

ANANDA VĀRTĀ

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

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

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ANANDA VARTA

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

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JANUARY, 1996

No. 1

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Reminder

**Re : Renewal of Annual Subscription of
ANANDA-VARTA for 1996**

Dear Brother/Sister,

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This also carries our best of wishes and Vijaya/Diwali greetings to you. You are sincerely requested to contribute your experience when and how you came in touch with MA. We gladly publish that in our English Ananda Varta.

Sri Debabrata Pal

Secretary

Publications Division

Shree Shree Anandamayee

Charitable Society

“MATRI-MANDIR”

57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road,

Calcutta-700019

Phone : 74-8504

January, 1996

Matri-Vani

The remembrance of God must be with a human being day and night so that he may be cleansed from his shortcomings and errors.



In order to solve his queries and doubts, it is incumbent on man to be engrossed in spiritual practice.



Human beings have to be dwellers of the inner cave so that God who resides within may be revealed.



A man can be recognized as a human being by his worthy character. A human being is in fact a traveller towards the realization of the superman. Each one should advance with his gaze fixed in this direction. A spiritual atmosphere and satsang will be helpful in this pursuit.



Those who have adopted the ashram of the householder should be model householders and live according to the precepts of *dharmā*. Endeavour to know yourself.



Through the ever new transformations of a life dedicated to the Supreme Quest, one must strive to become firmly established in one's true Self (*Swarupa*).



In the proximity of Him from whom Creation and Preservation emerge is all coming and going. Everything is within His dispensation, is indeed with Him. Thus, solely by the remembrance, the realization of Him, everything is found—supreme peace and supreme bliss.



God is the one and only friend of the pilgrim to the Ultimate. He should act in this spirit so that he may come to accept Him as his all in all. Unless one is single minded there will be obstacles at every step.



To keep company with Mahatmas, to associate with great souls means to put into practice precisely what one has heard them say.



Just as a flower contains seeds that can be seen only when it opens, and in the seed again the tree is potentially present, so also He resides within you. By practising *sadhana* this may come to light—in other words, if the veil of ignorance can be destroyed, the One who is Self-effulgent will be realized. Just as the whole tree is potentially contained in the seed, in a similar manner, He in His fulness is enthroned within you.

Sai Ram Sahay

Happiness and Peace

Happiness

Generally we consider that a man is very happy if he possesses wife children, property and position. But our Thought goes wrong. The man's life is full of pain and pleasure one after other. Let us know the actual happening in the life.

Lord (Krishna) left

His body means that He left again His plenary in the respective dhamas (transcendental abodes), as He left His virat-rupa in the material world.

TEXT 9

Srimad-Bhagavatam (Canto 1, Ch.14)
Yasman nah sampado rajyam
darah pranah kulam prajah
asan sapatna-vijayo
lokas ca yad-anugrahat

TRANSLATION

From Him only, all our kindly opulence, good wives, lives, progeny, control over our subjects, victory over our enemies, and future accommodations in higher planets have become possible. All this is due to His causeless mercy upon us.

PURPORT

Material prosperity consists of a good wife, good home, sufficient land, good children, aristocratic family relations, victory over competitors and, by pious work, attainment of accommodations in the higher celestial planets for better facilities of material amenities. These facilities are earned not only by one's hard manual labor or by unfair means, but by the mercy of the Supreme Lord.

Prosperity earned by one's personal endeavor also depends on the mercy of the Lord. Personal labor must be there in addition to the Lord's benediction, but without the Lord's benediction no one is successful simply by personal labor. The modernized man of Kali-yuga believes in personal endeavor and denies the benediction of the Supreme Lord. Even a great sannyasi of India delivered speeches in Chicago protesting the benedictions of the Supreme Lord. But as far as Vedic sastras are concerned, as we find in the pages of Srimad-Bhagavatam, the ultimate sanction for all success rests in the hands of the Supreme Lord. Maharaja Yudhisthira admits this truth in his personal success, and it behooves one to follow in the footsteps of a great king and devotee of the Lord to make life a full success. If one could achieve success without the sanction of the Lord then no medical practitioner would fail to cure a patient. Despite the most advanced treatment of a suffering patient by the most up-to-date medical practitioner, there is death, and even in the most hopeless case, without medical treatment, a patient is cured astonishingly. Therefore the conclusion is that God's sanction is the immediate cause for all happenings, good or bad. Any successful man should feel grateful to the Lord for all he has achieved.

(By A.C. Bhakti Vedanta Swami)

We have come across that the material prosperity is not permanent happiness.

TEXT 20

Yena caivabhipanno 'yam
 pranaih priyatamair api
 Janah sadyo viyujoyeta
 kim utanyair dhanadibhih

TRANSLATION

Whoever is under the influence of supreme kala (eternal time) must surrender his most dear life, and

what to speak of other things, such as wealth, honor, children, land and home.

PURPORT

A great Indian scientist, busy in the plan-making business, was suddenly called by invincible eternal time while going to attend a very important meeting of the planning commission, and he had to surrender his life, wife, children, house, land, wealth, etc. During the political upsurge in India and its division into Pakistan, and Hindustan, so many rich and influential Indians had to surrender life, property and honor due to the influence of time, and there are hundreds and thousands of examples like that all over the world, all over the universe, which are all effects of the influence of time. Therefore, the conclusion is that there is no powerful living being within the universe who can overcome the influence of time. Many poets have written verses lamenting the influence of time. Many devastations have taken place over the universes due to the influence of time, and no one could check them by any means. Even in our daily life, so many things come and go in which we have no hand, but we have to suffer or tolerate them without remedial measure. That is the result of time.

Srimad-Bhagavatam (Canto 1, Ch.13)

(P 734 By H.D. Grace A.C. Bhakti Vedanta Swami)

Happiness Continued

The end of every human activity is happiness. Our feelings and sensations are attuned to derive happiness from every action we perform. We feel dejected and lost heart when this happiness is denied to us. As children we crave for toys because they give us momentary pleasure. In adult-hood. We set our goals high so as to reap maximum happiness. However, happiness is a relative term. A poet's heart leaps up when he beholds a rainbow

in the sky while a miser finds happiness in hoarding his wealth.

The real happiness, however, lies in a life devoted to the service of God. We can enjoy this world through renunciation and through action with a detached reason. Through renunciation and detachment we become identified with the immortal and divine Brahman. Which is the self of all. One who performs one's duties with detachment and renunciation feels real joy and his mind is ever calm and serene. Sanatkumara exhorts Narada thus:

“That verily which is infinite is happiness. There is no happiness in the finite. The Eternal alone is happiness and it is alone to be sought (realised)”.

(Saptagiri)

Peace

‘I want peace of mind’, we frequently hear people say. What do they mean by peace of mind? Life is full of uncertainties, conflicts and day-to-day problems, and by ‘peace’ most people mean a life without these difficulties. But polarity (that is, the occurrence of all experiences in pairs: joy and sorrow, good and evil, love and hate, etc.), impermanence, and ignorance are inseparable attributes of life and, as long as these persist, troubles and afflictions are unavoidable. True peace is not a form of enjoyment, nor is it like sleep. Rather, it is a state of transcendence, remaining unaffected by the polarity, impermanence and ignorance of the world and the pleasures and sorrows that spring from them. Real transcendence is not seclusion or escape, but is the attainment of a higher state of consciousness which harmonizes all polarities and integrates individual life with universal life. Real peace is thus a state of transcendental harmony.

Peace is not something we get by shouting ‘I want peace’ or by worrying about peace. It is one of the

paradoxes of life that peace eludes the person who hunts for it. Peace is a result, an effect, that follows sincere effort and fulfilment. When we hear the call of the ideal or duty, we cannot get peace until we have responded to it in the best way possible for us. This is all the more true of spiritual life. Supreme everlasting peace is the result of higher spiritual experience which can be attained only through intense effort and struggle, and until it is attained, one of the first things that a spiritual aspirant should do is to sacrifice the illusory peace of mind that mundane life offers.

Genuine spiritual experience is the result of a transformation and expansion of consciousness (Prabuddha Bharat May 1983.)

Positive Aids to Peace of Mind

It is common knowledge that good health and economic security are a 'must' for peace of mind. But having both, many are still in a state of perpetual mental restlessness. Do you belong to this category? If you say 'Yes' then read on. The chances are that your trouble is mostly of your own making and therefore avoidable. Let us see how.

Do you interfere too often in the affairs of others? May be they are wrong. But why should you be disturbed on that account? Do not criticise anybody or anything. God has not delegated to you the authority to sit in judgement over others. All men act the way they do because they are prompted that way by the God within them. It is a good rule to mind your own business to keep your peace.

(Swami Sivananda)

Pujya Narasimha Swami, states as regards to Sai Baba's opinion of happiness and peace in his book Babas Life.

"Another important thing for peace and happiness is love of all creation. Baba's moral teachings were conveyed

by his own life and activity. Baba loved all creatures, and the underlying motive of every act of his was love towards all human beings and all creatures. Baba said, 'Love all creatures. Do not fight with any. Do not retallate nor scandalise any. When any one talks of you, that is, against you, pass on unperturbed. His words cannot pierce into your body. Others' acts will affect them alone and not you, (One is very strongly reminded of the teachings of the great Greek stole teacher Epictotus, when reading these words.) As for activity, Baba was ever active and never idle. And his advice was, 'Do not be idle. Work. Utter God's name. Read scriptures. Baba's advice was always simple and capable of being accepted and acted upon by even persons of the meanest capacity and women and children. He told Chandrabai Borkar, 'We should not harbour envy, rivalry, or combative disposition towards others. If others hate us, let us simply take to Namajapa and avoid their company'. He told the child Bapu Rao N. Chandorkar, 'Hearken to the words of your parents. Help your mother in her tasks. Speak the truth and truth alone'. Baba's regard for truth was so well known. He had no interest, nothing in him, to make him swerve from the path of truth and rectitude. He occasionally had to impress on people like Mrs. M.W. Pradhan the virtue of meekness, The lady had a bit of temper. Baba told her, 'If anyone talks ten words at us, If we reply at all, let us reply with one word. Do not quarrel, retaliate, or bandy words with anyone. Do not give tit for tat'. Baba's Guru had implanted in him from the earliest stage 'Nishta and Saburi'. 'Saburi' is patience and perseverance with cheerfulness. Baba had to press this home on some, especially those who were of an impatient nature. Uddhavesa Bua of Omkar on the Narmada came to him and asked him at once, 'Where is my Moksha Guru, and how is he to be got?' Baba counselled patience, and said, 'Wait for five years, and you will know. How can you

swallow at one gulp an entire loaf? Wait for five years and then see'. As for the need for perseverance, that had to be driven home to persons with weak faith. There was a Prarthana Samajist who went to Baba, having caught up some little faith. However, on his way, before he saw Baba, he had a discussion with someone else about the Gita definition of "Sthitha Prajna" mentioned in Chapter II, verses 48-52, and wanted to know whether Baba had the characteristics of a Sthitha Prajna. This discussion unsettled his mind, and when he went to Baba, his mind was in a thoroughly disturbed state. Baba noticed at once his unsettled mind and told Shama, 'Take him and tell him something (of experiences of devotees)'. Then Shama took him to his wada and learning what happened, he gave him this valuable advice, namely, '(1) Despise irresponsible and uninformed people's talk, and (2) place your mind at Baba's feet, and then all will be safe. Have Saburi, and you will be safe. When they returned to Baba. Baba told the samajist that he should follow Shamasadvice".

Sai Baba also said whoever sings.

My praises I will bestow upon him complete happiness, permanent pleasure and contentment. Believe this as the truth".

The qualities of Sthitha-Prajna are as follows according to Gita Chap. II V. 48 to 52 which Sai Baba had all these.

GEETA PRABUNDH

"Lord Krishna says do not be motivated merely by the fruits of action: but at the same time do not shun work".

(2/48): "Do your jobs in association with truth and detached from other things. Keep your balance in success as well as failure, because balance is said to be the agent that establishes the link with truth".

(2/49): "Those who work, motivated by again or loss

are miserly and such work is lowly, compared to intellectual work. Therefore, resort to intellect (centred on truth)".

(2/50): "The intellectual one, abandons argument on merit and demerit and works. Therefore, resort to work in communion with Reality (i.e. Yoga), because Yoga is the way to be an adept in action."

(2/51): "The intellectual and prudent ones, abandon the fruits of action and freeing themselves from the bonds of birth, proceed towards the final destination which is free from pollution".

(2/52): "When your mind surpasses the quagmire of infatuation then you will clony from desire for things about which it is pleasant to hear and things about which you have already heard so far". (Ananda Varta)

Lord Further Says

Gita II-V, 66. "No knowledge (of the Self) has the unsteady. Nor has he meditation. To the unmeditative there is no peace. And how can one without peace have happiness ?"

Where there is no happiness. There is no peace. Where there is no peace. There is no happiness. The real happiness and peace are within. So we have to surrender to our Guru and follow his instructions for happiness and peace.

Mahavisnu is the one all-comprehending being who appears as the many. He is the essence of all beings, the consumer of the worlds, the indestructible one and the master of all. Pervading all the three worlds, He enjoys all entities constituting them.

इमं स्तवं भगवतो विष्णोर्व्यासेन कीर्तितम्।

पठेद्य इच्छेत् पुरुषः श्रेय प्राप्तुं सुखानि च॥

*Imam stavam bhagavato visnor vyasena kirtitam
pathed ya icchet purusah sreyah praptum sukhani ca.*

Whoever desires advancement and happiness should repeat this devotional hymn on Visnu composed by

Vyasa.

विश्वेश्वरमजं देवं जगतः प्रभवाप्ययम् ।
भजन्ति ये पुष्कराक्षं न ते यान्ति पराभवम् ॥
ओं नमः

*Visvesvaram ajam devam jagatah prablav' apyayam
bhajanti ye puskaraksam na te yanti parabhavam.*

Om namah

Never will defeat attend on a man who adores the Lotus-eyed One, who is the Master of all the worlds, who is birthless, and out of whom the worlds have originated and into whom they dissolve.

True Happiness

114. (Q) N.G.C. :- Joys and sorrows of samsara disturb one so much. Should we not renounce samsara therefore?

Sai Baba says

(SAI BABA'S CHARTERS AND SAYINGS)

Baba (Ans.): Joy and sorrow are mere delusion. Mere appearance of worldly joy is not true happiness. The worldly man is forcibly drawn to it, as he believes it to be true happiness. According to the Prarabdha of each, one gets delicacies (Panchamrita), one, stale crumbs, and one, mere bran-gruel. The latter fancy themselves unhappy at that, and the former fancies he lacks nothing. But the result of eating any of these is merely the satisfaction of hunger. Sover cover themselves with laced shawls, other with barks. Both serve only one purpose, covering the body. This joy and this sorrow is due to opinion, which is mere illusion and is ruinous. Whenever any idea of joy or sorrow arises in your mind, resist it. Do not give room to it. It is pure delusion.

Peace:**BABA SAYS ...**

“Just as a wick soaked in oil when joined to a flame of light, becomes itself a bright light, in the same way a person reaches the status of a sage at the feet of the sage. He who thinks of nothing but Allah Malik, the Supreme Being and the pure Consciousness, he has peace, has no desires and looks upon all with an equal eye. How can he have a separate identity from the Supreme Being ?”

(Saileela July 94)

Let us know what other Saints and sages say regarding the happiness and Peace.

“Life is like a drama if you understand the plot there is great happiness”.

“When we realise the original nature of our soul is that of Peace, we can combine with God who is the occure of Peace and so become the embodiment of Peace a living, thinking Power”.

(Thought for today by

P. Brahma Kumaris Mount Aba)

Swami Ramadas says to the devotee

Devotee How am I to achieve mental peace at all times.

Ramadas (Papa) “To achieve mental peace, you should strive to keep your mind ever in tune with God. The easy way to do this is repeat the Rama mantra constantly with all devotion and faith. By divine grace may you attain immortal Peace and bliss”.

(Vision June 94)

Sadhu Vaswami says “In Loving dedication of all you have and all you are to the service of Love is the secret of the happiness which the world can not give and cannot take away”.

(East and West Series)

Jan. 1995

Shree, Shree Anandamayi says

In wealth and property there is certainly no peace. What then does give peace ? My own true nature is peace, knowledge, divine consciousness — unless and until this is realized, how can there be peace ? In order to find your Self you must become revealed to yourself. How beautiful!

— Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

SYNOPSIS OF DISCOURSE

Mother attracted all people alike. Ordinary household people, scholars, saints also came to her to listen, to quench their thirst for knowledge. Such was the personality of the Mother, she was the embodiment of Wisdom and Happiness. When she spoke of knowledge, she seemed wisdom personified, and when she spoke of devotion, she looked as Devotion incarnate. I am yet to meet some one who has seen her but has not been gladdened by the mere sight of her. There were many who name merely to have a look, or to see the 'fun', but they were changed, and purified, on seeing her. Countless are the people who had received her mercy. I have seen how thousands have waited merely to get near her, to touch her feet. What eagerness ! What endless patience ! It is impossible to attract such numbers and such a variety unless one is the abode of divine power."

(50 Ananda Varta Vol. XXXVI)

Brahma Vidya - Para Vidya and Aparā Vidya

Nirmal Chandra Ghosh

(Continued from previous issue)

(4)

Those big fools being desirous of worldly gains and enjoyments and pleasures — in heaven, perform sacrifice etc., dig ponds, well and tanks believing these to be the right and the best action for achieving their objectives. They do not know the best beneficial things (i.e. the

realisation of Brahman) which ensures perpetual happiness. These people therefore having enjoyed their fruits of good action on the summit of heaven, enter this world or an inferior one to suffer the fruits of the remaining action. Such people being ignorant of Para Vidya think themselves to be very wise and learned. They ramble about in this universe like a blind man lead by another blind man and go astray from one blind alley to another and suffer innumerable sorrows and miseries.

(Ananda Varta)

- (a) Give up everything to Him, resign yourself to Him, and your troubles and sorrows will be at an end. Then you will come to know that everything is done by His will alone.

Sri Ramakrishna

(b) Happiness

The three grand essentials of happiness are

Something to do (Gods work)

Something to have (Gurus advice)

Something to hope for (His grace)

(Sai Padananda Magazine)

- (c) If we follow the above sayings of the saints and put them into day to day practice, then we will get the real happiness and Peace.

Om. Shanthi, Shanthi Shanthi

On the Way to New Life

Bhaiji

Since my first meeting with Mother, Her everjoyful, simple and soothing looks cast such an ineffable charm over my life, that even in the midst of various distractions and excitements, through which I passed, I came to forget all my worries and temptations. There was only one consuming desire—to obtain a particle of Her Grace. Like the upward, surging waves of the ocean, there was a deep outburst of my heart, roaring day and night, towards Her feet, and drowning all the tumults of the world. At times, like a mad man if I could shout “Ma Ma” and shed tears for Her and sing Her glory, I would find great relief. But such opportunities I could hardly find in my home.

As I have seen in Mother’s physical body various unprecedented *Bhavas**, I was struck with joy and wonder in Her presence. Before Her I came to feel that I was but an infant or an almost helpless and poor beggar, absolutely unfit to sit at Her feet. In fact, in my whole life, I never sat down on the floor in Her presence. I always used to stand at a distance. Every morning I was fortunate enough to have the first Darshan of Her feet, because very few people could go to the Ashram so early. On some mornings, I found Mother sitting idly on one side of Her bed with all the languor of sleep still over Her eyelids; sometimes She was found with Her bright eyes and sweet face radiating all the motherly affection and grace profusely on all men ; or on other occasions Her looks at dawn wore all the serenity and grace of a lovely autumn sky in the morning, infinitely bright and blue, yet quite isolated from the things of the world. The expression of Her face changed constantly with changes in Her inner thoughts and emotion. At times, She would look like an old lady. Sometimes in the midst of playful frolics and loud laughter of a gleeful girl, She would assume sud-

denly such serious, thoughtful and determined look as would strike awe and fear in us. In this state Her body would reach such unusual dimensions. Her face wore such a solemn expression that it would make us all feel that Mother *Rudrani** had possessed Her whole being. At that time Her wild laughter, rolling eyes, and the movements of Her limbs all conspired together to strike terror in our heart. But after a short time, Her natural expression of joy and sweetness was restored.

At all times, however I would feel such an attraction for Mother that if I failed to come to Her one day, I would always feel ill at ease and my mind would seek the earliest opportunity to obtain shelter and repose at Her feet. It would appear to me that She was ever calling out to my soul, "Come, come to me", at all times of the day and was always watching me with Her eyes ever intent on my welfare.

On many days, with a strong will I tried to black out all thoughts about Her but She mocked all such perverse attempts of mine and captured my mind and reason all the more. I felt exhausted by such efforts and was left dumb and inert like a lump of clay. I could not find any means to slake my thirst for Mother's affection. Thus I began to grow weak and my body hastened towards a crisis.

At last on the 4th of January, 1927, I fell ill. At the very start I began to feel a very acute pain in the region of my heart. No medicine could give me relief. Mother came to see me one day, placed Her soft soothing hand upon my breast. All my pains subsided with the touch. But the disease continued to take a more and more serious turn. Doctors said, I had developed Phthisis. A few days after Mother came to me one night, sat by my bedside and said something by Herself. Long afterwards

*Wife of Shiva—the God of destruction and dissolution, wearing grim looks.

I learnt from Mother that She had said to the figure of the disease*, — "Thou hast done what thou couldst do. Stop from now." From that time Mother ceased to come to me. During the last few months of acute condition of my illness, I had not the good fortune to see Her.

It was necessary for me. The acute desire to see Mother made me forget the pain due to disease, my mind in those days hovered round Her feet day and night. She pervaded my whole being both in and out. One day, I was told later, Mother said at Shah-bag She saw blood on all people's lips. *Pitaji* on hearing this remark at once came to see me at night. I was then vomiting blood and all my strength was nearly spent up. On many occasions Mother used to guide me with Her suggestions for a remedy much before She was informed verbally about the changes in my illness.

One night, a very acute crisis came. The doctors in attendance declared my case to be hopeless. It was 2 A.M. Heavy rain fell in torrents with deafening noise. Dogs were barking to make the gloom more frightful. I began to see dreadful visions, all my hairs on the body stood on end. At that time, I saw as clearly as in broad daylight that Mother was sitting on the right side of my pillow. An agreeable surprise stole in upon me. Before the first spell of surprise was over. I found Mother passing Her hands over my head. It was so soothing! In an instant I fell into deep sleep.

From that day on, for about 8 to 10 months as long as I was confined to bed, I would always feel that Mother sat on my bed near the pillow with a very calm, serene face and would not hand me over to death.

Sometimes when for hours together I could not stand the pain of coughing followed by the spitting of blood, I used to repeat the name of Mother and soon the acuteness

*Mother says each disease has its specific appearance as distinctly visible to Her as a material form.

of the pain passed off.

During my illness Mother asked Brahmachari Jogesh to go out for one year to Western India and to pass the year, living on alms only and without any fixed habitation. It might have been intended possibly to divert some of my sufferings.

After some months of illness when I occupied a Government house near Shah-bag, Mother left for Hardwar to attend the Kumbha Mela. My illness had a second serious set-back and a telegram was sent to Mother at Hrishikesh. But She did not come. I learnt afterwards that when *Pitaji* was anxious about me, She said to him, "I find Jyotish has been lying on my lap, quite unconcerned about his illness."

After about 5 months of treatment I wanted to test how much strength I had acquired through medical treatment. I tried to walk a few steps leaning against the wall of the room. This strain caused profuse vomiting of blood the same evening. When the doctor was informed he left instructions to the inmates of my house to see that I must lie flat on the bed.

Four or five days later, Mother returned to Dacca and came to see me. She enquired, "How do you feel now?" I said, "I don't feel much pain now, but I feel very uncomfortable owing to my not having had a cold both for a long time. It was the month of Baisakh. There was grilling heat. She sat for sometime and then left. Next day at about 1 P.M. She came again with *Pitaji*. At that time everybody in the house was asleep. My daughter, aged about 11 or 12, who was posted to keep a watch over me, was also fast asleep. Mother said, "You wanted to bathe; if you are keen about it, there is a tank yonder, go there and have a good bath."

That tank was about 60 to 80 yards away. As soon as I heard Mother's words, a new strength was infused into my frail body with love and devotion for Her. My body

then was but a skeleton. The warning of the physician not to leave the bed flashed before my eyes for a moment and vanished away. In this condition as I tottered by trying to stand up and to take another piece of loin cloth to put on after the bath, *Pitaji* at once caught hold of me and led me to the tank. The floor of my house was also about 4 ft. high from the ground level. I got down the stairs and walked the whole distance. It was a reserve tank with the University Moslem Boarding House standing on its bank. There was also a notice put up by the P.W. Department to the effect that it must not be used for bathing and washing purposes. But that day no inmate of the Boarding House could be seen. In my house, too, every body was asleep at that time; I got down into the tank and had a delightful bath. On returning to my quarters I spread out the wet cloth on the line hung up for drying clothes and I lay down on the bed taking rest.

No sooner had I spread myself on my bedstead than my daughter awoke. She found Mother sitting by her side. As I went to have a bath through the lawn, numerous seeds of love-thorn grass (चौरकौटा) stuck to the loin cloth I wore, while going to bath. When my servant Khagen saw the cloth studded with those thorns, his natural inference was that I had walked across the lawn at noon. This was brought to the notice of my wife who showed that piece of cloth to Mother and complained to Her that I walked on the lawn during midday against the doctors' express prohibition.

Mother began to laugh without saying a word. I was really struck with surprise to find how I could walk across the open lawn to have a dip in the tank in broad day light quite unnoticed by any body and how I could get so much strength to stand such an effort. Such a feat was quite beyond my comprehension. After 3 or 4 months when I left Dacca for a change to a healthier climate told Niranjana all about it. Subsequently when I resumed my duties in

the office after recovery I stated the fact to my physicians who discredited the story altogether. My wife, too, did not at first believe it herself. When I described to them the full story they came to believe it to be true.

When the disease was in full swing, I developed a very strong desire to eat boiled rice. The attending physicians would not allow me to have it. Nirranjan appealed to Mother, saying, — “Ma, Jyotish wants to take boiled rice; the doctors won't allow it. If he dies, we shall have one great grief that we could not satisfy his desire to eat rice before his death.” Mother laughed and said, “When Jyotish has a desire like that, he should be given rice. After a few days *Pitaji* brought some boiled rice from Shah-bag and made me eat it but nobody noticed it.

In those days Mother used to come to see me once every day. But one morning Mother came very early and after She had left, Brahmachari Kamalakanta brought to me some *Champak* flowers. It was with a painful reflection I looked at the flowers, because I would not have an opportunity to offer with my own hands, those flowers that day at Her feet. In the afternoon Kulada Dada brought me a lovely rose. The same painful thought recurred. The rose was placed on the table by the side of those flowers. That such lovely flowers could not be placed at the feet of Mother pained me much. Just at that time Mother entered my room suddenly, went to the table and stood reclining to the left. She gazed at me for 3 or 4 minutes quite absent-minded and then left. I thought that Mother had taken the flowers. The rose was missing. Next day when She came I enquired about the flowers. She said, “I don't quite know what I took, but I must have taken something from here. I went to the house of the Zamindar of Dhankora, I gave something to a woman there; from there I went to the house of a Deputy Magistrate where a woman was ill and I dropped something there too.” Afterwards, I came to learn that at the

first house She had dropped the rose and at the second one champak flower. The sick lady there, recovered soon.

In this connection Mother said, "Intense hankering after the Divine is the core of all worship, of all prayer. In our heart lie eternal springs of divine power and in our efforts lie the roots of all the creative, preservative and destructive urges of Being."

I am just reminded of another incident. During my illness *Pitaji* ordered that everyday some *rice-prasad* should be sent to me from Shah-bag; but the *Bhoga** was offered at about 2 P.M. and the *prasad* used to reach my house much later. Every body in my house got annoyed to find me waiting for *prasad* so late in the day. On the particular day in question there was some adverse criticism of the whole arrangement at my house. It caused me so much pain that I came to feel there was no need of *prasad* being brought to my house in the face of so much disgust and criticism amongst the members of my family. The day wore on: it was 2 A.M. at night. No *prasad* arrived from Shah-bag. It came to my mind that my reluctance to have *prasad* with so much trouble was most probably the cause for the stoppage of the arrangement. I wept and wept on my bed and came to find that the *prasad* arrived in half-an-hour. I learnt that Mother had just risen from Her bed and ordered, "Go quickly and carry *prasad* to Jyotish at once." I was given to understand later that when during the preceding midday, Mother's permission was sought to send *prasad* as usual, She said, "No". So the practice of sending it was stopped. In this connection Mother said, "I don't do anything of my own will; you laugh and weep according to your mental impulses and your desires are fulfilled".

During my illness, I went to Vindhya-chal for a change. I happened to meet Mother at Calcutta on my way and requested Her to go there. She did not agree. On reaching

*Offerings of food to God.

there I passed one whole night weeping for Her. Just after one day I found that Mother with *Pitaji* arrived there.

Mother remarked with regard to this affair "The aim of all religious practices is to sublimate all egoistic impulses and give them a unified direction towards the Divine. The more the self or the Ego ceases to function, the more the "Eternal Thou" will enter into your whole being."

From Vindhyaçal I went to Chunar. Mother also went there. One day She said, "Don't you often go out to walk?" I replied, "I am too weak to move about. How can I?" Next dawn She took me out with Her for a walk. On the level plains as well as on small hills we walked 5 to 6 miles and returned at 11 A.M. While coming down hill, I felt very weak and could not walk on. Mother turned round and said, — "Our house is not far off." In 10 minutes' time an *Ekka** turned up quite unexpectedly in a small lane; otherwise we would have to walk one mile more to reach a carriage stand. I was afraid that the unusual strain due to such a long walk that day might aggravate my illness. But no such thing happened.

Mother said a little while later, — "Both in this work-a-day world as well as in the spiritual sphere, patience is the crown of life."

At Chunar a little away from my house, *Pitaji*, Mother and myself sat on a lawn. Mother said, She would like to bathe with the water drawn from the well near the fort. She began to press for it like a little child. I said, "Let me call in my servant." She replied, "No, you must not." I felt puzzled. For, in those places, people finish drawing water from the wells before sun-down. I felt sorry at the prospect that I would not be able to carry out Mother's wishes. But to my surprise, a man with a lantern turned up at the well for drawing water. He was persuaded to draw water for Mother's bath.

*A country vehicle drawn by a horse.

Mother said with regard to this affair, — “Whatever you seek can be obtained provided the thirst for the thing of your desire pervades every fibre of your being.”

During my illness I passed some days at Giridih. I became very restless for Mother one day, only to find, with surprise on the next morning, that Mother with all Her party had arrived.

I returned to Calcutta after change. My physicians advised me to pass the remaining few days of my life at some healthy place. Even then there was spitting of blood with cough.

Mother ordered, — “Go back to your desk in the office and resume your duties there.” I went to Dacca, both *Pitaji* and Mother accompanied me to the office and came back seating me in my own chair.

At that time Mr. Finlow was the Director of the Agricultural Department as well as my boss. He loved me and had a great regard for me. He told me, — “Do as much office work as you possibly can; send the rest to my desk.” He enquired, “Well, just tell me how you have recovered from that fell disease?” I said in reply, “It is through the grace of *Mataji* who lives at the Ramna Ashram over there. She did not give me any medicine; though I followed the doctor's prescription Her kindness was my only shelter.” He said, — “Amongst our people, too, there are similar instances. I believe what you say.”

One evening an old neighbour of mine, aged about 80 years, Syama Charan Mukherjee by name, came to my place. When the conversation turned upon Mother I said, “It is through Her kindness that I happen to be still living.” He blurted out, “Can one live longer than his predestined span through anybody's grace?” In the course of this discussion he suddenly became silent and went away a few seconds later. He returned next morning to say, “Do you know why I left your place so abruptly? When we were talking about Mother, I found, on the back

rest of your chair, an oval bright light like that of the sun. At that time there was darkness outside and no light in the room. I looked about and could not trace the source of such light at that hour; so I decided to think over the phenomenon before I should tell you about it. After careful thought I have now the conviction that everything is possible through the grace of a saintly person. Really, She has been protecting you at all times."

A few months after first seeing Mother, Niranjan told Her at Shah-bag, "Ma, we very frequently think that after your Ashram is started both myself and Jyotish during our next birth would live there as Brahmacharis." Mother looked at me and enquired, — "Why are you silent? Won't you be able to do the same even with this physical body?"

Some 3 or 4 years later, when I resumed my duties after recovery, Mother reminded me of the above talk and said, "Just think, how you have had your rebirth." After it Mother took a gold chain from Her neck and placed it on mine saying, "From this day forward, know it for certain that you are a Brahmachari and that you have had your rebirth."

The little hut, 8 by 5• cubits, with verandahs on all sides, which I had erected in the *Ashram*, according to my own ideas, was used by Mother. She used to lie down on the two long verandahs on either side. She told me that of the Sanyasis who used to dwell on that site, I was one; and the spot which I had unconsciously chosen for building the said hut for Mother, was the very place where I passed my life during my previous birth.

I came to think that it was my unique good luck to find Mother's physical body resting on the very spot where I had once carried on my *Sadhana* during my previous existence. Probably my previous *Karma* had directed such a course; for when I first saw Mother She appeared to me to embody all gods and goddesses in Her Person and

that She was my presiding Goddess all through the series of my previous births.

From the latter part of 1929 for full 3 years I used to go to Ramna very early in the morning with a desire to see Her first. For this purpose I used to rise from bed at 2 A.M. I finished my usual prayers and worship by 4-30 A.M. and then went out. On certain days it so happened that I confused the two hands of my watch and misread the time and started much earlier. Hearing the clock strike in some adjacent house on the way, I realised that I had started much earlier. In that case I would rather walk in the Ramna fields or sit at the gate of Ramna Kalibari, waiting for the light of dawn. I entered Ashram at 5 A.M. and walked about in the fields with Mother and returned home at 10-30 or 11 A.M. On certain days, I came back at 12 noon or even 1 P.M.

I never sat in Mother's presence. My whole body remained erect with a thrill of inner joy. When I was asked by any person to sit down, I felt quite embarrassed. Mother would remain usually quite silent during our morning rounds. She broke Her silence only in exceptional circumstances. I used to follow Mother's footsteps in silence.

One day an old pleader. Babu Aswini Kumar Guha Thakurta by name, came there for a morning walk and said to Mother, — "I come not to see you, Mother, but to meet your pet lamb and to observe with my own eyes how he comes to you so early every day, regardless of cold, heat, or rain and how he does follow your every footstep in mute silence. The very sight gives me great delight." I told him, — "Kindly bless me so that I may pass the rest of my life in this manner." The old man clasped me to his bosom and said, "You are already a blessed fellow."

I noticed on several occasions that there was a heavy downpour during the early hours of morning, but when I started with the name of Mother on my lips, rainfall

ceased for the time being and I had little difficulty to reach there. during the rainy weather or through the dense fog of winter, there was no obstacle whatever for me to walk with Mother every morning for full 3 years.

There was a time when the Hindu-Moslem riot was rife at Dacca. Before the outbreak started Mother one day exclaimed, — “Terrible ! Monstrous!” When I enquired about the import of such expressions She said,—“I hear, all about the town, wild shrieks, lamentations and wailings.” But even when the communal bitterness was at its highest, I did not stop my morning walks. My neighbour Srijut Bhawani Prasad Neogi used to look upon me as his younger brother. He warned me one day, saying, “I remain very anxious for you till you return. Stabbing, murder, assaults are the order of the day all through the city. Is it proper for you to walk out alone in such atmosphere?”

I used to reflect that as Mother did not say anything against my morning excursion, there was no fear for me. So I followed the usual routine of my life.

One day I was on the way to the Dacca Ashram. The street lamps were then burning. There was no man on the street. I passed by the Dak Bungalow and walked about 100 yards from there, when I noticed a stout fellow slinking from behind a Mahogany tree with his body wrapped up in a piece of cloth. He was following me.

I asked him where he would go; he replied that he would go with me. I let him know that I was going to Ramna Ashram; he said that he, too, would go there. His manner looked suspicious and I was much frightened. Suddenly, I screamed out, “No, you must not go with me!” Saying this I strode on fast, without looking at any direction. After I had gone far, I turned round and found that the man stood motionless like a log of wood on the same spot I left him in last. When I reached the Ashram,

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Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Vol. VI

(Translated by Tara Kini)

(Continued from previous issue)

April 2 Saturday

Ma awoke at the crack of dawn — she did not appear to be in the mood for sleeping. Even when she is made to eat she seems to be least interested in eating and starts talking about other matters. Although this *bhava* is prevalent all the time, it is more noticeably manifest at some times. It is very difficult to feed her, she almost always wants nothing to eat. From many days she has been saying, "See Khukuni, forgetfulness — like illusions will be noticeable in this body during this time." And in fact that in what I will perceive now. Referring to that Ma said, "Look, does the condition of forgetfulness usually occur within any body with prior warning? Do you know how it happens in this case? It is like the game of Holi. People play intensely, slapping on mud, ink and what not and turning themselves into demons. But they know that they are only playing and they keep water ready for a bath before they start. They know very well that after playing for awhile they will wash it all off. They do not hesitate to apply colours generously and also wear old, tattered clothes in preparation for the games. When the game is finished they bathe with soap and warm water and sit back as they were before." Laughing, Ma continued, "It is just like that, what else!" It is just a question of a variety of *bhava* within Ma; these *bhavas* perform *kriyas* within Ma's body.

One day I jokingly said to Ma, "Ma, suppose we were imitate one of your myriad *bhavas* and pass it off as our own amongst people. If someone were to do this, how would we detect such an imitation?" Ma replied, "He would be hurt. Because those who have any experience in

these matters would spot such an imitation immediately; the one who tries to imitate would himself receive an injury, fall down and come to grief." She continued, "Look, whatever great people preach by way of spiritual practice, follow it with one pointed determination. Do not try to do what they do." So saying she laughed and sang,—

"Shohoj bhabe shohoj nam
Poorna hoy monoshkam"

which means,

"Just repeating the name, results in
fulfilling all the mind's desires."

Ma then began speaking about herself, "You know that education was almost negligible, then leave aside imitation. When the sport of *sadhana* began manifesting in this body, whenever anyone narrated a life history, any scripture, play, novel or story, it was like lightning striking this body; whatever was being narrated seemed to fly away somewhere. The natural pace of the body prevailed most powerfully all the time. Nothing could enter within from outside. Do you know how? Just as a piece of brick when flung against a strong wall hits it and bounces off without making the slightest mark on the wall. If the piece of brick had been stronger than the wall it could have chipped the wall."

"But now I can say this much — that when anyone narrates anything now I sit beside the speaker. One day Sharada Shankar had come to narrate the *Bhagavatam*. After staying in that state for some time I got up alone and left. Again on another day someone had come to narrate something and I was unable to even sit beside him. Other than those two days, no one came to narrate anything on any other day. Seeing my condition no one came. If the person to whom you are narrating does not show any signs of listening, will anyone want to narrate anything to that person?"

One day Shishir Babu spoke to Ma alone. I was present. Shishir Baby asked, "Ma, I heard that you do not give *diksha*. At one time I greatly admired that. But Shobha says that in fact, without giving *diksha*, power is not distributed. If that is true then truly, you are doing nothing for those who are attached to you for succour." Ma replied, "Look, whatever is of use to each one is happening anyway. It is not as if nothing happens without a *mantra* being whispered into your ears. It is not possible to explain whose job is being completed and which *bhava* is being used."

Looking towards me Ma said, "You tell us." I said, "It has often been observed that although Ma gives *diksha* to none someone who has taken refuge at Ma's feet may have discovered the *bija mantra* within himself either in a dream or in the waking state. And that has served his purpose. And who knows how many other kind of *bhava* exist? "Ma then narrate narrated a number of events in agreement with what I had said.

At night I was seated near Ma and no one else was present. Referring to the subject discussed earlier Ma said, "Do you know what it is like? Suppose a tree grows out of a seed. Then you take a pen and draw another tree from its branches. No seed was used but tree drawn with a pen will also have fruits and flowers. In this fashion the purpose may be achieved in a variety of *bhavas*. There are many such matters within this." I said "I have heard that *mahatmas* roam in the world many kinds of bodies. It is not as if each one has to be born from a mother's womb." Having heard this comment from me earlier Ma had spoken about the pen drawing mentioned earlier.

April 3 Sunday

This morning Purnendu Babu, the son of Rai Saheb Radha Govind Babu of Dinajpur arrived. He expressed the desire to ask some questions of Ma. He comes often to

Ma. Ma has travelled to several places of pilgrimage. He asked Ma, "Alright Ma, does God really exist? Can he be seen?" Ma replied, "Yes, He does exist and He can also be seen. Just as you are seeing me and I am seeing you. He is more true than even that."

He then asked, "Then why does He not remove afflictions? Why is He so heartless?" Ma said, "He is not heartless. With the aim of making you achieve completeness He takes you through joys and sorrows. Moreover, there is yet another point. He plays with Himself — it is His *Leela*.

Purnendu Babu asked, "Alright Ma, why is it that the mind cannot be steadied in any way? I have visited many places of pilgrimage, sat for years on end quietly repeating the Name, but why is it that the mind refuses to be still?" Ma replied, "Look, I speak in any old haphazard fashion. I am after all only your laughter."

Purnendu Babu rejoined, "Fine, you may be my daughter, but your father has become senile and only his daughter can explain to him. Tell me Ma." Ma said, "Do you know what the matter is? The meaning of *tapasya* (penance) is *tapa sahana* (endurance of heat). This sorrow that you are experiencing is the penance (*tapasya*) being performed to attain Him."

Purnendu Babu asked, "What is achieved by visiting places of pilgrimage?" Ma replied, "Firstly it exerts an influence. Moreover, once the curiosity to see all the places is satiated you will be able to sit in peace. It is all necessary. Also it is possible that you may have the *darshan* of a *Mahapurusha* in a place of pilgrimage. According to one's fate many special benefits may accrue in these places. After all, the place of pilgrimage also showers mercy (*kripa*), Baba, I am unable to speak ill or depreciatingly about anything. Do you know what I perceive? Everything is necessary and whatever is spoken by anyone from his situation is all true. It is not

as if all are situated at the same spot.”

This morning Swami Devananda of the Ramakrishna Mission brought Prasanna Babu and family of Dhaka to Ma. Prasanna Babu's wife sings very well. She sang many songs to the delight of all present. Another lady arrived with a gentleman. The bried in divine *bhava* she sang beautifully and danced. She seemed steeped in her own *bhava*. We heard that after the death of her husband she has relinquished the life of a householder and has come away.

In the afternoon Ma explained a few things. She was lying down and I was seated beside her. No other person was present in the room. Ma said, “Look, sometimes it so happens that while speaking, speech is halted suddenly and no sound can be uttered. There are many facts underlying this occurrence. Sometimes it could be that there is no need for speech and therefore no speech emerges. Then again do you know what it could be? There is a level at which speech is uttered, is there not? Having gone beyond that level, no speech emerges; it is as though everything has been destroyed. The *bhava* that is manifested as *nirvikalpa samadhi*, for example, makes it impossible to speak in that state. Call it an *avatara* (incarnation) or call it anything else, if taking birth is perceived, then a limitation is observed. In this manner, depending upon how long a sport has to be played the appearance lasts accordingly. The sport is manifested in accordance with the duration. Within the limitless lies limit and within the limit lies the limitless.”

“Then listen to yet another point. When you heard Prasanna Babu's wife singing did you not hear the rise and fall of melody, rhythm and beat? Then *stotras* were uttered by this body there was no end to the number of *chhandas* there were in it. It was all infinite — how shall I describe it? One by one the *stotras*, or whatever you people call them, emanated. *Chhandas* after *chhandas*

emerged and then each *chhandas* seemed to merge into the other. Just as the melody, rhythm and beat can be of innumerable kinds. It is as if one by one the melodies merge into the Great Melody, the sound into the Great Sound."

I said, "Ma, in Calcutta, at the residence of Pramatha Babu, you had once sung '*Hari Bol*' with innumerable tonal variations. Listening to it Professor Khagen Mitra had exclaimed in surprise — "I had never imagined that *Hari Bol* could be sung in so many different tunes ! And he is a good singer himself."

Ma replied, "I have stressed already that everything is infinite. And after all how much had emerged that day? And that again was what you all had extracted. Because the *kriya* that occurs within this body is always in response to the *bhava* that you present before it. Khagen Mitra is a good singer. He sang and with that many melodies emerged. But it does not always happen thus. In fact I have never learnt music. In villages women plant a hand on their cheek and begin to sing — it is just like that. There did so many melodies come from? Whatever you people make happen, that transpires. Whatever is necessary, exactly that much occurs. Someone could ask, 'Why did you not become a good singer ?' There is no end to such 'why' queries. Then this could also be asked, 'Why do you not speak in English ? Why do you not wear their clothes ? Why do you not eat food consumed by Muslims?' So many such questions could be put. Therefore I say, you people get one by me whatever is needed by you."

At another time Ma had said to me, "Look, it is difficult to understand how many states exist within a *sadhaka*. No speech emerges — this *bhava* could be the result of so many other bhavas. One example is the infant, who utters only 'Ba, Ba' when speech first emerges, and is unable to say anything else. It is not as if the infant knows more and yet utters nothing else. He has neither

the knowledge nor the ability to speak. Yet another *bhava* is this — after witnessing some incident, a young or an old person wonders — ‘O ! what is this !’ and is unable to speak because of being wonderstruck. The infant says ‘Ba, Ba’ and then says no more. The young or old person also says nothing but in these two conditions, there is a world of difference. Similarly there is great difference in the spiritual condition of one seeker from that of another. Therefore it is always not possible to judge the inner *bhava* of a *sadhaka* by observing the external condition.”

This afternoon as soon as Shishir Babu arrived Ma asked, “Do you laugh or do you cry ?” He replied, “Why do you ask ?” Ma laughed and said, “I just asked !” Later he said, “Ma, you understood correctly. Just today there occurred an incident which I will not narrate before everybody; I shall only reveal it to you in private.”

Till sunset Ma remained on the terrace. Then she came down and drank some water after which the doors of her room were shut. Tonight again I was seated alone with Ma. In the course of conversation Ma said, “See, what do children do at first ? They only babble incoherently, for they do not know any better. Then gradually their words become clearer, though knowledge has still not dawned. After that, little by little, one or two words are uttered. Even at that stage the child’s parents and nearest relatives look after him and serve him. As the child grows a little older and speaks one or two sentences, though not clearly, questions like, ‘What is this ?’ and ‘What is that ?’ begin arising in his mind. At that point everybody starts answering his questions and the child begins to learn. The whole world is then his *guru* and he is the questioning pupil. Spiritual seekers are in exactly the same condition.”

April 4 Monday

Ma sat up early this morning. A boy came to sing for

Ma. Some others gathered and the singing continued till ten a.m. Ma's face was washed and she was offered bhoga. She had eaten nothing this morning. She had once remarked, "By organising this regular schedule of eating and drinking, you people are further harming this body. Why don't you revert to the earlier system when there were no fixed times for meals?" Yet, nothing the condition of Ma's health, the doctor did not have the courage to allow Ma's diet to assume its usual haphazard schedule. He would say, "Ma's body also has its *dharma*. Ma remains absorbed in her own *bhava* and does not think of her body at all. That is why her health goes down."

Her diet and rest can never be regulated. Sometimes she would eat nothing the whole day and then perhaps have something at sunset. This pattern would continue for many days. Then again whosoever appeared in front of Ma would feed her something or the other and she would accept it. In Dehradun particularly this went on for some days. Kashi Babu's wife Lakshmi Rani and others were surprised to observe that day and night, whenever people walked in, they brought some eatable or the other which they placed in Ma's mouth and she accepted the offering without any reluctance.

In the afternoon a man arrived. He could produce a flute-like sound from his throat; he could also produce a melody as played on the *been*. He also sang *kirtan*. Ma sat on the terrace, surrounded by men and women on all sides, and listened to the *kirtan*. After sunset Shishir Babu and Gopinath Babu came and sat near Ma. Shishir Babu wanted to ask Ma some questions so he, Gopinath Babu and I took Ma inside her room and shut the door. Gopinath Babu indicated Ma's body and said, "It is essential that Ma's body should be well." Ma laughed and said, "Tell me Baba, whose body?" Gopinath Babu laughed in turn and exclaimed, "She has again dragged in the philosophical viewpoint. We speak from our point

of view — ‘your body’.” Ma replied, “Alright, then I shall also say that. People say that I do not speak straight at all.” Gopinath Babu laughed and said, “Ma has all the answers well defined to begin with !”

Shishir Babu asked, “Do these incarnations (*avataras*) like Rama and Krishna take birth as ordinary human beings ? Who becomes an incarnation ? Does an *avatara* have a previous birth ? Was Rama or Krishna a *jiva* in his previous birth ?”

Ma laughed and said, “All these people here are all incarnations.” Shishir Babu implored, “Please explain in a manner that we can understand .” Then Ma said, “Look, if you ask whether Rama, Krishna and other incarnations had previous lives or not then it can be said that there may be innumerable Ramas and Krishnas who come and go, but their births not like yours.” Shishir Babu said, “Do they come in the form of *jivas* like us ?” In reply Ma said, “As the *jiva* attains more and more exalted states it becomes more like God and God as an incarnation behaves manifestly like a *jiva*.”

Ma then entreatingly requested Gopi Babu, “Baba, say something in this matter; what do the *shastras* opine?” Gopi Babu replied, “ There are two states possible. One is when the *sadhaka* reaches an elevated state and becomes like God, and the other is God Himself.” Shishir Babu asked, “Then which of these appears as an incarnation ?” Ma replied, “God Himself appears because He is self-enlightened. He is everything, in all *bhavas* and in all forms. He who resides in one is present in all the various *bhavas*. Previous lives and future lives are for you. All births are His births and again He is never born. So where does the question of previous and future births occur at all ?”

Shishir Babu asked, “Then does that mean that those who acquire godliness by practising *sadhana* do not come back again ?” Ma replied, “How can they possibly come

and go ? *Sadhana* is performed to cross over the limitations of coming and going. Yet, from another point of view it can be said that they do come. Do you know in what sense they come ? Just as the waters of the streams and waterfalls flow into the water of the Ganga. Now if you were to take one mug of water from the Ganga, some part of the water of the streams and that of the waterfall also comes with it but you claim to have brought back one mug of water from the Ganga alone. The water of the stream and that of the waterfall have merged into the water of the Ganga and become part of the Ganga, there is no difference between them now." Looking at Shishir Babu Ma laughed and said, "You told me to speak in a manner that would be understandable to you. That is why I am telling you in a straight forward way. Yet this is just the view from one angle. For look again, consider those seekers who have become God — like. If God Himself incarnates them along with Him, those seekers who have become one with God also come for they are now not separate from Him. Wherever you look, whether in separateness or in oneness, you will find Him."

Shishir Babu said, "God is complete. How is there compassion and pity in Him ? Why does the Gita say, '*Yada yada hi dharmasya ...*' ? Does God experience pity on seeing the state of the people ? Do those answers arise from that ? Then does that mean He has compassion and pity ?" Ma replied, "Look, compassion and pity are there within you and therefore compassion and pity are manifested. But in truth they are not compassion and pity."

"Yet consider, if there be no compassion and pity in Him then where would you get them from ? He is all in all and He resides within everything. There is no question of compassion and pity. But again all compassion and pity lie within Him and He pervades all compassion and pity. He is complete and therefore everything is possible within Him. Do you know how that is ? That is just His natural

rhythm. Like thunder arising if there are clouds and like lightning flashing, because of natural causes; no desire is necessary to produce either thunder or lightning. Then again desire also occurs regularly and naturally within Him and similarly the cloud, that is the wail of the people, causes His appearance naturally. What has been said, is like that. How will He 'come' again ? He always is. Just as it is natural for you to ask for the revelation of Him to whom you belong. Therefore it is said that by knowing yourself, everything can be known."

Ma then went on to explain a particular state — "On reaching a certain state no speech emerges, everything is dissolved, but there remains some trace of it. It is said that no speech emerges. Sometimes internalised speech emerges through external behaviour. Then no external force can obstruct it, it emerges endlessly."

The topic that came up for discussion next was whether any state exists beyond the *nirvikalpa samadhi*. Ma said, "It exists. In *nirvikalpa samadhi* some may give up the body while others may retain it in the same way as fan blades which continue to move even after the fan has been switched off. Without a cause a body cannot survive. Is not *samadhi* also a particular state, Baba ?" Gopinath Babu said, "It is only a state, Ma."

Ma said, "Each of these is but a single point of view." Then Shishir Babu asked, "Ma, For those who remain after attaining *nirvikalpa samadhi*, due to some reason, do the different elements of *samsara* exist for them ? And how do they view the world ?" Ma laughed and was quiet for awhile ; then she spoke slowly, "Look Baba, if someone holds the hand of your body and asks, 'Who is this ?' you reply, 'I'. Again on holding your leg if he asked you the same question you would still say 'I'. If he held your finger and asked you, you would again say 'I'. Though the hand, the leg and the finger have different names you still call them 'I'. Understand it to be an identical situation."

Shishir Babu said, "The reason for my asking all these questions is the following. I remember that in one narrative Nara and Narayana are born as Krishna and Arjuna while it is stated in another scripture that Krishna is God Himself — what is the ultimate analysis of this ?" Ma entreated Gopinath Babu, "Baba, what do the *shastras* say about this ?" But Shishir Babu intervened, "I want to hear the answer from Ma's lips." Ma acquiesced, "Very well, I want to hear from Baba what has understood." Gopi Babu laughed and said, "Ma will give the answer to this problem. Only a person situated at a particular level can answer from that level." Ma said, "Look, it appears that in making such a statement all are situated equally. No one can be left out. All are infinite. Bholanath calls me 'Appealeshwari' because I say that everything is correct ; but do you know what the fact is ? I perceive that each one is connected to the other. It is not possible to function by saying 'Yes, yes' to each and every opinion; yet it is not right to negate it either. By thinking '*Tat na*', '*Tat na*' (that is not) it can be perceived that even One-ness is infinite. This is very true."

(Continued from page 26)

I found Mother standing at the gate with Her loving steadfast gaze directed towards me. I fell down at Her feet and let Her know the details. She did not say a single word. I came to learn afterwards that there was a murder in that very quarter.

Ma—The Eternal Friend

“Bishuddha”

A famous Mahatma had said, “Just as the earth provides for each plant the substance necessary for its growth, so does Anandamayee Ma guide every aspirant according to his individual uniqueness.” It was the experience of thousands that she had the right word at the right time for every seeker after Truth. Ma has said, “As you sound this body, so you will hear.”

Ma used to address the girls of the Kanyapeeth as ‘friends’. All of us students had serial numbers for our desks and clothes etc. Ma, therefore, had the serial number ‘1’ as the chief Kanya amongst us. On a summer morning in Kishanpur (Dehradun) Ma, instead of putting on her usual clothes after her bath, donned a robe (like a long frock) and came downstairs. I was attending on her at the time. She said, “Now I am going to play with my friends, so I have dressed like them too” and she smiled like a beautiful little girl at me.

One summer, in Varanasi, I was preparing the evening ‘tit-bit’ for the girls with some ordinary sour mangoes. I added salt, sugar and green chillies to the peeled mangoes. Then I tasted it and found it to be very good. I immediately took one dish of the mangoes to Bunidi asking if I could offer them to Ma because they were so tasty. Bunidi took me to Ma’s room and said, “Ma, Bishuddha has brought some mangoes for you.” Ma expressed great pleasure at the sight of the dish as if she had been waiting for it. She ate a little of it and said it was tasty. Then she said, “This body as a child used to mix sour mangoes like this and used to enjoy the dish.” Bunidi thereupon tasted a little of the prasada and exclaimed that the mangoes were too sharp and sour for Ma! Next day Ma ordered two baskets of sweet mangoes and had them distributed to us

in her own room, saying — “My friend has fed me, so I should also feed them.”

One day a party of 20/25 students with their teachers came for Ma’s darshan at Varanasi ashram. They recited some Sanskrit hymns in front of Ma. The teachers asked Ma a few questions. Ma then asked Dadabhai (Gurupriya didi) to fetch some kismis (raisins) from the puja-room of the Kanyapeeth. Dadabhai knew that the girls offered only sugar puffs (batasa) in puja which was kept in a receptacle as prasad to be distributed to chance visitors. She tried to give a hint to Ma, that there would be no kismis but batasa only. But since Ma insisted on the kismis, Dadabhai approached the girls and made enquiries believing that when Ma had expressed a kheyal for kismis then they must be available. This turned out to be the case. A rich devotee had recently given a large amount of raisins for the daily puja to the girls of the Kanyapeeth. So a sufficient amount was given to Dadabhai questioned Ma, “Ma, I was so sure that there would be no kismis. How did you know, so that you insisted ?” Ma smiled and said, “Khukuni, the girls offer kismis to me everyday, and I take, so I know.”

Ma was tender as a flower; but at times could be hard as a thunderbolt. Ma had occasion to take some girls to task one day. The girls immediately started to cry. Ma then spoke sternly, “All of you have come here to me; if you do not try to improve yourselves, if you do not think that Ma is my very own and that she can say anything which is good for us, then what is the use of joining this institution? There should be no quarrelling amongst yourselves. You should obey the elders and observe all the rules of the ashram. In case of wrong doing, punishment is to be accepted.” Ma was very clear regarding the nature of punishments also. According to herm more hours of japa, or mauna or to be kept standing or to be given one vegetable only with the main meal were some instances

of punishment. One day Ma was passing through the verandah of the Kanyapeeth, Varanasi. She saw quite a lot of rice grains in the drain. She stopped and made enquiries. One of the inmates due to inexperience had washed away a lot of the grains. Ma said that the anna (rice grains) which was in charity should never be carelessly wasted. She wanted that she would eat of those rice grains lying in the drain if any such future occasion arose. This was a salutary lesson for the careless one.

We remember many occasions when Ma supervised the serving of delicacies to Kanyapeeth girls. It was an experience of a mother's love for us, she created a family atmosphere in the Kanyapeeth which was quite unusual and rewarding for all of us.

Once we accompanied Ma to Patna. From Patna Ma and three of us went by car to Rajgir. It was a memorable journey. We squeezed ourselves at her feet in the back of the car. Ma went on telling us her reminiscences of her previous visit to Rajgir. When the driver stopped the car, we got down and walked along the country road with Ma. Someone had given a big basket of lichis. Ma gave us great pleasure by sharing the summer fruit with us. During the journey we came across one bridge which had suffered a slight damage in an accident the previous night. The police manning the bridge allowed the vehicles to proceed in a single slow moving line. When our turn came, Ma spread out her arms and held us in her protective embrace throughout the time it took the car to go past the danger zone. There was no danger of our falling out of the car and over the bridge, but we did enjoy the experience of Ma's care and concern.

On one New year's day (Baisakh, 1) Ma was in Varanasi. I stayed awake the whole of the previous night making a specially long and thick garland with white fragrant mogra flowers. Ma came to our Puja room on that day and graciously accepted the puja of the girls. She

looked pleased with the beautiful garland. When she was garlanded with it she drew in all of us within its circle and thus we (approximately 25 to us) were united together in a circle of flowers. Ma said with a smile, "My friends have tied me with flowers !"

We were fortunate to have Ma as our true friend and also the most loving mother possible. Such experiences were made possible by Gurupriya Didi, our Dadabhai. She was most indefatigable about collecting funds, clothes, utensils etc. for the little girls living in the ashram. She taught us to take care of Ma's personal things and also how to be of service to her. Dadabhai's attitude of awe and reverence for the least of Ma's kheyal and her meticulous rendering of service was the example for us. If Ma was pleased with us, she would be so proud. Another affectionate person was our beloved Didima. She was as if love personified. She gave initiation to the girls of the Kanyapeeth. She was soft, patient, gentle and concerned about everyone of us. We treated her like a beloved grand-mother. We played holi with her, and listened to her songs and stories. Everyday she blessed us when we did pranam to her and gave us a little bit of sweets.

I feel thrilled whenever I think of my days in the Kanyapeeth, as if we were forever bathing in the confluence of the three sacred rivers — the tridhara of Ma — the Ganga, Didima — the Saraswati, and Dadabhai — the Yamuna.

The Secret of Self-Knowing

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

We are all searching for happiness. The question is whether it can be attained by the mind which is apt to mistake mere pleasurable sensations for happiness. And yet we find from experience that although gratified desire produces such pleasurable sensations, these sensations only intensify our desire for further similar pleasures. The most important fact that we must understand is that we cannot have real freedom by indulging in emotional excitements. If we observe our minds we will find that innumerable desires rush in creating confusion. The best method to eliminate such contradictory desires is to watch the activities of our minds with meditative awareness. We must also understand our mental reactions and psychological conflicts by the simple method of constant self-observation. Furthermore, to watch closely the inflowing and outflowing breath brings not only harmonization of mind, but also vitality and strength to our nervous system which in turn, keeps our physical body healthy and pure.

This process of self-healing is purely a spontaneous act that takes place quietly and subtly when we are in deep silent meditation and in tune with the inner force of pure consciousness. The healing aspect of prayer results not from mere intellectual ability, but from communion with that Supreme Power of consciousness within. The physical light that we see through our eyes can be described, but the divine illumination that we intuitively perceive while we are in deep contemplation cannot be described. By turning our minds towards that divine light, we can actually transform and spiritualize the material aspects of life. To dwell in the abode of meditation is the only way to attain liberation and happiness.

The fundamental problem is that we cannot run away

from our own mind, which is the real culprit. Unconscious desires can be exposed and the mind understood only when we are confronted with tempting circumstances. In such circumstances, an aspirant must understand his reactions by silently watching the sense activities of the mind. This quiet, passive, concentrated awareness is defined as meditation in action; such detached observation provides the spiritual impetus to go beyond the mind. Outward worldly attractions cannot touch our minds if we constantly practice this method of self-observation. The disturbing elements of our thought patterns are completely negated by such a process of self-knowledge, which means that our mind is made pure by forces of a spiritual or divine nature.

It is very important to ask ourselves why our mind is so often distracted. The distractions are due to the myriad sensations that the physical world provides. The interaction of matter and mind is the main breeding ground for the distractions because the mind is much excited by the pleasure that it derives in its relationship with the material world. It is always attracted towards outward sensations because of habitually following the excitements, which produce in the end not only dissatisfaction, but also a desire to seek satisfaction elsewhere. To contact Reality however, the mind must be still, and only in this process of silencing the mind can we attain happiness.

It is very necessary that we have the ability to discriminate between the real and the unreal. We must also have a certain asceticism that is the spirit of renunciation not dissociation from people and things. Asceticism is really an attitude that everything is permeated by the Godhead. When human energy is expended in thirst for gratifications, it inevitably leads to frustration and sorrow. For a man who remains unenlightened, life is only a story of birth, disease, old age and death in which he is the victim of bondage and ignorance.

Needless to say, man's cravings indicate the failure of his mental state to rest on the Absolute Reality owing to his ignorance, brought on by deep rooted psychological impressions, which in turn are due to attachment. Attachment is always the auto - defensive reflex of an unconscious fear and is always an obstacle to the attainment of absolute Reality. Self-contemplation however, is essentially a turning inward, away from the flux of phenomena through putting aside of all worldly desires. The necessity of observing our mind all the time is strongly stressed because of the fact that by this self-awareness alone can we unfold the entire layers of our mental make - up and thus pave the way for the attainment of the transcendental state, which is the key to opening the treasure of self - knowing.

The secret of attaining purity in life consists in constantly observing the inner workings of the mind and this state of self - observation is possible only if we keep our minds free from desires. The main defect in man is his inability to maintain a spiritual focus in his day - to - day affairs. The mind is the chief cause of this defect as a result of its tendency to chase the sensual objects for its satisfaction. After enjoyment of them, the very same mind will pursue desires of an opposing nature. Man is leading such a discordant life, not due to lack of understanding, but because he is unable to free himself from worldly temptations. The possibility and the utter necessity to unfold his life in its totality comes only when man is confronted with various problems and sufferings. During such a period of spiritual testing our task is to maintain mental equilibrium.

The main cause for the contamination of one's heart are utter ignorance of spiritual living and the clinging to carnal pleasures. One should not forget that just as food is indispensable for keeping the body healthy and fit, in a similar manner meditation is also essential for the

purity of the soul. The physical body by itself has no utility without the co-operation and co-ordination of the mind and the soul. We must make our minds absolutely clean and through the practice of meditation. When our physical body and mind are purified by constant meditation, then they become good and useful instruments to express the finest that is within us. The beauty of mental healthy consists in liberating our minds from the clutches of emotional complications. To live in such a state of higher meditation is really to provide a great service to humanity because of the fact that this state emanates the sweetness of serenity and spiritual joy for the good of all.

By meeting with people who are also interested in the pursuit of the deepest level of reality, we can develop and broaden our knowledge of the path of self - realization. The powerful experience of being in the presence of spiritually advanced soul is very inspiring and helps one to enter deeply into meditation. The secrets of inner spiritual wisdom are revealed to us in such a state and that wisdom can guide us all. When one is in deep meditation, one is extremely sensitive to external influences, but the mind is not disturbed by the attractions of sensual pleasures because of the spiritual power one generates while in meditation. No external movement has the power to disturb the person who is engrossed in meditation.

Internal events also cannot disturb a true meditator. In deep sleep we are aware of some inner urges, but we have no control over them because we have not properly penetrated into the workings of our unconscious mind. It is very essential to observe the emotional states of our mind if we want to master the devil of deception. To observe our mental activities during sleep is a tedious task because in that state, unconscious impressions arise as a dream. The psychological interpretations of the dream is difficult because we normally identify ourselves

as actors and thus are affected by the dream. Our self-awareness is subdued or lost while we experience the dream, and in such a state we are unable to observe our thoughts clearly without deception.

Since, a sensitive, alert mind is necessary for continued examination and unfoldment of the unconscious, meditation is a useful tool: it enhances both mental alertness and sensitivity. Thus an adept at meditation will dream less because he has penetrated more of the unconscious and integrated its contents. Also any dreams that he may have will be less disturbing, because of his fewer unconscious repressions. When one has fewer and less disturbing dreams, deeper levels of reality can become manifest to consciousness more easily, and one will then have learned the important lesson that nothing in the world can produce real self-knowledge except one's own mind, which has been purified and made calm and undisturbed through meditation.

In very Truth everything without exception is possible for god. The impossible becomes Possible and the Possible impossible.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

Nama is the highest gift. Nama is the best of all actions, Nama is the best of all Dharmas and Nama is the best result — So it is said.

Sri Sri Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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Twelve Suggestions of Bhairji

For

Obtaining the Blessings of Mother

*Circulated in Bengali by brother Abanimohon Sarma
on the eve of Mother's Forty-fifth Birth-day Celebrations.
Translated into English by G.C. Dasgupta*

(I) Mother Anandamayi is the Visible Embodiment of what we conceive by the word Bhagawan or God. We must endeavour to enthrone Her in our heart and allow Her influence to colour our actions, thoughts and meditations. We must have a firm conviction that Her Body and all its sportive activities are far beyond the bounds of Nature and that She is the ONE object of our highest adoration. If we can develop this outlook, we shall require no other help for our spiritual advancement.

(II) If we fail to contemplate Mother as ONE far above and beyond the limitations of Her visible Form, we should take up, for our ideal, any one of Her numerous Graces e.g. dedication of Her all to selfless service to humanity, Her ever-flowing cheerfulness, Her serenity of mind and body, Her magnanimity, Her treatment of all creatures with an equal eye, and should shape our conduct accordingly.

(III) If we have the good luck to come in touch with Her ways of life, Her conversation, Her expressions of joy, Her playful humour, Her graceful movements, and Her modes of eating and dressing, we should not be carried away by our ordinary, crude judgment on life and things, but try to appreciate the beauty and probe the mystery of each one of Her actions. Let there be a conviction growing and developing in our heart about their importance in our life.

(IV) We must always remember that She is absolutely free; nothing can restrict Her ways. In us there is always a conflict of will, to do or not to do, to be or not to be; such

conflicts have no place in Her way of life. She moves about without any preconceived motive. Whoever approaches Her, finds always that Her Supreme Will functions just to meet our own actual welfare-requirements.

(V) Let a faith grow in our heart that what She does or what happens under Her eyes, be it to our liking or not, must have some hidden objective, and that too, for our ultimate welfare. With such a conviction let us learn to accept all Her words and decisions in all humility.

(VI) If through our good luck any of us receive any direction from Mother, though such chances are very rare indeed, we must, without any scruple whatsoever, guide our mind and intelligence to implicitly carry it out; there must be no compromise thereof in the light of our individual judgment.

(VII) For our own good it is necessary that Mother should be absolutely unobstructed in Her moods and actions—not even opposing thought-currents should be allowed to flow from us. Let Her *Kheyal* always prevail: even by way of protecting Her body, or looking after Her physical comforts or discomforts, there must be no scope for the exercise of our judgment. Any hint or suggestion emanating from Her must needs be carried out without reserve; failing that we should always develop the attitude of a silent on-looker of Her Lila.

(VIII) Mother begs only a few minutes' time from every one of us to be spent in contemplation of the Divine. This brief period should be dedicated for ever to God; no earthly thoughts must be allowed to creep in during it. It is far easier to obtain Her grace by earnest devotion and prayer than by rendering Her any personal service.

(IX) To make a real approach to Mother or to gratify our longing to touch Her sacred feet, our mind should be, at least, for the time being, as transparent as a mirror without any film of worldly thought over it. The intensity of our satisfaction will be in proportion to the keenness of

our desire, strength of our faith and devotion to Her, and to the sincerity of the spirit of our self-surrender.

(X) All of us are equal in Mother's eyes. The degree of our love and adoration for Her is the only thread that links us to Her feet. We obtain as much of Her grace as we are capable of love and adoration for Her.

(XI) Always REMEMBER that Her words are fulfilled to the letter. Her memory knows no lapse nor change under the pressure of time.

(XII) We must never slacken our faith in the ever-bounteous flow of Her Mercy, Grace and Compassion for all men, in all their successes and failures; we must not forget for a moment that all the worries and tribulations of our life, all our difficulties and disasters are the inevitable products of our past actions. To counteract them, strenuous *sadhana* on our part is absolutely necessary.

Our Mighty Mother

Mohua Das

Our Mighty Mother's blessing it was,
For whom we come down
On this earth.

Her grace is truly on us all,
To keep us struggling in our life.

Her soft sparkling gaze on us
Is like a lantern in the night.

Her motherly teachings to us,
Is to help us to line in the bright.

Her laughter is of an innocent child;
She tells us to be happy in our bad times;

She gives us friends and foes in our life;

She gives us joyous moments in our life.

Truely, Our Mighty Mother she is,
In our life.

Annual Naam Kirtan At "Matri Mandir"

**SHREE SHREE ANANDAMAYEE
CHARITABLE SOCIETY**

"MATRI MANDIR"

57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road,

Calcutta-700 019

Phone : 74-8504

Dear Brother/Sister,

With deep pleasure, we are announcing the celebration of Annual 'Naam Kirtan' at our above addressed office. The Adhibas will be observed in the evening of Friday, the 8th March, 1996. Next day, i.e. on Saturday, the 9th March, 1996 a **DAWN TO DUSK NAM KIRTAN** will be observed. On this occasion, Special Puja of Shree Shree MA Anandamayee, Shree Shree Narayanji and Shree Shree Onkarnathji will also be performed. At noon after Purnahuti, prasada will be distributed among the devotees participated in the function.

We look forward to your active participation in this auspicious function.

Yours

In the service of Ma,
Members

(Executive Council)

Shree Shree Anandamayee
Charitable Society

Dated :

The 1st January, 1996
(16th Paush, 1402)

Sri Sri MA

(Extracts from Chapter Ten of "Matri Darsan" by
Bhaiji. Translated by G.C. Dasgupta.)

It is beyond our ordinary intelligence to understand what Mother really is. Though She is constantly saying, "I am but a wayward crazy daughter (pagli) of yours", yet underlying all Her movements and behind Her everchanting Leela amongst us, is to be discerned the manifestation in bodily form of the Supreme Divine Mother-Power.

Though living day and night in the midst of the thousand turmoils of the busy world, Sri Sri Ma keeps ever fresh the perennial fountain of Her joy. Her pure serene gaze, the unrestricted flow of Her divinely sportive life ringing with laughter, gratify the infinitely various sentiments of all creatures. Thus it would be no exaggeration to call Her the embodiment of Universal Mother.

Some say that She is "the visible Incarnation of the Supreme Goddess of the Universe," others that She is "a *sadhika* (an aspirant) who has attained salvation in this life." We, however, think that "She is but what one sees Her to be." Even at the very first sight, a contact with Her tranquil and universally pleasing spirit, brings about a transformation of feeling in the heart of even those who are most averse to religion. In Her vicinity, devout feelings are awakened into activity even in the most arid of hearts, and the vibrations of one universal existence overpower the heart of ordinary mortals like the unending restless waves of the ocean.

Once when, asked about Her "Diksa" (Spiritual initiation) and Her "Guru" (Spiritual guide), Mother replied, — "In childhood, parents, after marriage, the husband, and in all conditions everything throughout the world are my Guru. But know in your heart of hearts that, really speaking, Guru is only the ONE, Himself." Just as from

the worldly point of view, Mother appears as an ideal daughter, wife and mother, similarly from the spiritual standpoint, various Yogic paths or ways of Bhakti, Jnan or Raj Yoga, or the diverse modes of *Sadhana*, indicated by different schools and doctrines such as Monism, Dualism and qualified Monism are clearly represented in Her sayings.

From Her trance like conditions witnessed during "Kirtans," She may be well regarded as a great Vaisnab; again from the natural aptitude noticed in Her for the worship of Siva, Durga, Kali and other deities according to Tantric rites or from the devoted performance of Vedic sacrifices (Yajnas) it would not be an over-statement to say that She is the supreme Deity embodying all gods and goddesses.

She may be designated a great "Yogi" (an adept in Yoga) from the supernatural powers observed in Her life in such abundance from the very beginning, even without any spiritual practice, as if they were but normal or routine activities. There will be also no hesitation to characterise Her as a Sage (Risi) to whom the Mantras (mystic-formulas) have been revealed through many Suktas (sacred texts) and Hymns in a language like that of the Vedas, that found expression in Her utterances during trance.

Her intuitive conclusions based on personal realisation of the Paths of Knowledge, Devotion and of Sastric rites have filled with astonishment many an Eastern and Western philosopher, both young and old. The difference between those who have progressed towards perfection by following some limited and specialised mode of *Sadhana* such as knowledge, Yoga or Devotion and Sri Sri Ma is that in Her are united together in a wonderful synthesis all those limited and specialised means and methods. From this proceeds incessantly Her boundless power for human uplift.

Unique and incomparable in the present age are Her gracious and charming appearance, Her patience and endurance, Her simplicity, Her invariably kind and gay, light-hearted sportiveness, Her unsullied beneficent gaze, Her uniform attitude towards all, gentle and compassionate, irrespective of caste and creed, Her eternally free spirit beyond the reach of opposites. She cannot be described as a *Sadhika* (spiritual aspirant) because all who have been observing Her from Her very infancy say that She has remained in the same state from Her very childhood in Her actions and feelings. No one has ever noticed in Her any attempt at *Sadhana* or spiritual practice.

The various natural or supernatural powers which are manifested at all times and under all circumstances through the medium of Her body flow spontaneously for the good of Her numerous Bhaktas or devotees.

They are altogether independent of any desire or reluctance or any purposeful spiritual effort on Her part. When libations of "Ghee" (clarified butter) are offered into the glowing sacrificial fire, the flames flare up in accordance with the natural law, the whole atmosphere becomes purified and filled with the fragrance, but after a while no trace is left of the libation in the sacrificial flames; they keep on burning steadily with uniform brightness. So also in response to the reverential offering of homage by the devotees at the alter of Mother's heart, Her speech, looks and face become saturated and aglow with love and affection, flowing spontaneously like milk from the mother's breast, and the next moment they subside and merge into Her natural gracious expansive composure.

There is no conflict in Her between desire and aversion. Attachment and detachment find no play in Her through the medium of Her will. The Eternal Truths which have been manifesting themselves of their own accord to the human mind as the foundations of all

religions and all activities for the good of the Universe, surround and invest Her with their radiance, glimpses and suggestions of these shine through all Her actions and conduct. Her life illustrates how a person can move freely on the spiritual plane without losing grip over himself and at the same time fulfilling all the obligations of the world.

We observe in the life of Sri Sri Ma that She is always eager to promote the good of the world, entrusting the burden of maintaining Her body on others, as it were; and releasing Herself completely from all labours and attention for Her own body, She has dedicated Herself completely to the achievement of welfare of the universe. Judged by worldly standards, She possesses nothing which She can call Her own. All places are Her own, all creatures are Her intimate friends and children; She says, "This body sees the whole universe as a garden, and you are like flowers blooming in it. This body is only moving about in one part or another of this garden."

On another occasion she said, "This body has no need of doing or saying anything. There was no such need before nor is there any now, nor will there be any afterwards. Whatever has been and is being manifested through this body are for the sake of you all. If you want to declare something as belonging particularly to this body, you may state that the whole universe is its own."

The infinite glories of divine creative activity that shine throughout the entire universe under the urge of the spirit of Motherhood, find expression in all the ways, in every word and action and in every thought of Sri Sri Ma. Fondly insisting on something before the devotees, like a small daughter or offering the boon of safety from danger like a mother to those seeking shelter in Her in distress, all these are but the working of the same Supreme Mother Power.

By maintaining the same regard and attachment to

all the religions of the world, to all castes and creeds, to all stages of life, to all laws and types of education, She has demonstrated in Her own life the truth of the great text, "All this is but Brahma or the Absolute." Mother says, "All religions represent one course; all paths lead to one; we are all one." If any one asks Her, "To what caste do you belong? Where do you live?" She replies with a laugh, "To speak in the manner of the world, this body belongs to East Bengal and in Brahmin by caste. But if you think apart from these artificial, discriminating attributes, you will discover that this body is a member of one family."

At times She has been heard to say, "Have faith in this body. Your whole-hearted faith will itself open your eyes." She also says sometimes, "This Body knows nothing. It but speaks out what you put into its ears." Again at times She declares, "This body is but a doll. It plays exactly as you want it to play."

From utterances such as these, it becomes definitely obvious that in this body of Sri Sri Ma, the Power that lies hidden behind the phenomenal world has taken form. All Her activities emanate from the Supreme Power pervading the universe and also everything merges into Her. She is altogether without the sense of duality. She occasionally declares "Either you alone are all or I alone am all."

On another occasion She said "I am really you. It is only because He exists that the notion of 'I' and 'you' originates". Whoever will say ever once with a heart full of faith and reverence, "Come to me, O Mother mine, I cannot pass my days without you", verily indeed will Mother reveal Her true self to him and take him up on Her affectionate lap. Driven by distress, do not look upon Her as a mysterious refuge for the moment. Remember she is always present and very near to you like the very breath of your life. Once you do this, you will not have to do anything more. She will take full charge of you.

Don't Cut Wood

Nihar Ranjan Chakraborty

Don't cut tree
 Don't cut wood,
All they love you
 From child-hood.

They cool the air
 Appease our mind,
They help to rain —
 Blow wind nice.

Soury — sweet taste
 A fruit owes
Through a plant
 It any grows.

The flowers bloom
 only on plant,
Smell comes out
 Lovingly discent.

So, let all tress
 Crown to wear
On their head
 Self-made flower.

Sita

(Translation of a Bengali Composition)

সীতা - হরপ্রসাদ শাস্ত্রী (1852-1932)

Translated by :

Nihar Ranjan Chakraborty

1. Sita is a polite and calm peaceful natured girl according to Balmiki. After her marriage she kept her busy in serving her husband. Gaining accompany of Sita for the first time in life, Ram got much comfort at that time. After his exile from the room of Kaikei, Ram informed Sita the news of his exile. Sita became eager to go alongwith. The dialogue of the couple of that time was full of pathos. Sita insists to go alongwith in the forest and Ram forbids her. Ram describes her all difficulties and sufferings of the forest. He also told her all comforts of the palace and the facilities of performing religious rite for the welfare of husband. After a long debate Sita said, "It is not in any way wise for you to go alone in the forest without me. Whether for living with or for asceticism, your accompany is my heavenly pleasure. If I follow you and be with, none will feel tired. The tale of thorn in the forest which you are describing, I sincerely tell you that I will feel no trouble at all and those will appear soft as cotton to me due to your companionship." Saying so, raising her two arms around the neck of Ram started weeping. Ram with the help of his argumentative advice failed to escape: He assured her to take alongwith.

2. After bowing the reverend mother-in-laws, Sita began to put-off her queenly fashionable dress and forwarded to wear skin of tree to proceed with Ram. But being a daughter of a king and lady of simplicity had no idea how to wear a tree-skin on human-body. So keeping

one piece on the shoulder holding another piece in her hand, looked aimlessly towards Ram and tearful Sita asked, "Lord I have no idea how to wear a tree-skin." Ram fastened the tree-skin over her petticoat. They left palace. Walking on foot for a long time and 1st in life, she got much uncomfot and became tired. Eventually she felt much difficulty. She realised the pain of exile, practically in the forest. Moreover only testless fruits were the edibles in the forest. Dry leaves were their bed ! Yet she bear-up all for the visibility of Ram. Passing Chitrakut, when they were advancing to-wards Panchabati, Sita gave a good and long instruction to Ram, advising him not to creat enimity even with an animal.

3. While stealing Sita in a air-car, Ravan tried to motivate her saying, "I am the only worthy person to be your husband. You, be my wife; the Gods also will be under you to obey. My original queen will be your maid-servant. Five thousand maid-servants will be always ready at your service." Sita cared not his words and gave a negative reply, "In comparison to Ram, you are no better than a fox or a jackdow. I know none in the world except Ram. For the cause of stealing me, you are to die alongwith your entire relatives.

4. When Sita was confined in Ashokban, Ravan used to pray to appease her. In reply Sita said, "In a name of Ram there is a relegious, famous person who has long arms, broad eyes and he is my husband and only Lord."

5. Ravan could not tame her. Many days passed in this way. One day, being much annoyed, Ravan threatened her, "If you do not accept me as your husband within a month, I will eat your flesh and put an end to my thirst." Sita, who had solmny dedicated herself to Ram, fearlessly replied, "This body of mine has no sense; you

destroy it or save it, do as whim likes. I have no desire to save it nor I have any love for life.”

6. Terror does not exist permanently in any one's life. Hanuman entered into Ashokban and found Sita, Ravan had appointed many maid-monsters who had surrounded Sita-devi. Day and night they were creating fear and raising temptation also to her. Sometime opening their big jaws posed to swallow her. In that dangerous atmosphere, Sita got two maid-monsters named Sarama and Trijata, who used to give her consolation, like friends. Seeing hanuman after a long interval in that foreign land, Sita felt great delight and she could smile. She blessed hanuman and conveyed her desire to Ram. She re-gained hope and believed that Ram will surely rescue her.

7. After Killing Ravan, Ram coronated Bibhishan on the throne of Lanka and sent soldiers to rescue Sita. When came, Ram said. “I have rescued you. Efforts of Bibhishan and all the friends has produced a successful result, Ravan has been killed.” Listening all these, there appeared a shining glax on her face. Tear came out from her eyes due to extresm joy. Then, Ram said with gravity, “Janaki ! I have done my task; but cannot accept you. You lived in other's house although not at your will. But belonging to a respectable family if I accept you, all will abouse me, so, I permit you to depend on any other person whom you like. I have no other alternative.”

8. Hearing such a hurl word from her beloved husband Sita felt speak-not pain. Effacing tear she spoke, “Lord, you have thought me similar to all other women ! But how I have passed that critical time in Lanka, your massanger hanuman knows that well. So, is it logical and justice to refuse me in this way ? Have you totally forgotten that

you have married me in your youth ! Can't you remember? Have you forgotten all my devotion and nature - altogether ?”

9. Speaking this much, she asked Lakshman to make burning arrangement. Ultimately, she entered into fire. Ram could not enter into her feelings ! Before that she respectfully remembered the elders and with folded hand in public witness she requested the fire-God, “Oh God, save me; because I did not shift my devotion to anyone else, beyond Ramachandra and no one except Ram I do remember, Save me.”

10. When she entered into fire, she remained unburnt. The public, who were present remarked “SPLENDID” and thanked her. Sita was accepted; but she lived very short time in the palace of Ramchandra.

11. One day, Bhadrak, a member of the parliament, raised a point in the assembly that “Many of the subjects objected and spoke ill of Ram for accepting Sita, who lived in the house of Ravan”. The Kshatriya blood that was flowing in his vein revolted at once. He resolved to expel Sita. So, he asked Lakshman, “you take Sita out in the forest and leave her there on the Bhagirathi river-bank”. Lakshman took her there. When Lakshman disclosed the order of her expel, Sita became senseless for few moments. After raising up addressed Lakshman, “Dear, this body was born to bear such pain life long. Having so much devotion, when I am to suffer only, perhaps it is the dues of sins of my previous birth. Otherwise, for what other cause the King can expel me ? Public opinion is truer than fire-test !” Again she spoke, “Lakshman, tell Aryaputra that what ever he behaves with me, he is my reverend husband. Tell him to spend his whole time in His majestic job”. It is not a job of ordinary woman to pray welfare of

her husband in return of such ill treatment. In each sentence and in every word of Sita, there is expression of deep sympathy, kind heart and spiritual love.

12. Bereaved Sita lived 12 years again in forest. There after, the sages of the forest requested Ram to accept Sita. Ram also agreed to accept her with a condition that she has to take a test in front of all. Then Sita was brought to the King's council. Sita could not bear so much inhuman treatment; tear dropped on her feet and that pathetic condition was indescribable. Love for Ram was still undirty in her heart; but to appear test to prove her sanctity everytime seemed extreme disrespect to self. She also possesses kshatriya blood in her vein. Entering into the council she looked towards none — keeping silent for few moments prayed to mother earth to accept her. Statue like state of the council was silent. Sita prayed, "Oh mother earth, as I have not sheltered any other person in my heart except Ram, so accept and give me relief. Oh, mother I know none on earth beyond Ram; please take the bereaved in your lap".

13. Pin drop silence was prevailing in the council, eyes of spectators became tearful. Ram also lost his sense. The earth cracked, Goddess of earth appeared with her flame and embracing Sita took her inside the earth and both disappeared.

14. Sita had qualities. Is it possible for any other woman to be a much more stronger devotee than Sita? It is also doubtful whether any other woman ever had to face such circumstances mixed with temptation. Due to ill fate, for no fault of self, she had to face tyrannical situation. It is also wonder that being a King's daughter and Queen of a wellknown good King, she suffered life long. First, Ravan stole her ; there she lived in demon's dreadful

terrorism. When she was rescued Ram's refusal to accept her was another woful condition ! Any how, after the fire-test she was excused. But due to suspicion of his subjects, and for no fault of Sita, Ram was afraid and expelled her. Sita lived again in forest and alone at this time. At the last she sought way to escape from man-made society. She went alive into the lap of Goddess-earth. It will be seen that her birth effected on earth only to bear appression and to take extream test of tolerance.

15. Sita and Sabitri both are unparallel to the common women. No other poet of the world could build such qualitative characters with his powerful imagination like them. Love of Sita is spiritual; because at the time of extream distress attributed by her husband, she wished all well for Ram. Lakshman kept her in the forest; she did not blame — rather she blessed him and she conveyed respect to the elders of the palace. Sabitri is also fully sincere and victim with the flame of her intellectuals and devotion. Sita argued with Ravan and Sabitri argued with Yamraj. Both of them gave proof of their spirituality. But Sabitri is industrious than Sita. In her manful attitude she deviates from the same soft hearted character of Sita—that Balmiki has depicted. The poet has built her a pationate lady. Sabitri is also not less than Sita ; but Sabitri's laboriousness subsided the potency of her softness. Yamraj admitted the unafraid nature of Sabitri. Considering mind-power and argumantative talk of Sabitri it seems she is superior than Sita. Sita had love, effecton and high regard for all which is not profound in the character of Sabitri. Sita and Sabitri both are unparallel to the common women; because their fathomless devotion equally developed for their husbands.

A Letter

*(Written by Late Shashi Bhusan Dasgupta to
Late Ganga Charan Dasgupta)*

OM MA

Bombay
15.9.1948

Most affectionate Brother Gangacharan,

Yesterday, the 14th November was an auspicious day for me as on that day at noon, I received your priceless gift — “Matri Darshan”. Embracing the book I had wept continuously for two hours. Dear Brother, when I had time, I failed to realise you, Bhaji and Shree Shree MA. Now, at the twilight hours of my life, I am, by the grace of Ma, realising you all, crying.

That last Thursday, the 5th August was my last day in this world. Death was sitting by my side to snatch away my last breath. It was 11 O'clock in the morning, the room was over crowded, I was crying MA, MA with all my heart. Suddenly I lost my physical senses and with a strange feeling, I saw that the entire space had become brighten with the Halo rays and standing in the middle, MA was saying, “So much was done, but you failed to visit Kishenpur Ashram. Avoiding all, tried to pass life boasting of being the disciple of a Dasnami saint. What have you got in return ? Now, after recovery, go to Chittagong with a little sized idol of MA Kali made of silver. Get it installed in a solitary room and laying under its feet go on crying like a madman. Offer yourself totally to me — only MA and none but MA — let the passersby see you crying MA, MA. Only then you will find me in the dark room at Kishenpur Ashram. Remit money to Ganga Charan babu. He knows a good goldsmith and with his help he will make a beautiful idol of Kali for you.”

SHE told many things about you. I did not understand all of them. Now, I am trying to remember them by and

by. SHE also cautioned me not to tell anything to anybody except you. Moreover, SHE told me to collect vermilion from MA Kali temple at Kalighat and after wearing a red cloth and taking the vermilion on the forehead I had to cry.

Since 5th August, I have been crying continuously. So, my dear dada, kindly arrange to make an idol of Kali of silver of about 4• inches in height. Also bring some vermilion for me from MA Kali Temple at Kalighat. I am remitting rupees ten (Rs. 10/-) today by money order. I shall remit the balance if any, immediately on receipt of your letter.

I do not know when I shall be fit enough to meet you. Doctors are expecting that it will take about 4 months to recover. By the grace of Shree Shree MA I have got a new life. Now, it would be difficult for you to recognise me. I have the confidence that I shall be fully recovered by grace of MA.

Dada, by hard labour all over the life, I have earned lot of money. By the grace of MA, I need no more. Now, I have nothing to do other than crying MA, MA. What's the need of a son; what's the need of friends; what's the need for taking food. Shree Shree MA assured me that all my desires will be fulfilled only when I shall become mad crying. Now, at every night, when crying for MA, I feel HER presence.

Dada, my humble request to you to send me a copy of Sadvani in Bengali, as early as possible. I was keenly waiting to get a hand written letter from you. I do not know why I am deprived of the same. Laying on bed, I am writing this letter. So, I pray to forgive me for bad handwriting and mistakes. Please reply promptly. Waiting for your reply. Dada, never disclose the directives of Shree Shree Ma. Pardon me for cautioning you.

I remain,

Your wellwisher
Poor Shashi

Ashram News

Jagaddhatri Puja at Matri Mandir, Calcutta

Like last year, this year too, Shree Shree Jagaddhatri Puja was celebrated at Matri-Mandir, 57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta - 700 019.

The Adhibash (inaugural rites) was observed on the evening of Wednesday, the 1st November, 1995. Next day i.e. on Thursday, the 2nd November, 1995 — from the very morning the puja of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, Shree Shree Onkarnathji and Shree Shree Ma Jagaddhatri started. Recitations from Vedas, and other holy scriptures went on simultaneously.

At noon, after the performance of Kumari puja and Maha - Astami Puja; special arati was performed and floral tributes were offered by the devotees. Then, prasad was distributed among the devotees present. About 2000 devotees participated in the celebration. In the afternoon, the Special Puja of Maha-Navami was performed.

Next day, i.e. Friday, the 3rd November 1995, the special puja of Bijaya Dashami was performed and after that prasad was distributed among the devotees. On this day about 300 devotees participated in the puja.

In the afternoon at about 2.30 p.m., in the midst of special religious rites the image of Shree Shree Jagaddhatri was placed on the board of a decorated truck for immersion in the river ganga.

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Obituary

Smt Nilima Lahiri, one of the ardent old devotee of Shree Shree MA Anandanayee, passed away at her residence in C.R. Park, New Delhi in Tuesday the 19th December 1995. She was popularly known as "Bulidi" who used to excellently cook the "BHOG" at MA's various "ASHRAMS" on special and ordinary occasions with utmost sincerity and dedication. Her husband, Late Pranjit Chandra Lahiri, who had received the name, "BHOLANATH" from MA, was one of the leading singers of the "DELHI KIRTAN PARTY" at any "NAM - KIRTAN" or "NAMYAJNA". The late couple had very close association with MA for many years. Bulidi was very seriously ill and even bed-ridden for months. While lying in her death-bed she looked up at the portrait of MA, hung up on the wall of the room in front of her and after uttering MA's name twice she breathed her last. May her soul rest in eternal peace at the lotus feet of MA !



Last 15th November, 1995 at night, both husband and wife — Shri Amal Ghatak and Smt. Anjali Ghatak breathed their last. Both of them were ardent devotees of MA. We pray to MA for the eternal peace of the departed souls.
