMA)
which is neither existent nor non-existent,
(Because it overflows our concept of existence)
— Geeta interpreted for Scientists.

After having attained that knowledge one enters the field from where nothing is hidden and the entire picture of things that come to an end and things that are constant, is revealed. That is the ultimate in knowledge and is variously described in the 'slokas' of Geeta.

They have a message for cosmologists, they have a message for the Physicists, and for the scientists.

If scientists and people with knowledge of Sanskrit scriptures keep up a regular dialogue on matters of common interest a lot can be achieved in the field of basic knowledge about the ultimate Reality.

It may be emphasised that Sanskrit is not a dead language and Sanskrit Scriptures contain so many enlightening features which can enhance the understanding of everyone and help science in its research. When Sanskrit is studied in so many Universities all over the world and not being merely linguistic but a language which can contribute a lot to society and science, on basic knowledge, and so is alive and shall live as long as the spirit of enquiry lives.

MA Amidst Everything Yet Amidst Nothing*

Bandhu (Friend)

It was Bhadra Shukla Navami in 1982 that brought the darkest eclipse of our lives — for it was on that day that “MA” decided to withdraw Herself ‘physically’ from our midst ; yet amidst that all-pervading darkness, many of us have still been witness to ‘beacons of light’ — ‘kripa’ which is truly ‘ahetuki’ (without any reason).

Even to attempt an appraisal of MA’s personality would be the height of arrogance. I would merely endeavour to behold certain facets of HER persona, which prove beyond the shadow of all doubts, an eternal truism, which emanated from MA Herself. For truly, whatever ‘role’ She played, She was the epitome of perfection. Yet, in no particular role was She attached or immersed in — it was, as I see it, truly “amidst everything, yet amidst nothing”. It was perhaps part of Her ‘lila’ for which She performed these roles, but never out of necessity or compulsion.

I shall try to behold certain visible roles that my limited and mortal vision has allowed me to perceive-roles, where She was perfection personified !

* MA’s saying on several occasions in several different contexts.

MA as a 'householder', 'teacher by example', 'supreme philosopher', 'Divinity' and dearest of all, 'Mother par excellence'.

In her early years as a *householder*, examples abound of Her excellence and perfection; She was always the perfect hostess, resplendant in culinary talents, taking care to see that everybody is carefully fed and looked after, before She attended to even the smallest of Her needs. This was manifested, even later in Her life when in the Ashram the well-being of everybody was Her uppermost and daily concern, right down to everyday's menu, which inevitably was one of the main points of Her discussion with Swami Paramanandaji every night of the year.

But, yet She never 'lost' Herself over such chores, much as it would seem to several people. In fact, when some people had on occasions, suggested to MA that instead of discussing such mundane chores, the time with Swami Paramanandaji could perhaps be spent more fruitfully in pursuit of 'higher thoughts' — to which She had replied, "Do you think that this (i.e. daily chores) is bereft of IT (the spirit of the Divine)?" Again, whilst immersed in Her role as a householder, She demonstrates the essential "ONE-ness" of The Spirit.

As a *teacher by example* Her excellence knew no bounds. She preached simplicity and She truly epitomised this quality in Her life-style. While She rested on precious little other than a 'sattranji' (jute carpet), a straw mat, and an immaculate white

sheet and adorned only a simple white cotton 'dhoti' and 'chaddar', yet She was resplendant in it, with majesty which was beyond compare !

She was also extremely careful that food should never be wasted. She tried to inculcate this virtue in everybody and saw it fit to again teach by example. I could not have been more than ten years of age, but till today this incident has always been visible in my mind's eye.

Ma was about to enter Kanyapeeth (the Ashram girls' residential school, based in Varanasi) after 'satsang'. A young brahmacharini was busy washing and cleansing the rice and in the process, inadvertently dropped a few grains of rice on the floor. The epitome of perfection that She is, Ma promptly stepped down to collect those *few grains* of rice, and, departing from Her normal convention, put those grains in Her mouth. I have yet to see a more effective lesson taught in so unassuming a manner.

Ever so often, we have seen Ma imploring ever so humbly, "This body is a poor unlettered girl and only says things out of turn ('utpatang baath')." Yet, a perusal of Her sayings demonstrates a unique capability of elucidating the highest *philosophical truths* in the simplest of words. Her erudition in the highest forms of Hindu philosophy and religion have been recognised and acclaimed by successive presiding authorities of Hindu philosophy and thought. Yet again, She conclusively proves that while She can immerse Herself in a particular role, yet She is never 'bound' in it or by it.

MA has been perceived in very many forms of *Divinity* yet at no time has She laid claim to it personally. But here too, Her 'lila' has been faultless ! It is a documented fact that amongst Her first devotees in Dhaka, they had had the unique blessing of seeing MA as "*Dasa Mahavidya*", simultaneously, whilst engaging in 'satsang'; the celebrated Mahatma, Shankar Bharati, also had a vision of "Lalita Tripurasundari Debi" asking him to visit Her in Bhadaini, Varanasi, at a time when MA was residing in person in Her Bhadaini Ashram (in Varanasi). Thereafter, Shankar Bharati merely came to the Ashram and stood in front of MA, in perfect silence — their 'communication' was complete !

However, the dearest of Her manifestations, was truly of a '*Mother per excellence*'. She could be compassionate, She could cajole, She could give you motherly love, She could admonish you, She could take care of you and She could forgive you, unconditionally, like no other mother ! Personal instances would be far too numerous to recount, but this particular manifestation was apparent to all. Ma 'embraced' you, as it were, with a unique kind of transcendental bliss, which left oneself shorn of all the troubles and cares of this world. She bestowed upon all and sundry an inner feeling of Peace which perhaps attracted people to Her the most and above all, She made everyone feel very special in their own way. It can only perhaps be adequately described as "PERFECT AND COMPLETE LOVE" —

the kind only She and She alone is capable of giving!

She had manifested Herself in all these roles and many more with a degree of perfection which was faultless. And yet, She was always shorn of any particular preference or attachment to any specific role. She is, in my mind, "*in all and all in one.*"

It is God's law to end suffering by suffering. Your present condition is His gift of the results of your past actions. Bear in mind that it is because God will take you unto Himself that He is purifying and cleansing you.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

A Unique Being

Dr. Nalini Kanta Brahma, M.A., Ph. D.

It was a cold evening in December 1924, when I was taken to Shahbagh for a *darsana* of the Mother by Rai Bahadur Pran Gopal Mukherji, the then Deputy Postmaster General of Dacca. He had already secured the permission of Her husband for the purpose and we were taken straight to the room where Mother was sitting alone deeply absorbed in meditation. A dim lamp was burning in front of Her and that was perhaps the only thing in the room. Mother's face was completely hidden from our view as in those days She used to veil it exactly like a newly married village girl. After we had waited there for about half an hour, suddenly the veil loosened itself and Mother's face became visible in all its brilliance and lustre. Hymns containing many "seed mantras" began to be recited by the Mother in uncommon accents, producing wonderful resonance which affected the whole surroundings. The stillness of the cold December night, the loneliness of the Shahbagh gardens and above all the sublimity and serenity of the atmosphere in the Mother's room — all combined to produce a sense of holiness which could be distinctly felt. As soon as the recitations ceased, Mother's father who was present that day at Shahbagh began to sing a few songs of Ramprasad with an exqui-

sitely melodious voice, and Rai Bahadur Mukherji remarked that the sweet songs of the old man must have been instrumental in bringing about the descent of the Divine Mother. As long as we were in the room, we felt an indescribable elevation of the spirit, a silence and a depth not previously experienced, a peace that passeth all understanding. We came away from Shahbagh late at night with the conviction that we had been in the presence of a superior Being whom it is difficult to doubt or deny.

I had the good fortune of seeing Mother next in the summer of 1926 at Deoghar, where She had gone at the invitation of Rai Bahadur Pran Gopal Mukherji. On that occasion She stayed there for a week. Sri Sri Balananda Brahmachari Maharaj was alive then and used to have conversations on spiritual topics with the Mother for long hours both morning and evening. *Namakirtana* was held in the Ashram and Mother went into states of deep *samadhi* during the *kirtana*. One evening after the *samadhi*, Mother was almost dancing with joy whilst singing 'Hari Om'. She sang with such a sweet and melodious voice that it seemed to all present that She could not be any human being, but must be a Goddess in human form. Sri Sri Brahmachari Maharaj himself remarked that he had carefully observed that Her feet did not touch the ground and this was to him a conclusive proof that She was the Divine Mother incarnate. After singing *Hari Om, Hari Om* for about half an hour She took Brahmachari Maharaj to his room in

the upper storey of the "Dhyana-Kutir" and there told him certain very deep things. As nobody else was allowed in the room, the substance of the conversation can only be conjectured. Sri Sri Brahmachari Maharaj was very much impressed by the Mother and it was at his special request that She agreed to stay for a week, changing Her original programme of remaining for three days only. Even after these twenty-five years *Hari Om* as sung by Her seems to be still ringing in our ears, and it had such a charming and wonderful effect that even agnostic youths and non-believers felt its influence and some of them were heard actually chanting *Hari Om* in their sleep. At that period, for the major portion of the day, Mother used to live in a higher world as it were and whenever She had to reply to any questions put to Her, it seemed definitely that She was descending from a higher level and for several minutes She could utter words only with great difficulty. The look in Her eyes changed whenever She attempted to speak and proved beyond doubt that She was forcibly attempting to come down from a higher level. This transition is not noticeable now and it is quite likely that She now always lives on the higher plane and that this has become so natural and spontaneous that it need not be shut off even when there is work at the lower level, and that the two go on simultaneously.

In the afternoon of the day of starting from Deoghar I was granted the privilege of a private interview. I asked Mother what I could do for

spiritual advancement and was told in reply that what I did was all right and that nothing further could be done even if She instructed me to do so. I betrayed signs of doubts. Mother noticed it and said, "Very well, I am telling you a very simple thing. Do not worship the portrait of a man who is alive." "I never do and why should I?" was my answer. Mother merely smiled and said, "Very well."

After two years and a half I met Her in the house of Her husband's brother at Calcutta. I remember two or three missionary gentlemen coming to see Her that evening and She was busy with them. As soon as I approached Her, She said, "Well, you do not worship the portrait of any living man, do you?" I was bewildered. During the interval of those two years and a half I had got a bromide enlargement of a saint (who was then alive) kept in my puja room and had been worshipping it every day. She did not wait for an answer and said to me, "You see, then, that what is ordained to happen, happens and nothing but that."

Mother is a great personality. It is impossible not to bow down in Her presence and not to obey Her commands. She is not the person to be persuaded by entreaties and whatever She wills must needs be performed. When She decides to go out on a tour alone and asks Her nearest associates to stay behind, however harsh and cruel the command may appear, it has to be carried out without a murmur. Nobody has the courage to go against the decision of the dynamic personality. Mother is

kind-hearted, so soft and so tender, so merciful and so gentle, that it often seems impossible that She could wound the feelings of anybody. Again, at times She is so strong and so resolute, that She seems harder than steel and almost heartless and cruel. It may truly be said of Her that She is "harder than thunder and softer than a flower" gentler than the gentlest and more beautiful than the most beautiful and yet as dreadful as enraged Death Itself, as mild and sweet as the silvery rays of the moon and yet as harsh as Severity Itself merciful yet cruel. These seemingly contradictory characteristics merely show that She transcends the ordinary human categories. Her beauty surpasses the most beautiful of all earthly things and so She is truly described as more beautiful than the most beautiful. She is cruel when She has to fight against evil forces and then She knows no compromise. She is again exceedingly gracious to those who are striving towards righteousness and Her infinite love encompasses all. When She travels hundreds of miles to see an ailing patient in the hospital or to console a mother who has lost Her only child, Her mercy and love are evident. But who knows whether Her mercy and love are nor even greater when She does not yield to entreaties and appears to be cruel? Fighting against evil forces is also an indication of mercy, because it is the only way to the Kingdom of Heaven that has been lost.

Mother's answers to questions are so simple and so forcible that they cannot but touch the hearts of

those who listen to them. Wonderful solutions of difficult philosophical problems by an almost illiterate woman show that there is in Her the great Light that illumines everything. Ceaseless activity without rest for 365 days of the year shows it must be the universal Life that is pulsating in Her. The motherly affection that is bestowed on all who come to Her and captivates the hearts of them all bears out that it must be Absolute Love that is working. The single-minded devotion to Truth, the utter spontaneity and freedom in all Her actions, steadfast adherence to the ideal, the constant reverence for all that is great and holy, the respect for tradition and custom, the utter disregard of worldly praise or blame — all these go to show that we have in the Mother a very unique being worthy of love and adoration, of reverence and worship.

In perfect, all-embracing darsana the Beloved stands revealed.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Obituary

1. Jagannath Roy :

Sri Sri Ma's old and loyal devotee and descended from the famous 'Bhagyakul Kundu' family, Jagannath Roy after suffering from a long illness has recently left his mortal soul in his own home.

Devoted to religious preconcept, not at all boastful of his status, economic in his spending and well known for his "Seva of Jana-Janardan", Jagannath Dada was one of the main supporters of Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha. At his passing away, the Ashram has suffered a loss which can never be filled.

We send our best condolence to his family for the merging of his soul at Sri Ma's feet and pray that they may be granted mercy by Sri Ma.

2. Bramhachari Ganeshananda (Parimal Kushari)

A grandson by relation of Baba Bholanath, and the younger brother of Maranididi (Sri Sri Ma's adopted daughter) and Dasuda, after suffering a prolonged illness Parimalda entered the feet of Baba Vishwanath of Kashi Dham in Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee Hospital on the 24th January, 1989.

3. Swami Ranjanananda Giri (In his early life Sri Ranadhir Dastidar)

Swami Ranjanananda (Bramacharini Pushpa's uncle) left his mortal soul fully conscious on the

18th Feb. 1989 at Kashi Ashram. Descended from Shylet's renowned family, highly educated, a bachelor, Ranjananandaji was dear to all for his quiet and sweet nature.

He met Sri Ma in 1948-49 for the first time. In 1973 under instruction from Sri Ma, he joined Kanyapeeth at Kashi as a Professor. His strict devotion to duty and incessant efforts in improving the girls in very praiseworthy. In 1986, he embraced "Sannyas". After 12-13 years as a teacher in Kanyapeeth he was afflicted by an incurable disease of the eyes and lost his sight. But due to Sri Ma's unbounded mercy, this painful blindness never affected his quiet and devoted sense of duty. Due to Sri Ma's unexplainable Kripa and at her earnest wish his soul was merged with the almighty on the bank of the Ganges in a very holy and quiet atmosphere.

He was a spontaneous poet. By quoting one of his own poem we are expressing our "Sroddha" to him.

(At the end of tired journey I leave love and respect in the hearts of everybody and a deep oblivion in innermost mind of all. If you ever remember me, remember with beautiful religious songs and flowers with sandalpaste to delight my passing away.)
