

JAI HA

MA ANANDAMAYEE
AMRIT VARTA

A quarterly journal dealing mainly
with the divine life and sayings of
Shree Anandamayee Ma

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Shree Shree Ananda chalia Radha and Shree Krishna Rudra

MATRI VANI

Look, in order to pluck a rose one has to put one's hand into the midst of thorns. But if the rose is a person's aim and he has a keen desire to pluck it, he will not refrain from doing so for fear of being pricked. Moreover the Great Mother arranges whatever is necessary for each one: She certainly knows the real need of every individual. If one has at least this much faith, there is no reason at all to feel distressed.

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HE at all times lavishes His Grace on everyone. Only in order to acquire the capacity to understand this, one must tenaciously fix one's gaze at Him as Goal.

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Who is 'Anandamayi Ma'? Who indeed is '*Anandamaya*' (permeated with Divine joy)? HE is eternally enthroned in the hearts of all beings; verily HE dwells *everywhere*. Having seen Him, reached Him, everything is seen, everything is attained; in other words one becomes fearless, certain, free from conflict, immutable, imperishable.

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To live in a foreign country is in itself painful; but to be in one's own home together with one's near and dear ones is happiness. This is why there is the search for one's real Home, for one's true Beloved. How much longer will you remain in this alien land and suffer misery?

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Do you imagine that you are liberated? In order to become actually liberated, that is to realize Him, one has to set apart a little time. If you live in the spirit of "He is engaging me in His service," there is no cause for bondage. But if this attitude of mind is absent the desire for praise and fame awakens. The serving is HE, the server is also HE and the one who is served is likewise HE alone: there is none apart from the ONE.

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Who is going whither and from whence does he come? For this body there is no going and no coming. That which existed before exists even now. What does it matter whether one dies or remains alive? Even after having died he still exists, so why worry?



“The endeavour to keep the mind constantly engaged in the contemplation of That is one’s duty as a human being. Donot escape by saying “I cannot”. You will have to develop the capacity for it; You will have to do it. For a human being every thing is possible. By God’s grace you have been born in a human body as a Brahmin. If some one is knocked down, he surely does not remain lying on the ground. He rises, stands up and walks on again. The speed of of one’s advancee must become swift. For those who are pilgrims it is necessary to forge ahead with great vitality, vigour, vivacity and velocity. Do not proceed leisurely sitting comfortably in a hackney carriage.”

—Shree Shree Ma

Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Prasang

- Amulya Kumar Dutta Gupta

(continued)

Henri Petit's Story

Today since I was feeling alright I joined the evening '*Patha*'. I saw one 'Saheb' (white foreigner) was also present there, and heard that his name is Henri Petit, that he is a special envoy of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) in France. He is 66 years old and a bachelor. For the last 29 year he has been studying religion. The books of Swami Vivekananda are his favourite. He is very interested to learn about the religious and philosophical heritage of india and that is why he is very keen to come to India, leaving his job, but the emperor of Abyssinia does not want to let go of him. In the meantime efforts were being made by the Govt. of Abyssinia to open an embassy in Delhi; the emperor advised him to be associated with the embassy and sent him to Delhi 8/9 months in advance. Mr. Petit arrived in India with a lot of enthusiasm. Shree Aurobindo now has a worldwide renown, that is why at first he went there and stayed there for a month. there he joined the devotees of Shree Ma; (of Shree Aurobindo Ashram) and participated in prayer sessions but he did not realize much. From Shree Aurobindo Ashram he went also to Ramana Maharshi's Ashram and stayed there for a while. Then he arrived at Kashi, there he met Mr. Thomson who is a devotee of Shree Shree Ma. He told Mr. Thomson that he came to india in quest of spiritual realization, but had been unsuccessful; he did not find any experience of such realization anywhere, everywhere there was discussion about knowledge only. Mr. Thomson said to him, "Before you leave this place, do visit Ma Anandamayee once." Saying this brought Mr. petit to Kashi Ashram. Shree Shree Ma was at Kashi those days. Many people were crowding around Ma. Mr. Petit could not go near Ma. He kept watching her from a distance. As soon as he saw Shree Shree Ma a strange inner feeling started over-

whelming him. Tears started rolling down his eyes. He kept sitting there wonderstruck for a long time. The next day he was supposed to depart from India, but he on in Kashi for the next 5/7 days. During this period he met a great devotee of Shree Shree Ma called Ms Blanca. *Finally when he left for Abyssinia, it was the beginning of a new chapter of his life. There he started having visions of Shree Shree Ma. These visions were not a dream but he had these visions when awake and in all his senses. Those visions were followed by bouts of tears rolling down his eyes. Mr Petit used to say, "When I was in such a condition and fearing that people would think that I was mad-- I started wearing colored glasses". This time he took 6 months' leave and came to India. In the meantime if an embassy of Abyssinia was established in Delhi, then he would be attached to it, otherwise he would stay back in India permanently. He had said, "I am not rich, nor am I poor, I am a servant at the lotus feet of Shree Shree Ma. The path that Ma leads me into, I shall follow that path". To look at, Mr. Petit is serene and cheerful. I heard that he knows seven languages can read and understand English, but that expressing himself in English becomes a bit difficult for him.

Girindada was given the responsibility to look after Mr. Petit. Though Girindada likes to have a life of solitude yet he has a great sense of humour. He is a doctor who has studied and practiced medicine abroad. Now he has left his household and is carrying out his religious practices as per the directions of Shree Shree Ma. He arranged for Mr. Petit in quite a satisfactory way. At night in the presence of Shree Shree Ma he topic about this foreigner came up. Ma said "He is a bachelors. In the country where he is born, it is not easy to stay a bachelor. Blanca* is also the same. Once with the intention of meeting Me Blance hired a taxi. The taxi driver took her to a different route instead of getting her into the correct route to the Ashram. Blanca kept asking him from time to time as to which route he was following. The taxi driver pulled up at a public garden. Seeing this Blanca

*Shree Shree Ma refers to Late (Ms.) Blanca Schamin from Austria, who was once associated with the Theosophical Society and taught vocal music at the Vasanta College for Women, Rajghat for some years. When she met Shree Shree Ma, she felt an irresistible attraction towards Her and left her job to stay near Ma. Shree Shree Ma gave her the name "Atmananda," by which she is widely known today. As a sanyasini, Atmanandaji wore saffron and served the Sangha in various capacities, the most prominent of which was the editing of *Anand Varta*.

asked, 'Where have you arrived? This is not the Ashram'. Then the taxi driver said, 'We could go around the garden for a while and then we can go to the Ashram'. Understanding his evil intentions and without saying anything further, Blanca started boxing him mercilessly. On being boxed strongly the taxi driver got scared and immediately brought her to the Ashram. On reaching the Ashram, Blanca loudly narrated the story to everyone. How simple-minded and pure should one be for such a thing to be done you all can understand for yourselves."

(to be continued)

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MA ANANDAMAYI LILA

—Hari ram Joshi

Sri Sri Ma Saranam**CHAPTER SEVEN**

Visits to Various Places - Pitaji's Death - Establishing the *Anandamayi Nari Siksa Niketan* and *Vidyapeeth* - Mataji's Illness and Miraculous Cure.

(1937-1940)

In October 1937, Mataji accompanied by Pitaji, Swami Akhandananda and Gurupriya Devi left Dehradun to tour some important places in Gujarat, such as Baroda, Ahmedabad, etc. This had been arranged by Swami Asimananda who had come in contact with Mataji in Dehradun about a year before. As advised by Her, he had stayed in the Raipur Ashram for a couple of months for his *sadhana*. When Mataji had left Dehradun, he went to Gujarat and spent several months in Ahmedabad and Baroda. On returning to Dehradun about the middle of September (after the death of Bhaiji) he requested Mataji to visit those towns where a good number of religious persons, who had heard about Mataji from him, were very keen for Her *daršana*.

They had sent to Swami Asimananda the required funds for the journey of Mataji and Her party to Ahmedabad. After returning to Dehradun from this trip in January 1938, Mataji proceeded to Rishikesh some time in February and came back to Dehradun, suffering from an attack of acute malaria. Her temperature at times would shoot up to about 106° and She would vomit whatever She ate or drank. Mataji refused to take any medicine, though Pitaji, Swami Akhandananda and others tried their level best to persuade Her to do so. In that condition of ill-health She decided to go to Hardwar where She stayed in a *dhuramsala*. Dr. Pitamber Pant, Retired Civil Surgeon, who had had the privilege of Mataji's *daršana* twice at Etawah (once in November 1935 and again some time in the rainy season of 1936) was staying in Hardwar in his house close to the Bhola Giri Ashram on the Ganga Canal. On hearing that Mataji had come to Hardwar and was suffering from acute malaria, he went to see Her and requested Her to take some medicine to cure Her fever.

It must be stated here that during Her second visit to Etawah in 1936 Mataji had suffered from a severe attack of blood dysentery. At that time She had been staying in a *dhuramsala* with sister Virajmohini. Dr. Pant had brought some medicine and urged Mataji to take it. Mataji however had asked Dr. Pant to wait and watch Her condition for another day. The following day Dr. Pant found no trace of blood dysentery on testing Her stools, and so Mataji did not take the medicine. However, a day later Dr. Pant observed

that the disease had reappeared and therefore tried to persuade Mataji to use the medicine prescribed by him for Her complete cure. Mataji did not agree to do so but said that if ever in future She would have the *kheyala* to take any medicine She would do so on Dr. Pant's advice.

When Dr. Pant found Mataji suffering from acute malaria at Hardwar, he reminded Her of what She had said to him at Etawah in 1936 and requested Her to undergo proper treatment. Pitaji, Swami Akhandananda, Didi and others also urged Mataji to take the medicine which She finally did. One or two tablets cured the malaria but Mataji developed violent palpitation of the heart, which caused a lot of anxiety to Dr. Pant and others for several months. It was just to satisfy Dr. Pant that Mataji had agreed to take his medicine. Dr. Pant of course never could have imagined that, as a result, Mataji would develop such a serious type of heart trouble. He remained with Mataji for a couple of months and made all arrangements for Her proper nursing and complete rest. Needless to say, he never again ventured to administer any medicine to Mataji.

On the occasion of the *Kumbha Mela* of 1938 at Hardwar, just after Mataji had been cured of acute malaria, Dr. Pant requested Her to go and stay in his house on the Ganga Canal, which he had decided to convert into a school for young girls, so that if they wished to get married after finishing their education, they might become *adarsha grihinis* (ideal housewives). He had decided to name this institution "*Sri Anandamayi Nari Siksha Niketan*" and requested Gurupriya Didi to select a couple of idealistic, religious-minded lady teachers who were known to Mataji, to work in that institution. After attending the *Kumbha Mela* of 1938 and having stayed in Dr. Pant's house for a couple of weeks, Mataji, Pitaji and others returned to the Kishenpur Ashram.

The spacious house endowed by Dr. Pant for establishing the *Anandamayi Nari Siksha Niketan* was valued at not less than one and a half lakhs of rupees. Dr. Pant at his own expense, amounting to about Rs. 400/- per month, maintained the school for a period of about five years. He mentioned in his will, written in 1943, that the building had been donated by him to the Municipal Board, Hardwar, for running the Girls' School and for this purpose he also donated to the Municipal Board Rs. 20,000/- in cash. This he did as Gurupriya Didi did not agree with him that the institution should impart education to girls who afterwards might lead a family life. She would have preferred the institution to be reserved for girls who wanted to take the vow of *brahmacharya* for life. The *Anandamayi Nari Siksha Niketan*, now called "*Sri Anandamayi Seva Sadan*", has during the last about 30 years developed into a very large institution, imparting education to girls upto the B.A. standard under the principalship of Miss Khurana who has been in charge of the institution for over 20 years.

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—to be continued

MOTHER AS REVEALED TO ME

Mother and Her Lila

—Bhaiji

The parents of a girl suffering from paralysis approached Mother for cure, She asked the girl to roll on the floor. The girl could not move at all; she could not even turn round. Mother was clipping betel-nuts into tiny pieces for the worship of a deity. A few pieces were thrown at the girl and she was asked to stretch out her hand and catch them. With great difficulty she could catch some. After that the family left. At her home the girl was lying in bed. On the following afternoon She heard the rumbling noise of a passing car; she suddenly jumped out of bed and ran towards it. Thereafter she gradually began to move about.

One day a carriage was driving along the road across the Ramna grounds. Mother asked me to hire it. She got into it. The coachman enquired, "Where would you go?" "To your own house", was Mother's prompt reply. Without saying a single word, he drove to his home. On arriving there, it was found that an old man was about to die; by his side his relations were weeping. Mother asked me to bring some sweets which were distributed amongst the people present and She came away. We learnt subsequently that the old man had recovered.

Mother had other ways as well to give relief to sufferers. She would ask a person in distress to use anything he could lay his hands on, at dusk, shutting his eyes. By using such articles he was found to recover. Sometimes She would ask a patient to eat the food prepared for Her and She would Herself eat the sick-diet intended for him. In cases of fever or serious bowel-complaints, patients following Mother's direction ate food not considered beneficial by physicians, with the result that they were restored to their former health in no time. When my son was fifteen or sixteen years old, he was suffering from dysentery for about ten or twelve days. Mother came to see him one night. From that night he began to recover but Mother had dysentery for a few days. It was also been found, if any patient was destined not to come round, he would either willfully violate Mother's directions or fail, by the pressure of circumstances, to follow them. In these cases the final outcome could be foreseen from Mother's ways. The Hindu *shastras* enjoin that the results of our past actions in this birth or of those done during our previous

births, can only be neutralized by steady good work in this life with the help of Divine Grace; but work that calls forth divine intervention is very difficult to perform, unless some saint out of compassion voluntarily aids such efforts.

Mother says, — “As long as you see this objective world, creation exists for you. There is conflict so long as the notions of you and I, happiness and misery, light and darkness, prevail. Consider yourself an integral part of Nature and let there be stress on Nature’s work or on Her Laws of work instead of on your own self as the embodiment of your sense perceptions; then all your senses will be quiescent and your inner being will gradually awaken; the problem of the self and of creation will be solved. Then all your wants will vanish; the impact of life’s basic urges will gradually wear off like a smoke screen at the first breath of wind, your soul will resume its full glory like the morning sun and the time will arrive for you to fix your eyes upon the Supreme Being.” In Mother’s early life, opportunities for Her education were rather meagre, neither did She pay much attention to it. But it was surprising to find that the examiners would ask Her questions from only those topics which She had glanced over beforehand. For this reason She was looked upon as a bright pupil in the class. From Her girlhood She did not, of Her own accord, read any book nor did She practice handwriting. Still the groundwork of Her knowledge appeared to be quite sound. Whatever She studied She could master thoroughly. One day Mother enquired, “What is Italy?” A few days later an Italian Professor named Tucci came to Mother at Shah-bag. He had come to visit the University of Dhaka. He asked a question in English and it was to be translated into Bengali for Her, but before this could be done She gave the proper answer in Sanskrit.

We prayed to Her several times to give us a specimen of Her handwriting in Bengali. She said, “I don’t write anything with any purpose in view. When the time comes, you may get it.

Fortunately on the 4th of Ashar, 1337 (Bengali Era) some 22 years back, we received a specimen*.

*. English translation - “O thou Supreme Being. Thou art manifest in all forms- this universe with all created things. wife, husband, father, mother and children, all in one. Man’s mind is clouded by worldly ties. But there is no cause for despair. With purity, unflinching faith and burning eagerness go ahead and you will realize your true Self.”

There are many photographs of Mother; their number may be not less than 1,000. But what is surprising is that no two are alike. Sri Subodh Chandra Dasgupta of Dhaka, and Sri Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta of Chittagong amongst many other photographers, took many snapshots. In October 1926 Shashi Babu came to Dhaka during the Durga Puja celebrations and some of us went to Shah-bag together to take a photograph of Mother early in the morning.

On reaching there we found that nobody knew where Mother was. At last we discovered that She lay in a state of *samadhi* inside a dark room. It had been arranged that Shashi Babu would leave Dhaka the same afternoon. He was therefore very anxious to take a snapshot of Mother that very morning. *Pitaji* was specially requested to approach Mother for permission.

He, himself with my help brought Mother out and seated Her for an exposure and we withdrew from the range of the camera. Mother was still in a state of self-absorption with Her body and limbs slackened. Suspecting that She might have moved during the exposure, Shashi Babu used eighteen plates. He then left for Chittagong. Subsequently he wrote to say that of the eighteen plates only the last one produced a good portrait which contained a moonlike ball of light on Her forehead, and what was still strange, my figure appeared behind Mother's. An extract from Shashi Babu's letter written to me long after, is given below.

Shashi Babu's letter ran thus: - "When Mother's photograph was being taken I loaded six plates at a time and in three shifts eighteen plates were exposed. In the first few plates there were no impressions, only a ball of light covered each plate. The next few plates showed some hazy outlines; it was only on the last plate that the figure of Mother came out in full relief. You were far away beyond the range of the camera and on one side. From there you gave me the signal for giving the exposure. From the very outset I was feeling nervous when taking the exposures, as I had a dim suspicion that things were not all right, which caused me much pain. When the last plate was exposed, I felt a flood of joy filling my heart. At that time I just began to approach Mother's feet as my only refuge. During those days an incident like the one mentioned above almost overwhelmed me."*

* The letter was dated 5.5.1337 (Bengali Era), 1930 A.D. (around 20 August)

When the photograph was received at Dhaka people suspected some trick of the photographer in developing it. But when Mother was approached about the matter, She expressed Herself thus:

“When this body lay in a dark room in an almost frozen condition the whole room was flooded with light radiating from it. When you brought this body out into the sunshine, the radiance was there. But it gradually shrank into a ball of light on the forehead. There was an impression in my mind that at the time Jyotish was standing behind me. You may now judge what it meant.”

ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ-ଜ୍ୟୋତୀ

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ଶ୍ରୀଜ୍ୟୋତୀଙ୍କର ହସ୍ତଲିପି

ପ୍ରଥମାଂଶୁର ଶରଣ

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—to be continued

Children's Pages
OLD HABITS DIE HARD

—Sw. Shivananda.

There was an old woman who was a seller of oil by profession. In her ninety years of human existence she did nothing except selling oil. When her life was to end and she was about to die, all her relatives assembled around her. Looking at them the woman said, "You are all here, I entreat upon you all to look after my oil shop and see that it is not closed down. Remember what I say. Do not forget".

When she was saying all these, she was by degrees losing her consciousness and also power of hearing.

Her relations, realizing that the end was very close, urged her. "Grand Ma, repeat—'Krishna', 'Krishna'. Repeat 'Ram, Ram'".

By then she became half-conscious and her power of hearing was impaired. So, shouting to her children and grandchildren she kept on saying, "No, No. not even a drop of oil shall I give you free. You beggars, run away, run away from here." With these words she breathed her last.

Ma related this story to illustrate the fact that at the moment of death one has no control over the mind. One is engrossed in thoughts which one treasured throughout one's life. Therefore, one must practice to remember the Creator at the time when one is young and healthy, so that at the time of death God's name may spontaneously come to the mind. Ma makes it clear that God's worship be practiced all through the days of existence in this world and not left to be done only at the last stage.

(From *Ten Inspiring Stories*)

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Pilgrimage to Kailash
(from SRI SRI MAANANDAMAYI)
Vol V

—Gurupriya Devi

(continued)

Saturday, July 27

We decided to set out after eating. We managed to procure potatoes, pumpkin and greens. *Khichdi*, *roti*, greens and curry were all prepared. We also got oil and some milk so henceforth we may not experience much inconvenience.

After the meal we proceeded on our journey. The path was uphill for three miles but we did not have to walk as we were carried in the *dandi*. We sighted many fields with greens. Fields are called "*chooya*" here.

I shall put down here something that I forgot to write about earlier. Ma's body has thinned down. When we reached Garbiyan we found that all of us had grown darker; this was particularly true of our noses. The horses had become lame due to walking over rocks and stones all the way. Because of this, a young groom jokingly remarked that the *prasada* from Kailaspati was "black humans and lame horses." Since Garbiyan our colour is changing again.

Though the days are warmer now we still need blankets at night. It usually rains at night but for the last two or three days the weather has been dry. This was lucky for us for had it rained the path would have been rendered even more terrible.

Bholanath travelled in Tunu's *dandi* and also walked some distance. Tunu travelled a long distance in the *dandi*. As the *dandis* have been breaking on the way their numbers have decreased.

We can no longer hear the roar of the Kali Ganga which has been left far behind. It is believed that this very Kali Ganga is famous as the Sarayu in Ayodhya and by other names in other places. Since yesterday we lost sight of snowy mountains and today they are completely absent from our surroundings. Today we have to travel for ten miles till we reach Sasa.

Three or four miles before our destination, Ruma Devi arrived and bowed down at Ma's feet saying, "Ma, I have been sitting here and awaiting your *darshan* for the last three or four days without going to my ashram." Before sunset we reached Sasa. Ruma

Devi accompanied us. She had arranged for a house in which we could stay at Sasa; there she had already spread mats for us. As soon as we reached she went to the homes of householders and procured flour, ghee, potatoes and milk for us.

Service is the motto of her life. We were surprised to see this keen spirit of service in such an elderly *sannyasini*. She told Ma, "Ma, I was counting the days and waiting for you, roaming around here for the last three days. Today I sat on a stone—I was afraid that you would go past and that I would miss you. Many people have come to the ashram and there is much work to be done. But I did not go for I was waiting for you. It is seven days since I came here from Almora." She plucked flowers from the mountainside, offered them at Ma's feet and did *pranama*. We watched the devotion of this elderly lady, enchanted. She had known Ma only for a few hours. At night we ate the meal prepared by Ruma Devi and rested.

In the evening the house was crammed with householders who arrived to see Ma. Ma was suffering from stomach ache so she ate very little in the afternoon and refused food now. As Jyotish Dada was having fever we were all worried, otherwise we had no other problems. Tomorrow we are to leave for Khela after lunch. Today we had set out at ten a.m. and travelled ten or twelve miles, passing through Sirkha on the way. We also slept quite late.

Sunday, July 28

Jyotish Dada was ill. We set out after eating. Khela is seven miles away. The coolies are to accompany us till we reach Khela; then they will leave.

Ruma Devi went with us. She said that she would stay with Ma and that she would not return to her ashram any more. She declared, "I had decided that the vow of service was the greatest in life. But now that I am old I find that there is no end to the work. I do not like it any more; I wish to live with Ma in peace and do my *sadhana*." So saying she accompanied us.

We found roses and champak flowers blooming all around. Dasu Dada plucked the flowers and offered them at Ma's feet. We saw Indian flowers after so long. Since morning the village folk have been coming for Ma's *darshan*. Some brought milk from home bred cows, some covered Ma's bedding with flowers. Some ladies brought flowers and sugar candies for Ma; subsequently I distributed these items to all present.

One woman began questioning Ma on religious matters and asked for Ma's advice on how to proceed with *sadhana*. Some people walked beside Ma's *dandi* for quite some distance. Ruma Devi's Sharada Ashram is about one and a half miles from here. Many villagers hold Ruma Devi in great esteem. The Postmaster of Garbiyan had written

to the Postmaster of Khela to make arrangements for Ma's stay there.

We reached Khela a little before sunset. It rained on the way. The Postmaster's man was waiting by the roadside to convey information about Ma's arrival. We sat in a shop in Khela where the Patwari, the Postmaster and others came to meet us. Jyotish Dada had no fever. But as he was feeling very weak, we decided to stay here tomorrow. The coolies' homes are here, so they took leave of us. Tomorrow, coolies will be arranged for the trip to Almora. It is still raining. Parvati Devi is with us. She will go to Nainital for her job.

—to be continued

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“What Bhagavan does everything whatsoever is for the best. Just as a physician cuts on abcess and removes the putrid matter, thereby freeing the patient from discase even so by giving you sorrow God cleanses and purifies you and then takes you in His arms. He delivers man from all sins and blemishes saying, “Offer all your impurities and deprivations to Me and in return receive the ambrosia of immortality.” He makes the devotee suffer pain and trouble in order to increase his eagerness, his yearning for the Real. God accepts as worship the agony, the flood of teass of the distressed.”

— Shree Shree Ma

SVAKRIYA SVARASAMRITA

MARRIAGE: MA ENTERS GRIHASHTRAM

The wedding was over when Ma's age was twelve years and ten months. Ma did whatever She was told to do at the time of marriage and, accordingly, standing and sitting, as required. She carried out all instructions given to Her by anyone. When the moment (for marriage ceremony) arrived, She was taught how to throw flowers, etc., from a receptacle made of woody stalks of jute plants by a grandmother of Ma with her own hand. That there must be *Shubh Drishti* (the first exchange of glances) between the bride and the bridegroom had not been told to Ma by anybody. Hence She did what She was told to do by that grandmother, but where was the exchange of glances as they have to be exchanged? On the contrary, Ma was looking skyward at the spectators who had congregated in a group there. At Ashtagram, Bajitpur and other places, when all that of Ma was going on (Ma was, then deeply engaged in Her play of *sadhana* with absolute indifference to the world), on Bholanath's mentioning about this absence of exchange of glances to his friends in their friendly talks, they too remarked, "Yes, yes, really it is so; perhaps all this is due to this reason—the family life has not functioned with the normal bond.

At the end of the marriage ceremony, there was *havan* (oblation of fire), etc., next day. Sri Lakshmincharan, an old famous pundit of the village, performed this oblation. In village relationship, he was Ma's grandfather. While performing this (religious ceremony), he said with eyes moist with tears and while drawing attention of Bholanath, "Grandson,

* A traditional practice at the time of marriage. This had significance, particularly in the context of those days when the bride and the bridegroom had never seen each other before marriage. This *Shubh Drishti* (literally auspicious glance) would prognosticate a happy married life if the pair felt happy looking at each other.

you do not know what jewel you are taking home!” The son of this pundit too, it is reported, had, while pointing towards Ma, sometime told someone, “Her shining complexion is becoming visible through Her clothing; She is not an ordinary person (human being).”

That day, after the oblation, etc., were over, Ma’s youngest maternal uncle feasted Bholanath lavishly with love and respect. A variety of dishes of rice, curry and other eatables in a set of well-matched glass and small *katories* (bowls), nicely arranged in a large plate was placed before Bholanath after seating him on an *asana*. A rectangular flat cushion used widely for sitting in India placed on the painted wooden seat that had been given to him as a wedding present.

On the occasion of this marriage of Nirmala— the beloved niece of the youngest maternal uncle, who had always treated Her with reverence internally and affection outwardly—this uncle gave as many wedding gifts as his means permitted. We know that he never gave back the horoscope of Ma after taking it away to read it. That Ma would definitely never be tied down in family life, was a fact which must not only be not disclosed at this juncture, but should rather be guarded as a top secret. Perhaps this was the reason for hiding the horoscope.

—to be continued

“Contemplation of the Atma takes one towards one’s ultimate good; while worldly actions only deform Reality”

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—Shree Shree Ma

KEDAR MALAKAR
(translated from *Manishi ki Lokyatra*)

—Pt. Mahamahopadhyay Gopinath Kaviraj

(Continued)

After that, one day I said to Kedar, "Go and take a look, what does Vaikunth look like from Mahashunya (महाशून्य). He went and just as he did earlier, he returned in some time. He said, "Vaikuntha resembles a "दक्षिणावर्त शंख" A conch shell with folds from light to left from outside." I have seen this description of the Purushottam Kshetra in the Shastras.

This was the state in which Kedar was in 1938. When Ma Anandamayee came to Kashi, She was staying in a dharmashala. It was during those days, that I took Kedar to meet her one day. I also told Mataji that this state occurred naturally in that child. Mataji asked Kedar several questions. Kedar said, "Ma, I can leave the body, do come with me once." Ma said, "Kedar, it is not necessary for me to leave the body. You go wherever you want and think of me there. You will see me present there itself. I myself am everywhere. I do not need to come and go. At that time, talk to me as you wish." That night itself, Kedar travelled to divine Lokas. In the morning he said that wherever he went, whenever he remembered Her, he gained her darshan, she also replied to his questions. On hearing this Ma started laughing.

Kedar had gained different types of divine knowledge in the higher worlds. There was a very old lady called, "Siddhi Ma" living in Kashi in those days. I had a very close relationship with her. One day I talked to her about Kedar. Mataji said, "It is all very well, travelling to different Lokas, but there is absolutely no spiritual gain in this. It is no use travelling throughout the entire universe. What is really necessary is to अपने देह को भेद करना, Forging path through one's body without arousing the Kundalini. It is not possible to go out from the middle path and without that occurring देहभेद Transcending the body is not possible. The universe and the body are one and the same. The only way to (भेद) pierce the universe- is देह भेद. After saying this she became silent, then said, "He is a child. It

can happen slowly.”

After this, something really strange happened. One day Kedar felt that a Sadhu Mahatma had come to his house. After meeting him (Kedar), he said, “A Mahapurush has come to meet you. He desires you to meet him.” Kedar asked, “Where does he live? which path do I have to take in order to meet him?” The person who had come said, “You go to Bisesarganj, however, once you reach there, you will see the place. Then you yourself will understand where you have to go”. After saying this, the mahatma disappeared.

Kedar took his nephew's cycle and set off in the afternoon. Passing through Godowlia, Chowk and Maidagin, he reached Bisesarganj. It was 4o' clock in the afternoon. On reaching there, there was a change in him. The physical Bisesargung, the crowd there, the noise all disappeared. He saw a huge field in front of him and there was some slightly raised ground in the middle. There were trees and an ashram. He realized that this was the place he was to go to but there was no way to reach it. There were fields there and he had to go along the boundaries. He went along the boundaries on his cycle and reached the ashram. He met a Mahatma as soon as he reached there. He (the Mahatma) said, “I have been waiting for you.” Kedar stayed there for 2 hours. He did not divulge his conversation with the Mahatma. When it was evening- Sandhya time - the Mahatma said, “Your mother is worried. Go home at once.” Kedar obeyed him and going along those boundaries walking with his cycle, he went across the field. When he crossed the boundary and came to the other side of the field. He found himself on the Grand Trunk Road, the one which goes to Allahabad. This place is to the west of Benaras and Kabir's birthplace- Lahartara. He walked to the station from there, got on to the road and reached home. He was astonished to note that he had gone towards the east of Kashi, but returned to the west. He was not able to understand the reason for this.

Similarly, he again went to have darshan of that Mahatma. He now wanted to take a friend with him, but the Mahatma said, “Come alone. It will not be possible for anyone else to come to this place.” That is why he went alone through the same Bisesargunj and the fields. On reaching, he said, “Maharaj, where is this place located? the one you reside in? What is its real state?”

The Mahatma said, “You wish to know where I am? All right, see.” After this, he raised a rock which was lying nearby. After it was being lifted it was possible to see that there was an infinite and huge void underneath it. There was absolute nothingness on all four sides. There were infinite stars and constellations moving around in it. Kedar was astonished at this. He was not able to understand the geographical situation of that place.

The Mahatma said, "There is no need to be surprised. All the places on the earth are close to where I am situated. After saying this, he put back the cover of the stone in place. Then he said, "Kedar, would you like to see your house?" After saying this, he waved his hand. Kedar was able to see everybody in his house. Not only that, he was able to hear whatever they said. The Mahatma waved his hand again, and everything disappeared. The Mahatma said, "I am the closest of all, yet this place is farther away than anything else. Now you should return home."

Kedar returned back by the same road, but this time, on crossing the farms and coming to the field, he found himself in Lanka, in front of the Hindu Vishwa Vidyalaya. This is situated in the southern part of Kashi. He found this experience quite astonishing. The situation of the ashram is always the same, the fields are the same, but when he crosses them and is on the outer boundary, he finds himself, sometimes on the West or sometime on the South side of Kashi. Looking at it in the normal way, it was not possible to understand the reason.

After this incident, Kedar came to meet me and wanted to know the hidden meaning behind all this. I said, "There is nothing to be surprised about. The truth is that the place where the Mahapurush lived and appeared before you is a "Siddha Bhumi." You went there when you were awake and returned in the same state. It was not as if you left your body and went there in your Sukshma Sharir (subtle body). This is why that place can not be called Sukshma" (subtle, astral). In the normal way, it can not be called gross either (sthula). This is called 'Siddhapura'.

It is subtle as well as gross. It is not related to any geographical place. At that time, it will be felt as if it is a gross place. You will feel, it is a very gross place. In spite of this, the ordinary people of the world can not see it. It is not a part of the subtle world, where you can go only with the subtle body. It is possible to go to a 'Siddhashram' only with a 'Siddhadeha'.

I explained all this to him in this way and Kedar was satisfied. He was studying in the 7th standard at this time. After sometime, his state was such that just by going a little farther from his house, he was able to see that field and the ashram of that Mahatmaji. He lived for 5 to 6 years after this incident. He left this world at the young age of 21 years. There were several other unusual (not normal) happenings in Kedar's life. It is not necessary to describe them here.

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SHREE KRISHNA CHHALIA MANDIR, VRINDAVAN

—Swami Narayananda Tirtha

(continued)

Shreemati Chananoo Devi, the paternal grandmother of Shree Durga Singhji, had expressed her wish to get a temple of Radha Krishna constructed and have the idols of Radha and Krishna installed in it. But this pious sankalpa (resolve) of hers had remained unfulfilled. She had passed away even before the birth of her grandson, Shree Durga Singhji, who now wanted to duly fulfill his late grandmother's *sankalpa*. He approached Shree Ma for guidance and told Her that it was his desire to build the temple of Radha Krishna in the premises of Her Vrindavan Ashram. Shree Ma in Her own natural affectionate way suggested the spot between the temples of Nitai-Gour and Shivaji in the Ashram at Vrindavan for the Radha Krishna temple to be erected upon.

At an auspicious moment, in the presence of Shree Ma, the foundation stone was laid with due rituals at the spot as per Shree Ma's instructions. While the *pūja* of the *Vastu Devata* (the guardian deity presiding over a house) was being performed on Shree Shree Narayana Shila (Shalgram, the naturally shaped Holy Stone representing Shree Narayana), the blazing rays of the midday sun were falling on the Deity. Seeing this, the renowned professor and orator of Kolkata, Shree Tripurari Chakravarty, held an umbrella over the Deity. This sight stirred up Shree Ma's *Kheyal* to reveal that once in the past She had "seen" a similar sight in a vision. She had seen that on the banks of the river Yamuna, under an acacia (babool) tree, Shree Krishna was standing in a stooping posture. He was apparently watching something in the river stream, bending forward, while a person stood behind Him, holding an umbrella over His head. On hearing this, the audience felt that perhaps in the past, the Yamuna river used to flow through this area.

When the site was being dug up for laying the foundation of the temple, a dried up river bed, filled with sand, was discovered. Hence, the digging work had to be carried on in an extended area, avoiding the sandy riverbed. As a result, the base of the temple became much wider than what had been planned for. The Raja Sahab gave the assurance that the excess cost, over and above the money already paid by him, would be met by himself. Under the supervision of Shree Ma's veteran devotee, Raibahadur Shree Narayan Das, Retired Executive Engineer, the construction of the temple building got under way.

The Raja Sahab is known to the community of Shree Ma's devotees as "Yogibhai", following the name "Yogiraj" conferred on him by Shree Ma Herself. From now on he will be referred to as such in this article. There is an interesting story behind this new name of his.

An elder uncle (father's cousin) of Raja Sahab Durga Singhji was a Yogi of high

caliber. He could stay in *Samadhi* for days. Once he said to his relatives, "Take care that no one opens the door of my room until I myself open it". Saying so, he shut the door of his room and stayed in.

Day after day, the Yogi stayed inside his room and when a whole week had passed and the door was not opened, his family members, except his wife, began to fear that he was no more. They decided to break open the door, but the wife of the Yogi requested them again and again not to do so, because she was sure her husband was in deep *Samadhi*, still alive. She knew that her husband, a Yogi of an elevated state, was able to stay in *Samadhi* for long durations. However, the relatives did not pay heed to her and broke open the door. They found the Yogi's body had no sign of life, but it had not decomposed either. Ordinary people as they were, they knew nothing about a Yogi's powers. Turning a deaf ear to the Rani's protestations, when they carried away the body to the cremation ground and put fire to the funeral pyre, everybody present there observed that the big toe of his left foot was moving slowly. When this matter was reported to the Rani, she was inconsolably grieved and in a fit of rage, set a curse on the family of the offenders. She said, "As you have burnt him alive, your family line shall be cut short soon without a progeny to continue it". We have learnt from Shree Ma that the present King of Baghat, Shree Durga Singhji, is a reincarnation of the same Yogi, his paternal uncle. Yogibhai's father, Raja Shree Dilip Singhji, had five Ranis and they had given birth to nineteen children. Raja Durga Singhji, our Yogibhai, is their only child who has survived.

(to be continued)

LETTERS WRITTEN BY BABA BHOLANATH TO DEVOTEES

Kishanpur

Anandamayee Ashram 2.10.37

May wellness be with you,

Ma Hasi, I am delighted to receive your letter. Your Ma does not have any aches in her body now. She is alright. I am pleased to learn that your poisonous boil has been healed. In fact, I was worried about you. Poisonous boils are quite harmful and give a lot of trouble too. You have written me to send you a photograph of your Ma in which she is seen with some girls of Kolkata. Manik has taken that photo with him. I keep asking Hamsa about that photo. He only says, "Yes, Yes, I'll give".

Ruma Devi is alright. Shashibabu has left. He could not go to Delhi, owing to some urgent work. I have shown your letter to Bhramar. At your Ma's suggestion, I am sending you the address for the photo:

Shachi Kanta Ghosh,
No. 14, Police Hospital,
Entaly, Kolkata

Look, Ma, I have given you the address. Now please don't scold me. You may rather give me a thrashing. I am more scared of scolding. On the other hand, you are not scared of scolding but laugh it away.

We all—Asimananda, Yogesh Brahmachari and I—went on a pilgrimage to Haridwar and Rishikesh. After two days, we returned yesterday. Whatever the reason, there was delay in replying. Please don't mind. When are you coming? Do come soon. Believe me—what shall I do? You can well understand—does a naughty son let his mother ever stay in peace? You know me very well; tell me, my good mother. I have given you all good news.

Your Crazy Son

PADA PEETHAM SMARAMI SHREE SHREE MA IN VINDHYACHALA AND THE VINDHYACHAL ASHRAM

—Brahmcharini Geeta

(continued)

Shree Shree Ma's Vindhyachala Ashram has been a witness to many of Her Divine *Lilas*. Every nook and corner of the Ashram has a separate story of some special importance of its own to recollect.

Ashtanga Yoga Manifested in Shree Shree Ma's Body at Vindhyachala Ashram:

While at Vindhyachala Ashram, one day Shree Shree Ma was lying down on the verandah next to Her room. All others were asleep. Only Gurupriya Didi was sitting next to Shree Ma. Suddenly, during those moments, Shree Ma's composure began to transform to a state of *Mahabhava*. Various yogic *Kriyas* were getting performed automatically in Her body. Observing this Didi called out for others. Shree Ma was in a state of a Divine *Bhava*. Didi and others carried Shree Ma inside the room. Various and peculiar yogic actions were manifesting in Shree Ma's body in succession or simultaneously. In spite of all this Shree Ma was in a clam and composed state. The *Kriyas* were taking place quietly one after another. After these activities stopped Shree Ma sat up in a normal posture. Everybody was observing all this in absolute awe. After some time in the same composure and with Her eyes closed She said, "This is the *Devi's* (Goddess's) *Ashtanga Yoga*".

Durga Puja Celebrated in Vindhyachala Ashram :

In the year 1929, Durga Puja was celebrated in Vindhyachala Ashram in Shree Shree Ma's presence. The well known priest from Varanasi and an exponent of the *Smruti Shastra*, (the *Puranas*) Shree Shashi Bhushan Tirtha was the main priest of the rituals and he also did the '*Chandi Path*'. Among others who attended this great occasion was one of Shree Ma's favorite devotees, Shree Atal Bihari Bhattacharya who was accompanied by his nephew Shree Kamala Kanta Bhattacharya, who was later known as Shree Virajananda Brahmachari. The responsibility of organizing the whole function was with Shree Shashanka babu. Kunjababu and his son-in-law Nirmalbabu. Others who also helped in the organization were Dr. Upendranath Bandyopadhyay of Mirzapur, Kuladaprasad Chattopadhyay, Sudhir Kumar Ghosh and other devotees of Shree Ma.



Shree Shree Ma in a 'Bhava' at vindhyachal Ashram.



'Taru kutir', 'Yajnashala and 'Matri Bhavan' at Vindhyachal Ashram.



Shree Shree ma in a Jovial mood at Vindhyachal Ashram.



The yajnasala at vindhyachal Ashram.

Gayatri Mahayajna In Vindhyaachala:

In the year 1934, on Shree Ma's instruction, Swami Akhandanandaji established a Yajnaashala in Vindhyaachala Ashram. The width and the depth of the Yajna Kund was of the measurement of Shree Ma's being. On being questioned about this Shree Ma said, "Once while I was at Dehradun, the Vindhyaachala Ashram was clearly seen by me in a vision; the way I am seeing you all, it was the same way. There in the Ashram one person was performing the Yajna, the way the Yajna is being performed now, the same was visible then. The person who was performing the Yajna had expressed his desire to perform the Yajna. That is why instructions have been given for establishing the Yajnakund. I do not do anything of my own desire or will. The person performing the Yajna had some relation with Akhandanandaji and that is why he has been asked to establish the Yajna Kund". After this when asked about giving the measurements of Her being for the 'Kund', Shree Ma said, "You all wanted measurements and wanted the same in cubits. It occurred to me that 'Savitri Yajna' is a 'Brahma Yajna' and that Brahma is 'Akhanda' (indivisible or whole) and that is why the full measurement of this body was given. It is but correct that when a job is done in a finite form, there are limits and that is why the body has limits, but the thought behind it should be of the Infinite. Then again as per your wishes the measurement was spelt out in cubits. This is how it happened at Ramna Ashram also. I used to visit that place from 'Shah-bag' itself, exactly like you all visit from your houses. The people who were present there had expressed their desire. I did not tell anyone anything then, as whatever is required to be done wherever, the work gets done on its own. After some time when you all wanted to establish an Ashram, once Niranjan came to me and said, 'Ma, now we are put to shame, as whichever place we decide on, some problem or the other crops up and we cannot procure the piece of land. Thus we cannot decide on any place'."

It occurs to me that after such complaints by Niranjanbabu, by Shree Ma's divine intervention the Ashram got established at the desired place. Shree Ma had then said, "Due to the wish of the people who stayed here before, the Ashram has got established with the temples etc."

About one and a half year after the construction of the *Yajnaashala*, the ritual of its consecration got started in 1936 in the Indian month of Phalgun (February-March) on the fullmoon day of Holi (the Colour Festival). As per Shree Ma's instructions a large sacrificial pit had been constructed inside the Yajnaashala. Sometime before this, Shree Ma Herself had said to Akhandanandaji, "You have got this work still pending. Get the Yajnaashala ready; the ritual will get started when it is time." Now Ma expressed Her *Kheyal* for beginning the *Yajna*. About 8-10 priests were invited from Varanasi. It was

fire from Tarapeeth. Thus on the fullmoon day of Holi, at the prescribed moment of auspiciousness, the *yajna* was started. Afterwards, Bholanathji and some other Brahmins performed *havan* (offering oblations to fire) for five days. Simultaneously with the *havan*, some devotees were directed by Shree Ma to carry on *Gayatri japa*. Dr. Upenbabu, Shree Narayan Swamiji and others took charge of this routine task. The offering of one lakh oblations was completed. Arrangements were made for the maintenance of the sacrificial fire. A Brahmin arrived from Varanasi. He had been living as a Brahmachari without household ties. He was given the responsibility to look after the fire. His name was Shree Ananga Mohan Bhattacharya. Arrangements were made for Daily oblations to be offered at the *havan kund*.

While the Gayatri Yajna was going on, one day Shree Ma was heard humming a melodious Bengal song in Her own unparalleled sweet voice. The lyric was set to the tune of traditional folk music of Bengali. Shree Ma was sitting in a small room on the terrace and singing the following ditty composed and tuned *extempore* by Herself.

"It is not the lot of a creature to attain to the Supreme State without *vairagya* (dispassion), (So) make *vairagya* and *viveka* (discrimination, moral conscience) your essential possessions, by giving up your *vasanas* (cravings)

How much *vairagya* is there in you, in what measure, that you will understand only when you have embarked upon your work (*sadhana*); and then will you find out in which direction is your mind dragging you on and on.

Surrendering all your karmas to Him Perform the *dharma* (moral duties) of human life. (You) contemplate again and again in your heart on the Eternal Flawless Brahma.

Calling your mind back from the external world,
Guard it securely in the heart
each and every moment,
Cross the ocean of the world,
Sailing on the raft of Brahma,
When your ego is nullified,
All disputes and tensions resulting from dualities will vanish
(you will see) then
your *svabhava* (individual mode of consciousness) will be established
in the Supremest of the Supreme Truth - the
only Truth worth knowing."

(to be continued)

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Daily Regimen [Dincharyal According to Ayurveda]

Dr Kavita Vyas [Ayurveda Specialist]

Different people have different daily routines according to their profession and other liabilities. Here we are giving a general guideline for daily routine and health care habits as mentioned in Ayurveda.

1) Time to wake up

A healthy person should arise two hours before sunrise. Morning time air is fresh and full of oxygen. The energy of morning atmosphere gives you freshness for the whole day. In yoga early morning time is considered as the best time for doing meditation.

2) Water Intake

Early morning on empty stomach 3-4 glasses of lukewarm water should be taken. It is very good for health as it dilutes all the acids and toxins collected in the stomach during the whole night. Water should be drunk slowly because it will take more saliva to stomach if taken slowly. Our early morning saliva has antibiotic, antibacterial property, this can be applied to skin for any skin disorder.

3) Exercise

Regularly light exercise should be done by every body. With exercise the body grows and becomes proportionate in shape. Muscular strength increases. The body comes to withstand exertion, fatigue, heat and cold. Appetite also is improved and health is maintained. Exercise is most beneficial in the winter and the spring season. *Surya namaskar* is considered as one of the best combinations of yogasanas which any healthy person can do.

It is best when done to the extent of half the exercising capacity. When sweat appears on the forehead and in the armpits, and respiration becomes quick and one breathes by opening the mouth, these are the signs that exercise should be stopped.

While doing any exercise, due consideration must be given to age, strength, physical condition, time, season of the year and diet. If exercise is done wrongly, then it aggra-

vates *vata* and it produces many diseases.

4) Care of the Teeth-

In ancient days people used to clean their teeth with the help of sticks of medicated plants like *neem*, *khadir* etc. Teeth should be cleaned with medicated powders mixed with oil and salt. The mouth is the place of *Kapha* and has an alkaline PH. Hence the teeth should be brushed or better yet cleaned with the fingers, with ayurvedic medicated powders containing astringent, bitter and slightly pungent taste.

For this purpose, a mixture of the powder of catechu, rock salt, black pepper, long pepper, camphor, turmeric and *neem* [*Azadiracta Indica*] in equal proportions along with a small amount of cloves and honey is recommended. Such ayurvedic tooth powders are commercially available. If used regularly, they can eliminate many dental problems, particularly gum diseases which are the main cause of loss of teeth. Ayurvedic tooth powder is much better than tooth paste for teeth and also low in cost. After having meals, gargle the teeth with water at least 12-15 times, so that any residue of food can be removed from the teeth, which is harmful for the teeth and gums. Don't have very hot or very cold drink or food; it is harmful for the teeth and throat both.

5) Care of the Tongue-

The tongue should be cleaned by a flexible and long strip of metal or wood. Steel or copper are used for this purpose. Each person should use a tongue scraper every day. Cleaning the tongue not only cleanses the mouth but also stimulates the whole digestive tract and improves the digestive fire.

6) Care of the Mouth

Gargling with $\frac{1}{4}$ th cup of lukewarm undiluted sesame oil or mustard oil is recommended. This gives strength to the teeth, improves the voice, and imparts proper taste to the food that is eaten. One used to such gargles never gets dryness of throat, nor do his lips ever get cracked; his teeth will never get dental carries and will be deep rooted; he will not have any tooth ache nor will his teeth set on edge by sour intake; his teeth can chew even the hardest eatables.

7) Care of the Face-

Every day collyrium or *kajjal* should be put in the eyes. This helps in removing dirt and dust and relieves watering or burning of the eyes due to strain. Regular use of collyrium increases the brightness of the eyes and strengthens their power to withstand bright light. Collyrium should be made from the decoction of liquorice and triphala in equal parts along with enough honey to produce a paste. This can be applied to the eyes.

For making collyrium the best substance is the soot from a cow's ghee lamp, the black material which accumulates under the bowl is collected as collyrium. Massaging cow's ghee on the soles of the feet is good for the eyes. Waking till late night and sleeping after sun rise affects the eye sight. Sleep early and wake up early.

9) Care of the Nose-

Medicated oil should be put into both nostrils every day [This is called **patimarsha naya**] A few drops can be put on the end of the little finger and gently applied into the nose. For this purpose the Ayurvedic oil called *Shadbindu Tailam* should be used or, if it is not available, such oil as sesame oil, Brahmi oil or ghee are also helpful. Constant use of *nasya* treatment [one of the panchakarma treatment] protects the eyes, nose and throat against disease and improves their efficiency. It also helps to prevent diseases of the head region and strengthens the voice.

10) Care of the Ears-

If sesame oil is regularly dropped into the ears, ear diseases due to vitiated *vata* like torticollis, lock jaw, hardness of hearing and deafness can be prevented. For ear diseases *Bilva tailam* is good.

11) Oil Massage-

a) **Body Massage-** Oil massage on body is known in Sanskrit as *abhyanga*. Medicated oil should be massaged on the whole body, including the head and feet. Regular oil massage removes excess fat from the skin, makes the skin glossy, soft and strengthens it. It also protects the skin from diseases. If one practices oil massage regularly, the body, even if subjected to injuries or strenuous work will not be much affected.

b) **Head Massage-** One who applies sesame oil on his head regularly does not suffer from headache, baldness, graying of hair, nor does his hair fall. Strength of his head and forehead is specially enhanced, his hair becomes black, long and deep rooted; his sense organs work properly; the skin of his face becomes brightened; it produces sound sleep and happiness. Coconut oil is also considered good for the hair.

c) **Massage of Feet-** By massaging oil on the feet, roughness, immobility, dryness, fatigue and numbness are instantaneously cured; tenderness, strength and steadiness of feet are effected; the eyesight becomes clear and a *Vata* [vitiated] is relieved thereby. Prevention from sciatica, cracking of feet, constriction of vessels and ligaments of feet is ensured;

The reproductive system is also strengthened.

12) Bath

Hot water bath should be taken after half to one hour of oil massage so that oil can have sufficient time to be absorbed by the skin. For washing the head the water should not be too hot. [In fact cold water is good for head bath]. For body hot water bath relieves fatigue, increases strength, cleanses the body, improves appetite and imparts a pleasant sensation to the body as well as the mind. In general bathing is purifying, stimulant and life giving; it removes fatigue, sweating and dirt. It brings about strength in the body and is an aid par excellence for the enhancement of *Ojas*; it increases immunity.

13) Other Cares-

The proper dressing and regular cutting of hair, beard and nails etc. adds to the beauty, cleanliness and longevity.

14) After lunch one should have half hour nap; it increases efficiency in work. It is known as *vaamakukshiti* [sleeping on left side turned body.]

15) If one applies cow's ghee with the help of the little finger in both the nostrils, before sleep, it increases immunity and is good for sinus problem.

16) At night taking hot milk with $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 tea spoon of cows ghee is good for sound sleep and subsides *pitta*.

Dietetics and Regimen for the Summer Season [*Grishma Ritu*]

In the summer, the sun with the help of its hot rays absorbs the moisture from the earth. So in the summer-

- One should take food which is sweet in taste and cool in its effect.
- One should take liquid diet and light food
- In summer it one takes *sattu* [(fried gram powder or fried barley powder) which is used after diluting in water, common in India] ghritam, rice and milk, then he does not lose his normal strength.
- Taking sweet milk with ghritam in the night is a good habit.
- Eating seasonal fruits like watermelon, cucumber, orange etc is good for health.
- Chewing fresh coconut fruit, fennel with *mishri* gives cooling effect in the stomach.
- In this season one can have *Haritaki churnam* powder of terminalia chebula], 5 gm with jaggery; it has rejuvenation effect.

Asharam Varta

Anandaswarupeshu,

As it happens every year, this time too all the special festivals have been observed in all the ashrams of Shree Shree Ma with the beautiful flowers of intimate devotion arranged on the platters of worship. Paush Parvan has been observed on the occasion of Paush Sankranti on 15th January, 2016. On this occasion the ashrams organized *Nam sankirtan* (musical repetitions of the Holy Name of God) from dawn to dusk, coupled with the offering of the *bhog* of *pitha* and *payas* (rice cake and porridge of rice and milk) to the deities in the temples. On the Republic Day on 26th January, the national flag was hoisted with due ceremony and a wonderful programme was organized in Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth in Varanasi and in Ma Anandamayee Vidyapeeth at Kankhal.

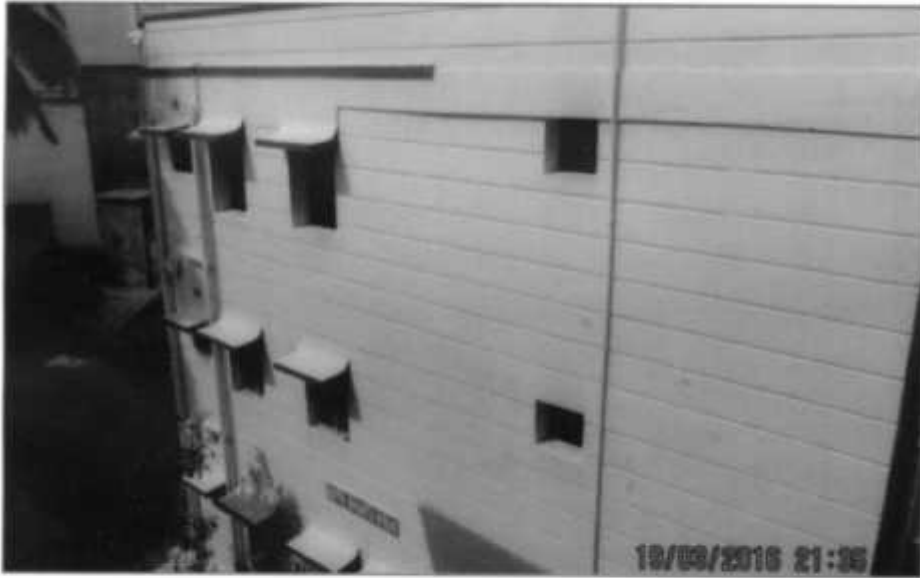
On 13th February, 2016, all the ashrams of Ma became busy with the arrangements for the worship of the vina-playing Goddess Saraswati. The year, The hall of the Kanyapeeth in Varanasi was decorated in a special way. In front of the background of beautiful scenery of mountains and clouds, Ma Saraswati on the snow-white swan assumed an ethereal grandeur. On both sides of the image of Ma Saraswati, beautifully designed thermocol pillars were arranged. Worship of the Goddess, food offerings to the deity and the *kirtan* of the Devi gladdened everyone's heart. At the end of the worship, there were flower offerings to the Goddess offering of *bhog*, and finally everyone took the *prasada*. In the afternoon, after the recitation of the Ramayana and *kirtan* by the girls of the Kanyapeeth, a special devotee of the from Pune, Shree. Hemantabhai Desai, mesmerized everyone with his dulcet sitar recital. His sitar playing was accompanied on the *tabla* by Shree Rajesh Banerjee, a deft *tabla* player and a devotee of Ma from Kashi.

In the other ashrams of Ma as well, Saraswati Puja has been observed with utmost care and profound devotion.

On 22nd February, the Tarapith asgram, as usual, witnessed the beautiful, bliss-filled get together on Maghi Purnima. In Kashi, the annual Satyanarayan puja and the singing and recitation of the *panchali* of Satyanarayan were observed in a well-orga-



The deck decorated with 'Rangoli' of flowers varanasi Ashram.



Matri Bhakti Nivash



Bhagvan Shree Bindu Madhav



The Temple of Shree Bindu Madhav



Panchganga Ghat



Panchganga Ghat

nized manner. Later on, all took the *prasada*.

On the occasion of Mahashivaratri, on 7th march, 2016, the Varanasi ashram was filled with the remembrance of Shiva. The little *brahmacharinis* of the Kanyapeeth, wearing *namavalis*, and smeared with *bhasma* (holy ash) and sandalwood paste, worshipped Lord Shiva in every *prahar* (phase of the night), in the intervals, they engaged in the *bhajan* and *kirtan* of Lord Shiva. Thus, they, as it were, brought the mood of Mount Kailash into the Hall of the Kanyapeeth. In all the ashrams of Ma, including the Kankhal ashram, Shivaratri has been observed properly. In Vrindavan, the *Rudrabhisheka* of Shree Siddheshvara Mahadeva and the *vrata* and *puja* have been observed without any deviation from the norms.

The *abir* (coloured powder) of Phalgun, on the occasion of Holi, reddened the yards of the Varanasi ashram and the natmandir of Shree Shree Gopal. This year while playing Holi with Gopal, we mixed countless rose petals with *abir*. In Vrindavan we had seen the *sukhis* of Thakur (Lord Krishna) play Holi with Him with flower petals during Ras Lila. This time, we played Holi with Gopal in a similar way.

On the day before Dol Purnima, 22nd march, which was the birthday of Hari Baba according to the lunar calendar we observed the special *shodashopachar puja* (worship with sixteen items as per the shastras) of Srimanmahaprabhu, Hari Baba's Ishtadeva. Above the kitchen of the Gopal temple, in Ma's room on the second floor, which was the place of Hari Baba's *mahaprayana*, we organized the worship of Hari Baba, followed by *kirtan* for three hours, *bhog*, *sadha bhandara* (ceremonial feeding of the sadhus) and the distribution of *prasada* among the devotees. In the evening that day, on the *dol mancha* in the sacred yard of the Kanyapeeth, near to the place where Ma had seen the dancing of the sadhus with bodies made of radiant moonlight, we observed Narayana's *adhivas (chanchar)*, *puja*, Holikadahan, singing of *bhajans* and *kirtan*. The arrival of the bhaktas of Ma from Kolkata, who are the devotees of Gopal, increased the joy and beauty of the festival twofold.

In the morning on the day of Dol Purnima, before playing Holi with Gopal, Narayana's special *shodashopachar puja* was observed on the Dol Mancha, followed by the offering of *abir* to the deity. Afterwards, in the Gopal temple, which is the place for the union of the deity and the devotee, Gopalji was smeared with *abir* by the devotees.

As if, intensely desirous of playing with His devotees, he came out of the sanctum. Gopalji was seated on Ma's bedstead. Afterwards, the Maha Abhishek of Gopalji, *shringar* (decoration), *puja*, *kirtan*, *bhog* and *arati* created together an atmosphere of great joy.

In Ma's Vrindavan ashram too, the Dol festival has been observed in a special way. From 18th March to 23rd March, everyday in the afternoon from 3 PM to 6 PM, the Ras Lila has been observed by the special Ras Mandali of Shree Chandra Sharma. On 23rd March, there was Nane Sankirtan from dawn to dusk, coupled with *shodashopachar puja*, *bhog* and honouring and feeding of the sadhus in all the temples on the occasion of the birthday of Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

From 12th April to 16th April, Shree Shree Vasanti Puja will be observed.

We pray at the Lotus Feet of Shree Shree Ma for a very happy, peaceful and prosperous Bengali New Year for all.

Jai Ma

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ON THE ASCENT TO THE SPHERE OF THE IMMORTALS

SHREE AJAY SOPORY

~~SHREE AJAY SOPORY~~

We sorrowfully announce that Shree Ajay Sopory, a true devotee of Shree Shree Ma, has left this mortal plane on 25 November, 2015 to rest forever at the Holy Feet of Shree Shree Ma. His father, Late Shree Shyam Sundar Das Sopory was one of those numerous Kashmiri devotees, along with Shreemati Swaroop Rani and Shreemati Kamala Nehru from the Nehru family, who had their first *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma at Dehradun in the decade of the thirties during the first phase of Her itinerary and became devoted to Her.

Shree Shyam Sundar Dasji came to be known as "Sopory Bhai" among Shree Ma's devotees.

The two sons of Sopory Bhai, Shree Ashok Kumar Sopory and Shree Ajay Sopory and his daughter, Shreemati Maya Rajdan, have all been sincere devotees of Shree Shree Ma. Shree Ajay Sopory was well known for his generosity and gentle, suave deportment. He was a bachelor and passed his days in God-remembrance. Every now and then, he used to send articles in English on his reminiscences of Shree Shree Ma for Anrit Varta. He had a very good collection of photographs of Shree Shree Ma, Didima and Shree Ma's various Ashrams and would often send some of them to us.

Verily, he belonged to the fold of Shree Shree Ma's dedicated followers. During his last illness, to the very last moment, he was immersed in the remembrance of Ma and Didima and mentally adhered to their Feet. Undoubtedly, Ma has bestowed Her *Kripa* on him in full measure and taken him across the ocean of the world to the shore of Eternal Life, Light and Bliss. We pray to Shree Shree Ma for giving solace and peace to the bereaved family.

Jai Ma

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DR. (KM.) PREMLATA SRIVASTAVA

We are much grieved on the demise of Dr. Km. Premlata Srivastava, a long time devotee of Shree Shree Ma. A pious and simple soul, Dr. Srivastava, our Premaji, breathed her last after a short illness on 6 March, 2016 on the eve of Maha Shivaratri in New Delhi at the residence of her younger sister, Dr. Smt. Sushma Kumar.

Premaji's dedicated life was a string of episodes of Ma's *Kripa*. Her family belongs to Lucknow from where she completed her education and while as an MBBS graduate she was awaiting her appointment after having appeared at an interview, one day she was on an outing at Vrindavan. By chance she took her seat at the entrance to Shree Shree Ma's Ashram. Suddenly, someone came out and asked her to come in. She subsequently learnt that Shree Shree Ma --- who was inside Her room with the door closed --- had said to this person, "There is a doctor of the Railway Hospital sitting at the door. Go, call her in". She was amazed, but that was the beginning of her lifelong association with Ma and Her Ashrams.

Gradually, the whole family, Premaji's mother, her siblings, their families, were all attracted to Ma's magnetic, divine Presence and received initiation from Her. Worthy recipients as they are, they have reaped a rich harvest of Ma's unconditional Grace. On Shree Shree Ma's own initiative, Premaji's mother was given *atir sannyas*. Away from pomp and show, in an unassuming way, members of this family have rendered much service to the institutions in Ma's Holy Name. Over several decades, Premaji was actively associated with Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth, first as a member and later as Vice-President of its Managing Committee.

Premaji had a flair for writing; on several occasions, she contributed articles for Anand Varta. In the 1980's, Premaji brought out the first complete biography of Shree Shree Ma in Hindi, *Ya Devi Sarvabhuteshu*, which was subsequently translated in English and is now available on the net.

Born on the night of Shree Krishna Janmashtami in 1937, Premaji was very fond of Shree Gopalji, her Ishta Devata. She had an idol of Gopalji, for whom she herself used to prepare food offerings. Wherever she went, she carried Gopalji along with her. After some time, she procured a Shiva Lingam and began to do Shiva *puja* together with the *puja* of her *Ishta Deva*.

Premaji was very much attached to Varanasi. After having served as a medical practitioner at the Railway Hospital of Varanasi, she took voluntary retirement in order to