
A person who does not for the love of God and with a cheerful heart, acquit himself of whatever responsibility that may fall to his lot at any time, will find life excessively burdensome and never be able to accomplish anything. Man's duty — more especially for those who have made the Supreme Quest their one and only aim — is to work joyfully for the uplift of the world, with the conviction that all service is His service. Work done in such a spirit helps to purify both mind and heart.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

By Courtesy of :

The Asiatic Oxygen & Acetylene Co. Ltd.

Regd. Office : 8, B. B. D. Bag (East)

Calcutta-700 001

Phone : 204241/204247/204259/205115



ANANDA VĀRTĀ

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

Vol. XXXVIII

● OCTOBER, 1991 ●

No. 4

CONTENTS

1. Sri Sri Ma's Utterances ... 253-256
2. In Association with Sri Sri Ma
 Anandamayee—Anulya Datta Gupta ... 257-264
3. Education in Ancient India—Ajit Ghosh ... 265-272
4. Sri Sri Ma & Didima and the Story
 of a Rose Bud—Er. Girish Chandra ... 273-276
5. Ma Touches Us : In our Sanatan
 Dharma—P. C. Datta ... 277-285
6. Sai Ram Sahay—M. Rama Rao ... 286-291
7. Mahamahopadhyaya Gopinath Kaviraj,
 A Legend and a Tradition—Dr. S. Misra ... 292-304
8. Reminiscences of Anandamayee Ma
 —Professor Bireswar Ganguly ... 305-310
9. The Teaching of Ma Anandamayi
 —Jean and Josette Herbert ... 311-319
10. Sri Ma's Janm Utsav 1991
 —Er. Girish Chandra ... 320-323
11. Obituary ... 324-327

**AN APPEAL FOR DONATION FOR
SHREE SHREE ANANDAMAYEE
CHARITABLE SOCIETY**

After the sudden death of our beloved General Secretary Dr. Gunendra Narayan Roy (Misra) at Varanasi on 1st July, 1991, this Charitable Society has fallen in severe financial crisis.

Late Dr. Roy was very active, resourceful and known to many respectable devotees, distinguished persons and eminent industrialists. Every month he used to collect plenty of donation for our

- (i) Mata Anandamayee Hospital
- (ii) Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth
- (iii) Ma Anandamayee Karuna including Shishu Kalyan Kendra

and used to send to Varanasi about Rupees Thirty to Forty thousands per month.

Last few months due to unavoidable circumstances we could not give the drive to raise fund. We asked the units at Varanasi to raise fund themselves.

Now we sincerely require your generous help as donation to run the society.

All donations either by Cash, Cheque or Draft may please be sent to Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society, 57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta-700019. (Telephone : 74-8504)

1st October, 1991

Dr. Baren Guha Roy
(*Assistant General Secretary*)

on behalf of Executive Council & Governing body of
Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society.

Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

One day, Ma said, "*Samadhi*, too, is just a state, what else? For instance, while you are walking along a path, you take a little bit of rest from time to time. After that, when you arrive at the end of the path, or when you reach the terrace (after climbing the stairs), there is no need for the 'breaks'. After this the question of rest or no rest does not arise at all."

*

*

*

A gentleman was feeling diffident to leave home in spiritual pursuit. His wife was saying to Ma, "Ma, he does his discipline fairly well even at home, how can he be left here at this age?" The gentleman, too, added, "Well, Ma, He is verily every where, always accompanying us. Verily, He Himself is guiding us from within our heart, and we are doing what He is making us do." For some days, Ma did not give any reply to such statements. As they continued talking in the same strain, Ma said, "Look, Baba, all this is just evasive prattle; whatever our mind wants to do, we speak in support of that. 'God alone is making us do all this; He is present with us everywhere'—you have not yet acquired the right to say all these things. There is a particular stage where a person realizes that He is making us do all things and He is ac-

companying us everywhere ; and when you people say these things, it is because you have read such things in books or heard them from others." Hearing such frank words from Ma, the gentleman was speechless.

* * *

A Kashmiri lady put this question to Ma, "Between the worship of *Sakara* (God with form) and the worship of *Nirakara* (God without form), which is better ?"

Ma replied : "Without passing through *Sakara* worship, one cannot reach the stage of *Nirakara* worship. One has to reach *Nirakara* through *Sakara*. Suppose, for example, in order to reach the Ganges, we are passing through the streets, that is, we are passing through *Sakara*. Thus walking, we reach the river bank, and when, crossing the bank we get into the river-water. There is no more *Sakara*, even the ground is not felt under our feet. Again as we get out of water, we realize that *Sakara* and *Nirakara*—both are verily He Himself."

* * *

Ma : "Taking the shelter of a Guru is indispensable. It is possible to learn everything from books, even the *bija* (*mantra*) can be learnt. But it is like drinking water from a pool, and learning from the mouth of a Guru is like drinking the water of a stream. Although both are water, it is true that things can be learnt by book-

reading, yet there is a difference between the two.”

* * *

Ma often said, “You keep sugar-candy in the mouth, don't you ? The sugar-candy kept in the mouth, is so effective, that your mouth must water. What is the sugar-candy ? Well, it is His Name.”

* * *

One day, in reply to a query made by Basanti Devi (wife of C. R. Das), Ma said, “The Grace of the Guru is everything ; if the *mantra* received from the Guru continues vibrating in the heart, the sprout comes forth and the tree develops out of it. After that, the tree gets laden with flowers and fruits. *Dhyana* (meditation), *japa* (repeating God's Name or *mantra*), *kirtan* (singing devotional songs), *patha* (reciting from the scriptures) and *satsanga* (being in the company of the holy)—stay with any one of these five (at least).” Thus saying, Ma added smilingly, “It is like taking your meal with five courses. You may get tired of eating just one kind of preparation.”

* * *

One day, a devotee of Ma got enraged by some objectionable words uttered by Abhay (a devotee of Ma), and as he ran towards Abhay to hit him, Abhay hid himself behind Ma. When the *Kirtan* was over, Ma bade both of them sit near Her and said, “Look, whatever

anyone of you do in protest, protest just orally ; don't resort to beating and, do know it for sure that in whichever manner one of you hurt another, you hurt this very body. The wrong thing that Abhay said, he said it to this very body. Again, as you got ready to hit him, it was also to hit this very body. If you want to stay here, you will have to bear with many thorn-pricks. The principal support on this path is the quality of patience." Ma stretched Her own hand towards the devotee and said, "Since you felt like hitting, hit this body." At this, he clasped Her hand with both his hands. Stunned, the congregation of devotees kept hearing silently. Then Ma went on, "Look here, is it good to fight and hit? Promise that you will never speak of beating again." The devotee said, "Ma how can I make such a big promise?" Ma said, "Say that you will try your best." Then he promised to do so and took Abhay in his lap. At Ma's behest, Abhay, too, did obeisance to that devotee. Spell-bound at this lila of Ma, the devotees went on exchanging remarks among themselves about how that day, in that particular context, Ma did a special lila.

In Association with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

Sri Amulya Kumar Datta Gupta

Translated from Bengali by Sri Kalyan Maity

(*Continued from previous issue*)

Worldly ways are not for the holy person

I had heard at Kashi that Hari Baba would complete his month-long celebration at Jhusi. But the fact that he was eager to leave Jhusi at the insistence of his disciples, before the completion of the celebrations, was not much after my heart. When Prabhudatta Brahmachari left, I asked Ma, 'Ma, is it good for the devotee to run anywhere the mind would lead him to ?'

Ma : If it is after things worldly, then to obey the dictates of your mind is not good. But if the goal is spiritual, if one thinks that a particular place will enable one to meditate on God in peace, then it is not bad to go there.

I : Supposing one goes to Kashi with the expectation that it would help his spiritual quest and then after a couple of days, runs to Vrindavan thinking it would be better ?

Ma : It is good for one's *sadhana* to stick to one place. But don't your scriptures mention the *paribrajaka* (itinerant) stage ? The holy person will move on until he comes to a place that helps him to concentrate. And he will stick there. He

may also have presentiments about a particular place and may go there quite consciously. Besides, a *sannyasin* is not supposed to stay at a place for more than three nights lest he should develop an attachment. There are many who are settled in places like householders without their spouses. There may also be a sense of establishment about sticking to a place. Don't they say that this particular man has been staying here for a long time and doing his *sadhana* here, so he must be a very holy person ?

These are some of the reasons why a seeker after God has to change places. Do you understand ?

I : Yes, Ma. I understand.

Suddenly Ma said to me, 'Babaji, you want to go to Vrindavan, don't you ?'

I : I don't know.

Ma : You won't see Vrindavanchandra ?

I : That's a different story, isn't it ?

Ma veered round the topic, saying, 'We can't even stay long at Vrindavan. We can stay at Raipur for some days, though.'

All I understood was that Vrindavanchandra was not for me. I could only go upto Vrindavan if I took for granted the rigour of the journey.

The 1st day of Agrahayana, Wednesday (17 Nov. '48)

At 3-30 in the morning today started the Usha Kirtana (dawn hymneal) as Hari Baba was to leave for Vindhyaçal in the morning. I did not attend it. It was chilly outside. I thought I would make

my *Pranama* when she would come out for departure. A little while later I heard Ma say, 'Where is Girin? Where is Amulya?' I got up and came out directly I heard this and made my *pranama* to her. Just as I had stood on my feet, Ma said, 'I saw a horrible figure approach.'

I : In which direction is it coming ?

Ma : If you say direction, then it is all directions, there is a particular direction, though. I see such figures at times, you know.

From the way she spoke, I had the realisation that the time was not fit for discussion of such things.

It was decided last day that a car from Allahabad would come to Jhusi to take Ma to Vindhychal. Ma had told my wife and me, 'One of you two can accompany me to Vindhychal. You decide who it will be. I had decided that if my wife was willing she would go. On the other hand, Ma sent Subodh to check if the floating deck on the Ganga was in good shape. Subodh returned to inform that it was useless and the car would not come up to Jhusi. A horse-drawn carriage came and Hari Baba and party set out in it. Ma took my wife on her own carriage. We made for the Ganga on foot.

We crossed the Ganga and reached Allahabad to see a motor car waiting there. My wife stayed back at Allahabad when she found that the car would not accommodate so many. Ma went away to Vindhychal with Hari Baba and his disciples.

I was chatting with Girin-dada (Dr. Girin Mitra) in his room after evening when my wife came and told that Ma had come. Instantly I rushed to her. She was in her room sitting and talking, with a smiling face.

Arrangements had been made for *Ramlila* at the ashrama. We all went to see it. The stage was set up on the ashrama courtyard. There was no dearth of theatrical costumes either. But the acting was a departure from good taste. *Ramlila* it was called but the *lila* part was rather insignificant. It was all song and dance and risqué humour. After it was over we came back to Ma's room along with her and sat down.

A widow from Calcutta had come to Jhusi. We heard that she was suffering from a certain kind of insanity. Ma instructed that I cable her brother the next morning so that he could come and take her back to Calcutta.

Then I asked Ma about the horrible figure of disease that appeared before her in the morning. Ma said, 'It was the figure of disease. The moment I saw it I felt that it had come as a torment. But many others come that give joy. Such occurrences are not many times spoken about. Again, sometimes they are.'

From that very evening my throat began aching and with the night progressing, it increased. I understood from what Ma told that the apparition Ma had seen in the morning had actually come for me. An aching throat had been a problem with me for over a decade, but it did not occur for the

last 8-9 years. This recurrence after so many years would certainly trouble me for at least 5-7 days. But was there any way out ?

*The 2nd day of Agrahayana, Thursday
(18 Nov. '48)*

As soon as I got up in the morning, I went and cabled the brother of the widow mentioned above. The post office was close to our ashrama.

Swami Umeshanandaji came from Puri yesterday. It was at Ma's bidding. Swamiji had taken the vow of Sannyasa from Debgiri Maharaj of North Kashi, and was a great devotee of Sri Aurobinda. He spent many years at Pondicherry also, but did not settle there. It was at Ma's bidding that he took up Sannyasa. Now he was doing his *sadhana* at Puri at his elder sister's place. In the morning I went to Ma and saw Umeshanandaji sitting there. Ma was saying, 'Babaji, if you took up Sannyasa, then why stay with your sister ?'

Umeshanandaji : I am old. I need somebody to look after me. Puri is a very temperate place. I am quite well there.

Ma : You have been all along at Mirzapur without any trouble. Then why now you need to stay at Puri ? Why don't you go back home if you need somebody's service so much ? There are many people to look after you there, isn't it ? If you took up Sannyasa why stay with you near and dear ones ? Better go to your Guru. He's now at Mirzapur. Do precisely what he asks you to. If

you die at your Guru's feet, is there anything bad in it ?

Umeshanandaji agreed to go to Debagiri Maharaj at Mirzapur.

The ache in my throat aggravated today. I could not pay Ma a single visit during the day. Ma sent me word that I should leave the room I was in and shift to the one Umeshanandaji was in. According to Ma's instructions, a wooden bedstead was provided. I came and slept on it for the night. It was a far better room, I felt much less cold here. Girindada gave me a few 'Cibazol' tablets. But I knew that the ache would not go before 5/7 days.

The 3rd day of Agrahayana, Friday (19 Nov. '48)

Ma was due to leave for Kashi today. She would come back tomorrow, from Jhusi to Kashi by car. I did not get up from bed as I was ill. Ma came to my room on the eve of her departure. I got up and made my pranama to her. Upon seeing the condition of my throat, she said, 'The trouble has got you in its grip firmly, I see. Do one thing, Keep in your mouth the tablets of *neem* I do at times. They are very good for the throat. Take care of yourself. See that I find you better when I return tomorrow. When Mani Babu (the Late Manomohan Ghosh) will hear of it, he will say—'Go and practise some more *nada bindu*!' She laughed. We laughed, too. Ma's last words had their own significance. When Ma had asked Manomohan and me to go to Kashi, Manomohan said, 'Let Amulya go to Jhusi, and discuss *nada*

bindu, *prarabdha* etc. with Ma. I have no need of all that.' Ma's words in fact referred to this.

Ma as Palmist

I lay down once again after Ma had left. Didi sent for me a little while later. I went and saw Ma doing something pretty funny. She had her spectacles on and she was reading everybody's palm. To Manohar, a disciple of Hari Baba, she said, 'You'll fight a lot with Baba (Hari Baba). To another, 'You'll make long *pranamas* to Baba. To a third she said, 'You'll play the *tabla* much.' She read the palm of our Paramananda Swamiji and said, 'You'll build many 'big houses.' Everybody began to laugh heartily at these words of Ma. In fact what Ma had told everyone was their respective specialities. The one whom she predicted would make long *pranamas*, was found not to raise his head before at least an hour has elapsed. The one whom she said would play the *tabla* much was found to be doing precisely that at the *Kirtana* time for several days on end. Swamiji had already erected many buildings of the ashrama at Kashi, Almora and Dehradun—Ma saw me and said, 'What have you brought Baba here for?' Didi said, 'Amulya Dada likes all these lila of yours'. Girin Dada sat down to put the sandals on Ma's holy feet. Ma said to him, 'The lines of your bald head tell me that you will keep sitting alone for long spells of time.' In fact Girin Dada loved to live alone. He was actually spending much of his time in his cottage, in lonely meditations.

As Ma got into the car and set out for Kashi, I came back to my room and lay down. Girin Dada made me take two more Cibazol tablets. I also took the *neem* tablets Ma had suggested. Throughout day time the pain remained constant. It did not aggravate at night, either. But I never expected it to heal the very next day, as I was a long sufferer. Once it started, it never went before 6/7 days, and today was only the second day of its recurrence.

The 4th day of Agrahayana, Saturday (10 Nov. '48)

As I got up in the morning I felt my throat completely cured. I was surprised at heart. It was by the grace of Ma, I thought. Ma returned from Kashi at about 1-00 in the afternoon and I made my *pranāma* to her. Asked how I was, I said I was completely cured. Didi said, 'You healed up just within a day.' I said, 'Ma asked me to heal up just in a day, didn't she?'

(*To be continued*)

Education in Ancient India

Ajit Ghosh

(*In continuation from July '91 issue*)

The university of Takshasila became the acropolis of learning and higher studies in the whole of upper or north-west India. Even before six centuries before the birth of Christ it acquired the most elevated position in the field of education. Bimbisara, the illustrious king of Magadha, who reigned between 582 B.C. and 554 B.C., was the most distinguished donor to this university. He often used to patronise it with considerable aids and royal grants. Of course, the king held in his heart a feeling of thankfulness and deep appreciation for being successfully medically treated and cured of some painful ailment by the then most eminent physician Jivaka, who was attached to The School of Medicine at Takshasila. Asoka the Great, reigning between 263 B.C. and 221 B.C., was also at the helm of its patrons. During his time and with his valuable support this institution achieved glorious excellence enjoying sincere services of scholastic personnels and literatis of distinction as well as of numerous resident scholar monks, those were attached to Buddhist missionary services.

Centuries before the advent of Christ Takshasila flourished as a cultural hub of then the region of Gandhara comprising mainly Punjab, Sind and

Afghanistan. As a territory of India's western border, Gandhara was open to foreign powers for invasions and confrontations at different times. Such onslaught started with the attack by the army of Alexander the Great of Macedonia during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya (315-291 B.C.) of India, who occupied the territory but was fought back. This region then reached a commendable status under the rule of Asoka. After the decline of Maurya power the Bactrians are said to have acquired a short rule. In the second century B.C. the Greeks ventured another attempt to conquer the land but could not stay on. Then came, early in the first century B.C., the victorious Sakas or Scythians who ruled about a century thereafter and yet after another century came the Pahlavas or Parthians followed by the Kusanas who ruled for a long time. The foreign raids were not ended. And in the third century of the Christian era the Kusanas lost their hold after the onset of the Sasonids of Persia. The Kusanas regained their power again by conquering the Sasonids in the fourth century. And, finally, in the second half of the fifth century this territory was swept away by the white Huns, who ran rampant with fire and sword causing widespread destruction, thereby closing a glorious chapter of civilization leaving only heaps of ruins in desolation. Evidently along with this the great university of Takshasila closed its tradition from the face of the earth.

Takshasila has been identified with the ancient *Pushkalavati* or *Pushkaravati*, references of which

we can have both in the Ramayana and Mahabharata. In the Ramayana (*Uttara*: chaps. 101, 113-41, 200) it has been mentioned as the centre of royal power of Gandhara. It refers to the name of *Taksha*, most probably another name of *Pushkala*. Pushkala or Taksha was the son of Bharata, brother of Ramachandra, the central figure of Ramayana. He was made king of this region by his father Bharata, the retiring monarch. From the remote pre-Buddhist time Takshasila was the capital city of Gandhara. It has been stated in *Divyavadana* as well as in the Jatakas that Lord Buddha in one of his previous births was the king Chandraprabha of Bhadrasila who relinquished his throne and presented that to a Brahmin beggar, Taksha by name, and since then the name of Bhadrasila has been changed to Takshasila. Mahabharata refers to Pushkalavati as the capital of Gandhara, Gandhari being the daughter of its king. The *Paushyaparva* of Mahabharata records the conquest of this region by Janamejaya, son of Parikshit, distinctively figured in the main role in the sacrifice of serpents. *Kathasaritsagara* (chap. 37) mentions Pushkalavati as a metropolis situated on the bank of Bitasta, now Jhelum; it was said to be the royal centre of the *Vidyadharas*, or in the other name *Gandharvas*. *Divyavadana* mentions this city to be the place where Lord Buddha lived in one of his previous births. The birth stories of Buddha practically had become the romance of this region. According to *Nandivilasa Jataka* and *Sarambha Jataka* Takshasila has been mentioned

as a centre of learning and the capital city of Gandhara for some time. It is mentioned in the *Asoka-Avadana* that the great Asoka, when he had been a prince, was the Viceroy of this region under his father King Bindusara of Magadha. Takshasila revolted against the Mauryas but was brought to submission by the prince Asoka. After the death of Bindusara when his eldest son prince Sumana occupied the sovereignty of Gandhara and took away the viceregal power from Asoka, prince Asoka killed him in encounter and regained his power and established his supremacy.

Takshasila entered into the full light of its existence during the Macedonian invasion in 326 B. C. under Alexander the Great. From the extant of Alexander's court annalists and some of his contemporary authors we come to know that this metropolis had enjoyed a rich distinction of culture and higher studies and, more so, with all its immense prosperity its influence extended from the Indus to the Hydaspes. According to a considerable section of historians and particularly the western scholars, Alexander occupied some portion of Gandhara territory by defeating a local king, Porus or Puru by name. It is true that the accounts of this event had been depicted by Alexander's own patronised or engaged writers. A controversy has already arisen regarding the authenticity of this matter. There is no substantial truth behind the controversial statement. The all-round advancement of Takshasila towards a glorious achievement was going on, and suffice to say,

it did not stop in any occasion. Centuries passed on and it grew to high eminence specially under the most valuable patronage of Asoka the Great and later on during the reign of the Kusana rulers. The great Kusana king Kaniska, in the beginning of the Christian era, was a patron of this university. Practically, the reign of Kaniska was the golden age of Gandhara chronology and, according to the historians, the year 1 of the Christian era was the beginning of his rule and the best period of cultural stability is undoubtedly attributed to him. The culmination of this progress dates between 50 and 200 A. D.

It is true that it was the age of Buddhistic domination when the pride of Takshasila reached reality. The Buddhism of Gandhara was in the realm of *Mahayana* Buddhism that then prevailed in all its glory and pride throughout India extending to its border countries. The memoirs of great events along with historical associations of this land have been preserved in Buddhist records. With the evolution of this *Mahayana* Buddhism, Takshasila, the great centre of learning and higher studies, reached the zenith of its dignity in north-west India. It was the greatest pride of Gandhara which occupied an eminence parallel to Nalanda in the eastern zone in the annals of the golden age of medieval India. But, unfortunately, it met with its end some centuries before actually Nalanda reached its glorious position.

It was in the first century B. C. when the Maurya power declined from its existence came

the displaced Kusanas from Bactria and emigrated to Gandhara in and around Takshasila and brought it under their occupation and control. Subsequently, they were converted to Buddhist faith and gradually mixed up with the Indians. The Sakas and the Pahlavas, however, ceased to stay on and withdrew from Takshasila and shifted their administration to present Sirsukh [cf. Archaeological Survey Reports, 1912-13]. The Kusanas, on the other hand, made their position strong.

The university of Takshasila received the valuable patronage of the Kusanas. Like other universities in different regions of India, such as Valabhi in the west, Vikramasila and Nalanda in the east, Kanjipuram in the south and Sridhanyakataka in the Central Provinces, this university of Takshasila obtained a deserving dignity. *Rajovada Jataka* delineates different aspects of this exalted educational institution and has laid considerable stress on its eminence. In some other *Jatakas* too this university has been referred to as *Takkasila* in Pali and is described as a great centre of learning. During the Maurya rule Asoka and in the time of the Kusanas Kaniska were its chief patrons. Although its origin must go to a hoary past, it was no doubt the largest and the most prominent seat of education and cultural practices in the whole of upper India as well as the contiguous border countries. In the time of Asoka, Panini, the celebrated author of the *Ashtadyayi Vyakarana*, had his education in this university [S. C. Vidya-bhushana : *Buddhadeva*. P. 220] The royal physi-

cian Jivaka, who was a grandson of king Bimbisara and the king's medical adviser, had also his education here. Jivaka's father was Abhaya, his mother being Salavati, a prostitute. [Mahavagga 8.1. 7]. Chanakya, the great diplomat politician who is identified with Kautilya, the great author of *Arthashastra*, was the Prime Minister and the Chief Adviser of the Maurya king Chandragupta. [cf. *Mahavamsa*, ed. by Turnour, Preface ; *Sthaviravalicharita* of Hemachandra, ed. by Jacobi, viii, 231.] The four Vedas, Upanishads, Philosophy, Grammar and all the treatises in the field of literature and learning along with fine arts and crafts, medicine and even military training were the chief features of curriculum of the university of Takshasila. Not only did a colossal flow of students pour in here from different parts of India, but students from abroad also streamed into the holy precincts of this university.

As Sanskrit was the chief and prevalent language of India in those days, evidently it was the medium of teaching in the educational institutions of the land. So was in Takshasila. But it is a settled fact that the *lingua franca* was *Prakrit* that was in vogue throughout upper India. We find *Brahmi* and *Kharosthi* scripts inscribed on coins and this lays bare truth that those two scripts were in use in that area.

An account of Takshasila has been found in the Travels of Apollonius who visited the metropolis in the year 44 A.D. and it was during the heydays of the Kusanas. He found the city, specially the

seat of culture and higher studies, in a state of eminence and immense prosperity. With the advent of Christian era it was still in progress which continued even upto the third century A.D. when the Kusanas lost their power. Though Takshasila regained its heritage in the fourth century when the Kusanas defeated the Sasonids of Persia and re-established its position, it faced the decline and, finally, had to conclude its existence with the aggression of the unscrupulous White Huns led by Mihirakula. It was in 515 A.D. when the university of Takshasila had to face this consequence. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang had the occasion to visit this territory in the Seventh century when he found the remnants of this great university in desolation witnessing the ruins with clear traces of long decay. The Chinese visitor Fa-Hian came to the place in 404 A.D., of course, found the university city in a very prosperous state. [cf. Ajit Ghosh : *Gandhara and Its Art Tradition*].

(To be continued)

Sri Sri Ma & Didima and the Story of a Rose Bud

Er. Girish Chandra

The object of this brief write-up is to examine the spiritual relationship between Sri Ma and Poojya Didima in the institution of Anandamayee Ashram. Bhagwan Ram's Shakti rested with Sitaji. Bhagwan Krishna's Shakti was represented by Sri Radha. Bhagwan Shiv rests motionless on Kailash in meditation and his Shakti rests with Ma Parvati. Mahaprabhu's Shakti rested with Prabhu Nityananda. Following this logic, it can easily be concluded that Sri Ma represented Parmatma, Poorna Brahma Narain, and Didima represented her Shakti. If Sri Ma is compared to sun, Didima is sun-light.

As devotees of Sri Ma would remember that Didima gave the appearance of an unsophisticated Bengali lady possessing great humility and love towards everyone without distinction. Sri Sri Ma told some devotees pointing towards Didima :—
"People do not know the greatness of Didima".
It is a fact that people did not know Didima fully. She appears to have been eclipsed by the spiritual aura surrounding Sri Ma.

It is clear from the above that if we want Sri Ma to bless us, we should first have faith and

devotion to Didima, who will remove the dross of our mind and make us clean enough to appear before Sri Ma.

It is well known that Sri Ma did not cry when she heard the news of her father passing away. She did not cry when Bholanathji attained Maha Samadhi. Similar was the case when Bhaiji attained Maha Samadhi at Almora. However, she wept bitterly after Didima attained Maha Samadhi. Shakti of Sri Ma disappeared physically but got absorbed in Sri Ma.

There is a belief that when Bhagwan comes on earth, He is not conscious of HIS Shakti and IT appears in another form.

May Didima bless us and make us fit to rest at the lotus feet of Sri Ma.

The story of a Rose Bud

About thirty years ago, while I was posted at Gonda on N. E. Rly., I took a trip to Varanasi. When I was on my way to Bhadaini Ashram of Sri Ma early in the morning, I bought a garland for Sri Ma ; I felt that Sri Raman Maharshi had sent a message to me, as if through telepathy that I should offer a flower on his behalf to Sri Ma. Accordingly I took a rose bud. When I reached the Ashram, I found that everybody was on the bank of Ganga and Sri Ma was sitting on a chair and worship of Ma Ganga was going on. Sri Ma appeared to be in a state of semi Samadhi. Sri Ma had created such a powerful spiritual aura that practically everybody's eyes were wet. I offered

her the garland which after accepting, put it round my neck. Thereafter, I handed over the beautiful rose bud on behalf of Raman Maharshi but I never told her on whose behalf it had been offered. The suprising thing was that Sri Ma held the rose bud in her hand for 3 to 4 hours, and when she appeared before the crowd of Bhaktas at about 10.00 a.m., the bud had blossomed into full bloom. I immediately narrated this phenomenon to one of Sri Ma's devotee, Swami Vijayanand who hails from Farnce. He agreed with me that it was a phenomenon. I did not divulge this "LEELA" of Sri Ma for many years thinking that it was a trifling thing. During Sri Ma's "Janam Utsav 1991" at Kankhal, I met Swami Vijayanand and reminded him about this story and asked his opinion if I should share it with Sri Ma's devotees, through the medium of Ananda Varta. He said the story must be circulated. Hence the description of the above "LEELA" is before the readers.

Two questions may be raised on the above story. The first : "How can you say that Raman Maharshi sent a message that a flower be offered to Sri Ma on his behalf. The second question is how a bud can be transformed into a fully blossomed rose in human hand." Reply to the first question is that since I am a devotee of both the Maharshi and Sri Ma, Sri Raman found it easy to communicate through my medium — as if through telepathy and offered His obeisance to Sri Ma — the universal Mother. It is needless to mention that Mahapurush know each other without physically meeting them.

The explanation to the second question as to how a bud become a full blown rose in the hand of Sri Ma, is that Sri Ma's hand is not that of an ordinary human being. Sri Ma is the Universal Mother and such a phenomenon is possible.

May Sri Ma bless us with ever increasing devotion to her NAAM, her LEELA and her lotus feet.

Only if there is a spirit of service can one remain engaged in the service of God. By persuing delusion death is reaped. His law is truly wonderful.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Ma Touches Us: In Our Sanatan Dharma

P. C. Datta

Out of the four important objects, one has to attain, in an ideal, perfect, and glorious life, *dharm* has the first position (*dharm, arth, kam, moksh*). *Dharm* is the harmony in diversity, the hidden thread of unity principle which holds the diverse apparent phenomena or creations, just like the inner thread or string holding the pearls to form a necklace. Without the hidden string a garland can not exist. So a perfect knowledge of the garland demands a knowledge of the string. The objects and events of the universe, including our sense organs, mind and intellect are strung on some hidden threads. Human mind if living and alert, possesses two natural instincts : (a) the thirst for knowledge which is not quenched with the apparent ephemeral forms and events and (b) a deep inherent belief of the existence of a hidden unchangeable (*Sanatan*) ultimate thread (*dharm*) behind. These two components of mystic nature are possessed by every wakened mind, some less and some in excess. But these are the bases of all sciences, all religions and all philosophies (Einstein). This *dharm jijnasa* (aspiration for the knowledge of harmony) should be cultured by every educated mind, and should be clarified at the beginning of student life. In ancient

India "upanayan" ceremony (bringing the child to a teacher's institute, ceremoniously) included wearing a sacred thread. This probably symbolized the object of education, the thread of *dharm* that holds the apparent.

Dharm in science

Education of science may be defined as the cultivation of faculties of discovering the unity principles (*dharm*) *in diversity of nature e.g. Nutonian laws, Darwin's laws of evolution, Mendel's laws of heredity etc. Education of History means collection of all types of informations, selection of evidences that may lead to a linkage (*dharm*), a reasonable story of earlier days. What does a painter or a musician wants to create? It is the harmony (*Dharm*). What does a poet wants to tell the humanity, it is the harmony, the *dharm*. When we discover a *dharm* or a principle in science, we have to be sure that it will hold good equally in India, America, U. K. and in this year and coming years, this decade and coming decades and so on. Thus a *dharm* in reality is *sanatan*, until a better substitute is discovered. Naturally with advancement in education and science, the *Sanatan dharm* will be expanding for ever.

Harmony with human. ecological factors

Ecological factors are :

A. Physical environment involving *edaphic* (soil) and *climatic* factors.

B. Biotic environment—Plants and animals, in the surroundings, edibles, herbal drugs, etc.

b) —Ethnic environment : human societies or groups and helpers in life.

C. Sagacious and psychic environment—

c) —Forefathers—symbols of cultural heritage

d) —Sages—who contributed to the advancement of human knowledge.

D. Spiritual environment : manifestation of the Divinity.

To establish a thread of harmony with the first category of ecological factors, one has to practise *Tapasya*, (to endure *tapa* or afflictions of climatic extremities, heat or frost) and *Titiksa* (forbearance). For establishing the thread of harmony with all other factors of environment, one has to cultivate respect to all.

Shraddhaban labhate Jnanam, tatparah Samyatendriyah :

To learn or to earn education, one needs cultivation of respectfulness, zealous devotion and control of senses. For cultivation of these faculties, ancient Acharyas suggest practising five *Yajnas* (sacrifices) : (a) *Bhutayajna*—Love the creatures e. g. birds, deer, cows, horses ; growing plants, etc. ; feed them and nurture them. (b) *Nriyajna*—Love the society of men with respect and try to serve them as much as possible. (c) *Pitriyajna*—Remember the forefathers, pay respect and be proud of the cultural heredity of your family or society. (d) *Hrisiyajna*—Remember the sages and

authorities of past or present days, pay respect and study their contributions. (e) *Devayagna* or *Brahmayajna*—Pay respect to all divine forms as the manifestation of One, give up all narrowness and do not limit your God to a particular form, a name, a personality, a book or a ritual system. These five *yajnas* will open your doors of higher intellect or superior consciousness. *Dharm* is the linking thread between the life style of men and the biotic and spiritual environmental factors. *Yajnas* help in discovering and realizing this thread for which the sacred threads were called *Yajna-sutra*. *yajnapabit*. Paying respect to all by offering services is *yajna*, the sacred thread signifying the harmonizing principle, the *dharm*.

Sciences and religious aim at Sanatan Dharma

Science has a dynamic urge for discovering *dharm* in all contradictory facts. *Sola* (sponge-wood) floats on water but an iron piece sinks down. Science does not discard one fact as unscientific and accept the others : science accepts all contradictions and ventures to discover the linking thread or *dharm*, the law of specific gravity. Ma Anandamayi also says “The One is present in each sect. This body, however, does not exclude anything (Words p. 181)”. “If one remains satisfied with whatever can be achieved by following one line, the Goal of human life has not been attained by him. What is required is a *Realization* that will uproot conflicts and divergence or opinion that is complete and free from inherent antagonism. If

it be anything less than that it means that one's experience is partial, incomplete. In the event of true Realization, one is fully enlightened, as to all faiths and doctrines, and sees all paths as equally good". (Ma, Words p. 182). That is, the stage where all conflicts inherent in creation merge into One, is the Goal of life. Is it not the goal of science also ?

Science without religion leads to a blind lane :

But simply intellect-based science can not realize That. Religion is necessary for attaining that supra-intellectual consciousness which can realize the ultimate harmony. Why should there be so many religious sects and sub-sects ? Through everyone of them, He gives Himself to Himself, so that each person may advance according to his individual uniqueness (Ma ; Words, p. 176). Not only that "One has to realize One in all others, and all in One." Diversity gives this opportunity.

"Science" can be defined as a mystic urge to understand that time and space permeable *reality* (*Sanatan Dharm*) beyond the ephemeral apparent diversity, which the senses can not perceive, intellect-virtually obstruct understanding. "Religion" can be defined as that science which from the starting is conscious about the inefficiency of the senses and intellect in realizing the Reality. Thus both science and religion aim at the realization of the thread or *dharm* or Truth, holding the ephemeral apparents.* But science has to depend upon

*Historically in India, religions (Shaiva, Shakta, Baishnab etc., and Sciences (Hindu chemistry, Hindu geometry, Hindu

human senses (including intellect), which are very often blurred by selfish emotions and superstitions. Religions offer prescriptions to purify and to nurture all levels of consciousness leading to development of healthier, finer superior consciousness. Diversity of religions is a necessity, because of uniqueness of superstitious constitutions of every individual.

Dharma creates a healthy environment :

Dharm can not be limited to a sector creed. *Dharm* harmonizes a member to the diversity of the other members of the family. *Dharm* harmonises a person with diversity of tastes and opinions of the members of the society. But it has no fixed formula. You are to discover it in every step of your life. *What is Hindu Sanatan Dharm?* Actually *dharm* is always *sanatan* (time permeable) but cannot be labelled as Hindu, or English or Christian. *Dharm* is the dynamic harmony beyond emotional, mental or intellectual conflicts which we may meet in our life. The idea of this ever expanding *dharm* developed in India. In that sense *dharm* is Hindu by birth. Sometimes we ignorantly use the word to substitute *religions*. Hindu (or Indian) religions are innumerable but the followers usually respect this diversity, help mutually and live symbiotically, because every one is a searcher of Truth, the *Sanatan dharm*. *Dharm* stands as the calm below the waves of ocean. If one's religion leads to

science of life, Hindu Astronomy etc.) had never been in conflict, because religions remained restricted to the search for Reality.

realization, the world appears as movement. "Behold it is movement as that of *samudra* (ocean). He is expressing Himself (*Swa-mudra*). It is the same water that forms *Taranga* (waves), *Tar-anga* i.e. (limbs of His own body) (Ma, Words p. 80). In *Hindu Sanatan Dharma*, there should not be any conflict on the difference of ways. (Ma).

The continuous search for *dharm* in everyday conflict, leads to the discovery of rest in movement and movement in rest. "Each stage in development of a tree represents a point of rest, yet is also a passing one. It does and it does not, for after all it belongs to one tree" (—Ma ; Words 130). All points of rest or activity are points of a total system.

Refuse to *Dharm* leads to where difference and non-difference exist together: "There is yet another state where difference as well as non-difference exist —both being inconceivable—where He is quite beyond thought (—Ma ; Words, p. 178).

Eternal in Diversity :

Ma says : "In the form of a path He attracts each person to a particular line in harmony with his inner dispositions and tendencies. The One is present in each sect, even though in some cases there appears to be conflicts among them due to limitations of ego" (Ma, Words, p. 181).

Our senses are capable to see the outer light. Our religions want to lead us to the ultimate light — *Dharm*, the eternal light. "By this light you can behold the outer light and everything in the universe ; it is only because it shines ever within

you, that you can perceive the outer light" (Ma, Words, p. 12).

In our everyday life we encounter diverse conflicts and we search for harmony or *dharm* with the help of an emotion—free pure intellect. We may find different *dharmas* of different angles of view. Ma says: "You will find a complete and final solution of each particular question from its own particular angles of emergence; and you will also find there is a place where all problems have but one universal solution in which there is no longer any room left for contradiction. (Actually) the question of solution or non-solution will then cease to arise. Whatever one says: 'Yes' or 'no' everything is THAT" (Ma).

Innumerable solutions are the products of the inherent inquisition for *dharm* or the hidden harmony, but the ultimate *dharm* is the ultimate solution or completion of seeking or *samadhan*, which comes through *Samadhi* (according to Ma). "Samadhan signifies the perfect resolution of form, formlessness, manifested being and non-being—of everything. The solution of a problem is one thing; yet there is another kind of resolution where the possibility of problems and their solutions can not exist. This is called *Samadhi*. ... So long as thoughts and ideas (*Sankalpa* and *bikalpa*) persist, not even *sabikalpa samadhi* can occur. *Sabikalpa samadhi* signifies awareness of Existence. But when there is no question of Existence or non-existence—when there is no possibility of differentiating "what is" from "what is not" ... This is *nirvikalpa samadhi*

(—Ma ; Words, p. 50-51). The *highest dharm* is the highest *samadhan*, the true realization. “But Realization must be all comprehensive, all embracing and one must recognize one’s Self in every thing” (—Ma ; Words, p. 157).

Thus we find : a search for harmony in diversity is the *dharm* which is inherent in humanity, which has developed the society. But religions should help the science to correct the vision and to develop a superior intelligence and to realize the ultimate harmony, the Self beyond the question of existence and non-existence. Therefore, our education should start with a vow : **DHARMAM SARANAM GACCHAMI.**

Man must go out in search of That which is concealed behind the world. He should choose an abode that will make it easy for him to proceed to his true Home.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Sai Ram Sahay

Prasad (God's Gift)

M. Rama Rao

Swami Vivekananda says "True love (Bhakti) can be regarded a triangle. The first angle is, love knows no bargain. So when a man is praying to God 'give me this and give me that' it is not love. How can it be ?

I give you my little prayer and you give me something in return ; that, is mere shop keeping.

The second angle is, love knows no fear. So long as God is regarded as rewarder or punisher, there can be no love for him.

The third angle, the apex, is, love is always the highest ideal (Moksha). The ideal can never escape, because it is part of our own nature."

To reach Moksha we have to understand the four purusharthas and try to follow the path of Moksha.

The social scientists of ancient India have classified the totality of human urges, under the four broad categories of goals pursued by man (Puru-sharthas). They are Artha, Kama, Dharma, and Moksha. In modern terminology, these may be redefined as follows :—

1. The demand for Economic Security (Artha).
2. The desire for the sense enjoyment and aesthetic appreciation (Kama).
3. The search for moral principles and norms of conduct (Dharma).

4. The quest for Reality and spiritual enlightenment (Moksha).

These four values include all the different achievements of human culture and civilization in their utilisation and non-utilisation aspects. Men pursue these values individually as well as collectively for the sake of fulfilment and social welfare. The methods adopted, the pathways pursued and the goal achieved in this pursuit unique to man, constitute the psycho-social-phase of evolution.

Of these four values, majority of human beings pursue only Artha and Kama...wealth and enjoyment. The more sensitive and psychologically developed amongst us pursue Dharma, moral and ethical virtues while very few are conscious of the Moksha ideal, spiritual aspiration. To most Kama is primary and Artha is only a means to have varieties of Kama fulfilled. In a society constituted of innumerable persons pursuing Artha and Kama, unless there are rules and norms for acquiring them, there will be utter chaos. So some kind of social Dharma becomes necessary to regulate human greed and indulgence. According to Hindu Seers, the pursuit of all activities according to Dharma assures welfare here as well as hereafter, because a person accumulates merit (Punya) by Dharmic actions, which he comes to enjoy in celestial abodes after death, and not the ultimate things in life. Dharma helps man to choose between right and wrong ways of acquiring Artha and enjoying sense delights, thus saving him from the painful consequences to himself and others in society, of an

indiscriminate pursuit of these two goals. Dharma brings in the benign influence of reason and moderation in the play of passion and greed. Its guidance when accepted builds up a strong and calculated character in man. Without Dharma, there can be no real cultural refinement, but only more sophistication.

All must finally recognise the necessity for Moksha, so it has been called the Parama-Puru-shartha, the supreme goal of man, only the achievement of this goal will ensure man permanent peace, Bliss and Enlightenment. In the fourth and last Ashrama, Moksha is the only value pursued with single-pointed attention ; he is a Sanyasi who has voluntarily given up the pursuit of other values and takes up to the contemplative life of a wandering monk.

To take up the value of Moksha as the summum bonum of life, an individual must have sufficiently evolved psychologically to see the hollowness of mere Artha and Kama. The purpose of the previous three Ashramas is to hasten this realisation in as many members of society as possible.

To achieve the two lower objects of Artha (wealth) and Kama (desire) along with our own efforts we have to perform Homa, Puja (worship) and prayer to God. In those rites we have to offer food cloth cash etc., as Prasad (gift) to God. These must be satvic, under unavoidable circumstances if we have to offer Rajasic or Tamasic gifts it must be with the utmost faith and surrender.

The following are some instances of Sai Baba, regarding gifts.

(A) In 1914, Ramanavami season, when myriads flocked to Baba, an old woman was shouting.

O.W. : Hallo, take pity upon me, an old woman ! Hallo, Baba, give me your darsan.

Sharma went out and elbowed his way back with her into Sai Baba's presence. She melted into tears and held Baba with both her arms round his waist.

Baba : Mother ! How long have I waited for you. Have you brought anything for me to eat-?

O.W. : Here is a piece of stale flat bread and an onion. I started my journey with one flat bread and two onions. But tired by journey, I sat at a stream in the morning and ate off half the cake with one onion. Here is the remainder. You had better eat it.

B. (Crunching the stale bread and eating it with gusto) : How sweet, O mother, is your bread.

(B) In 1913 Nama-saptah, Baba sat surrounded by a large crowd.

B : Sharma, go out. Beyond the wall there is an old man sitting and he has some sugar candy with him. Beg of him some candy for me and bring it. Sharma went out and found an old man, his saliva dripping, stinking pu, exuding from a wound on his chest, pestered by flies and wearing a rag. In one corner of which some sugar candy was tied in a knot. Sharma brought him through the crowd to Baba and said "He here is". Baba

placed his hand in blessing on the old man's hand, took out a piece of the bread candy and said "Take back the rest of the candy" (as prasād).

(C) *Dubious Gifts.* Mrs. Kanitkar's grapes

Mrs. Kanitkar went with her daughters to Baba with a very nice basket of grapes, which she specially lovingly brought for him.

B. (in a kind tone) : What have you brought ?
Grapes ?

Mrs. K. : Yes, for your sake. I have brought it from Nasik.

Then she presented the basket. As Baba was turning over a few grapes, her daughter, Banuthayi thought the fruits were going to be scattered and wasted by Baba.

Baba pushing aside the whole basket to Mrs. K. said Go, take away yours.

Mrs. K. was mortified. Baba evidently feeling for her, picked up a few dried and worthless fruits from the basket and returned the rest saying, "Go, now, let your children eat this."

As Mrs. K. and her daughters, returned with the basket, Banuthayi said 'Mother, I do not know what made me think so : but as you presented the basket I thought "What ! she has given him the whole basket of fruits ! It will be all scattered in a trice. He will eat nothing and we shall get nothing.

Baba's action and words showed, that he appreciated the mother's intention to present her gift which was vitiated by the daughter's unwillingness to part with it.

If God fulfils our desires and grants gifts such as wealth, health, education and power etc. he also tests us whether we use these gifts only for our selfish ends or distribute some of them to others who are also in need of them.

Thought for the occasion

By making a gift, you are able to help yourself. It is not the receiver that is blessed, but it is the giver. Be thankful that you are allowed to exercise your power of benevolence and mercy in the world, and thus become pure and perfect.

Try your utmost never to succumb to anyone's influence. In order to become firm, calm, deeply serious, full of courage, with one's personality wholly intact, pure and holy out of one's own strength, one has to be centred in God.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Mahamahopadhyaya Gopinath Kaviraj, A Legend and a Tradition

Dr. S. Misra, Retd. Professor of Philosophy,*
College Road, Puri

1. Mahamahopadhyaya Gopinath Kaviraj is a rare individual and a noble soul. We know him as a scholar of rare distinctions who had free access to the most precious treasures of ancient wisdom. But he was not a mere scholar. He was inherently a spiritual person who received the light of the divine and whose life and thoughts were dedications to the divine. A mind purified and an intellect illumined, he was truly an enlightened being, captivating in his discourses and persuasive in his dialogues. He had a firm grip over almost all branches of Indological studies, history and culture, philosophy and religion, so that he was equally at home when he discoursed on Vedanta or Mimansa, Nyaya, Vaisesika or Sankhya, Agama or Nigama, Buddhism or Jainism. His expositions were authentic, his insight original and his scholarship profoundly overwhelming. Professors of Universities and reputed Scholars gathered round him for consultations and guidance. Traditional Sanskrit Scholars

* Reprinted from Centenary Celebration September 1988 at Sri Jagannath Sanskrit Viswavidyalaya, Sri Vihar-Puri.

came to him with ancient Sanskrit texts for explanation and to remove their doubts. Spiritual seekers of all shades and colour visited his residence to listen to his inspired discourses and to learn the mystic way to divine life whoever came to him received his riches in bountiful. He could open his treasures to all. But one needs a quality of the mind to appreciate the affluence and choose what one desires. He could equip you intellectually and and make you a thing of the spirit. Such is the undecaying greatness of the man, that he stands out even now as an invisible institution, unsullied and untarnished by the ravages of time. In fact, M. M. Gopinath Kaviraj does not appear to us as a mere individual or a reputed scholar. He belongs to the ancient heritage of Risis and Acharyas, a devoted spirit who illumined the path of knowledge by sheer brilliance of light which he was. He represents a noble tradition which does not die with death but continues to remain as the perennial source of inspiration for generations to come.

Vidyavacaspati Dr. Umaraman Jha writes about him :

Vedangadi vicarana Krtamati statren ca
 Mantre tatha
 Nyaye Gautama eva yastu bhuvane
 Vidyatpriyo dharmikah
 Yoge vyakarane Patanjali Samo janagra
 ganyo budho
 Gopinath Sudhivaro yativaro
 payad bhudhan svargatah.

Birth and childhood :

Born on 7.9.1887, at Dharmaraj Decca, now in Bangladesh, Sri Kaviraj jee is the sixteenth in the direct line of descent from one 'Bhattnarayana' who was one of the five learned and orthodox pandits whom Adisura the then king of Bengal had called from Kanya Kubja towards the latter part of eleventh century A. D. for performance of certain rituals. Since then the family settled down in East Bengal. Kaviraj jee's father Sri Baikunthanath was a student of M.A. under the University of Calcutta, when he expired four months before the birth of Sri Gopinath jee. Kaviraj jee grew up under the affectionate care of his widow mother, Srimati Sukhada Sundari right from his childhood. Sukhada Sundari now a lone figure in her father-in-law's house, moved to village Kanthalia and stayed with Pandit Kala Chandra Sanyal, the maternal uncle of her husband. Kaviraj jee therefore, spent considerable period of his childhood in the village Kanthalia. Pandit Kala Chandra Sanyal had no issue and his wife was an affectionate lady. Both of them did everything they could for rearing the child Gopinath at Kanthalia village. In fact Pandit Kala Chandra Sanyal declared Kaviraj jee as the heir to his property. Gopinath jee has his sacred thread ceremony at Kanthalia Village on 18th of February 1898. Subsequently he got married to Kusum Kamini Devi, the daughter of Sri Braja Sankar when he was less than thirteen years. Gopinath jee's father had considerable landed property at Mymensingh. But he could not own the

property due to family intrigues. At Kanthalia he also could not inherit the property of Pandit Kala Chandra Sanyal due to machination of crafty relations. Bereft of any standing source of income, Kaviraj jee had to face formidable financial difficulties right from the beginning of his childhood. But the divine grace was on him and he succeeded in overcoming these difficulties by generous help he received from many quarters.

Early Education :

It was at the Village School of Kanthalia that Gopinath jee received his early education. He read upto sixth standard at Kanthalia and then proceeded to Dacca to join Jubilee School. He passed the Entrance Examination from Calcutta University in first division in 1905 at the age of 18 years, but he suffered from a severe attack of Malaria and discontinued his studies for a year. Since the climate of Bengal did not suit his health, he decided to go to Jaipur and to join the Maharaja College at Rajasthan. The Dewan of the State Sri Sansar Sen offered him free boarding and lodging and he won the admiration of his English teacher Prof. N. Roy who arranged a stipend of Rs. 15/- per month for him. For four long years he studied in Maharaja College and won the admiration and sympathy of all concerned. He passed his B. A. Examination from Allahabad University in 1910 to which Maharaja College was affiliated then. Earlier while he was still in his village school Kanthalia, Bengal, he studied Panini gra-

mmer under the guidance of Pandit Kanailal Goswami. Subsequently he mastered Sidhanta Kaumudi with Taranath Tarkavcaspati's commentry while he was at Dacca under the guidance of Bidhu Bhusan Goswami. In fact, Kaviraj jee's father had a good collection of Sanskrit works and Kaviraj jee studied them all while he was just a student, preparing for his entrance examination. At Dacca, Kaviraj jee developed a taste for English literature, and under the generous guidance of Heramba Chandra Maitra, he studied Emerson, Milton, Wordsworth and many other distinguished poets and writers. At Maharaja College, Jaipur, he got greater scope to use the rich library of Maharaja and read through classical works of Sanskrit and English literatures and studied almost all available works on mysticism, philosophy and religion. He had a powerful and penetrating mind and his memory was wonderful. This self building at Jaipur gave him a stable intellectual base for all subsequent phases of his career.

Post-Graduate Career :

The next phase of educational career of Kaviraj jee started at Varanasi, the traditional seat of learning, the Vidyanagari of India. Kaviraj jee, then a young graduate, joined Queen's College at Varanasi for post-graduate M. A. Queen's College had an unenviable reputation in the field of oriental studies. The College had two wings, one Sanskrit Wing and the other Post Graduate Wing. Kaviraj jee joined the Post-Graduate Wing. Dr. Arthur Venis, was

then the Principal of the College. He was deeply impressed by Kaviraj jee and asked Kaviraj jee to work under his guidance. He advised Kaviraj jee to attend the regular classes of Navya Nayaya Philosophy conducted by Mahamahopadhyaya Bama Charan Bhattacharya, an eminent scholar of Navya Nayaya School in the morning session. He also instructed other scholars of the institution to teach Kaviraj jee Pali, Prakrit, French and German. Dr. Venis however made adequate financial provision for Kaviraj jee. While Kaviraj jee devoted his morning hours for traditional sanskrit course, he studied ancient Indian history and culture, epigraphy etc. with Dr. Venis in the Post-Graduate classes. His hard labour to master the different topics seriously affected his health. When he proceeded to Allahabad to take his M.A. (Previous) examination, he was down with severe malarial fever. However Acharya Narendra Dev, still a student, rendered Kaviraj jee generous service in arranging medical treatment. Kaviraj jee could somehow manage to finish his examination. He joined his final M.A. classes in 1911, but due to health hazards, he had to drop out. Dr. Venis advised Kaviraj jee to proceed to Calcutta for medical treatment. Kaviraj jee remained under medical treatment of two reputed heart specialists. Subsequently he proceeded to Puri Jagannath and stayed there for two months. During his stay at Puri, he used to visit the great temple of Jagannath almost daily. Here he restored his health and regained his physical strength completely so that he returned to Banaras to join his final Post-Graduate

classes during 1912. In April 1913 he appeared at M.A. (final) examination and stood first class first in order of merit.

Queen's College Banaras :

He was at Nainital with Dr. Venis, when he received the news of his success in M. A. examination. He also received two telegrams, one from Lahore College and the other from Mayo College, Ajmer, offering him the post of Professor. But as per the advice of Dr. Venis, he declined the offers and decided to pursue the line of research. He was appointed to the post of Superintendent of Saraswati Bhavan under Dr. Venis. But in the mean time he got an alluring offer from Allahabad University. Dr. Venis was reluctant to leave Kaviraj jee. He got a temporary post of 'Director of Research' sanctioned by the Govt. of U. P. for Kaviraj jee with the same benefits as the University of Allahabad offered.

Subsequently Kaviraj jee got the appointment to the post of Librarian of Saraswati Bhavan and continued in the same post from 1914-1920. When Dr. Venis retired, Dr. Ganganath Jha was appointed as the Principal of Queen's College. Dr. Ganganath Jha retired in 1924. A selection committee consisting of Prof. A. B. Dhruva and Dr. Ganganath Jha, selected Kaviraj jee for the post of Principal against Dr. S. N. Das Gupta, the contesting candidate. For seventeen years, M. M. Kaviraj jee rendered distinguished service to Queen's College as the Principal. But due to his failing

health and growing spiritual involvements, he decided to retire from the service before the date of superannuation. The Govt. of U. P. instead of accepting his resignation, requested him to take long leave. But he declined the offer. He was relieved of his Office of Principal on 13th March, 1937. Thereafter he lived at Sigra, Banaras where he built up a house for himself.

Retirement & after :

While after retirement he maintained good health, he got deeply engaged in spiritual works assigned to him by his Guru, Paramahansa Sri Visudhananda. Paramahansa Visudhananda was a Yogi and tantric. He had a spiritual programme of momentous significance to be worked out. Kaviraj jee was the chief disciple of Yogi Visudhananda jee Maharaj. He had therefore to take a leading role in implementing the programme. But Yogi Vishudhananda departed from this world in July, 1937, leaving Kaviraj jee alone in the field. The dramatic events which occurred in Agasti Kunda, Banaras, thereafter have not come to light. They will remain possibly a mystery forever. The events worked up and in course of events Kaviraj jee came to Puri and stayed for about a month. The outlines of what is now published as Akhanda Mahayoga was worked out at Puri. Kaviraj jee was back to Banaras and thereafter he lived at Sigra, Banaras, frequently visiting the Ashram of Ma Anandamayee. In 1961 Kaviraj jee suffered from acute dysentery. Ma Anandamayee arranged

for his medical treatment at Tata Memorial Cancer Institute, Bombay. He was cured and came back to Banaras.

In 1964 the Govt. of U.P. requested him to take full charge of Yoga-Tantra department at the Sanskrit University of Banaras. Sri Kamala Pati Tripathy, personally came to him and requested him to accept the offer. He was allowed to conduct his classes at his own residence. He worked as the Director of Tantra-Yogā from 1964-1969. During this period he edited three volumes of tantrik texts, the Luptagamasaṃgraha and Tantrasaṃgraha—a collection of 18 Tantric treatise in three volumes. In 1969, his wife passed away. Ma Anandamayee requested Kaviraj jee to stay at her Banaras Ashram. From 1969-1976 he stayed at Ma Anandamayee Ashram at Banaras, when the curtain fell and Kaviraj jee passed away on June 12, 1976. The light had gone out. The light that illumined the path of knowledge for generation of scholars. We do not know what exactly happened to implementation of a momentous spiritual programme inaugurated by Kaviraj jee's guru, Sri Visudhananda Paramahansa. We cannot intelligibly fill up too many gaps in the spiritual life of Kaviraj jee which will remain forever a mystery. But there is none denying the fact that in Kaviraj jee we have a highly responsive mind and a tender sensitive soul. His mind had wings to fly and his spirit could soar to awesome height. He moved upward beyond the borders of the mental world and was lost to our horizon bound consciousness.

Publication :

Kaviraj jee was a monument of scholarship. His contributions in the field of indological studies are massive. His research articles published in Saraswati Bhavan studies and Bhandarkar Oriental Institute, Poona, have since been compiled and published by Burdwan University in "Some aspects of Indian thought."

A catalogue of Sanskrit manuscript 1918-19 published by Govt. of U.P.

A descriptive catalogue of Mimansa manuscript in Sanskrit College, Banaras with introductions, published by U. P. Government. Bibliography of Nyaya Vaisesika Philosophy is published by D. P. Chatterjee, Calcutta. In Hindi, the Bihar Rastra-bhasa Parisad have published 'Bharatiya Sanskrit aur Sadhana' (2 volumes), 'Tantrika Vanmaya men Sakta drsti', 'Kasiki Sarasvata Sadhana', 'Tantric Sahitya' and a bibliography of tantric literature are published by Hindi Samiti of Govt. of U. P. In Bengali, Sanskrit College, Calcutta published 'Bharatiya Sadhanar Dhara', 'Tantra-O-Agama Sastra Digdarsan'.

Sri Sri Visudhananda Prasanga, Banaras.

Akhanda Mahayoga-1948-Chakravarty-Chatterjee.

Srikrishna Prasanga-Calcutta.

Tantrik Sidhanta-O Sanskrit-Burdwan University.

There are any number of Essays and writings published in different journals and periodicals. We have fairly an exhaustive list of Kaviraj jee's

publication in 'Kaviraj Abhinandan Grantha' published by Akhila Bharatiya Sanskrit Parisad, Lucknow. We feel that there are still many of his writings laying at Sigra, Banaras, which may be lost to us for good. Kaviraj jee also edited a number of Sanskrit Texts. Some of the rare texts edited by Kaviraj jee in Saraswati Bhavan texts are : Goraksa Sidhanta Samagraha, Tripurarahasya, Yaginihrdaya dipika, Kiranavali Prakas etc. Many Sanskrit texts of obscure religious sects of India have also been edited by him. It is not our intention to present any exhaustive lists of these texts in the present context. It is sufficient to mention that he recovered many Sanskrit texts from oblivion.

Kaviraj jee's Honorific Distinction :

1. The title of Mahamahapadhyaya conferred by the Govt. of India — 1934.
2. The Degree of D. Litt honoris causa conferred by the University of Allahabad — 1947.
3. The Degree of D. Litt honoris causa conferred by B.H.U. — 1954.
4. Certificate of honour granted by the President of India — 1956.
5. 'Padma Vibhusana' title conferred by Govt. of India, 1964.
6. Fellowship of the University of Burdwan and Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1964.
7. D. Litt Degree conferred by the University of Calcutta, 1964.
8. 'Sahitya Vacaspati' title conferred by Hindi Sahitya Sammilani, 1964.
9. Title 'Sarvatantra Sarvabhauma' conferred by Sanskrit College, Calcutta — 1966.

10. D. Litt Degree conferred by the University of Delhi — 1973.

11. The title Brahmarsi conferred by Madan Mohan Malaviya Siksyasamsthan — 1973.

12. 'Vidyavaridhi' Degree conferred by Nava Nalanda University — 1975

13. Rajgiri literary award by the Govt. of U.P. 1975.

14. 'Desokottam' Degree by Visvabharati—1975.

15. 'Vidyavacaspasi' Degree conferred by Sampurnananda Sanskrit University, Banaras — 1976.

We have presented a short sketch of Kaviraj jee's biography. There are many things which we have not said. We do not claim that the sketch is complete. We are aware of our own limitations. But Kaviraj jee struck us more as a living symbol of knowledge and wisdom. He was like a vast sea overflowing the shores. For a period extending over sixteen years (1946-62) we had several occasions to know him from very close quarters. He was superb in his discourses, candid and systematic in expositions, but overwhelming with his scholarship. His quest after truth was the eternal quest of mankind for the divine life on earth and immortality within the mortal frame. His central problem was to master the technique of spiritual engineering so that the transcendent and the temporal could be transformed in the light of the spiritual. Sri Kaviraj jee used to talk of transformation almost as Sri Aurobinda would like to have it in the 'Life Divine'. His Akhanda-Mahayoga is integral Yoga of Sri Aurobinda, leaning heavily upon 'Tantricism'. While it is possible to find some basic points of

resemblance between Kaviraj jee and Aurobinda, they do differ in their technique, language and approach to the problem. A comparative study of Kaviraj jee's thoughts and that of Sri Aurobinda could be on fruitful field of Research for all those who are interested in the subject. It is sufficient for us to mention here that the Guru of Sri Kaviraj jee was believed to be one who had the vision of the whole scheme and that he initiated Sri Kaviraj jee into the sort of Sadhana that could build up a traffic bearing bridge between the mortal and the immortal, matter and spirit and the transcient and the transcendent. Kaviraj jee has nowhere explicitly spelt out the set of axioms with which we can reconstruct his philosophy. But he did believe that Para citsakti has a major role to play in raising and uplifting the earth consciousness into things of the spirit. Kaviraj jee's integral absolutism was primarily based on the fundamental belief in citsakti. Citsakti in its poise of 'Sat', the immutable and the immobile, is Siva.

Kaviraj jee's life was indeed a dedication to the cause of world transformation. He not merely believed the possibility of such transformation but worked for it as per the instructions of his guru. Sri Kaviraj jee is no longer with us. We do not know if the possibility of transformation can be worked out into concrete actuality in the near future. But Sri M. M. Gopinath Kaviraj remains with us as a legend and a tradition.

Reminiscences of Anandamayee Ma*

(2) Initiation

Professor Bireshwar Ganguly, D. Litt

(*Continued from previous issue*)

My first initiation took place at the age of five, when I was initiated to the Bengali alphabet. Since my respected father had his spiritual initiation at the feet of Shree Shree Ma Sarada Devi, the spiritual consort of Shree Ramakrishna Paramahansa deva, one of the latter's chief disciples, Swami Subodhananda (Khoka Maharaj) used to visit our place, whenever he had an occasion of coming to Ranchi. While learning the alphabet at a ceremony, I asked him, "Maharaj, are you a degree-holder?" The Maharaj smiled and told me, "I am no degree-holder. But you will get the highest degrees. Try to understand the inner meaning of the letters of the alphabet, and you will gain knowledge of both the worlds, mundane as well as spiritual."

My second initiation took place at the age of twelve in the sacred thread ceremony, when my respected father acted as the preceptor. While teaching me the method of muttering the sacred *Gayatri mantra*, he told me, "The Vedic rishis have

* Translated by the author from Ananda Varta (Bengali),
October, 1988, pp. 317—320.

bequeathed to the brahmins this epitome of *mantras* in the sacred *Vedas*. The essence of the *mantra* is that we meditate on the *Varga-jyoti* (the effulgent light-energy) of God, in order that He might lead us on the right path of *dharma* (moral duty).”

While meditating on and muttering the *Gayatri mantra* three times a day, I used to behold subtle lights of different colours, and hence my aspiration for beholding those lights made me regular in the practice of *Gayatri mantra*.

My third initiation took place at the feet of Shree Shree Pagal Baba, an expert *Tantric Yogi* of Ranchi. Once while I was reading in class IX, I paid a visit to him along with my maternal grandfather, after my Geography examination was over. He asked me, “What proof is there that the earth is round ?” As I had the vanity of being the first boy of my class, I repeated the six or seven proofs, that I had learnt from my book on Geography. At this he smiled and told me, “All these are inferential proofs and not direct perceptions. If you spend a month of your summer vacation with me in this Mukteshwar temple, I shall soar to the sky in subtle body along with you and you will yourself see whether the earth is round like the moon or not.” Accordingly I began staying in the temple and every morning after worshipping Lord Shiva for one week, he instructed me how to concentrate first on the Mukteshwar *Shiva-lingam* (black stone image of Shiva) and then on the *Sahasrara-chakra* (cerebral cortex of the brain). While meditating on the *chakra*, I felt sleepy and fell in a trance. I felt

in the trance that he caught hold of one of my arms and we were flying in the sky. After reaching a certain height in the sky, I observed that the earth was round like the moon. Even after that first astral journey, we often used to have flight through the sky, always in trance condition after meditation. But never could I achieve this condition by my own efforts alone. When I asked him the reason for this, he exclaimed that it was the primary initiation, in which the *Guru* (preceptor) gives the first demonstration, which has to be followed up by gradual practice by the disciple, who can, in due course, get a mastery over the technique of astral journey with the subtle body. However, he insisted that for final success in the practice I would have to give up the materialistic education of the Zila school and to devote myself wholeheartedly to spiritual *sadhana* (practice). As I did not agree to his proposal, there was ultimately a separation of twelve or thirteen years between us.

My fourth initiation took place at Patna on the *Saraswati Puja* day of 1951, while I was listening to *Kirtan* (devotional music) in the presence of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee. The narration of this initiation has been made (as much as possible) in my article on "Reminiscences of Anandamayee Ma (i) First Glimpse" in *Ananda Varta*, April, 1991 [which is a translation of my Bengali article in *Ananda Varta* (Bengali edition), July, 1988.]

My fifth initiation took place at Chapra during the summer vacation of 1951 at the residence of

Mr. Gurtu, the Manager of Bihar Bank in the *satsang* (spiritual congregation) of Anandamayee Ma. In that *satsang* every afternoon, my senior colleague, Professor Sudhir Gopal Mukherjee (of B. N. College, Patna) used to recite from and explain *Shreemad Bhagavatam*. One day, he was to be absent in the afternoon for some reason, and hence Mother asked me to enquire from Professor Mukherjee about the chapter of *Bhagavatam* on which he had given his last discourse and also about the technique of discourse. I frankly admitted to Mother that I understood *Shreemad Bhagavad Geeta* and the *Upanishads* and could give discourses on them, but not on *Bhagavatam*. Mother smiled and assured me, "You will succeed, for this body is behind you." There was a simultaneous fear and inspiration instilled in me by Mother and hence I read the episode of Prahlad and rehearsed it mentally to face the final ordeal. In the afternoon *satsang*, I took my assigned seat on the pulpit by the side of Mother and began narrating the episode of Prahlad from *Bhagavatam*. According to the episode, the father of Prahlad chastised him for always thinking of Lord Krishna and narrating the *leela* (divine play) of Krishna to his friends against the wishes of the father. Prahlad admitted that he could not help this behaviour, as he was possessed by Lord Krishna. While I was repeating the explanation given by Prahlad for his devotion to Krishna, I felt inexplicable shuddering and trembling of the body and ecstatic running down of tears with shivering all over the body.

The next morning Mother enquired of me affectionately about my spiritual *sadhana* (practices) every morning and evening. While I was narrating the sequence of my daily *sadhana*. I recited one hymn to the Divine, in which there occurred several *veej mantras* (mystic seed sounds). All of a sudden, Mother interrupted me and exclaimed, "This is your own *veej mantra* of the Divine Mother. Continue your daily recital of *Geeta*, *Upanishad* and *Chandi* (*Durga saptashati*) as usual, and your daily muttering of *Gayatri mantra*, but mutter this *veej mantra* with prefix and suffix of *pranava mantra* (AUM) as many times as possible, till it becomes *ajapa* (automatic meditation without muttering)."

My sixth initiation took place at 4 a.m. on the *Gurupurnima* day of 1951 in a first-floor room of Anandamayee Ashram at Kashi (Varanasi). I woke up in the early hours of the morning in my room and sat on my bed for my usual meditation, while the room was dark and the door was closed. Suddenly the room was illumined and I beheld Mother standing on the eastern side with a smiling face. Again I felt the same inexplicable shuddering and trembling of the body and ecstatic running down of tears with shivering all over the body. I prostrated before Mother. When I looked up Mother's apparition had vanished, but my *ajapa jap* continued.

My seventh and final initiation took place, after my marriage, at Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram, Ranchi, during the *Durga Puja* ceremony of 1954 on the *Navami Puja* morning in Mother's

bed room. On the previous day of *Mahashtami Puja*, Mother called for my wife and me at night after the mass observance of silence and Mother's discourse were over, and instructed us to come to the ashram the next morning with white and red sandalwood paste, and Tulsi and Bel leaves, after finishing our morning bath. Accordingly when we entered the room of Mother the next morning at 8 a.m. Mother asked Didima (Mother's mother) and Gurupriya Didi to vacate the room. We felt overwhelmed with devotion while prostrating before Mother. Mother instructed me to write down my old *veej mantra* on a Bel leaf with red sandalwood paste and gobble it up. Then she instructed me to write down the *veej mantra* of my wife (Nupur), (which she had received earlier in her childhood in a dream from Krishna), on a Tulsi leaf with white sandalwood paste. After this Mother asked her to gobble it up. Finally Mother told us, "While it will be your duty to mutter the *mantras* regularly, the *mantras* in the leaves will discharge their function."

(To be continued)

The Teaching of Ma Anandamayi

Jean and Josette Herbert

(Translated from French)

Jean Herbert was a writer and translator of world-repute. He rendered invaluable service to humanity by making available the wisdom of the East to the French speaking people. He compiled and translated some forty volumes and wrote about 25 himself. Already in 1943 his translation of Bhaiji's collection "Sad Vani" appeared under the title "Aux sources de la joie" and has had several editions. After a long and very active life of ceaseless service Jean Herbert passed away in Geneva in August 1980. Madame Josette Herbert is carrying on his work.

A book of Mataji's teaching in French, compiled and translated by Jean and Josette Herbert, appeared first in 1974. This volume of nearly 400 pages has had a 2nd edition in 1980. The following is a translation of a small portion of the Preface to this book.

..... Mother has no particular teaching or doctrine of Her own, although She may advise one or the other according to personal needs. She knows that "there are many mansions in my Father's house" without forgetting that the house is one.

Mother says that the teachings of all teachers, provided they are genuine and proceed from the right sources, are correct and should be followed by those for whom they are meant. They may be

in opposition to one another, but that does not detract from each its peculiar value as a distinct path leading to the goal set before it.

But each doctrine and discipline can lead to imperfect achievement only. She keeps on repeating: "Where doctrines are, there will be differences."

In Her presence, parties and sects, intolerant beliefs and philosophies disappear. Mother's views are so catholic that men of all shades of religious thought and belief come to Her, and everyone feels satisfied and stronger, with beliefs purified and reinforced. A Vedantist, for example, when talking to Mother for the first time, will feel convinced that She is a pure *advaita vedantin*; a *sakta* may say that She is an incarnation of the Divine Mother, while a *vaishnava* will see in Her a great *bhakta*, and so on. One day, when speaking to two visitors, She surprised people who were familiar with the general trend of Her answers to typical questions who noticed that She was branching off into new channels and using unusual phrases and terminology. They found out that the visitors were Buddhist *bikshus* who went away, convinced that Ma had an extensive knowledge of the Buddhist Scriptures. One morning two Jain *sadhus* attended the satsang and Mataji had the *kheyala* to disclose for the first time some interesting details of the Jain *sadhana* She had practised at the time of Her *lila* of *sadhana*. She shows Christian visitors how to deepen their vision and make the most of it.

To Her all rites and attitudes have their value at a given plane, in a given situation and at a certain time.

Within each religion or tradition, She stresses that people have different temperaments and intellectual approach and, consequently, must be guided along different paths. Therefore, to monks as well as to people living in the world and in charge of dependants, She often gives contradictory replies :

Mother says : "God's world is made up of both, people who understand its nature and who do not. They have to be kept satisfied with just the toys they want."

Although Her replies are based essentially on the Indian wisdom of the *rishis* and *munis*, it is impossible to fit them into a philosophical system. She never forces one solution to a problem but mentions several ways of dealing with it. A student recalls : "She has asked me to study hard and finish my educational career before I think of doing anything else." To another student She says : "Education is not important. This education will help you to earn material wealth only. You must strive for spiritual wealth."

Three heads of families ask Her if they should give up everything to seek spiritual development. She replies to one of them : "The time has not yet come for you to do so since the question arises in your mind whether you should or not." The second one She advises strongly against the breaking up of a home, adding it was of no use arguing

that difficulties could be solved only by going away. The third man She advised that "no duty is binding for one who goes forth in quest of God." On another occasion She said : "The call of the Divine must be felt as a compulsion. A man who hears this call leaves all behind even as a dry leaf falls from its branch."

To questions which are not bonafide in nature but are either academical or intended to elicit opinions likely to hurt the feelings of others, She maintains an attitude of strict reticence replying with 2 or 3 words only, making the conversation a non-starter. A research student of the University one day came and posed many searching questions and tried to have a lively argument with Mataji. Finally Mataji said to her : "Listen first to all I have to say and do not contradict just yet. Think it over quietly, and if you have any questions left, we shall discuss again to-morrow." The next day, the girl returned, saying that all her doubts had been solved.

Ma replies only when prompted to do so by Her *kheyala*. It happens that if She has no *kheyala* to supply answers, She stops short right in the middle of a discussion. One day, when asked to speak through a microphone, since Her replies usually addressed to one specific person and not to a crowd, She spoke in monosyllables in a most inaudible manner. At times, She observes silence which nothing can upset. In fact, when She answers questions it is not through Her intellect ; She expresses Herself in very simple words which cannot

always be grasped by the mind. The words She utters are very meaningful and full of common sense—they are never lacking in humour. She says: “This body does not know how to give instructions. It simply converses with its fathers and mothers and does not feel timid. You all are this body’s father and mothers. The children are all my friends. Everywhere is only the home of the ONE. Everything is contained in everything. Thus this body does not go to anyone’s house, does not eat anyone’s food. Neither does this body give instructions or orders. From what this body says, take that which leads to your ultimate goods, not what is merely pleasing.”

Being in *sat-chit-ananda* consciousness, She “dissolves” problems put to Her by people seeking Her advice. For him who sees Ma and is permeated by Her grace, all desire disappears. Thus Her replies at such different levels give us an inkling, however difficult to grasp, of the road yet to follow.

“This body responds strictly to the line of thought and to the spirit in which a question is asked. Consequently, what is the opinion of this body and what is not? If there is a line of approach, there must be a goal to which it leads, and beyond that is the unattainable. But where the distinction between the attainable and unattainable does not arise, is THAT Itself.”

When someone complained to Anandamayi Ma about Her unwillingness to give clear-cut answers to problems, She retorted: “At least you have understood that there is a state where problems

are no longer settled in any particular way. But now you will have to realize that no solution is ever conclusive; in other words, you will have to go beyond the level where there is certainty and uncertainty. The solution of a problem arrived at by the mind must of necessity be from a particular point of view; consequently there will be room for contradiction, since your solution represents but one aspect."

Although Ma's teaching is so diversified and adapted to everyone's possibilities and needs, and although She acknowledges as valid all true search for spiritual development, one should not conclude that Her teaching is vague. On the contrary, it is extraordinarily definite and precise.

To Her the only aim of human life is to "realize the Divine" and since "to be born as a human being is a rare boon", one must direct all of one's energy here and now towards this achievement.

Her conception of the Divine—similar to that of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Ramdas and other great Hindu sages of our times—is both clear and all-embracing. She views the Divine both as static and formless (which justifies *Jnana-Yoga*) and dynamic and with form (which justifies *Bhakti-Yoga* and *Karma-Yoga*) and also as within man which justifies both *Jnana-Yoga* and *Karma-Yoga*). Each of these yogas leads to a realisation of one aspect of the Divine, but this is not the final aim, which is to realise the Divine in oneself and in the cosmos and in the Absolute, or rather as being both the Self in man, the world of multiplicity

(including one's neighbour) and the unconditioned Absolute—and to see that all three are one and indivisible.

In order to go through these successive experiences, man must strive to reach a state of actual obsession, which can be achieved by moral discipline, the company of saints and sages, study of Scriptures, meditation, prayer, constant thought of God, repetition of one of the powerful Names of God, by reaching beyond the intellect, dropping the ego, gradually destroying all attachment to things of this world, offering to God all one's actions, by total unconditional surrender to the grace and love of God, by intense craving for God, which can be achieved in the world just as well as in solitude.

Thus only can man reach the supreme, ineffable and imperturbable Happiness which is hidden within everyone and to which we shall all attain.

In this search, in this effort to tear asunder the veil of ignorance which alone prevents us from seeing our real Self and from living according to our true nature, the only guide is God, the supreme Guru. In order to make our work easier, the supreme Guru becomes manifest in a human guru, whom we must trust and obey when we have found him. Thus it becomes possible, in due course, to leave behind all ritualistic practices and the study of Scriptures—whose only purpose was to set our feet on the path.

A wonderful teaching indeed, which brings to us the understanding that all truths are true, because each one is only a facet of the one Truth and the

various ways of viewing It are equally valid, each one being adapted to a particular angle of vision. Thus each and everything finds its place in the whole, nothing is destroyed any longer, integration replaces opposition.

Thus everything opens up, an ever wider understanding awakens within us and enables us to discover treasures and unsuspected sources of joy in every aspect of life.

Before us Ma stands as a mirror to our real Self and makes us unearth in ourselves ever new potentialities.

Sitting at the feet of Ma pulls down the veil and many people become capable of concentration and prayer. Her mere presence, Her smile, Her expressions are a teaching in themselves. Her protection is actually felt as soon as our thoughts and actions are pure and free from egoism. Pure desires are fulfilled.

In Her proximity miracles appear natural. In everyone She brings out the best, and whatever ought to happen does in fact happen. Her greatest miracle, however is that She gives to every one exactly what he or she needs at that precise moment in life. Each gets from Her satisfaction and blessings in proportion not only to his or her sincerity and devotion but also to his or her capacity to receive at the time.

To someone who complained he had not received total and immediate enlightenment, as Krishna had given Arjuna, She simply replied: "Bring me an Arjuna, and you will see what you will see!"

People wishing with all their might and love to see Ma, often wait patiently and are suddenly immersed in joy and feel Her blessings on them. An encounter with Ma is never a chance meeting, unless chance be God's will! When the time has come—sometimes after years and years of suspense—the meeting takes place with all propitious prerequisites. On that day Ma, who is always surrounded by a crowd, is suddenly alone to welcome Her visitor—and the crowd comes back just as the visitor leaves.

Sometimes She says: "Although owing to the illusory attractions of the world you often forget this little daughter of yours, you may rest assured that your worries and tribulations are ever before my eyes."

"You may want to banish this body (Mataji) from your mind. But this body won't leave, you for a single day—it does not and never will leave your thought. Whoever has once been drawn to love this body will never succeed in wiping out its impression even despite hundreds of attempts. This body rests and shall remain in his memory for all times."

Sri Ma's Janm Utsav 1991

Er. Girish Chandra.

Through the grace of Sri MA, the author was enabled to participate in HER BIRTH ANNIVERSARY Celebrations at the Kankhal Ashram during the last week of May and first week of June 1991. I wish to convey my impressions through these few lines for the benefit of those who did not attend the celebrations.

I have a feeling that generally those attend Her functions whom Sri MA calls to do so. She had said this on a number of occasions that those come near Her, whom She calls. This appears to be true even after Her Maha Samadhi.

We used to sit in the Maha Samadhi Mandir for about an hour both in the morning and evening at the time of Her Arti. This Mandir is full of spiritual vibrations and one feels that Sri MA is blessing everybody with Shradha, Bhakti and Gyan. Meditation and "JAPA" becomes very easy and one gets lot of peace while sitting in front of Maha Samadhi and the Moorty which are ever awakened and full of consciousness. Arti was performed with great grace and devotion amidst the chanting of Bhajans, Kirtan and recitation of Vedic Mantras. Devotion of people for Sri MA had to be seen to be believed. Most of the people sat in the Mandir in meditative posture. Prasad was distributed after Arti without fail.

Through Sri MA's grace, several saints had kindly taken the trouble to come from distant places at a time when weather was very hot. They had come to offer their respectful "Shradhanjali" to Sri MA and while doing so, gave inspiring lectures on spiritual topics. Once Shri Raman Maharishi was asked as to what was the easiest method to attain Gyan and Bhakti. His reply was: "SATSANG" — holy company of Saints and that is what Sri MA had arranged for our benefit. Swami Chidanand Maharaj, President of Life Divine Society, compared Sri MA's Ashram to "Kalpatru" tree and added that we can get what we desire. All that we have to do, is to put into practice what Sri MA advised us to do. Result is assured. He described Sri MA as Jagdamba MA and said that she was the greatest Saint of the Twentieth Century. Swami Vivekanand of Naimisharanya compared Paratama to a Power House and Guru to an Electric Pole. He said that power cannot flow direct from the Power House; hence it has to be drawn through an electric pole. It is only through the Guru that spirituality can be transmitted to the people. He spoke on the role of the Guru in spiritual development. Lectures by Swami Brahmanand ji Maharaj and Swami Vidyanand ji Maharaj were also highly illuminating.

One evening after dinner Video Cassette concerning Leela of Sri MA was displayed. It lasted for about two and half hours. Production is of a good technical quality. We were thrilled to see Sri MA moving about, doing Kirtan and answering to

questions etc. We were told that after a month or so, the same would be available for sale. It will no doubt be a priceless possession for a devotee of Sri MA.

The holy "Tithi Pooja" of Sri MA's advent was performed from 2 a.m. to 5 a.m. on the 1st June 1991. (Sri MA's descent on this earth took place on Jaistha Krishna Chaturthi—Thursday, the 30th April 1896 at 3-30 a.m., in the remote village of Kheora, District Tripura, now Bangla Desh). Through the grace of Sri Didima a new dawn appeared on the horizon which illumined the whole world with Atma Gyan and opened the flood gate of Bhakti and Shradha. The ceremony was performed with great grandeur. Sri MA's Samadhi and "Vigrah" were artistically decorated. The entire floor was jam packed with devotees when we reached the Mandir at 3 a.m. Recitation of Vedic mantras, chanting of Bhajans and Kirtan was going on. This was followed by Arti. Everybody felt that Sri MA was showering Her blessings. Devotees were sitting in a meditative mood. Afterwards devotees were allowed to go inside the Sanctum Sanctorum in a que and worship Sri MA's Samadhi and Vigrah, followed by distribution of Maha Prasad. The ceremony went off smoothly.

The last item of celebration was Nam Kirtan by ladies in the night of the 1st/2nd June and male devotees performed Kirtan from Sunrise to Sunset on the 2nd June '91. Kirtan was very successful. Many people had stayed on for the Kirtan. Everybody participated in the Kirtan and had

tears in their eyes. It appeared as if Ganga of Bhakti and Shradha was flowing from Sri MA's lotus feet engulfing everybody. Through tears in the eyes, Sri Ma was cleaning the dross from the mind of Her devotees.

We enjoyed our meals in the Dining Shed which were treated as prasad from MA Annapoorna Herself. Sri Ma seemed to be cleaning our "Antakaran" and removing layers of Vasnas grown through a number of past births, through the medium of prasad.

We felt that our spiritual battery cells which had become weak were re-charged in the elevating environment of the Ashram. May Sri MA bless us with increasing devotion to Her name, Her leela and Her lotus feet.

Obituary

1. Smt. Nandita Sarkar

In Ranchi, on 13th July '91, on the day of Ratha Jatra, a well known devotee of MA passed away and got a place on the feet of MA. About 15 years ago she got the blessings of MA and used to take active part in all functions of the Ranchi Ashram. In her residence she used to arrange "Satsang", which turned out to be a beautiful and attractive function.

Let MA grant her soul eternal peace.

2. Sri Rakesh Ranjan Roy

Sri Sri MA's old and loyal devotee Sri Rakesh Ranjan Roy left his mortal soul on 17th July '91 and is absorbed in MA's bosom in permanent rest. He was one of the ardent devotee of MA and a kind hearted man. He was associated with many social service institutions.

3. Sri Nilankar Roy Chaudhury (Jishu)

On 26th July '91, on the auspicious day of Guru Purnima, Jishu the youngest son of Sri Phanindra Bikash Roychoudhury (a member of our Ananda-mayee Sangha and Charitable Society), an eminent devotee of MA, had suddenly expired in Calcutta, in his own residence only at the age of 32 years. We all were shocked at the news. We send our deepest condolence to his family, and old parents.

Let his soul rest in MA's lotus feet.

4. Sri Santosh Bhattacharyya

An old and Sri Sri MA's a long time loyal, special devotee, Sri Santosh Bhattacharyya, after suffering a brief illness has left his mortal soul on 7th August '91. He was amiable and silent devotee with flare for Kirtan. Wherever the Kirtan function used to occur, Santosh would play Kartal and join in Kirtan sitting in the back row.

Let MA grant his soul eternal peace and we express our deep condolences to the bereaved family.

5. Sri Harendra Nath Gupta.

It is with great regret that we have to announce the death of our beloved Harendra Nath Gupta, on 10th August '91 at his residence. He left his mortal remain fully conscious and went to rest in the lotus feet of MA.

All the members of Harendra's family are the devotees of Sri Sri MA. He was closely associated with the management of Delhi Ashram for many years.

Harendra was deeply motivated with the thought of MA. A few months before his death, he often used to say, "Look, everywhere MA's name is inscribed and I see the same vividly glittering on the wall, ceiling and the floor in Devanagri Script." He occasionally used to utter that now I will go to my home.

On listening the same, his wife "Latudi" used to reply that you are in the house.

Then Harendra used to tell her that "Not this house, I will go to Mother and Her Home."

Harendra always used to listen the songs of MA and used to cry along with the songs with

tearful eyes. Once he was in the Nursing home for a short period. During treatment one day his wife Latudi asked him, "How are you?"

In reply Harenda told that, "I am fine and alright. Please see that MA is standing with glow all round. How big "tip" on MA's forehead and light is coming out of the same everywhere: Look how many Saints and Mahatma's are standing with folded hands and reciting Ma's praise. Do you not see that everywhere is Ma. There is none except Ma: you are Ma, I am Ma and everywhere is Ma and everything is Ma."

Latudi told her daughter-in-law Ranu, to listen the saying of Harenda.

Then Harenda told Ranu, "Yes, Ranu Ma, with Ma, no existence."

The nurse on duty in the Nursing home thought that the patient is in delirium and to verify she asked Harenda who are all standing around his bed.

Harenda pointing out his daughter-in-law and wife, replied correctly. After recovery, Harenda returned home from the Nursing home. Within few days, his health again deteriorated. On 10th August '91 noon, when all the members of Harenda's family were on the side room, his grand daughter "Pupai" came out of his room crying and announced that "Dadu is leaving us and Jai Ma has come to take him."

Later on Pupai told that she has seen distinctly a "Mancha of Namyagna" near the head of Grand-Papa (Dadu) and Ma is present. Saints and Sadhus

with Dadu, are circling around the "Mancha" and Grand Papa has gone away with Jai Ma."

Immediately a next-door neighbour doctor was called and on examining the doctor announced that "Harenda is no more."

All those who were present there, noticed that there is no sign of pain on the face and eyes of Harenda. An eternal light has overcome his face. Dearest son of Ma, has slept on the lap of Ma Anandamayee.

A remarkable Matri devotee and his family members. Jai Ma, Jai Ma, Jai Ma.

PROGRAMME

October '91 to April '92

1. Mahalaya—7th October, Monday.
2. Sri Sri Durga Puja—13th October Sunday to 18th October, Friday.
3. Sri Sri Lakshmi Puja—22nd October, Tuesday.
4. Sri Sri Shyama Puja—5th November, Tuesday.
5. Sri Sri Annakut—7th November, Thursday.
6. Samyam Saptah—14th November, Thursday to 20th November, Wednesday. Purnahuti of Samyam Mahavrata on 21st November.
7. Pous Sankranti—14th January '92, Tuesday.
8. Saraswati Puja—8th February '92, Saturday.
9. Maghi Purnima—18th February '92.
10. Sri Sri Sivaratri—2nd March '92, Monday.
11. Dol Purnima—18th March '92, Wednesday.
12. Sri Sri Basanti Puja—(Beginning) 8th April '92, Wednesday.
13. Sri Sri Basanti Puja—(Vijaya Dashami) 12th April '92, Sunday.
14. Chaitra Sankranti—13th April '92, Monday. Sri Sri 108 Muktananda Giriji's Sanyas Utsab.