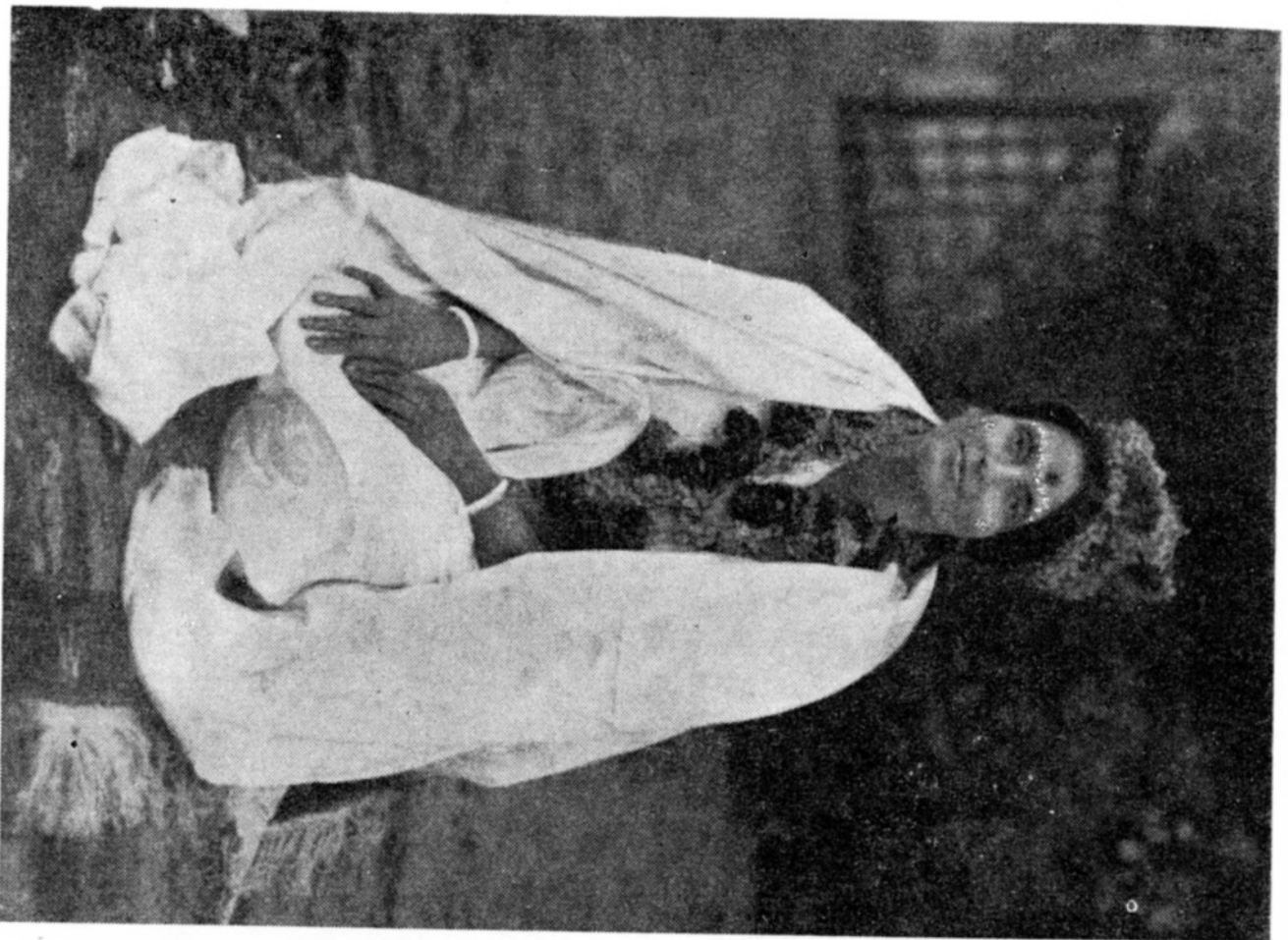


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CORRECTIONS

<i>Page No.</i>	<i>Line No.</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
25	3 from bottom	Don't	Do
31	5	query	query



This photo was taken in New Delhi
on 31st March 1937.
Description on p. 17-18.

CHAPTER 1

SIX DAYS IN NEW DELHI

(26th to 31st March 1937)

My first *darshan* of *Ma* came about on the day of *Holi*, 26th March, 1937. In the previous evening, I got the welcome information that Shri Anandamayee *Ma* had come to New Delhi and was staying in a tent, pitched in the compound of No. 13 Cantonment Road, occupied by Shri Panchanan Mukherjee. Just seven or eight days previous to that date, I was having a talk with an elderly devout lady (*) at the upper flat that my family was then occupying on Hanuman Road. I was telling her regretfully that I had travelled in so many places and had come across a good many renowned *mahatmas*, but had so far not seen a single *mahatma*, at whose feet I could rest my head and be care-free. She said, "We have seen *Ma Anandamayee* at Simla. I am sure you will find her to your liking. She will

* Shri Jogamaya Devi, wife of Shri (now Late) Priyanath Banerji, an official under Central Government.

be coming to New Delhi shortly. I shall send you information as soon as she will arrive."

On receiving that information, the very next morning, we (myself and my wife Juthica, whom I shall subsequently refer to as Mrs. C) went along Cantonment Road. As we proceeded, we were overtaken from behind by Shri Sudhir Gupta, who had already seen MA and had been attracted by her. By 7-30 a.m., all three of us entered the tent in which MA was staying. There I saw MA, clad in immaculate-white, with no ornaments on her body, her long, dark hair dishevelled and sitting still like a marble statue. My eyes were gratified to have a clear vision of MA's enchanting form, radiant with a mysterious, divine glow. I sat motionless, amazed and almost paralysed, at a corner of the tent with my unblinking gaze glued on MA's exquisitely beautiful face. I sat there for nearly three hours, wondering all the while that I had never seen such an abundance of grace, sweetness and rare effulgence, all harmoniously built into a single human body. A small group of singers (Bholanath † was in the group) was singing *keertan* before MA. But very little of the music ever entered my benumbed ears and bewildered mind.

† MA's husband.

At about 11 a.m. MA came out of the tent, went to the open court-yard behind Shri Mukherjee's house and mirthfully played *Holi* with ladies and girls assembled there, besmearing one another (as is customary) with coloured powders. We males could hear from the tent the melodious mixed voices of hilarious ladies and girls, taking active parts in the colour-throwing game going on under MA's leadership.

Close upon midday, MA came out to the front of the house and put coloured powder on all men, who came across her way, one after another. When she came near me, in her sweet, charming voice, she put to me the question, 'May I put coloured powder on you?' I was simply overwhelmed by this unasked-for grace. Without waiting for my reply, she rubbed on my fore-arm a corner of her *chaddar* (textile wrapper), which had been sprinkled over with coloured powder. In this process, I received on my left fore-arm a direct touch of MA's right fore-arm. Immediately and almost automatically, I bent down, placed my head right on MA's feet and bowed down to her, pouring out my heart, as it were, and mentally prayed as follows: "Dear *Ma*, why do you put colour only on my body? Pray colour my inner heart as well."