

# Contents

## ENGLISH SECTION

	Page No.
1. Matri Vani .....	1
2. Conversations with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee— Prof. B Ganguly	5
3. What mother is not—Vijaianand .....	11
4. Mother—D. Padmanabhan, I. C. S. (Retd.)	23
5. Mother Anandamayee : A Votary of Divine Love —Dr. Chou Hsiang Kuang, Ph. D.	27
6. In quest of God and Sad-Guru—P.M. Verma, M.A.	33
7. New Diary Leaves—Atmananda .....	40
8. From the life of Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee— Dr. Bithika Mukerjee, M. A., D. Phil.	45
9. Matri Lila .....	52

---

*Printed & Published by K. Bose for*  
Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, Varanasi,  
at the Kamala Press, Godhowlia, Varanasi.



The ONE who is the Eternal, the Ātman,  
He Himself is the traveller on the path of Immortality,  
He is all in all, He alone is.

## MĀTRI VĀNI

“*Mahashunya*—the Great Void—is alone His Form. But it has to be distinguished from the ordinary void that belongs to the world ; where this functions the Great Void cannot be comprehended. • What is and what is not ? Yet everything is and is also not—and neither is it not, nor is it. Albeit—to find all by losing all, this is what is wanted.”

\* \* \*

“You and I are two persons and yet you and I are one ; and the gap between the two of us, this also is myself : there can be no question at all of duality. Attachment and hate arise out of the sense of duality.”

\* \* \*

---

• *Mahashunya*—Great Void means Absolute Consciousness characterized by the absence of all creation. *Shunya* or (ordinary) void is the interval or gap between every two persons, things, feelings, thoughts, ideas, etc., which of necessity exists in the world of duality.

“Whether this body talks to you or laughs or lies down to sleep, or whether it sinks to the ground and rolls about, as sometimes happened during *kirtan*—no matter how many different states and conditions this body may appear to be in, it nevertheless remains always in the one state. Indeed everything occurs out of the one condition.”

\*

•

•

“Again when *puja*, etc. was spontaneously performed by this body, \* then the particular characteristics of the deity worshipped, the *āsanas* (postures) and *mudras*, † the display of power and so on, specific to that deity, everything manifested through this body in exactly the prescribed manner. But all this, far from being the product of imagination, was as real as you are here right now before me. Every detail of the paraphernalia necessary for the ceremony not only appeared of itself, in fact it issued from this body! Even the forms (*murti*) of gods and goddesses were taken out of this body, made to sit down and then were worshipped. Again when the *puja* had been completed they re-entered this body exactly from where and in the same way in which they had emerged. It has to be borne in mind that everything is possible.”

•

•

•

---

\* Mataji here refers to the time when She played the role of a *sādhika* (in Her twenties.)

† Positions and movements, mostly of the hands and fingers that are a part of ritual.

“You know in what manner service was done by this body : I myself was the patient, I was his suffering, and the nursing was also done by me. This is why whatever was required anywhere, at any time, came about in precisely the way needed. You also should exert yourselves and try at least to engage in service with heart and soul, considering whomsoever you serve as your own self : by so doing, no matter what be the nature of your service, it will in time become instinct with life.”



“It is characteristic of this body that from whatever point of view anyone may speak at any particular time, it will respond from precisely that point of view or angle. This body is not always consistent in what it says in the way you would be. Everyone’s varying thoughts and feelings are indeed ever clearly visible before my eyes.”



“If happens off and on that the forms (*murti*) of diseases† approach this body. They may even enter it and have free play for a certain period of time. It is the nature of this body neither to invite anyone nor to send anyone away. Just as you exist, so do illnesses. This body does not turn

---

† Mataji says that every disease has a distinct form (*murti*) that can be perceived on a subtle plane.

you away, as you well know ; why then should it mete out a different treatment to them ?”

\*

\*

\*

“For this body only the ONE exists, there is not even the possibility of a second. Who then can give trouble to whom ? Only if there be ‘another’ can he cause trouble.”

---

“Light is gained by His Grace alone. He is the One to be held in remembrance at all times. There is nothing else that you need feel concerned about, father : contemplate only Him and Him alone.”

“Ma”

# Conversations with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

RECORDED BY PROFESSOR B. GANGULY

( Translated by Atmananda )

( 2 )

*Question :* What is the significance of the saying in the Bible : “Knock and the door shall be opened to you ?” Does it refer to the opening of the door of the ego ?

*Mataji :* What is your opinion ? One has of course to break up one’s own ego.

*Question :* When the walls that make up the ego have been demolished, what happens ?

*Mataji :* On what foundation do those walls rest ?

*The Questioner :* On the cover that is spread over the Light of the Self.

*Mataji :* Now you have yourself given the answer !

*Question :* What actually is the ego ?

*Mataji :* You imagine that you are the doer of your actions—this indicates the existence of the ego in you. ‘Duniya’ (world) means ‘du-niya’ (based on duality). Here the cause of the conflict lies in the idea that the ego is the doer of actions. Duality breeds conflict, problems, the separate ‘I’ and its activities. In the imperfect ‘I’ the ego is present, while the realization ‘I am the Self (*Atma*)’ is of the perfected

'I'. The result of egotism is blindness. In the attitude of mind : 'I am the Lord's eternal servant,' there also seems to be duality, but the worldly 'I' has not survived. Not until the I is perfect, in other words not unless '*Aham Brahmasmi*' (I am the Brahman) has been realized will the ego be destroyed from its roots.

*Question* : Which of the two is better : to break the door and enter, or having broken up the ego, to remain lying at the door ?

*Mataji* : In the first instance the ego has still confidence in its own power and capacity, while the second is a case of self-surrender—and therefore He is sure to open the door and let you see the Light Eternal. The door is meant to be broken ; this may be achieved either by self-effort or by the special *sādhana*\* that the *Guru* prescribes. All *tapasya*† has for its sole purpose the piercing of the veil of ignorance. But God is not revealed by the seeker's own effort, He is ever Self-luminous and does not depend on any action. However, by one's own doing has the veil been fashioned and by one's own doing will it be destroyed ; and then the One who is eternally pure, fully enlightened and free will shine forth. Only what is removable will be removed ; how is it possible to remove what cannot be removed by any means ? When your life is centred in activity, either in the world or in the domain of thought, you experience relative happiness, for the sphere of the mind is in fact the kingdom

---

\**Sādhana*—Spiritual practice performed for the purpose of preparing oneself for Self-realization.

†*Tapasya*—Hardships undergone with the definite object of attaining to the Spiritual.



of delusion. There, true happiness, which does not depend on anything, cannot be found. To be delivered from this want one has to take recourse to *sadhana*, and then the Beloved (*Ishta*) becomes revealed by virtue of the *Guru's* power. Where nothing undesired (*an-isht*) can be, in other words no want or sorrow, that is indeed one's *Ishta*. Try to burn what can be burnt by Knowledge and to melt what can be melted by faith and devotion; then the Beloved will stand revealed. The path of discrimination leads to the realization of the essence of Knowledge and the path of devotion to the revelation of the essence of Love. Verily, both are one: by *bhakti* one will arrive at a state where the Beloved is seen everywhere and in everything; and by discrimination at the realization of the One-Brahman-without-a-second. Both are in fact one and the same; no matter what be a person's method of approach, ultimately he will reach the One Destination. In nature there is gradual development, while the One State in which there are neither grades nor stages lies beyond nature. Here Pure Consciousness is realized, where even though the whole is taken from the whole, yet the whole remains unimpaired; where even though the void is taken from the void, yet the void remains unaltered. He alone exists in the guise of nature as well as of supernature. By persevering in spiritual practice the 'I' (*Aham*) will be transformed into "I am THAT" (*Soham*); or in the case of those who advance along the line of devotion the wayward servant will be transformed into the Eternal Servant of the Lord.

In the realm of the fleeting there can be no peace, notwithstanding the great variety of objects of enjoyment,

for none of them endure. The sense of want will never vanish unless the Eternal One has been realized. Actions that are the expressions of the ego will only lead to more perplexity ; but by engaging in *sadhana* the Self will be found. Do not be a traveller on the path of death ; become a pilgrim on the path of Self-realization. A life burdened by desires for sense objects is the path of death. So long as craving and passion persist, one is obliged to take a 'return-ticket' as it were, in other words one will be reborn in order to experience pleasure and pain again and again.

*Question* : Convicts in jail know for how long they have been sentenced. Why do the prisoners of the earth not know for how long they will be confined ?

*Mataji* : Why, indeed, it is made known to them. Supermen, saints and sages by proclaiming Truth are at all times making it clear that this world is a prison-house. Try to return from your captivity.

*Question* : Who is a mother ( *māti* ) ?\*

*Mataji* : A mother ? This is the mother—earth. ( Pointing to the earth ).

*Question* : May householders take initiation by *mantra* from a *sannyāsi* ?

*Mataji* : From whomsoever a person is fated to receive something, from him will it be received.

---

\* *Mā* is the Bengali word for mother. The suffix 'ti' is commonly affixed to singular nouns, thus '*Māti*'. But *Māti* with long 'i' ( ee ) means earth.

**Question :** Is it right and proper to sever one's connection with one's family *guru* ?

**Mataji :** Ultimately all Gurus are one ; He who can reveal the eternal *Guru* who dwells in the disciple, He alone is a true *Guru*. If a *Guru* is given up, it must be understood that He has never really been accepted.

**Question :** What is the meaning of the word '*ānandamayi*' ?

**Mataji :** From times immemorial *anandamayi* has been the epithet of *Bhagavati* ( God conceived as mother ). *Anandamayi* is in fact contained in all things. Thus it is said that 'wherever a man is, there is *Shiva* and wherever a woman—*Gauri*'.

**Question :** Why is *ānanda* ( bliss, happiness ) so attractive to all human beings ?

**Mataji :** All manifestations are the manifestations of *ānanda*.

**Question :** What is sorrow ?

**Mataji :** Sorrow ( *dukha* ) is inherent in duality.\*

In the realm of the mind, in the material world, which is the world of duality, there must of necessity be sorrow. Everything without exception is a form of God. In the disguises of sorrow, shadow, error and illusion manifests also but the ONE. Nevertheless, the special abode of sorrow and sin is where the thought of God is not. There is a story, in

---

\* *Du* means two, and *dukha*—sorrow.

which it is related that after God had created the universe and assigned their rightful places to all creatures, sin approached Him and asked: "Where is my place?" The Creator replied: "Where God's name is not, there you may reside; your dwelling-place is with the man who does not pronounce the name of the ONE, who does not cherish the remembrance of Him."

---

In your sorrows and troubles your prayers and petitions to Him. To Him you should confide all your difficulties, for He is the Fountain of Goodness.

"Ma"

# WHAT MOTHER IS NOT

VIJAIANANDA

What Mother is in reality is a perplexing question that has been voiced frequently and to which to this day nobody has been able to find a satisfactory reply; for the simple reason, it seems to me, that no adequate answer to this enigma exists. The full solution of the mystery can come only after complete spiritual Realization.

In this article, however, I intend to deal with a problem which is not quite so far beyond my limited possibilities. Among certain people false ideas are prevalent concerning Mother and Her teaching. These ideas are held by persons who have either met Mother only casually or else have merely heard or read about Her. Such wrong notions are to a certain extent excusable, for it is very difficult to find out along what line Mother actually teaches. A *vedantist* for example, when talking to Mother for the first time, will feel convinced that She is a pure *advaita vedantin*; a *śakti* may very likely say that She is an incarnation of the Divine Mother, advocating the cult of *śakti*; while a *vaiṣṇava* will see in Her a great *bhakta*, and so on. It is only after having known Her fairly closely and for a long time that one becomes aware of Her innumerable facets and of Her extraordinary universality. But let us examine one by one the incorrect or partly incorrect views about Mother that I have come across.

**Is Mother a Tantrika Guru ?**

( I shall refer to the world 'tantrik' not in its etymological and true meaning, but in the way it is commonly understood especially by Western people, namely as the path of *sadhana* that makes use of sexuality in its practices. )

When I first came to India I was told by a young Westerner that he had been warned against Mother, as She was supposed to be a "yogini dealing with 's'aktis'." This opinion can of course be held only by one who has never seen Mother and probably not even talked to any of Her devotees ; who is completely ignorant of the fact that strict *brahmacharya* (chastity) is one of the main requisites for admission into Mother's Ashrams, that people leading married life cannot join the Ashram at all and that moreover not only physical abstinence is necessary, but absolute purity of thought and emotion is aimed at.

Says Mother :

"It is the pure undefiled flower that finds a place at the feet of the Lord and nowhere else. Take great care to spend your life in spotless purity, worthy to be dedicated in worship to the Lord."

( 'Matri Vani' No. 85. )

As to Mother's own person it is needless to say that the name given to Her by Her parents, namely *Nirmala* (immaculate) is more than justified : Such absolute, flawless purity cannot be found in any earthly or even heavenly being.

**Is Mother a Magician or Hypnotizer ?**

It has come to my ears that there are those who believe that Mother attracts people through magic or hypnotism, with no other motive than to play with them. Someone from Europe who came to see me, related to me, he had been given to understand that there was a French doctor ( the writer of this article ) staying in Sri Anandamayi Ma's Ashram, whom She was keeping under the spell of Her hypnotic power. Someone had even been advised to try and rescue me.

To such deluded people we can only say that Mother is indeed a great divine magician, attracting to Herself innumerable men and women, who are under the spell of the terrible and powerful magician called *maya* and hypnotized by the countless ties of mundane life. By the charm of Her divine love Mother hypnotizes them away from worldliness and with Her infinite patience gradually leads them "*From the unreal to the Real, from ignorance to the Light of Wisdom, from death to Immortality.*"

**Is Mother a S'akta ?\***

I have read an article about Mother in which the writer referred to Her as 'a child of the Divine Mother'. The author had obviously the best intentions and felt deep reverence for Mother, but he evidently failed to recognize Her true greatness. Mother does not worship any aspect of God, being Herself the

---

\*S'akta—Worshipper of God conceived as Mother.

embodiment of THAT, from which all gods and goddesses emanate. It is of course true that Mother often speaks of Herself as a little child and calls all married people Her fathers and mothers. But so far as I can understand, She is the kind of child to whom Sri Aurobindo refers when he writes that the Lord is an eternal child, playing an eternal play in an eternal garden.\*

### Is Mother S'akti Herself ?

In *S'akti* worship devotion is directed towards the Divine in Its dynamic aspect, putting less stress on the static, transcendental consciousness (*S'iva*). The personifications of *S'akti* as *Durga*, *Kālī*, *S'rī* correspond to different methods of awakening *kundalini*, the creative power slumbering in man. These deities possess a relative reality. They represent certain aspects of the Divine condensed into name and form. Mother says it is like water in ice. But what manifests through Mother's physical frame is THAT in which all deities have their source. To say that Mother is an embodiment of *Durga*, *Kālī* or any other deity, may be true, but it is only fragmentary truth.

Says Mother :

“The visions of gods and goddesses occur in accordance with one's inherited dispositions (*samskaras*) I am what I ever

---

\*The book by Sri Aurobindo is not with me and the quotation is therefore not verbal.



was and shall be. I am whatever you conceive, think or say,"

(Mother As Revealed to Me, p, 6-7.)

and : ".....Thou art the embodiment of all gods and much more. Thou hast come out of me and I am the epitome of the created world....."

(Id. p. 51-52).

### Is Mother Recommending the Cult of S'akti ?

The first nucleus of devotees that gathered around Mother were Bengalis of the upper classes who in their great majority are *S'aktas*. At present also there are quite a number of *S'aktas* among Mother's *bhaktas*. It is easy to understand why the worshippers of the Divine Mother are attracted to Mataji.

Her followers often greet one another by exclaiming : "Jai Mā" and are fond of uttering the word 'Mā' in connexion with *pranava*.

These are *mantras* used by *S'aktas*. When *kirtan* is sung in the *aśrams* the word 'Mā' can be frequently heard and also hymns to the Divine Mother. This is why people who are not well acquainted with Mother and Her ways may get the impression that Her teaching is based on the cult of *S'akti*. But those who have had the chance of becoming more intimately acquainted with Mother and Her surroundings know that among Her followers are not only a great many

*Vaiṣṇavas*, but also 'Vedantists, Sikhs, Jains, Christians, Jews and Mohammedans, The *kirtans* held in the ashrams are of *Rama, Kṛiṣṇa, Ś'iva* as well as of *Devi* or simply of 'Bhagavan' and some are purely *advaitic*, consisting of *mantras* from the *Upaniṣads*. The recitation of portions from the *Bhagavad-Gīta*, the *Durga Śapta Śati*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavata Purāna* forms part of the daily routine of the *āśrams*.

### Is Mother a Great Bhakta ?

I have seen it in writing by authoritative hand that Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma is a great *bhakta*. Before coming to India I myself was under the impression that Mother was advocating *bhakti marga* (the path of devotion) and probably many people abroad as well as in India still hold this view. My wrong idea about Mother was based on the following facts :

#### 1. *The bhavas.*

I had heard and read that in Her early days a great variety of extraordinary raptures and divine ecstasies had been observed in Mother, especially when She listened to devotional music. But nowadays things have evidently changed. For the last nine years I have been with Mother, yet have never once witnessed any state of this kind. Those who live near Mother cannot help marvelling at Her wonderful poise and balance, which is quite unshakable. Behind the superficial emotions that are but a momentary identification with the people who happen to approach Her, She is ever in a

state of undisturbed, profound joy and peace, far beyond emotion. Sometimes while singing *kirtan*, Her features seem express deep religious feeling; but no sooner has She stopped singing, in the twinkle of an eye, She resumes Her calm and serene countenance. Evidently She has merely played with the religious emotion, perhaps to give an example to devotional people.

ards the *bhavas* of Her early life, I suppose they occurred in response to the expectations and desires of the devotees of those days and were nothing more than a play on the surface. Mother can often be heard to say that She has ever been the same since Her infancy, notwithstanding all the apparent outer changes. As the pure crystal takes on the colour and reflects the object placed before it without actually undergoing any change itself, so Mother appears to be different according to Her surroundings.

## 2. *The Kirtans.*

Mother greatly encourages the singing of devotional music. *Kirtan* before sunrise and after sunset forms part of the daily programme of the *as'rams*. Wherever Mother happens to be *kirtan* is performed as a rule. She Herself sings off and on, even during public gatherings.

But at the same time Mother also encourages other spiritual exercises, such as *japa*, *dhyana* (meditation), *vicara* (self-inquiry) etc. in the case of those who are able and willing to engage in those practices. For many people

*kirtan* is a simple and effective method of luring the mind from worldliness to divine things through the medium of music.

### 3. *The devotees.*

Quite a lot of the people close to Mother are of the devotional type. *Bhakti marga*, being the easiest path, is followed by the majority of aspirants. But among Mother's devotees all other types of *sādhakas* are also to be found, namely those whose approach is by *karma*, *yoga* or *jñāna marga*, etc.

**Is Mother a Vedantist or is She extoling any other school of thought ?**

Without a doubt Mother teaches the highest truth as found in the *Upaniṣads*.

"This body\* presents the matter from the standpoint of the *Risis* and *Munis*, from the line of approach that they choose." ( Ananda Varta, Vol. V/3, p. 205 ).

But Mother does not belong to any sect, creed or school of thought. The 'Real' which She embodies and teaches is THAT from which all things emerge and in which they are rooted ; but 'THAT' itself is beyond caste and creed, beyond religion and philosophy. It cannot be described in words, nor measured by the mind in terms of name and form. However, for the *sādhaka*, the individual on the path, a line of approach through the channel of the mind is necessary.

---

\* Mataji's way of referring to Herself.

Says Mother :

“In fact seekers after Truth are made each in a particular way, different from others as well as from one another, but in any case they have to pass through the gate of Truth.”

(Ananda Varta, Vol. V/3, p. 204.)

and “When discussing creeds and paths one has to remember that it is only while on the way that one speaks of various paths.....”

“But where there is no question of any doctrine nor of controversy, there is He at the root—He who is present in all these innumerable guises.”

(Ananda Varta, Vol. V/3, p. 205.)

### Mother's Universality

The seers, saints and *yogis* who attained to Self-realization have almost all followed a definite line of approach. After becoming spiritual preceptors they lead their disciples along the path they have themselves trodden, although it is true that some of them are able to guide aspirants by a few other lines of *sadhana* as well. But most of them prescribe a definite method by which Truth will be apprehended, as for example Self-inquiry, or *japa*, or self-surrender and so on. The consequence of adhering to one particular line of approach in preference to all the others is that only aspirants of a special type are able to get the benefit of such a *Guru's* guidance.

But the divine Power that manifests through Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi is characterized by an extraordinary integrality and versatility as regards the knowledge of spiritual practices. It seems quite unfathomable that a being should exist to whom no path of *sadhana* is unknown.

In Her early life, during a period of about six years, Mother played the role of a *sadhika*. It was nothing more than a play, for Mother had never been in ignorance or bondage.

Says Mother :

“Let me tell you that what I am I have been from my infancy. But when the different stages of *sadhana* were being manifested through this body there was something like a superimposition of *ajñāna*.\* But what sort of *ajñāna* was that? It was really *jñāna*† masquerading as *ajñāna*.”

( Mother as Seen by Her Devotees, p. 143 ).

As a rule it takes a whole life or sometimes several lives to master one line of *sadhana*. But Mother in the short span of six years traversed untold spiritual paths with all their stages and states up to perfection. Every avenue leading to Truth has been explored and mastered by Her. Some of those *sadhanas* are extremely difficult and perilous. Only exceptionally gifted and bold aspirants are able to use them. The few who

\* Ignorance of the true nature of the Self.

† Knowledge of the Self.

succeed reach only after long and strenuous efforts and after a great many ups and downs, whereas Mother accomplished all those practices without the least strain or exertion, just as a matter of play and in an incredibly short spell of time.

The following utterances of Mother about this topic are quoted from Sri Amulya K. Datta's diary, translated by himself from the Bengali original.

"I may tell you that this body has not followed only one particular line of *sadhana*, but has covered all the known lines. It has passed through all the different varieties of practices referred to by the sages of ancient times. This body has successfully gone through *nama sadhana*, *hatha yoga* with its various *asanas* and through diverse other *yogas*, one after another. In order to attain to a particular stage along one of those lines of *sadhana* an ordinary individual may have to be born again and again ; but in the case of this body it was a matter of a few seconds....."

"Moreover the different forms of *sadhana* that this body has been seen to practise, were not meant for this body, they were meant for you all....."

"When you relate your spiritual experiences to me, I often say that this body has had those experiences and this is why it knows what they are. Not only that : if anyone discloses to this body a special line of *sadhana*, it can describe in minute details the various stages of that very line."

We may conclude that Mother is able to guide every type of *sadhaka*, no matter what his avenue of approach or his level of attainment.

This is why in Mother's *as'rams* there is an astonishing diversity of seekers after Truth. Those who follow *jñāna marga* live side by side with those who practise *bhakti* or *karma* or *hatha yoga*, etc. The *sadhaka* is required to mould himself according to the pattern given by the *Guru*. Mother guides him along the line he is already following and indicates the one that is best suited to his temperament and conditioning. She bestows on him knowledge and power, a knowledge and a power that are not imposed from outside, but come by bringing to the surface the *sattvic* mind, the higher self, which will in due course lead to the revelation of the Real Self, the ONE.

---



nothingness." Perhaps the thought is obscure because of our inadequacy i.e. because we have not established rapport with Reality we cannot follow what Mother says.

It will be clear to all who have been privileged to meet Mother that She pays little attention to externals or to form ; She goes to the root of things and though some of the people round Her observe ritual and conform to tradition, She seems to attach no importance to the soulless observance of ceremonies, while She emphasises devotion and faith. If religion is the constant remembrance of God then Mother can be called deeply religious. No one who has heard Her leading *bhajan* with "Hey-Bhagavan" can forget it. There is a deep earnestness and suggestion of surrender to God which recalls the "*Prapatti*" of *Sri Ramanuja*. It would be interesting from the point of view of a layman to compare Mother with another Saint of Modern India, Sri Ramana Maharishi. I have had the privilege of meeting both ; in contrast to Mother Ramana Maharishi did not usually join in *bhajan*. The writer had an impression of an immutable and towering spiritual genius far removed from the ordinary run of humanity in the case of Sri Ramana Maharishi. On the other hand Mother radiates an atmosphere of overwhelming kindness and sweetness. A friend of mine, a noted barrister, told me that in Mother's presence all mental turmoil was stilled and that She had the rare faculty of making you feel close to the heart of things and a deep peace filled the mind when one was with Her. This has been the experience of many who sought Her company. I have heard Her described as the "Joy-Permeated Mother." This is an inadequate description of Her genius. She seems to me full of joy as well

as peace. I have attempted in the above paragraphs to give my impression of Mother's personality. It is very, very difficult for a person who is very much of this world to attempt an understanding of a spiritual genius like Mother and still more difficult to convey to others an experience which necessarily is subjective; but no person who has had the privilege of meeting Mother, but is the better for it.

---

"If you want to become a householder and take up family life you will have to pass through all kinds of experiences. Let your mind be centred in God, then only is there a prospect of complete peace."

"Ma"

# Mother Anandamayee : A Votary of Divine Love

DR. CHOU HSIANG KUANG, PH. D. ( DELHI )

Asstt. Professor of Chinese, Allahabad University.

The present age, in which scientific invention is becoming a menace to culture and civilization, needs the healing influence of a religion of unalloyed love and devotion ( *Prema Bhakti* ), as exemplified by Shri Radha, the Dominated Divinity, in her unparalleled life of self-surrender and service at the feet of Shri Krishna, the Supreme Dominant Divinity. Mother Anandamayee seems to me to be a living Radha, and a living Mira as well.

I have had the good fortune of knowing Her and Her beneficent influence for many years. I met Her first at the Raipur Ashram, Dehra Dun while I was on an educational tour through India. I vividly remember this first darshan of Mother which has remained as a very clear and definite impression in my mind. It was about 1 p. m. on a day in January 1946 when the Manager of Roadways of Dehra Dun who happened to be a devotee of the Mother, very kindly arranged for me to go to the Raipur Ashram in his car. On arriving at the Ashram gate, I found thousands of men and women gathered round Mother. The hall was packed and I was unable to enter and therefore stood outside for about twenty minutes or so. It seemed to me that all men and

women present were asking Mother to give them something of Her grace or blessing without making any effort themselves. It is true when we begin to seek Truth, we need a Guru to guide us safely across all sorts of obstacles and difficulties that have to be faced on the spiritual path. The Guru's grace is certainly needed by the aspirant. But this does not mean that disciples should sit idly by their Guru's side and expect Him to push them into *Samadhi* by some miracle. It is obvious that we have ourselves to walk every step of the spiritual path. God resides within every being, the *Purusha* in His perfection ever exists. If we practise meditation we shall see God. As Mother says, "Meditation is the real form of worship and formal ceremonies are but passing phases." ( see Sat-Bani )

When at 1-30 p. m. Mother came out of the hall and stepped into a car, I gave up all hope of meeting Her, for I had come without any introduction, alone with my burning heart in search of Truth. At that very moment Mother called me by raising Her hand and invited me to get into the car and sit by Her side. We drove straight to the railway station. Mother was kind enough to consent to my travelling to Hardwar with Her in the same compartment, along with Mr. J. C. Mukerji, an Advocate of the High Court, Allahabad. We three were sitting together undisturbed all the way to Hardwar. I utilized every minute of the journey to benefit by putting question after question on Indian philosophy, religion and systems of *Yoga*. Mr. Mukerji acted as an interpreter. Mother's replies to every one of my questions gave me great satisfaction. Mother has had as

good as no school education, but Her knowledge is so profound and wide. Of course a person who gives spiritual instruction should not have mere book knowledge but must have first hand spiritual experience. Don't we read in Shri Ramakrishna's sayings that a teacher who undertakes to expound religion from book learning is like a man who undertakes to describe Banaras after having seen merely a map of the sacred city. Mother also gave me some advice concerning meditation.

When we got down at Hardwar railway station, an old Muslim gentleman came and bowed and prostrated himself before Mother. Mr. Mukerji remarked : "Oho, just see how this old Muslim gentleman who is a professor of philosophy of the Allahabad University puts his head on the ground before Her. How great Mother is." Mother allowed me to accompany Her to the Dharmasala for some time and then I had to take leave from Her, as my train for Lahore was due at 6 p. m. or so. Before I parted from Her, Mother told me again that if I had any spiritual experience, I should write to Her. I spontaneously responded by saying, "Will you accept me as your disciple?" She just kept quiet with a smile on Her lips. The sun was setting on the western Himalayas when I returned to the station and Mother strolled to the Ganges to bathe in the holy river.

As the train was carrying me further and further away I felt that She is a Mother, full of love and tenderness. Yes, Mother is the embodiment of *Bhakti*—is intense love for God. When a person attains to it, he or she loves all, hates none; he or she becomes fulfilled for ever. This love has no motive

and seeks no reward ; because so long as worldly desires endure that great all-embracing Love does not come.

When my appointments at the University of Delhi and the Indian Administrative Service Training School expired, I came to Allahabad in 1954 to act as Asstt. Professor of Chinese at the University. Though I went to see Mother at Gopal Ashram and George Town, Allahabad, I got no chance to talk to Her, as day and night She was surrounded by too many people. I therefore went to the Vindhyaçal Ashram when Mother was residing there at the end of October, 1958. I discussed with Mother some problem of *Raja Yoga* in Her own room on the top floor of the Ashram and Swami Chinmayānanda acted as interpreter. Before I left Mother's presence She put a flower garland round my neck. I felt so keenly that if I did not achieve anything along the spiritual path it would be ungrateful to Her and I should feel ashamed of myself. This feeling always remains with me and never goes away.

Recently the *Ardha Kumbh Mela* was held at Allahabad from the 15th of January to the 25th of February, 1960. I met Mother on the 2nd of February at Her camp in the Mela area. About 30,000 Sadhus were assembled at the Mela and more than a million people came from every part of India. They bathed in the Ganges in order to wash their sins away, and at the same time also hoped for some sort of spiritual progress. However I have not a very high opinion of this kind of religious gathering, for God has to be found within ourselves and not without. There is a story in the Chinese Dhyāna-Buddhist texts, which illustrates the idea that we should search God within and not outside of ourselves.

Dhyāna Master Huai-hai was asked by Ta-an :

“How to know the Buddha ?”

Huai-hai answered : “It is as if you were riding on  
an ox and searching the ox.”

Ta-an again asked : “What is it like to know the Buddha ?

Huai-hai said : “It is just as if you were coming  
home on the ox’s back.”

In Yoga-Vasishtha the same idea is expressed thus :  
“Those who forsake God who is within the cave of the heart,  
and search for another God outside,—they are really searching  
for conch-shells after abandoning the *Kaustubha*, a precious  
gem, which is in their hands.”

Before Mother shifted from the Kumbh Mela to  
31, George Town on the 2nd of February, She told me at my  
request to meet Her there at noon on that very day. I had  
lunch at Dr. Bithika Mukerji’s house and Mother replied to  
my questions in a gathering for about twenty minutes while  
Shri Atmananda (an Austrian devotee) acted as an inter-  
preter. Later on I had another opportunity for a conversation  
with Mother in her own room and Dr. Panna Lal, I. C. S.,  
very kindly took on himself the task of interpreting. By  
listening to Mother’s words I have come to understand the  
process of *yoga* more clearly, although I have not yet been  
able to achieve any spiritual insight.

Today the power-intoxicated, war-thirsty spirit of the  
devil is roaring aloud, shouting its battle-cry, menacing not  
only to destroy the civilization of the world but also to lay  
axe to the root of the entire human race. We do want a  
teacher who can give us Faith, who can show us the straight  
way to the new Heaven and the new Earth of our fervent

hopes. Mother Anandamayee is the Mother of Supernature and the Pilgrim of Eternity, the great Power and Personality that the Time and Spirit has evolved out of the labour of the ages.

I deeply rejoice on the occasion of Mother Anandamayee's entering Her 65th year in May, 1960. Let us jointly celebrate and prostrate with veneration at the feet of this great saint :—

Mother,

This day too will pass,

And only rumour remain.

I came to the market of the world,

I sat by its bathing-ghat,

I sat down to sell my wares.

Mother,

The sun is seated on high,

And the Ferryman has come :

The load of many doth fill the Boat :

Alas, none thinketh of this unhappy one :

I am left behind,

For they ask for a coin from this poor man :

Where shall I get it ?

Mother,

O, Mother,

Give me, too, a place in the Boat,

Thy glory shall I sing,

And with Thy Name

And Thy Song on my lips

I shall plunge into the sea of life.

—Ramprasad Sen.



