

ANANDA VARTA

*

The Eternal, the Atman—

Itself pilgrim and path of Immortality

Self contained — THAT is all in One.

Vol. XXXXIII

JULY, 1996

No. 3

CONTENTS

1. Matri-Vani	...	1-3
2. Sad Vani	...	4-12
3. Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi—Tara Kini	...	13-23
4. Sai Ram Sahay	...	24-32
5. Mother - Then and Now —Gour Gopal Mukhopadhyaya	...	33-38
6. A Life Sketch of Mata Shree Anandamayee — Salim Khan	...	39-42
7. Mother and Her Ways — Swami Paramananda	...	43-47
8. Ma's Hundredth Birthday—Mahua Das	...	48
9. Matri Darshan—Bhaiji	...	49-55
10. Ashram News	...	56-57
11. Obituary	...	58

आनन्द बार्ता

नं XXXXIII

जुलाई, १९९६

संख्या 3

: सूची :

१। मातृ-वाणी	...	59-60
२। श्रीश्री १००८ श्री आनन्दमयी माँ प्रसंग	...	61-64
३। भजन करो रे	...	65
४। प्रध्मात्मिक होली - श्रीमती सरला जैन	...	66-67
५। करुणामयी माँ श्री आनन्दमयी	...	68-74
६। श्री आनन्दमयी माँ की प्रथम दर्शन तथा महिमा	...	75-80

Truth itself will assist in every way him who has gone
forth in Search of Truth.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

There is no sin born out of any deed, word or thought
which is not destroyed by the power of Nama.

Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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Yes, if you can observe silence and be in harmony with everyone all round, it will be excellent. Try to remain without the help of signs and gestures far as long as possible.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

Nama is the best Bhakti (devotion) Nama is the best ending Nama is the best Japa, Nama is the best Prayer.

Sri Sri Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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Matri-Vani

While one is in the midst of maya it is difficult to understand from where maya arises, Aspire to the Knowledge of Him. Truly, to know oneself means to know Him, Having found one's Self all problems are solved, So long as there is maya it is difficult to know what maya is.



So long as one has not found God, sorrow will not depart. If He is to be realized, one has to practise there petition of His name, His Contemplation, His worship, singing His praises--no other path to man's Supreme Welfare exists. The company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, religious gatherings and the study of Scriptures are also helpful on this path. This body ever stresses on thing; sense enjoyment is poison and gradually delivers one to death. Therefore this body always emphasize: endeavour to be engrossed in Him as much as you possibly can.



Your body, which is part of and depending on this illusory world, is on the other hand the expression of hidden inner process. You are yourself the many, appearing in various aspects, forms and modes. Each one of them exists in fact to fulfil a particular need. Yours is the give and take of the universe, yours the need and yet you yourself are the fulfilment, that hidden inner process is generated by you.



Someone asked Mataji : "Have you seen God?" Mataji replied without the slightest hesitation : "Why, indeed,

He is always visible. Yet again, who sees whom since all are He? In very truth, nothing exists apart from God."



Having turned to this side, the sense of want awakens. And proceeding further there is the first stage of passing from this condition of want and emptiness to one's true nature : the realization that without Him the world is darness : nothing of this world seems attractive. It cannot be said that you have reached that state. To yearn for Him also indicates progress.



All the time you have the desire to find, the acute feeling of lacking something. Just persist in your sadhana and for the rest, He will make it complete. By perfect grace comes perfect illumination. In the measure as you exert yourself you will receive.



Action is necessary in order to remove the veil of ignorance. Using to the full the intelligence He has given you, proceed with your work. His grace is without motive or cause. Why He has not shown His mercy to you. He knows best. Verily, all is His and He does according to His Will. Where there is a motive, there is the desire for fulfilment and the enjoyment of the fruit. I have acted and therefore I have reaped the fruit. The fruit of what? The action is one's own and thus the consequences are equally one's own. God is everyone's, there is but one Self (*Atma*). To begin with, one does not realise this and therefore questions arise. At the stage at which you are at the moment from there it looks as you have described.



No matter what be anyone's line of approach, at first there is torment and perplexity, one is unable to find. After that comes a state of suspense, of emptiness as it were; one cannot penetrate within neither does one derive satisfaction from worldly enjoyment.



Take care not be contented at any stage. Some aspirants have visions, others realizations. Or someone experience bliss, great happiness and thinks he has himself become God. On the spiritual path, before true-Realization supervenes, one may get caught in supernormal powers (*vibhutis*). To become entangled in his kind of thing constitutes as obstacle.



PROGRAMME

1. Ratha Yatra - 17th July, Wednesday
2. Guru Purnima - 30th July, Tuesday
3. Shree Shree 1008
Swami Muktananda
Giri Maharaj
Tirodhan Tithi - 2nd August, Friday
4. Jhulan Purnima - 28th August, Wednesday
5. Rakhi Purnima - 28th August, Wednesday
6. Janmastami - 4th September, Wednesday
7. Radha Astami - 20th September, Friday
8. Jagaddhatri Puja - 19th November, Tuesday

Sad Vani*

Bhaiji

(Translated by Atmanandaji)

Foreword

There is nothing in the world that can be called new. Revolving ceaselessly on the wheel of time, the old appears again and again clothed in ever new forms. This is even more obvious concerning the dissemination of Supreme Wisdom (*Parama Tatwa*). Time after time, expressed in many different ways, there have been numerous attempts throughout the ages to proclaim the Eternal Truth of the ONE in the many. This ancient Truth (*Satya*) has ever purified and enlightened the human mind. To this category belongs the teaching set forth in the 'Sad Vani.' May it bring Supreme Joy to all its readers!

Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma, at whose Holy Feet I sat, listening to her words collected in this small book, has said : "The search after Truth becomes easy for one who can be completely one-pointed and firmly concentrated under all circumstances, no matter what path may have been chosen." It is well to remember this. That to which the mind is attached, ever appears delightful to man.

—Bhaiji.

1

In the field of action, people's minds become crippled by the lack of freedom to proceed in their own way. The same is true in the sphere of religion. If the aspirant does not find scope for a wide extention of his search in keeping with his individual temperament, his efforts will stagnate

**Sad Vani* was first published in English translation by Sri Hari Ram Joshi and N. N. Das Gupta in 1935, long before the foundation of the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, and has been out of print for many years.

in narrow grooves. The path that has been chosen must be pursued with great vigour, in order that purity of mind and heart may be developed. When the goal is ever before one, and has become a living reality all that is needful will come of its own accord.

2

To be attracted means to become transformed. Whenever you feel drawn to anything, be it a person, an object, or an idea, you have to sacrifice something of yourself. In the exact degree that you give up, so will you receive. This is an axiom of life. To gain everything, without letting go of anything, is never possible for the simple reason that two things cannot at one time occupy one and the same place. That is to say, without sacrifice nothing can be achieved. The more the heart becomes filled with the love of God, the fainter will grow the appetite for material enjoyments. The moment you become charmed and therefore transformed and inspired by Him, your mind will be stilled. True, it is not possible to be fascinated by Him unless His pull is felt from within; yet determined effort and constant alertness are essential. As a business man always keeps himself informed about the market rates, so should one remain ever occupied with thoughts and discourses concerning Him.

3

In the midst of limitation, if one line of approach is selected and steady progress made in that, the bonds of limitation will fall away as soon as one becomes fully concentrated on the goal. Then the One will stand revealed as the many, and the many as the One. In order to be blessed with the power to reach Infinity, one must begin by labouring within the finite.

So long as the body has sway, it is necessary to submit

to the rules and prohibitions set forth in the Sacred Texts. This requires patience and endurance. Nature although itself in constant flux, never accords help to a restless wavering pilgrim.

4

(This is in verse in Bengali and loses all its charm in a translation. It has therefore been omitted).

5

Without experiencing the anguish inherent in the mechanism of life in the world, the desire to become acquainted with the Great Mechanic (*Yantri*)* Who causes the cosmic machine to revolve does not arise in the human heart. Disease, grief, privations, remorse and the like, are very necessary for man. Just as fire burns away all dross and rubbish, so the three-fold suffering (*tritapa*)† purges man's heart from all impurity and results in a growing single-mindedness in his search after Truth. When he becomes deeply conscious of his weakness and tormented by the thought of his undesirable impulses and distressing characteristics, when afflictions like poverty, bereavement or humiliation make him feel his life is futile, then and then only does he develop real faith and religious fervour, and becomes anxious to surrender himself at the feet of the Supreme Being. Suffering should therefore be welcomed. Never does the soft moonlight appear more soothing than after the scorching heat of a summer day.

6

You all say : "I want to find God, I want to find God". But are you really seeking Him with your whole heart

* Play upon words : *Yantra* machine and *yantrana* anguish.

† *Tritapa* - Suffering in all aspects of our being : *adibhautika*, *adidaivika*, *adhyatmika*.

and mind, with your whole being? Just watch and you will see! If you are in dead earnest you are bound to find Him. Do you know by what signs a true-seeker can be recognized? If you pine for Him as a shipwrecked traveller longs for the shore, as a mother yearns for her dead child; if you desire Him with such eagerness you will find that He is with you every second, day and night.

You pray to Him for the good things of this world, and this is why He bestows on you riches, family, friends, position and so on, which make you forget the real treasure. Seek Him solely for His own sake and you will certainly find Him.

7

There is nothing in this universe that may be treated with disregard or contempt. He acts His Divine Play in infinite ways, through infinite forms, and in an infinite variety of settings. Without appearing as the many how can this Play be staged? Do you not see how light and darkness, joy and sorrow, fire and water, are inextricably linked together in one unbroken chain? Remember that spiritual endeavour must be coupled with purity of heart. To the extent that we harbour unkind or narrow thoughts, we increase the cause of evil in the world. What necessity is there to pay attention to what others have or have not? Far better be intent on your own improvement. If you can develop inner beauty, and enshrine Him, the ever Beautiful in the glorious temple of your heart, you will then be able to perceive beauty in everything.

8

People who come to see me, sometimes say : "I hope my visit is not putting you to any inconvenience?" It is because they wish to keep apart from me that such questions come readily to their lips. Just ask yourself

whether this sort of consideration enters your mind when you wish to see your father, mother, brother or sister? You feel at ease in their loving company, and even should your visit cause them some inconvenience, they will not notice it. If you understand that this body is here for you all, such hesitation will not arise in your mind when you come to me. Wherever you go at any time, go with your whole heart and soul, and nobody will seem as a stranger to you. It is a great joy to see all of you who are manifestations of the One Joy Supreme.

9

Since everything in this universe is the creation of the one Great Father, all are kith and kin. Just as the sons and daughters of one large family choose a dozen different professions whereby to earn their livelihood, just as they settle and build homes of their own in a dozen different places, so all human beings, although one in essence, are grouped in various ways and under various denominations, according to the demands of their multifarious lines of activity.

For the cure of the ailing body many systems of medicine exist, such as Allopathy, Homoeopathy, Ayurveda and others. Each person makes use of the method that is best suited to him. Equally, to cure man of the diseased condition that causes the perpetual recurrence of birth and death, there are elaborate prescriptions to be found in the *Sastras* and many rules and regulations to be learnt directly from sages and saints, yet all have the same purpose. The diverse paths followed by Hindus, Mohammedans, Vaisnavites, Saktas etc., all ultimately lead to the threshold of the Eternal.

At the entrance to a railway station, there is much agitation and noise, much pushing and jostling; but once the correct platform has been reached all confusion ceases for everyone's destination has been settled.

10

The Master and the servant, though separate embodiments, are essentially one. When the Master in His infinite mercy, descends into a physical body, He becomes the Servant. Just as there can be no servant without a master, so also the Master is dependent on His servant. Thus there is an eternal mutual relationship between the two, so much so that the one cannot exist without the other. The Master is the sole object of the servant's self-dedication. On the other hand the Master must rely entirely upon the servant for service. The One Who in His fulness, in His totality is the Master, He Himself when appearing in division becomes the servant; in other words, the servant is but a partial manifestation of the Master.

You boast so much of doing service. This is just idle talk. The real servants were Hanuman, Garud and others like them, who identified themselves so wholly with their masters that they had no longer independent existences. Complete subjection of oneself in service, is what is required. He who is incapable of unreservedly offering to his Lord, his all, his wealth, family, friends, mind, heart and body, cannot become a servant of the Lord, that is to say he cannot claim to be recognized as His true servant.

11

This world may be likened unto a drum, with only one player. The rhythms it gives forth depend on His Will.

When kirtan is performed, have you not noticed how many people dance and sing to the rhythm of the music? But do any give a thought to the instruments or their players? Those who in happiness pass their days on this earth, although their happiness is only a tiny fragment of the real Joy, are not interested in knowing Him, the

Source of all delight. Seek Him Who is the Fountainhead of everything. This is real *tapasya*,* this is real *sadhana*.†

12

One often hears people say that while living the life of a householder it is impossible to make spiritual progress. Is this really true? How many opportunities are offered to a householder for practising religion in daily life! Parental affection, the fondness between brothers and sisters, the love between husband and wife, the reverence and devotion of children for their parents, the companionship between relatives and friends, the blessings of dependants and of the poor and suffering, are all potent aids towards a life that ultimately aims at Self-realization. Think it over and you will understand! Tossed about incessantly between the ordeals and pleasures of family life, the spirit of renunciation sometimes awakens in man together with a desperate yearning for God : Where this is so, the householder has a better chance even than many an anchorite who has left home and family.

13

What is the good of saying : "I want to turn my mind to the Eternal, but I am unable to do so." When anyone in your home has just an ordinary illness or indisposition, no matter how preoccupied you may be, you at once consult a doctor and run here and there for remedies; or if anything goes wrong with your worldly affairs, think of the amount of trouble you take to put it right. But when you find a difficulty in concentrating on God you at once give up, fold your hands in your lap, saying : "I cannot", and wait for His Grace. Does this befit a *Karma Yogin*? If

* *Tapasya* – To undergo hardships with the definite object of attaining to the spiritual.

† *Sadhana* – Any spiritual practice for the purpose of arriving at Self realization.

once you rouse yourself to enthusiasm you will be able to concentrate well enough. You spare no pains to make your body healthy, strong and beautiful; if you try equally hard to educate your mind, you will see how whole-hearted, how fervent your aspiration will grow. Merely to sit down and philosophize will not take you anywhere; it is necessary to apply theoretical knowledge in practice and to engage in *sadhana*. To be one-pointed in all you do, will of itself teach you the secret of how the goal can be attained through action.

14

Restlessness, agitation and the like are certainly objectionable; yet it is the search for happiness that lies at their root. Like a child, thoughtlessly flitting here and there, not discriminating between good and evil, the mind ever seeks joy. But the evanescent pleasures of this world that come and go, cannot hold the mind for long. Loving attention and reprimand are both necessary for the education of a child. In a like manner the mind has to be trained. By frequenting the company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, by harbouring only pure and noble thoughts and emotions, by listening to religious discourses, and by reading books of wisdom, will be provided the right sustenance for the mind, inwardly as well as outwardly. Gradually you will be freed from all worries until at last you find your rest in the Supreme. On the battle field one has to lay stress on the means of self-defence rather than on provocative attack. Similarly one should take special care to keep oneself protected within the entrenchment of discrimination and intelligent reasoning re-inforced by consecrated activities that make the mind God-centred, so that the outer enemy in the form of craving for sense pleasures may not be able to intrude. The mind is its own friend or foe, the mind itself has to destroy its own ignorance. The easiest and most effective

means for purging the mind is to associate with saints and seekers after Truth and the ceaseless invocation of God's Name (*Nama Kirtana*).

15

People seek only outer opportunities and conveniences. They fail to realize that so long as they are merely concerned with success and failure they simply remain on the surface of things. Unless one looks within and without simultaneously, God cannot be found. The body, worldly possessions, one's home and people belong to the external; meditation on the Self and the endeavour to let one's thinking be permeated by Him are inner processes. To run after physical and mental comforts will only strengthen attachment to external pleasures, and rust will collect inwardly. This is why life after life has to be spent in cleansing the mind from all accumulated dross and impurity. So long as one cannot make a clean sweep of outer attractions, one should at least aim at directing one's attention within as well, by seeking the Essence of things, and meditating on him, who is Bliss Eternal.

Gradually the glorious moment will come when one's whole being will be united in single-minded contemplation and the inner and outer welded into one.

(To be continued)

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Vol. VI

Translated by Tarakini

(Continued from Previous issue)

April 11, Monday

Ma's hand shows no improvements. The doctor and Swami Akhandananda are worried about it. The house is full of people and Haridwar is also full of crowds. A *Yajna* goes on here, a *bhandara* (feast) elsewhere, instruments play through the day and night. In solitude I asked Ma, "Ma, what is *Ananda Bhava Ghan?*" Ma answered, "That which is permanent and impermanent, constant and ever changing. That which can never be broken — now understand for yourself" and she burst into charming laughter.

Today Vinay Sen asked Ma, "Ma, how do you understand humour, fun and frolic? You have never entered such *bhava* at all!" He thought he had Ma at a loss for words but Ma immediately shot back, "You people think of so many different persons and offer your advice. How do you understand? Have you people done such work?" As she said this and laughed all the people present burst out laughing. Vinay Babu also laughed and said, "That was a quick repartee Ma!" Ma said, "I never think and speak. You people extract from me the response that you want. Listen to one more point about this. There is no question of understanding and thinking here. 'That' is always manifested in various forms and in various attitudes. Whatever you say, that is so."

April 12, Tuesday

The atmosphere of Haridwar seems to have undergone a radical change. It is difficult to even breathe. The pathways and the river banks are crowded with people. A constant din pervades day in and day out, the noise is

deafening. Tomorrow is the day of the bath. Today Shachi Babu, Rai Bahadur Suren Babu, his daughter Nani and many others arrived from Calcutta. It was decided that Ma's *puja* would be performed in the *panda's* house followed by *kirtan* throughout the night. The worship was started in the evening. The *kirtan* will be sung on the bank of the Ganga.

April 13, Wednesday

Today is the day of the *Kumbha* bath. This festival is celebrated only once in twelve years in this spot. Lakhs of people have gathered. The police and many groups of volunteers are working hard. Although they are all making a great effort to maintain peace and order, several people have been injured. Many make-shift straw huts and tents have been erected; some have caught fire and people's property is burning. People are dying and the condition is terrifying.

Early morning the *kirtan* was started,

"*Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna,*

Krishna Krishna Hare Hare,

Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare."

In the morning Bholanath set out with a batch of *kirtan* singers as he had been doing everyday. On the banks of the Ganga where the *kirtan* had been initiated, some people sat and continued singing the Name. The place had been decorated beautifully with a dais at the centre. At about nine a.m. Ma's worship was commenced. Shri Manmath Chattopadhyaya performed the *puja*.

After the *puja* Ma was offered *bhoga*. Then the doors were shut so that Ma could rest but she could not lie down for long. Devotees have come from far away places for Ma's *darshan* and some cannot stay for more than a couple of days. In the afternoon Ma went down and attended the *kirtan*. On the requests of those around her she entered the waters of the Ganga and sprinkled some water on her head. Devotees immediately put some of the

water on their heads as well. Some people did not go to the Brahma Kunda. They put the Ganga water touched by Ma's feet on their heads and felt blessed.

Today Ma had a bath with hot water. Meanwhile the pain in both her arms has become so great that she is not able to move them. She also has a cold and fever. She showed the doctor all her symptoms like a little child. The doctor said, "Ma, if you only arouse the will to recover from within yourself, everything will be alright. Please accept this prayer from us."

At ten p.m., a little while after the doors were shut, Ma sat up. Since this afternoon there has been talk of going to Dehradun. Ma also agreed saying, "It is a good idea, try it." But the present situation in the town makes it practically impossible to leave. At eleven p.m. Ma went down to sit for the *kirtan*. Men and women sang *kirtan* in Ma's presence. Everyone was garlanded and anointed with sandal paste *tilak*. The *kirtan* gathered momentum. Ma was also decked with garlands and sandal paste. In between Ma stoop up and waved her arms to the best, inspiring the others. Seeing her wave her arms the devotees raised their singing of the Name to a crescendo. The four quarters shone in the moonlight which mingled with the gurgle of the Ganga and the sound of the Name to make it enchanting. All those present drank it in. The voices of those who had come specially for the festival from different places, could be heard above the rest. *Sannyasins* shouted, '*Hare Hare Ganga*' and jumped into the Ganga. On the other bank of the Ganga, the *shobha yatra* (procession) of the *sadhus* was on from morning. Even at night some groups had walked past on decorated elephants, camels and horses. We were all engrossed in *kirtan* with Ma. Then a small group of men sat up to continue singing the Name while the rest went to sleep. With great effort I got together some women and together we went down to attend the *kirtan*.

April 14, Thursday

Purna kumbha has been celebrated in Haridwar. Ma is staying on. In the afternoon some people took their luggage and reached the railway station with great difficulty. They, however, returned in exasperation after some hours. Some of us had stayed on at our lodging with Ma. No one was able to leave because of the crowds. The entry to the station has been barred. Ma said, "Try to leave. The town is getting hot. Disease has spread. With so many people here it is necessary to leave as soon as possible. But there seems to be no way of leaving." It was finally decided that at midnight we would travel by car to Dehradun.

After sunset Ma went and sat on the terrace. Today Ma's body seems ill. She could not sleep for a long time. May be she is in the mood to leave and since that has not been possible, her body is restless. She lay down for some time on the terrace and then sat up. Her countenance was happy — she sang as she strolled on the terrace. Everybody was waiting for the car. Ma laughed and said, "The doctor took so much trouble to keep this 'bird' in the house and shut the doors every night at ten, but now the bird has cut away the fetters and is leaving," So saying she laughed.

Around midnight the car arrived. By the time everything was arranged and we departed it was two thirty a.m. The rest of the devotees left by bus to go to Dehradun via Saharanpur. In Ma's car were Hariram Joshi, Rai Bahadur Surendranath Bandopadhyaya, his daughter Nani and I. We travelled through jungle and spotted herds of deer and rabbits. We heard that the forest is also inhabited by tigers and elephants. Englishmen visit these forests twice a year to go hunting.

Ma's health was bad but if we had not made this arrangement and got away from Haridwar we would have suffered great inconvenience.

April 15, Friday

We reached the *ashram* by five thirty a.m. this morning. Ma has fever but her countenance is radiant. We are afraid about Ma's condition because her body is so weak and now she has fever in addition. By nine a.m. Bholanath arrived with all the others. Dr. Jotish of Jamshedpur has rented a small house opposite the *ashram* and is staying in it with his family. They are extremely happy that they have a so close by. Another big house was rented near the *ashram* where the householder devotees are camping.

In the afternoon, in the course of conversation, Ma said, "Action exists as long as language exists; action continues as long as language exists."

Because of Ma's ill health the doors of her room are being kept shut for longer periods of time in order to regulate the crowds. She has continuous fever night and day.

April 16, Saturday

This morning when all were seated around Ma, Shachi Babu suddenly came up with, "Rai Bahadur had decided before he set out from Calcutta that he would take Ma to Mussorie." Ma immediately responded with, "Very well, make preparations to leave right now." But now seeing Ma's poor health Rai Bahadur had no desire to take her to Mussorie. Finally Ma said, "I shall be quite alright, you people watch and see. Come let us go there." Receiving such encouragement from Ma, about sixteen people set out with Ma at eleven a.m. and returned by four p.m. In fact Ma did appear to be slightly better after the trip. At six p.m. Rai Bahadur, Shachi Babu and others left for Calcutta.

April 17, Sunday

We received news that right after Ma left Haridwar a disastrous incident occurred there. A big fire destroyed many people. The police and the social workers clashed violently. The chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Govind

Vallabh Pant, has reached Haridwar and is staying at Dr. Pitambar Pant's residence. The house is now full of police men. If Ma had not departed when she did, we would have been put to great inconvenience. We all realized why Ma, who must have had a premonition of such trouble, had come away from the crowded place. Hearing about all the occurrences in Haridwar Ma smiled gently.

Today Prankumar Babu and family arrived here from Haridwar after much difficulty. They were not in the yellow house with us but were put up elsewhere which is why they could not go along with us. The crowds in Haridwar were so great that it was not possible to communicate with anyone else. The situation was asphyxiating. People were dying right, left and centre. The level of maintenance of law and order which was very good to start with had considerably deteriorated. The condition that had developed was terrifying.

April 19, Tuesday

Today Ma's fever has come down slightly and she is also looking better. Massage and fomentation has been stopped. Ma had said, "You have tried it all for many days. Now stop it."

At about four p.m. Ma went out into the verandah. Somebody sat in the room kept aside for *japa* and sang the Name. Every morning and evening *kirtan* is being sung. In the course of conversation Bhupati Dada said, "Ma, that day you had said that nothing ever goes waste." Ma replied, "Nothing ever goes waste. It only gets transformed. Do you know how? Like the tree that grows out of a seed. The seed is destroyed. Yet from the tree that grows out of the seed, thousands of seeds of the same kind are produced. Again everything is destroyed and yet nothing is destroyed—both statements are quite correct."

In response to another statement Ma said, "Just as I see you people so also do I see the personifications of diseases clearly, whether it is day or night, whether I

sleep or sit or exist in some other condition." Even though it may appear to us that Ma is resting, she does not actually rest — she made the above statement in reference to this.

April 22, Friday

Today Ma woke up a little late. Some people spoke to her in private. At eleven a.m. Ma was offered *bhoga*. Some English ladies came to meet Ma. Till noon they all sat around Ma and talked about various matters. At twelve the room was emptied and Ma lay down to rest.

At four p.m. Ma went out for a stroll. Some people came for *darshan* and one of them was the Rani of Gidhond in Bihar. She is related to the Raja of Solan.

April 23, Saturday

At four p.m. I went with Ma for a drive in Sanjna Devi's car. Hariram is sick; the car stopped in front of his house. Finding Ma in his home he came down slowly for her *darshan*. We also halted at Kashi Babu's house and visited the Manohar temple before returning to the *ashram*. Today Jotish Chandra Guha and Prankumar Bosu were to leave for Calcutta with their families. But their departure was postponed to tomorrow because Prankumar Basu's mother-in-law is very unwell and also because the train did not arrive on time.

April 24, Sunday

When Ma Woke up in the morning some people took her out for a walk. Since Ma's body is weak they walked only a short distance and returned. Ma sat in her room. Nowadays she is eating *chapati* with a little milk, she eats nothing else. Ma said, "If you people feed this body in its natural manner, it will not remain well as you see it." Ma, of her own volition eats very little. She has practically stopped eating rice, vegetables, fruits and other food-stuffs. Her arm is still painful. At the request of all those around her, she keeps her arms warm for awhile. Then

she unwraps the covering and casts it off saying, "Till now you people made all the arrangements, now let my arms get some fresh air."

I now remember something that happened in Haridwar. When Bholanath, wearing flower garlands and sandal paste, went out with a group of people to sing *kirtan*, he would appear very handsome while in the throes of singing. Actually he derives great joy from *kirtan* singing. Groups of people thronged the waysides to touch his feet. On the day of the *Kumbha* bath when he had gone to the Brahma kunda for a dip accompanied by his group, the *naga sannyasins* arrived there and bathed him. They themselves did not know what divinity they saw within him. Social workers came forward to rescue Bholanath from the *sannyasins*, but the latter were reluctant to let go of him and they bathed Bholanath with great delight. Later Bholanath told us, "They caught me in such a state of mind that I cannot even explain what happened; I hardly knew where I was." Bholanath had been going out everyday with his group to sing *kirtan*, as I have mentioned earlier. At six a.m. Ma would go out into the courtyard. Then Bholanath and others would sing the Name before her for some time before they set forth. Gradually more people would join the group as they proceeded, singing *kirtan*. Bholanath would sing for about three hours and used to return singing. He never felt tired or fatigued while singing *kirtan*. He would sing with great enjoyment and dance as he sang.

This morning at nine thirty a.m. two *brahmacharis* (disciples of Sant Das Babaji) arrived for Ma's *darshan*. They were going to Mussorie. One said he had left the householder's fold nine years ago to become a *sadhu*. Even while he was at home he used to visit Kamakhya and Vashishitha *ashram* in between and sit for *japa* and meditation with one pointed attention. At that time many deer would come and stand near him. That made him think that if, as a householder, just a little *japa* made deer

come and stand near him, then perhaps if he renounced everything and started taking God's name, even tigers, bears and other wild beasts might forget their aggressiveness and come near him. But then, he said, that kind of grave *bhava* is no longer present. The other *brahmachari* has a wooden born cloth. He has been away from home for the last eight years. Both of them stayed on in our *ashrama* for the day.

At four p.m. Kashi Babu's wife Lakshmi Rani arrived. Day before yesterday she was very ill with a stomach ailment. Today she came to Ma and narrated a wonderful incident. She said, "Ma, on the first night of my illness I saw a black figure approaching me in my dream. The figure was not terrifying; in fact it was radiant as if it was shining. That figure came before you and stood with folded hands. I thought, 'Such a beautiful figure must be that of Mahadeva himself, but where is the serpent?' Meanwhile the figure seemed to have received some orders from you by way of a signal from your eyes and the order seemed to concern me. You were seated steadily and the order was conveyed only through your gaze. As soon as it received the order the figure opened its joined palms and a terrible snake emerged; it had an enormous hood. Before the snake emerged fully the black figure disappeared. The snake then proceeded to eat my clothes. It pulled off so much of my apparel it appeared as if it would consume all of it. You watched unmoved. Then I shouted out of fear, 'Ma, you sit and watch while this snake eats me! Please save me, save me!' When I screamed piteously the snake also disappeared. I awoke and felt as if Lord Yama himself had been there. By Ma's grace I was saved. May be I was to get some dreadful diseases, but I would not die, I would recover. The next morning I had such a terrible illness that I felt my limbs were breaking. Yet the very next day I recovered."

Ma heard this narration and laughed lightly. I said, "The figure that you described is very similar to the figure

of Yama that you see in pictures."

The incident roused within me the feeling that Dharmaraja had asked Ma's permission to proceed with his work. On receiving Ma's orders he appeared in the form of the Great Time serpent and began swallowing everything as Ma assumed the form of the Changeless Observer and watched the sport of destruction. Absolutely no change was possible within her. Even the mere thought of this form is enough to stabilize a restless mind. Again, Ma also demonstrated the result of prayer. These *bhavas* are possible only within the Eternal Purusha. As the Lord says in the Gita, "I do everything, and yet I do nothing." These totally contradictory phenomena are perceptible within Ma. This kind of *Leela* goes on all the time within Ma, yet we people are unable to understand it every time.

At six p.m. Shri Jotish Chandra Guha and others left. Even before the ailing elderly lady was brought to the door of the *ashrama* and made to sit in the car with great difficulty, Ma said to me, "Disease is but another form of His. Come, let us go and see this Disease form of the Almighty." As she said this and took us to the wayside, the car drove up near us. On the old lady's insistent plea Ma got into the car and she touched Ma's feet. She caught hold of Ma's hands and touched her head and body with it. Ma told her, "Meditate on Vishwanathji as you go along." The old lady was being taken to Kashi. As soon as she left Sanjna Devi arrived with her daughter and son-in-law in their car. Ma and I went in the same car some distance in the direction of Mussorie. The Gujarati Vyasji has returned from Europe two days ago. After dusk he sat down to speak to Ma.

When the devotees departed this evening they all, particularly because of Buni's weeping had tears in their eyes. Ma said, "I am laughing. Then why do you all weep for me?" The other day when Belu and others were leaving Ma laughed and said, "You people are weeping but I am

laughing. Both are essentially the same." This caused Belu to weep louder. She noticed that Ma's eyes were glistening with tears. The result of this was that after returning to Dhaka she ceased to enjoy the life of a householder any longer. Every time she remembered Ma's eyes glistening with tears, she felt like casting everything aside and running to Ma. It is humanly impossible to understand the myriad forms of attraction that reside within Ma. Yet we want to move away -- how unfortunate ! In spite of getting such a wonderful opportunity we lose it fruitlessly. Do we have the power to understand the innumerable ways in which Ma is showering her grace on everyone?

At four p.m. today during conversation I said, "Ma wants to take everything." Ma laughed and said, "But who gives? It is doubtful as to whether, after preserving everything for Himself, He will part with even a fraction of what remains." Everyone experienced the truth of this statement in their hearts.

Shri Kunja Mohan Mukhopadhyaya has been given the name of 'Turiyananda' by Ma, but he has not been initiated into *sannyasa* with a *viraja homa* (sacrifice). It is now two days since Ma sent him to Mangalananda Giri's *ashram* in Kankhal to perform the *viraja homa* according to scriptural injunctions. This morning Bholanath and Akhandananda Swamiji went to witness his initiation into *sannyasa*, as instructed by Ma. His *sannyasa* will be taken during the remaining part of tonight. As Bholanath was not feeling too well Ma told him not to go but he got ready to go nevertheless. Ma told me in solitude, "Bholanath has contracted a disease." I asked, "Then shall I stop him from going?" Ma replied, "It will be fruitless. He will go for sure. The disease will also come on for sure." Saying so much she shut her eyes and kept lying down. A few days before this Ma had said, "Something that seems to you to be a big calamity will occur within a few days."

Sai Ram Sahay

Baba's sweet and Nectar like words

Therefore at all times think upon Me only and fight. With mind and understanding set on me, you will surely come to me. (134 Chap 8-17) Sai Baba used to call his devotees Bhagath Baba Kaka Nana Shama Mayi Aayi etc as his own children.

Baba's Sweet and Nectar like Words

One day at noon after the Arti, devotees were returning to their lodgings, when Baba gave the following beautiful advice :—

“Be wherever you like, do whatever you choose, remember this well that all what you do is known to me. I am the Inner Ruler of all and seated in their hearts. I envelope all the creatures, the movable and immovable world. I am the Controller the wire-puller of the show of this Universe. I am the mother origin of all beings the Harmony of three Gunas, the propeller of all senses, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer. Nothing will harm him, who turns his attention towards Me, but Maya will lash or whip him who forgets Me. All the insects, ants, the visible, movable and immovable world, is My Body or Form.” (Sai Sat Charita Chap III)

Baba's Nectar-like words

The kind and merciful Sai Baba, said many a time the following sweet words in the Masjid “He who loves Me most, always sees Me. The whole world is desolate to him without Me, he who tells no stories but Mine : he ceaselessly meditates upon Me and always chants My name. I feel indebted to him who surrenders himself completely to Me, and ever remembers Me. I shall repay his debt by giving him salvation (self-realization). I am dependent on him, who thinks and hungers after me and who does not

eat anything, without first offering it to Me. He, who thus comes to Me, becomes one with Me, just as a river gets to the sea and becomes merged (one) with it. So leaving out pride and egoism and with no trace of them, you should surrender yourself to Me, Who is seated in your heart.

WHO IS THIS ME?

Sai Baba expounded many a time who this ME (or I) is. He said, "You need not go far or anywhere in search of Me. Barring your name and form, there exists in you, as well as in all beings, a sense of Being or Consciousness of Existence. That is Myself. Knowing this, you see Me inside yourself, as well as in all beings. If you practise this, you will realize all pervasiveness, and thus attain oneness with Me.

Hemadpant, therefore, makes a bow to the readers and requests them humbly and lovingly that they should love and respect all Gods, Saints and devotees. Has not Baba often said, "He who carps and cavils at others, pierces Me in the heart and injures Me, but he that suffers and endures, pleases Me most. Baba thus pervades, all beings and creatures: and besets them on all sides. He likes nothing but love to all beings. Such nectar, pure auspicious ambrosia always flowed from Baba's lips, He, therefore, concludes — Those who lovingly sing Baba's fame and those, who hear the same with devotion both become one with Sai. (Sai Sat Charita Chap XLIV)

BABA FED SUMPTUOUSLY, HOW?

Once, Mrs. Tarkhad was staying in a certain house in Shirdi. At noon, meals were ready and dishes were being served, when a hungry dog turned up there and began to bark, Mrs. Tarkhad got up at once and threw a piece of bread, which the dog gulped with great relish. In the afternoon, when she went to the Masjid and sat at some distance, Sai Baba said to her, Mother, you have fed Me

sumptuously up to my throat, My afflicted pranas (life-forces) have been satisfied. Ever act like this, and this will stand you in good stead. Sitting in this Masjid I shall never, never speak untruth. Take pity on Me like this. First give bread to the hungry, and then eat yourself. Note this well. She could not at first understand the meaning of what Baba said. So she replied—Baba, how could I feed you? I am myself dependent on others and take my food from them on payment. Then Baba replied.

Eating that lovely bread I am heartily contented and I am still belching. The dog which you saw before meals and to which you gave the piece of bread is, one with Me, so also other creatures (cats, pigs, flies, cows etc.) are one with Me. I am roaming in their forms. He, who sees Me in all these creatures, is My beloved. So abandon the sense of duality and distinction, and serve Me, as you did today. Drinking these nectar like words, she was moved, her eyes were bedimmed with tears, her throat was choked and her joy knew no bounds.

(Sai Sat Charita Chap IX)

*tasmāt sarvesu Kalesu mam anusmara Yudhya ca
mayy arpitamanobuddhir mam evai syasy asamsayah*

Therefore commands him to fight. Every individual has to discharge faithfully the duty that is his.

There are people who neglect or give up their earthly duties on the plea that they have taken to spiritual life. And there are the others who excuse themselves from spiritual practices on the plea that in the midst of their worldly engagements they have neither the time nor the inclination for anything else. The sacred and the secular are incompatible, is their view.

But the Lord's message is to sanctify the entire life. The so-called secular duty may be converted into the service of the Lord. Whatever man does or thinks ought to be for the glory of the Maker. By this way man's life

gets perfectly enriched.

The singing medicant on the street artfully plays on the stringed instrument with one hand and with the other, gracefully beats the drum fastened round his neck. These two items of music serve as accompany to his songs. In this manner, man ought to discharge his worldly duties carefully and at the same time be inclined Godward. He should imbibe godly tendencies more and more.

(Sri Ram Krishna)

I though Baba's words are sweet and simple, they are shrouded with mystic meanings.

As noted above from Saisat charita chap III words indicate that Baba is all pervading in every where and in every being.

Sai Sat Charita chapter-44 Baba stresses how the relation between Guru and deciple.

He also reaches Gnana Yoga as the enquiry who I am? What I am where from I came and what is my destination. The Atma which is in all being is myself (Baba).

In Chapter IX Sai Sat Charita Baba is showing how he is omniscien and Omnipresent.

What Lord Krishna taught to Arjuna as noted above Sai Baba preached his devotees as follows.

You may attend to your worldly duties, but give your mind to Sai and his stories. He is sure to bless you.

(Sai Sat Charita Chap X)

We have to take Sai's holy name constantly and do our allotted duty sincerely let Sai Baba give us strength to avide by his teachings.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi also used sweet words while talking with devotees they were as Pitaji Baba, Ma, son Babaji etc.

The mother of Aurobindo Ashram and Sri Ma Ananda Mayi are respectively the embodiment of the Sat-Chit-Ananda.

In this context the under mentioned quotes exemplify their teachings. Ananda Varta October 1985 P 289 describes the above statement.

SRI AUROBINDO :

“This world is God fulfilled in outwardness”.

(SAVITRI-Book Ten, Canto Three)

“It was joy of being on the peaks of God.”

(SAVITRI-Book Seven, Canto Seven)

THE MOTHER :

“It is the Divine Presence that gives values to life. This Presence is the source of all peace, all joy, all security.”

“The Divine manifests in the psychic as love, in the mind as knowledge, in the vital as power and in the physical as beauty.”

“A life consecrated to union with the Divine is the only life worth living.”

Ma:

“Be quiescent in body, speech and mind and know that thou art THAT.”

“Enquire : ‘Who am I?’ and you will find the answer.”
(I am THAT).

(‘Anandamayi Ma’ by Anil Ganguli-Page 141)

Like the other two divine stalwarts Ma had completely identified Herself with the Supreme. Her assertion echoed in the inmost heart of Paramhansa Yogananda, when he met Her, (vide page 453 of his ‘Autobiography of a Yogi’) : “Behold, now and always one with the Eternal, I am ever the same.” Bhaji has reproduced a more emphatic affirmation from Her. “I alone am and all is contained in me.” (Vide page 219 of his book ‘Mother as Revealed to Me’). Anil Ganguli has narrated Her inner attitude (vide his book ‘Anandamayi Ma: The Mother,

Bliss-Incarnate') thus: "Ma sees the world as God and this is the secret of Her marvellous love and compassion."

So this is the real personality of Ma, which has aptly been depicted in eight rchas (mantras) of Rig Veda (Mandala Ten, Sukta 125) in the words of Vak, the holy daughter of Maharshi Ambhran, who had established complete indentification with the Divine Mother. One day Sri Aurobindo, on realisation of such divine personality of the Mother (of Sri Aurobindo Ashram) had also declared to Her : "You are SHE." And it is not a mere coincidence that he formulated his supreme mantra:

'Om Anandamayi, Chaitanyamayi Satyamayi Parame.'

In such divine personality of Her inner being Ma is present eternally. Her presence can still be experienced and realised as concretely as while She was playing Her 'lila' in Her recent incarnation which was only Her "outer manifestation."

Ma's (Initial) Precepts to Her Spiritual Son
Anil Ganguly

In this essay Ma's saying in other contexts and relevant to the subject under consideration will be referred to and extracts will be quoted from writings of renowned authors, including some senior devotees of Ma.

First Precept

"I am what I was and what I shall be"—Ma.

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

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

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

aum tat sad iti nirdeso

brahmanas trividhah smrtah.

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

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

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

“All that I can say is that in the midst of apparent changes of state in body and mind I feel, I am aware, that I am always the same. I feel that in me there is no change of states.”

(Ananda Varta July 1989)

Further Ma's precepts to Bhaiji Her second precept.

(Continued from July '89 issue)

Second Precepts :—

“I am whatever everyone of you says or thinks”— Ma. Bhaiji's question was :

“Who are you in reality?” Ma's answer in her first precept was :

“I am what I was, and what I shall be.”

(Ananda Varta, July, 1989)

As discussed in the last essay, that Precept seems to indicate that Ma is beyond time, space and causality that is to say, Bhrahman, the One-without-a-second.

In answer to Bhaiji's same question, Ma's second Precept was :

“I am whatever everyone of you says or thinks” a different picture of Ma's identity. The second Precept raises questions such as :

- (a) is Ma one or many?
 (b) does not this Precept indiscriminately give unchartered freedom of choice to Ma's identity out of limitless alternatives?

As a matter of fact, people hold different views as to what Ma is — Kali, Durga, Krishna, Shiva, an Avatara, an advanced Sadhaka etc. No agreement on this point seems to exist.

(Ananda Varta January 1990)

In my humble opinion Ma shows us that her divinity is always unchangeable as per her precept "I am what I was and what I shall be" Oct 1987.

In Ananda Varta October '87, P314 it has been stated as follows:

"Ma's duty is to awaken to True humanity and to cast aside his animal propensities — To choose what is excellent and to relinquish the merely pleasurable. Let your mind be like a beautiful flower that may be offered to the Lord in Worship."

"At all times let forbearance be your norm." Say to yourself "Lord everything thou doest is for the highest good." Pray for the power of endurance. Nothing happens that is not an expression of God's Grace Verily all is His Grace.

Anchored in patience, enduring everything, abide by His Name and live joyously".

"Bhagavan, the all pervading in every form in every sect and religion is He alone. To be eager to love God is very fortunate. Man's love should be directed solely towards God, then only will there be peace and bliss. Ever take refuge at His feet It is Man's privilege to realize the ONE the path to truth is open to him.

Ma often referred to Bhagabad Geeta and she wanted the truths in it to be implemented in our day to day life.

"Fill thy mind with Me, be thou my devotee, Worship

Me, and bow down to Me, thus stead fastly uniting thy heart with Me alone and regarding Me, as thy Supreme Goal, thou in her infinite shall come unto me Ma (Sat Chap-34) kindness to her devotees has propagated the eternal truths, which ultimately can lift Mankind from the present morass, to something Lofty and durable.

In Jnaneswari Sri Jnandevi Mahataji states regarding Bhagavad Gita chapter IX Verse 34 as noted below. (vide vision magazine April 1988)

Bhagavad Gita : Chapter IX : Verse 34:

“Infix thy mind in Me, be devoted unto Me, offer service unto Me, render homage to Me, so with thou come right unto Me, having thus attached thyself to Me, and accepted Me as the ultimate goal.”

Lord Krishna said : “Let thy mind be full with My presence : fill thy soul with My love : bow down to My divine being in all.”

He alone worships Me by true sacrifice, who burns up all his desires in his answering devotion to Me. Here indeed I tell thee the innermost secret truth: with thy heart full of My divine being, thou shall reach My eternal home, and realise that treasure of eternal bliss, that is hidden from all.”

The above precepts and sayings are for to read and read, assimilate and put into practice.

Om Shanthi

Om Shanthi

Om Shanthi

Mother — Then and now

Gour Gopal Mukhopadhyaya

The first glimpse of Mother was granted to me at Dacca early in 1925. My father, Sj. Pran Gopal Mukhopadhyaya, was in service there at the time and Mother used to vouchsafe occasional visits to our home. Living in those days a purely domestic life, She was then unknown to the world and unsought. In fact, our first contact with Her was at a time when Her own family looked askance at Her, wondering if Her raptures were not perhaps pathological symptoms rather than signs of spiritual exaltation. They were naturally more at pains to conceal what to them at the time was a disturbing and embarrassing domestic problem than to publicise it. My first impression of Mother was of a person, shy and reticent but calm and self-possessed, with an aura of sweetness and peace that commanded spontaneous homage. The few questions She was pleased to ask me about my health and welfare were put through my mother.

Mother's light might have remained hidden for some-time yet, had not Providence decided to step in at the moment and take a hand in Her dawning revelation. Come to think of it, it could have been nothing short of a divine dispensation which brought my father, unbidden and fortuitous to Her sequestered altar. It was my father's habit to go out to Ramna for his morning walk and he was often accompanied by his esteemed friend, Professor Nani Gopal Bandopadhyaya of the Dacca University. This was in November 1924. Lowering clouds made my father cut short his walk one morning but the professor was not one to miss his full round. Mother was at Shahbagh at this period. Caught in the rain, Professor Bandopadhyaya had taken shelter under a tree, right in front of Shahbagh. By the way, the garden was then out of bounds for the public. A relation of Mother's, the elder brother of Her consort,

saw the professor in distress and very kindly came out to take him along to their place. It went on raining and the tedium of a grey morning had inevitably to be lightened by casual conversation. Eventually, the same morning, the professor was taken into confidence and the perplexities of the family over Mother's disturbing seizures were laid bare before him. With patent embarrassment he was at first asked to keep the matter to himself, but the professor subsequently had their permission to confide it to a person who might possibly throw a helpful light on this obscure phenomenon. He came straight to Sj. Pran Gopal Mukhopadhyaya with his wondrous tale.

So they, the professor and my father fixed up a date and hastened to Mother's place at Shahbagh. Even after this passage of time, it is over twenty years now that he had Her first '*Darsan*', there is a thrill of wonder in my father's voice as he narrates the account of his first encounter. Ushered into Her persence, on the very first day, he was enraptured with what to him, was an unmistakable radiation of spirituality or '*sattvika vikara*'. By Grace Divine, a great spiritual planet had swum into his ken, and he was privileged to watch, in humble awe and holy wonder, its resplendent rise. As te days passed, his devotion grew from more to more. At first Mother seemed tongue-tied and reticent, and it was with difficulty that She could be drawn out. But even Her silence was veritably golden, and a single word, bore a world of meaning and was redolent of Her Passion and Love for the Divine. As Lao Tzo, the great Chinese mystic says, "One who knows does not talk....The sage keeps his mouth shut....and conveys by silence his instruction. To be taciturn is the natural way." The chanting of God's holy name seemed to ravish Her out of the world of senses and those winged words would transport Her to transcendent regions far above the thud and surge of this querulous world. She would be beatifically oblivious of all

and She would dance in Her ecstasy like a little child in sheer inconsequential joy. Ultimately outer consciousness would cease, and there ensued a tempestuous rhythmic rolling on the ground of Her God-possessed body. Like a mountain torrent in spate, the flood of *Mahabhava*, the highest ecstasy would surge and swell through Her body, life and spirit in one majestic sweep. Then followed a state of utter calm, flickerless and still 'peace, perfect peace',—like the sleep of the top at the highest spin. This is the state that has now been for long Her habitation and home. The Alone has taken its flight to the Alone, and for ever and ever, the beating of the eager wings is stilled, for ever stilled.

In those early days, my father was no less struck by Mother's tireless devotion to domestic duties while Her soul was ever tugging at the body's moorings in its eager voyage to the Infinite.

Another remarkable feature of Her life during this early period was Her almost total abstinence from food, only three to nine counted grains of rice being Her daily fare. Indeed Mother used to feel choked if She tried to force even one grain more down Her throat. This is all of a piece with the experience of the great mystics all the world over, an inevitable phase in their development. Yet She looked the picture of radiant health, and showed not even the faintest sign of fatigue at the end of a hard day's work. Her devotion to Her husband was also exemplary : no work on his behalf was too mean for Her. Her love of Truth, Her strength and courage, and above all Her wonderful receptivity to Divine influence have left a fadeless impress on my father's mind, of these Her early days. My father was expecting to leave Dacca on retiring furlough early in June 1925, and Mother had not still emerged from Her domestic seclusion. To his importunate questionings as to when She would reveal Herself to the world She replied enigmatically that he would know it all

about the 6th Asadha that year on which date the *Ambuvachi* commenced. At that time my father did not expect to be at Dacca till that date, but somehow or other, official relief was late in arriving and it was immediately after the 6th Asadha that he found himself in a position to leave.

On the whole of the appointed day Mother lay in trance, speechless and motionless. In the evening She betook Herself along with Her husband to the Siddheswari temple at Ramna, and there the floodtide of *Mahabhava* came sweeping over Her. Mother had an esoteric affinity with this holy spot, and She had once indicated a site close to this temple as the seat of the *Sadhana* of Bholanathji in a previous birth. This place, then discarded and overrun, was subsequently cleared and fenced around and was later the site of what was Mother's first Asrama. Up till this time Mother's glory was a jealously kept secret, and was shared by my father with just a few *Bhaktas* among whom were professors, Nalini Kanta Brahma, Girija Sankar Bhattacharya and Atal Bihari Bhattacharya. It was after the 6th Asadha that Mother's privacy was broken, and first in a trickle and then in an ever-swelling stream, people began to flock to Her and receive Her Grace. She *had* arrived.

The first visit that Mother vouchsafed to us after my father had left Dacca was when She came to Deoghar in 1926. The most memorable incident of this visit was Mother's meeting with our Gurudeva, Sri Balananada Brahmachariji Maharaj who welcomed Her with a warmth which only a feeling of spiritual kinship can evoke. For long after and on numerous occasions Sri Gurudeva used to recall the memory of this meeting and pay eloquent testimony to Her *Sattvik* exaltation. During Her visit to the Asram She attended a *kirtan* recital and went into a passionate storm of ecstatic rapture which eventually subsided into radiant calm. Sri Gurudeva later led Mother

along with Her consort into his *sanctum sanctorum* and they were closeted together for some time. A year or two later Mother paid us a surprise visit to Deoghar with Her consort. She was then on Her way to Vindhya-chal and spent a couple of days with us *en route*. My father happened to be away at the time and only my mother and my humble self were at home. She was ineffably kind and sweet to us.

It was after the lapse of a decade, years which had seen Her canonization and during which myriads of *Bhaktas* from all over India had flocked to Her holy feet, that I was privileged to have Her next *Darsan*. It was in Calcutta late in 1939. Not in the privacy of home or the quiet precincts of an *Asram* this time, but amid the din and bustle of the metropolis with constant streams of visitors surging around. It was a far cry from Her demure domesticity at Dacca, and what a sea-change had come over Her! Her frame now was like *Parvati's*, attenuated by *Tapasya* and ringed by an aureole of sweetness and light. Hers was a presence that radiated peace, 'the peace that passeth understanding', a balm to the 'fretful stir unprofitable and the fever of the world'. And above the storm, an upper-air serenity pervaded Her, and all the time one felt that She was here, yet not here; astronomically far, yet withal so near. An air of easy mastery and indubitable poise, the sure-footed tread on what the *Sruti* calls the razor-edge path, was Hers. Majesty was Hers as to one to the manner born and yet there was nothing forbidding about Her with Her childlike simplicity, buoyant good humour and never failing smile. She was an apotheosis of Light, Love, Power, Goodness, Beauty and Truth.

Puerile and pretentious it would be, and indeed laughably so, to try to show up the sun with the aid of a candle, and it would be no less futile to attempt to gauge the depth, immensity and expanse of Mother's illumination

with the help of our circumscribed intellect and inhibited soul. All revelation is *Svaprasakasa* Being at its white-hot incandescence, and only Being can know Being. Enmeshed in our sensuous sheaths as we are, it is only through fortuitous chinks that the Light streaks into our dark deeps and divinely disturbs our sleep of ages. To Mother's Grace we owe that even with the murky minds that are ours we have been able at times to mirror fitful gleams of the Light Divine which emanates from Her. This should be to us at once a solace and a spur.

Jagaddhatri Puja at "Matri Mandir"

Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society

CALCUTTA ZONAL OFFICE

"Matri-Mandir", 57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road,
Calcutta - 700 019

Dear Brother/Sister,

We have great pleasure in informing you that we have organised Jagaddhatri Puja on the auspicious day of 18th November, 1996, Monday (Bengali 2nd Agrahayan, 1403) and on the following day i.e. on the 19th Nov. 1996, Tuesday (Beng. 3rd Agrahayan, 1403) with Special Pujas of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, Shree Shree Narayanji & Shree Shree Onkarnathji in MATRI-MANDIR. After the Purnahuti the assembled devotees will be entertained with prasads.

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

Yours

In the Service of Ma, Members
(Executive Council)

Dated :

1st July, 1996

16th Agrahayan, 1403.

Shree Shree Anandamayee
Charitable Society

A Life Sketch of 'Mata' 'Shree Anandamayee'

Salim Khan

A nation is, but a collection of Individual and one can easily catch a glimpse of its achievements, by studying the Bio-graphies of only the vading personalite, who are its acknowledged representatives. Great men are the pillars and architect of a nation, and their struggle for success and glory are closely related to the main events of a country. The Bio-graphies of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, etc. can give us a very clear picture of India, in the first half of 20th century. They throw lights on currents and cross-currents of life in these particular periods. How they influence and mould the lifes' of others has been beautifully expressed by a poet in these following lines :-

"Lives of great men, all remind us
we can make our life subline
And departing leave behind us
Foot-prints on the sands of Time.
Foot-prints that perhaps another,
Sailing over life's solemn main
One Forlorn and ship-wrecked brother
Seeing shall take heart again"

Great men with exceptional, talents and rare powers, do always visit this earth from time-to-time. They are perhaps sent by god to re-establish a reign of peace, in the chaotic days. Historians cherish their memories, as great prophets or incarnation of all-powerful creator. They never-die, their examples live eternally in the hearts of all. The guide the destiny of generations even from above. In these catagories of people of great attitude, comes another personality or 'Femina' :- "Shree ANANDA-MAYEE" Ma or Mataji.

Mataji, was born in 1896, in the village of KHEORA, now in East Pakistan. Her parents Devout Brahmins named her Nirmala Sundari. She was extremely obedient, helpful and radiantly happy child by all accounts. Her safaucy was that which had an exercised unusual attraction for those who meet her. For a short time, she was a pupil of the local village school, and an everready child to help with the chores, not only at home but at all the neighbouring houses.

Nirmala Sundari, was married to Ramani Mohan Chakraborty, when she was not completed her 18th year. In accordance with her, village customs, she stayed with her husbands' family, for the first few years, and when she was 18 years of age, she went to keep house for Bholanath, her husband. There was nothing for this unusual couple. She had said :- "My parents told me, that I should respect and obey Bholanath, as my guardian and he was like a Father to me, also I respected him due to my Father." Me was a remarkable man, from all accounts. And when the time came for them to stay together, the young husband found herself, to be extraordinary of smart, gentle, hard working and Joyful Nature, but without the trace of worldly feelings or desires. She has an exclusive state of humour. She had said :— "One who makes you task towards the one beloved, he verily is a real and true Friend."

Mataji was never taught any spiritual practices, neither did she engage in the accepted sense of the term. Some Devotees, in praise of her, all encompassing message say that she welcomes all faiths as true paths to god. The fact was that Sri Ma saw no differences, which had to be cemented; to her indeed the one only. She would be in exalted state of Bhava or Samadhi, and her body would assume various yogic postures. She watched herself going through the innumerable paths of Sadhana, as she watched herself performing the household work. She is able even to the life of a hard-working housewife with that of a person engaged in Manifesting Sadhana.

Mataji did not need or ask for publicity, and she tried best to avoid it, the maidens of village sought others, and gradually crowds began to assemble round mataji's radiant personality, seeking advice on spiritual things, as well as on their own problems. Mataji did not go out of her way to talk to any people. If Bholanath, ask her to speak to people he would do so; not otherwise, and she never did anything without his consent. By this Bholanath, occupied a peculiar position. But After the death of Bholanath in 1938, at the age of 56, other devotees had tried to same mataji, and even made all arrangements for her. Mataji herself has had no *give*, neither did she had chosen attendants. Mataji Devotees travels of residence are fortuous. One of the Mataji's expression respected was ('जी हो जाया'). The mere presence of Mataji around people, Mother and children, awakens in them a feeling which is 'ANANDA'. This destiny later on, because the most important term of her name. She had said :— "One who makes you turn towards the one beloved, he verily, is a real and true Friend".

The people did not talk about state affairs with her. She only says about god, and religious aspirations of man. Also she believes in true paths to god. The same may be said about her treatment of women. She recognised, no inferiority or superiority. She said :- (If such a word can be used for her) the same high quality of asceticism for the Brahmacharis, and Bhrahmacharinis of the ashram. During the years from 1918-1926 she stayed in Dacca, she practiced the various yogic practices, indicated in the Hindu Scriptures, as well as of other faiths.

Sri Ma, when speaking with modern young people showed herself to be fully aware of the trends of times. She, with her great humour and understand tried to make them accepting her request to search for him, who is hidden in the cave of heart. She did not respond to any kheyala, for her recovery. For her practical problems she has moved from the public audience apart, from a few exceptions. From the late seventies and in 1981, she did

not respond to any kheyala for her recovery, till the Ati Yudra Yajna of kankhal; the greatest of Vedic Yajna performed in the Hindu Scriptures. For this she had developed the Satya Yuga in the *from* age of Kali. Shree Jagatguru Shankara charya once asked Sri Ma to attend the annual Durga Puja at Shrigeri, and urged him to perform kheyala for her recovery. Sri Ma said in her usual gentle tone :— “This Body has no sufferings, it is being, recalled towards unmanifests.”

Her Teachings :-

- 1) Mahamaya is one thing, and Vishya Maya, the Delusion of Sense Object-Sense enjoyment-quite another. Aspire to self-realization.
- 2) Infatuation (Moha) causes entalgement, while the love of god leads to self-revelation of man.
- 3) To make the effect of Yajna, less
It must be done spontaneously, of its own.
- 4) According to worldly things :— Sons are the most important of all things but, at theirs ‘A son may be *desowned*, but that Friends *cause* never give up.’
- 5) Every thing is god’s Vibhuti—His Maya—His lila—His own Play.

At last, on becoming one of the hearts of all, Sri Ma’s body became unmanifest on Friday evening of August 27th ’82 around evening of 8.00 p.m. As Sri Ma has said, that she did belong to everybody so everybody participated, in bidding farewell for the human body, which had sustained their Ma for 86 years. It was a great threat to the people’s mind, as :—

“Lives of great men, all remind us.

We can make our life sublime
And departing leave behind us

Foot-prints that perhaps another
On the sands of Time.”

“May God rest his soul in peace.”

Mother and Her Ways

Swami Paramananda

There are some remarkable features and aspects of Mother's personality. What strikes us most in the first place is the complete absence in Her of the various passions and qualities natural to all living creatures (Jiva) such as anger, greed, envy, hatred, desire, aversion, hypocrisy, falsehood etc. These have never been observed in Her either by ourselves or by those who have been in Her company for a long time. Even under the gravest provocation She is always the same, serene, unperturbed, firmly poised like the Himalayas. Mother's patience, endurance, simplicity, Her benign appearance, and Her care-free, cheerful face lit up with charming smile and Her nature ever free from dualities such as happiness and misery, likes and dislikes, are indeed unique. When we see Her we feel that She does not belong to this body nor does She live in this world of ours.

Equally remarkable and worthy of note is, in our opinion, Her universal toleration and love. Mother keeps Her door wide open for all, be they mad, stupid, absolutely unprincipled or worthless, — persons whom everybody avoids. Knowing very well their real character, for nothing is hidden from Her, She welcomes them all with the same smile and pours Her healing compassion and grace upon them all. If we object to Her giving shelter to such people, She says, "Where will they go? This body does not call anybody deliberately. When they come, serve them as much as you can. Every one is His form or image. Knowing them so, try to serve them. He reveals Himself in diverse forms." Such as all-embracing love and mercy as mother's, which denies itself to none, is indeed rarely to be found. Almost everybody offers shelter and protection after first considering a person's worth or fitness. But

Mother extends Her protection and mercy to all who seek them, regardless of all considerations of fitness and qualities. Mother is above all sectarianism and tolerates every shade of opinion, variety of religious doctrine or creed. She had no Guru of Her own and had no disciple except Bholanath and makes none now. When requested to initiate somebody She says, "Nothing deliberate or intentional can be done by this body. In the case of Bholanath, "*Kheyal*", (an urge) came spontaneously. Even now if there arises a *Kheyal* it may happen again. No such vow has been taken by this body that it will or will not initiate anybody. Whatever comes off, comes of its own accord." Having no Guru of Her own, mother belongs to no particular sect (*Sampradaya*). When asked about it, She says, "Leave aside the question of this body. It is but a little child of yours. This body is what each of you thinks it to be. Further, there is but one sect in reality. Everyone is seeking Him. And this body says whatever has been said or is being said about Him is right. For He is infinite; He is one. So whatever anybody says is correct, no matter what sect that person belongs to. What matters is that he should think of Him. All thoughts, except those about Him, are fruitless and painful (बृथा एवं व्यथा)." Again She says— "It is He alone who exists in all forms and He also resides in the formless. So what is needed is that you should think of Him in any way you choose, whether as one with a form or without it. For He is indeed everything; therefore all who think of Him or seek Him belong to the same sect. Everyone should reason thus that since there is no end or limit to Him, so in whatever manner or with whatever notion, people seek Him, they all belong to the same sect; for after all they are all seeking Him alone."

Mother says further,— "Some teaching or doctrine is inferior and some superior, or some path is more true and some less; this body has nothing to do with such controversies and conflicts. Whatever anybody says is right

from his standpoint. Each person realises in his own way the Infinite and the Supreme Reality. So it is but natural, that there must be diversity or variety in men's attempts to express or reveal Him. In that Infinite Reality is to be found the unity and harmony that subsists even in the midst of conflicting and divergent doctrines and opinions. Nothing is outside the Infinite Totality or the Whole (अखण्ड), not even the "non-existent."

As all sects and doctrines are equal to Mother, followers and aspirants of every sect come to Her and obtain peace and joy from Her.

Whatever be the path one follows, whatever be one's '*Bhava*' (attitude or sentiment), everyone feels blessed by receiving favour and grace from Mother, each according to his *Sanskaras* (tendencies and dispositions). We have heard from many people belonging to the different *Asramas* and orders of Hindu life such as *Brahmacharis*, *Grihasthas*, *Sannyasis* that the recollection or contemplation of the '*Ista*' (the chosen deity) of each is stimulated or is induced in them when they sit near Mother. Mother too, says that whatever the *Guru* has instructed is right. His instructions should be followed. One can find peace only by doing so. For this reason people of every sect and order of life find peace when they come to Her. Almost everybody feels that Mother loves him the most and so is extremely kind to him and favours him and holds the same doctrine as his.

Let us now say some thing about the word '*Kheyal*' which mother frequently uses. If anyone wants to know something from Mother or requests Her to do something saying, "Mother, you know everything and can do everything", She never says, "I cannot do it, or I do not know it or I have no power to do it." Such expressions as "I do not know or cannot do, have never been heard from Mother. Her usual reply in such cases is, "There is no *Kheyal* now; if circumstances allow, ask again." As far as

we have understood, Mother has none of these, — mind, intellect, egoism, found in us nor the three states, waking, dreaming, or sleep. In Mother there is only this state of one-ness with the Infinite or She is Infinity itself. So in Her there is none of the conflict between desire and aversion, mind and intellect etc., yet in a sense everything is there. Mother says, “Here (inside Her) it is all swept and rubbed clean; there is no thought of any kind. As you will play on it so you will hear.” Mother’s movements arise directly from the Ultimate Reality or the Supreme Will according to our *Sanskaras*. When our desires correspond to the Supreme Will, then they are fulfilled. That Supreme Will manifesting itself to us according to our *Sanskaras* is probably the “*Kheyal*” of Mother.

As Mother is absolutely devoid of the gross, narrow ‘ego’, so the expressions of this ego, as “I shall or I know, I can, I do etc.” and their negatives are never heard from Her. Generally Her remarks are liberally sprinkled with a few “ifs” or qualifying expressions such as “if circumstances are favourable,” “if there is no obstacle,” “one cannot be certain of a single breath” “let whatever happens happen.” Not that She deliberately avoids one kind of language or uses the other, but such words come spontaneously from Her.

There is no end to the extraordinary aspects of Mother’s Personality. In fact everything about Her viz. Her laughter, weeping, singing are all supernormal and extraordinary, as those who have had the good fortune to witness and hear them, will testify.

It is almost impossible to convey their special quality through words only. A few more interesting details may be added. Mother sees disembodied souls of saints, *sadhus* etc. She says, “they are sitting here round about his body just as you are. Only you cannot see them.” Once She said,— “There are so many of those saints and others

sitting inside the room that there is hardly any space available." She sees also the forms of diseases and often describes them. She says, — "Every disease has its own peculiar form, when such forms come before this body they are not forbidden or opposed, just as you are not prevented from coming. Occasionally however, they may be opposed or have their destination changed, — suppose, for example, they might be coming in this direction but they are deflected in a different way.

It is impossible to understand the strange, extraordinary personality of Mother unless She of Her own accord reveals Herself to us. Mother's teachings are universal, simple and touching to the heart. She never preaches or gives instruction with any definite purpose. She also says, "One gets as much as one is destined to get from this body in the light of his *Bhava*."

Ma's Hundredth Birthday

Mahua Das

You blessed the souls
To breath the fresh air of the earth,
But You had to take your human form for them.
When the silent moon emerged out of the clouds,
And shimmered on the dark planet,
Indeed, it was your divine light on earth
Your first cherubic smile, gave
Immense pleasure To your
Humble Parents!
It was you, O, Mighty Mother
Who endured all hardships;
While some slept in palaces
Only blessed by You
It was some time after
When the world came closer to You
You taught the worldly lessons;
You narrated the fables
You gave them momentous happiness,
Amidst there sufferings
You didn't mind their vexation
Indeed they were your children
And as the world changed courses,
Your mortal body ceased to breath
But You didn't leave us,
And even today we celebrate
Your "Hundredth Birthday"
Indeed the custom will go on
And till doom's day,
It will go on for ever.

Matri Darshan

Bhaiji

(Translated by Ganga Charan Dasgupta)

Sree Sree Pitaji

Pitaji has blest my life with his natural kindness in various ways. He looked upon me as his god-child. From the very first day of our meeting I have been able to obtain his affection. His love and affection has guided me through life. Once I had an impression that one could have father's affection only through mother's. But in this case I am compelled to admit, it is through Pitaji's kindness and love that I could find myself into Mother's grace. From a worldly point of view, I can state definitely that without Pitaji's ardent eagerness to secure the welfare of all men and his great kindness for all beings, no body would have been fortunate enough to see Mother.

We are all helpless people much weighed down with the burden of the world as well as with our numerous infirmities. It was Pitaji who pointed out many of the weak spots in our nature and helped us a lot to purify and ennoble ourselves. During my protracted illness of a very serious nature, his sincere good wishes and blessings helped me a lot in imparting a new life and vitality to my body which was almost tottering under the blows of death.

When I went to Siddheswari Ashram, Pitaji with great emotion pulled me on and made me sit on the lap of Mother, saying "I leave your child on your lap and now his life and future entirely depends on your grace". For Pitaji was much afraid that I might have a relapse of the disease, I had fallen a victim to.

I heard from Mother many years back that She had seen a light radiating from his forehead at the parting of

his brows. In all acts of worship, of meditation as well as in the performance of religious rites, his earnestness and devotion was extraordinary.

We have not the capacity to ascertain what wonderful and hidden powers silently worked in Pitaji and made him so full of joy at all times by making others share his delight and happiness. He was always satisfied even with the most meagre response from persons he loved and blest. Those who came in contact with him, must have been convinced that in his character there was an inexhaustible store of sweetness. Every body was eager to have his blessings. With little boys and girls his frolicsome and pleasant manners, his laughter and fun with them, were a delightful sight to see. Mother found in him child-like simplicity and introduced him under the name of "Gopal" to all persons that came to Her.

His heart was so generous that he had no hesitation to worship Mother as the Supreme Goddess of all powers.

There were persons who thought that Pitaji had an angry disposition. But those who had an opportunity to mix with him intimately, must have noticed that behind his apparent expression of anger and indignation, there lurked a boundless store of affection and love for the welfare of the person whom he took to task. His only vow of life was how to wish good for others and how to do people a good turn.

Pitaji says, "Enjoyments and sacrifice are the twin faces of mind; it is like the outward garment of our soul. The more a man approaches God with strength and power, the more does he find the final outcome of the two to be for the good of man.

My little story

Many of my friends and relations, kinsmen as well as strangers, raise questions regarding the present course of my life. To them I must say something about me.

I should say first of all that I have no answer to the query why I revere Mother so much. But I find that I stand speechless if I be asked to try to get away from Her. My mind, my heart, my very life rests at Her feet day and night. At times I come to feel that if the flow of my thoughts towards Her were to stop, my life stream would also be choked up. I have no desire to secure any spiritual benefit from my association with Mother. That I have sought shelter at Her Feet because I have been cured of my disease, is equally misleading. It is not also a fact that I have been attracted by the endless manifestations of Her spiritual power.

But of one thing I am pretty well certain, that Her influence which pervades the Universe has closed in about me on all sides, just as a Mother's embrace does about a helpless infant.

I may add, — "The joy that naturally fills my heart at the sight of those blessed feet of Mother is so overpowering and so deep that even a small fraction of that joy I cannot obtain from the best things of this world or of the next nor even from the devoted worship of all the Gods and goddesses. That joy is my only bondage and this bondage I feel convinced, is the only path of my salvation.

Mother says, "I have brought you out of the narrow groove of the world. It was no easy job for me to draw an ease-loving fellow like you from the worldly chains". I too, realise fully that without Her natural kindness, it was impossible for a man like me, torn with infinite distractions, to find a lasting shelter at Her Feet.

Mother also says, "No body, up till now, has yet realised that had you been left in the midst of the worries of your family, you would have long been with your ancestors and gone to ashes". I fully appreciate the truth of this forcible statement.

My wife has helped me a lot in my path to spiritual uplift. From her birth she has had a great selfpride. She

came from a very rich and respectable family. She was the first child of her parents and as such, an inordinate sense of self-respect and family prestige was ingrained in her nature.

When I first saw her at the 8th or 9th year of her life, the picture of pure simplicity that she then possessed in her looks, continues to be the same even now.

When I first saw Mother, Pitaji was the chief helper in enabling me to approach Her feet. In the beginning of my association with Mother, my wife had a profound regard for Her, but of late, owing to her inherited pride for high pedigree and prestige, there has developed a spirit of rebellion in her and she has been left in the shade to wear off the result of her *Karma*.

As I gradually developed a spirit of self-surrender towards Mother and became gradually indifferent towards my family and society, my wife began to look upon my change with great disfavour. One day she plainly said to me, "Cannot we develop our religious life by remaining inside the fold of a family and society? It is much better to abstain from religious practices altogether than to undermine one's health by religious excesses neglecting the duties to one's son and daughter.

I tried in vain to make her realize that as soon as a man tries to break loose from the chains of the world, one's conduct is looked upon as arbitrary by society. I told her that I was not leaving anybody in the family but only seeking my spiritual uplift to be able to look after their welfare better. I added, — "Really speaking, to make some progress in religious life in the midst of all the distractions and apparently sweet pleasures of life is very difficult unless one seeks to break away from them by temporarily stepping off from the customary grooves of family traditions.

But all my persuasions were of no avail. She said one day rather abruptly with some irritation, "From your

present indifferent modes of life it appears that your living with us in the family circle or outside it means the same thing to us". I laughed and said, "If I happen to go away with the robes of a Sannyasi, leaving you all, will it not cause you pain?" She retorted with an air of self-pride, "We shall certainly not feel pain". My little son and daughter were there. I noted down the remark in a small book. Such discussions were frequent. Niranjana also tried to soothe her with soft words but her heart was too sore to find peace.

After sometime, I was attacked with Tuberculosis of the lungs. I was bed-ridden for a longtime. Her superhuman patience and endurance, absolute disregard for her own safety in nursing me day and night, her steady, whole-hearted, sleepless attendance by my bed-side without any sign of fatigue, month after month, her strong will to pull me up and her absolute indifference to severe blows that threatened her from other quarters, are indeed unique in these days.

A few months before I resumed my duties after recovering from the said illness, her younger brother whom she loved like her own self, died in the prime of life. That damped all her spirits. After this bereavement, she became quite indifferent to all family affairs. She already did not at all like my devotion to Mother; after she lost her brother, her dislike turned into an attitude of protest and opposition. My son and daughter too developed like attitude towards me.

They came to believe that I was drifting further and further away from them. Not only they, but my own close relations came to look down upon my conduct as something quite unnatural. Even my elder brother Satish Chandra Roy to whom I was very much devoted since my boyhood by ties of deep love, affection and regard, and who led a very clean life in accordance with the dictates of Shastras, morality and religion, wrote me saying, "I fail

to understand in what way your life is drifting. Relying on the wings of a woman, nobody has, up till now, reached spiritual eminence. At least there is no such record in our history and mythology. I am afraid that you may lose both this world and the next by your false step, like the mythical figure Trisanku."

I realised gradually as I myself failed to judge my own state of mind, how could I expect others to understand my position ? So I put a stop to all discussion with other persons about Mother. The result was that my wife lost all self-control and took up a positively arrogant and hostile attitude towards me and did not hesitate to disclose publicly that my conduct has been unsocial.

According to Hindu ideas of religion and society the relation between husband and wife is indissoluble. Tradition has it that even in heaven one has to wait for the other to arrive there ! So when there is a slackening of the conjugal ties the outburst in either case naturally becomes as damaging as the sweep of a tornado. I silently bore all outbursts. I used to pray to Mother to calm Her feelings by rousing better sense in her. By her opposition I was not at all pained; on the other hand I was released from various ties and I got a unique opportunity to avoid gradually all the childish frivolities of our nature which ordinarily dominate our family life.

It was never an aim of my life to renounce world for religion and view the worldly affairs as illusory. My education helped me to build up that aim. As long as I shall have a real existence, the world, too, would be a reality to me. But the supreme light that reveals this world of sense and illumines the inner world of thought has to be awakened in one's life to carry on the work of this world fruitfully. To achieve that objective temporary suspension of our normal duties to family and society and passing sometime in a place of retirement to enable one to devote wholly to spiritual culture, prove to be ex-

tremely helpful. Contemplation of the divine need be reinforced by a free life of seclusion. My people said to me, "You have left us." But I don't feel like that. I remained where I was all along, — only a small distance in space separated me for the time being. No religious doctrine advocates a life exclusively in the chained circle of one's family for ever.

Whenever I think of my wife, I come to feel that her opposition towards the course of my life is chiefly due to her desire to secure the welfare of her husband and children. It was not motivated by any desire for self. From the standpoint of the world she snapped all connections with Mother no doubt, but in all her thoughts and actions Mother was always present before her mind though not as a friend and helper.

Ashram News

Concluding Ceremony of the Birth Centenary Festival of Shree Shree MA Anandamayee at MATRI-MANDIR

The concluding Ceremony of the year long Birth Centenary Festival of Shree Shree MA Anandamayee, which had started on 17th May, 1995 at this Matri-Mandir — along with the rest of India, was observed on 6th May, 1996 at Matri-Mandir.

From the very dawn of Monday — the 6th May, 1996, this auspicious Ceremony started by chanting of Mahanam. Gradually recitation from various religious scriptures had started. Then started the Special Puja of Shree Shree MA, Sriman Narayan and Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnathji. As a part of the Special Puja, Kumari Puja was also performed. At noon after Bhog and Special Arati, prasad was distributed among the devotees present.

Due to General Election there was a scarcity of conveyance and several other constrains. In spite of all these more than a thousand devotees attended the Ceremony and took prasad at noon.

In the evening again Special Puja and Kirtan were performed. After that Prasad was distributed among about 400 devotees who were present at Matri-Mandir. The main rites had started at 3 A.M. which continued till dawn of 7th May, 1996. After which prasad was distributed among at least 200 devotees who were present at Matri-Mandir.

At 5 a.m. on 7th May, 1996, Nagar Sankirtan started. A long queue of devotees of Ma with the portrait of Shree Shree MA and Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnathji, placed in a well decorated Matador Van, marched through the main-arteries of Calcutta, chanting Mahanam and

returned again at Matri-Mandir. After Nagar-Sankirtan some religious rites were performed and then fruits and Special handkerchieves were distributed among the devotees. Then the conclusion of the entire Ceremony was announced.

The Occasion of the Birth Centenary Celebration of Shree Shree MA Anandamyee will never come again in the life of the present devotees. Hope, the memories of this Festival will remain in the heart of all devotees and remind them that during this Occasion we all able to embrace each other — forgetting all our differences at least during this Occasion we all tried to embrace each other.

Obituary

Smt. Anjali Ghatak, an ardent devotee of Shree Shree MA Anandamayee, breathed her last on Wednesday — the 15th November, 1995 at her own residence. We pray to MA for the eternal peace of the departed soul and also pray to Her to grant strength and peace in the heart of the members of the bereaved family to stand the loss.



Sri Nityananda Chakraborty, an ardent devotee of MA, left His mortal coil on Friday, the 20th April, 1996 at hospital, Calcutta. May his soul rest in peace eternally at the lotus feet of MA and may MA grant enough peace and strength to the members of the bereaved family to bear of his absence.



Swami Onkarananda Giri, one of the old saints of our Ashram and a favourite son of our Pujya MA, passed away on Monday, 1996 at 8.30 p.m. to take eternal rest in the lap of our divine Mother, Shree Shree MA Anandamayee. We pray for devotion of His soul and peace in the mind of his family members.
