

Swami Chinmayanandaji

'Khyal' -an indescribable word as Her Holiness Sri Sri Anandamayee Ma termed it to explain Her 'free will' had once been experienced by Mrinmay, a young and trust-worthy soldier of Indian Freedom Movement . Through this 'Khyal' Mother's invaluable blessings were bestowed upon him to transmute his life from 'Mrinmay' to 'Chinmay' i.e. a manifestation of materialistic instinct to the extent of immortal eternity.

Mrinmay was then hoodwinking the British Police to avoid the obvious punishment by them. In course of his living incognito one day he came to a lonely Shiva temple at Dehradun. Sri Sri Anandamayee Ma along with some of Her devotees was already there. Police suddenly came there with a photograph of absconding Mrinmay and asked Mother whether She had found the criminal to enter into the temple? Mother answered that many devotees used to come to that temple -if the said absconder was there Police could easily search him out and arrest. Then Police force entered into the temple but very astonishingly returned unsuccessfully being failed to identify Mrinmay who was already in the temple in front of all.

This incident changed the life of Mrinmay, the former best student of Missionary High School of Shilong, latter on a dangerous extremist freedom fighter. He fell down at the lotus feet of Mother and had been initiated to Bramhacharyya (having undergone a long process of austerity and sacrament prior to join an order of hermits) by Sri Sri Muktananda Giri Maharaj (Mokshada Sundari Devi - mother of Sri Sri Anandamayee Ma).

Mrinmay Chowdhury was born in the year 1919 in a well to do family. His father Jogendronath Chowdhury was a high ranking British Government employee in Accounts Department posted at Shilong. He was loyal to his service. Mrinmoy's mother was a pious lady and was the host of many religious dignitaries like Bramhajna Ma, Sri Sri Ram Thakur, etc. Despite a religious atmosphere prevailed in his fam-

ily since his childhood Mrinmay could not resist himself to revolt against the state observing the distress of his countrymen under British Rule. He left his promising academic career. As a result search warrant was issued in his name. He fled to Calcutta and took resort to a restaurant owner there, who was compassionate, too, to these young rebels and used to help confidentially in many ways.

British detectives were dogging Mrinmay madly and one day to avoid them he entered into a Cinema Hall and had succeeded in hiding himself in the midst of show end crowd to arrive at Howrah Railway Station. He availed the train in front of him about to depart and at last reached at Dehradun. He managed a shelter at the residence of Sri Bhattacharya, one of his father's friends, who was a bachelor person and used to practice Yoga, other than his profession of private tutorial for I.C.S preparations (now I.A.S). He loved Mrinmay very much. Since he was a strict person to take only milk and boiled rice in his meal, he, himself used to cook non- veg dishes for Mrinmay.

Sri Bhattacharya achieved a great deal of expertise in Yoga. He even could float in the air during Yoga practice. Mrinmay was charmed viewing such activities and one day requested Sri Bhattacharya to make him his student. But he expressed his inability to do that since he could predict that Mrinmay is destined to be a disciple of a Bengali Mother who at present was staying at an age old Shiva temple, situated at a solitary place, adjacent to the hills. Mrinmay was disappointed for a moment but afterwards he went to that temple and met Sri Sri Anandamayee Ma where the aforesaid great supernatural incident took place and totally changed his mission of life. Mother provided him with Bramahacharyya and latter on Sannyasa (Sainthood) through Sri Sri Muktananda Giri and Sri Sri Mangal Giri Maharaj respectively. Mrinmay had been transformed into Swami Chinmayananda Giri being initiated to the Sanyasa.

The life of Chinmayanandaji consists of the stream of many of such events. A revolutionist in nature he always used to protest any deviation or deflection from idealism. During his stay at Agarpara Ashram one day the local M.L.A., a Marxist Communist leader came

along with his followers for a visit. The leader was very much infamous for his rough and autocratic behaviors. He did not wear Poita (sacred thread) though he belonged to a Bramhin family. Knowing this Chinmayanandaji rebuked him severely for such devoidance of him from the culture and tradition. Everyone present there, were afraid anticipating an adverse consequence since his party was in power. But strangely the leader kept mum and returned back who after a few days left politics to devote himself in social service according to the idea of Swami Vivekananda and started to observe all the statutory rites and duties a Bramhin should do.

Same thing occurred when the only son of a former chief judge of Allahabad High Court (a devotee of Mother) visited Agarpara Ashram. He was a foreign educated very rich business tycoon, well dressed with suit, neck tie and shoes, having his own workshop at Jamshedpur. As soon as he stepped up stairs wearing shoes Chinmayanandaji came in front of him and shouted to order him to get himself out immediately so that sanctity of the Ashram could be maintained properly. The person reputed before him for such of his deed to enter at Mother's place wearing shoes. Within a fortnight the person took Sanyasa leaving all his worldly belongings to go to the caves of the Himalays to observe the austeric vow. It was totally different from his previous life style pertaining extreme lavishness.

Thus Chinmayanandaji's harsh words not came as a born to those two persons only to direct their lives towards spirituality but those also instigated the self quest in the minds of a considerable number of people. He was a splendid combination of hardness in one hand and the tenderness on the other. To define the character of Lord Rama Bhawabhuti in 'Uttara Rama Charita' uttered 'Vajradapi Kathorani - Mriduna Kusumdapi' i.e, even more severe than the calamity like lightning and at the same time even softer than the flower petals. The nature of Swami Chinmayananda was like that. He always used to shed tears for the distressed and helped them by dint of the enactment of his own spiritual power to evoke the self reliance in their minds.

Once a poor Bramhin Pundit of Sanskrit of a local high school was able to reach at his proximity at Agarpara Ashram. Chinmayanandaji

advised him to recite the Bhagawat at the Ashram in regular course. The Pundit had three daughters and always remained anxious for the expenses he would have to bear for his daughters' weddings because with a meager income it was very difficult for him to pay the dowries and offered the other expenditures. According to the Chinmayanandaji he was very particular to recite the Bhagawat in the Ashram.

One day when the Pundit bowed down before him after completion of that day's discourse, suddenly Chinmayanandaji told him that he should not worry for his daughters because God's blessings were always with a person like him who was habituated to recite the holy Bhagawat regularly. In fact Swami Chinmayananda was completely ignorant about the family affairs of the Pundit. But very surprisingly within a very short period one after another his three daughters were married to the well off bride grooms without any dowry or any trouble as such.

Chinmayanandaji was so open hearted that even during the serious dissension with Swarupanandaji (one of his colleague hermit) in different important issues, never disengaged his own hands from him. He was grateful to Swarupanandaji because during the prolonged period of his sufferings from the deadly disease small pox. Swarupanandaji regularly nursed him with great care even ignoring the dreadful contagious disease in such a way so that soon he had been recovered from that severe ailment. Chinmayanandaji used to say that disagreement is superficial where true relation resides at the care of the heart.

He might have realised this truth when during initial stage of his Ashram life some one reviled him as swine. With much anger he was about to set out from the Ashram forever. In the meantime Muktananda Giriji came to him and asked him whether he knew the saga of the Puranas where the Boar had been described as the third incarnation of the Lord Vishnu and therefore it was a matter to be glorified. Chinmayanandaji could not but cut his relation with the Ashrama and he learned the fact that it is only the relation that exists forever.

Chinmayananda Maharaj often used to opine that relation of a

mother with her child is the only persistent fact. He always thought himself a mere child of Mother and with such childish mentality one day he straightly asked Sri Sri Anandamayee Ma addressing her Annapurna (Goddess of Food & Wealth) that since Sri Ma is considered by Her devotees to be the supreme entity and creator of the whole universe, why She could not even extinguish the burning poverty of her own family which includes The whole World ?

Mother smiled affectionately at him to appreciate his rare quality of kind heartedness towards the downtrodden. She then answered that She belonged to a spiritually rich family which could go beyond any worldly want. *Until and unless people do not confront the misery, adversity or disaster in their lives which should have to be considered as the blessings of God they obviously remain involved with the silly worldly matters.* She added, aversion to these silly things comes from the core of heart. It can never be imposed from outside.

He could realise Mother's verses that the only requirement of life is the basic need to attain God and the only relation persists is the relation with God -accordingly to him 'the relation between mother and her child', In the aforesaid occasion Mother told him about the highest degree of philosophy but at the same time both Mother and her devotees appreciated his lofty mentality that always shed tears for the distressed.

During the concluding phase of his life. Chinmayanandaji used to remain almost continuously immersed in an ever pleasurable transcendental state of realization regarding the essence of union of the bodily soul with the supreme soul -an ever lasting bondage of a child with his mother , At last on the 13th October in the year 1996 on the auspicious day during Devi Paksha (on set of Durga Puja Festival) Chinmayanandaji the beloved of his Mother, slept forever in his Mother's lap at Agarpara Ashram situated at the bank of the holy Ganges River, At the spot, loud Vedic chants ", were being recited by Nirmalanandaji -" *Asado Ma Sadgamaya - Tamaso Ma Jyotir Gamaya'* ' i.e. 'Lead me towards the supreme truth exterminating all evils enlightening me eradicating all dark', It was a twilight. The

flowing water of The Ganges ,, was reflecting the mild and reddish melancholic light of The Sun going to set below the horizon. The birds were returning to their nests. Swami Chinmayananda Giri Maharaj set off for his desired destination to his Mother Sri Sri Anandamaayee 's lotus feet.

By courtesey of Milan Kusum Bhattacharyee