Beloved Ones:

We arise early here in Agra and prepare to drive to Brindaban, not far away. The air is cool at this hour and we hope to reach Brindaban early in order to avoid the worst of the heat. The country we drive through is flat and arid, but the well-made road to Brindaban is lined with trees that resemble our pepper trees in California. Along the road we meet a caravan of twelve camels, followed by two very young ones loping alongside their mothers, backs yet free from the burdens carried by the older camels.

The villages of India we have seen thus far have been most picturesque, and the ones we now pass are equally so. Their mud huts have the usual thatched roofs. The women of this area wear bright-colored saris, the men their customary scanty clothing. A typical Indian scene on the roads: men in loin cloths carrying huge loads of straw or other articles on their heads; women dressed in bright saris, wearing silver anklets and ornaments, walking along in groups, one or two of them carrying a child astride their hips; men and boys on bicycles trying to pass one another or the few cars driving along the left side of the roads, while the cars are trying to pass the herd of goats, or carts drawn by water buffaloes, which are a familiar part of the scene.

We pass through Mathura, one of the oldest cities of India and the birthplace of Sri Krishna. Mathura is the center of the Bhagavata form of religion, and is a great center of pilgrimage for Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains as well. We find Mathura a progressive town now, with modern buildings, well-kept homes, and beautiful flowering trees with bright red blossoms. We stop briefly to visit some of the temples in Mathura and to see Vishram Ghat, which, according to tradition, is the spot where Lord Krishna rested after slaying his evil uncle, Kamsa. Here, too, we took photos of the huge water turtles that are so numerous, resting on the shores of the river Jamuna. Prabhasda has a young boy bring some turtle food and we throw out some to the nearby turtles who then come swimming toward us in hordes, eager for a handout.

The oldest shrine in Mathura is the Brahmanical temple of Kesava Deo. It occupies the site where Krishna was born in Kamsa's prison. The temple itself is in ruins but there is a committee now formed to restore it.

Leaving Mathura we drive on toward Brindaban, stopping at Birla Temple, a beautiful, recently constructed building of marble with graceful yet strong figures of Lord Krishna, depicting scenes from his life -- all done in gold, browns, reds, and yellows -- very impressive. On some of the walls, too, we see scenes taken from the Bhagavad-Gita, or finely carved figures of the Hindu gods and goddesses whose lives are related in certain scriptures of India. On the grounds of the Temple stands a huge stone obelisk on which is inscribed the entire eighteen chapters of the Gita. On the other side of the Temple stands a huge stone chariot and a pair of horses, all done in cement, depicting the chariot used by the Lord Krishna.
We cross the street and stop for a time in Birla Rest House, having our lunch there and taking a brief nap before going on to Brindaban. Our lunch, incidentally, consists of cucumber sandwiches (a favorite of ours) tomatoes, potatoes, vegetable cutlets, and oranges. We eat them in the shade of our rooms.

We start out again on our journey after midday, thus avoiding the terrific heat, and arrive in Brindaban toward afternoon. Our first visit is to Prabhasda's mother-in-law, a remarkable woman who lives the simplest life, like a true devotee of God, devoting her days to meditation and thoughts of Him. We are much impressed by the beauty of her soft eyes and her peaceful expression.

We then visit the ashram of Anandamayee Ma. This blessed Mother has sent one of the sannyasis all the way from Rishikesh to greet us at the Brindaban ashram, expecting that we would remain there during our visit to Brindaban. Unfortunately, however, we are unable to do so because of other commitments, but we do rest for a time and meditate in the rooms of the Mother. How peaceful it is here! We feel all the while the tender love of Anandamayee Ma. Reluctantly we leave the ashram and go to see some of the temples in Brindaban.

Brindaban is sacred to all Hindus, for every nook and corner is associated with some event in the life of Sri Krishna. We enter one of the groves where stands a shrine dedicated to Sri Krishna and we pluck leaves from the tamal tree under which he is supposed to have stood, playing his flute. Here he used to play with the devotees, and to hide from them when they sought him. You will remember the song, sung by Radha, "My Krishna is blue, the tamal tree is blue (repeat), so I do love you, my tamal tree. And when I die, do put me high, on the branch of the tamal tree. Where Krishna sat, there I lie (repeat) on the branch of the tamal tree..." This is that tree. In meditation my consciousness races back through centuries, visualizing the lila of the Lord at that time. What loving vibrations pass through our beings in this grove! I can truly say that here in Brindaban, more than anywhere else in India that I have visited, one can and does feel the wonderful love and devotion still permeating the atmosphere -- that divine friendship between Sri Krishna and his faithful devotees.

We then visited the ashram of the late Swami Keshabananda, great disciple of Lahiri Mahasaya, and we sit quietly again in devotion, recalling the visit of Master to this ashram in 1936, when the great Swami was still alive. How quiet is the ashram now! Sadness fills our hearts that he is not here to greet us -- but we stand before the samadhi mandir of this spiritual giant and feel his silent benedictions upon us.

Toward dusk, after taking food at the home of Prabhasda's mother-in-law, we start again for Agra where we will remain another day or so, just resting, remaining in our rooms. We have been on the go for the past weeks and feel the need to refresh ourselves inwardly.

Deepest thanks to all of you for your Mother's Day cards and letters. My heart is deeply touched by your dear messages. You are all Master's children -- I am grateful if I am regarded as a little mother by some of you -- I wish only to serve you all. Bhalo basho neo.
FROM SISTER DAYA'S TRAVEL NOTES
Part 9: India (continued)

April 24, 1959 (contd)

Beloved Ones:

Again I look back through my notes to record our daily activities and share them with all of you there. It is April 24th and we have returned from Brindaban, sacred land of Lord Krishna, to Agra. In the evening we drive to see the Taj Mahal for the last time. Again we sit quietly in her shadows and drink in her exquisite beauty; then we take our minds within and silently bathe in the atmosphere of peace and love that is everywhere present here.

Benares
April 25, 1959

We arise at 6:00 a.m. and prepare for our flight to Benares. Arriving there in the heat of the day, terrific blasts of hot air strike us as the wind blows through our car in which we are driven to Clark Hotel. By the by, before going further into our Benares pilgrimage, let me say that one afternoon there came to the hotel in Agra a snake charmer, carrying in baskets his cobras and pythons, and, on a long leash, a mongoose that ran nervously about. Again a secret wish has been fulfilled for me -- but I will write no more about this experience -- let the photos Mataji has taken speak for themselves! Can you guess my secret wish?

In the evening on the 25th we visit some ivory shops and then return to our hotel to get a good night's rest before starting our pilgrimage in this holy city.

April 26, 1959

The next morning we visit a factory where beautiful Benares saris are made. Such beautiful materials, woven in colors of blues, golds, reds, oranges, yellows, and iridescent hues! We visit, too, the Ananda Mayee ashram in Benares, where the devotees have been waiting to receive us. We had been invited to remain at the ashram, but owing to the fact that we have many places to see, we felt it better to stay at the hotel where it would be easier to get the necessary transportation to reach those places. I hope we will be invited there again, when we can remain for a few days, just to meditate and absorb some of the peace of that ashram. Again we sit in the Mother's rooms for meditation, feeling Her loving vibrations all about us. How gracious and kind are Sri Bose, the secretary, and the other devotees here who receive us.

During the heat of the day we return to the hotel to rest, for it is impossible to be out in a hot furnace at high noon! Later in the afternoon we drive to see the temple of Vishwanatha or Golden Temple, which is crowned by a dome covered with thin plates of gold. Toward evening we drive to Dasasamedh Ghat, immortalized in Master's autobiography, for it was here that Babaji, in the presence of Lahiri Mahasaya, Mataji (sister of Babaji), and Ram Gopal, made his "immortal promise" never to leave his physical body. Can you not
imagine the tremendous thrill that passes through us as we stand on this sacred Ghat?

We then take a boat and are rowed out on the Ganges where we view the thousands of tiny oil lamps on the shore. Upstream we go and as we near another ghat we hear the sound of devotional chanting. A bhajan is taking place in the evening stillness and we sit quietly in our boat and listen, our hearts and minds floating o'er the peaceful waters of the Ganges. Moving on we come to the burning ghat where the holy city's dead are cremated. When we leave the Dasasamedh Ghat we pass by a little hut where lives a naked ash-covered sadhu. How bright is the light in his eyes as he looks at us -- a light of another world. He never accepts money. Benares, the holy city of the Hindus, is "the epitome of all that is best in Hindu religion and philosophy. Its rare sanctity, its hallowed memories of thousands of saints and seers and great deeds of preachers and reformers, its sacred temples and bathing ghats on the river -- all make it the holiest and the most beloved city of the Hindus." Here one can meet many sadhus such as the one I have described, for here they gather, in this beloved holy city of Benares.

The next day we visit the grandsons of Lahiri Mahasaya, first calling on Abhoy Charan Lahiri who now resides in the home of our beloved paramparamaguru. What a thrill of joy passes through our beings when we enter the home and behold in a little room the wooden dias or bed on which Lahiri Mahasaya used to sit. Over the bed is spread a cloth he used, now yellow with age, and here we see the slippers worn by Lahiri Mahasaya, and the books, printed by hand, which he used. We hold in our hands the precious copy of the Bhagavad-Gita that was his. Its leaves are yellowed and torn, indicating its frequent use by Lahiri Mahasaya. Toward the end of this same room we see the receptacle that holds some of the ashes of the great guru. We sit quietly in this room, before the bed now become altar, and listen as the grandson Abhoy recounts the following for us:

"There are many who worship the statue of Buddha, but who lives according to his teachings? In the same way many worship Christ, but how many follow his teachings daily? So, Lahiri Mahasaya did not wish to have his picture taken, because he did not want worship of his likeness. But the disciples argued that there were many who would not be able to see him and who would long to know what he looked like. Therefore, Lahiri Mahasaya consented to let one picture be taken. A small wooden platform was placed in this very room where we are sitting and the camera was brought. In order to get the right focus my father, who was Tincouri Lahiri, his eldest son (then only a young boy) was asked to stand in for his father, Lahiri Mahasaya. Tincouri sat on the bench while the photographer was getting the camera in focus. When that was done Lahiri Mahasaya was requested to sit there for his photo. Lahiri Mahasaya asked the photographer, 'How is a photograph taken?' The photographer, Ganga Dhar Babu, was rather a vain fellow in that he thought no one could rival him in photography, and my grandfather knew of the man's attitude. The photographer described the science of photography. Then he began to take the picture of my grandfather but he saw no image registered in the camera finder. He got ner-
vous, finding that he could not adjust the camera to catch an image. When asked what was the matter he said, 'I cannot find any image to snap.' Then grandfather replied, 'What does your science say now?' The photographer fell at his feet and said, 'My vanity is gone. Please let us have one picture.' And Lahiri Mahasaya smiled and said, 'All right.' And that is the only picture we have.'

Here in this little room Lahiri Mahasaya used to sit and the devotees would gather around him while he gave commentaries on the scriptures. Some of the disciples would take notes. He died here on this bed. We touch his shoes, now covered with cloth to protect them, and hold his Gita, hand-written in Sanskrit. Before leaving this sacred room we sit for a while in meditation with the great-grandson of Lahiri Mahasaya, Professor Bonomani Lahiri. How full is our day! We have realized a desire long held in our hearts -- a pilgrimage to the home of Lahiri Mahasaya.

We are grateful that these good people have given us a piece of the cloth used by our beloved parama-paramaguru.

April 29, 1959

Today we drive to Sarnath, about five miles from Benares. Here Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon 2500 years ago and set into motion his eternal message of Truth--the Wheel of the Law. We see the tower on the little hill where Buddha gave his first sermon and made his first converts--five disciples. The heat of this area is terrific today, so great that it is difficult to remain long out-of-doors, but we have come to see these holy places and do not intend to be discouraged by the midday sun. First we stop at Mulagandhakuti Vihara, a temple build by the Mahabodhi Society in 1931. Its walls are covered with Ajanta-style frescoes depicting events from the Buddha's life. I was particularly interested to see that one of the principal contributors to this Temple was the same Mary E. Foster who donated money to SRF for printing the first issue of our "Self-Realization Magazine" back in 1925.

What a beautiful golden figure of the Lord Buddha rests on the altar! His face expresses perfect serenity, sublime victory over life and death. Again we meditate, lotus-postured on the cool marble floor before this great Buddha.

Leaving the Temple we see the Asoka Pillar, which most probably marks the spot where Buddha delivered his first sermon. We see here too the ruins of some ancient Buddhist monastery believed to have been built in the 9th century.

Before leaving Sarnath we stop at the Museum to see priceless relics -- a number of Buddha and Bodhisattva images believed to be of the Gupta era.

In the late afternoon of this same day we visit the other grandson of Lahiri Mahasaya, Satya Charan Lahiri. At the time of our arrival a kirtan was being held in the open hall where the Gita and other scriptures are recited. Across the court stands the Guru Mandir of our blessed Lahiri Mahasaya, where, with tear-filled eyes, we prostrate ourselves before a beautiful marble likeness of him. Here, too, we see a container where a portion of the ashes of our revered parama-paramaguru are kept. What a divine thrill passes through us as we
behold these places where Lahiri Mahasaya once lived and communed with God! There is a warm feeling of welcome and love here in this Guru Mandir and we are much impressed by the gentle mien of the grandson. Later he takes us down the narrow lane to Dasasawamadh Ghat where Lahiri Mahasaya used to take his bath in the Ganges.

We pass through the lane, so narrow, where Master first met his own Guru, Swami Sri Yukteswarji. As I read that portion of Master's autobiography wherein he tells us of his deep hunger that memorable day, of how he wiped his teary, swollen face and set out meekly for the market place in the "ungentle Indian sun," of how, after purchasing some things for the ashram he passed through the narrow lanes (so many here) until he saw one inconspicuous lane, at the end of which he beheld a Christlike man in the ocher robes of a swami, of his inner tumultuous emotion, and, finally, his wing-shod steps to the feet of that divine personage, of his Guru's blessed greeting, "Oh, my own, you have come to me!" I am transfixed with the thrilling wonder of it. We stand in that very lane.

Passing through the lane, we go on down to the ghat in the Rana Mahal section of Benares, where the great Guru often visited for a few days with his mother.

Oh, these are experiences to dwell upon, and our hearts are full as we turn our steps back toward the home of the grandson, Satya Charan Lahiri. When we arrive there the kirtan has ended and the Gita is being recited. We are introduced and I am asked to speak. I tell them about our Master and about his great work started in the West, which is now spreading over the world---about the interest in the West in the eternal science of Kriya Yoga as taught by Lahiri Mahasaya and Sri Yukteswarji. We are later told that the grandson will give us a cup used by Lahiri Mahasaya and we rejoice with tears in our eyes, remembering that only the night before we had prayed to Divine Mother that we might be given some article used by the great avatar to take back to America to enshrine there. Once again, our own inner cup is full, and we are indebted to the grandsons of this great avatar of ours.

During our stay in Benares we take one more boat trip up the Ganges, visit the Ananda Mayee ashram again, and call on the Mother's great and noble devotee, Mahamahopadhyaya Gopi Nath Kaviraj, who is recognized throughout India as one of the greats in the field of philosophy and learning. He is noted not only for his wisdom but for his simplicity and love for the Divine. We are much impressed by his quiet, peaceful personality. We tell him briefly about the SRF work in America, and mention that we publish a magazine, "Self-Realization." He expresses his desire to receive copies and I tell him we will see that they are sent to him regularly. Then I become more bold and ask him eagerly if he will kindly write an article for publication in our Magazine. He nods in assent and we gratefully thank him. All the while we are talking, I see that his mind is withdrawn, absorbed in the peace and love that he beholds within and which we can feel so deeply in his gentle, wise presence.

And so our visit to Benares, city of holies, has ended. We fly the next day to Calcutta, grateful for this three-week pilgrimage, which has increased our understanding of and love for our spiritual motherland.

Thanks to each one of you for your letters. Now that our time in India is drawing to a close, I cannot write much, and many of your letters will go unanswered, outwardly, but through this heart you will feel my silent messages of love and friendship divine.
Beloved Ones:

It is May 2nd and we have been visiting His Holiness, Jagatguru Shankaracharya, who is stopping in Calcutta for two weeks before going on to Puri. Our daily visits have given us much joy and we have felt again and again the refreshing benediction of his wisdom and understanding. He has told us that he read, in a recent issue of our Magazine, of our last talk wherein he promised to visit our Ashrams near Calcutta, and that he must perforce do so. This he says with a big smile. We are delighted, and plans are made for him to come to Yogoda Math in Dakshineswar next Saturday, May 9th. He will not speak, however, since he is still troubled with the bronchial affliction from which he suffered an attack during our visit with him in Nagpur.

After sitting for a time on the stone bench in front of Yogoda Math, we drive to the Baranagar Ashram where YSS devotees are waiting to greet him. All gather about him and he sits quietly while Kriyanandaji and Amanandaji chant, then Prabhasda and I say a few words. Because His Holiness has come out, in spite of his ailment, we do not detain him long; but we expect to see him again when we go in to Calcutta. He is stopping at the home of disciples, Mr. and Mrs. C.P. Chatterjee, and there, each evening and morning, he receives devotees who travel from far and near to receive his darshan. Always, whenever we are there, His Holiness introduces us to the devotees present, and speaks highly of Master's work in America and of his stay with us.

We are planning to leave shortly for Cooch Behar since Her Highness, the Maharani, has invited us and is there now, expecting our visit. We will be away for about four or five days, then return to Calcutta for a few days, and then go on to Puri when His Holiness goes there. At that time we will also see Sanyal Mahasaya who has now gone to Puri, and two of our monks will take sannyas (swamihood) while in Puri.
Beloved Ones:

We are now in Cooch Behar as guests of the Maharani. We left Calcutta by plane this morning, arriving here in time for lunch.

As we drive through the palace gates, what beauty strikes our gaze! acres and acres of fresh green lawn; large plots, lining both sides of the driveway, of orange and yellow cannas; a large, clear lake; and trees fringing the property.

And the building itself -- a real, real palace! red, huge, with countless arches and a large dome. As we drive up to the main entrance, there waiting to greet us are the Maharani, her two beautiful granddaughters, her daughter-in-law, and guests. As we embrace the Maharani, she presents each one of us with a fragrant gardenia garland.

I just wish you could see our rooms, which are huge and richly furnished. In the dining hall and drawing rooms are crystal chandeliers, rich rugs and tapestries, quite modern -- and much pink! In Her Highness's room all is champagne white and gold.

After dinner and a rest we drive with her to see the palace elephants, huge beasts used on tiger hunts. They are all tame. What a thrill to see them, about ten in number, staked out in the meadows eating branches of sugar cane and palm!

Mataji and I are resting this morning in our rooms. How strange is life! last night we slept in a palace; and a few months back we slept in sleeping bags in a simple Indian village. And in both places we felt equally happy and at home.

The grounds of the palace are beyond description, so vast and beautifully kept! This has been the Maharani's home since she married the Maharajah in 1913. She is the daughter of the Gaekwar of Baroda who attended the religious conference in Chicago in 1933. Master met him there.

I wish you could see the beautiful paintings in each of the eighteen bedrooms of the palace. In the library are large, autographed pictures of Britain's royal family, and rare old Mogul paintings in reds, blues, and golds. Oh, there is so much beauty and richness in this palace! All the floors are Italian marble covered with lovely Persian and Cashmere rugs.

Just now red-turbaned servants, dressed in white, bring us our break-
fast. Ho, hum! But beneath the surface of my activities my mind is with the Beloved Divine Mother. She alone fills my heart, mind, and soul; and makes my life rich wherever I am. How blest we are that our divine Guru gave us such training that in all the various circumstances of life we strive to behold only the presence of the sole Reality -- God.

Later today we will fly to the Maharani's chateau in Darjeeling for a few days; then back to Calcutta. I wish you all were here with us, but we have brought you in our hearts.
Beloved Ones:

Leaving Cooch Behar Palace we fly by plane, which Her Highness (The Maharani of Cooch Behar) has chartered, to a little village near Darjeeling. There we get into three cars for the drive to Darjeeling. What glorious countryside we pass through -- nests of little villages of thatched huts, very clean, groves of palm trees and banana trees, such lovely green fields as far as the eye can see, with here and there a pond of clear water reflecting trees or other green growth nearby.

We are in the car with Her Highness and she points out to us the places of interest. We drive for about two hours, passing along the way the little cable train made so well-known in America through travel films.

It is dusk and raining when we arrive in Darjeeling. H. H. tells us no cars are allowed in Darjeeling save hers (a jeep) and her son's and the governor's. Here at the foot of Darjeeling we leave our car and get into the jeep for the short drive to the Cooch Behar chateau, "Colinton." Through winding narrow streets we drive, turning into a hedged gateway and driving round a circle until we arrive at the Swiss-style home of H. H. in Darjeeling.

Oh, to describe this lovely chateau! lights ablaze, looking friendly and warm after our drive in the drizzling cool of this Himalayan mountain region. We are greeted by Mrs. Singh, wife of the secretary to the Maharajah, and someone presents us with beautiful bouquets of flowers. Mine consists of pink roses, blue (such heavenly blue) cornflowers, and purple blossoms.

Then we are shown to our rooms. The room assigned to me is that of the late Maharajah, done in white and blue, across the hall from H. H. on the upper floor. Mataji, Revati, and Kriyananda are given rooms on the lower floor. I am told one can get a grand view of Kinchenjunga mountain on a clear day, and of course I hope to do so tomorrow morning, from the window of my room.

We sup at about 10:30 p.m. and after a little visit we retire to our rooms. It is cold here in Darjeeling, and it seems impossible that in Calcutta it is sweltering!
May 14, 1959

Arising early I rush to my window to look for Mt. Kinchenjunga. The sun is shining, the sky is blue and filled with lovely fleecy clouds. Looming straight ahead, its peak piercing the swiftly passing fluff of clouds is The Mountain! Oh what a thrill -- and how close it appears! I throw on my robe and rush downstairs to tell Mataji, Revati, and Kriyananda to dress quickly and come with cameras. What a thrilling, inspiring view we get from the window of the chateau! While Mataji and Kriyananda take pictures from my bedroom window, Revati and I sit gazing rapturously at this magnificent grandeur, tongues tied with awe.

The rest of the household is still wrapt in sleep but a maid comes to the door to ask if we wish tea. We do, for it is cold. We remain at our windows for half an hour watching the changing scene before us, as cloud after cloud passes over the Mountain. Kinchenjunga seems to lift its peak ever higher in order to greet us who have come to worship at its altar.

Slowly the fog encompasses us and we realize we shall not see the Mountain again today. We hope we can do so again in the morning. We are told we have been very fortunate, for recent guests waited a week and never did see Kinchenjunga, owing to clouds that hid it from view.

Today we visit the beautiful botanic gardens and the Tibetan monastery. In the evening we engage in a discussion about yoga, Christianity, and religious topics in general.
Beloved Ones:

This diary letter concerns our visit with His Holiness, Jagatguru Shankaracharya. We have been spending some of our free hours visiting with His Holiness, who has remained for about two weeks here in Calcutta. During this period he has come to our Yogoda Math and Yogoda Ashram in Dakshineswar and in Baranagar. We have had many interesting discussions with him, but, as I have written you before, what I enjoy most of all is just sitting quietly in his presence. I have not had an opportunity to record those discussions, but Kriyanandaji has done so and I include it here in this letter to you:

"Last evening there was a particularly fine discussion. It was started by Dayama, who asked His Holiness to explain the nature of the three gunas (Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas). His Holiness first defined them briefly, then went on to say that no person manifests purely one guna or another. In everyone the three gunas are present, though in some one guna is uppermost in expression; in others, another guna. For example, he cited sleep. Sleep is tamasic; it is a state of nonactivity. Yet everyone must indulge in it. Sleep affords another example of how a guna, while in itself activating or obstructing, may be used for good ends. For without the rest of sleep one could not carry on.

"Then someone asked His Holiness how to transmute Rajas and Tamas gunas into Sattwa. His Holiness replied substantially in the following manner: 'You are referring to the obstructing power of worldly habits. For man's true nature is Sattwa. It is because he has allowed himself to acquire wrong habits that he fancies himself to be Rajasic or Tamasic by nature. In this truth lies the key to the way to bring out once again his true nature.

"Let us suppose that a man is given to using abusive language. One day he loses his temper and abuses some one in the vilest of terms and as a result he is brought into court, tried, condemned, and made to pay a fine. Thus he suffers public humiliation, and loses not only time but a considerable sum of money. He must pay the court costs, and the fine that has been imposed upon him by the law. Obviously his loss of temper has resulted in nothing but unpleasantness to himself. Convinced of the foolishness of giving vent to abusive language, he vows never to do so again. But later someone offends him. Without thinking, he again pours abusive words on his offender. Why? He had resolved not to do so. He is convinced that doing so will result only in pain to himself. He did not want to talk in such a way, and yet he did. That shows the power of habit.

"Now, finding that he has lost his self-control, he grieves inwardly, saying, 'Oh, I have done it again. I vowed not to, and yet I did. I have failed,' I am speaking, of course, of those that are sincere in their desire to change.
If they fail repeatedly, they may get discouraged. At last, the thought may come to them, "This habit is stronger than I am. I am powerless to overcome it." And so they give utterly in to discouragement. In fact, however, there is no need for any such feeling as discouragement, for wrong actions and feelings are not natural to us. They have been imposed upon us from without.

"Let us take the example of water. Water does not naturally become hot. If heat is applied, the water becomes hot. But when the heat is removed, the water gradually cools to a normal temperature. Heat is a property of fire but not of water. Even so, if wrong habits and delusions were a property of man's nature, he would be justified in thinking it impossible for him to overcome them. But they are foreign agents. Therefore it is possible for him to overcome them.

"Let us take another example -- say, the death of a loved one. The person suffering such bereavement has often been known to say, "I am so grief-stricken. I shall never be happy again." But on the second day his grief is already somewhat diminished. And day by day it keeps on diminishing until it disappears altogether. The reason is that grief is not the true nature of the soul. It must be introduced into our consciousness by some external factor. (We all admit this truth. Whenever we see someone unhappy we ask, "What is the matter? What happened?" Our very question shows that we understand that unhappiness is not a normal state. Something must have happened to produce it.)

"When the cause of delusion is removed, the delusion itself gradually disappears, just as when the cause of grief or when the application of heat to water is removed, grief and heat both slowly vanish.

"So the secret lies simply in this: stay away from the causes of delusion. In the case of bad habits, stay away from those people or environments that aggravate them. But this removal of the cause must stem from inner willingness. It cannot be forced upon one from without. If one locked an unruly boy in a room to keep him from performing mischief, he would be just as unruly, and perhaps even more so, after his release.

"While staying away from those factors that stimulate bad habits in us, we should also direct our attention in positive channels. In this manner, Tamas and Rajas gunas will gradually disappear, and our natural Sattwa will manifest itself."

After this helpful discussion we take our leave of His Holiness, arranging to travel to Puri on the same train with him, for he has been able to obtain tickets for us through a devotee connected with the railroad, when we were unable to do so. We will leave for Puri Sunday evening, May 24th, and expect to remain there about five days.
Beloved Ones:

It is Sunday evening and we are going to Howrah Station to entrain for Puri. We meet His Holiness at the station for he will be traveling with us, in the compartment next to our own. Going along with us four from America are Prabhasda, Brahmananda, and Mr. Dubey who will receive Initiation in Puri in the Samadhi Mandir of our beloved Paramaguru. I am looking forward to this occasion, for it has been a wish of mine to give initiation here in this sacred shrine, and to give it according to the way Master taught us.

The train ride is pleasant and soon after we enter our compartment we retire for the evening, for we should be ready to leave the train when it arrives in Puri about 7:30 a.m.

When we arrive at Puri Station we again greet His Holiness and wait with him, while a chair is brought to carry him to the waiting car. He then leaves for the Shankaracharya Math, while we drive to our Yogoda Math; but, before doing so, we arrange to see him the next day and he tells us he hopes to arrange an "informal formal" gathering while we are in Puri.

Our stay in Puri will be from Monday until Friday evening when we shall leave for Calcutta. During this period we meet and meditate with devotees in the Ashram, and, when the heat is bearable, toward afternoon or in the early morning, we call on His Holiness. In the words of Kriyanandaji again, let me give you a little of our talks with Sri Shankaracharya.

"In Puri, referring to certain persons who had caused trouble, His Holiness said, 'Few people deliberately create trouble. Out of a thousand one may do so. The rest will do so only because they are misguided. Therefore, I have endeavored to help these people to understand the nature of their error. I spoke carefully, so as to avoid giving offense. I avoided all reference to personalities. It is better to avoid such references. What is to be gained by them? After all, it is with truth and principles that we are concerned, not with personalities. It is always better to be impersonal -- to speak of principles. No one can quarrel with you then. Rather, they will be forced to admit the truth of what you are saying.'"

"In these words you will see the deep understanding of the Shankaracharya of Puri Math. How much simpler life would be if we could get away from personalities......to the principles involved. The trouble with most of us is that we become emotionally involved with the personalities and therefore cannot clearly see the principles, the truth. In the many discussions I have had with His Holiness, I have been deeply impressed by his impersonal analysis of a situation or a problem, seeing how he has divorced his mind from all personalities that might be involved. This is the only way to see the truth in anything.
"When asked a question relating to the days before he took sannyas, His Holiness apologized kindly and said, 'A monk is not supposed to talk about those days; they are finished for him. There are others in the ashram you can ask about me if you so wish. If I were to talk of myself, the question of self-eulogy would enter in. A monk's duty is to propagate truth, not speak about his own personality. God does not require any individual to support the cause of religion, or Truth. Truth stands by itself. Many people have the attitude that God needs their support. But He does not need it. He never has needed it, and He never will need it. There is no good end to be served, therefore, in drawing people's attention to ourselves. It is only with principles that we should concern ourselves.'

"On the subject of suffering, he said, 'Suffering is universally dreaded. People may, while they are undergoing it, think, "I cannot bear it any longer," and other similar thoughts. And yet we generally trace back to such periods of suffering in our lives all the subsequent joy we have known. We see that this happiness has come, not in spite of, but because of the pain we have undergone.'

"'And the contrary is also true. For a few moments of pleasure we may have to pay with years of suffering.' His Holiness was showing how we welcome pleasure, and shun pain, but make a mistake to judge by the feelings of the moment instead of looking to the long-range effects.

"He finished this discussion by saying, 'People that foolishly give in to temptation, even though they know better, may be good people. Metaphorically, they lack a vertebral column. They are like the species of animals that are classed as invertebrates.' Here he laughed. He was implying that a strong will, and not only a good intention, is necessary to follow the path of virtue.'

Thus ends the report of Kriyanandaji, who made mental notes during this discussion.

The Puri Math of the Shankaracharya is truly beautiful with its fine old buildings and well-kept garden. The ashram is spotlessly clean and simple. Mataji has taken pictures to show you.

One afternoon we called on Sanyal Mahasaya, whose ashram is on the same road, a short distance from the Puri Math of Jagadguruji. Sanyal has been ill, for he is aged now -- in his middle eighties. But what sparkling eyes he has, and what a gentle mien! One of the main reasons for our coming to Puri again was to meet this renowned disciple of Lahiri Mahasaya, for he was away when we made our first visit to Puri.

Mataji has written about our two visits with Sanyal Mahasaya and I will use her notes in this diary.
"We entered a large, bare room and seated ourselves in front of a small colorful rug. Within a few moments we heard a movement on the stairway and shortly thereafter a man of slight form walked into our midst. Seating himself on the rug, he looked curiously at each of us as we were introduced and pronounced him. There were about twelve persons seated in this room, including Sanyal Mahasaya's wife. We note that he understands some English but generally speaks in Bengali, which is interpreted for us by one of his disciples. He is very reluctant to talk about himself and when questions are put to him we note that he turns the conversation to Lahiri Mahasaya. His eyes light up with love as he reminisces about those glorious days at the feet of his guru -- a pleasant gentle laugh bursts forth at times. His eyes remain aloof and one feels in his presence a deep serenity and peace.

"Soon the light of day fades and kerosene lamps cast soft shadows around the room. When we reluctantly take our leave, we remind him of our wish to return in two days and take pictures. He expresses pleasure over our proposed visit."

When we visit Sanyal Mahasaya two days later, he is seated on the upper balcony, resting. A few disciples are gathered about him. We make our pronams and then sit on the floor beside him.

I ask him how he met Lahiri Mahasaya. Mataji here relates the ensuing conversation:

"'I had it in mind at the age of fourteen to study the Vedas. I had no thought of going to Lahiri Mahasaya; but when I saw him, he asked me to continue the study of the Vedas.

"'On the first visit I had no idea of initiation but just an ordinary visit; but when I saw him, for no reason at all, he began to smile, and kept smiling and smiling. An intuition came to me that his smile meant that he was my guru and that I would have to come to him for initiation. I was initiated at the age of fifteen; and at the age of sixteen I was asked by him to give Kriya initiation to seekers. I have now given initiation to about 5000 people.

"'When I was a boy of about fifteen or sixteen I had malaria. My eldest sister wrote to Lahiri Mahasaya in Benares asking when I would be cured. He replied that there was no danger -- that I would not die young, for I had hard work ahead of me. He wrote this message in his own hand.

"'When I was nineteen, Lahiri Mahasaya died. For a time I was disconsolate with grief. I could not sleep and wept all the time. One night I was weeping and fell asleep while doing so. Suddenly I woke up to find that Lahiri Mahasaya was in front of me, looking just as he had done while he was in the flesh. He asked, "Why are you weeping? You live not only in this world; you are also with me." Lahiri Mahasaya began to smile and said, "Why will you
say I am not here? I am here with you. I am always with you. You need not be afraid." I touched his body and he then disappeared. This incident happened in Deoghur.

"Dayama then asked Sanyal Mahasaya whether Lahiri Mahasaya manifested more of bhakti or of jnana. The saint replied, 'He was all-sided. He was the most loving person I have ever met, yet he expressed himself in terms of sublimest wisdom.' Sanyal Mahasaya continued: 'A similar incident happened in Santiniketan when I was there as superintendent. I was very ill and given up for lost. One night when I was sleeping, Lahiri Mahasaya appeared to me in a dream and asked me what was the matter. I said, "Now that I am going to die, I regret that I have not been able to do more in this life." Lahiri Mahasaya touched me and said, "You are not going to die. You have something more to achieve in this life." The doctors who were treating me were greatly surprised to see me better the next morning and talking with the people around me.'

"Dayama said, 'We learned this from our Guru -- that you can judge a disciple by his feeling toward his own Guru. To see the love and devotion you show toward your own Guru is deeply touching to our hearts.'

"Sanyal Mahasaya replied, 'My guru is my father, my God. I like to see him as my God. Never have I met another so great as he. Meeting him once, one could never forget him.'

"After a few moments of silence he went on, 'They said you have been on a pilgrimage.' To this Dayama replied, 'Now that pilgrimage is completed in seeing you.' In his sweet way, Sanyal Mahasaya said, 'You will feel Lahiri Mahasaya's presence if you go to the Temple (Guru Mandir),' pointing toward the small building on the grounds." (Thus ends Mataji's report.)

Sanyal Mahasaya expressed delight on hearing of the vast extent of the SRF work in the West. He remarked, "Lahiri Mahasaya said that Kriya would spread throughout the world." Later, on being told Kriyananda's name, he expressed great pleasure at its meaning. "What a beautiful name!"

While we are seated at his feet, Mataji takes motion and still photos. Taking leave of him, we go over to the Lahiri Mahasaya Mandir to meditate for a short time before the marble murti (figure) of our Paramagurudeva. As we turn to leave the ashram grounds, we see that Sanyal Mahasaya has seated himself on the upper balcony, waiting for us. He said in English, "I am really very happy to meet you all. I hope you come again, as often as you can."

We assure him we will do so. What peace one feels in the presence of these great souls whose minds have pierced the veil of maya -- the peace sublime we have experienced in our meeting with Ananda Mayee Ma, His
Holiness Jagadguru Shankaracharya, Mahamopadhaya Gopinath Kaviraj, and now, our own Sanyal Mahasaya, one of the few living disciples of Lahiri Mahasaya.

Taking some thoughts from Kriyananda's account of this visit: "Remark­
ing on the size of Master's work in the West, Sanyal Mahasaya said, 'Lahiri Mahasaya predicted that about fifty years after his passing, Kriya Yoga would start to become known all over the world.' Sanyal Mahasaya was particularly loving this day. It was obvious he had taken us to his heart, as we had taken him to ours. He said, 'I feel you are all mine. You are a part of our family.'

"Later, Daya Ma, in bidding farewell said, 'Amar prithi neo.' Someone in our party suggested 'Amar sraddha neo (respect),' might be more approp­riate for an older person. We said, 'No, he is ours. Prithi (love) expresses our true feelings toward him.' He smiled happily with approval."

After visiting the Guru Mandir of Lahiri Mahasaya for the last time, we turn again to see the gentle countenance of Sanyal Mahasaya looking down at us from the upper balcony with so much love and peace flowing from his eyes. We pronam to him and walk on through the gates of the ashram, down the road toward our own ashram. Now and then we turn back and look toward the ashram, waving our scarf in farewell, while this gentle soul responds with a wave of his hand.

Here in Sanyal Mahasaya we have seen the perfect attitude of a disciple toward his guru. For him the guru is everything, he is nothing. For him, the guru is the shining Light, he is but the bulb reflecting that light. For him, the guru is all wisdom; he is merely the conveyer of that wisdom, merely the spokesman for his guru. For him the guru is Love and Bliss Divine -- his eyes reflect that divinity that is his guru. His interest is not in extolling him­self, the disciple, but rather in turning the spotlight of his love, understand­ing, and wisdom upon the inspiration of his life, Lahiri Mahasaya, that all may behold only the guru, not the disciple. How much I admire such devotees, such selfless disciples -- for indeed, in the West and in the East, they are few and far between.
Beloved Ones:

Today is a memorable day for two of our brahmacharis, Robinarayan and Girinji of Ranchi, who will take their sannyas (vow of swamiship). It was their wish to take sannyas from Master, and he intended to give it to them upon his return to India. That plan, alas, was impossible of fulfillment. As there is no senior swami here (Atmanandaji is their brother-disciple) they were inclined to seek someone else in the Giri Order to give them sannyas. It occurred to us that possibly the head of the Swami Order, our dear friend the Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Puri, might perform this initiation into the Giri Order. His Holiness kindly consented. He showed us a recently published book in which it is stated that a Shankaracharya may give initiation into all branches of the Swami Order.

It is customary, in such cases, for those seeking swamihood from the Jagadguru to go to him in his Puri Math. On this occasion however, His Holiness graciously makes an exception and agrees to give initiation here at our YSS Ashram in Puri. He performs the sacred ceremony before the pictures of our line of Gurus, in the Samadhi Mandir of Swami Sri Yukteswarji on the ashram grounds.

Robinarayan will henceforth be known as Swami Hariharananda, and Girinji will be known as Swami Bidyananda.

Today my own heart is filled with blissful memories of my own sannyas, taken on New Year's Day in 1935 in the presence of our blessed Master.

May 28, 1959

We have been invited by Raja Sri Birkishore Deb of Puri to his palace for the "formal-informal" function at which His Holiness will preside and to which many pundits have been invited. I am informed that I am to speak there, as well as Kriyanandaji.

His Holiness has told us that he has always made it a principle not to take meals at social functions; but that, because of our visit, he will break his lifelong practice and eat at the palace with us. How deeply touched we are as he tells us this, for it reflects his feeling for us, and our deep love for this humble leader of millions of Hindus.

About 7 p.m. we arrive at his historic Puri Math. We will go with His Holiness from there to Shreenahar, the Raja's palace. The younger brother of the Raja comes to drive us to our destination. There we are greeted by the Raja, who ushers His Holiness and us into a large room where a thronelike
canopy has been erected. Here His Holiness is seated and we are seated by his side (but outside the canopy). The wives of the Raja and his younger brother are then brought into the room. They bow at His Holiness's feet, and are then introduced to us. We see, too, the young children of the two brothers. After a short time the wives retire with the children and the doors are opened.

The distinguished guests enter to pay their respects to His Holiness and to meet us. They then sit in a semicircle facing His Holiness and us and I am then asked to speak to the group.

A news item about the function appeared on June 2nd in several Indian-language newspapers. Some excerpts follow:

"On May 28th a meeting was held at Shreenahar, the Raja's palace in Puri. Raja Sri Birkishore Deb of Puri, his brother, and many other distinguished persons were present, including Mahamohopadhyaya Sri Damodar Shastri of the Pandit Assembly of the Mukti Mandap of Sri Sri Jagannath Temple, the Mohant Maharaj of the Utterparsha Math, and the Mohant Maharaj of the Manhata Math (the preceptor of the Raja). Jagadguru Sri Shankaracharya 1008 Bharati Krishna Tirtha Maharaj presided. Sister Daya was the chief guest.

"The opening song -- a devotional Bengali chant of a high order -- sung by Brother Kriyananda of America, charmed all present. Sister Daya, in a brief speech, dwelt on the core of Hindu religion, which is universal brotherhood. Brother Kriyananda spoke on Sanatan Dharma or the 'eternal religion.' The chairman, Jagadguru Sri Shankaracharya, said in his speech that the central theme of all religions is the same. Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, Moslems -- all alike are in search of the Absolute; only the outer rituals are different.

"At the close of the meeting, the Jagadguru, along with Sister Daya and others, sat in the same line with the learned assembly in the palace, and partook of the mahaprosad."

We are told that it is a distinct honor in India to be seated in the same line with learned pundits.

During our visit at the palace the gracious Raja tells us he is reading with much enjoyment the copies of Self-Realization Magazine which we have begun to send him, and that he is looking forward to reading further issues. Later, out on the long verandah where we sat for prosad, photos are taken of us. Then we thank our host and return to the Puri Math with His Holiness. He asks us to come the next day for prosad, before we entrain for Calcutta that evening. We accept his invitation gladly.

Bidding our adieu, we walk the short distance back to our Yogoda Ashram, finding our way with a lighted oil lamp. My thoughts are intoxicatingly sweet and deep as I feel the dark, warm blanket of the silent night all about me --
thoughts of the blessed nearness of my Divine Mother who silently whispers loving thoughts to my soul, of my divine Gurudeva who first lit the taper of love in my heart for that sweet Mother, and of this sacred land of Puri where Her devotees such as Sri Chaitanya and our own beloved Sri Yukteswarji and countless others walked these same lanes, filled with similar, but no doubt much more profound, thoughts of the Mother. Oh, I am blessed, indeed I am blessed!

Nearing our Ashram, after passing by the shore of the Indian Ocean, I behold the pure white marble of Sri Yukteswarji's Samadhi Mandir. My soul continues to feel a bubbling peace and happiness as I recall the great Lion of God whose physical form rests in lotus posture within the shrine. I feel his gentle blessings. Here, too, in this temple, I gave my first Initiation. In this experience I beheld not myself, but the beloved Guru, giving that initiation through me -- and it made me realize more than ever that pure happiness lies in forgetting the self in the higher Self.

Thus end our final days in Puri. We gathered, just before departing for Calcutta, in the Samadhi Mandir for our last meditation. How to convey our thanks to those who have contributed so much to our blessed stay here -- Swami Hariharananda (Br. Robinarayan) and the devoted members of the Puri Yogoda Ashram; His Holiness, Jagadguru Shankaracharya; Sanyal Mahasaya; and the Raja Sri Birkishore Deb; not to speak of others, too numerous to mention, in Puri, as well as those who traveled from Calcutta with us.

Take the love of my heart, bhalo basha neo, and give me yours, amake prithi deo.
Beloved Ones:

Today we attend the eleventh anniversary of the foundation day of the Bangiya Pallee Sangathan Samity, as guests of Sujata Debi Das. The meeting takes place at the orphanage founded by Mrs. Sujata Das. Afterward, dresses and saris are distributed to the orphaned children. I am asked to present these clothes to the little girls and I am most happy to do so. What beautiful children! They range in age from about four to seventeen. I am simply charmed by one little girl of about ten with delicate features, who shyly responds to my smiles, revealing as she does so beautiful white teeth and a sparkle in her soft brown eyes.

Incidentally, I made a mistake in reporting the name of Mrs. Das in my diary letter published in the May-June issue of Self-Realization Magazine. I erred in referring to Mrs. Sujata Das as "Mrs. Swarupa Das." Mrs. Sujata Das is the daughter-in-law of one of India's greatest men, C. R. Das. She is not his widow, but rather, the widow of C. R. Das's son. One of the main streets of Calcutta is named after C. R. Das, known as Chittaranjan Street.

June 19, 1959

It is midnight and tonight the rains came! This is something new. The rain is pouring in heavy torrents and the sky is streaked with great flashes of lightning while the thunder is clapping boisterously, as though to awaken all creation from its mayic slumber.

Above all, what a refreshing breeze stirs through our room at this early hour of the morn. Our skin, for long weeks bathed in constant perspiration is becoming dry once more and our spirits rise as though to touch the watery heavens in gratitude.

To visualize this monsoon weather, one must witness it. It is often like standing directly beneath a waterfall -- no sparse raindrops are these! And the streets of Calcutta are no longer streets, but canals through which rivers of water flow in violent surges.

Faintly I can hear the cry of a cat, complaining against Nature's force, but soon that cry is drowned out by the louder voice of the thunder....

It is morn now and still the rains come. The window sills of our room are filled with water, which spills over onto the floor. Fortunately, the tile floors or India have a low place with an opening where water can drain off, thus keeping the rest of the floor dry. As I sit writing at my desk I behold a
rivulet of rainwater flowing along the window sill, down the wall onto the floor, slowly wending its way toward that opening whence it drains outside the building, once more joining its source -- the heavy rains that are omnipresent at least in our part of the world.

We are packing to leave for Ranchi tonight by train. We should arrive there early in the morning. Sleeping on the trains of India can be a most interesting experience. One may travel first class, having a compartment that beds four. One can never be certain that that fourth bed will be occupied by another woman -- the beds are sold to the first comers. But we rest on our bedrolls fully clothed so that we do not feel unease on this account. We have a shower room where we can freshen ourselves and change our saris, etc., in privacy.

One evening we visit again the home of Mr. Biswanath Roy. I like this devotee of the Divine Mother, and such visits to his home include a time for meditation and speaking of the Divine Beloved. Kriyanandaji sings some beautiful Bengali chants to Her and a well-known singer of Calcutta added to the inspiration of the evening with his beautiful compositions, sung in a sweet, clear voice.

Revati has just come into our room to say, "We have only one can of 'Frysticks' left. We have been saving it for a special occasion. Shall we celebrate today and have them instead of our usual diet?" Happily we assent. I don't know just what we are celebrating, but still, the idea is a good one on this first day of the monsoon -- blessed cool weather!

By the by, while I am rambling on, I must share this British "funny" with you all. Do you know what the firefly said when it lost its tail? "De-lighted, no end!"
Beloved Ones:

Today we are going to Ranchi for what may be our last visit there before leaving India. We have delayed until the school semester begins, in order to meet the little boys and to learn something more of the school activities.

It is 8:15 a.m. and Brahmanandaji has brought us to Howrah Station where we board the train for Ranchi. The trip is pleasant and Kriyanandaji and I have a long discourse on spiritual matters. Incidentally, the trains in India are most unusual. The first-class compartments have accommodations for either four or six persons, with connecting bath. The upper berths are like padded shelves, one on each side of the car and another at the end of the car. Rather, these padded shelves are around three walls of the car, directly above the seats below, which may be made into beds also. Fans are turned on and these give blessed relief from the heat, and all the car windows may be lowered to get fresh air. For privacy one may pull up a wooden windowshade, similar to a venetian blind, in each window of the car. The floor is covered with linoleum, and the room is fresh with the smell of disinfectant.

The train motion and the constant stopping at village stations along the way make it impossible for me to get to sleep, so I use this time to meditate, for I find that in meditation the body becomes well rested and the mind is refreshed with divine thoughts. What are some of my thoughts as we pass through these villages on our way to our final stay in Ranchi? Oh, they are many, but their theme is one -- Master, Divine Mother, YSS-SRF. That theme runs like a strong thread through all my activities: what is best for YSS, what did Master want to accomplish here in India, what can I do to draw ever closer to my Beloved Mother, and how can I become more receptive that She may use this child to greater and greater advantage in Her scheme of things? Soon my consciousness is cozily nestled in Her loving embrace and I am lulled to rest for a time. O blissful moments! Dawn comes all too soon, and we must prepare ourselves to leave this train and board another.

About 6 a.m. we enter a little train that will carry us to Ranchi. The dawn is bursting through dark clouds in the eastern skies and the stars, put to shame by the brighter light of the sun's morning rays, soon hide themselves from our gaze. Slowly the earth's forms take shape and we see beautiful green paddy fields and little villages with early-risers busy taking baths or leading their herds to the fields.

Arriving at Ranchi station we find a group of yellow-clad boys standing there, along with Swami Bidyananda, Swami Satchidananda, Ramkishore Babu, and other residents of the ashram. The children present us with gar-
lands and then we are led to bicycle rickshaws for the short journey to the ashram. The boys scamper along the road back to the ashram to be part of the group there waiting to greet us. We walk toward the Guru Mandir where once stood the little storeroom in which Master had his vision of the West and his mission there. The young boys sit in neat little rows on one side of the hall; the ashramites and friends sit on the opposite side. Swami Bidyanandaji leads them in chanting and then I say a few words of greeting. My heart is so deeply touched when the boys chant "Jai Guru," and soon we all join in this song of victory to our divine Master.

What a happy day it is, for I love this Ranchi colony of Master's. Every walk, every mango tree bespeaks the silent presence of our blessed Gurudeva who once walked through these lanes and plucked mangoes from these same trees.

We are soon settled in our rooms in the ashram and we take a little rest and a refreshing shower. The afternoon is spent walking about the grounds, seeing visitors, and later watching the youngsters play soccer on the recreation grounds. During these games we are delighted to see Kriyanandaji from SRF in America and Karunanandaji from YSS in India taking part in the play with much enthusiasm and ability. I too kicked the football. I might have done better without a sari to entangle my feet!

This evening the moon seems to be bursting its circumference with the ripeness of approaching fulfillment — tomorrow it gains its fullness. Long after the other devotees have retired I sit outside, absorbed in the splendor of Divine Mother's mystical beauties both without and within. Yes, I am happy to be again at Ranchi, and to lose myself in the dreams Master envisioned for this school, and for others like it. (See November 1958 issue, Self-Realization Magazine article on Ranchi school.)

June 21, 1959

It is Sunday at Ranchi. We arise early but I remain in seclusion until noon, just to be alone with Divine Mother. This is the first time since coming to India that I have had this blessed opportunity to remain in seclusion on a Sunday and I am enjoying it to the utmost.

Early in the afternoon I greet the devotees who have come to the ashram to see us; and then, because dear Prabhasda is to be with us in Ranchi only for this day, we take a drive with him to see the beautiful Jonha Falls, about five miles from here. At the head of the Falls is a Jagannath temple (not the Puri one, of course, which is the most famous). Arriving at the top of the Falls we walk down a stone path through tangled jungle-like woods until we come to the foot of the Falls. Leaping over rocks (and how I love this -- I must have been a mountain goat at some time or another!) we soon come almost beneath the falls and a fine spray of water envelops us. The climate is very warm and so is the water, creating an atmosphere one would find in a steam bath. We sit on rocks and let our feet rest in the pools of swirling water.
The native bearer has prepared hot tea for us and there on the warm rocks we have a little picnic of tea, bananas, mangoes, and biscuits. This being the monsoon season, skies that were blue only minutes before soon become dark with rain. Large drops splash upon us and we start back up the hill.

In the evening we visit the Bihar Sangit Sikhala Bhawan to hear again the beautiful devotional songs of Mr. and Mrs. Sen and their group of students.

Tonight the voices of Mr. and Mrs. Sen blend into such perfect harmony of devotion to the Divine Mother that I plunge deeper and deeper within into a blissful state. The world is swept aside and I hear only the voices of these two great lovers of God, now soothing, now plaintive, now urgent in their longing for the Divine Mother. Long I remain enlocked in that state of supreme love and bliss. As the final song is sung to the Mother, suddenly Mr. Sen has an unusual divine experience. I cannot write more of this experience save to say that through Mr. Sen I find that Divine Mother has once again given me a taste of Her sweet Presence. How I long to remain enlocked forever in that divine embrace! How gross seems this world when my consciousness returns to it! If only every person could taste but once this divine joy, how simple would be the path thereafter! for he would then have the opportunity to compare the state of consciousness during ordinary pleasures experienced through the five senses with the intoxicating state of consciousness when the sixth sense, soul intuition, takes over.

When we "come to" and the songs are over, a terrific storm has broken. The heavens are bursting with lightning and thunder while great, dark clouds are spilling their contents in great torrents that rush down the streets of Ranchi, seeking lower levels.

My mind is still withdrawn and remains so the rest of the evening as, rain subsiding, I walk in silence around the compound of the ashram, inwardly communing with my Beloved while the full moon darts in and through the scattering clouds.

All my love to you, beloved ones. These days you are constantly in my thoughts and I ask Divine Mother and our Beloved One to bless you, each one, with deepening awareness of Their presence within, without, everywhere.

Bhalo basha neo.