

# MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

A quarterly journal dealing mainly  
with the divine life and sayings of  
Sri Anandamayi Ma

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## MATRI-VANI

As to self-surrender : by constantly endeavouring to live a life of self-dedication, it will come about one day. What does self-surrender mean, if not to surrender to one's very own self.

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*Jagat* (world) means ceaseless movement, and obviously there can be no rest in movement. How could there be peace in perpetual coming and going ? Peace reigns where no coming exists and no going, no melting and no burning. Reverse your course, advance towards Him, then there will be hope of peace.

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The natural impulse to have faith in something, which is deep-rooted in man, develops into faith in God. This is why human birth is such a great boon. It cannot be said that no one has faith. Everyone surely believes in something or other.

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A man's belief is greatly influenced by his environment ; therefore he should choose the company of the Holy & Wise. Belief means to believe in one's self, disbelief is to mistake the non-self for one's self.

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Man thinks he is the doer of his actions, while actually everything is managed from 'There', the power-house. Yet, people say : 'I do', How wonderful it is !

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The light of the world comes and goes— it is unstable. The Light that is eternal can never be extinguished. By this Light you behold the outer light and everything in the universe; it is only because it shines ever within you, that you can perceive the outer light.

All paths are good. It depends on a man's *sanskaras*, his conditioning, the tendencies he has brought even from previous births. Just as one can travel to the same place by plane, by train or by car, so also there are lines of approach for different types of people.

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What is *dharma* ? Those actions which are conducive for attaining to Him, who is desirable for everyone. This is also the natural way of life. Sorrows are due to unnatural ways. So that is *adharma* .

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Regular prayer purifies the mind and the heart. Set apart at least ten minutes for your daily prayer at a fixed hour. You may even go on doing your usual work during this period, but observe silence and meditate on Him in any way you like. See that throughout your life there should be no slackness in regularity and punctuality.

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Exert yourself to the limits of your power, however feeble. He is there to fulfil what has been left undone.

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Don't sit idle. Always be engaged in doing something useful. Either chant God's name in silence, or read a good book, or discuss a good topic. But don't waste your valuable time in idle gossip.

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Discipline of the tongue and other sense organs will help the mind to withdraw from other things and will turn it inwards.



## TWO INCIDENTS

— Sri Vijaiananda (Dr. Weintrob)

We have frequently heard Mother say that She does not go anywhere; yet we see Her travel from place to place. Being all-pervading and therefore everywhere at all times, Her body and its movements have significance only for us. Mother has assured us that She will never leave us, no matter where we may go or what we may do. I feel convinced that She is the all-pervading Divine Consciousness, for whom there is no limitation of space and time, for whom the word 'impossible' has no meaning. However, for most of us; this knowledge is only on the level of the spoken word. Many just repeat it from hearsay. But those who have for a longer period of time lived under Mother's guidance, have experienced in a variety of ways the benediction of Her presence, and are able to understand that Her blessings and Her divine love are the same, whether we are far or near Her physically. But our mind is like a stupid child that has to be taught his lesson again and again, because he keeps on forgetting it, until it is hammered right into his brain. On occasions something happens that impresses deeply on our foolish minds the evident fact that Mother is ever with us, seated in our own hearts, guiding us constantly, removing obstacles, saving us from dangers. It is to this that I want to refer here.

### (1)

In 1954 Mother's birthday celebrations took place in the Almora ashram. I was then staying at the Varanasi ashram and proceeded to Almora to attend the function. Already for three years I had enjoyed the good fortune of living under Mother's direct guidance. During the first half of this period I had constantly travelled with Mother, accompanying Her wherever She would go. To leave Her even for a single day was a source of almost unbearable mental suffering to me. This is how Mother at first attracts us towards Her physical presence, in order to wean our minds from all worldly attachment. Love for Mother—although it is still *moha*—purifies mind and heart, awakens, and greatly increases our yearning for the Divine. What may be achieved after long years of struggle by the practices of pranayama, japa, or selfenquiry, is accomplished within a short period of time, effortlessly as it were, by pure and intense love for Mother. In fact, intense, pure and selfless love for

Mother is in itself a most powerful *sādhana*. This love has then to be expanded progressively to 'the all-pervading presence. Thus Mother leads us stage by stage.

Some temperaments may actually feel Mother nearer, while far away from Her in space. This may sound a paradox, but can be explained as follows: When we are with Mother physically, Her sweetness and kindness, Her childlike simplicity may make us at times forget Her divinity. While far away, if the mind is capable of rising beyond the physical aspect, we have perhaps a greater chance of grasping that which abides in the heart.

When talking of Mother's divinity, it may not be out of place here to draw attention to some misunderstanding, not uncommon with Westerners. For people in the West, grown-up in the belief of one of the Semitic religions, to worship God in the form of a human being is considered a great sin, a blasphemy. In the Occident, it is the dualistic doctrine that prevails—God being worshipped as the Lord or Creator of the universe, while the individual soul is conceived as remaining ever separate from Him. In India, on the other hand, the doctrine of Advaita is accepted commonly by the educated. According to the advaitic teaching, the ONE, who is beyond all thought and description, is the 'Being par excellence', the substratum of everything; without Him nothing can exist, in fact, He alone really exists, the phenomenal world being but a surface play, like the waves of the ocean. In a perfect Being, this Divine Consciousness, this Eternal One is present in His full effulgence, without any covering veil. Therefore it is quite natural to look upon such a Being as the Divine Incarnate.

But let me again take up the thread of my story. During the second half of the three years that I had spent travelling with Mother, I could bear to remain without Her for short intervals; but never (as far as I remember) had I been without Mother's *darshan* for more than a month. When I came to Almora for the birthday celebrations, the yearning for Mother's physical presence had come again, even stronger than before. The infinite Love of the Guru is quite different from what is usually called 'love'. Real Love knows no weakness. It may even appear hard and merciless on occasions. The grown-up child was clinging to the toys of the baby, and Mother most probably knew that the time had come for him to shake off the habits of the infant.

Mother's skill in seizing the psychological moment is wellknown. At such a moment I was made to promise to remain in the Almora Ashram for one whole year, without travelling anywhere. One whole year without seeing Mother ! It seemed like eternity to me. Previously, even after fifteen days of separation, I would count the days and wait for Mother's return, like the well-known *chatak* bird for the rain.

Mother stayed for more than two months at Almora that summer. Whilst She was there, a number of improvements were made in the Ashram, which thereby became a place provided with modern comforts, such as electric light, tap water, etc. Only too soon the inevitable day of Mother's departure came. I was standing by the road-side, looking at Mother's car that was ready to start. It was beyond my imagination that Mother, knowing my state of mind, could leave me behind for such a long period of time. Before starting She called me, gave me Her blessing, and uttered a few kind and soothing words. The car began to speed down the road to Kathgodam. I followed it with my eyes until it vanished out of sight. All kinds of childish ideas flashed through my mind. I thought that Mother was just testing me and soon would send back someone with a message for me to join Her. But the time passed and nobody came. My mind was overcast by sadness, as the sky by dark clouds. I felt helplessly despondent and depressed. Of course, I was not compelled to stay on. ( I have never witnessed Mother exercising compulsion for anyone). I could have easily followed Mother to the plains— She would probably have laughed the matter over, as had in fact already happened on a former occasion, and waited for a better opportunity to make me stay in solitude. But then I had given my word and moreover, my mind having matured in the meanwhile, I understood that it was necessary for me to practise *sādhana* and lead a secluded life. I thus tried to divert my thoughts from their painful one-pointedness, keeping myself engaged in some work or other. During Mother's sojourn at Almora, I had temporarily occupied a room near the tank of the Patal Devi temple, since the Ashram had been overcrowded. Now I had to shift to the Ashram. So I began to pack and arrange my belongings. But my sorrow would not leave me. I was slowly ascending the narrow path leading from Patal Devi to the Ashram. The sky was spotlessly blue, the air fresh and light. In the plains, I mused, there must be broiling heat, heavy with dampness. Here, at Almora, was the calm stillness of the Himalayan mountains with their majestic beauty. In the plains I would have been in the midst of the buzzle and noise of the towns. Travelling with Mother means to endure all kinds of hardships and inconveniences. Here I had every facility, almost as in my own home. But of what value were the beautiful sceneries, the bracing climate, physical comforts and all the rest, when the main thing was lacking, namely the happiness I found in Mother's presence. It was a happiness that did not depend on any outer circumstances.

With eyes veiled by tears, I was gazing at the gorgeous range of mountain peaks in the direction of Kasar Devi. All of a sudden something extraordinary happened. My whole being was flooded with joy. Mother was there ! Here, present



before me ! Yet, not in Her physical form .....But how to describe what cannot be put into words ? There was no form—yet I could see Her long black hair floating along the mountain ridges, although it was not to be beheld with these eyes. There was no face, although I could distinctly perceive Her divinely sweet smile filling my heart with inexpressible joy and peace. Glued to the spot I stood like a small child gazing in awe and wonder at Her majestic features. She was outside and also inside of me—verily, She was my life-force, my *prāna* having taken shape, nay, She was the *prāna* of my *prāna*. No sound could be heard, but in the depths of my heart I understood the meaning of Her silence. It was telling me, "Why do you lament, O fool ? I have not gone far away from you ; I am ever with you, ever present in your heart, I am your Real Self." This experience lasted for a few minutes only, but it sufficed to disperse the clouds of my misery, to chase away the heavy mists that had obscured my understanding.

( 2 )

Not only in times of distress is Mother present; She is ever watchful, even where the small details of our daily routine are concerned. The following is an instance of how we are sometimes made aware of this fact.

It happened at the Varanasi (Benares) Ashram. That Ashram, apart from its sanctity, is one of the beauty spots of the city. Even tourists often come to see it. It is situated right on the banks of the Ganges, built on an elevated foundation, overlooking the river. The terrace and the roofs command an extensive and inspiring view over the Ganges.

Here, perhaps more than elsewhere, the Ganges has a great natural beauty. In the rainy season it becomes flooded and gives the impression of a huge lake. To the left, the crescent of the ghats up to the bridge spreads out. In the dark of night the funeral pyres may be seen burning at the *Manikarnika Ghāt*, standing out like sign post, to remind us in the eternal city of the impermanence of all that is born. To the right, on the opposite river bank, is visible the small but picturesque town of *Ramnagar*, with the palace of the Maharaja of Benares. Opposite *Ramnagar* lies ever green *Lanka* and the Hindu University. At the time of which I am telling, the Ashram was much more charming than it is now. Its beauty was enhanced by a large semi-circular terrace, protruding over the river, with two small, finely built temples on either side. The spacious hall below the terrace was used for religious gatherings, such as Kirtan, devotional singing, discourses or discussions on religious and philosophical topics, and so forth. To the right and left of the hall were a few rooms to accommodate Ashramites or guests. The whole Ashram front

with the terrace, the hall, the exquisite little temples and the guest-rooms, had to be demolished a few years ago, since they were in danger of collapsing, due to damage caused by high floods.

At the time to which my story refers, some threatening cracks had already appeared. The hall could not anymore be used for public gatherings, and visitors were not allowed to go downstairs. Only a few inmates occupied some of the side rooms. I happened to be one of those fortunate ones. I say 'fortunate', for I enjoyed the great privilege of living in solitude, right in the midst of that crowded Ashram. My room, facing the Ganges, was near "Anandamayi Ghat". In the stillness of night I frequently would sit in the hall near a window that opened out unto the river.

Next to the Ashram, on top of the *ghat* is a small shrine dedicated to Sri Ganesh. Every year the community of fishermen who live in the vicinity, organize a function that continues for five days. The celebration begins on the fourth day of bright moon of the month of *marga shirsha* (November-December). On this occasion a raised platform is erected over the *ghāt*, the upper part resting on the steps of the ghat, while the lower is supported by wooden posts and beautifully decorated. Every evening, when their day's work is over, the devotees assemble in the pandal, where *kirtan*, devotional singing and the recitation of scriptures continue until late at night.

During one of those nights, I was as usual sitting in the hall, looking down at the river. Mother was not at Varanasi at the time. I could distinctly hear all that was being said or sung at the function on the *ghāt*. Frequently, *sādhakas* who start engaging in regular spiritual practice and live a secluded life, become very sensitive to the vibrations of their surroundings. This was also the case with me at that time. But the loudness of the function did not disturb me at all, so long as it was of a religious nature. On the contrary, I listened with great joy and appreciation to the Nāma kīrtan and the *bhajans*. But all other kinds of sound or noise would sometimes considerably upset me.

That night I could observe that the mood of the people on the platform was gradually changing. Although I was unable to understand the words of their songs, yet the tunes and the laughter of the audience gave me the impression that the celebrations had taken a worldly tune. It was perhaps quite harmless and moreover, my impression might have been wrong ; but that night I seemed particularly sensitive, felt quite disturbed. In a prayerful mood, I said mentally : "In holy Kashi, on the banks of the Ganges, next to Sri Anandamayi Ashram, how can one possibly indulge in vulgar songs ? They should at least sing the *Mahamantra* !"

No sooner had this prayer taken shape in my mind than I heard a mighty sound—I could even say that I 'saw' the sound. It is a well-known fact that sound and form are intimately connected. There is a level of perception where the two mingle. The sound I heard was not uttered by any human voice, it had its own living personality. It came like a huge wave from the terrace of the Ashram, flowing down into the hall and finally enveloping the platform where the function was in progress. Although the wave had no definite shape, I somehow felt that it was connected with Mother's physical presence. The sound wave was uttering once only "*Hari bol*" (Which means "repeat the name of the Lord"), but not in the tune in which Mother usually sings these words. Here the voice was mighty and stern, like a rebuke or severe command. No sooner had the wave engulfed the platform, than the people present stopped singing instantaneously. A blank silence prevailed for a few minutes. Then, without any transition, they began to chant : "*Hare Rām, Hare Rām, Rām, Rām, Hare, Hare*", which is the first verse of the *mahāmantra*. They continued with this for some time, without singing the second verse ( *Hare Krishna etc* ). Later they sang "*Sitarām, Sitarām*" and, as far as I remember, the remaining part of the night was spent in *Nāma kīrtan*.\*

My prayer was a childish one and hardly deserved such supernatural response. But very likely it was one of those psychological moments, a moment of conjunction, brought about by the interplay of various factors, in which the lesson so frequently forgotten, could be hammered into the mind of the above mentioned child.




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\* The aforesaid is written from memory and therefore may not be quite precise in all details.

## FROM THE DIARY OF A EUROPEAN

—MELITA MASCHMANN

*(Translated from the German)*

(III)

**Vindhyachal, October, 1963.**

Today Mataji saw me standing near her trellised window and suddenly broke out into ringing laughter. Just as she had calmed down, a second fit of laughter came over her and then a third. Her laughter is something very mysterious. For me it is quite irresistible. Even when I have no idea why she is laughing, I am forced to laugh with her. This morning I had for the thousandth time just asked myself the question: "Who is Mataji?" Her laughter came as a reply, but when I try to translate it into my language I notice that I have not understood it.

In the evening we again sat in her room, while she was dictating replies to letters. One of them was from a South Indian Christian, who asked whether it was true that Christians were not liked much in Mataji's Ashrams. Ma said: "Write to her: Under whatever name anyone may seek God, this little child most heartily welcomes him."

Later Mataji suddenly said to me: "Melita, sing a German song to us!" I objected vehemently. How could I explain to her that I am unable to sing in tune? Indian music is so fundamentally different. Never in my life have I sung to anyone. I like to sing to myself, but I know that it is out of tune. Mataji was adamant. "Why should you not be able to sing? When you talk your voice sounds so nice. But whether you have a beautiful voice is not at all important. What alone matters is the feeling with which you sing. Or, are you not in a mood to sing today?" — "When I am with you I am singing constantly, but without sound." — "Then sing now with sound!"

We fought on for a little while, finally I gave in. I sang three couplets of a German song about the moon (grateful that no European was there to criticize). Mataji slightly bent forward and listened attentively and lovingly. Then she said: "It was very beautiful. You have a sweet voice." I felt amused and embarrassed. "No,

of course not, but it is sweet of you to say so" — "You find me sweet only because you yourself are sweet."

This may sound like an exchange of rather cheap compliments. But there is more behind it. According to Mataji, we see in the people with whom we deal, that which is in ourselves. If they seem wicked to us, it is but our own wickedness that we find reflected in them. Consequently: Be good and those around you will be good.

Is this really so?

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Today I had a long personal talk with Mataji about prayer. Panuda translated with great care, putting many counter questions. I want to note one question which is as European as it is Asiatic.

"Again and again it occurs to me that I should stop praying altogether. Whether intentionally or not, our prayer usually becomes a petition. Does this not amount to some kind of interference with God's will?"

Mataji: "You should pray, in fact you can never pray enough. And you may also ask for something, but ask only for God Himself, for His advent. When the time comes for you to cease from praying, you will stop of your own accord. Then the question whether you should pray or not will not arise anymore."

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For many years a record has been kept of Ma's life and her sayings. A small portion of it has been published also in English translation.\* Amongst those reports I have found an account that states something very interesting about Mataji's deep cosmic understanding, or perhaps I should say "cosmic love". This is a feature of her being that I often sense very strongly, although I have really never observed her in a corresponding situation. Her relationship to the sky, to air, water, earth, sun, the stars and so forth is different from ours. One can recognize this when watching her gaze over the Ganges or at a flower.

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\* In four English books.

Except in very rare moments of mystic union, nature for us ever remains "the other life": foreign to human existence. For Ma, nature is the same one life : All life is rooted in the Self, there is nothing outside of the Self. The distinction between nature (*prakriti*) and spirit (*purūsha*) is annulled in the Self in which she lives.

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Today I had a very impressive talk with Mataji. I was assisted by an excellent interpreter, an elderly lady who teaches English at the Allahabad University. She is not only intelligent, tactful and well educated, but also has for years been at home in Ma's spiritual world and can translate correctly even hints of Mataji.

No doubt, my personal contact with Ma gains intensity every time she talks to me. I feel that she listens with ever growing attention and her answers are more and more closely adapted to my individual approach.

Today she sat on the very edge of her bed, slightly bending forward—and while at times one has the impression of being watched through a telescope turned upside down: (although the picture remains clear-cut it yet seems very remote)—this time I feel under her gaze life in the focus of a magnifying-glass. I am convinced that she sees everything. In fact, I should prefer to remain silent, for she anyway knows what I want to ask or say. But this would be against the rules of the game.

I am not noting down the personal problems that were discussed. Only a general query: Misfortune—for instance in the history of peoples or in the lives of families and individuals, seemingly senseless destruction—how are these facts compatible with the idea of God, whom we should like, not only to fear but also to love?

*Mataji:* Do you believe that God is the creator of the world and therefore its Lord?

I : Let us anyway in our discussion take this for granted.

*Mataji :* Very well. If God is the Lord of the world, He can do with it as He pleases. Suppose you have grown beautiful flowers in your garden, but decide to plant fruit trees in their place, won't you have to remove the flowers? If you have a fine house, but wish to build a larger and better one on the same plot you will be obliged to demolish the old one. The freedom that is yours in small things, God

wields in great ones. In both is He, in destruction as well as creation. The history of nations, families and individuals is the great *Līlā* (play) that He stages with Himself.

*I* : What about evil in the world?

*Mataji* : When you have realized God, then good and evil are like two ways of dressing your hair. (While saying this, Mataji pulls her hair first to the right and then to the left side of her forehead.) Good and evil do not exist for you anymore when you have realized your union with God.

I cannot grasp the simile with the hair dress, I do not see what it intends to convey. So I say : "Probably I do not understand rightly what you have told me about good and evil. Do you mean to say that I should refrain from fighting the evil in my surroundings ?

*Mataji* : Serve human beings as much as you can; but do not identify yourself with their wants and needs. You must go beyond all this and seek God.

*I* : Where does the source of evil lie ? If Brahman is all in all, as Hinduism teaches, then evil must also derive from Him and occur within Him.

*Mataji* : Good and evil are distinctions that arise in human thought and experience. Only when entering the world of duality we begin to distinguish between good and evil.

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Evenings are lovely here. We either sit in Mataji's room or on the veranda in front of it. When sitting outside I find a place from where I can see Mataji. On the verandah there is only the light that the moon sheds. In the room a dim kerosene oil lamp is burning. Sometimes there is singing for hours together, with short intervals. I never get tired of listening to the beautiful songs that often transport the audience.

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Twenty or twenty-five men and women sit scattered over the verandah. Rarely does one hear anyone talk. Probably most of them are praying or meditating; many hold a rosary in their hand. For the first time here something like a community feeling arises in me. I never missed it, as I was not intent on finding it. But I often ask myself whether it exists in the people with whom I am together here, and if it does, of what substance it may be. That I sense little of it, is only natural. I can

hardly talk to the people and very rarely understand their conversations amongst themselves and what concerns them under what circumstances.

In general, as far as their religious life is concerned, the individualistic element among men and women here seems much more dominant than with us Westerners. What we call a community does not appear to exist here. Everyone has his own personal relationship to his Guru and proceeds along his own path. Temples where congregations assemble are the exceptions here. Nevertheless, some kind of community feeling seems to develop. It is too dark to distinguish anyone's features. Everyone abides undisturbed in his own contemplation and everyone knows of the others that soul and spirit are open to the common centre. Of course, in a very individual manner. Many of my companions must be praying to Ma as in the West one prays to Christian saints or to the Christ Himself. I am not praying, neither do I attempt to meditate, and even if I try to reflect over a question, my thoughts soon stop. I just keep still and absorb something that is as mysterious as the beauty of a landscape, the radiation of a sublime thought or the charm of lovely music.

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This afternoon we went for a walk with Mataji for the first time. Nobody seemed to have known it beforehand. The girls were as usual barefooted and had to perform a painful dance on the path that was strewn with thorns. But apart from this we all enjoyed it immensely. At first Mataji advanced at great speed so that we found it difficult to keep pace with her. Later she slowed down. On the way there was much laughing and joking. When we passed a high solitary house, the men amused themselves by waking the echo from its slumber : "Jai Ma, Jai Ma !"

It was dusk by the time we returned. Mataji ascended the platform that had been built over the foundation of an ancient temple, and for a long while walked up and down in silence. We remained standing on the edge. In the West the evening sky was flaming as if the jungle were on fire. In the East it was already night. Venus hung above us, glittering brightly. Somewhere nearby a peacock screamed again and again. "Do you hear", said one of the men, "this is Krishna's bird." Later we all sat on the platform and it became a wonderful night. A lengthy conversation ensued, interrupted at intervals by laughter or by silence. Everyone who had something to say participated. Then Mataji told us about her childhood and about her pilgrimage to Mount Kailash from which Bhajji did not return.





## THE FIRST MEETING

—Late J. N. Talukdar, I.C.S. (Retd)

I came to hear of the Holy Mother first in 1928. She had come to a town in East Bengal where I was then serving, and was staying in the house of a brother officer hardly a furlong away. Yet I did not go to see Her; my time had not come.

Many years passed. I was working in Calcutta in the early fifties and became friendly with Sri S. N. Sopory, a great devotee of Mother. She paid a visit to Calcutta. At his suggestion, I went to see Her in a house in Alipore where many devotees had assembled under a pandal specially erected for the occasion.

She was seated there in their midst. She spoke little. I sat some distance away, a silent spectator. I was struck by the serenity of Her countenance and nobleness of her bearing. I came away feeling an urge to see her again.

Shortly afterwards, I went to the house in Ekdalia Place, Ballygunge, where she was staying. It was dusk. She was on terrace upstairs with a small gathering seated round her. She was talking to them on spiritual matters; I stood at one end. The profound truths of philosophy which have been taught in the Geeta and the Upanishads were coming out of her lips in simple, homely language. I was filled with wonder, as I had heard that she had little of our formal schooling. Where did she get this knowledge?

On my return, I spoke of my impression to my friend Sopory. He said I must talk to her. He made an appointment with her at 2.30 p.m. on a day shortly afterwards. He took me to the house in Ekdalia Place at the appointed time. It was a hot day in April; the sky was spouting fire. We were told that Mother had returned a little earlier from Santragachi after a heavy programme and was tired and resting. No one was being allowed to see her; a crowd of ladies was besieging the entrance. I felt embarrassed; I told Sopory that we should come on another day and not disturb her now. He would not hear of it. He went up to Her room and on returning called me up there. I went into her room; it was semi-dark. She was lying on the bed. After *pranama* I sat on the floor on a mat. I apologised to her, "Mother, I am feeling guilty for disturbing you when you are resting after so much fatigue."

Promptly she replied: "Whose fatigue, baba, not mine but of the body". I was amazed at this answer. I had read that only those rare souls who had realized the Self (Atman) could think themselves separate from the body and were not affected by its caprices. I felt too small to talk on any spiritual matter. I only said, "Mother, I cannot turn my mind towards God; other things then come in my mind". She said, "You will have to take medicine for a long time for your cure". I withdrew soon after this.

I am still not cured. When will my treatment be over ?



**"To attain the Truth one has to endure all hardships.  
It is the obstacles that give birth to patience.**

**—Ma Anandamayee**

## PAGES FROM MY DIARY

—Gurupriya Devi

(Translated from Bengali)

**Bangalore, 16th July, 1961.**

This evening at about 5'clock Mataji arrived here from Poona. She has come at the invitation of the Chief Justice Sri Subodh Ranjan Das Gupta (Kohinurda), an old devotee of hers, who was very eager to have her in Bangalore for a few days. Sri S. R. Das Gupta, his wife, the Rajmata of Mysore and lots of others received Mataji at the railway station. With the utmost reverence Kohinurda welcomed Mataji in his house. He had erected a lovely hut made of palm leaves for Mataji's use. When Ma entered it, she remarked: "What a beautiful little house!" In South India people are especially skilled in preparing garlands. Kohinurda's wife Beladi put a huge garland round Mataji's neck and performed āratī to her. Later in the evening a few people came for Mataji's darśana. Sri S.R. Das Gupta has made excellent arrangements with a view to letting Mataji have a good rest.

**Bangalore, 17th July, 1961.**

This morning's paper brought some bad news. Last night the Maharaja of Gwalior suddenly breathed his last in his house at Bombay. When being told, Mataji said: "This body also had the *kheyāla* that his death was sudden." The Maharaja had been ill for some time. Already when Ma was in Gwalior last April he was bed-ridden due to heart trouble. It was not unknown to Mataji that even then anything might have happened at any moment. But at the time of the consecration of the temple and during Mataji's visit this would have been very painful indeed. We therefore were firmly convinced that the Maharaja would get over the crisis.

He had not been connected with Mataji for long. Even in that short time everyone came to appreciate his gentle and straight forward personality. It was really surprising to see his deep devotion and faith in Mataji. Maharani Vijayaraje was herself marvelling, as the Maharaja had never before bowed to any sādhu or mahātmā, neither had he shown any interest in spiritual things. But towards Mataji

he behaved like a little child. We feel sincerely grieved at the Maharaja's passing away. It is as if one of our own people has left us. God's inscrutable dispensation is beyond our grasping capacity. In her great anxiety the Maharani had again and again sent messengers to Poona soliciting Mataji's blessing. Ma's līlā is beyond the ken of human understanding.

**Bangalore, 18th July, 1961.**

Today Mrs. Feroza Talyarkhan came to see Mataji. She is a disciple of Sri Ramana Maharshi and singly devoted to Mataji. She has for many years lived in Sri Ramanashramam in Tiruvannamalai. When Mataji visited South India in 1952 together with Sri Haribabaji Maharaj and Sri Avadhutaji Mrs. Talyarkhan took great trouble to make arrangements for Mataji's stay in several places. Today she brought the Chief Minister of Mysore and his wife for Mataji's *darśana*. In the course of the conversation Mataji said: "Just as the cow absorbs all the dirt of her calf into herself by licking it clean again and again, so also God removes the faults and shortcomings of His children and makes them pure and holy. Try to engage in selfless service with utter purity of heart."

Then again Mataji said: "Endeavour to remain immersed in God's name as much as ever possible. Just as when you have a friend in the world you can pour out your heart to him, so, if you establish a contact with the Supreme Friend, He will reveal His real Being to you. When you see the waves of the sea will you refrain from bathing? In the midst of the tempests and difficulties of worldly life try at all times to sustain His remembrance and the repetition of His name."

**Bangalore, 19th July, 1961.**

This evening Kohinurda took Ma in his car to see Bangalore. While driving, Mataji said: "The atmosphere of this place is very good, one feels at peace. The expression on people's faces is beautiful and the trees look fresh and green." Mataji much enjoyed seeing Lalbagh. Bangalore is really a wonderful city, its natural charm is quite outstanding.

During the satsang at night, Mataji said: "He, the Self, the Mother, having permeated everything, He remains, He Is. When man calls out to Him with desperate yearning the One becomes revealed. A mother knows when her child cries from his heart and then she leaves her work and hurries to her darling."