
The relation between Guru and sisya (disciple) deserves to be called eternal only when the Guru is possessed of divine power and can and does communicate this power to the latter at the time of his initiation. This power being eternal, the relation between Guru and sisya as thus established is also eternal.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

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ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ

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

Vol. XXXVI

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No. 3

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PROGRAMME

- 18th July, Tuesday —Guru Purnima
- 8th August, Tuesday —Death anniversary of 1008
Swami Muktananda Giri
Maharaj
- 13th August, Sunday —Jhulan Ekadashi
- 14th August, Monday —Death anniversary of 1008
Swami Muktananda Par-
bat Maharaj
- 17th August, Thursday —Rakhi Purnima
- 24th August, Thursday —Janmastami
- 7th Sept., Thursday —Death anniversary of
Swami Gurupriyananda
Giri Maharaj
- 8th September, Friday —Radhastami
- 7th to 10th October —Durga Puja
- 14th October —Lakshmi Puja
- 28th October —Kali Puja
- 30th October —Annakut
- 31st October —Bhatri Dwitiya
- 6th to 12th November —Samyam Saptaha
-

Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

Ma : "Look, how long does one wish to keep secrets, you know ? 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 (by disclosing secrets). And the common people are afraid of losing their prestige. Hence they have the urge to guard secrets. Again, when sometimes the *Mahatmas* do not disclose everything to others, it is because those persons do not qualify for hearing everything. Just as a matriculate will fail to understand if he is told what is learnt by an M.A. student — it is like that."

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

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

Sadhan Brahmachari, one old devotee of Ma, 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 *sannyasi* for such a long time ? If such things happen, then what are our hopes ?"

One day, Ma asked an aged *sadhu* of a very tranquil nature, "Pitaji, how to quiet the mind?"

He said, "What can I tell you? You are already sitting here with full realization of plenitude. "All the other persons present there said to the *sadhu*, "Please say something for us." Then the aged *sadhu* said a few things which can be summerized as follows: "The first spiritual discipline is *sadacara*, pure and virtuous conduct; not only externally, 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 down from it — this is not the right way of thinking; I will ride the horse, and, holding the reins tightly in my hand, I shall control the horse — this is the proper attitude one should maintain. The mind can be conquered only by continual practice of self control — this is what the Lord has said in the Gita. Those who are in your (Ma's) company — what need they worry about? They have been fortunate to be "associated with" you. Such an association is rare, inscrutable and infallible. It is rare, as it is not easily available — it is a matter of immensely 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 the very first look at you, I felt that you draw all people towards you. I do not usually tell anyone about these things dis-

cussed in the scriptures, but since you permitted me to talk, I have talked. But what will these words do? There should be realization in one's heart. "By saying so, the old gentleman fell silent."

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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 following even in the upper veins of the body, as the knots snap open. Sometime it is seen that while *Kirtan* is going on, some persons engaged in it experience a slight manifestation of ecstasy and due to this, they are seen in a state of connection, 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, and, trying to come out meets an obstruction. And as the knots are not open, they knock about restlessly in that manner.

In Association with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

Sri Amulya Kumar Datta Gupta

(Translated from Bengali)

(Continued from previous issue)

Wednesday 17.4.46

Today Sri Sri Ma returned to Dhaka after almost a year.

During Dol-Purnima it had been arranged for Sri Sri Ma to proceed to Behrampur, but instead she proceeded at that time to Sri Haribaba's Ashram in District Badaun. The place of Haribaba's Ashram is called Bandh. We heard from the mouths of people that the village in Badaun District used to be spoilt by the flooded Ganga waters. Thus there was no end to the misfortune of the inhabitants. Because due to the floods they could never save any of their crops.

Haribaba did not take the help of the Govt., but used the local manpower to build a huge Bandh which was quite a few miles long. Haribaba's Ashram was situated on that very Bandh. Haribaba was respected by the local population like a God.

Whatever it may be due to Haribaba's eagerness Sri Sri Ma proceeded to Bandh during Dol-Jatra.

At the conclusion of the festivals Haribaba came along to Behrampur with a few of his devotees and disciples.

This year the devotees had arranged to celebrate Basanti Puja in respect of Sri Ma.

From Behrampur Sri Sri Ma proceeded to Dhaka via Navadeep and Calcutta. We were present at Dhaka station to greet Sri Ma. Sri Harendra Banerjee was waiting at the station with two cars.

When Sri Ma and Haribaba arrived at the station, they were taken along in the cars to the Ashram, while we proceeded to the Ashram, some on horse carriages, some on rickshaws.

When we arrived at the Ashram we beheld Sri Ma sitting in the Nam ghar. The ladies were singing Kirtan. A little while later, it started raining, and the wind, starting from a gentle breeze, later assumed gale proportions together with heavy rainfall. In due course the weather became so violent, that it was scarcely possible for us to remain in the Nam ghar.

On perceiving this Ma started laughing uproariously. Although the wind dropped gradually, the rain continued. Sri Ma laughingly said pointedly to us, "When the rain and a little breeze started, I thought that let there be rain, but no more breeze, but with the very thought the gale started. Then I was compelled to say, "Stop, stop, this is enough." At listening to Ma's words we all started laughing as well.

When the rain had subsided, Sri Ma came out of the Nam ghar and began to check what arrange-

ments were being made for the Sadhus. I accompanied Ma with an umbrella over the head. On the occasion of Ma's visit a new room had been constructed. This had been done by a military contractor. First of all Ma visited that room. Sri Sitaram Baba and his disciples had taken up residence there. Sri Ma requested him to move to a better room, but Sitaram Baba expressed his desire to remain in the same room. A wooden bed was brought from them. Sri Ma sat there and conversed for a while with them, and praised that spot in the Ashram, saying, "Once upon a time Sadhus practised very severe tapasya here. I have heard they were your forebears (i.e. Sitaram Baba & Co's), and belonged to the same country.

Sitaram Baba praised the Kirtan being sung by the ladies and said, "I never realised before that Bengali ladies could sing Ram Nam so well." Ma replied, "Yes, here the ladies can produce very good Kirtan. The menfolk also sing Kirtan, but there are not many of them."

Sri Sri Haribaba

After this discourse Ma went and stood on the veranda of the Smriti Mandir. We stood below on the ground. By that time the rain had stopped. Because of Haribaba's visit, Sri Ma had issued instructions to clean out the Ashram thoroughly. On seeing the spotless condition of the Ashram, Ma expressed her pleasure, and said, "When this Body visits the Ashram alone, it does not matter whether you clean the Ashram or not. Because it does not

matter the least to this Body. But Haribaba cannot bear to see anything dirty. His own Ashram is always kept spick and span. If he perceives any dirt, he cleans it with his own hands. Furthermore his duties are bound strictly to a time-table. There are two long halls on top of the Bandh. In one of its rooms Satsang is held, i.e. throughout most of the day there is some religious or other discussions being held there. Some may read religious books, others may discourse on religious subjects, others may be singing Kirtan. In his own allotted time, Haribaba visits the place and performs his reading of the Sculpture etc., but no sooner is this completed than he returns to his room and shuts the door. He is never seen taking part in useless talks or actions. He is immersed all the time in action or talks concerning the Divine."

I had briefly seen Haribaba once only at the station, but never beheld him in the Ashram. I heard he usually lived inside shut doors. The three or four days he was in the Ashram, nobody had any opportunity to discuss any subject with him. He used to visit the Nam ghar only during his Path, and then return behind closed doors in his room.

In appearance Haribaba was tall, and of a pleasant mien. His eyes were always fixed downwards towards his feet. His age then appeared to be 60 years old, or more. In spite of his age, when he starts his Kirtan, he no longer appears to be aged. He jumps about so much, and beats his hands together, and plays the large Cymbals while singing Kirtan, in such a way that one cannot fail to be

impressed. His kirtan had another characteristic, that when he sings, all his limbs seem to help him in his Kirtan. I later heard from Khukuni didi that he was a doctor from the Punjab and a life-long celebato. In Punjab people usually know very little about the Bengali Vaishnab Samaj, but Haribaba was a devotee of Sri Sri Gauranga Dev and used to worship him. I heard that his knowledge and reading of Chaitanya literature was extraordinary. He lived mostly in Bandh. Previously he had glimpsed Sri Ma once. Didi confessed that when Haribaba had consulted a mysterious Punjabi Mahatma, and asked his permission to view Sri Ma, the Mahatma had advised him to seek advice from Sri Ma. From that time onwards, Haribaba was anxious but his devotees and disciples never wished to release him. But this time he had ignored their requests and had arrived to meet Sri Ma. He had moreover declared that he would be present at Matri Sangh for a few days. But even after arriving here he could not get peace of mind. He was alleged to have confessed to Didi, "I have come here to do Seva to Sri Ma, but instead of giving me that duty, Ma is treating me with the utmost respect. Under these conditions, I will not be able to stay here long."

Thinking that we would return to Ma at night, we came back to our homes in the evening. At about 11 p.m. we returned to the Ashram. My relative, Sriman Jatin (Majumdar) kept a sleeping in my home.

In spite of reaching the Ashram, I did not get any real chance to speak to Ma. Before departing,

when my friend Manmohan (Ghosh) and I went to do our pranamas to Ma, she asked about Jatin and told us, "Return to your homes and lie down. It is cold due to rain, so it won't be easy to stay in the Ashram." We did our pranamas and came away.

Thursday, 18.4.46

At 6 p.m. in the evening, Ma went to Shahbagh with Haribaba and party. The Jhau tree which was smelling like Sandalwood was pointed out to Haribaba and his companions. They were extremely surprised at seeing this. Haribaba declared he had seen Jhau trees like this in the Punjab, but they had no such scent. Khukuni didi declared to Haribaba, "Ma has said because of Nam Kirtan and other religious rites that had been performed here (i.e. Shahbagh) had resulted in the Jhau trees picking up the scent of Sandal. I had then asked Ma, that there were several other trees in Shahbagh, why had they not been similarly affected? In reply Ma had informed me that just as there are different qualities in human beings, that everybody could not grasp the significance of what was going on, so also trees had similar qualities. That is when while some trees had showed this change, others had not."

From here we went along to the tomb of an Arabian Fakir. Sri Ma went and sat inside the Fakirs' room with her full entourage. There was a Maulvi present. Today being Thursday, he had come to offer Dhup at the cemetery. Stories were then told of how Ma read the Namaj in this room

previously. The Maulvi Sahib also added stories of what had been handed down for generation. He said, "Formerly there used to be a jungle in this part of the compound. One day the Nawab Bahadur wandered into this part of his compound, and beheld a Fakir riding on the back of a tiger. As soon as he saw the Nawab, the Fakir commanded him to go to the gate of the garden and see who was there. On hearing this the Nawab at once went to the gate, but found nobody there. On returning he saw that neither the tiger nor the Fakir was visible. It looked as if a man was lying there covered with a piece of white cloth. On raising the cloth he saw there was nobody there, only the cloth. At this he felt extremely surprised, and imagining that the spot denoted the resting place of a Mahatma, he built a tomb over it. It would not be true to say that a Fakir used to live here, and that his body was buried there.

Sri Jamini Mohan Chatterjee, the Deputy Commandant of the Pioneer camps was then at Shahbagh. He had been transferred to a new job in Cooch Behar, but learning that Sri Ma was coming to Dhaka, he was staying at Shahbagh to catch a glimpse of Ma. He invited Ma to his house, and offered her Bhog. There was Kirtan for some time.

From Shahbagh Sri Ma travelled to Siddheswari. The history of the Siddheswari Ashram was told to Haribaba. The oil painting of Sambarban Maharaj and other interesting exhibits were displayed to him. From Siddheswari Ma returned to the Ashram.

In the afternoon the Ramayana was sung. Two singers (brothers) had accompanied Sri Ma. It was they who rendered the songs. I have heard good reports of their singing even in Calcutta. Here also they sang well.

Friday, 19.4.46

This morning Ma took along Haribaba to the Dhakeswari temple. It was Haribaba's wish to see everything worth-while there. That is why Ma was travelling round with him. In the afternoon there was again the singing of the Ramayana. All day, either Nam Kirtan or reading of the texts etc. was being carried on.

The devotees of Haribaba that had accompanied him were also versed in staging Lilas. They call them "Lila"s. Sri Ma had said that no special dresses were required for those devotional plays, and that there was no fixed time or place for staging them.

Suppose Haribaba was proceeding somewhere with his devotees, and being tired on the way, he happened to sit down under a shady tree on the way, the lila would be started there and then. It was the sole objective of the devotees to provide some enjoyment to Haribaba by staging these shows. Haribaba was always of a very grave mien. If by their acting, the devotees could produce a brief smile on his face, they considered their labours well worth the while.

The acting of Haribaba's devotees

This lila commenced tonight at 9 p.m. The story ran as follows:— A Guru once visited the

house of his disciple Dhanya. Having arrived he started worshipping his Shaligram Shila. Dhanya was a milk man by caste, and knew nothing of puja etc. Having seen the Guru worship thus, he started longing to worship God himself in this way. The Guru tried to dissuade him from this job suitable only for Brahmins, but seeing him adamant, the Guru gave him a piece of stone, saying, "Here take this as your God. You will bathe him, offer him Bhog and after the God has partaken of his meal will you only eat his prasad." Saying this the Guru took his departure. Dhanya started his worship from the next day with great joy. He bathed the piece of stone, and kept a piece of bread in front of him, entreated him time and again to partake of the food offered. But his God refused to take his offering. On seeing this he was very grieved. He began saying, "Oh God, when my Guru offers you Bhog, I have seen you partake of it quickly, so why are you not doing so now? If you do not eat, neither shall I."

But there seemed to be no response from the side of the God. Then he stuck his god inside his puggree and took him elsewhere on his duties. As his God was fasting, he did not eat anything. The next day was the same. In this way he remained hungry for seven days! After this, God seeing his devotee's deep sense of duty, manifested Himself. Thereafter, there seemed to be no limit to Dhanya's joy! He fed his God, exchanged several stories with Him. When Dhanya learnt that his God would take over his duties, he applied his God to take his

cows grazing, and till his fields. The God willingly consented to comply.

After a few days had passed thus, Dhanya's Gurudev again visited his house. On seeing his Guru, Dhanya said, "Gurudev, you have bestowed on me such a God, that he ate nothing at the beginning. I had to fast for him seven days at a stretch." The Gurudev said, "You fool, does God eat anything concrete? One has to keep his Bhog in front of him for some time, and that is sufficient for his meal." Dhanya replied, "No, why should this be so? God eats just the same way as we do." Everytime the Guru denied this, Dhanya repeated his belief in great faith. Thereupon, the Guru said, "If you can show me your God, only then will I believe you." Dhanya exclaimed, "My God has gone now to look after my cows. Oh well, I shall have to call him." Saying this, he began to pray to his God to return. The God did come, but he was invisible to the Guru. Because the Guru could not see his God, Dhanya entreated him several times to be visible. The God said "Your Guru will not be able to see me in this birth, because he has no devotion or faith." But Dhanya was adamant, he said, "Oh God, if you do not appear now my Guru will never believe that I have obtained you through devotion, so you must appear in person." At last God said, "You must ask your Guru to sit on your lap, only then will he be able to see me." Dhanya complied with this. The Guru thus beheld God, and worshipped Him with slokas and prayers. He then clasped Dhanya several times in his bosom and

declared, "By obtaining a disciple such as you, even this unworthy evil being became relieved of his household duties."

The lila ended here. Dhanya and the Guru both acted superbly. The audience were very pleased with their performance. The whole thing took place in Hindi. Abhay sometimes translated the words so that all could understand.

Saturday, 20.4.46

Today also Ma went out with Haribaba. I learnt that they had gone to view the Akharas of Namak Sahib at Tejgaun and Shankartola. After waiting until 12 p.m. at the Ashram I did not have the chance to see Ma.

In the afternoon, there was Ramayan sung again, and at night, Haribaba's devotees staged another play. The theme of the play was as follows :—

Devarshi Narada learnt from God, that inspite of suffering untold hardships on the earth, human beings were unwilling to visit Vaikunth ! In order to test these words of God, Narada came down to the earth. First of all he came across some pigs. After seeing them rolling along on the mud he thought, "Oh, what a suffering are they going through ? What about taking them to Vaikunth ?" Thinking this, he asked the pigs, "Well, will you come with me to Vaikunth ?" They replied, "What kind of a place is Vaikunth ?" Narada replied "Oh, very beautiful. It cannot be compared to this earth. Those who live there do not know the

meaning of sorrow or strife. They are always happy.” The pigs must have then thought of their fooding, so they enquired “Can you get excreta in Vaikunth ?” Narada replied “Ram, Ram, Vaikunth is the residence of God Himself, where is the place for excreta there ?” Then the pig said, “Then we do not have any need of Vaikunth. Thakur, you can now take yourself off !”

Narada then set out in his travels to seek out a new pilgrim for Vaikunth. He beheld an old Sethji, and imagined, “This Sethji had enjoyed all the earthly engagements, wealth, son, grandson etc. so if I ask him he may go to Vaikunth.” At once he approached Sethji and asked, “Sethji, you have enjoyed every kind of joy in your household, so now forsake the attractions of your household, and come away for Vaikunth.” Sethji said, “Thakur, what you have said is true although I am old, but I still have a young wife, and I have very young grandsons, they are not yet educated. When they finish their education and are manned, then only can I visit Vaikunth. Then I will have no further strings attached to me.” Disappointed, Narada came away from there.

A few days later he visited the Sethji’s house again, and learnt that the Sethji had died. Through his Yoga, Narada realised that the Sethji due to his infatuation to his household had been re-incarnated in his own house as an oxe. So he approached the Seth and asked him, “Well Sethji, you had decided to wait for your grandson’s marriage, but you could not achieve your

object. Due to your infatuation, you had to become an ox, and your sufferings have increased ! Do you still wish to live here ? Come, let us now go to Vaikunth." The Sethji, in the guise of an ox, replied, "Thakur, whatever you have said is quite true. But how can I now leave for Vaikunth ? I am used for tilling their fields and they are living on the produce therefrom. If I suddenly leave now they will suffer a lot of hardship. Could you please visit me later, and I will then accompany you." Narada was astounded to realise the tremendous attraction of human beings to worldly objects.

He returned to the Sethji's house a few days later. Then he learnt that the ox had died. Narada again entered into deep meditation to ascertain how he had now been reincarnated. In this meditation he realised that the Sethji was now living in the same house as a dog.

So he went and approached the Sethji, saying, "See what a tremendous attraction your household has for you. You were firstly a Seth, thereafter an ox, and now you are a dog. You are eating forbidden food, staying up all night to guard the place, and suffering how many more diversities. So let us now go to Vaikunth."

Sethji in the guise of a dog replied, "Thakur, whatever you have said is quite true. But see here, my sons are not businesslike. I am guarding their property day and night by keeping awake for thieves. If I depart now, there will be nothing left here. So as soon as they learn to safeguard their

property, I will leave with you." So Narada came away.

A few days later he returned to the Sethji's house and learnt that the dog had also died. During his Dhyān-yoga he learnt the Sethji was now a snake guarding his secret wealth. Narada told the Seth in the guise of a serpent, "Sethji, what more do you want? Has your attraction to your household still not satisfied? You are now suffering from the life of a snake. So now you must come along with me to Vaikunth."

Sethji replied, "Thakur, you have spoken wisely. But if I do not guard the secret wealth of my sons or grandsons like a serpent, then there will be nothing left for them. That is why I cannot leave them or this property."

Narada realised that this terrible attachment would never be set aside. He then said to the Sethji's wife, "See here, under your room in a secret box there is a very vicious serpent, go and kill it with a piece of stick, do not fear it." The Sethji's wife did exactly as asked. Before the Sethji could leave his serpent's guise, Narada caught hold of him and said, "Well Sethji, what more do you want to see?"

Those for whom you have undertaken so much hardship have themselves tried to kill you. So what more do you want? Come with me to Vaikunth." But Sethji had not yet got over his worldly attachment and was not ready to go. So Narada said, "If you will not go to Vaikunth of your own accord, then I will follow my Guru's

advice. I will take you to Vaikunth by force." Saying this, Narada brought along Sethji to Vaikunth and said to the Lord, "Oh Lord! you have spoken the truth. Human Beings never want to set aside the attachment of worldly household to come to Vaikunth!"

But on the other hand as soon as the Sethji caught sight of the Lord, all his worldly longings disappeared. He was overgrown with joy and started to sing the praise of the Lord and Narada.

Haribaba's devotees acted these scenes very well. They did not need any special apparatus to stage their scenes. They experienced very little trouble in dressing up as a pig, ox, dog etc. They usually lay on their stomach and covered themselves with a blanket.

The spectators could imagine what the animals were according to their intelligence.

They carry out these shows as part of their Sadhana. Because, in their plays, the Guru's greatness, simple truth and devotion can lead to God, these are the subjects that are discussed. The Sadhus display their acting with a lot of feeling. That is why the heart and soul of the spectators are temporarily, deeply influenced by their attitude.

(To be continued)

Ma's (Initial) Precepts to Her Spiritual Son

Anil Ganguly

One question has been too often profaned for me to profane it — what is Ma? I have neither the competence nor the intention to do the impossible. Can a doll of salt plumb the depth of the ocean? Can a river scale its fountain-head? Can a child know its mother? I do not propose an exercise in futility. I owe it to my sisters and brothers to tell them how Ma was graciously pleased to reveal Herself to me as my own dear mother who has ceased to be in the land of the living. Anandamayee Ma, however, as revealed to me, still is and shall ever be.

Millions of people have, like me, rediscovered their own dear mother in this, the Universal Mother. It is common for all mothers to love their own child more dearly than any other child. It is also common for every child to love its own mother more dearly than any other woman. The Universal Mother loves everyone as Her own child and inspires in everyone who seek incomparable and in-expressible love for Her. I do not know if there is any special charm in the word 'divine'. I feel that Anandamayee Ma's love is human love to perfection and that she is intensely human and, therefore divine.

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Sri Sri Anandamayee Ma (1896-1982) was the magnetic centre of a wonderful drama on the stage of life in this world. Bhaiji was the protagonist of that drama.

In 1947 Ma "Kidnapped" me on board the Delhi Express* and had since been gracious enough to give me Her holy association in different places in India. She also gave me the privilege of playing different minor roles in Her drama. This fact has made my life worth living. In particular, I have been fortunate enough to hear from Ma details of Bhaiji's arduous spiritual journey leading to the goal of self-realization.

The pseudonym Bhaiji is well-known to readers of Ananda-Varta. His diary — Matri Darsan — is a Bible to us. He was Mr. J. C. Roy, I. S. O., a Central govt. employee. A typical big official, Mr. Roy was smug and dignified, spick and span and some what withdrawn. He was also religious minded. It appears from his diary that he lost his mother when a small boy and that he had "an overpowering desire to find a living Mother, a material embodiment of divine powers in human life." That desire of his seemed to be fulfilled at his first darsan of Sri Sri Anandamayee Ma in Dacca in 1924. In Her he saw the deity of daily worship — Jagad-dhatri. It was Ma who inspired in him a feeling of Eureka. But he was dampened by Ma's aloofness. He asked Her : "Have I any chance of spiritual uplift ?" She replied, "Your hunger for the spiritual is not yet strong enough." Disappointed by

*Anandamayee Ma, The Mother, Bliss-Incarnate.

Ma's seemingly indifferent attitude, Bhaiji stopped going to Her for sometime. He could not, however, escape from the mystic aura diffused by Ma. One day Ma told Bhaiji : "Remember, you really are a Brahmin ; and there is a very subtle, close spiritual link between this body and yourself." In course of time Bhaiji got opportunities to come in close contact with Ma, but his critical mind remains inquisitive about the identity of Ma. One day he submitted : "Mother, pray tell me, what are you in reality ?" Ma laughed loudly and said : "How could such childish queries arise in your mind ?" And instantaneously emanated words of universal message from the Mother of the Universe. Bhaiji was silently listening ; but Ma abruptly stopped with a warning, "Further questions will be fruitless !" Bhaiji's ultimate submission was : "These words of yours, Ma, do not satisfy my yearning."

Speculation about Ma's identity or spiritual status would be presumptuous on my part. But it is the birthright of every child to back in the mellowed sunshine of Ma's grace. If I attempted to describe Ma's Lila to enlighten readers of Ananda-Varta, it would be like carrying Coal to New-Castle. But every child of Ma has the privilege to babble. This essay is a spiritual pigmy's attempt to study a profound subject — Ma's initial Precepts to Bhaiji. Recognized by Ma as Her spiritual son, Bhaiji was destined to be a spiritual giant himself.

In this essay Ma's sayings in other contexts and relevant to the subject under consideration will be

referred to and extracts will be quoted from writings of renowned authors, including some senior devotees of Ma.

First Precept

“I am what I was and what I shall be” —
Ma.

Let us study different versions that may be deduced from this Precept :—

- (a) Ma does not run with time.
- (b) effluxion of time has no effect on Ma.
- (c) for Ma, the past does not exist ; nor the future.
- (d) Ma is changeless.
- (e) for Ma, there is only Existence in the present tense.
- (f) Ma is IS *simpliciter*
- (g) Ma is Her Being.

“Sat” is the Sanskrit equivalent of “IS”. Sat is one of the three symbols of *Brahman*.

aum tat sad iti nirdeso

brahmanas trividhah smrtah.

Aum Tat Sat—This is considered to be the three-fold symbol of Brahman.

In the Brhadaranya Upanishad there is a famous prayer : Asato ma sat gamaya — from Asat (Changeful world) lead me to Sat (changeless, the Real, that which IS)

Ma told Swami Dayananda of the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal at Varanasi in 1928 :

“All that I can say is that in the midst of apparent changes of state in body and mind I feel, I

am aware, that I am always the same. I feel that in me there is no change of states.”*

* * *

Once Ma went to a temple in Calcutta on the occasion of the Holi festival. A crowd assembled in the small hall where a large number of ladies pressed hard round Ma to have a look at Her. Ma sat almost huddled up. It was hot and the rush of people seemed to be further distressing for Ma. Principal Dasgupta, an old devotee, aggrieved at the conduct of the crowd, asked Ma, “Don’t you find it to be highly oppressive and disgusting, Mother?” A least expected reply spontaneously came from Ma, “No, it is a great pleasure to me to find them so close to me.” Pointing out the normal human reaction to such a situation, Principal Dasgupta said, “Ma we feel it awefully boring to have such a crowd pestering us with tales of their domestic troubles and worries.” The reply that spontaneously emanated from Ma reveals what She really is and what Her children are in Her eyes ;—

“Because you feel that your own body and theirs are distinctly separate. As you do not feel the weight of your head, of hands and feet, of so many fingers and toes, of legs and thighs, to be a burden, nor a heavy load upon yourself because you feel they are but vital parts of your own body, so do I feel that these persons are all organic members of this

*Mother as seen by Her devotees pp. 163-164.

body ; so I don't feel their pressure nor find their worries weighing upon me. Their joys and sorrows, problems and their solutions, I feel to be vitally mine. Their acts and awards too, are essentially mine. I have no ego-sense nor conception of separateness. Each one of you have the 'height and depth of eternity' in me equally."

What a sweet unfoldment of the Universal Mother !

(To be continued)

Whatever thou lovest, that become thou must,
God if thou love God, dust if thou love dust,
If thou dwellest on the lowest, then the lowest
must thou be,
Fix thy thoughts upon the highest and the highest
thou shalt be.

—English Poets

“The Holy Mother Anandamayi as I have known Her”*

Prof. Bireswar Ganguly, M.A.

I met the Holy Mother Anandamayi for the first time at Patna on the 17th February, 1951. She was sitting in the midst of devotees, who were singing devotional songs. She appeared to be in a meditative mood. I have since come to know that for Her there are no changing moods ; She always abides in a state which is beyond all changes. I went there because a colleague of mine, who had introduced me to Sri Aurobindo's works, had informed me of the Holy Mother's stay at Patna. It was pure disinterested curiosity which had led me there. I did not expect much from an almost illiterate woman, who laid so much stress on “Kirtan”, i. e. devotional music in chorus. Though She had been staying at Patna for about a week, I had, because of my intellectual vanity, not cared to go and ask Her any questions on philosophy. I was convinced that nothing more than what was to be found in books could be said by or learnt from anybody. I was, however, eager to find, if possible, the ideal non-attached man spoken of by Aldous Huxley. It seemed totally with the concept of ‘*Sthita-Prajna*’ of the Gita. The lives of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Aurobindo and Sri Ramana

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Maharshi had convinced me that a non-attached *Brahmajnani* was possible even in these days of industrial civilisation, nay, in fact the salvation of our industrial civilisation, which according to Dr. Joad, has lost the values of life, lay in the leadership of society by such non-attached ideal human beings. I have not had the good fortune to meet Sri Aurobindo or Sri Ramana Maharshi. Could it be, I thought, that fate had at last moved to retrieve my fortune and I was going to have Darshan of a *Brahmajnani*, an event at which, all unknown to me, my whole life-impulse had been aiming.

The uproarious Kirtan, however, disappointed me, as I was of the opinion that such terrible noise must be a positive hindrance to meditation, which is considered the best method of communion with God. After an hour's severe trial, which was relieved only by the Divine Grace of the beautiful face of the Holy Mother, just as I was on the point of leaving, I fell into a sort of trance — almost the first of its kind in my life, and experienced a state of ecstasy, which was broken at about 10 P.M. by a sweet call from the Holy Mother. I felt a sense of great relief and perfect repose when I woke up, and looking at the face of the Holy Mother I found a touch of the Beyond in Her. By that time I had returned to my senses and thought that I might have been under a hypnotic spell. I pulled myself together and got back my critical mood. However, before I could put any question to Her, She asked me to narrate my experience. By that time every-

body had left Her room and so without any hesitation I related to Her my strange physical, intellectual, emotional and possibly spiritual experience. What astonished me was the way She made definite and explicit what I had groped for in my narration. Ultimately she wound up the whole description by saying that She also had had similar experiences in Her childhood, — such is Mother's way to encourage a child. I was naturally anxious to know from Her the correct interpretation of such experiences.

What followed was a masterly discourse on Yoga. It seemed to me that Her knowledge far excelled that of Patanjali's "Yoga Sutra" in matters of detail, or of Blavatsky's "The Voice of Silence" in sense of realism. I bowed down to Her in love and respect and came away a changed man. Out of the ashes of my philosophical knowledge, full of doubts and difficulties, was born a devotion that knows no doubt, no break. Her very presence, aglow with a sublime radiance, was sufficient proof that there was a divine Mother, upholding and protecting the Universe. The presence of Mother in the midst of a Kirtan now assumed a completely new meaning to me, namely of a Being, standing beyond the 'Kirtan' and yet presiding over it. The necessity of seeking inferential proofs for such feelings was gone and it seemed to me as though I had an intuitive glimpse of the Lord of the Gita.

Since then I have paid many visits to Her Ashrams at Banaras and Vindhyaçal and it would take one long chapter to write down every single

event or idea that has struck me as something full of spiritual significance. Apart from the indescribable devotional atmosphere of the 'gnostic collectivity' around Her, reminding one of the Divine atmosphere created by Devarshi Narada of the Puranas or Lord Chaitanya of Bengal, wherever they went, the most pleasing and astonishing thing about Her personality is that it offers a wonderful reconciliation of all religious and philosophical views and theories. She does not only resolve conflicts theoretically, but can actually satisfy the contending parties that they are all perfectly correct from their relative angles of vision. I have attended several conferences of philosophers and religious men in India, and always found them unsatisfactory and disappointing. On several occasions when I had the misfortune of offending somebody holding the view of Vedanta of a school other than that of Shankaracharya, the Holy Mother intervened and like Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa Deva of Dakshineswar proved to the entire satisfaction of everybody present that there are as many ways of understanding Truth as there are accepted theories. At the outset I used to think that She reconciled those views in order to please all Her children, who are groping in the dark. But no, Her cosmic consciousness enables Her to identify Herself with everyone and thus realize as well as explain the truth according to the particular view held.

Mother often speaks in the terminology of pure monistic Vedanta. It seemed a little strange to me that one who appeared to be immersed in

Bhakti and dedicated to this cult based on pure Dualism, should repeatedly speak in terms of the Upanishad such as "only Brahman is true", 'the world is an illusion' or "Thou art That", etc. — concepts which form the very corner stone of Absolute Monism. The theory of three levels of consciousness hinted at by Sir J. Woodroffe and P. N. Mukhopadhaya in their 'The World as Power' seemed to suggest a solution. The three levels correspond to three stages, viz. the state of the *Brahmajnani* who sees one in the many, the state of the ordinary man who sees nothing but the many and mid-way between those two levels of consciousness lies the intermediary plane of consciousness through which a Yogi has to pass. The conflicting statements of many Realized souls who got glimpses of the timeless, spaceless, absolute Brahman and yet had occasion to speak in terms of pluralism can probably be explained by the hypothesis, viz. that they — the Realised Souls, so to say, come to other planes to meet the needs of men.

And yet doubt assails when one proceeds to apply this theory to MOTHER, from whom Truth flows at its source. In Her case the criterion of Truth as propounded above does not exist.

On the lower pragmatic planes of consciousness the apparent multiplicity has its relative importance, and it is through strenuous efforts or by the grace of the Divine that one can transcend the lower levels of consciousness. In the beginning the Yogi gets temporary glimpses of Truth which cannot be described in language, but the goal of the Yogi is

to reach the state of Maha Yogi, who always lives in absolute Consciousness. Whether we adopt the path of *tapasya*, i.e. deliberate and strenuous efforts at Yoga or that of surrender to the Divine, we have got to get away from this sordid worldly consciousness by annihilating the composite elements in our being. So from an embodied consciousness, in which the conscious Purusha or Soul has been enslaved, we shall ultimately come to bodiless consciousness, or realise the Purusha free from Prakriti or Lower Nature consisting of body, mind, ego etc. Perhaps *sadhana* ends there and the free soul waits for its final deliverance by the Grace of the Divine Mother, the *Ishwara-Shakti*, when the Divine spark merges in the Infinite.

Mother Anandamayi reminds us of the *summum bonum* of human existence and re-enforces the truth of all the scriptures that we are greater than ourselves, that we are purer than we seem to be, that we are by nature Divine, and that we must realize the Divine in this very life. This body is the temple of the Divine Mother, let it not be made into the devil's work-shop. By surrendering to the Mother we keep our shrine ready for the expression of the Divine within. The Divine pervades all existence, material as well as spiritual. Hence it is the sacred duty of physical-vital-mental man to evolve into a gnostic being, who also functions on the intuitive plane and on the plane of unconditioned joy. Sit near Mother Anandamayi and Her joy will touch you, invade you and you will forget, at least for the time being, that there are things like cares and

anxieties in life. Such a temporary infusion of joy may make you ultimately mad for Joy Absolute and a life of sadhana may begin.

Put an abstruse metaphysical question to the Holy Mother, and see how spontaneously, without any effort, without the use of inferential processes, She convinces you. Once I had a serious difference of opinion with a qualified monist and after spending a whole night arguing with him I approached Mother in the morning and She asked me, "By accepting which of the different schools of Vedanta can you accommodate the other schools most conveniently? I replied "Advaita Vedanta." She said, "Oh then his qualified monism can also be reconciled to your pure monism. Why did you then quarrel with him all night long? My son, you have as yet only intellectually approached the truth of pure monism. Had you actually realised the Truth, you would also have realised the relative truth of Mr. X from the angle of vision of Mr. X. Mr. X may not have had the vision of the One, but if you have come to It, you should accommodate the many in the One which contains the many."

The Holy Mother does not, like a philosopher of one school, try to and coerce others into submission. Rather does she encourage him to support the view point of other seekers, when he is in their company. A devotee, having blind faith should stick to his blind faith. But a philosopher or a teacher, who knows the different theories of different schools of thought, should make an attempt to explain in the most logical way any

particular view, held dear by a particular group of devotees. Once I had to suffer for my dogmatism in this connection. During the last Dol Purnima day of 1952 (the full moon day of the Bengali month of Falgun, in which Lord Chaitanya was born), the Holy Mother was present, when at a religious conference at Vrindaban, I delivered a speech on the message of Sri Chaitanya. It was well received. When I was requested to give another discourse the next day at the same conference, I began to explain the fundamentals of the "Synthesis of Yoga" by Sri Aurobindo, which lays special stress on work without attachment as sacrifice to the Lord, in view of the fact that free India needed Divine workers more than hermits living in seclusion or in Ashrams. The source of the thesis of Karmayoga as developed by Sri Aurobindo and as explained by me on that occasion, is what Lord Krishna preached to Arjuna in the Gita. And though everyone present in the audience was a devotee of Lord Krishna, most of them disliked my speech, because of the exuberance of my words. There was such a violent reaction that some learned pandits complained to the Holy Mother about my speech. I, of course, tried to justify myself, but ultimately became convinced that my talk had been an inopportune one. I was simply amazed to find in Mother a first class logician with wonderful sense of realism. She convinced me that not only the philosophical basis of life at Vrindaban was quite different from that of other places, but also that an attempt at Divine work by ordinary

sadhakas, who have not attained to a certain stage, would lead not to "Karma-Yoga" but to "Karma-bhoga", that is to say, the Sadhaka at initial stages may just rationalise his ordinary actions, which have been dictated by his lower nature. Hence some sadhakas, at some periods of their sadhana may require exclusive recourse to devotion after abandoning works of life. I was reminded of a reference to that effect by Sri Aurobindo himself in his "The Synthesis of Yoga." I came home and after self-scrutiny I discovered that there is much unnecessary compromise with work in my life; there is a huge gap, a make-belief, a sort of rationalisation of work that I cannot help doing. There has on many occasions been a slow imperceptible replacement of the Lord of Sacrifice by the Magnified Ego, and I believe it is the Grace of Mother alone, which will help me to annihilate the Ego completely and enthrone Vasudeva, the Divine, in its place, so that ultimately all my work of life, work of love and work of knowledge may be offered to the Lord of Sacrifice, to the Absolute, and not to Prakriti, the lower nature. It is in order to kill such great illusions that we require conscious efforts at surrendering to the will of the Mother, who by Her Grace can surely show us the Light.

From Intellect to Superintellect

Dr. P. C. Datta

World as a mirage

Swami Vivekananda, when roaming as a 'Paribrajak' (a wandering ascetic), throughout India, lived for a few days in Gobi desert area. Everyday he got out for morning walk when he felt attracted to a beautiful lake. One day he made a mind to visit that lake which appeared not very far. But alas, he walked and walked and walked, the lake remained as far as it was. He remembered the story of mirage and was disillusioned. Every next morning he saw the same lake, but now he felt no attraction. Swamiji tells this story when explaining Shankaracharya's philosophy of *Maya*. The lake did not exist in reality, but it existed only in the eyes. Thus the universe does not exist in reality, it exists only in our senses.

Subjective world of Shankara and Einstein

Out of the unlimited waves of light a very insignificant fraction reacts to our eye-perception to create something new, inexistent in reality, — a sense of colouration. Thus the colour exists in the eyes only. Again the colour perceptions are also not same for all, its natures are relative to constitution of eyes. The same wave length may produce one colouration in one's eyes, another colouration

in another's eyes. But that does not make any difficulty in behaviour. When I say, "this is red", you also say, "Yes, this is red", though "red" of my eyes and your eyes are different. Similar are the sound waves perceived by ears. Dr. Einstein shows mathematically, the space and time of the universe are unreal. The Universe exists in the sense only, not in reality. You may disregard Einstein's mathematics as abstract things. But can you ignore the "atom bomb", which is also a product of Einstein's mathematics? Anyhow, the theory of relativity propounded by Shankara Logic and Einstein Mathematics suggests that the Universe has no objective existence, its existence is relative to senses of individuals.

Deceptive senses

Lincoln Barnett (1953), when explaining Einstein, says, "In the evolution of quantum physics, the barrier between man, peering dimly through the clouded windows of his senses, and whatever objective reality may exist, has been rendered almost impassable. For whenever he attempts to penetrate and spy on the 'real' objective world, he changes or distorts its workings by the very process of his observations. And when he tries to divorce this 'real' world from his sense perceptions he is left with nothing but a mathematical scheme. He is indeed somewhat in the position of a blind man trying to discern the shape and texture of a snowflake. As soon as it touches his fingers or his tongue it dissolves".

So our sense organs are incapable of knowing the reality, nay, they create obstruction in knowing the reality and they distort the reality. Suppose you are in a prison-house, made up of mirrors. But the mirrors are so defective that whenever you look at them, you can see twenty eyes, twenty noses, twenty ears, twenty lips and so on. But you have no alternative way of seeing your face, excepting these mirrors of prison-house. They depict such figures which exist in the mirror only, not in reality. We are similarly imprisoned in our senses, who create an unreal picture (the Universe) of the Reality, if any.

According to Newtonian Physics, the Universe was permeated with an invisible medium in which the stars wandered and through which light travelled like vibrations. It provided a mechanically fixed model of absolute immovable space, for explaining all known natural phenomena. Einstein's special theory of Relativity discards this idea of space, which is nothing but an order or relation of things among themselves. Along with absolute space, Einstein discards the concept of absolute time, streaming from infinite past to the infinite future. Just as there is no such thing as colour, without an eye to discern it, so an hour or day is nothing without an event to mark it.

A tree of sense knowledge

We are unfortunate that our senses deprive us from realizing the Reality. Story of Adam and Eve shows that they were separated from the

Reality or God as soon as they ate the fruit of sense-knowledge. How can we remove the sense-barrier to unveil the Reality. Shri Geeta also describes a World Tree, which has its roots above in the finest and supreme consciousness, branches downwards in the hankerings for sense pleasures. We are imprisoned in the branches. We have to cut the tree with the weapons of non-attachment to way out. Here come the religions of the world. Acharya Shankara accepts all religious ways to root out the world tree (or the Sense tree) for liberation from the sense-bondage and realization of the Truth.

Place of religion in science

What is religion ? A religion to me is a way or technology of developing a supra-sense consciousness for realizing the ultimate unknown principle or Indian *Dharma* holding and explaining all diverse natural phenomena. Actually religions come to help a 'living' scientist (or a philosopher). That is the proper place of religion. Science tries to discover *Dharma*, senses create obstructions, religions way out the development of a supra-sense-faculty to help the 'living man'. "To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms — this knowledge, this feeling is at the centre of true religiousness" (Einstein). This feeling can occur only in a 'living man'. "He to whom this emotion is a stranger

who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead" (—Einstein). Einstein declares, "This cosmic religious experience is the strongest and noblest main-spring of scientific research".

The question of Reality

In the arguments of Relativity, questions arise : What is the ultimate Reality, is it simply emptiness — an undescrivable void ? What is that which is distorted by our sense-mirrors ? What is the factor or force that has created this prison of senses ? Western science upto-now fails to answer ? Buddhist philosopher will find support in the mathematical conclusion on emptiness. But Relativity of Shankara suggests that the idea of emptiness can not stand alone, it is relative to the concept of 'fulness'. That fulness is the Universal Self. The false world is an image of that One, that Self, Brahma ; nothing other than that One exists at all. This distorted sense-image is the creation of *Maya*.

Probably the same logic leads Einstein to the mathematical endeavours to establish the "Unified field theory", in which time, space, matter, energy, mass, all melt in an unified space-time continuum. "It carries to 'logical' fulfilment of the long course of science towards the unification of man's concepts" (— Lincoln Barnett).

In trying to distinguish appearance from Reality, scientists were baffled by the sensory experiences. The only world that a man can really know is the world created for him by his own senses but actually never happen. If you can wash out this supersti-

tious habits of senses and the wrong impressions stored in memory, nothing is left. Actually washing out all sense prejudices is the true purification. That purity reveals the ultimate Pure Self (according to Shankara). Philosopher Hegel remarks: "Pure Being and Nothing are the same".

The One vs. The Empty

But this philosophical or mathematical Nothing or Emptiness is an intellectual Emptiness. Realization of One, experiencing the One or the Self requires freeing oneself from the prison-house of senses by the religion — layed-out purification processes and development of a superior intelligence.

Both Buddha and Shankara were not simply intellectual persons ; they attained the highest consciousness no doubt. But, for filling up intellectually the *void* of Buddhist intellectuals, (not of Buddha), Shankara establishes the formless, colourless, qualityless, nameless "One" logically, and Einstein establishes the Unified Field mathematically. There was a philosophical conflict in India between "One" and "Emptiness" for more than 2500 years.

Solutions in Ma Anandamayee

But the arguments of relativity does not end here. At Dehra Dun, one devotee of Ma Anandamayee was exclaiming, "I believe that the Creator and the Creation both happen to be. I can not believe that only One exists, and the Universe is unreal". Ma Anandamayee says : "I accept your idea as true. But remember that the other idea is

also true : Only One is there, nothing else. This universe is unreal, the Reality is only the Self, That One. Again see, That One also does not exist, because The One is also relative to the concept of multiplicity. When this worldly concept of "many" will vanish "the One" will also vanish. The question of one-two-three does not arise. "When Buddha was asked, "Does something remain after Nirvana ?" — the reply was 'No'. "Does nothing remain after Nirvana ?" — the answer was 'No'. — "Does a condition intermediate between something and nothing remains after Nirvana ?" — Buddha's reply was 'No'. "Does a condition beyond something and nothing remains there ?" — the answer was the same 'No'.

Human worldly language can express the world affairs only. Intellectual revelations are the last limits of expression by our language. Our worldly language is too weak to express the supra-intellectual realizations. That is the reason of two and a half thousand year old conflicts of philosophies. Ma Anandamayee dissolves this old conflict very simply and lucidly. Upto the concept of One or Empty we are in the field of Relativity. But when a Yogi can realize that the question of One also vanishes, he is in the supra-intellectual non-confliction (Nirbirodh) plane. Ma explain, when your language says of the worldly *Sunya* it means empty. But Lord Buddha's *Sunya* (you may call it *Mahasunya*) — is empty of emptiness also, where nothing is also nowhere, inexistence is also in-existent, where you will find death of death, negation of all affirmations and negations. Similarly when

your language says 'Bhaba' it means an existence filling up some empty space. The 'Real Bhaba' (you may call 'Mahabhava') implies the same 'Mahasunya' consisting of everything; non-existence is also existent there; i.e. affirmation of all affirmations and negations, i.e. *Sunya* and *Purna* together. Mahabhava and Mahasunya are the same.

The Expanding God

If you consider God as a creator of the Universe, how can He exist, when the Universe does not happen to be. Shankaracharya unifies God with Brahma or Self, but for practical purposes Shankara allows people to follow the individual concepts of God, as will be useful to him. Ma Anandamayee also asks every one to start from his own position. As our senses become refined and widened our Universe also become refined and expanded. As the sense perceptions are finite, the world is also finite. Even if this Universe vanishes a quest for the Truth persists, that Truth is God. Thus with the refinement of senses the concept of God (or Truth) continues to be refined and expanded.

To some Ma suggests to worship God in the idols, rocks or trees and gradually to expand the concept of God in every rock, every idol, every tree, every river and so on. To some She suggests to utter a name of God and then gradually realize God in every name and every sound. To some others She suggests to look upon the crowd or people as the God, and then to spread the concept

to the humanity. To some, complaining against family troubles, Ma suggests to discover the Creator in His creation (the family and troubles). To some She suggests that God is formless, nameless, adjectiveless, etc. If some one argues God is absent in his concept, Ma would say, you are correct, as you are at such a position where God appears as 'absence'.

What is the ultimate reality? — Ma says, you can find an ultimate if you are only in a limited area of vision. If your vision is unlimited it would never find the ultimate. Thus the 'ultimate' will change according to your position. In the field of relativity it is relative to the subject or philosophy. In a sense all these philosophies, are perfect. Because if you try, you can discover all others in any one and one in all others, infinite in finite and finite in infinite. All religious paths pass by the door or Reality or Truth, but if you can cross over this world of relativity, the question of real or unreal, true or false will not arise.

To some She says, "Find the Self. Realization of Self is the realization of God; the realization of God is the realization of Self." To some She says, "liberate yourself from the diversity of the world and plunge into the One." She says, "To plunge into the One is not the aim of life. You will have to go beyond, where the conflict of one or many, dissolves, where infinite 'yes' or infinite 'no', infinite 'truths' and infinite 'falses', infinite 'creations' and infinite 'destructions' remain together, all are infinite but none are barriers to

others." It is inexpressible by worldly language. "It is that what it is." Einstein says : "That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God." Ma would say : so long as you are in the intellect, God would appear as this *idea*. But when you are beyond that, God is neither in ideas nor is beyond ideas, not is in any form nor is formless ; not between forms and formless; nor is above those. God is existence and non-existence both, neither existence nor non-existence, neither between existence and non-existence, nor above them. "God is beyond all dualities, nay, the question of beyond or non-beyond also does not arise". How can one understand this ? — One can realize that after crossing the intellect. For that, one has to start from where he is standing, with the help of his religious guide. Thus the personified God expands into infinite Brahma ; Qualified Brahma expands into non-qualified Brahma — which merges into a Consciousness unexpressible *Mahasunya* or *Mahabhava*.

Divine Message

Sri Dibyadarshi

Arise, Awake.

The noble, sublime men,
You approach, Oh, you men,
The path Divine is sharp,
And difficult as razor's edge,
Declare the sages.

The whole world is oblivious of the inner self and totally merged in delusion and the purpose of life is lost to men. The seer's are invoking men in clarion voice on that account. Men are requested to have resort to Saintly men, who have sacrificed worldly life. The whole world is rushing in the path of sensual pleasures and is being drenched in the intoxication of vital life. The path of God is beyond mortal pleasures ; it is immortal bliss.

The path Divine moves on the road to self discovery. It is a path very difficult to move on : if the devotee is not alert all the time, he may easily fall down in the way of vital pleasures. So in order to move safely in this path of Divine pleasures, one must associate himself with Saints and observe and pursue what they dictate and instruct.

In every walk of life we require preception. If one is to learn music, he must approach a musician. Follow his words ; if one is to learn mathematics, he must go to a mathematician. Similarly, if you

intend to move towards God and happiness and peace of mind, you must approach Godly men.

That is why Upanishads say : If you want immortal bliss and Supreme happiness in life you must have power to forsake lust, greed, anger. Your mind then will be filled in with heavenly joys.

When Lord Krishna was speaking to Arjuna — He categorically stated that it was unappeasable fire of desire and lust that covered knowledge and it was a veritable enemy of wise men and devotees of God.

Even God instructed Arjuna to control the senses first and kill this lust and mundane desire, the destroyer of knowledge and realisation.

It is very nicely put by a prophet writer — Dr. Paul Brunton in his book “The Spiritual Crisis of man”. People who are dazzled by the ownership of things while neglecting the ownership of themselves show they are emotionally and intellectually under grown up, a race of spiritually dwarf small boys and girls preoccupied with small toys”.....as a result what they have really got, they have got a world of increasing frustration and greed, chaos and violence, envy, hate and unrest.

Mother Anandamayee in her gracious and sweet words say — “Go to the east, the west will be left behind. Don’t rack your brains for your failings, you adopt a good means, bad ones will be left out. You read either scriptures or good books telling the life of Saints or take to chanting of God’s name or associate with Devotees”. Develop a strong habit of doing good deeds by repeated following, at one

time you will find that you are an honest man in the path Divine — these are the ideas and wise-sayings, the devotees must bear in mind and must act upon them.

Sri Ramakrishna says, "Do not move towards gold and woman and sing the glory of God. Within a short time, you will get heavenly bliss". Mother Anandamayee says : "Chanting of God's name is penance, one who sings the glory of God always, God will come down to him. One who will not remember or chant his name, will be brought down to worldly life of trouble and unhappiness". Mahaprabhu says, "No way is left to men of Kali Yuga and chanting the name of Hari is the only means of salvation and happiness."

(To be continued)

Our Ma

Ma Das

O Eternal Love, our *Atma*,
The sole Supreme Essence,
Nothing else is Sweeter Ma
Than your omnipresence.

Thus Replies Ma*

Gopal

The story is very short, but heart-striking and abstruse.

I got a request to visit (as doctor) Srimat Gnanananda Swamiji, the founder of Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, who was seriously ill. I went and saw him, an incarnation of peace and quietude, a grey haired short old man of fair complexion.

At that time, his face was shrunk of pains, due to stoppage of urination for two days. The highly extended kidney covered half of the abdomen. I understood that the enlarged prostate gland plugged the urinary duct. His age was 105. Certainly he was enduring an unendurable pain. Further delay might cause bursting of the kidney and a severely painful death. Surgical operation was also dangerously risky. But it would relieve from pains.

I explained the situation clearly and he agreed to face the risk of surgery. "Baba! I know you will not operate yourself, but whomever you engage, you must kindly be seated near me throughout the period of operation" — was his earnest request.

The operation was over. I was seated near his head with his hands held by me. The urination

*Translated from Bengali Ananda-Varta, Vol. V(1): p. 32-33.

reduced the pains. But I felt from his pulse condition that he might not be able to overcome the shock of the operation.

Still I was affording all possible attempts without any lapse. I was sincerely trying my best. But after three days I felt clearly that all attempts to keep his mortal body alive would fail.

In the evening Swamiji uttered, "Baba, I have read in your face that my departure is very near. I am charmed by your sincere service. That is why I am inclined to beg another thing from you; can I?"

No word I could utter! I replied only by nodding my head affirmatively.

He said, "This is my last will. I want to have once a *darshan* of Ma Anandamayi. Would you kindly arrange this. If you request Ma, she will certainly come to see me at this last phase of my life."

I stood up immediately and rushed to Ma's *ashram* in a motor car. Reaching there I heard that Ma had gone out in a motor car, none knew, where.

I felt very much disappointed, because I was afraid, Swamiji's life might not cross to-night even.

I had to wait in the *ashram* for Ma's return. After one and a half hours Ma came in and immediately looking at me Ma uttered smilingly: "Baba, I have come just now, after seeing Gnanananda Swamiji."

I was stuck with awe and lost my speech. After sometime I became normal and asked — "Ma, did you know Gnanananda Swamiji previously?"

“No ! This is the first time. But this body heard his name.”

“Did you know anything about his illness ?”

“No, Baba !”

“Then, why did you run there suddenly today ?”

“Baba, this body was going some where at that side. Suddenly the “Kheyal” came in to see that Baba and this body went there.”

After the conversation with Ma, I came to the conclusion that Ma was at Vindhyacal at that time. And the Kheyal to see the Swamiji came in Her, probably, when Swāmiji expressed his earnest desire to me.

I said : I was waiting here, for taking you to that Baba.

Ma laughed much, the mystery of which was difficult to understand. But it hurt my vanity.

I went back to Swamiji. He embraced me with his two arms, pulled my head to his bosom and caressed and blessed me for a long time. An indomitable spell of weeping rushed through my heart. But I could not tell him, that I did not deserve that caress or blessing. Ma Herself went to see and bless Her own son, which would be an invaluable companion during his last voyage.

Sai Ram Sahay

Sri M. Rama Rao

Distribution of Gangajala in Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee Bhagavat Bhavan, Bangalore.

I am a Sai devotee, Sai Baba has said "Light up your life with the Saints. We are all one".

Ma Anandamayee also said (Addressing a congregation of devotees).

"You should go to all those places where you can have even a little bit of spiritual gain. There is no restrictions here ; one can freely go wherever he thinks he will find joy".

As such I have a great regard and reference for Ma and visit now and then her Bhagavat Bhavan, Bangalore.

Sri Viswananda Swamiji is the executive secretary of the Bhavan. He recently on the auspicious day of Makara Sankranti in the month of January 1989 attended the Kumbha Mela at Prayag (Allahabad) and stayed there for eleven days and fed hundreds of poor devotees, Sadhus and Saints.

Let us understand something about Kumbhamela. They are generally held at place where different rivers join as Sangam (confluence) i.e. Prayag (Allahabad), Hardwar, etc., and in the South at Tirumal Kudu in Mysore District. During these Melas the places are flooded with different types of people.

Hardwar and Kankhal are filled with Ma's leelas. I reproduce the fact written as regards Kumbha Mela in 1986.

Origin of Kumbha :

According to Skanda Purana and Matsya Purana, at the time of creation a certain great saint cursed the gods. As a result they became weak. In order to regain strength they went to Brahma, the Primal creator who asked them to drink nectar churning it out of the sea. Accordingly they started to churn the sea ; but they took the help of demons as they themselves were weak. The Churning rod was the Mandara mountain and the rope was the enormously big snake Vasuki. This ocean is called Kshiroda Sagara which was situated, according to the Hindu mythology on the northern side of Himalaya mountains. Finally thirteen precious objects came out of this churning such as poison, pushpak chariot, Auravata (elephant), Phant, Parijata tree, Rambha (Apsara), Kaustubha jewel, Kundal, Saranga bow, five Gods daughter the celebrated horse Uchhaishrava Lakshmi and Viswakarma. When the fourteenth precious object the golden Kumbha (vessel) of nectar in all its blissful luminosity in the hands of the God Dhanwantari came out, Gods and demons became mad with joy for having it. All of them had heard that one could be immortal by drinking nectar. In the meantime, with the instruction of Indira, King of Gods, his son Jayanta taking the nectar Kumbha fled away. Sukracharya, the preceptor of the demons, having

come to know of it, asked the demons to go to the east and capture the Kumbha. Accordingly, the demons pursued Jayanta. In the meantime the Gods also reached there. A fight ensued for 12 days between the Gods and demons. These twelve days are equal to twelve years for man. During this period for the safety of this Kumbha, it was kept in twelve places — eight places were in heaven and four places were on the earth. According to the tradition these four places were Haridwar, Prayag, Nasik and Ujjayini — all situated in India. Drops of nectar were said to have fallen in these four places in India. At this time the preceptor of the Gods, namely, Brihaspati and Sun, Moon, and Saturn helped Jayanta for its defence.

According to Vishnu Purana the Moon protected the nectar from falling, the Sun from melting. Brihaspati — from demons and Saturn saved it from Jayanta himself who might have otherwise drunk it. That is why whenever in any one of these four places, these four planets meet, (this is known as Kumbha Union), the holy festival of Kumbha is held there itself.

Glory : Vishnu-yaga, thus describes its glory. Those who will take bath at this auspicious time being present at the place of Kumbha, will be freed from worldly bondage, Gods bend down to such persons, as the poors bend down to rich men.

The Kumbha congregation of 1986 was one of the greatest so far recorded ; from unofficial sources it is estimated that seventy lakhs of people

including seven lakhs of sadhu-mahatmas came for bath in this Kumbha. In Kaliyuga Ganga is the special Tirtha. Bath in the Ganga, Puja and living specially on the Ganga of Haridwar are particularly considered more virtuous deeds.

Lakhs of sadhus and saints from all over the country rushed this time for bath to the Brahmakunda at Haridwar. Discourses on the Upanishads, complete reading of the Gita, Ramcharit Manasa and Bhagavatam with commentary, Vishnu Sahasranama, Shiva mahima stotra, Guru stotra and Ganga stotra and so on in different places.

As a token of love and exchange of brotherhood feasts are offered to monks and the poor and devotees are fed. Processions are held, some carry auspicious pots with holy water on their heads. Millions of virtuous people feel happy to have the holy darshan of this biggest congregation.

(Based on Prabuddha Bharata)

As aforesaid Sri Viswanand Maharaj, having compassion on Sri Anandamayi's devotees brought a big pot full of Gangajal from Kumbha mela.

Mahashivaratri Puja in Mayees' Bhagavath Bhavan on 6-3-1989 was held auspiciously and next day the Gangajal was sprinkled on the devotees' heads and a little was given to sip as holy tirtha to pave the way for the freedom from birth and death.

Once when Ma was alive the Shivaratri Puja at Ma's Varanasi ashram was held and at the end Ma gave Prasad to every one. After a while she added "Some one had told Panna Lal (a devotee) that he

had completed his life term. But he participated in the Shivaratri Puja and kept the fast too and lived for another ten years". When the devotees heard those words from Ma's mouth the importance of Shivaratri Puja and fasting became more clear to them. Ma has taken birth for the welfare of Mankind. When again shall we see such a Ma? It is a mystery.

Shankaracharya of Kanchi, as regards to the significance of Shivaratri has said, "The Lord who performs the illuminating dance appears in the form of Lingodbhavam moorthi on Shivaratri to shower His grace on us. It is our duty on that day to fast, keep vigil and worship Him at midnight atleast with one leaf of the Bilva tree."

We have to take note that half-hearted fast and awakening would not be effective without staunch faith and devotion. The inner meaning of fast and vigil is that we should fast for our bad desires and keep vigil on our inner six enemies such as Kama, Krodha, Mada, Moha, Mastarya and Lobha.

Lastly I may mention that if we get a chance to bathe in Ganga during Kumbha Mela, it is well and good. If not, we need not feel sorry for the same. If we have pure faith and reverence in our Guru, the water with which his lotus feet are washed is equal to Ganga water for us. Guru Padodakam Pavanam".

Once Das Ganu a staunch devotee of Sai Baba thought that he should go to Prayag (Allahabad) for a bath in Sangam and came to Baba to get His

permission for doing so. Baba replied to him, "It is not necessary to go so far. Our Prayag is here, believe me". Then wonder of wonders. When Das Guru placed his head on Baba's feet, out came or flowed streams of Ganga and Yamuna water from both the toes of Baba. Seeing this miracle, Das Guru was overwhelmed with feelings of love and adoration and was full of tears.

Baba in his life time used to purchase provision and vegetables from his own pocket and prepare food and distribute as Prasad. And he used to keep big earthen Pot (Kumbha) filled with water in Dwarkamayi. This system is going on even now. If we, devotees sip a little water from the Pot (Kumbha) and sprinkle on our head, it is equal to taking Gāngajal as tirtha and bathing in Ganga during Kumbha Mela.

May Sri Ma bless us with ever-increasing love for Her holy feet.

Jai Jai Anandamayee.

Jai Jai Baba Sai.

Science, Sufism, Sanskrit And Reality

D. M. Sampat

At very top levels both science and high philosophy seem to go hand-in-hands. While talking of the universe and cosmology science plays hide and seek with flights of fancy and speaks in a language not very different from philosophy. In philosophy also, there is a difference between an empty philosophy of learning and phonetics and a real philosophy of knowledge and basics. The ultimate REALITY is the thing that matters, both in science as well as in philosophy. The ultimate TRUTH is the goal of all seekers, whether the seeker seeks via science or via philosophy. The scientific method is an accepted method during these days and we need not overlook that it has contributed a lot in increasing the credibility of philosophy. Philosophy must give us something concrete; otherwise mere words and arguments amount to empty philosophy.

To say that aeroplanes etc. are mentioned in our scriptures and so our ancients knew about it, knew the techniques and produced them will be a hollow statement. With the help of our scriptures, we are not able to produce any such thing at present. No doubt, in the field of Ayurved and Unani medicines, we have certain unique and im-

portant formulas but that does not amount to much and we lag far behind science. We, in the eastern countries should try to understand what we lack and what we should know and acquire from the West. We should not boast about the knowledge of our ancestors and should stop preaching to the world and start learning what we lack in knowledge and come upto a standard, from where we can sit by the side of the scientist, and tell the scientist, in scientific terms about what the scientist wants to know from our scriptures. That requires much more than what we churn out from the linguistics of scriptures. That requires in depth penetration of scriptures — that requires a *surplus*.

Shree Ma spoke from where ? Shree Ma spoke from the depths. She spoke from Eternity and told everybody about eternal facts. She never learnt in school but she was learning incarnate. She showed us by her example, where knowledge lies. It was not in her body and yet within her and everywhere around her. That is where, we have to seek knowledge. That is how we have to seek knowledge.

The scholars discuss and debate

The seekers explore and penetrate.

And every devotee has the blessings of Shree Ma, the Mother Eternal, in his/her quest for TRUTH.

So, the goal of all, whether the scientist or the Sufi or the Sanskritist is the same — the knowledge of the ultimate Reality.

In spite of its great strides in knowledge, modern science is still fumbling in its estimate of Reality.

Oscillating between innumerable alternatives modern science is faced with many imponderables. So Science is induced to look in the direction of "ancient insights" to obtain a better perspective, if possible, through ancient wisdom.

And in this connection, we may examine what Sufism has to say and what Sanskrit scriptures have to unfold to enhance our understanding. In this write-up excerpts on Sufism are from an article "Malfuzaat" of Sufi mystics, by Madame Akhtar Qamber of Delhi.

It is said one-eighth of the holy Koran deals with science. This requires a proper study of the holy Koran. The cream of the philosophy is reflected in the utterances of Sufi Saints.

The monotheism of Koran, the *Brahman* — the one without a second — of Adi Shankarcharya and the Unified Theory suggested by Dr. Einstein seem to be moving in the same direction. They are different versions leading to the ONE REALITY.

"The final goal of Sufi spirituality is nothing short of direct and personal apprehension of the Supreme Reality." Here the Supreme does not indicate something above, something beyond and separate from everything but stands for something intrinsic in everything that IS in the universe, and all that constitutes the universe. Like a thread that passes through all the beads that make up this universe. The same idea is described in Sanskrit in the Geeta as "Sutre mani ganaa eva." A comparable interpretation of the universe was given by the famous physicist — Dirac (Nobel Laureate)

which in the scientific world is known as "Dirac's Ocean" and the Equilibrium associated with it. When this equilibrium is disturbed Creation starts. So also in Sanskrit scriptures it is described that the Prashanta (which also means the ocean) is quiet, stable, complete (all by itself) and motionless. In that Prashanta disturbance occurs when Maya sets in, and that creates duality out of unity and that gives rise to the great cosmic dance — the Maharaasa described in Shreemad Bhagavata.

Such a dance, poet Oomar Khayyam has tried to describe in his Rubayyat in these words :—

"In and out above and below ;

Is nothing but a mystic shadow show ;

Played in the light whose lantern is the sun,

Round which the phantom figures come and go."

But his description seems related to the solar system. Many solar systems make a galaxy and there are many galaxies, and the Milky Way and then, the "Vishva" which is described in Chapter XI, Vishvaroop-darshan of the Geeta.

Our Shree Ma, never read the Geeta, but she could see the Geeta, through and through, see all the Yogas as they are, see the Truth as it is in Reality and tell us all about it. If we can sort out Shree Ma's utterances, we can cull out many references which may help in dealing with some problems facing the present scientific world.

The base of Shree Ma's knowledge was infinite, where nothing is unknown. The reason why Shree Ma did not open her eye of scientific vision, seems to be, that she wanted her devotees to take up a

more direct route, a short route to the ultimate Reality and avoid the scientific route full of innumerable alternatives lading in many directions, culminating in disruption of concentration on the ultimate goal.

Let us, therefore, examine ourselves and see how far we have come up to the standard, which She wanted us to achieve and let us pray for HER BLESSINGS.

To perform one's worldly duties is a good thing.
At the same time one has to be mindful of man's real duty.

Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma

“Message sent by Sri Virajanandaji Maharaj, President, Committee of Ascetic Members of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Sangh, on the occasion of the group satsang of some junior Brahmacharis of the Sangh at Almorah from 5th to 19th June 1989.”

Snehaspada Bhratrivrinda

On this occasion of your second *satsang*, I invoke the blessings of Ma for its complete success and pray that by Her divine grace, everyone of you may be blessed with single minded determination to achieve the highest goal of human life. You have given up all family attachments and ambitious endeavours for worldly success, despite good education in the prime of your life, and have had the rare good fortune to be accepted by the Supreme Herself, our eternal protector and refuge, by whose compassionate *Kheyala*, we have successfully tided over for ever the unfortunate misunderstanding among us, Her beloved children. What better start in life for spiritual attainment can one ever make and at such a young age as yours ?

Undoubtedly, for sincere spiritual seekers, as I am sure you all are, *satsang* is a vital part of *sadhana*. As Goswami Tulsidasji very correctly puts it in his immortal Ramayana बिन सतसंग विवेक न होई (without *satsang* no discrimination between real and unreal is possible). But to derive maximum benefit from *satsang*, one must ever remember that the ego is the biggest enemy of earnest aspiration

and unless one is firmly determined with whatever strength one possesses, to follow strictly the way shown by one's Gurudeva, no real success in spiritual life can be achieved. The Guru is the divine doctor who never fails to cure the disciple's malady, whatever it may be, provided that latter has the good sense to give up his own preferences and take only the medicine prescribed by his greatest knowledgeable well-wisher in the world.

This firm fidelity is the imperishable foundation on which the super-structure of all spiritual life is built, and should never be forgotten. But let me warn you that this implicit faith in the Guru may not come by itself in the state, which the *sadhaka* may be in. To develop this faith, one has to cultivate the fundamental principle of discipline which is popularly known as *yam, niyam*, etc. The cultivation of this discipline reveals the potency of the latent inner forces, and in combination with Guru Shakti, the process of unfoldment of the inner being continues. In fact, in this process, it is the Guru Shakti only which unfolds also as the personal effort of the *sadhaka*. In other words, the ego of *sadhaka* dissolves in Guru Shakti, which alone leads the aspirant to his goal.

The important factor in the growth of a *sadhaka's* life is his constant effort to conquer himself. And this is sustained by not being carried away by any distracting forces, but remaining ever fixed one-pointedly with an unbroken effort on his objective. But, how can this be achieved? Here comes the discipline of *sadhana* as prescribed by

the Guru. The normal discipline of *yam*, *niyam*, prepares the ground which enables the *sadhaka* to get the capacity to understand the Guru's words properly. And by actually acting in accordance with those words, the disciple develops the power within to conquer the distracting and veiling forces. When this happens, the mind is in a state to keep it fixed on the objective.

In this state of *sadhaka*, the play of Guru Shakti takes an upper hand and the *sadhaka's* march towards his objective becomes an uninterrupted uniform movement. Therefore, it is imperative to follow the Guru's instructions to the letter without fail, never questioning his authority, but ever remaining aware of the most compassionate Shakti, for the real being of the *sadhaka* is in the form of the Guru. So let the *sadhaka* mould himself into the light receptacle to hold this Guru Shakti with his entire being.

To make it possible for the above-mentioned receptivity of Guru Shakti to be taken up in right shape, be humble, polite and serious all the time. In the footsteps of Ma's technique of *seva* in Grihastashram, imbibe the quality of being humble and polite, be respectful to elders, have affection for youngers, develop the spirit of understanding, sympathy and love in identification with others.

When enquired about the value of the above qualities in the context of a *sadhaka's* life, Ma had replied : there must be steadiness in all actions, sustained by a sense of seriousness. Abiding in clear understanding and never perturbed, remain

courteous with an attitude of receptivity in dealing with others. There must be a pleasing manner with graceful pattern in movement and talk. Through all these, indeed, build up the ways and methods of *sat-kriya* leading to the attainment of the objective. Om shanti !

Virajanand

(Shri Virajanand ji Maharaj)
Chairman Ascetic Members Committee.

NEW PUBLICATION :
ENGLISH EDITION OF :
MATRI-LILA DARSHAN

by

Dr. Debaprasad Mukhopadhyay

The dawn

Nihar Ranjan Chakraborty

It is the dawn
When all birds
Do not gather.
Sitting in nest
Welcome the day
Singing together.

The dark of night
Has been thrust out
By the baby-sun.
The clean breeze
Calmly passes all over
Makes flower-fun.

If you are at sleep
In a sweet-dream
Give up the dosy charm,
For, the day welcomes you
In the realm of life,
So, be steady and firm.

Eternal Journey of Amala

(Translated by Smt. Swati Bhattacharyya from Bengali Ananda Varta, Vol. 2 No. 1, 1954.)

There is a proverb, "In prayer and pure austerity, one may spend one's life, but it is how one dies that counts." When the final end is nearby, one loses all conscious hold over one's senses, thoughts, feelings and even intellect. Thus the desire, conscious or unconscious, which is strongest in him, involuntarily surfaces and decides the direction of his soul. We get the same idea in the Gita also. "Blessed are the souls who can aspire God even while breathing their last."

The late Dr. Gopal Dasgupta, a distinguished doctor of Varanasi and his wife the late Amala Dasgupta were among the ardent devotees of Sri Sri Ma. In our society, instances of such a couple living an exemplary life of devotion and mutual help in attaining the Supreme goal are indeed rare. Ma was always in their mind — awake on asleep.

(2)

On 9th December, 1953, Amala departed for her heavenly abode after a brief ailment. A few days earlier she could sense the proximity of her final hour and absorbed herself in the thought of Ma alone. A letter to her sister Buni, on the day

before the death shows how strong was her urge for Ma. She wrote :

“Buni,

Received your letter. I have written a letter to you in the address of the Ashram at Puri. Have you not received that? Why should I be annoyed? Of course I felt neglected. Those who stay with Ma and near Ma, do they feel our woes. Even Ma does not know our grief. This time, I have not received any letters from you. Gurupriyadi used to write earlier the words of Ma. Now-a-days, I also do not disturb anybody by writing letters.

Please ask Ma, whether or not she thinks of us even once a day. Even amidst a thousand troubles, I never let Ma out of my mind. Her face is always before my eyes. When I can not tolerate any more, I go to the prayer room so that no body can notice where I weep. What else I can do? I have learnt that Ma may come here at the end of this month or at the beginning of January. How long shall I have to wait with patience. Convey our deepest regards to Ma. Please accept my love and blessings.

Yours

Didi

(3)

Dr. Gopal Das Gupta told Amala, “Just before death Ma is testing you.”

Amala replied, “I will certainly pass in this examination. Ma-Ma-go.” With these words,

Amala passed away for ever and entered into eternal sleep in the lap of Ma.

(4)

Fragments of Amala's association with Ma, as depicted by the late Dr. Gopal Das Gupta, to the last day of Amala's life, are here under.

Amala

- Birth in Varanasi
- Married in Varanasi
- Family life in Varanasi
- Met Ma in Varanasi
- Death in Varanasi

On Bijoya Dashami (Bengali year 1360)

Amala came out smiling from Ma's room. Dr. Das Gupta asked, "What blessing did you ask from Ma."

Amala replied, "That I may depart with Sindoor on my forehead."

— "Could you really ask such a question?"

— "Ma knows the mind of all. Do you know that? I have made my Sindoor blessed by the touch of her feet."

Yes, the mark of Sindoor was never wiped out. Even at the point of her death.

Seven days before Amala's death

Conversation during an evening ride in a rickshaw.

Amala said, "I am very much afraid to die."

Dr. Das Gupta asked, "Why, suddenly such nonsensical talk? Moreover why the fear of death in the mouth of a devotee like you?"

"No — not for myself. I fear to leave you alone, so simple, so innocent you are! However Ma is there. She will look after you."

"I will certainly complain to Ma. You will get a fine scolding from her."

Just the opposite happened. Ma took her up for good, into her lap.

Sri Sri Ma's journey to Puri from Varanasi

Ma started from Ashram to Railway Station by car. Amala sat besides Ma in the car.

Afterwards Amala said, "To day I have hugged Ma's feet to my heartfelt satisfaction. Ma did not protest at all. She caressed me so lovingly."

Who knew at that time that Ma was fulfilling in this way the last wish of her devotee. The dust of Ma's feet accompanied her as shield for the unknown destination.

At noon the day before Amala's departure

Amala was busy hanging up herself seven photographs of Ma on the walls of her room.

Dr. Gopal Das Gupta asked, "What is this? Why should you fill the four walls with Ma's photos? Why not fill your heart?"

Amala answered, "Oh, she is always in my heart. Every moment whether in waking or in sleep Ma is with me. But do you know? I want Ma to be in sight from every possible corner at all times."

This wish was fulfilled. Amala breathed her last in this room.

Afternoon — the day of Amala's demise

Dr. Gopal Das Gupta said, "I am getting a loan. Why don't we buy the house instead of counting rent every month. Later on we shall pay the debt gradually."

Amala replied, "Yes, do buy it. But you must accept my condition. After our death the house will go for the welfare of the children. It will serve your Lord Balgopal."

Dr. Gopal Das Gupta thought, "Ma, shall I be able to bear such heavy burden?"

In the evening near the temple of Durga

Amala said, "I had a great desire to pass my life in serving the children. Even if I die, won't you keep Sishu-Kalyan alive?"

Dr. Das Gupta prayed to Ma for strength to carry out the wishes of Amala.

From midnight 1-30 a.m. to morning 7-15 a.m.

Amala requested, "Please don't leave me alone. My head is paining very much."

Dr. Das Gupta replied, "Keep praying to Ma. Ma is testing whether a devotee can keep Ma in her mind even amidst unbearable pain."

Amala's last utterance, "I will pass the test. Oh Ma ... Ma ... Ma Go!"

Then all became quiet.

“Let her remember and follow the path of Ma Anandamayee.” Dr. Das Gupta prayed. “Ma ... Goo ... whatever you feel good, please do that. You are the well-wisher, you are the affectionate and you are the blessing, let me feel that. The other half which is left behind, will be waiting for reunion again.”

(5)

After the death of Amala, Ma sent a condolence letter to Dr. Das Gupta's daughter and daughter-in-law. Some portions of that letter are as follows :—

“ She could never rest unless she had confided all her thoughts and pains to me. She was more like my friend. She is very fortunate, being survived by husband, son and daughter. It is natural that tears should come out. But you must not give way to grief. Have patience. As it is the duty of parents to look after the peace and happiness of their children, so it is the duty of the children towards the parents. All brothers and sisters should pray through their tears. Let Amala Ma attain the Highest Abode. Crying over dead body only agonizes the unfettered soul. One should always keep in mind the very peace lies with her peace, from whom I was created. God will keep her, who is so close to Him in her rightful place ”

Doctor's Visit Given by Ma*

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

(Continued from previous issue)

Synopsis

(Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram, Naimisharanya, Nov.-Dec. 1968. I went as an escort to my old mother to attend the ceremony of 15 days Bhagavat Path by Swami Akhandanandaji and opening of Vedavyas Mandir.

In Naimisharanya, a minor operation was done by me on the right palm of Ma Anandamayee against the wish of many top devotees of Ma. After operation gradually Ma's pulse returned to normal, the door was opened ; devotees waiting outside came and sat in front of Ma. Then Ma started telling of a strange happening in her life.)

(13)

Ma started saying :—

“Many years ago once I went to the Ganga Sagar Tirtha. I fell sick there. Something happened in my throat ; feeling difficulties to eat, my voice became hoarse. The devotees of the Ashram called a doctor from the Sagar Mela Camp Hospital. The doctor asked me to open my mouth widely to see the throat by a spoon and torch. I opened up my

* Published in Bengali Ananda Varta from October 1984 to October 1985.

mouth. As soon as the doctor had seen the inside of the throat, he felt giddy and became unconscious and fell down on the floor. Later on, when the doctor regained his consciousness, he told to all who were present, 'When I was examining the throat,' what did I see, an un-natural scene, I can not explain."

After hearing the fact, everybody was surprised. I kept quiet and remain sitting. Seeing no expression on my face Gurupriya didi asked me, "Well Doctor, you can not believe the fact inspite of Ma telling the story herself."

I said nothing. Most probably there was an expression on my face of not believing the facts. But I was thinking after my experience. I was about to kill Ma Anandamayee due to shock while performing a minor operation. How gradually the human pulse can come down and can cause heart to stop — again how the pulse gradually returned to normal — all that was beyond my imagination! I was also about to become unconscious like the doctor of the Ganga Sagar Mela.

Then I got up. When I was about to come out of room, Ma said, "Doctor, wait ; Take your visit." She gave a box of sweets and a few fruits. I returned to my room. I have never taken such good sweets and palatable fruits. I could realise that some rich devotees of Ma had brought these from Delhi or Lucknow. It was my good-luck. In Naimisharanya such good things were not available with money. With great satisfaction my mother and I made good use of those sweets and fruits.

(14)

After this happening, I would daily go to Ma's room to dress the operation site. After dressing Ma used to ask me to sit down ; used to tell various stories — gossip. Though I liked the talk but I used to feel embarrassed, because I knew lot of devotees were waiting outside the room to have a darsan or to do 'Private' with her, whereas I was taking lot of time of Ma without being devotee or initiated by her. I felt that I was cheating the other devotees.

One day Ma asked me — whether I have faith in God ; do I pray to God anytime. I replied, "Ma, where is my time ? I have to see the hospital, lots of work of my family, then I have to play outdoor games, attend the club, Officers Mess and parties and so on ; I remain so busy — when will I sit down to pray ? Well, when I get up from bed I pray to God to bless me so that the day I can pass peacefully ; again at night before going to bed, I pray to God and thank Him for letting me have the peaceful passing of the day. That's all.

Ma said, "Well, you do enough praying. In this world, how many people do remember and pray — even if for a minute — twice a day. Few days ago, you have heard from the Bhagavat explained by Swami Akhandanandaji, that a farmer was more devoted to Narayan than the Narada. After doing his duties if anybody can remember God — even for a while — twice a day — that is enough. You have your old parents with you, and your wife and children. Honestly doing your own duties and looking after them, you are serving God."

(15)

One day after the dressing of Ma's hand when she was talking to me, I took the courage to ask her, "Well Ma, many Ashramites are saying — you take pain and illness in your body to give relief to your devotees ; is it a fact ? If it is true, then please tell me what was the reason to take this particular trouble in your body."

Ma smiled and said, "You know the reason. That night after you repaired the broken finger of the statue of Vedavyas, Swami Paramananda told me everything."

Now I remembered. Few days ago in the evening I was sitting in the "Puran Mandir". A little away, under Swami Paramanandaji's supervision a long big wooden box was being opened. When the lid of the box was open, out of curiosity I also went there. Vedavyas's marble statue was taken out of the wooden box. It had come from Jaipur. The statue was tightly tied down inside with a strong rope. When the rope was being pulled out, the right hand forefinger tip of the marble statue was broken accidentally. Everybody became perturbed. What to do ? The next morning the statue was supposed to be installed. What would happen ? Different opinions were expressed.

Seeing me present there, Swami Paramanandaji asked :

"Well Doctor, do some surgery for broken finger. Can you fix it ?"

It could be done. But where will you get Plaster of Paris or Durofix or Fevicol in Naimi-

sharanya, so that you could try to fix the broken finger.

Now what to do ? Swamiji was also in a dilemma. Quickly he went to Ma and informed her. Ma laughed and said something will be done.

By that time I had a bright idea. In our boyhood when we used at play with marble of stone, some marbles used to be broken due to hard wear. Then we used to make some sticking-glue mixing eatable soft lime and sugar dust. With such glue we used to repair broken marbles which would become as hard as before. I asked Swamiji whether eatable soft lime could be available in the Ashram. Swamiji replied sadly, "Nobody takes bettle-leaves in Ashram, where will the lime be available."

All right. I ran to the nearby village market. From a Pan-shop I collected some soft eatable lime and sugar dust from a grocer's shop. These two things were mixed like paste and the fore-finger of the right hand of the statue of Vedavyas was repaired properly. For sometime I held the two piece together and found gradually both the pieces have become hard. There was no chance of falling. From a little distance, there was no way in which one could guess that this finger was broken and united again. Next day the same statue of Vyasdev was installed in time.

Then I asked Ma, "Now is it understood that you took the blame of the broken statue upon yourself ?"

Ma smiled and answered, "Whatever you think, I have nothing to say."

“Then that very night the intolerable kidney pain I had, was it for the same reason ?”

Ma replied, “How can I say. All is His wish.”

After this our ‘Private’ was over. I came out with many fruits and sweets as my doctor’s fee.

(16)

As soon as I came out, I found many devotees of Ma were waiting in the corridor. One after another they would go to do “Private” with Ma. An old Bengali gentleman (later on I came to know his name as Kohinoorda — Sri S. R. Das Gupta — ex Justice of Calcutta High Court and retired Chief Justice of Mysore High Court) asked me, “Well Doctor! What do you do so long in Ma’s room?”

I replied smilingly, “Ma was telling some stories.”

“Very good! Please let us also know what stories Ma was narrating to you. If possible when you go back to your room put it down on paper. It will be very useful in future.”

Now I truly realise the advise of Kohinoorda. What Ma talked to me and narrated if I had kept them in writing at that time, then I could reproduce all without omitting a single word.

It became very easy to talk to Ma. After one or two days those stitches were to be removed. The incised portion was gradually drying up. Next day after the dressing was over, when Ma gave some fruits and sweets, suddenly I spoke out, “Ma, you are giving me daily so many fruits and sweets as

Doctor's fee, after this what will you give me as Operation fee ?”

Ma smiled and said, “That also I will give. What do you want ?” After saying this Ma glared at me for sometime. I became upset. I never thought that I may land in such an atmosphere. Quickly I replied, “Just like what I have said. Do you think really I have asked an Operation fee from you ? Even if you give, can I take that ?”

After saying so, I came out of the room.

That night I could not go to sleep for a long time. All the time I was thinking, I have asked for an Operation fee from Ma jokingly. If really Ma offers me some money or any precious article — then what will be my position ? Everybody of the Ashram will come to know — then what will they think about me — what will they say ?

17

The next day, with great hesitation I entered Ma's room. Stitches were removed and dressing was done. The wound had healed up properly. However the mark would remain for sometime.

Ma opened up the conversation and asked, “Doctor you have not yet said what you want as an Operation fee.”

I was completely taken aback. I started to collect my medical articles and kept my head down. As soon I looked up — I found Ma was smiling and gazing at me.

Again Ma asked, “Tell me what you will take as an Operation fee. Why do you feel shy ?”

Suddenly, my mouth opened and I begged, "Give me Diksha". After telling her so, I felt that as if I had not said that, but somebody had entered inside me and told that.

Ma caught hold of my ward and said, "Very well. I will give you Diksha."

Then Ma started calling loudly, "Oh Didi, Oh Didi". Gurupriyadi was in the next room. She came out. Ma asked her, "Call Bhaskarananda."

After a like while, Bhaskarananda Swamiji entered. Pointing at me, Ma said, "The Doctor will take Diksha from me, find out when there is a suitable day."

There was one "Panjika" in Ma's room. Swami Bhaskaranandaji consulted it and said, "Ma, day after tomorrow, Thursday, on full moon day, in the morning at 7 a.m. there is auspicious time.

Then Ma told me, "Well, that very day you will get your Diksha."

I became afraid and asked "Do I have to bring anything?"

Ma smiled and said, "No need. Bhaskarananda will arrange everything and will keep it ready here. You need only come here after a bath and without taking any food. Bring you mother along with you."

(To be continued)

Ashram News

Kankhal :

On the last 14th January a Special Puja was performed of Sri Sri Ma to celebrate Paus Sankranti. On 10th February *Aradhana* of Sri Sri *Bagdevi*, 19th February (on the day of *Maghi Purnima*) Sri Sri *Satyanarayan Vrata* were held. On 6th March Siva Ratri Mahavrata was held like previous years solemnly. On 22nd March "Dol" was observed by devotees who attended it by offering *abir* as usual on Sri Sri Narayan and Sri Sri Ma's feet, which was followed by ceremonial washing (*abhishek*) and chanting (*kirtan*).

On 13th April, Thursday (30th Chaitra, Chaitra Sankranti) was observed as the 50th Sannyas Ceremony of 1008 Swami Muktananda Giri Maharaj. Though there was no special arrangement to celebrate specially the completion of "Half-a-Century", it happened like that by the grace of Giriji. Her very old devotee Shri Mulji Bhai and Shri Thakur Bhai and others came from Bombay to Kankhal after many years. A huge quantity of ripe untimely mangoes and many other requirements of *Puja* were automatically collected. Navaratra was celebrated from Pratipad, by ceremonial placement of a pitcher (*Ghat*), chanting and explaining *Ramayana* for nine days, puja of Giriji with 16 offerings (*Shorashopachar*), *Bhandara* of 59 *Sadhus* and so on. At night from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m.

ascetics of our Ashram gave talks on Giriji. As a part of Ramnavami celebration, Ma's footwears were ceremoniously washed and Ma was worshipped with 16 offerings (*Shorashopachar*) inside the Samadhi Mandir (divine Mausoleum).

From 2nd May (19th Baishak) to 23rd May (9th Jyaistha) :

94th birth ceremony of the most adorable Sri Sri Ma was celebrated by Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha with much grandeurs. On this occasion, for long 22 days, continuous Japa Kirtan, one hundred times recitation of Chandi, Special Puja, Ceremonial washing of Ma's footwears, etc. were performed solemnly. From 16th May to 23rd May, recitation of and discourses on Rashleela, Mahaprabhu leela, complete Ramayan, Thousand names of Lord Bishnu, Shrimat Bhagavat Gita, *Matri Chalisa*, *Hanuman Chalisa* were conducted by Sri Haragovindaji. On 23rd special *pujas* were offered in different temples of the locality, services to poors as incarnation of God (Narayana) and Prasad was distributed among the patients of Hospitals of the locality.

On 2nd May (19th Baisakh), in the last part of the night, a special puja was offered in "Samadhi Mandir" at the time of arrival of Ma. The Ashram compound became glamorous by Bhajan and Kirtan.

On 8th May, there was holy Akshay Tritiya day, when Special Puja and Padukavishek were celebrated. About 25 to 30 ladies after bathing in the Ganges, performed some special offerings.

On 13th May (30th Baisakh, Saturday), a puja with 16 offerings was given to Baba Bholanath on the Tithi of his passing away. Kirtan and feeding of 12 Sannyasis and offering them clothes were also parts of the celebration. At night many of the devotees delivered discourses on Bholanath.

On 20th May (Purnima Tithi), clothes, cosmetics, monetary gifts, were offered in *Puja and Arati* of 108 Kumaris (Virgins) and 11 *Batuks* (Lads) They were fed specially. From 9 p.m. to 12 p.m. at night *Maharas-Lila* by Ras party of Vrindavan was arranged. After that *Ma-nam* was chanted continuously throughout the whole night by lady devotees who conducted a 'Parikrama' (encircling) of the local temples.

23rd May (9th Jyaistha, Tuesday), the holy *tithi* of Sri Sri Ma's advent was celebrated by Rudra-yajna, Purnahati of a special Hom and many nicely organized function. There were different programmes of the whole day and arrival of well-known ascetics, Mahamandaleshwars, Satsangs, expression of reverences to Ma by them, congregation of innumerable devotees, in the well-decorated Ashram, were objects of special attraction. The whole atmosphere was saturated with a festive joy. Evening songs and different chantings added some special solemnity. Devotees occupied their *asanas* in the Samadhi temple from evening. This special puja of Ma started from 1 a.m. at midnight. After the *stabh*, kirtans, *maun*, Kumari puja, arati, the devotees offered flowers etc. to the base of the altar of Ma. This

puja was graced by the presence of the Mahanta of Mahanirvani Akhara, Swami Chidanandaji of Divine Life Society, and many other famous ascetics.

24th May was the day of Bhandara. About 500 devotees attended the festival and received the prasād. The *Adhibasa* of Nam yajna was performed in the evening and the lady devotees carried out the kirtan throughout the whole night. Next day (25th May), the gents started kirtan from sunrise to sunset. *Malsa-bhog* was arranged at noon. A procession of chanting devotees was out at sunset. Dadhi-mangal and farewell to the Mahantas, were the closing functions of the festival.

The famous learned ascetic 1008 Swami Vidyananda Maharaj, Mahamandaleshwar of Kailash Ashram of Hrishikesh said in his speech on Ma, "Ma was *Swabhab Siddha*, advents in the world, in different ages to correct the sadhakas who takes up wrong routes. Ma was *Kalpataru* and fulfilled the wants of devotees. By her grace one can achieve *four chaturbargas* very easily." He further said, "In the Samyam Saptah at Gondal, someone asked Ma, what is *Dharma*, what is its nature? Ma turned to Vidyananda Swamiji and said, Baba, this body has not read books; You please answer these questions. Then a Brahmachari exclaimed, Ma, we want the answer from your lotus mouth. Ma said, 'Dharma is that technique of the life, by which one can proceed from lower planes of life and elevates one to the plane of the *Supreme Self*. One goes downwards by lustful

activities but achieves the Supreme Self by lustless activities. Only work cannot help in that attainment, work should accompany *upasana*. Inner purification leads to an urge of knowing reality, that urge leads to the knowledge of Truth."

The Director of the Life Divine Society (1008 Swami Chidanandaji) said, "You are fortunate enough by having the grace of Ma, grace of Guru, the opportunity of attending Samyam Saptah, Birth Cerebration and so on ; You can attend the discourses and explanation of Shastras given by highly elevated, learned saints and tapaswis. The tradition of Satsangs, Shrabans and Kirtans in different occasions, as taught by Ma, are sufficient for the life of a Sadhaka.

Sri Ramdasji, the guru of Chhatrapati Sivaji, gave valuable instructions for the people living in the world of phenomenal reality. He said to the aspirants, the life pattern should be of an affectionate philanthropic personality, so that when one would leave this world, every one would praise. To behave with everyone with much respect, I have never known in my life such a personality like Sri Sri Ma, who paid respect to everyone. The Sloka of Shri Ramdasji, has been incarnated perfectly in Ma.

Surat Giri is a Mahamandaleswar of Bengal and a great scholar. 1008 Swami Brahmanandaji said, "We celebrate the birthday of Ma, who is never born ; the object is to stop the cycle of our being reborn. The true form of Ma, her language and teachings are permeated with Satyam-Gyanam-

Anandam. This *Bhava* has been manifested in different ways, sometimes in her personality of a limited sphere, sometimes in her form as the Mother of the Universe. This Samadhi of Ma is ever-awakened, full of consciousness. Though we cannot see her in our organic eyes, she is emanescient in her talent form. All questions we have, all prayers we do will be resolved from this Samadhi.

Like previous years, this year also the Executive Committee of the Sangha met on 21st May. In the General Meeting of the Governing Body, held on 22nd May, various subjects related to the Sanghas were discussed

On 13th June (30th Jyaistha, Tuesday) on the holy occasion of Ganga-Dashara, many devotees went for a holy dip, and a Special Puja was arranged in the Temple of Ganga of our Ashram.

Dehra Dun

In the old Ashram of Sri Sri Ma at Kishenpur of Dehra Dun, on the occasion of the sacred *Akshaya-Tritia* on 8th May, an excellent *Nam-Yajna* was organised. Devotees of Delhi were invited and attended the occasion. Special *Puja* and *Bhog* were arranged in Matri Mandir and Shiva Mandir of the Ashram. Many devotees received *prasada* to their full satisfaction.

2nd May to 23rd May, Birth Anniversary of Ma was celebrated with grandeur. The sound of *Ma-nam* chanting spread out in every direction.

Varanasi

14th January (Paus Sankranti). In remembrance of the Purnahuti of Sabitri Mahayajna, a Kirtan

was conducted from sunrise to sunset. Bathing in the Ganges and a special Bhog were arranged.

Like previous years, Saraswati Puja in the Kanyapeeth, Satya Narayan Vrata on the occasion of Maghi Purnima (on 28th February) were organised. Kirtan in Lunar Eclipse from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. was arranged.

The President of Life Divine Society, 1008 Swami Chidanandaji stayed in Varanasi Ashram from 20th February to 22nd February. Two years ago on this sacred *Tithi* of Maghi-Purnima, he came to attend the Annual Festival of Kanyapeeth and opened the ceremony of Golden Jubilee. Last year on the occasion of Navaratri, he attended and presided over the Golden Jubilee. This year he came as if to declare the conclusion of the festival. Kanyapeeth is proud of such voluntary compassion of Swamiji.

In Varanasi, particularly in Kanyapeeth, Shivaratri was a pleasant celebration. All the Ashram girls of different ages observed waterless fasting and offered puja in every prahar (a period of 3 hours) to Lord Shiva with songs and instrumental music.

During *Dol-Purnima* festival devotees offered *abir* to Narayanas and Gopal and washed them ceremoniously. After the Gopal was dressed in new clothes and was worshipped with sixteen-offerings, *Bhogarati*, Kirtan and so on.

On *Chaitra Sankranti*, the occasion of taking to asceticism by 1008 Swami Muktananda Giriji (Didima) was celebrated by a special puja of Didima, Kirtan, Bhog and so on. The Holi Birth

Anniversary of Sri Sri Ma was observed with special grandeur by the daughters of Kanyapeeth. On this occasion, continuous *Japa*, *Kirtan*, *Kumari Puja*, reading books on Ma, etc. were arranged.

On the Ganga-Dasahara day, Puja of Ganga with 16 offerings, Kirtan etc. and at last bathing in the Ganges were arranged.

Calcutta

Paus Sankranti and Sri Sri Saraswati puja were celebrated solemnly at Agarpara Ashram. On the occasion of *Shivaratri*, Sadhus and Brahmacharies came from Kankhal and Dehradun. A large number of local devotees joined the *puja*. The compound of Agarpara Ashram situated on the Ganges with inundated shores experienced an enhanced tranquillity and solemnity in its natural atmosphere due to the prayers of devotee to the meditating form of Lord Shiva. Brahmachari Nirvananandaji acted as a priest to conduct the whole puja of four prahars of the night, which was accompanied by Kirtan and similar songs. Then the devotees were entertained by prasad.

On the occasion of *Dol-yatra*, following the usual procedures, images of Sri Sri Lakshmi Narayan, Sri Radha Gobinda, Gour Nitai and Sri Sri Ma were placed on the *Dol-Mancha* and were specially worshipped. Devotees offered "abir" to God. At noon, after ceremonial washing, *Puja* and *Bhog*, all devotees received prasad.

Taking to asceticism by Sri Sri Muktananda Maharaj on Chaitra Sankranti were observed by celebrating with accuracy and solemnity.

In the Head office of Sri Sri Anandamayee Charitable Society, "Matri-Mandir", the annual festival was celebrated with much grandeur on 11th and 12th March. In the evening of 11th March, the *adhibas* of the Holy Nam-Yajna and on 12th March a dawn to dusk *Ma-Nam*, Sankirtan, Special puja in the Temple, Satya Narayan Puja, *Malsa-Bhog* and Nagar Kirtan in the evening and then conclusion were well organised. Nearly 2000 devotees were entertained with prasad.

Ranchi

After usual *Puja* and *Bhog* etc. on Paus Sankranti, Pithe-Puli prasad was distributed to devotees.

As in previous years, this year also, *Sri Sri Saraswati Puja*, was celebrated with great grandeur. The well decorated Ashram compound was being resounded with devotional songs. After offering of flowers (*anjali*) and *Bhog*, about 300 devotees received prasad.

Shiva-Puja was arranged in every prahar on the occasion of Shivaratri.

On the occasion of *Dol*, abhishek (ceremonial washing) and puja with 16 offerings of Sri Gopal and Sri Narayan, Kirtan and distribution of *Bhog* prasad were arranged.

On Chaitra Sankranti Tithi (Sannyas-utsav of 1008 Swami Muktanandaji and the 94th Birth anniversary of Sri Sri Ma from 2nd May to 23rd May were specially observed.

Bangalore

Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Bhagavath Bhavan, during the months of January '89 to June

'89, arranged daily at 6-30 p.m. discourses on religious subjects by learned devotees. Moreover classes on Vishnu Sahasranama, Lalitha Sahasranama, Geeta and Sanskrit were conducted on every Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoon by Smt. Ramamani, Dr. B. S. Ramakirshna Rao, Sri Rama Chandra Bhat and Sridhar Hedge.

Special functions were arranged from 2nd May to 23rd May to celebrate with grandeur the 94th Anniversary of Ma.

In addition to these reports, all the ashrams celebrated all the above mentioned festivals.

Obituary

1. Shri Kanak Bandyopadhyaya, an old devotee of Ma and a relative of Bholanath, was suffering from incurable cancer for a long period. Last year on 22nd Nov. 1988, at the age of 86 years, he got rest in the feet of Ma.

2. Shri Purnendu Narayan Sinha Dev, a senior devotee of Sri Sri Ma always remained engaged in serving the devotees of Ma breathed his last on 17th February, 1989 after some period of suffering.

3. Brahmachari Harihar Da, an ageless devotee of Ashram left his corporal body in Sri Vrindaban Dham consciously according to his own pious will, chanting the *Ma-nam*. He lived in Puri Ashram for several years. But due to an intense urge of breathing last in "Sri Sri Vrindaban Dham," he went to Vrindaban and within a short period he was melted in the divine feet of Ma.

CORRECTTON

In the article "Ma please let us remember you in the nectar of our memories," written by Bramahacharini Chitra Ghosh, published in April, 1989 Ananda Varta, please read the following corrections.

1. 6th January, 1977, para 2 page 123

(a) For I heard Ma say "*My* body is rather"

Read I heard Ma said "*This* body is rather
*"*Elomelo*"

(b) For Puspa's mother's condition in the hospital was precarious, so *I* asked ... Puspa ... if she would accompany *me* to Allahabad or not.

Read Puspa's mother's condition in the hospital was precarious, so *MA* asked Puspa if she would accompany *MA* to Allahabad or not.

2. 7th January, 1977, para 2 page 125

For (this was presented in the Purna Kumbha of Hardwar in 1985)

Read (this was presented in the Purna Kumbha of Hardwar in 1975)

* Ma's original Bengali term "elomelo" has no appropriate English equivalent. It means "not well"

3. 12th January, 1977, para 1 page 127

(a) For Ma seeing from a distance a bundle of red *gamchas* on Nilima Mitra's head

Read Ma seeing from a distance a bundle of red *towels* on Nilima Mitra's head

(b) For in the worship of *Ganga* and *Jamuna*

Read in the worship of *Jamuna* and *Saraswati*

3. 19th January 1977, Para 1

(a) For When a girl from *the Akhara* came and told Ma.

Read When a girl from *our Asram* came and told Ma.

(b) For Ma laughed and said "Well, let us see what happens as a *regret* of your request."

Read Ma laughed and said "Well let us see what happens as a *result* of your request."

4. 22nd January 1977.

For To day Sailen Ghosh, *Renu* and their two sons have arrived in the camp.

Read Today Sailen Ghosh, *Ranu* and their two sons have arrived in the camp.

5. 24th January, 1977, Para 3

For She had placed a sola (Pith) *Veera* in Ma's hands.

Read She had placed a sola (Pith) *Veena* in Ma's hands.