

My Life with Anirvan

Part - VI

Thus after a month's quiet retreat, I returned to Kolkata. This is what Anirvanji wrote to Sandhya who was then staying at our house at Keyatala Road. The letter in Bengali is dated 13-7-58.

"Gautam will arrive tomorrow. He passed a month here closeted as if in a cave! Hope he is returning full of inner joy! He is going from one Haimavati to another Haimavati. I did not know that he too is a Mother-Worshipper. He is blessed by the Mother even before his birth! (In fact my mother's family were Mother-Worshippers — Shaktas — of Goddess Amba or Durga and my father's family were Vaishnavas - Krishna Worshipers). I bless him and hope my dream of 'Kumar Sambhava' (the birth of a son-Kartikeya for the destruction of demon Tarkasura as a result of meeting of Shiva and Parvati) will be fulfilled in him! The nation needs true men. There is a lot of noise outside, but tears come to eyes, when I think how people are empty and poor within! In such a situation, hope arises, there is some joy when I see someone engrossed in deep sadhana.

'Saraswati' is the longed-for 'Istha' goddess of Bandhu realized in a dream! You must have seen that picture of 'Saraswati' in their place of worship. One united India was a part of his constant meditation. We have to work for the success of the dream of Bandhu. That responsibility is mine as well as all of yours."

So much and so far Anirvanji had identified himself with Bandhu Dharmapal and Dharma Sangha's ideas and ideology, though officially he would not identify him-

self with any institution; such was his attitude after coming out of his Guru's—Swami Nigamanandaji's Arhram in 1930. He remained a free Baul! Like us, he too considered Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath (whom we kept outside the trinity of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo - only as a poet of the New Age) as the four pillars of resurgent India, of the New Age. Let me quote here a beautiful passage from one of his dreams...

He writes on 7th January 1963 from our Keyatala Road house ... "Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Rabindranath, Aurobindo—They are like the great suns shining in the sky of the same age. Not only of Bangla (Banga), or even of India, the Bharat-varsha, they are the great suns—Mahasurya en-

lightening the whole Earth—'Prithivi.' Ramakrishna in my childhood, Vivekananda in my adolescence, Rabindranath in my youth and Aurobindo in the end of my life—the unbounded splendour and strength and grace of these four great lights have always inspired and brightened my self-confidence. I have never been able to keep them at a distance and worship them as gods—'thakur'—Ramakrishna, I considered a constant playmate of my eternal childhood, Vivekananda, always a friend (dosara) of my eternal adolescence, and Aurobindo, my 'bandhu'—a friend and a brother of all my lives. And Rabindranath? He is my mother! Such close affinity of all my nerves, I have with none other! I have not seen Ramakrishna and Vivekananda with my (physical) eyes. They



Sri Anirvan

have left this world before my eyes opened! (In fact Sri Ramakrishna passed away in 1886 before Anirvanji was born, but Swami Vivekananda passed away in 1902 when he was six years old and could have seen him physically if he was nearby just as his Guru Swami Nigamananda born in 1880 had seen Sri Ramakrishna physically when he was taken to Sri Ramakrishna by his father to Dakshineswar. Sri Ramakrishna had blessed the young Nigamanandaji!). Though there was a possibility, I never saw Aurobindo physically; that was because of my nature. I could not go to anybody for the sake of just having Darshan! What happens naturally I consider that to be the real truth; I think, it is hypocrisy to go against one's nature and make things happen! (Then he continues to narrate how had seen Rabindranath several times but did not go very near him, etc.)"

Sri Anirvanji came down to Kolkata again in October 1958. This time he came a little earlier as he wished to prepare Sandhya for her M.A. examinations. Sandhya had already shifted to our Keyatala Road house from her hostel by May-June 1958. He taught Sandhya for many hours in the morning, afternoon and even at night for nearly one month as if this was his main work in life.

After Sandhya's examination was over, Anirvanji took her with him on his regular visit to Allahabad, Delhi, etc. They returned to Kolkata in the end of January 1959; Anirvanji took her study classes on the Upanishads in the morning at Keyatala Road and lectured at Sri Aurobindo Pathmandir thrice a week in the evening during February '59. He left for Shillong with Sandhya in the first week of March '59.

One would wonder why Sri Anirvan gave so much time to Sandhya? Many eyebrows were lifted, envying her and asking questions! Answer to this query lies in the life-story, in the dreams and visions of Sri Anirvan, in his mission of life; how the Su-

preme Divine guided and moulded him! Every person however small or great is a portion of the Supreme Divine, expressing, manifesting and developing in the manifested world as a particular aspect of the Divine. Slowly and steadily Sri Anirvan was prepared by the Divine for expounding and disseminating the sacred knowledge of the Vedas. His association and work for expounding Sri Aurobindo was a part and parcel of the same vision and mission.

But there was another sacred and secret vision and mission of Sri Anirvan's life which was very near to his heart and that was to search for Uma Haimavati - his Ishta - whose vision beacons him from his boyhood. He would find her out in physical human form as he would become like Shiva! If he does not meet his Uma Haimavati directly, he would try his level best to give shape to his ideal whenever he saw some possibility!

He also believed like Napoleon that the hand that rocks the child, shall rock the nation! That the future and greatness of the nation lies in the development of women! That was the main reason of establishing the Shanti Ashram in Almora with Lizelle Reymond as its Mother! The name "Shanti" was selected intentionally! "Shanti-devi" was the name of Anirvanji's 'bhiksha-mata'- the mother from whom he begged food for the first time at the time when he took 'Sannyas' (monk's) vow from his Guru. Shantidevi, herself had taken Sannyas from Swami Nigamanandaji and was a highly developed Sannyasini. Anirvanji paid her great respect and considered her like Gargi of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

When the idea of Shanti Ashram did not materialize, as said before, Anirvanji went to Shillong, where he had found some young (women) girls in whom there was possibility of growing into Gargis and Maitreyis, into his ideal of Uma Haimavati! And Sandhya

was one of those girls, who remained with him, under his direct training for a much longer time than any other person! Even

now she is working for him.

To be continued...

-Sri Gautam Dharmapal

The Tale of 'Panjashah'

When the cry of the suffering humanity floods the sky, when impiousness dominates over religion, God wakes up and descends on this earth.

The entire Aryavarta was under the shackles of the Mughal rule then; the religion of the Vedas was in the sinking state and the Muslim ruler was absolutely pertinent in diffusing Islam religion by hook or by crook. At this critical juncture of awful darkness and social crisis, Guru Nanak emerged like a beacon of light.

He pronounced thunderously that Hindus & Muslims are one, there is no difference between temples and mosques or between the Purans and Koran. They are the different forms of the same fundamental—

“Allah O abhek soi, Puran o Koran voi
Ek hi swaroop sab ai Ek hi banave hoi”

People were fascinated by this new religious doctrine that brought a breeze of social freshness and both the Hindus and the Muslims started to become his disciple. They forgot the religious disparity and rivalry and started to become one.

Like the Muslim emperors, the fakirs were also very narrow-minded. Guru Nanak used to travel a lot and one day travelling with his disciples, he reached the foothills of a mountain. On the top of the mountain, a Muslim fakir used to dwell, whose name was Ali Saheb. He was an extremely generous person and used to quench the material thirst of his disciples thoroughly. There was

a source of cold drinking water in his dwelling area. This source of drinking water was a matter of strong attraction amidst the rugged, rocky mountains.

The disciples of Guru Nanak were tired of travelling and were extremely thirsty. The Guru told them to go to the top of the mountain and beg drinking water from Ali Saheb. The disciples, accordingly, reached Ali Saheb's place and asked for water, but the fakir drove them mercilessly as they were Hindu. The disciples informed this to Guru Nanak. Nanak again sent them to fakir, who repeated the similar behavior. When this was conveyed to Guru Nanak, He instructed them to ask water from the fakir in His name. The disciples did this but the fakir refused to give them water. The annoyed Guru then attracted all water to the bottom of the mountain. Ali Saheb was absolutely enraged at this act as his place became devoid of drinking water. The angry Ali then pushed a part of the mountain peak to crush Guru Nanak, who simply held the enormous rolling rock with his fist. The Ali understood that Nanak was stronger than him, so he came down and asked Nanak to forgive him.

This place where Guru Nanak exhibited the power of his fist has turned into a sacred pilgrim place and is called 'Panja Shah'. Everyday lot of pilgrims visit this place, take dip in the holy river and take Prasad by sitting on the floor in a line.

—Excerpts from the
Biography of Sri Guru Nanak.