

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

*Arunachala! Thou dost root out the ego of those
who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!*

Vol. 15, No. III

July 1978

When I melted away
and entered Thee, my
Refuge, (I found) Thee
standing naked (like the
famous Digambara) ! Oh
Arunachala !

—The Marital Garland
of Letters, verse 59

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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

"Arunachala ! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala !"

—The Marital Garland of Letters, verse 1.

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JULY 1978

No. III

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— Editor.

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The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

The aim of this journal is to set forth the traditional wisdom of all religions and all ages, especially as testified to by their saints and mystics, and to clarify the paths available to seekers in the conditions of our modern world.

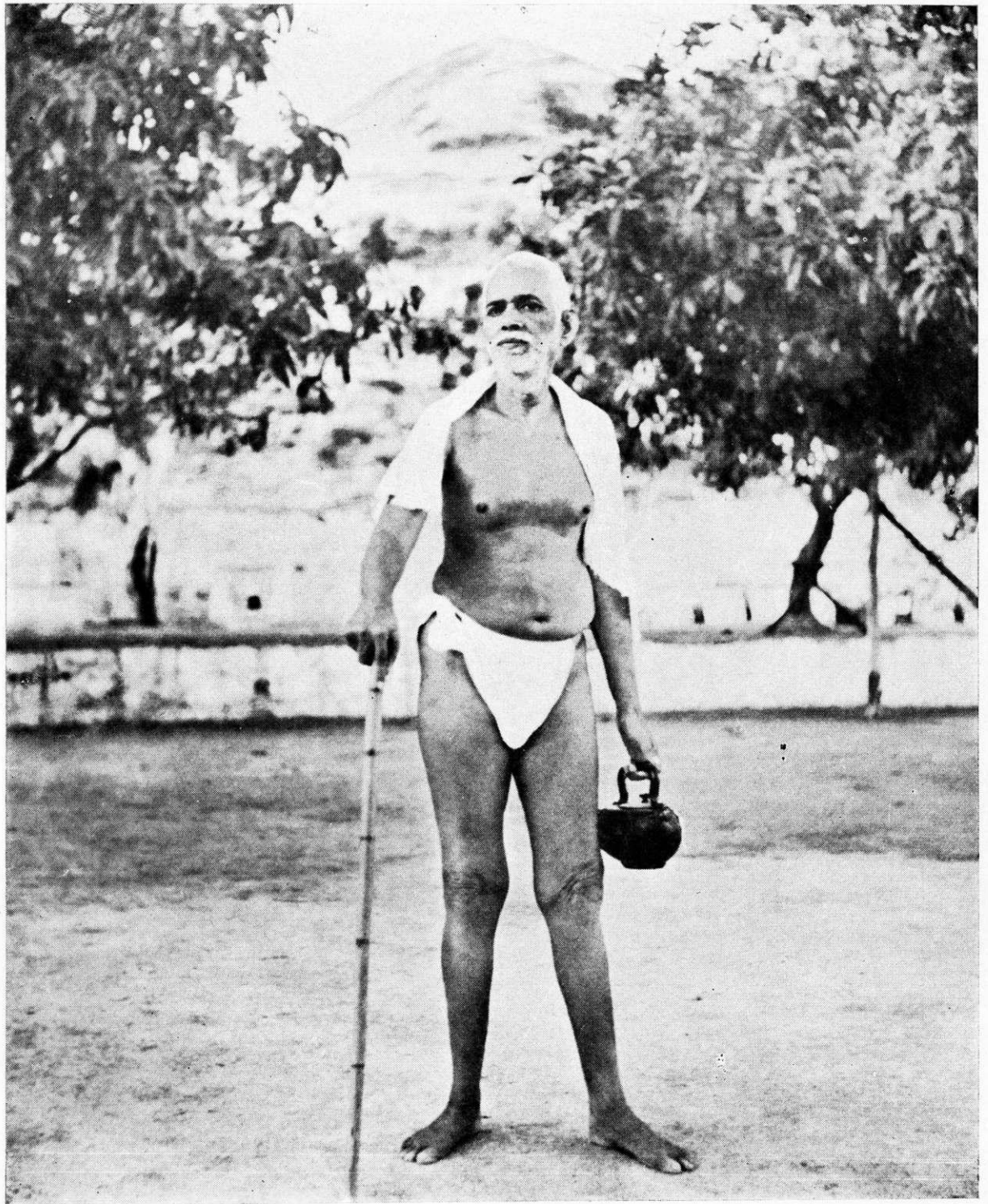
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THE MOUNTAIN PATH
is dedicated to
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi



The Mountain Path

Vol. 15. No. III, July 1978

EDITORIAL

In Tune with the Infinite

IN Chapter 3 of *Ramana Gita* the paramount task of man is defined as "the discovery of our real human nature".

What is our real human nature? Is it finite or infinite? Centuries ago Pico della Mirandola said, "Man occupies no fixed place in the universal hierarchy. Every man determines his place and nature through his own free choice."

Such is man's empirical freedom that he can identify himself with the finite body, lead a life "poor, nasty, brutish and short" and leave the world a little worse than he found it. Against this freedom operates a transcendental necessity.

The presence of the spirit, the call to be the formless infinite, is ubiquitous and undeniable. Not man alone, but every living thing without an exception has, according to Walt Whitman, "an eternal soul . . . There is nothing but immortality." Innocent minds, not bowed to cunning, "hold infinity in the palm of the hand" and find and spread happiness around them. But the world is too much with us and teaches the child to care more for the finite than for the infinite; getting and spending we lay waste our powers, and we fall out of tune with the movements of nature, of sun, moon and stars. Even so, as Carlyle explains, "Man has an infinite which with all his cunning he cannot bury under the finite; hence his unhappiness." And so most men live in the hope of regaining their lost infinity. It is this

same urge for the finite which Wordsworth describes:

"Whether we be young or old,
Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
Is with infinitude and only there;
With hope it is, hope that can never die,
Effort, and expectation, and desire,
And something ever more about to be."

What blinds us to this our own infinity is the veil of *maya*, the multicoloured curtain hung by the senses between us and the Truth. As Blake says, "If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite."

The healthy child is happy because it does not yet know duality. It sees in a dim twilight and enjoys uncritically the infinite in the finite, the distant in the near, the moon in the mirror, all love in its mother, all strength in its father, and heaven on earth. But as it grows older and looks outward through the senses at the wonder of this world, it develops, and identifies itself with, a separate, sturdy, body-bound ego, a cultural fiction created by linguistic and social usage. The body then and its shadow, the ego, become hereafter the sole reality, obvious, concrete and useful. The ultimate reality, the spirit unconditional and infinite, is too subtle and too far removed from the perils and pleasures of ordinary life. The sensible moth finds the flame more desirable than the star.

How to see through this fiction and put this narrow divisive, destructive ego out of the

way? How to discover the truth that our real nature is spiritual, that the ephemeral is rooted in, springs from and returns to, the eternal?

Ramana Gita, which defines the task, prescribes the method of self-discovery: By the strenuous effort of withdrawing thoughts from sense-objects and remaining fixed in steady non-objective enquiry.

In recommending this enquiry, Bhagavan was not philosophizing in the air. He was recalling the glorious moment when he saw himself the face of Truth and the precise method by which he had heard the music of the infinite only to become one with it for ever. When the lad of sixteen enquired, "Am I the body, or am I the spirit?", the answering call came clear and loud as the *adbara sruti* of "I, I, I", the fundamental note of the Self, which underlies and blends with other notes that might come and go, but which continues unbroken all the time in the sage, as it sounds vaguely sweetly in the child. It was this *sakaja* awareness, this inborn identity with the infinite, even in empirical living, which for over fifty years persisted beneath and beyond all Bhagavan's outward activities and made them all so sacramental in their harmony.

Many of us have witnessed and admired the effortless perfection in all the words and works of this embodiment and emblem of infinite bliss. Universal love radiated from him without choice or preference but, like light from the sun or fragrance from a flower, as the outward manifestation of his normal nature. In his presence, in the field of grace he created, we too became effortlessly attuned to that state of pure awareness and infinite bliss which swallowed up all differentiation born of ignorance. When one remains thus attuned to the infinite bliss, the distinction between bhakti and jnana vanishes. Though Bhagavan has cast off the physical body, he has charged with fresh power and left to us as a legacy a solid and permanent reminder of this ever-active, overflowing grace. He addresses the Self of Pure Awareness, visible and tangible as Shiva's Hill, in the last of the five verses in *Arunachala Pancharatna*:

He who, with heart to You surrendered,
Beholds for ever You alone,
O Aruna Hill,
And seeing all things as forms of You,
Loves and serves them as none other
Than the one Self, triumphs because
He is immersed in You
Whose being is pure bliss.

Karma, bhakti and jnana are all blended in this flood of bliss. This firm assurance of triumph — the promise that all things work together for good to them that love God — comes from the summit of achievement where the Sage sees only the silver lining of every cloud.

It may not be possible for others to climb up hill so quickly, to rush through the exploration of our ontological, epistemological and axiological dimension in a few minutes as Bhagavan did in July 1896. Endowed and situated as we are, our progress can only be slow, along a gentler slope, less steep and more manageable. It is only when we have attained a degree of mental purity and spiritual ripeness that the direct search for the inner self culminating in supreme identity will become easy. Meantime, devotional practices, *japa* and *stotra* recommended by all traditions help to wean away the mind from outward objects to the one divine Being dwelling within. So too, the practice of devotional music and fine arts brings about a degree of inner attunement and peace. This, however, is temporary and one has to go deeper and find the source of all experience, the reality of the experiencer, the one ever-free Self of all.

Karmayoga, selfless loving service of those around us, is a great help in attenuating the ego and attuning it to the one universal Self. Whether we follow the path of karma, bhakti or yoga, the main aim is to shift attention from the world without to the world within, from the transient to the eternal, from the sphere of our sorrow to the infinite which is bliss. All that is perceived by the mind and the senses, all that appears and disappears, is finite; there is no real happiness in it. The mind and the senses too appear and disappear, and so one should try to apprehend and get

attuned to what is beyond them, for it is there yonder that real happiness dwells. All the pleasures that we know in the world are pale, fragmentary and fleeting images cast by the bliss which is infinite, spaceless, timeless and formless.

Para vidya or transcendent wisdom is not a negation or contradiction of *apara vidya* or relative knowledge. It is the recognition of everything we perceive as the manifest image of the real which is unmanifest. To experience the unmanifest in the manifest, the universal in the unique, the whole in the part, the substance in the symbol, is to taste *amṛta*, nectar. And hence its name *madhu vidya*. This *vidya* is not in the world's markets bought and sold. It can be learnt only by humble persistent search, as the cartman Raikwa, happy in his obscurity, told the proud king Janasruti (in the *Chandogya Upanishad*). Narada's immense learning and Janasruti's untold wealth are alike worthless before this wisdom. When the disciple is humble and truthful and therefore ripe to receive it, it comes to him in its own mysterious way, through some guru, human or divine, or from trees and streams, from day and night, as it came to Satyakamajabala, or to Wordsworth's maiden who grew in sun and shower and the dear light of the midnight stars. To those who are utterly simple the secret, the supernatural buried in the bosom of the natural, is revealed. This is what the youthful sage Sanatkumara teaches the learned elder Narada: "There is no happiness in the finite; that which is the unchanging eternal Ground, that is happiness, that is bliss." (*Na atpe sukham asti bhoomaiva sukham*).

Young Nachiketas, the intrepid seeker, is tempted by Yama with promises of cattle, elephants, horses, land and gold, bevy of maidens making lovely music, and a long, long life. But the lad, knowing that all pleasures pass away and the longest life must end one day, insists on learning the secret of death, the meaning of the great beyond. Then Yama describes to Nachiketas the two paths, that of *sbreyas* of good deeds and excellence leading to immortality, and that of *preyas*, of pleasure passing from the perishable to the perishable. The path of *sbreyas* or self-transcendence takes

us 'ever upward and above the level of the mind, and yet the way to the Self is a way which none can ever miss. Like sunlight for the plant or like the master's scent for the dog, the thought I, the word I, the real I, the I undistracted by the senses, provide a continuous clue of perpetual self-transcendence. The progress is simultaneous in awareness and action, in being and becoming; the growth is at once vertical and horizontal. There is nothing occult or mysterious in the lesson taught by Yama. Every happy warrior has to make his moral being his prime case. The earnest seeker has to reject the dark, blind alley of duality and pleasure, and to choose the open path lit up and made smooth by the indivisible Self. As St. Paul says, "Those who work not after the flesh but after the spirit live a new life. To be carnally-minded is death; to be spiritually-minded is life and peace."

The insistence on *vairagya*, freedom from desire, and on disinterested service for self-purification, *atma suddhaye*, is a needed caution for saving the seeker from the danger of the search itself becoming a means of strengthening the ego. The reality is both within and without; one is both the seeker and the sought. Mere meditation may only maintain, instead of naughting, the ego. The would-be enquirer, sniffing at bhakti and karma, may be only puffing up his self-esteem. The purified mind finds ease and pleasure in meeting other minds, thus increasing happiness in day-to-day dealings.

The search for happiness as such is self-defeating. Happiness is a by-product. It occurs spontaneously, if it occurs at all. Self-understanding, which ends anxiety and inner conflict, has plenty of room for concern for others, and makes one eligible for happiness. Manikkavachagar's most ardent prayer is that he should be surrounded by fellow-devotees. Moksha cannot be sought. It comes of its own accord when we accept total individual non-existence. The moment the ego is extinct and one has become a zero, infinity takes possession. In the *Chandogya Upanishad*, Upakosala Kamalayana gives up at last the

desire to know Brahman and at that instant discovers that all life is Brahman.

As Vinoba says, the rule of the renunciation of fruit applies even to moksha. Even for moksha, for that state of inactivity, we should not be greedy. That state will come to us unawares, of its own accord. It is enough for the bhakta to love and serve the Lord. It is not for him to hanker after the final fruit of freedom. But this does not mean that we shall miss moksha. Even as we give up the desire for it, it will be moving towards us. If we are absorbed in *sadbhava* and forget all about moksha, then moksha will come seeking us and stand in front of us. "Round the neck of the seeker, who without desire for moksha is absorbed in *sadbhava*, Moksha Lakshmi, the goddess of freedom, will throw the garland of victory. Not to bother about moksha but to remain absorbed in *sadbhava* is the way to attract moksha. Do not be greedy for rest or the state of inaction."

Selfless action, surrendered to the Lord, and performed not for its fruit, but for self-purification, makes the seeker a *yukta*. "A *yukta* discards all selfish interest in work and enjoys the felicity of steady inherence in the Self." (*Gita-V*, 12). *Yukta* — this amazing word, as Zachner calls it — has been variously translated as the integrated man, the self-controlled man, the man of discipline, the athlete of the spirit, one who knows the mean, and one attuned to the divine. But it is idle to raise the question whether terms like *yukta* and *sthitaprajna* apply to the seeker or the *siddha*.

Chapter 12 of *Ramana Gita* says, "Being is eternally active. Jagat, the universe we perceive, is in a state of constant movement. But activity is not other than being." This movement is symbolized by the dance of Nataraja. The wave is not different from water. As Gandhiji says: "When we melt into the ocean of humanity we share its majesty; we share its movement as well as its stillness. A drop in the ocean partakes of the greatness of its

A Prayer to Siva

By
K. S.

The Mother in your heart abides
And you within her heart abide.
If it is true
That both of you
Within this servant's heart abide,
Then, our Prime Being, Lord eternal
Dancing in the Hall of Gold,
Come, stand in front of me, fulfil
My wish, and by your grace
Make this servant live right
In the midst of your devoted servants.

— MANIKKAVACHAKAR

parent. But it is dried up as soon as it enters upon an existence independent of the ocean. God is continuously in action without resting for a single moment. If we become one with him, our activity must be as unwearied as his. There may be rest for the drop separated from the ocean, but not for the drop in the ocean. Our very sleep is action, for we sleep with the thought of God in our heart. This restlessness constitutes true rest. This never-ceasing agitation holds the key to peace ineffable."

This recognition of infinite rest in the midst of infinite motion is also the lesson taught by the *Isopanishad*: Cheerful acceptance of what is given to us, whether of possession or obligation, without envy or resentment, fulfilment of *svadharma*, the doing of the duty that lies nearest to us, is life in its Wholeness. To live in tune with the infinite is egoless living, the truest *tapas*, the experience of the bliss of being in becoming, of the moveless in the moving, of the unmanifest in the manifest, of the whole in the part.

FULFILMENT

By

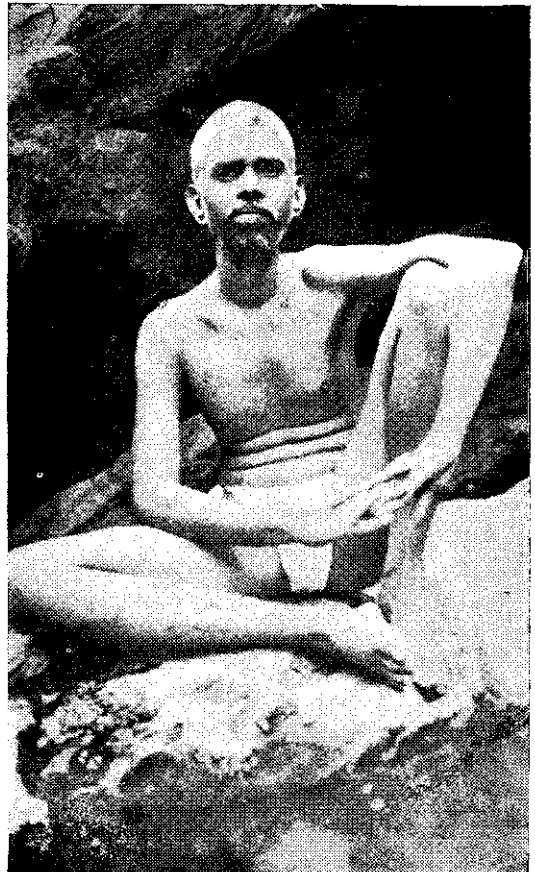
S. Sankaranarayanan

(This is the third in the series of four articles on Kaavyakantha contributed by the author as a Centenary tribute to that illustrious poet-scholar.)

FROM Tiruvotriyur Vasishtha Muni went along with his disciples in the course of his *tapas* to *Padaiveedu*, sacred to the Goddess Renuka, the mother of Parasurama. There he engaged himself in *tapas*, following the instructions of the Maharshi and had certain remarkable experiences. He travelled far south up to Kanya Kumari visiting all the holy places on the way. Then he repaired to the West and stayed for long in Gokarna at the loving insistence of his disciple Daivarata. The Muni was ever on the move. Between Andhra and Orissa, there was at that time the native State of Mandasa. Ganapati Muni stayed in *tapas* for a long time in the State of Mandasa and the adjoining hill of Mahendra. Intermittently he was visiting Arunachala and meeting the Maharshi.

Thus years passed and at one time the disciples in the South actually lost track of the movements of the Muni. News came to them finally that their Nayana had repaired to his village where he had been long bed-ridden with some severe illness and that he had just recovered. His illustrious disciple Sri Kapali Sastriar was able to locate him at the house of Subrahmanya Sastri in Secunderabad.

When Sastriar went from Tiruvotriyur to Secunderabad and saw the Muni, it was a touching meeting between the Master and the disciple. Meeting after such a long time, the two spent the whole night talking. In the middle of the night, as the Muni was narrating what had happened, he suddenly sat up in his bed and exclaimed : " I feel as though I have



Sri Bhagavan

emerged out of an eclipse. Now I shall go back to Arunachala and resume my *tapas* at the feet of my Master, the Maharshi". He continued, with an extempore verse addressing God Ganapati, the guiding spirit of his corporeal existence :



Sri Ganapati Muni

“ If I do not perform austere *tapas* it is thy mistake. Why hast thou not impelled me to do so, O Son of Siva ? If thou hast impelled me aright but I have not followed, what is the power of thy impulsion, O Elephant-faced God ? ”¹

Vasishtha Muni had to engage himself in *tapas* all the time. Rest and respitè was not

for him. He could not help wandering from place to place in his spiritual quest. But the Muni understood that the Maharshi alone could grant the fruit of all his *tapas*. He knew that he could find fulfilment only at the feet of the Maharshi. Very much later, writing from Sirsi, in a letter dated 14, April 1931 (Tamil New Year Day) to the Maharshi, Vasishtha Muni has given open expression to his conviction :

“ Lord, who lies in the heart-cavern, Please accept our salutations at this beginning of the year. Make us grow with thy Blessings. By thy grace may this year give us all-round weal and victory. Master, I feel that all is accomplished when the austerities get matured, the ego is cast aside, the natural inborn state, *sabaja sthiti*, becomes permanent and all the net work of actions depends on thee. Steeped in the knowledge-self (*Vijnānātma*) may I see the way to inherence in my original self. I know that the accomplishment of all my desires and my integral fulfilment can only be at thy Feet. I look forward to that auspicious time. Though I am now far away from thee, may I be held very close to thy heart.

“ Lord, thou reposest in my heart. I repose at thy feet. Thou art my all-powerful master. I am thy servant, carrying out thy work.

Thine, on all counts,
Vasishtha ”.

Without losing much time, Vasishtha Muni started from Secunderabad and, accompanied by his wife, proceeded to Tiruvannamalai. On the way he spent some time in Tiruvotriyur and stayed for a month in Madras. All the disciples noticed a new power in the Muni. His very presence gave them remarkable spiritual experiences. They felt as though the doors of the hidden knowledge were opened out for them. Along with the Muni, they also experienced a flood of bliss inundating their entire system. The Muni confided with them that the latent hidden energy usually dormant in all beings, the Kundalini

¹ This verse is now included in *Herambōpasthanā*, a poetic composition of Vasishtha Muni, in praise of Lord Ganapathi.

Sakti had become active in him. Consequently all the yogic knowledge was laid bare before him. His body became light and full of light. The Muni was frank when he said that he had not pursued the path of Pranayama or other yogic practices to merit these experiences. It was undoubtedly the result of the grace of his guru and God.

On reaching Arunachala, the Muni got the blessings of the Maharshi and with his consent repaired to the Mango-tree cave for *tapas*. It was the same place where thirteen years earlier the immortal poem *Umasahasram* was born. The moment the Muni set his foot in the cave, the experiences which he had been having in Tiruvotriyur and in Madras became intensified. A flood of energy coursed through the body all the time. Two or three disciples who were by his side were struck by the supernatural effulgence of his person. The Muni was in deep *tapas* throughout. He did not see the difference between night and day; neither did he see the distinction between his inner state and the outside world. Vasishtha Muni went from the cave once every day to Skandashrama to pay his respects to the Master. Once, unable to go to Skandashrama he sent a letter to the Maharshi describing the state he was in. He felt as though his head was being pierced and a stream of bliss shot forth from there making him completely intoxicated. His body was not in his control.

Somehow the next day, with great difficulty, the Muni proceeded to Skandashrama and narrated the whole thing to the Maharshi. The Maharshi, full of compassion, heard everything with rapt attention, affectionately passed his hand over the head of the Muni and told him not to worry. The Maharshi advised the Muni to anoint the crown of his head with castor oil before bath and apply almond oil after bath.

That night Ganapati Muni suffered terribly. There was an unbearable burning sensation throughout his body. It was just like some poison quickly spreading through the whole system. The Muni was not able to place the head on the ground. He could not lie down on his side either. It looked as though

his head would break into pieces any time. He suffered unbearable pain.

Suddenly a sound was heard; something like smoke was seen. The *Kundalini* had caused an aperture at the top of his skull. The Muni's wife and daughter who were not very far from him saw the whole thing. The devotee Kondayya held the body of the Muni from falling. Fortunately a detailed authentic version what exactly happened has been made available to posterity by K. R. Krishnaswami (Kalambur Kittaji) who was at that time serving the Muni.

After that experience for ten days something like smoke or vapour was found emanating from the orifice at the top of the skull. By that time the burning sensation subsided. The play of force became bearable. The long story of suffering, pain and agony ended. The body was filled with the flow of cool nectar of bliss. The face of the Muni reflected an ethereal splendour. His eyes bore the effulgence of the supernatural. After this extraordinary experience of *kapalabheda*, the Muni lived for fourteen years. Throughout the period, some of his close devotees have had an inkling of it.

As a part of *tapas*, Ganapati Muni began to revise his grand poem, *Umasahasram*. He has incorporated in the poem many new verses in the light of his own experiences.

Here are some of them :

"Siva in the form of *Taijasa Linga* (Arunachala) had retained in his throat the unbearable fire of poison. And who will become a corpse here having drunk the sweet nectar born of thy force, O Goddess".
(*Umasahasram* 5.1.16)

"Mother, for thy play of ascent and descent, the frame work of the spinal column extending from the top of the head to the base centre *muladbara* is the ground".

(*Umasahasram* 1.4.6)

"If one gets in tune with the force that descends from above through the aperture in the skull, one needs to do no other yoga".

(*Umasahasram* 1.4.8)

Naturally it took all by surprise that a person when alive should have the experience of his skull being broken. Vasishtha Muni explained the phenomenon to his intimate disciples and cited the authority of the *Taittiriya Upanishad* which talks of the breaking of the skull *vyapobhya sirsha kapale*. In a yogi when the *Kundalini Sakti* wakes up, it passes upwards through the *Sushumna* channel, breaks the skull and gets attuned with the Cosmic Energy. This was exactly what happened to Vasishtha Ganapati Muni.

After the breaking of the skull, *kapala-bheda*, the Muni could not bear the touch of the razor on his head. Similarly he could not walk bare-footed. From thence he never shaved his head and wore sandals to protect his feet.

The Muni read the revised *Umasahasram* in the Arunachaleswara Temple before the Goddess *Apitakuchamba*. And then he began a composition of seven hundred verses called *Indrani Saptasati*, paying his tribute to the *Sakti* of the all powerful God Indra, who is high above all the universe, *visvasmat uttarah*. It was then summer and the sky was cloudless, bright with sunlight. Even so, at the time of composition of the seven hundred verses, every evening there appeared in the sky flashes of lightning, indications of the unfailing presence of Indra's *Sakti*, the great *Vajra Vairochani*. To the seer-poet, steeped in *tapas* these lightning flashes were intimations of reassurance from the Supreme Goddess herself. After completing the composition, the Muni went accompanied by his wife and disciples to Padaiveedu to dedicate the work to the presiding Deity Renuka. When the composition was read by the seer-poet all those present felt that the presence of the Goddess was so palpable, it looked as though the Goddess in the idol came to life and heard it with approval.

Thus Vasishtha Muni got his fulfilment. The individual consciousness in him became universalised through the opening effected by the breaking of the skull. The portion *amsa* of God Ganapati held in his corporeal frame

pervaded everywhere. The Maharshi's grace manifested to the world through the Muni.

When the composition of *Indrani Saptasati* was going on in the Mango-tree cave, in Skandashrama, the mother of Bhagavan Maharshi shed her human body. The Maharshi was a *svatah siddha* — a spontaneously self-realised soul from the beginning and he had to make no effort for any liberation. To live on normally, a man among men in the world, after liberation, *jivan mukti*, was the meaning and message of his life. He wanted to impart liberation even to a person unprepared for such a liberation. The Maharshi tried to liberate the soul of his attendant Palaniswami before he passed away. But Palaniswami could not co-operate in the endeavour. But in the case of his mother, the Maharshi had a sense of fulfilment. With his active assistance, the soul of his mother found its liberation. The individual consciousness became universalised.

When the question of the disposal of the body of the departed one came up, it was Vasishtha Muni who decided the issue. He cited verses from *Sri Ramana Gita* to show that women had an equal right to *sanyasa* as men. Even in the case of an ordinary ochre-robed *sanyasi*, people bury the dead body and do not cremate it. Here the mother of the Maharshi had the good fortune of being actively assisted in her last journey by the Maharshi himself and she shed her mortal frame as a perfectly liberated being. Therefore it would be improper to cremate her, argued Vasishtha Muni, and saw to it that a Samadhi was erected over her mortal remains. At the foot of the hill, in the South east corner, a spot was chosen for the Samadhi. It was scorching summer and there was absolutely no sign of water in the vicinity. But when the Maharshi pointed out a place and the people dug, lo! water gushed forth in a stream and that became the sacred *tirtha* for the Samadhi. To commemorate the event, the foremost disciple of the Maharshi, the great Vasishtha Ganapati Muni sang a few verses saying,

“It was the year *Dundubbi*, the sixth day of the month Taurus, the ninth day of the dark fortnight in the spring and a Friday. In the first quarter of that night when the

sky was spangled with a hundred stars, Saundaryamba² became the Effulgence. Hailing from the clan of Bharadwaja, she was wedded to Sundara who was born in the family of Parāsaras. Spotless in character, she was the mother of Ramana Maharshi, an *amsa* of the God Guru Guha. Washing her sins by her devotion to the feet of Siva, abandoning her mental attachments, her Prana controlled by the force in the hand of Guha (Ramana), she cast away all distractions at that very moment and became liberated.

“Saundaryamba² became the Effulgence, proclaimed by the Vedas and Upanishads, the Effulgence that has pervaded all the worlds, the Effulgence that manifested through the gaze of the son, Guha (Ramana).

“Here is the new Tirtha, remover of all blemish, at the Samadhi of Mother Saundaryamba, like the stream of pollen from the two lotus hands of Ramana Maharshi.

“May the holy mother of the Maharshi shine forth! May her Samadhi shine forth! May the Lingam installed on it by the Maharshi shine forth! May the new Tirtha shine forth as the remover of all imperfection!”

About six months after, in December 1922 Maharshi came and settled down at his Mother's samadhi and Sri Ramanastamam came into being. For the son of *Sakti* that was Maharshi, the constant vivifying presence of *Sakti* was needed to give a sense of fulfilment to his mission and this was supplied by his mother in her Samadhi. The Supreme became the mother, *Matrubhuteswara*.

The importance of the concept of the Mother in the Maharshi's teachings is brought out

clearly in the following letter of June 9, 1931 written by Vasishtha Muni to the Maharshi from Anandashrama, Sirsi :

“Lord at play as man,

From here, pray, accept our salutations on these days of Mahapuja of the Mother. Kausalya gave birth to Rama, the protector of the sages, Devaki to Sri Krishna the teacher of the yoga (attunement); Renuka gave birth to the Teacher Parasutama, a life-long celibate and Mayadevi produced Buddha, the sage of the Sakyas who gave refuge to all beings. Mother Mary gave birth to the Son of God who bears the burden of sin of all devotees. Likewise, for the welfare of the world, for removal of the darkness of ignorance, for the casting away of all ill-conceived notions, for the realisation of the Truth, thy mother gave birth to thee, endowed with all these excellent qualities. To her, to Saundaryamba, the beloved wife of Sundara, our salutations. Salutations to her Samadhi and to the Lord Matrubhuteswara, installed on it. Salutations to her worshippers and salutations to the devotees of Ramana.”

The Kundalini Sakti in Vasishtha Muni became awake; it sped through the spinal channel to the top of the head, broke the skull and mingled with the universal Sakti. The mother of the Maharshi, liberated, became the Sakti and provided the *Pitba* for the Maharshi and his teachings.

The yoga of both which began as the search for the essential unity in diversity found its fulfilment in seeing the unity manifested as diversity.

(To be continued)

² Sanskrit for Alagammal, the Maharshi's mother — *Saundaryamba Nirvanastakam*.

“For the subsidence of mind there is no other means more effective and adequate than Self-enquiry. Even though by other means the mind subsides, that is only apparently so; it will rise again.”

— SRI BHAGAVAN in *Who Am I?*

Unknown Sayings of Jesus Christ

By
"Satyamayi"

THE New Testament is a collection of four narratives about Jesus Christ, three of them reporting the outer events of his life and his teachings, and the fourth, the Gospel according to St. John, presenting an altogether esoteric view of the whole. It might not be generally known that the present form of the New Testament was fixed rather late. After Jesus Christ had left this earthly stage of events, his disciples started spreading his teachings far and wide, and more and more material from outside was added to the original accounts of his life and utterances. Thus, when the Roman Church was at last established, and the authorities noticed the progressive addition of legends and tales to the originally so simple material, they decided not only to put an end to this accumulation, but even to 'purify' the material gathered up to then. This was decided and acted upon at the council of Nicaea in 325 A.D.

In this 'purifying' process, which resulted in the present text of the New Testament, there disappeared quite a lot of 'sayings' of Jesus Christ, obviously because they seemed to be of Gnostic origin — which the Roman Church considered as heretic, though there is no evidence that Jesus himself did *not* approve of Gnostic ideas, where they corresponded with his own spiritual insights.

Luckily this body of *removed* material is still available, though it is known almost exclusively to scholars.

In 1945 some peasants discovered in a ruined tomb in a cliffside near Nag Hamadi in Upper Egypt the extensive remains of an ancient Coptic library: 13 leather-bound papyrus volumes, enclosed in a number of earthen jars, making up the text of 49 works. This discovery caused a worldwide sensation



Jesus Christ

and can be compared in importance with the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

For our present purpose the most interesting fact is that among those 49 works there appears one, the recording and preservation of which is ascribed to the Apostle *Didymos Judas Thomas*. The 'Gospel according to Thomas' contains 114 'sayings of Jesus', among which are several sayings which disappeared from the New Testament in the course of the canonical 'purifying' process. These sayings were removed, apparently because they were suspect of being of Gnostic origin and therefore heretical in the opinion of the Church.

Gnosticism was a spiritual and metaphysical movement antecedent to Christianity, and it tried to combine Eastern religious ideas with Greek philosophy. 'Gnosis' is the Greek word for 'Knowledge', and the followers of this movement chose 'knowledge' — not blind faith — as the chief aim of their religious

endeavour. Of course, this 'Knowledge' did not mean mere intellectual understanding, but the esoteric *Jnana* of a true mysticism, a Knowledge that was rooted in spiritual insight, — the fruit of spiritual practice and experience —, rather than in studying and discussing scriptural arguments. During the 2nd century Gnostic influence on Christian literature was considerable, though later orthodox Catholicism got the upper hand.

The authoritative translation of this most interesting 'Gospel according to Thomas' has been produced by an international team of five Coptic and Hebrew scholars, who are specialists in Gnosticism and early Christian literature. Most of the following specimens have a strong tinge of Upanishadic Wisdom :

"These are the secret words which the Living Jesus spoke and Didymus Judas Thomas wrote :

- (1) Whoever finds the explanation of these words will not taste death.
- (2) Let him, who seeks, not cease seeking until he finds, and when he finds, he will be troubled, and when he has been troubled, he will marvel and he will reign over the All.
- (3) If those, who lead you, say to you : 'See, the Kingdom is in heaven', then the birds of the heaven will precede you. If they say to you : 'It is in the sea', then the fish will precede you. But the Kingdom is within you and it is without you. If you will know yourselves, then you will be known and you will know that you are the sons of the Living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you are in poverty and you are poverty.
- (5) Know what is in your sight, and what is hidden from you will be revealed to you. For there is nothing hidden which will not be manifest.
- (8) The Man is like a wise fisherman who cast his net into the sea, he drew it up from the sea full of small fish ; among them he found a large good fish, that wise fisherman he threw

all the small fish down into the sea, he chose the large fish without regret. Whosoever has ears to hear, let him hear."

This parable goes parallel to the well-known parable of the merchant and the pearl, which appears in the '114 Sayings' under Nr.

"(76) The Kingdom of the Father is like a man, a merchant, who possessed merchandise and found a pearl. That merchant was prudent. He sold the merchandise, he bought the one pearl for himself. Do you also seek for the treasure which fails not, which endures there where no moth comes near to devour and where no worm destroys.

(19) Blessed is he who was before he came into being.

(22) When you make the two one, and when you make the inner as the outer and the outer as the inner and the above as the below, and when you make the male and the female into a single one, so that the male will not be male and the female not be female . . . then shall you enter (the Kingdom).

(27) If you fast not from the world, you will not find the Kingdom ; if you keep not the Sabbath as Sabbath, you will not see the Father.

(42) Become passers-by.

(59) Look upon the Living One as long as you live, lest you die and seek to see Him ; and be not unable to see.

(67) Whosoever knows the All but fails to know himself, lacks everything.

(113) His disciples said to him : 'When will the Kingdom come?' Jesus said : 'It will not come by expectation ; they will not say : "See here" or "See there". But the Kingdom of the Father is spread upon the earth and men do not see it.'

After all : Why should Jesus *not* have spoken these 'Sayings', since he confirmed the great Advaitic Truth in that grand statement of his own experience : 'I and my Father are One'?

MASTER'S COMPASSION

By

P. S. Easwaran¹

SRI BHAGAVAN is the embodiment of the Supreme Awareness, a Knower of Brahman who has become Brahman. We are indeed fortunate to have seen Him and to have been chosen by Him for His service.

It was in February 1945 that I had the great good fortune of going to the Ashram and getting enveloped once and for all by the Master's Grace. I was then a student in Madras doing my Honours Course in Economics. I spent three memorable days in the Ashram and, whether I knew it or not Sri Bhagavan had graciously accepted me. I could not have understood all that was being discussed in His august presence and of course I never talked to Him. In fact, till 1948, I did not talk to Him at all! But I used to sit in front of Him in the Old Hall for long periods along with other devotees, and 'test' whether it was true that He could read men's minds. For instance, I would think that if Sri Bhagavan was able to understand my mind, He should look towards me. Instantly, His beaming face, like a search-light, would turn towards me with a twinkling of understanding.

The power of His presence to quieten an agitated mind, without even a nod or a word, was proved beyond doubt in my very first visit.

When I went to Tiruvannamalai in 1945, I did not know there was a direct bus via Tindivanam. So I went via Katpadi and Vellore by train. When I reached the Ashram, supper was just over. I placed before Sri Bhagavan two oranges which I had brought and prostrated myself before Him in the Old Hall. There was only a dim light; Adi Annamalai Sastrigal² was with Sri Bhagavan and nobody else. Sri Sastrigal asked me whether I had had my supper and when I said



no, he took me to the dining hall for food, Sri Bhagavan benignly looking at me.

¹ Introduced to our readers in our Jan. 78 issue, p. 57.

² Introduced in our Oct. 1973 issue, p. 253.

The next morning when I went to the Hall there were a few devotees sitting still. After some time I found that the incense sticks had burnt out and nobody bothered to light a few more. I approached Sri Bhagavan's couch, and took a few sticks of incense, lighted them and arranged them in the holder. Then I stepped back and sat with open eyes, as if devouring Sri Bhagavan's form through them. When I went out, a hefty attendant of Bhagavan asked me menacingly whether I could not sit quiet in the Hall when there were others to serve Sri Bhagavan. The suddenness and harshness of the accusation upset me deeply, but I ran back to Sri Bhagavan and sat in His presence; within seconds, the mind became calm and it looked as though I had nothing to do with the whole incident!

I remember another occasion when I was in His presence. Manu Subedar had added a Preface to his edition of *Jñaneswari* conveying the conversation between Saint Jñaneswar and his father. The addition was made because, when Manu Subedar was here, Bhagavan had referred to this conversation in detail and with great veneration. Sri Bhagavan had this conversation read out once in the morning. Then again when some old devotee came, Sri Bhagavan asked somebody to read this out for his benefit. The same piece was read out thus just for the sake of one devotee after another. As with fruits or sweets, a good piece of writing was to be shared by all devotees; such was his compassion.

I have had the privilege of talking to Sri Bhagavan and hearing His nectarlike words addressed to me. The chance came when somebody in the Ashram asked me whether I could write in Malayalam script. When I said yes, I was given a manuscript of the late Kravata Iyer who had passed away only some ten days earlier. I was asked to transcribe the matter in a legible hand after getting Sri Bhagavan's permission. With trepidation, I

approached Sri Bhagavan's august presence, in the Jubilee Hall, and prostrated myself before Him. He turned His gracious gaze at me inquiringly. Then in broken words, I explained to Him the job entrusted to me. He said that he was about to do it himself, and allowed me to copy the verses. I sat in front of His couch and started copying. His kindness made me bold to refer to him some doubtful passages. And I even now remember His most charming voice explaining the grammatic nuances, and asking whether I had understood Him. When I had finished copying Sri Bhagavan wanted me to read the piece aloud. By the time I came to the last stanza, I broke down with emotion before Him.

Sri Bhagavan's Grace works automatically. One experience may be cited. My brother-in-law met with a severe accident and he was in a state of coma for three days. We were in Madras and I wrote to Dr. Padmanabhan, who was then in Palghat, and was advised to write to Sri Ramanasramam and solicit Sri Bhagavan's Grace. I did so, and we got a reply assuring us of Sri Bhagavan's blessings. My brother-in-law recovered and he is still hale and healthy!

I can never forget my last meeting with the Master. It was in September 1949. In spite of the physical malady, His face was radiant. I prostrated myself before Him, asking mentally His permission to go to Calcutta. Sri Bhagavan opened His eyes wide, and smiled, and gave His consent with a nod of His head.

I have experienced Sri Bhagavan's unfailing grace in my material life even after His shedding His body. In fact, I was warned in 1968 by a friendly astrologer that I would go through very bad times, but Bhagavan's grace has so protected me that my astrologer friend now swears that he would never henceforth touch my horoscope!

“ Knowledge of the Self, which knows all, is Knowledge in perfection.”

—SRI RAMANA in *Self-Enquiry*

The Enlightenment of Buddha Sakyamuni

By

Lama Anagarika Govinda

PART II

ALL great truths were originally matters of experience, in which feeling and inner knowledge were combined; they were not discovered by the negative methods of deduction, abstraction or subtraction. They were found by the positive process of concentration and integration in contemplative activity in which the whole man was engaged and not only the brain or the counting, dividing, calculating, measuring and generalizing intellect. They were neither mathematical nor philosophical notions, and only if we can convert them again into something that can be felt and known directly and spontaneously, like heat or cold or like love and hatred — in other words, only if we can dissolve them again into the stream of life — only then do they become our philosophy. A real philosopher, in Lin Yutang's words, "is a man who holds his sensibilities at the highest point of focus and watches the flux of life ready to be forever surprised by newer and stranger paradoxes, inconsistencies and inexplicable exceptions to the rule."

Conceptual or intellectual knowledge only serves to rationalize our prejudices. The wise one has no prejudices. In other words: the wise one is not he who knows much, but he who is free from prejudice — even though he may know little. A mind free from prejudice is a mind free from the bondage of habitual thinking, a mind which refuses to move along the channels of habit and convention, i.e. an open and spontaneous mind: open to the outer world — in accepting it as it is (*yaibābbūtam*) — and open to the inner vision and the voice of intuition, by which our various experiences are welded together into an organic unity.

Ignorance (*avidyā*) in the Buddhist sense — and this is important to note — is not the

absence of factual knowledge (and can, therefore, never be rendered as "stupidity"), but the wrong interpretation of facts or impressions (to which the highly intellectual are as prone as the unsophisticated peasant is). Complete absence of knowledge is not ignorance, but either a state of unconsciousness or lack of awareness. The most dangerous state of ignorance is half-knowledge, i.e., one-sided and therefore biased knowledge, which only creates or supports our prejudices and prevents us from seeing things in their true relationship.

"The human desire to see only one phase of truth which we happen to perceive, and to develop and elevate it into a perfect logical system, is one reason why our philosophy is bound to grow stranger to life. He who talks about truth injures it thereby; he who tries to prove it thereby maims and destroys it; he who gives it a label and a school of thought kills it; and he who declares himself a believer buries it." (Lin Yutang *The Importance of Living*, p. 490).

This is why the Buddha preferred silence to words, whenever there was a question concerning ultimate things, whenever there was a problem which went beyond the direct experience of life. This was why he warned his followers of the danger of clinging to any extremes in life or in views (i.e. to any partial aspect of reality or truth), and why the Middle Way, which he taught, is not based on the acceptance of an article of faith or the formulation of a philosophical theory or any other dogma, but on the impartial and unprejudiced recognition of the facts of life, as experienced

¹The first part of this article appeared in our January, '78 issue, p. 17

by every human being. Each of the eight stages of this way of deliverance (generally known as the Eightfold Path : Skt. : *aṣṭāṅgika-mārga* ; Tib. : *lam-brgyad*) is prefixed with the word *samyak* (Pali : *sammā* ; Tib. : *yang-dag*), which has generally been translated as "right", so that the first step would be called "right views" (Skt. : *samyag dr̥ṣṭi*). But what is the criterion of "right" or "wrong" ?

Most religions would say, "right" is, what agrees with the teachings or revelations of their scriptures ; and consequently "wrong" is, what contradicts them. The Buddha is not concerned with revelations, however old and acceptable they may be, as long as they cannot be verified by the experience of each single individual. He asks the people to face the facts of life and to examine them carefully and impartially, i.e., to see them not only from one side or one point of view, or arbitrarily picking out partial aspects, but seeing them in their totality, in their completeness. This is exactly what the word *samyak* expresses. It has nothing to do with the opinions of "right" and "wrong", but signifies perfection, completeness, in contrast to something that is partial or one-sided. The epithet *Samyak-sambuddha* means a "completely" "fully" or "perfectly Enlightened One", but not a "rightly" Enlightened One.

Samyag dr̥ṣṭi, therefore, means more than what is commonly called "right views" or the agreement with a certain set of established ideas. It means a perfectly open mind, free from arbitrary opinions (an attitude that is not dependent on learning or factual knowledge and conventional education), which enables us to see things as they are and not as we want them to be. Thus, instead of closing our eyes to what is unpleasant and painful, we should face the fact of suffering, which the Buddha calls the First Noble Truth. By facing it, we discover the causes of suffering and with it the second Noble Truth, namely, that the causes of suffering are within ourselves and that it is up to us to overcome them. This leads us to the third Noble Truth, the recognition of the supreme aim of liberation, and

finally to the fourth Noble Truth, which consists in the way towards the realization of this aim : the Noble Eightfold Path (*ārya aṣṭāṅgika mārga*).

(1) The first step on the Eightfold Path, therefore, is the perfect understanding of and clear insight (*samyag dr̥ṣṭi*) into these Four Noble Truths, which means that they should not only be accepted intellectually, but consciously experienced. Even if in the beginning the full significance of the Four Noble Truths cannot be realized in its entire depth and universality (because suffering means far more than our personal pains and disappointments, and liberation means more than our personal happiness), yet the fact of suffering and its immediate causes are so obviously demonstrated in every phase of life, that the mere observation and analysis of one's own experience is sufficient to convince any thinking man of the truth of the Buddha's statements.

Out of this conviction grows naturally the second step :

(2) perfect aspiration (*samyak samkalpa*), namely a mental attitude aiming at the elimination of the immediate causes of suffering, like greed and hatred, by cultivating their opposites, namely selflessness and loving kindness, liberality and compassion, with a view to attaining final liberation and (according to the ideal of Mahayana) perfect enlightenment.

This attitude gives rise to the next three steps, namely :

(3) perfect speech (*samyak vāk*), speech that is truthful and kind, that creates unity and not dissension, that is meaningful and to the point ;

(4) perfect action (*samyak karmānta*) : in harmony with our mental attitude, i.e. based on love and compassion, on consideration of others ;

(5) perfect livelihood (*samyag ājīva*), that benefits not only ourselves, but others as well (avoiding trades and professions which are harmful to others and to our own spiritual progress).

(6) The sixth step on the Path consists in the full employment of all our forces towards the attainment of our aim in the form of a four-fold effort, namely, in overcoming all negative factors of our mind, in preventing such factors arising, in producing instead all such qualities that bring us nearer to our aim, and to cultivate all positive qualities of our mind, that have already arisen. This is called the perfect effort (*samyag vyâyâma*), in which the whole human personality is engaged and leads to the seventh step :

(7) perfect mindfulness (*samyak smṛti*) with regard to the body and its functions (in which especially the subtle functions of breathing — the meeting-place of physical and spiritual processes, vital energies and psychic forces — are raised into conscious awareness), mindfulness with regard to feelings and emotions, as well as to thoughts and phenomena concerning both the inner as well as the outer world.

(8) The eighth step consists in perfect concentration or absorption (*samyak samâdhi*), i.e., complete inner unification, in which the tension between subject and object is eliminated in favour of a fully integrated consciousness. Here man becomes "whole", "holy" in the true sense of the word, and the cause of suffering, consisting in the illusion of egohood, on account of which the world is torn asunder into the two opposing principles of "I-ness" and "other-ness" is annihilated. Thus man regains the harmony and universality of consciousness, in which the break is healed, the balance restored and supreme happiness is gained.

This experience may first be attained in momentary flashes or during brief spells of *samâdhi*-experience, but even then the gain is immense, as this will now form the basis of a new and deeper realization of the first step and consequently of all the following stages of the holy path, which is now traversed on a higher level, and this is repeated in ever ascending spirals until permanent liberation and perfect illumination are attained.

The Noble Eightfold Path is based on three partly overlapping principles: the principle

of knowledge, morality and concentration. Perfect views and perfect aspirations are based on the principle of knowledge, the faculty of understanding; perfect speech, action and livelihood represent the ethical principle. Perfect effort, attentiveness and *samâdhi* (inner absorption or unification) are based on the principle of concentration. It is characteristic of Buddhism that it puts understanding, the principle of knowledge, before morality and thus makes it clear that the latter is more than conformity to rules and customs, but is based on our convictions. It is the agreement between our understanding and our conduct. Only when our convictions and our actions are in harmony, can we succeed in achieving full concentration and inner unification.

Thus we may summarize the meaning of the three principles: Understanding is the harmony between our mind and the laws of reality. Morality is the harmony between our convictions and our actions. Concentration (*samâdhi*) is the harmony between the faculties of knowing, feeling and willing, the harmonious co-operation of all our creative faculties, leading to the experience of a higher reality.

'There is nothing in this Path that could not be accepted by every single human being and by every religion. In the Buddha's teaching there is no 'thou shalt' or 'thou shalt not', but 'come and see', and if you have seen and convinced yourself of the facts of reality, act accordingly and take upon yourself the consequences of your actions.'

According to the Law of Dependent Origination (the famous *pratītyasamutpāda*, through which the Buddha freed man from the fear of and the dependence upon the powers of gods and demons) man is the maker — as well as the unmaker — of his own fate. This is the law of action and reaction, known as Karma. As long as man has not sufficient insight into the nature of life, and especially into his own nature, he will act foolishly and suffer from the results of his actions. But this suffering is not a humiliating punishment, but the natural effect of his thoughts and actions, which will teach him more than the command-

ments imposed upon him by an external authority.

Thus suffering itself becomes the great teacher (as Guru Gampopa, the disciple of Milarepa, says in his *Golden Rosary*), because suffering forces us to look inwards and to discover the reason for our disharmony. It is the ignorance (*avidyā*) of our own true nature, due to which we see world and life under a wrong perspective, namely from the egocentric point of view of selfish desires. It is like looking through the wrong end of a telescope, by which everything recedes further away from us and shrinks into insignificance.

The illusion of ego-hood creates active, but self-limiting, form-tendencies (*samskāra*) which perpetuate individual limitations and characteristics, like the germ of a seed that is not only the product or sum total of a complete cycle of individual life, but the force or vital energy which preserves and recreates the forms that have been consolidated through repeated actions or functions of preceding life-cycles. The tendencies of the survival of form are amply demonstrated in all organic life, but they become intensified in self-conscious individuals, in which the form-preserving tendencies of organic life are transformed into the directive forces of conscious will, acting under the influence of a widening field of perception and experience, in which suffering has the function of a regulating principle, like the balance in a watch, that checks the accumulated force from spending itself in an unrestricted rush of energy or in a wrong direction.

However, this conscious will is a double-edged sword: under the illusion of our little separate ego and its petty desires, it cuts us off from the roots of that greater consciousness and from the stream of universal life, which alone can give meaning to our momentary existence, while under a growing insight and recognition of the universal foundations and relations of our being, it may free us from our self-created limitations by cutting down the fences (and defences) we have erected around us.

It is from this point of view that we have to understand the Buddha's formula of Depend-

ent Origination which says that the tendencies of our character, the karmic form-energies, created by our volition (*samskāra*) in dependence of ignorance (*avidyā*) will produce ever and ever again a (rebirth) conscious (*vijnāna*), which creates a psycho-physical organism (*nāma-rūpa*) that makes its sense-organs (*śaḍāyatana*) through contact (*sparsa*) with their corresponding objects and the resulting feelings (*vedanā*) into instruments of craving (*iṣṇā*, literally "thirst") after the things of this world. If this craving is satisfied, it results in clinging (*upādāna*) to the objects of satisfaction. Desire sows and clinging develops the seeds which lead to a new process of becoming (*bhava*) and towards a future form of existence, corresponding to the present level of individual development. Thus the cycle of birth and death is repeated until suffering leads to a reversal of our will through the recognition of the causes of suffering and the discovery of an aim that is greater and worthier than the maintenance of our ephemeral form of existence, an aim that alone can justify the aeons of our wanderings through birth and death: the final realization of universality in the experience of enlightenment.

The Buddha's enlightenment was the birth-hour of Buddhism. The aim of the Buddha's teaching, therefore, is not an abstract idea or an imagined paradise, nor a philosophical theory, but an experience, and it was this experience that gave Buddhism its name and determined the whole course of its history and its spiritual development. To understand Buddhism we have to view it under the aspect of this experience which represents both its starting-point and its aim. It is from this aspect alone that we can assess correctly the meaning of Buddhist terminology. Even such a simple concept as that of suffering (*duḥkha*) cannot be understood from a merely physical or psychological point of view, nor has it anything to do with philosophical pessimism — as early explorers of Buddhism were inclined to believe — but it has to be seen against the background of the Buddha's realization of the immense potentialities of the human mind, compared to which the average human life

and its paltry enjoyments were to be regarded as suffering, privation, as symptoms of a disease, of spiritual blindness, due to which human beings are not aware of the light that is ever present.

Enlightenment consists in the removal of hindrances that obstruct the light. And as this light exists everywhere, it cannot be created but only revealed. The Buddha therefore did not try to explain or to define the light, but to open the eyes of the people. "There are

people whose eyes are only slightly covered with dust", he said, "they will understand the truth."

The light is universal, but everybody must see with his own eyes. Buddhism, therefore, is a way to enlightenment, which is both universal and individual, and thus able to satisfy the needs of man in the present as in the past and to extend its willing co-operation to all other religions which are striving for the creation of a better world and a happier humanity.

GLIMPSE OF GLORY

By
'IRA'

"Turn to Me, Oh chosen one,
And cast your gaze upon me,
Incline your ear to my voice,
Direct your thought to my Being.

"And just as a man holding a precious jewel
Will drop it unmindfully into the sea
If something astounding should appear
Suddenly before him,
So will you drop body and soul
Back into the Sea of Spirit from which
they came
At catching even a glimpse of My glory."

In this way thou hast spoken, Lord,
While assuming in the Space of Mind
The shape of a celestial Mountain of Light,
Only to capture me utterly
With the grace of thy beauty.

But thou hast made a fool of me,
Oh my Lord of Silence.
And thou Daughter of the Mountain,
Thou Devi of the three worlds,

Hast made of me a wastrel before men.
For my Queen of Beauty,
I have cast away everything of "mine"
however precious

Just because I caught a glimpse of Thee
And I could think of nothing else.

And thou, Sadā-Siva,
My Lord of the Valley, hast compelled me
To speak and sing thy glory!
Just as a tiny, twirling leaf
Is compelled ever helplessly
By a powerful wind to whisper,
So my soul's tongue will flutter
In the cool breeze of thy grace,
And will not be stilled.

And what else, I ask, than foolishness
May come from the mouth
Of one who tries to speak of Thee,
Thou Guhesvara,
Thou, the Lord teaching silently
In the depths of the Heart Cavern!

ON DEATH

By

Wolter A. Keers

WHAT is there to die? The problem of death can arise only after you imagine yourself a somebody, and, having imposed such absurd limitations upon yourself, you see life in corresponding mini-dimensions. You begin to imagine that life begins with your skin, and that most of the things outside of it are dead. The air around you is supposed to be dead, until it circulates through the blood inside the skin and has become part of the body: then that very same air has become 'you'. Isn't that odd?

As long as you fancy yourself to be a thing, a concept, an image called the personality, naturally this 'you' has many beginnings and many ends. It lasts only a few seconds at a time, even though your concept itself tells you that it lasts twenty or sixty or ninety-eight years.

There is only one life. To project divisions in it and to call a number of the segments thus created 'I' is an absurdity.

When you examine your own experience, you find that you are there, as presence, as Experience, before the alarm clock rings in the morning. It is only when it rings, that a world arises in the Presence that you are. Part of that world is the feeling or the thought "I am so-and-so".

The moment you see this very clearly, and the moment you take note of the fact that the image "I-am-so-and-so" is part of what arises in the Living Presence that you are, death becomes an absurdity.

As object, as creation or part of it, you are born hundreds of times every minute, and you die just as often.

As the one, unbroken Presence that you are, you are timeless, and the 'raw material' out

of which the world creates itself again and again and again.

To the free one there is no death.

What appears through the peep-hole of thought as death is something quite different to the free one. He knows that he is a vast empty space of consciousness without images. This emptiness fills itself with image after image, never two at a time. The one must leave before the next one can take its place. That is all, the whole of existence. There is nothing else. If one cares to call the constant appearance of images their birth, and their equally constant disappearance 'death' . . . why not? But in that case, heaven forbid that there were to be no death! Just imagine: the same unchanging image, aeon after aeon. If there were no death, we should have to invent it, because without it life would be unbearable boredom.

As long as you are pasted against thought and feeling and sensory perception, there will remain a conviction in you that creation is permanent, and the body is permanent, more or less, and a character or a personality is something that gradually grows and that subsists for years. As long as you are fascinated by images and I-feelings, you pump energy into them, and this keeps the illusion going that there is a world outside of you (not merely outside of the body, but outside of you) which gives you experience. The moment this flirting with thoughts and I-feelings ceases, you discover that thought creates itself from second to second, and that the world is nothing but thought. We perceive only what appears as thought, in consciousness, and the story that the sense-organs tell us is a thought-story, a dream, creating itself from moment to moment. And you will easily see that it is not thought that gives you experiences, but

that you yourself are the one, undivided and unlimited experience that makes the rise and fall, birth and death of thought possible.

Understanding "death" means the end of personality. That means that you as an embodied being, and you the listener and you the thinker and you the visitor and another army of you's have disappeared, and there was only the listening without a listener, the understanding without a somebody projected into it. This entire army of You's was dead. There was only the Impersonal that you are. And that is what the word 'understanding' really means.

An authentic reply is not a reply to a question, but it is an answer that takes you to the position from where the question reveals itself as superfluous and disappears. When the questions disappear, so does the seeker. And a seeker who stops his search reveals himself as the sought.

During an activity or during a thought or a feeling, or in between, there is no I-feeling, no I-thought, no image of a man with hundreds of characteristics. This man is absent most of the time,

and this is true for very many people. Only those who go through periods of neurosis or psychosis are so pre-occupied with this image that it tends to become stronger and stronger. They feel themselves completely wrapped up in this kind of image, and they feel that they must defend it with all their might. But from the moment you discover that you are not a bag full of ever changing images, you lose the need to defend them. Who wants to spend his days defending a mere fantasy... a dreamed-up image that has no basis whatsoever?

Whatever ignorance disappeared from the person who believed he inhabited this body comes from meeting the embodiment of truth at several points in my life. If I may call it 'receiving', I can only say that whatever I understand now is entirely due to my good fortune in meeting the right person at the right time, and I received all of it completely free. I never had to pay a penny. The authentic teaching is always free, barring in one way: you pay for it with the death of your personality, which implies that you must be prepared to give up everything you have ever considered as yourself.

RETURNING PILGRIMS

By
'Kanji'

Your fears have been on a long pilgrimage
back to their source,
now they are knocking at your door again.
You are the keeper of this *dharmasala*,
do you not remember turning them out
so hastily that winter's night?
Now they've come back to Kasi
to be dissolved;

Don't send them away with the curses
of the sweeper ringing over their heads!
Open your doors fearlessly,
that is what they want, lodging for one night;
then, as the sun breaks through the bel tree,
they are gone away forever, down to the ghats
absorbed
by the everflowing Ganga!

THE CROWNING EVENT OF LIFE IS DEATH

By

B. G. Vellal

KNOWING very well that every living being has to quit this world some time or other and perhaps without any warning that nothing can prevent it and that one will never again meet one's relatives and friends, one's attachment to them and other possessions, is quite irrational and unjustified. Such meaningless attachments coupled with unsatisfied desires make one cling to life and resist the oncoming death though nothing can prevent it. They trouble man at the time of death, make him so restless, insane and afraid that he fails to recognise the serene, pure awareness of his true, ever-existing Self. He would enjoy the experience of death had he prepared himself for it. Death after all means nothing more than discarding the worn-out fleshy garment. In his confused state he forgets the existence of the 'Real Self' within who never dies. Holding fast to the ephemeral body, mind and intellect, he deprives himself of the excellent opportunity of merging into the true state which is Eternal, Supreme and Immutable. Earthly attachments offer momentary pleasures but they certainly lead one to grief in the long run. So, know who is your *number one* enemy and deal with him accordingly.

One would certainly sympathize with such a restless and lost person but should one do so? Should not a man boasting all the time of his infallible wisdom, skill and tact in solving problems, reflect on such a vital, imminent and unavoidable event of life? Should he not have prepared himself for this coming event? Is it possible for anyone to bring back to life a dead man and bestow eternal peace on him?

Unwilling to part with relatives and mundane possessions, a person suffers great agony during his last moments. Such attachments

make him return to this unreal life again and again until he learns to die peacefully free of thoughts, agitations and cravings. On the other hand, one who has trained oneself to abide naturally as the Supreme, Blissful Reality of one's own Self, is bound to merge in Brahman at the time of death. Such a liberated soul will never again return to individual existence.

Arthur Osborne was a very devoted disciple of Bhagavan Sri Ramana. With his last breath he merely said: "Thank you!", to take leave of his devoted wife who was sitting near him, tranquil and unperturbed. Such a peaceful departure, to get dissolved in Brahman occurs only as a result of one-pointed spiritual sadhana at the feet of one's *Satguru*. One should aim at developing such thorough spiritual understanding, equipoise and tranquillity, although living in the midst of human problems. Blessed indeed are both Sri Arthur Osborne and his wife. This incident provides a good example of how one should meet one's own death or witness that of another.

Last minute, haphazard effort will not rid the mind of accumulated thoughts, passions and impressions. A continued effort over a number of years alone can destroy the heap of rubbish in our mind and bring about a spiritual outlook. The only sensible way of life is to train the mind to dwell in the reality of our Self, one with the Supreme.

The only satisfactory solution to our most burning and bewildering problems is practising an effective spiritual sadhana. *Sobam Dhyana Yoga* is one such spiritual discipline. The devout follower will, in course of time, see the old desires and impressions slowly losing their grip on him and a beneficent

attitude developing within him. When the sadhaka makes sufficient progress, sadhana culminates in the spontaneous "*Abam Sphurana*", the glow of the real 'I'. The divine humming heard internally is indeed the voice of the Supreme within us. Man then understands the hollowness of the manifest world and the drama that takes place in it. Then one could act perfectly the part allotted to one on its stage, being oneself the fundamental Reality, the Ground behind it, just as Sri Rama played his part as instructed by his preceptor, the Sage Vasishtha. On awakening to his real nature, the seeker is absolutely unperturbed under any circumstance of life. All the old distracting tendencies of the mind vanish. He remains unruffled, peaceful and blissful.

Since acquiring such a state means, in most cases, prolonged consistent effort, it naturally follows that a seeker should commence the spiritual quest as early in life as possible. Visions of Gods or Saints and perception of effulgent light or hearing of *Nada* are not to be mistaken for Self-realisation.

Sri Gajanan Maharaj says : "The one Eternal Reality on which visions and sounds play and move about is none other than our own Self. That is Self-realisation, *Atmasakshatkara*. To be one with the everlasting Being is *Sakshatkara*". We never know when death will visit us but if we are prepared, the visit will be most welcome. In this spiritual quest every available moment is precious and has therefore to be utilised diligently. A seeker will not be justified in putting the blame on others if he neglects his own effort.

A most eminent and powerful spiritual giant, Sri Gorakshanath says : "Dear One, approach a *Satguru*, for without his guidance spiritual enlightenment is impossible". With complete surrender follow earnestly the path shown by him to ensure natural effortless abidance as the Self. One has to be alert till the end. Only then one can be sure of one's separate entity getting dissolved in the All-Pervading, Immutable Self.

If one prepares for it, Death will be a most welcome blessing, the crowning event of one's life !

silent reflection

bleak . . .
 . . . borne in imageless sound :
 though what may one find
 but Silence
 . . . in tune with the Infinite.

when the White Light
 comes near the face,
 one may know only the Rapture,
 not the Space.

. . . the mind cannot
 really know itself ;
 — only of what it contains.
 . . . it has no other function
 than reflecting reflections.

Be Still . . .
 to know the nonsense.
 Reflect . . .
 the Silence.

By
Ka Kavana

Dialogues with Mr. Wu

By
Wei Wu Wei

NEITHER . . . NOR . . .

Are you happy, Mr. Wu ?

Indeed No, Madame.

Are you, then, unhappy, Mr. Wu ?

Indeed No, Madame.

How can that be, Mr. Wu ?

That cannot not be, Madame.

Why cannot that not be, Mr. Wu ?

Because I AM what both Are, Madame.

And what may that be, Mr. Wu ?

They both ARE, Madame, what neither IS.

Then what are you, Mr. Wu ?

I am not what suffers, Madame,

I Am what 'suffering' IS.

I am not what is happy, Madame,

I Am what 'happiness' IS.

* * *

II

Good morning, Mr. Wu !

Good morning, Madame !

What are you doing, Mr. Wu ?

Being what I AM, Madame.

And what may that be, Mr. Wu ?

Just being, Madame.

How do you do that, Mr. Wu ?

*Madame, only a 'me' can 'do',
and I alone can BE.*

* * *

OBVIOUS

Good afternoon, Mr. Wu !

Good afternoon, Madame !

May I ask you a question, Mr. Wu ?

Yes indeed, Madame.

What are you, Mr. Wu ?

I am what you are, Madame.

And what may that be, Mr. Wu ?

What every sentient-being IS, Madame.

What, then, is every sentient-being, Mr. Wu ?

*Every sentient-being is 'What-I-AM',
Madame.*

But what is that, Mr. Wu ?

*What could that be, Madame,
but the absence of all presence ?*

The Vedanta as the Cosmic Religion

By

Rev. Anthony Elenjmittam

THE religions based on external authority are fading away, while those based on experience are coming to the fore. The decline of churches in the West and their displacement by Buddhist psychology and Vedantic metaphysics is a clear indication that religions are fast becoming more a matter of inner transformation than belief in creeds and dogmas.

The present writer is one who firmly believes that mankind is not rushing towards its doomsday, but is step by step marching forward in quest of more light and life abundant, utilising modern scientific technology to understand man as a ray of the Eternal, and not merely as a biological entity evolved from mammals, nor even as a being created by God on the sixth day of creation.

The future is for those who take their stand on self-awareness, on consciousness. Thoughts are powerful agents for effecting the metamorphosis of man. Thoughts are things, far more real than the physical objects like tables and chairs, dogs, cats and men and women. Objects are outer shells, while consciousness is the inner kernel of all beings. Why? Because the only All-pervading Reality is Consciousness, while the names and forms superimposed on this ocean of consciousness are evanescent. They are like the waves, ripples and foam on the sea, where the ocean is the only reality.

Indian seers have not drawn their inspiration from external scriptures. All that is best and great in our cultural heritage, the *Upanishads*, the *Brahma Sutras*, the *Bhagavad Gita*—the *Prastana Traya*—all that is perennial in the entire Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism, all could be traced back to the study, analysis and synthesis of consciousness in its unlimited variety, and yet in its one fundamental unity.

Consciousness, beyond the three-fold states of waking, dreaming and sound sleep, is *Turiya*, the Purusha, the *Ens per se*, *Ding-in-sich* of Kant. Purusha is pure unalloyed Being, the ground of all becoming. Purusha is Shiva. Yet the Shiva dance begins only when the Purusha is acted on by Prakriti, and Purusha, identifying with Prakriti in utter self-forgetfulness, dances to the tunes of Prakriti, the primordial matter, which, although pure potentially, contains germinally all possible forms of existence through the activities of *Satva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. Purusha as pure Shiva is ever still as Awareness on Mount Kailas. But Purusha as Shiva Nataraja is the dance of creation, whence is born the Mahat, the Hiranagarbha. The breathing in of creation into the bosom of the eternal is the involution, while the breathing out of creation is the evolution of the cosmos in myriad forms.

Knowledge is essential for emancipation and enlightenment. Mere acts of benevolence and charity without self-knowledge is not the last word in human redemption. Shankara of Hinduism, Nagarjuna of Buddhism and St. Thomas Aquinas, of Catholicism are at one in proclaiming that *gnosis* or *Jnana* is essential for enlightenment or emancipation or the second birth. Says Shankara in his famous *Bhaja Govindam* :

“One may make pilgrimage to Gangasagar, or one may keep all vows or distribute his riches in charity. But without knowledge, with all these, one does not reach emancipation even after a hundred births.”

Shiva in Mount Kailas is quiescent, absorbed deeply in meditation, he is one with the One that is without a second, *ekamevadvityam*. But Shiva in the presence of Parvati, i.e. creation, dances, because there is duality; Shiva

dances in the presence of Parvati, the symbol of Cosmic Love, Bhakti. Shiva as both the Nataraja and the Destroyer belongs to the region of *Saguna Brahma*, while the *Nirguna Brahma* — the Absolute — is pure Atman, Consciousness unalloyed, unrelated to Prakriti and creation. The Absolute is *Satchidananda* in its metaphysical essence, as it is also *Shantbam*, *Shivam*, *Sundaram* in its psychological essence. A part of that Infinity lent to Prakriti and Creation is enough to produce innumerable worlds and myriads of solar systems and galaxies from the bosom of the Infinite. In fact, the objectification of the Seer is creation, while subjectification of the universe is emancipation. The reality is one without a second, and this Supreme Reality when seen through the five senses is the universe, when glimpsed at by the mind and intellect is thought, idea, consciousness, and when realised in one's life is pure Atman, the Oversoul, the Self of all selves, the Being behind all becomings, the Eternally enduring behind the evanescent flow of events and things.

The Vedanta as lived and taught by Veda Vyasa, Yajnavalkya, Shankara, and in our own days by Ramakrishna and Ramana Maharshi, is the Religion underlying all religions. The Vedanta gives us the common denominator and basis for all historical religions to meet and learn from each other and grow into the Universal Man. In fact, I have learned from my own experience that even Christianity is unintelligible without the East and without Vedanta. Jesus, like all the greatest religious prophets, was an Asian. But this Asia, or Vedantic India, does not mean a geographical frontier, but a spirit, an attitude, a cultural heritage and an outlook on life which is far deeper than the scientific, rational outlook of the West. The great religions of the East sprang from the cosmic consciousness, of which the Everest Peak is the Vedanta, the pure Advaita as was lived and taught by Ramana Maharshi of Tiruvannamalai. This golden thread can

unify and intensify what is lasting in the cultural and religious values of both the East and the West. What is more, a realizational knowledge of the Vedanta means that *gnosis*, *jnana*, which counteracts, outweighs and displaces lust, greed and egoism, the arch-enemies of spiritual advancement. Merely praying without effort to vanquish the lower self through knowledge and discipline will not bring us any nearer to the goal. The heritage of Adam and Eve could not be displaced and completely dislodged without that minimum of self-inquiry and self-control which gives us the true picture of ourselves at various levels and enables us to glimpse that golden Self that hides behind the five sheaths, the physical, vital, mental, intellectual and the blissful sheaths around the Self.

The modern universal unrest, the frustration of the youth, the collapse of organised authoritarian religions, are all the birth pangs of a new humanity that is emerging from the ruins of the old. Science and technology have contributed their share in building Man the Universal, as also the democratic forces all over the world, the basic freedom of man to inquire and search and find his way towards the attainment of Inner Peace, Poise and Power. What else is religion for the masses and philosophy for the few but this acquisition of inward peace amidst the turmoils of life, this invincible power and benign tranquillity born of the communion of the soul with the Oversoul, of the Jivatma with the Paramatma? The signs of these apocalyptic times presage that the Advaita Vedanta, Buddhist Ethics and psychology, Christian Mysticism, Sufi Islam and allied movements like Neo-Platonism, Pythagoreanism and Zen Buddhism are the seeds and sprouts of a new Cosmic Religion based on Self-Knowledge and Self-realization, based on the *Noverim Me, Noverim Te*—"May I know myself and may I know Thyself" of St. Augustine, the *Atmanam Viddhi*—the Upanishadic "Know Thy Self", and the Socratic *Gnothi Seauton*—"Know thy own self."

How I Came to Bhagavan

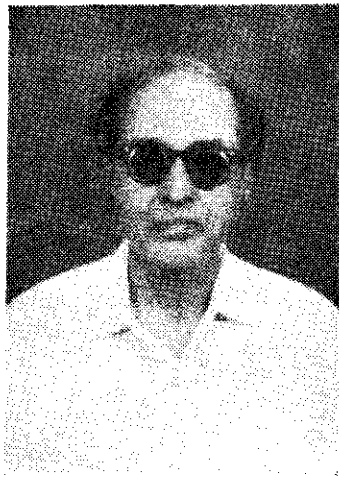
By

R. Rajagopalan

I AM a person of very little consequence, a mere non-entity. As the only son of my parents, I had a pampered childhood, which gave me a puffed-up idea of my worth. Yet, from my childhood, my faith in God has been strong. My grandfather had taught me to respect all sannyasis saying, "Bow to the ochre robe".

While in college at Trichinopoly, a friend mentioned the name of Ramana Maharshi. After graduation in 1928, I entered Government Service and happened to tour in Tiruvannamalai. It was my good fortune that the brother of a friend was a teacher in the local High School, and one afternoon he took me to the modest ashram and to the presence of the Maharshi, who was not different from any other *Aandi*!¹ I was so ignorant that I had to be prompted by my guide to prostrate myself before Sri Ramana.

For nearly a decade I had no further contact with the Sage. In 1938, my very close



R. Rajagopalan

friend, Dr. N. Kuppuswami Sarma (an obituary note on whom appeared in the January, 1977 issue of *The Mountain Path*) enlightened me about the "Who am I" teaching of Bhagavan. Chance provided me with a copy of Sri B. V. Narasimha Swami's biography of Bhagavan. Occasionally my wife's cousin used to talk to me about Sri Ramana. An incident in his family contributed to strengthening my faith. His last daughter was laid up for several years with a chronic ailment. In desperation, he wrote to his friend in the ashram, Sri M. V. Ramaswami Iyer (father of Smt. Lalita Venkataraman, the well known Vina artist) to solicit Bhagavan's grace. The same night his daughter astounded him by waking him up at midnight, saying that an old man had enabled her to walk and she had no more to be carried to her bed. From that moment

¹ Mendicant clad in loin cloth.

there was a turn for the better and the lady has been leading a healthy family life all these years.

By this time my mind was effectively turned towards the Maharshi and, in 1938, I made a trip to Tiruvannamalai with my eyes open. The journey in a bullock cart from the Railway Station to the ashram was filled with anxiety and eagerness for the *darshan*. On arrival I was told that Bhagavan was having his breakfast. Unaware of proprieties, I went directly to the dining hall and stood before him, when someone told me nicely to go out and wait for him in the Hall.

A few months after my visit to Tiruvannamalai, I got quite an unexpected offer of a job from Delhi and my joy was so great that I posted a card thanking Bhagavan for his Grace. My joy was great when a letter signed

by Sri Niranjanananda Swami informed me that my card was *seen* by Bhagavan!

Between 1939 and 1950, whenever I visited the South I took a day off to go to the ashram and have his *darshan*.

On three occasions, chance placed me very favourably in the close presence of Bhagavan, once when he was seated on the terrace of Matrubhuteswara Temple which was under construction; the second time when he was fondling an ashram cow in the backyard; the third, alone with him for a few minutes, when he was about to leave the Hall after all the devotees had left for the dining hall. On the last occasion, his gaze was full on me.

I feel blessed that I came in contact with a living Saint. I fully realize that a real sage "does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom 'but' leads you to the threshold of your own mind".

THE JOURNEY WITHIN

By

A. K. Devaraj

THE greatest obstacle to learning any subject is the conviction that one knows all about the subject. Thus if one wishes to learn Economics or Computer Programming one must first realise that one knows nothing of Economics/Computer Programming. And this is precisely the greatest stumbling block in the path of Self-enquiry. For if one is asked "Who are you?" one's natural response would be "Why, don't you know I am Raman son of Krishnan, Occupying the post of Director, ——— possessing a bungalow, car etc.?"

"Yes; but these are your adjuncts; who are you apart from these adjuncts?" Perhaps for the first time his attention is now directed inward and he may realise that he does not know himself. The enquiry "Who am I?"

really begins at this stage; it is no more a mere academic question. It becomes a real puzzling mystery. Now the seeker cannot rest until the goal is reached, just as a moth cannot rest till it is consumed by the fire, once sighted. This does not mean the path is easy or straight, especially for most of us, who are neither completely steeped in materialism nor liberated. However, regular practice of the enquiry "Who am I?" supported by reading the "Talks"¹ will yield the final answer.

Whatever be the language of the question one can answer only in the language one knows. The Self when asked "Who am I?" answers in the only language it knows, namely, SILENCE.

¹ *Talks with Ramana Maharshi*, a publication of Sri Ramanasramam.

STEPPING STONES

By
Judy?

MANY of us did not have the good fortune of knowing Bhagavan during His lifetime, yet have taken Him as our Guru. If we are sincere seekers and mature enough, we may turn to Bhagavan and read and ponder over His words of wisdom, and He, the Sat-Guru within (nearer than breathing, closer than hands or feet), will guide us. Or having decided on the mode of sadhana most suitable for us, we may avail ourselves of the help and guidance of elder seekers who have gone further ahead on the path.

Sri Sankara lays down the following qualifications for the enquiry into the Self :

1. Discrimination between the real and the unreal.
2. Not aspiring for the fruits of one's actions either in this or any further life.
3. The six virtues of tranquillity, self-control, withdrawal, forbearance, faith, and concentration on the Self.
4. Intense yearning for Liberation.

Kaivalya Navaneeta also mentions the same qualifications and advises : "No one can achieve anything in the world without being properly equipped for the task. For the same reason, only those who are equipped with these four categories of prerequisites can gain illumination. A novice cannot get it so readily."

Without steadying ourself physically and mentally, it is a fallacy to think that we can suddenly be steady spiritually. Whatever knowledge we attain, we should attempt to put into practice, quietly and steadily.

One of the ego-traps which we may fall into is the assumption that we are ripe or mature souls. We gain some knowledge mentally or get a glimpse of Truth, then the ego uses this

for its own glorification, becomes proud and feels superior to others. This effectively stops spiritual progress and blocks the flow of Grace which is ever radiating from the Self. Therefore, we must be always alert and watchful.

Bhagavan, the Sat-Guru, was and is an ocean of compassion. We instinctively recognize His teaching as the royal path, the very highest. He has stated clearly : "Self-Enquiry is the one infallible means, the only direct one, to realise the Unconditioned Absolute Being that you really are." (*Maharshi's Gospel*, Book 2, page 48). Yet He recognized that not all were of the same mental make-up and so was a guide to every seeker after Truth. In *Spiritual Instructions* it is reported that a devotee asked : "Can this path of enquiry be followed by all aspirants ?" Bhagavan replied : "This is suitable only for ripe souls. The rest should follow other methods according to the state of their minds." He then explained the other methods.

An attendant once told Bhagavan that though the process of vichara, "Who Am I ?" is rationally appealing and appears to be the easiest, it was in practice the most difficult. He replied that the logical appeal was meant only to lure people immersed in ignorance to the path eternal, but that persistent and intense effort was needed to pursue this path which was the subtlest and most direct. Many of us have not found it to be 'easy' and we can become very disheartened attempting the vichara before the mind is purified and made steady. Through His Grace we learn what preliminary steps are necessary for us, and are given the humility and strength to start from where we are.

When those who are following the path of vichara find it difficult, it does not mean

that it should be given up. A sincere and earnest seeker will make use of those other paths needed for steadying the mind, such as japa of mantra, or pranayama, and may well believe that Bhagavan is guiding one on these stepping stones to the royal path of vichara.

People came to Bhagavan from every walk of life, from many different countries, with various religious backgrounds. He never asked any of these to change their religion or their method of sadhana. His Grace embraced all, high or low, saint or sinner.

In Letters from *Sri Ramanasramam* (Vol. 2, p. 184) it is recorded that the question was put to Him : " Can a *Jnani* help not only those who follow his path but also others who follow

other paths ? " Bhagavan replied : " Undoubtedly. He can help people whatever path they choose to follow. It is something like this. Suppose there is a hill. There will be many paths to climb it. If he were to ask people to climb by the way he came, some may like it and some may not. If people who do not like it are asked to climb by that path only, they will not be able to come up. Hence a *Jnani* helps people following any particular path by the very path itself, whatever it may be. People who are midway may not know about the merits and demerits of other paths, but one who has climbed to the summit and sits there, observing others coming up, is able to tell people who are coming up to move a little to this side or that to avoid a pitfall. The goal is the same for all, you see."

STRANGE

By

Dilip Kumar Roy¹

His ways are strange, bewildering !
To fathom Him I fail.
How He fills our hearts with His love
O friend, I cannot tell.

I learned to laugh through tears and staked
My all to glimpse His Face :
I won Him by becoming His,
Losing all, I gained His Grace.

Relentlessly He weaned me from
My lesser loves, my kin,
Till even the mate I once had hailed
Loomed far and alien.

Now dead I am grown to fear and shame
In my lone quest for thee :
Strange, none befriends when thou becomest
One's friend, O Mystery !

¹ Translated from Indira Devi's Hindi song.

APPERCEIVING REALITY?

By
'Sein'

THE great longing of the earnest seeker is for Reality. His pole-star in waking, dreaming — even in deep sleep — is 'apperceiving Reality'. However, though Reality is ever-present, It is not a matter of *perceiving*, but of awareness only, and awareness of Reality is awareness in Itself, awareness absolute.

In order to perceive something one has to be aware, but to be aware does not necessarily imply perceiving. Perceiving is a function of the mind, awareness is a state of being! Awareness absolute goes 'beyond' the mind. How to go 'beyond the mind'?

To answer this question intellectually we would have to analyse 'mind', the result of which would confirm Bhagavan's statement, that there is no mind. According to him mind is merely a collective noun for a bundle of activities of the human brain, which could easily be treated each separately. However since Mr. Everybody knows — or believes, he knows — what is meant, when we talk of 'mind', let us **keep the term** for the sake of convenience, in order to demonstrate a certain experience concerning this so-called mind.

Habitually the mind tends to move outward, attracted by 'the world' and the objects therein. It is this outgoing mind that is said to shape itself as the objects of attraction and makes us believe that pleasure proceeds from objects. Consequently without the mind transforming itself into the objects perceived there could be no enjoyment of objects.

Here, finally, even Mr. Everybody feels compelled to ask himself: What then is 'mind'?

When this question is raised, a miracle takes place: The mind, withdrawn from objects,

turns inward and merges quietly back into its source. And just this is the condition which enables the earnest seeker to cross the threshold between 'perceiving' (without) and awareness (within), that means: *To go beyond the mind.*

The moment of return (of the mind) within is very important and crucial. If one is aware of this return, one experiences the non-existence of 'mind' and hence can prevent his illusion going out again through the senses. Usually we do not perceive the mind's return and in the moment of such inadvertance, the mind shifts its interest to another object and thus slips away again from the Centre. This operation of outgoing and withdrawal of mind takes place with unbelievable speed. So much so that we entirely lose track of its return and get caught up only with its remarkably agile outward activities. This untiring activity goes on in our daily life till deep sleep comes on. At that time Reality is tasted, but before the shift of identity from the 'person' into Reality is accomplished, oblivion takes over; and this state of darkness, of nescience, though harmless, reveals nothing.

Thus for the great longing of the seeker the question remains: How to go beyond the mind in order to 'apperceive' Reality?

Imagine yourself in the position of 'apperceiving' something. Then replace the term 'apperceiving' by the term 'witnessing'. They are similar in meaning, but not quite the same. 'Apperceiving' tends to react by accepting or rejecting the apperceived object; 'witnessing' should be quite neutral, quite detached, without any concern. When we are able to *be* this completely unconcerned witness-consciousness, then we are also able to turn the witness-consciousness into itself, dropping the object of our 'witnessing'. What remains is pure

Consciousness, which is the same as pure Awareness — Awareness absolute.

The aids to fix the wandering mind in its source are alert introspection, acceptance of individual non-being of the contentless void and so on. However, for all of them there has to be applied the same mind, which the seeker wants to get rid of. It is the process of trying to turn the thief into a policeman to catch the culprit who is himself.

To develop the inner attitude of unconcerned witnessing of all and everything, including ourselves, and finally to drop the object of 'witnessing', leads beyond the mind into pure Consciousness, which is Awareness absolute.

Reality, the Eternal Silence, *is* Eternal Awareness, aware only of Itself. We cannot apperceive It, because It is our very Nature ; we can only — be That.

Saints See No Evil

By
'Non-Entity'

"**S**AINTS are happy if good things are done, but they are not affected by evil". These words of Sri Ramana, which I heard during one of my visits to the Ashram, in 1941 perhaps, have been lingering in my memory all these years.

Going through the *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* one finds that Bhagavan never considered anyone unworthy or bad. To a devotee who felt his unworthiness the reply was : "Why do you think that you are bad ?" A sage sees no evil, hears no evil and speaks no evil. "You are good when you are one with yourself". To such a person nothing appears as evil. "For what is evil but good tortured by its own hunger and thirst ?" The saint has,

therefore, no feeling of hatred or disgust for anything not good.

God is Love. And one abiding in the Self is therefore all love. In his heart there is no room for displeasure. He knows that every human being is progressing towards the goal, even if most of us are only limping. The saying is : "Even those who limp go not backward" ! The following words of the Lebanese philosopher-poet, Kahlil Gibran, should encourage us.

"In your longing for your giant Self lies your goodness and that longing is in all of you. But in some of you that longing is a torrent rushing with might to the sea. And in others, it is a flat stream that loses itself in angles and bends and lingers before it reaches the shore."

The Essence of Contemplation

By

St. John of the Cross¹

I knew not where I entered,
For, when I stood within,
Not knowing where I was,
I heard great things.
What I heard I will not tell :
I was there as one who knew not,
All science transcending.

Of peace and devotion
The knowledge was perfect ;
In solitude profound
The right way was clear,
But so secret was it,
That I stood babbling,
All science transcending.

I stood enraptured
In ecstacy, beside myself,
And in every sense
No sense remained.
My spirit was endowed
With understanding, understanding nought,
All science transcending.

The higher I ascended
The less I understood,
It is the dark cloud
Illumining the night.
Therefore he who understands
Knows nothing ever,
All science transcending.

He who really ascends so high
Annihilates himself,

And all his previous knowledge
Seems ever less and less ;
His knowledge so increases
That he knoweth nothing,
All science transcending.

This knowing that knows nothing
Is so potent in its might
That the prudent in their reasoning
Never can defeat it :
For their wisdom never reaches
To the understanding that understandeth
nothing,
All science transcending.

This sovereign wisdom
Is of an excellence so high
That no faculty nor science
Can ever unto it attain.
He who shall overcome himself
By the knowledge which knows nothing
Will always rise all science transcending.

And if you would listen ;
This sovereign wisdom doth consist
In a sense profound
Of the essence of God ;
It is an act of His compassion,
To leave us, nought understanding,
All science transcending.

¹ With acknowledgment to *The Living Flame of Love* by St. John of the Cross, translated by David Lewis and published by Thomas Baker, London.

“ So long as subtle tendencies continue to inhere in the mind, it is necessary to carry on the enquiry: *Who am I?* ”

— BHAGAVAN RAMANA

I

see

it

"I" :
a package
to be
unwrapped

see :
a look out

it :
an object
made in the
nervestream
of a "subject"

In some such way
we make me and you
real while rushing on
to another making

It's true for me
as I see it
as I say it
as I re-member it

but it's a flash
in a pan man

"So what?" you ask
So YOU as a flashing BE-ING

reps

FAITH AND SELF-ENQUIRY

By

Suresh C. Khanna

BHAGAVAN RAMANA MAHARSHI'S philosophy of Self-enquiry is crystal clear and immensely rewarding for those who have faith and self-confidence to pursue his method. Faith will recondition our whole thinking and with consistent and persistent practice the idea, I-am-the-body, will be eliminated and the ultimate goal of Self Realisation achieved. The path amplified by Sri Ramana Maharshi can briefly be summed up as follows :

- (a) We wrongly identify ourselves with our body. If from the body all the elements are removed, then only Awareness is left which is formless and timeless.
- (b) By proper enquiry into the Self the notion — I-am-the-body — will gradually vanish and with the passage of time the faith that one is the Self will become unshakable. To attain Self, Self alone is the means. Man looks upon Self as something to be discovered but

the truth is that Self, the *Atma*, is always there. Realisation consists only in getting rid of the false idea that one is not realised. Realisation is eternal and always exists — *here* and *now*. Therefore one must turn inwards and seek the Self.

While following the above path, one may be confronted with obstacles. Then one should bring to one's mind the picture of one's God or Guru. Never accept defeat, though the process to be undergone is prolonged and hazardous. Continue with faith and confidence and ultimately you will have mastered the greatest secret of life. Faith overrides impossibles. It crushes fear. The inner power is so tremendous that with faith in it one can perform the most incredible feat of overcoming the basic ignorance of identification with the body. Through Self-analysis alone can one experience the thrilling discovery of one's true identity.

SPACE

By

Betty Ford

Space is beyond comprehension
 It has no beginning and no end.
 This Life Force that fills all things,
 I wonder how far it may extend.
 It's really beyond understanding
 And no matter how hard we would try
 We could never create what's created,
 Man, the Earth, the Sea, or the Sky.

Greetings in Atma

By

Margaret Coble

OF all the yogas the simplest and shortest is to directly repose in the Ultimate right within. It is always present as our real Nature underneath all temporary and changeful conditions. The sense of freedom experienced in life is really derived from our innate Nature of perfect Freedom as the Self. Body and mind can never be free! They are mere mechanisms and processes dependent on the changeless Spirit. They are conglomerates, mixtures only. And no mixture can be free or independent.

The attempt to give freedom to body and mind, without knowing that the only true Freedom is our own Spirit-Nature, must fail. Millions have yearned and laboured for conditions of expanded liberty. Many have suffered and died for their idea of freedom. Therefore we have relative improvements, psychological and political freedoms. But who will set man free from his own mental anguish, from boredom and restlessness, from wanting and craving, and especially from his false assumptions?

For that, it is necessary to stop all activities and mental preoccupations in daily meditation. There must be complete relaxation for at least one hour (for beginners), preferably two to three hours (for those mature enough in practice and understanding). Thus energy becomes released from physical-mental limitations and it can return to its Nirvanic Current to fulfil its primary duty which is to light up Self, our true Nature.

This unconditioned Nature is always already here as the prior Reality before and behind all arisings. So whatever arises is inevitably of the same Reality. All arisings are merely temporary local modifications of our own unchanging Condition. Nothing coming or going can be permanently real as such. Not birth or death, growth or decay, rise or fall, no state of life, no role in society, no search for God or pleasure can be our lasting Condition. All these are conditioned modifications of our original, innate Truth. Therefore nothing is gained by endlessly multiplying these phenomenal conditions and transformations. They are leading nowhere. No cosmic or individual phenomena are permanent. Every manifestation is but a pointer to the unmanifest prior Existence which is our true Nature, sure Abode. Since It is prior to all arisings, no manipulation of relative conditions can bring It about. It cannot be the result of thought, action, or anything. It is no result! It is I AM.

Ultimately, only direct effortless Understanding avails. Radical Understanding induces us to repose in our true Nature as Pure Consciousness, letting go all else — mere secondary modifications all — knowingly, intelligently, humorously! During long-continued meditative practice, all arisings are instantly sacrificed into one's prior Silence till that alone shines with all-consuming intensity. By this intensity, into which and for which all forms of distraction have been sacrificed, we become established in our original Natural State; I AM THAT I AM.

In That, all blessings abound.

“Not to desire anything extraneous to oneself constitutes *vairagya* (dispassion) or *nirasa* (desirelessness). Not to give up one's hold on the Self constitutes *jnana* (knowledge).”

— SRI MAHARSHI in *Who Am I?*

OVERBOARD

By
Wei Wu Wei

When I know that, Relatively, I AM no thing,
the 'me' of 'an I-me' being phenomenal,
I know that I AM Noumenality,
as which I AM the noumenon of phenomenality.

Negation of relative subjectivity, sometimes termed an
I-concept or 'ego', has always been recognised as the
essential factor of release.

Then the negated 'ego' or 'I-concept', rejected,
is replaced by what-I-AM, which Ramana Maharshi
designated by the locution 'I-I'.

Only subjected to relative conditioning can such a
situation appear to 'exist'. By negating an I-concept,
Relativity is no longer relative — and Absolute supervenes.

Simple — as the Sages said — but as long as we assume or
believe that an I-concept is what we are as I — such
'simplicity' is hidden by our conditioning.

But 'negating' is more than wishful thinking : it implies
total abstraction. 'Overboard' with every scrap of relative
rubbish — including 'the board' !

**“ Firm and disciplined inherence in the *Atman* without giving the least
scope for the rise of any thought other than the deep contemplative thought
of the Self, constitutes self-surrender to the Supreme Lord.”**

— SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

Glory of Arunachala

Arunachala Mahatmyam

(SIVA BHAKTA MAHATMYAM
of Sri Upamanyu)¹

Translated from Tamil by
M. C. Subramanian

CHAPTER XVI—(Contd)

THE Goddess now asked : “ How did the fiery Linga become cool like this ? ”

Gautama replied :

“ This was a fiery hill in the Krita Yuga, a hill of jewels in the Treta Yuga, a hill of gold in the Dvapara Yuga and a hill of emerald in the Kali Yuga. In the Krita Yuga the Devas praised this fiery hill from a distance, being unable to approach it. The Vedas refer to this hill when they glorify that which is copper-coloured, red and golden and the embodiment of all auspicious qualities. All the Devas praised it and prayed : ‘ Oh Supreme Self in the form of Aruna, the embodiment of all auspicious qualities ! Obeisance to Thee, Oh Sona Hill ! Thou must kindly become cool so that all can approach Thee ! ’ Upon this the fiery hill ceased to be fiery without and remained fiery inside. There are many *tirthas* (holy waters) around it. Hari (Vishnu) became sinless by bathing in the Indra *tirtha* situated to the east of it. By bathing in the Agni *tirtha* situated on its south-eastern side Agni expiated his sin of adultery. Yama became free of the sin of Brahmahatya by bathing in the famous Yama *tirtha* to its south. “ A travelling ascetic (*muni*) bathed in the Nirriti *tirtha* on its south-western side and thereby escaped from *Bhutas* and *Vetalas* (evil spirits). Varuna became the King of the oceans by bathing in the Varuna *tirtha* on the west. Vayu became the life-breath of the world by bathing in the Vayu *tirtha* on the north-west. Mahavishnu became the Lord of Lakshmi by bathing in the Sona *tirtha*, full of golden lotuses on the north. The Nine Grahas (planets) attained that state in consequence of

their bathing in the Isanya *tirtha* on the north-east. The exceedingly glorious Brahma *Tirtha* is in front of Siva. It is guarded by Sarasvati, Bhairavi, Ganapati, Durga and Skanda. In front of the God of Gods there is also the glorious Siva *tirtha*. It is in that *tirtha* that Bhairava got rid of Brahma’s skull. Besides these there are hundreds and thousands of *tirthas*, like the Ganga, the Vasishta, the Agastya, the Skanda, the Visvedeva and the Aswini. The Ganga worships the Sona Hill from the East, the Yamuna from the sky and the Sarasvati (Somodbhava) from the head (i.e. top). All the sacred *tirthas* appear here to devotees at the time of worship.

I prayed : “ Oh Lord ! Thou art a very stern and unapproachable red hill. How shall I worship Thee in my human condition ? ” The Lord of the Aruna Hill, the Boundless Ocean of Compassion graciously replied : “ I shall abide on earth in the form of an ethereal linga.² You must worship this linga according to the Agama Sastras. I, the Lord of the Aruna Hill, the wonderful ethereal linga of fifty different colours, shall be worshipped through the force developed by austerities.” After issuing this command the Great God, the Self-Created Being, revealed himself to me in the form of an extremely pure and ethereal linga. When I saw it I felt that my goal had been attained and was satisfied.

The Ocean of Compassion Himself prescribed the method of worshipping Him. At His command Visvakarma founded a pros-

¹ This is an ancient work, like the *Arunachala Mahatmyam*.

² i.e., the Sivalinga in the innermost shrine inside the temple of Arunachaleswara.

pcrous city. Those who offer to the God of gods the articles necessary for his worship enjoy luxuries in this world and attain, when they die, union with Mahesa. This linga of Sambhu, which is made up of the eight constituents³ is full of effulgence. If one bows down to it and circumambulates it one's sins will be burnt up. Those who circumambulate it are not reborn. They once for all become eternal like Arunachala.

One should, before proceeding to circumambulate the hill, take a bath, put on clean clothes, smear the body with sacred ashes and put on a garland of rudraksha beads. One should walk slowly with a serene mind remembering Siva all the time. One should imagine the Hill to be one of fire in the Krita Yuga, jewels in the Treta Yuga, gold in the Dvapara Yuga and emeralds in the Kali Yuga. Or it may be contemplated as a red and crystal-clear self-effulgent form in which all one's sins will be destroyed. One will then attain the City of Siva.

The very earth becomes taintless when the dust of the feet of those who walk on it in circumambulation falls on it and confers upon them the blessings of Siva. If one circumambulates the Hill by rolling on the ground all the way his body will at once become bright and hard like diamond. He will not pray for material happiness. Sambhu too circumambulates Himself (i.e. the Hill) during the six holy months of the sun's northern course in the company of Devas and Rishis.

One should never circumambulate the Hill on a conveyance. Once upon a time a King named Dharmaketu, who was well-versed in the rules prescribed for worshipping Siva but indifferent to Dharma, circumambulated Siva (i.e. the Hill) on horseback. The next moment his horse became an object of adoration to the Devas and was transformed into a leader of Siva's followers (Gananatha). It left the King and gained the abode of Siva. When the King saw his horse transformed into a leader of Siva's followers he also circumambulated (the Hill) and became likewise a leader of Siva's followers. King Vajrangada lost his vigour as

a result of his violating the convention connected with worship of Siva. He was however later reunited with Siva by virtue of his great devotion to Siva. By simply circumambulating this (Hill) two Vidyadharas named Kantisali and Kaladhara were absolved of the curse of Durvasa. They had been transformed into a horse and a civet cat, but by circumambulating (the Hill) they regained their state of Vidyadharas.

In former times there was a King of the Pandya country named Vajrangada. He made the earth tremble like a puppet with the might of his arms. Once, mounted on his horse he went hunting in the forest adjoining Arunachala. Seeing a civet cat which exuded fragrance, he urged his horse towards it very eagerly with the idea of catching it. Chased by him it ran in great fear round the Sona Hill with the speed of wind and mind. Although the King was a very strong man he fell down headlong from the horse breathing heavily, like a soul (jiva) falling from heaven (svarga), on the expiry of its merit. While he lay in great distress, too weak even to get up, he saw before him suddenly two bright beings dazzling like lightning. Even as he looked at them he saw his horse and the civet cat cast off their bodies quickly and assume divine forms. They opened their mouths as though they would dispel the darkness of his sadness with the brightness of their teeth, and said to him as he lay stunned and astonished, "Oh King! We were originally leaders of Vidyadharas. Once we were wandering about a wood near Durvasa's Asram close to Mount Meru. We were joyfully plucking the blossoms in his flower-garden when he noticed us and said angrily: you who are proud and sinful have fallen into my anger like moths in a burning fire by treading on this holy ground. One of you shall be born on earth as a horse and become the mount of someone who will ill-treat him. As for the other who was enamoured of the fragrance of flowers, he shall become a civet cat in a dense forest on the slope of a hill, making others enamoured of his scent."

³The five elements, the sun, the moon and the self.

When he threw the bolt of his curse in great anger we prayed to him (to forgive us). That great soul then bestowed his grace on us. He said: "You will be released from your curse if you circumambulate the Aruna Hill. The circumambulation of it is as good as circumambulating all the worlds. That is why Sankara gave the fruit to Ganapati who had first circumambulated the Aruna Hill in preference to Guha who had circumambulated all the worlds." After saying this Durvasa, the performer of great austerities, disappeared. We two were transformed into a horse and a civet cat. We were fortunate enough to circumambulate the Lord of the Sona Hill. As we circumambulated the hill on foot we have regained our original forms (of Vidyadharas). But, as you came mounted, you met with this fate. You may also now circumambulate the hill on foot. Worship the civet-loving Lord with red lilies scented with civet. Erect towers and quadrangles (in the temple of) the Lord of All according to your might. You will soon become Devendra again." After saying this Kantisali and Kaladhara went away. Vajrangada then entrusted his kingdom to his son Ratnangada and made the city of Arunachala his permanent abode. He circumambulated the Sona Hill and attained a very glorious state (*mahasiddhi*).

In former times, when Tilottama who was afraid of Brahma sought shelter in the form of a deer with Sankara the Changeless Being, and begged him to save her, the latter manifested himself as a hunter. At that very spot on the path of circumambulation he still abides in the same form accepting the worship of Brahma and Vishnu. At the same place there are several Devatas and *tirthas*. One can attain liberation there through gift, austerities, sacrifices and worship.

Those who live there with the object of serving the Lord, by erecting towers and quadrangles are worthy of liberation. There is no sacred place comparable to Sona Hill, no *mantra* comparable to the Panchakshara, no devotee of Siva comparable to Vishnu and no talisman comparable to the sacred ashes. Neither Kailasa nor the Mandara mountain can be a match to the Aruna Hill on earth for

while they are the abodes of 'Girisa, this is Girisa himself.

In order to show that one attains the goal of one's life by performing there any act whatsoever according to one's ability the following anecdotes are narrated. A spider which happened to weave a web in a corner of the Aruna Hill became a king. That king remembered his past (life) and adorned the Lord of the Aruna Hill with many clothes. While a thirsty elephant was drinking water it happened to spray some water on the Hill with its trunk and scatter wild flowers. In consequence of this it became a leader of the Ganas and attained liberation. Even the insects crawling on its slopes get rid of their sins thereby and with pure bodies attain the world of Siva. A firefly happened to give light to a person carrying a load and resting in the dark on the slope of the hill. As a result of this it attained liberation even while alive. A vulture flying in search of prey happened to remove the dust in front of Siva by flapping its wings. Immediately it attained supreme liberation. Who can possibly describe the glory of the Lord of Arunachala of such wonderful powers transcending word and thought.

"Goddess! You may also adore the Lord of the Sona Hill whose attributes are infinite and who confers the boons one desires and get your desires fulfilled. Austere one! you will attain the object of your wishes and rejoice in Sambhu. Austerities of this kind have been prescribed for you solely for the welfare of the world."

When Gauri heard the wise words of the sage she was filled with great joy. She praised him and told him: "I shall adore Siva, the Lord of the world at this very place and by pleasing him I shall certainly be inseparably united to him."

Eager to begin her austerities she at once asked him for a suitable hut of leaves. The sage said reverently: 'It shall be provided'. Although she was young and her austerities numerous and disciplined, she never met with any difficulty. That maiden who resembled a creeper made of emeralds was lovelier than ever.

(To be continued)

A SUFI MASTER

By
A Devotee

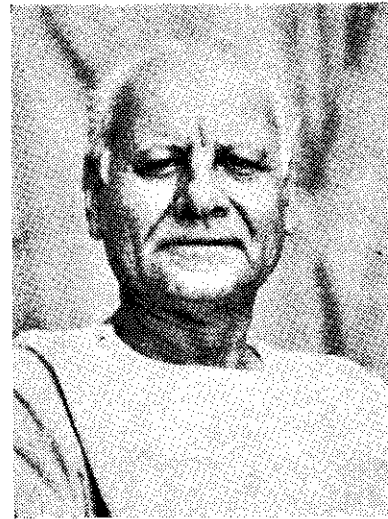
PUJYA BABA SAI MIRCHANDANI is a living saint in the line of Sufi Saints known as the Masters of Shah Daraz. Though he has lived for many years in Bombay and shed his love and spiritual aura on many seekers there, he has his own Ashram now at Gurughar.¹ Sai Mirchandani's Guru, Sai Giani, told him once: 'Mangha,² beware! You will be beheaded, but we will restore the head again. Do not be afraid, you will conquer death.

Here is an interesting account³ of how the disciple met the Master.

Pujya Baba Sai Giani came to Bombay and stayed with his brother at Matunga and it was here that Sai Mirchandani met him for the first time. Being a good singer, he pleased Sai Giani with his melodious voice. During his second visit, on the third day itself, when Sai Giani was going out, Sai Mirchandani caught the hem of his *kurta* (shirt) and asked if he was leaving him. Sai Giani graciously replied that he would never leave him.

As Sai Mirchandani looked round, he saw the picture of Sai Giani in his finger nails, toe nails, within himself and wherever he turned his eyes. This was an extraordinary experience. He saw Light travelling throughout his body like an electric current with a Form as distinct as his own. He began saying: "*Bhagavān Āyā Hai*" (God has come) and "I have become Him". The people around saw a glow in his face and bowed down to him. Twelve years later in 1949, when they were in Baroda, the Master revealed to Sai Mirchandani the state of Ultimate Reality.

Following is a short article by Sai Mirchandani:



Pujya Baba Sai Mirchandani

"Be above mind and you will have peace of mind. How to be above mind is the question. It must be answered by the Master Mind or the one who has mastered his mind. Mind, which is known as *Mama*, or the short form *Mami*, created everything through its own *shakti* or power and got entangled in the life-current of emotion. The same mind must disentangle itself and go to the Source from which it came. Once the mind knows its own origin and source, it will have entered upon its tranquillity and will be at peace.

"The method is through *mantram* — concentrating one's thoughts on one centralised picture in meditation or love. The way is of the Master or Guru, known ordinarily as Saint or Sage. Ramana Maharshi was one of those

¹ Gurughar is about 200 kms. from Bombay.

² "Mangha" stands for Sai Mirchandani.

³ Excerpts from Ch. I of Part II of *The Reality of Religion* by Jehangir M. Shapoorjee.

rare gems of a Saint or Sage or an Ascetic or a Supreme Being who has conquered his mind and become Him.

“To be of Him, we must be like Him, and fellow in the footsteps of the Father who has shown us the way. Repeat your *mantram* :

‘I and Ramana are one. Ramana is my protector – the life of all, of my being. He is Him and I am Him’. You shall verily become Him.

“Love — Pranams to Thee in all forms manifested by Thee, Oh, Lord, with Thy own abode in love.”

BIRDS, YOU, ME!

.....

Dear Sir George Trevelyan,

I read your article in Mt. Path,
BIRDS in imagination and poetry.
It gives me a new insight into how birds
bird. Thank you.

Now give it a better title,
more fetching,
say it in simpler sentences,
less argumentative,
WRITE IT FOR CHILDREN, for us children
and you will also be communicating
better with grownups so stiff and sunk
in boredom.

Please do this at once.
And put some pictures with it.
WHAT BIRDS THINK ABOUT YOU
HOW

Paul Reps

Garland of Guru's Sayings

By SRI MURUGANAR
Translated from Tamil by
Professor K. Swaminathan

669.

God's actions do not bind. Only
Those actions bind which you imagine
Are your own. Alas, it's like the father
Of the dead son rejoicing, while
The father of the living son lamented.

(The story goes that two young men from a village went to Benares, where one of them died. A pilgrim from Benares brought the sad news to the village, but mixed up the names of the young men)

670.

In His creation mighty Siva
Has laid His plan for our attaining
Mukti. He reveals the Guru
Who can establish us in *jnana*
Flawless, free from all attachment.

671.

I am not the worthless body. Nor am I
The prana, the senses, mind or intellect.
Nor am I the nescience dark devoid
Of action or object, but with *vasanas* filled.

672.

Since unrelated to true Being, which
I am, all these objects are unreal
And lack existence ; since apart
From Being-Awareness, there is no being
At all ; none of these objects scorned,
Inert, am I.

673.

Destroying through discrimination
The basic error that I am the body,
This object, and rejecting it
And the world as mere mirages false,
The Awareness that surviving shines
Alone as Being, That am I.

674.

No matter how which objects move,
Stand you apart and be a witness
Of all such movements.

675.

Don't meditate at intervals.
Abide without a break in steady
Self-awareness. Instead of plucking
Hair after itching hair of thought
Better shave the whole scalp clean.

676.

For removing from one's heel a painful
thorn
One takes and uses another thorn, and then
Throws both away. Cast off the thought
Of freedom after it has served to push
The thought of bondage out.

677.

It is only till bad *vasanas* end
That auspicious *vasanas* are a help.
The final state is freedom pure
Clear of all *vasanas*, good and bad.

678.

Absence of mental craving for
Sense-enjoyment is true fasting.
Abidance in the Self is worship true.
Hence those with pure, clear wisdom
Cherish as most precious
This fasting and this worship.

679.

With moderate *sattvik* diet grows
One's *sattva*. Hence such diet is
A potent and sufficient help
In Self-enquiry. Why then, alas,
Run after various other restraints
And get but more confused ?

680.

Again, again we cleanse the body
 And it gets dirty again, again.
 In view of this the books lay down
 Rules for bodily cleanliness
 So that at last we may give up
 In sheer disgust love of the body.

681.

"Marry some maiden," one is told
 That so one may at last give up
 The trivial pleasure of sex.
 The Vedas too extol the rules
 Of sacrifice that so one may
 Get cloyed with all the bliss of *svarga*.

682.

Those who love, deeming they are,
 This putrid body of flesh that turns
 In a brief while clean food to filth
 Are baser than the swine that feast
 On filth as food.

(10) Those who deem themselves the body
 That soon converts clean food to filth
 Are worse than swine that feed on filth.

683.

To worship God for some gain's sake
 Is worship of the gain, not God.
 Total absence of all thought of gain
 Is indispensable to the seeker
 Of union with Shiva.

684.

Those who perform high penance which
 Gives strength and meaning to their life
 Will never make it a means for some
 Delusive end. Pursuing pleasure
 Through penance would be exchanging
 Precious gems for a mess of pottage.

685.

When the inner and the outer organs
 Abide in stillness day and night
 True Being shines clear which only shines
 In the ineffable state supreme.

(The four inner organs are : mind, intellect, will
 and I-sense.

The five outer organs are : those of hearing,
 smelling, seeing, taste and touch).

686.

Instead of damming outward flow
 And keeping awareness still, within,
 To break the lock and spill it through
 the senses
 Is despicable like demolishing
 The bank and draining out the tank,
 Ruining the land.

687.

Self-alienated and in conflict
 Vishnu and Brahma argued vainly
 With bewildered minds and tried
 And failed to scan and measure
 The Column of Light. The lesson taught
 By this story is : Don't trust the senses.

688.

What is conquest of the elements ?
 Destroying the ego, the attachment
 To the body made up of the elements five,
 And scorning with contempt flaws of
 the flesh
 Which have nothing to do with the true Self,
 But are only based on the elements five.

689.

What is true conquest of the mind ?
 Death of the notion that I am the mind,
 Cessation of all mental trouble and conflict
 And firm abidance in Self-awareness
 Void of thoughts of freedom and bondage
 — both.

STORIES FROM YOGA VASISHTHA—XVII**STORY OF SIKHIDHVAJA AND CHUDALA—(Contd.)**

Translated from Sanskrit by
M. C. Subramanian

Kumbha continued :

O KING ! Now listen to another interesting and enlightening story which is similar to your own life. There was in the Vindhya forest, an elephant who was the mighty leader of a herd of elephants. His tusks were long and sharp and harder than diamond. He was once captured by an elephant-keeper and tied up with chains of iron. As the chains hurt him very much he broke them with great difficulty (and tried to escape). But the driver saw this and bent upon keeping him a captive jumped on his head from a palmyra tree nearby. Unfortunately he missed and fell down right in front of the elephant. But the elephant took pity on him. Even now creatures are sometimes generous and kind. He thought : 'To kill a fallen enemy does not befit my valour, although I am only an elephant'. So he left the man lying on the ground and returned to his haunts (in the forest). The driver got up unhurt and immediately went in search of him and traced him in a forest. He dug a pit and concealed it from sight with dry creepers. After some days the elephant fell into it like a mountain falling into the dry bed of the ocean. He was captured by the keeper and remains in captivity even now, like Bali in his place (i.e. patala). If he had killed the driver when the latter lay helpless, he would not have fallen into the pit or been captured again. One who cannot judge from his present state what would happen to him in the future will have to suffer like this elephant of the Vindhya forests".

Upon this Sikhidhvaja said : "O Son of a Deva ! Please explain the significance of the stories of Chintamani and the elephant".

Kumbha said : "He who is rich in scriptural learning but is ignorant of philosophical truths is the man who sought the Chintamani. And, you are that man. You knew the scriptures but not the ultimate Reality. Complete renunciation is the Chintamani. You wish to attain it and have, therefore, renounced your kingdom, wife, kinsmen and wealth and have come to this distant ashram of mine. Although you have renounced all your possessions you have not renounced your ego. Therefore your renunciation is not complete. So long as you entertain the notion of renunciation you cannot achieve the glorious 'total renunciation,' or enjoy supreme bliss. That is because you think that total renunciation can be achieved only through long and strenuous efforts and that only others can achieve it. When your mind is beset with doubts and anxieties renunciation will fly away like birds scared by the swaying of the branches of a tree in a storm. O Lotus-eyed man ! Having thrown away the great jewel of complete renunciation you have picked up the glass piece of austerities which you imagine is very valuable. He who gives up the easily attainable bliss which is unlimited and goes in for a limited object which is difficult to obtain, will be considered to be a perverse man who slays his own self. You think that you have got the Chintamani. O Poor man, you have not got even a piece of glass."

"The elephant of the Vindhya mountains is yourself ; your dispassion and discrimination are its two sharp tusks. The elephant driver is your ignorance. It wants to keep you under its control. It is a source of misery to you. Although the elephant was strong it was helplessly dragged by the driver from misery to

misery and fear to fear. Similarly you are drawn hither and thither by your ignorance. The chains of iron with which the elephant was bound are the ropes of desires which overwhelm you. Desires are stronger, bigger and more dangerous than chains of iron. Iron decays in course of time while desires grow strong. The breaking of the chains by the elephant is your giving up your kingdom and enjoyments. The falling of the elephant driver from the palmyra tree is getting rid of your ignorance (temporarily). When a man of dispassion desires to give up sense-enjoyments his ignorance begins to tremble like a spirit when the tree which it inhabits is being cut down. When one renounces all sense-enjoyments ignorance falls down (disappears). It flees from him like a spirit from a tree which is being cut down. When you left (your palace) for the forest you lost your discrimination. You did not slay (your ignorance), which had fallen down, with your big sword of complete renunciation. Therefore it rose up again and overpowered you. Thereafter you fell into the deep pit of this world. If you had slain your ignorance then and there, it would have died; it would not have overpowered you and made you renounce your kingdom. Just as the driver dug a pit for capturing the elephant your ignorance made you suffer misery. The followers of the driver are the thoughts which surround the King of your ignorance. The pit concealed by creepers is your austerities which have got some virtues. You are even now lying in the horrible pit of your austerities like King Bali in the world of Patala. Why did you not follow (the path of) knowledge taught by the excellent Chudala who knows what should be known? She is the best of all knowers of Truth. She does what she says. You should have followed her instructions diligently. Since you have not done so, how can you say that your renunciation is complete?

Sikhidhvaja said : I have renounced my kingdom, my country, my wives and my sons. Is this not total renunciation?

Kumbha replied : Wealth, wives, home, kingdom, world-sovereignty, relatives — all these do not belong to you. How then can you

The Only Answer

By

Ramesh V. Phadnis

Often when my mind is quiet
I ponder over the question "Who am I?"
Finding no answer
I sink within myself,
In the silence where there is
No question and no questioner.

say that your renunciation is complete? You have not renounced your attachment which is most important. If you could renounce that you will be completely free from sorrow.

Sikhidhvaja : If the Kingdom is not mine, the hills, the forests, the trees, the thickets and so on are. I shall renounce them.

Vasishtha continued : O Rama, Sikhidhvaja was speaking thus because he had not properly understood what had been said. But being a bold man and a man of self-control he decided to eradicate his attachment to the forests etc., even as a river in flood obliterates a line of dust on its bank. He said : "I have now renounced my attachment to the hills, chasms, forests and trees. Surely my renunciation is complete."

Kumbha said : The hills, forests, chasms, the waters, the trees, the land and so on do not belong to you. Then how can you say that your renunciation is complete? You have yet to renounce your attachment which is very important.

Sikhidhvaja : If that is so I shall renounce this hut, these vessels, this bathing tank etc. which are mine.

Kumbha : Even the hermitage does not belong to you. By renouncing it your renunciation will not be complete. You have yet to renounce your attachment which is very important.

Shikhidhvaja : If the vessels etc. do not belong to me I shall renounce this deer skin, these walls, this cupboard and so on.

Vasishtha continued : Accordingly Sikhidh-
vaja rose and made a heap of his rosary of
beads, his deer skin, etc. and set fire to it. He
threw dry wood on it and reduced everything
to ashes. He had no possessions now and was
pleased with himself. He said : I have
renounced my latent impressions (*vasanas*).
My renunciation is now complete. I have been
enlightened in time by the Son of a Deva. I
am now free, pure, perfect and happy. I am
enlightened. What are these vessels and other
household articles and home which are regard-
ed as our support in this world ? To the extent
that one gives up the various sources of bondage
the mind attains supreme bliss. I am now calm,
happy, free and victorious. There is no more
bondage for me. My renunciation is now com-
plete. The quarters of space shall hereafter be
my raiment as I am (free) like them. O Son
of a Deva ! Please say if there is anything else
which I have to renounce.

Kumbha said : O King ! your renunciation
is not complete. Do not imagine foolishly that
you are enjoying the supreme bliss arising from
total renunciation.

Vasishtha continued : Upon this the king
thought for a while and then said : This
aggregate of the senses is only flesh and blood.
I will have to renounce my body before I can
say that my renunciation is complete. I shall
throw it into a deep chasm and thereby make
my renunciation complete." And he rose to
carry out his intention. But Kumbha stopped
him and said : "Why do you want to throw
away the innocent body into a chasm, like an
angry bull which kills a calf ? Even if you
renounce your body your renunciation will not
be complete. Complete renunciation is
extremely difficult. If you could renounce that
which activates the body and is the cause of
birth and action, you will be a great
renouncer.

(To be continued)

Mirror of That

By
Ka. Kavana

In the coming forest of Time
i am alone in a lost Remembrance.
All the ages of Things
Are no more.
That Time if forgotten
is not difficult to See.
I am a mirror of That
which i see I AM . . .
Time-No-Time !

It sings in the eve
of my forehead.
It comes from within
the center of my heart.
No longer to think,
O Friend who is only
within . . .

INTRODUCING....

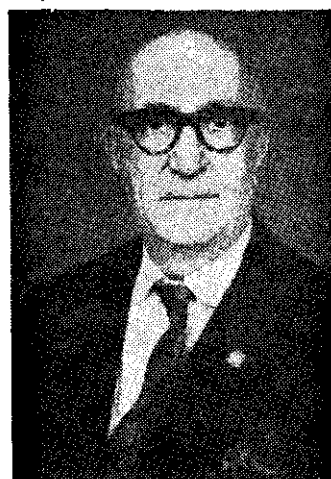
Smt. Mani Sahukar
and Sri Sahukar

THE essence of *Grihastha Dharma* is unified effort to reach the ultimate Truth through dedicated service of fellow-beings and devotion to Godmen and God. This ideal is difficult in modern times. In ancient days it was much easier since life was then uncomplicated. In the competitive life of today few can achieve success without losing hold of spiritual ideals.

She had the great opportunity of coming to Arunachala in 1947. The Maharshi was seated on a dais at the end of a long verandah and she was sitting in front of Him along with other devotees. There was an atmosphere of serene silence. Mrs. Mani Sahukar saw Bhagavan as a *Deva* carved of gold. The Great Master raised his head and gave her a look of infinite Grace. She was enthralled and



Smt. Mani Sahukar

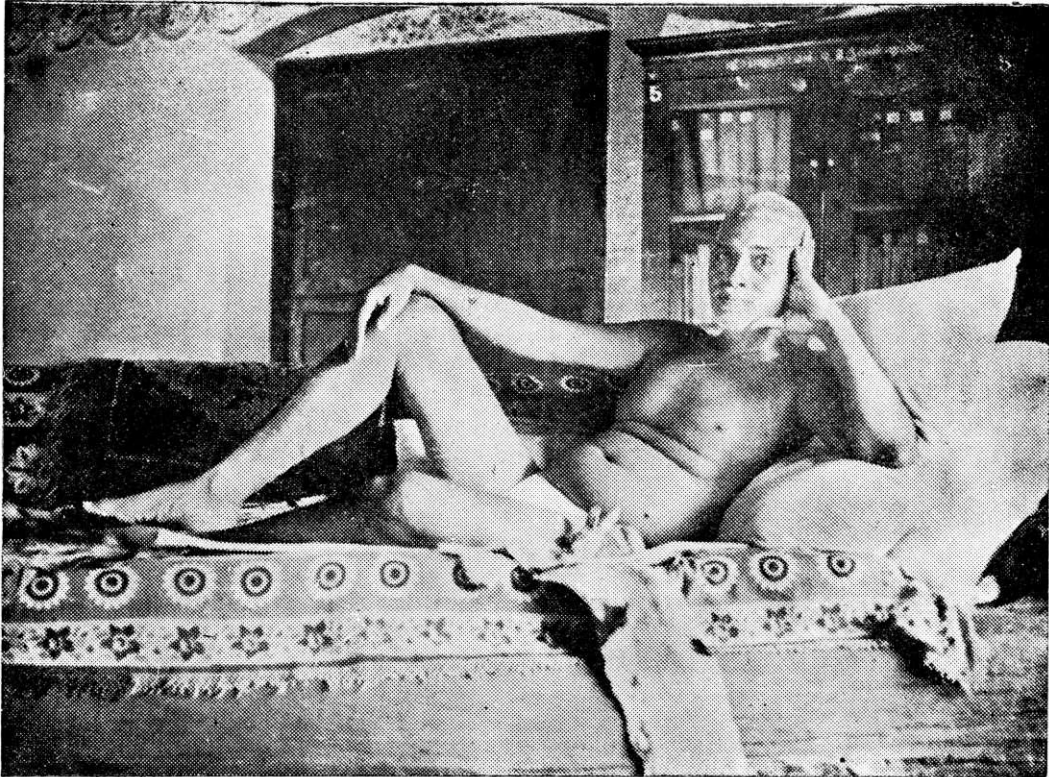


Shri N. D. Sahukar

Smt. and Sri Sahukar are a devoted couple belonging to this small exceptional class. Smt. Mani Sahukar, a Philosophy Graduate, has had a distinguished academic career. Being a fluent and lucid speaker, both at College and after, she has won many laurels through her discourses. She has also written a few books; the most important of them, *The Saint of Sbirdi*, has been published in the U.S.A. Her devotion to Sai Baba, Upasani Baba and Godavari Mata is well-known among the circle of devotees.

transformed, as it were. This deep spiritual experience, according to Smt. Mani Sahukar, "is a miracle of miracles — All hopes, desires and cravings lacking the sanctity of a permanent fulfilment pale in importance before this profound miracle that takes you to the fringes of an enduring bliss".

This meeting has been of profound significance, for the lady devotee has been conducting, together with her husband, Sri Bhagavan's *Jayanthi* (Birthday Celebrations) in



Bombay, year after year, for more than 25 years.

Sri N. D. Sahukar, now the General Manager of the Godrej Group of Companies, has had a brilliant record of service and achievement in several fields of public activities. A graduate in English literature, he is also widely read and knowledgeable in Art, Religion and Philosophy. He is one of the most successful businessmen in Bombay, much sought after and consulted by the other industrialists. His devotion to Bhagavan Ramana is deep and profound.

We are happy to announce that this devout couple is earnestly engaged in founding a *Ramana Kendra* in the 'Gateway to India' (Bombay) and erecting a shrine for Bhagavan Ramana. As Chairman of the *Ramana Jayanti Celebration Committee* for a number of years, Sri Sahukar is the right person to fulfil this important task, so dear to the hearts of *Ramana-bhaktas* not only in Bombay but all over the world.

We wish this devoted couple a long life of dedicated service to Bhagavan Ramana !

“By a steady and continuous investigation into the nature of the mind, the mind is transformed into THAT to which the ‘I’ refers; and that is the SELF.”

—SRI MAHARSHI in *Who Am I?*

BOOK REVIEWS

A HISTORY OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY: By Surendranath Dasgupta, Vols. I to V. First Indian reprint: Motilal Banarsidass, Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-7, 1975. (Vol. I, pp. 528, II, pp. 620, III, pp. 614, IV, pp. 482 and V. pp. 204.) Price: Complete set Rs. 200/-.

This is a photographic Indian reprint of the five-volume philosophical classic published by the Cambridge University Press during the period 1922 to 1954, the last volume issued posthumously.

The late Dr. Surendranath Dasgupta (1885-1952) combined in himself the depth of traditional sastric learning and the width of a truly modern scholarship in the several schools of European philosophical thought and culture, a rare combination indeed even in his generation of stalwarts. He was equally at home in the most abstruse Sanskrit sastric texts as well as European streams of thought. At a time when the vast range, scope and intricacies of Indian Philosophy were all but unknown even to scholars, when popular translations and epitomes of small upanishads and Gita were naively supposed to represent the cream of Indian theorisings, when even expositions of Vedanta were, more or less confined to the *obiter dicta* of Sankara and his followers and did not go beyond him to the schools of Ramanuja or Madhva, when more than half the Sanskrit source-books in the different *sastras* were unpublished and available only in rare manuscript libraries, Dr. S. N. Dasgupta dedicated himself to the herculean task of essaying a modern history of Indian philosophy based on a first-hand study of the far flung source-material in Sanskrit. With his massive scholarship, dedicated zeal and modern equipment, he could complete single-handed his project in the course of three decades, utilizing the best library facilities that Calcutta and Cambridge could afford. It is a project which several academies might have despaired of completing successfully. The success attained by him was so complete that, both in the East and the West, his volumes were hailed as epoch-making milestones in the history of philosophy.

Unlike the usual summary accounts and surveys of Indian systems in colourful and high-flown language or in the technical terminology of current Western philosophy, and unlike the haphazard and selective treatment of topics excluding most of the intricate issues discussed at length in the sastra source-books, Dr. Dasgupta chose to present a clear, comprehensive and complete picture of the field, covering not only the well-known orthodox and unorthodox systems, but also

unknown or little known or neglected shades of thought within each system itself. We thus find in these volumes for the first time dependable and exhaustive surveys of Bhaskara, Yogavasistha, Ramanuja, Madhva, Vallabha, Chaitanya and Saiva theistic schools. For the first time again, we find an inside account of the polemics between monistic and theistic schools. Further, even the speculations of the biological sciences and medical schools are given their rightful place for the first time in these volumes.

Not only in the wealth of content but also in the style of presentation adopted here we see novelty. The author selects the best and most representative passages of the sastric texts and renders them faithfully into non-technical English in the course of his exposition. The original Indian flavour is thus retained in the English garb also and the original argument is never allowed to get distorted by the use of modern philosophical terminology which often are but inadequate synonyms.

The author never indulges in controversies with modern writers in the field; he allows the originals to speak for themselves. His sympathies are always with the thinkers who are neglected by and large; but he never allows his judgement to become uncritical. Thus he speaks of the merits as well as defects of not only post-Sankara advaitic writers, but also of post-Ramanuja and post-Madhva writers who were stalwarts in their own way. He does not show prejudice or partiality in setting forth the conflicting views of several thinkers. Throughout, he allows them to speak for themselves adopting their own words.

With all his admiration for the past, the author does not fight shy of strictly adhering to the historical outlook and tracing the evolution and development of philosophical ideas.

With so many excellences, naturally, these volumes have served as starting-points for more minute monographs and studies in the following decades; and in spite of the passage of time, one cannot say that the volumes are dated. They have not been replaced by any other work as yet; and the enterprising publishers deserve wholehearted appreciation for arranging Indian reprints of these valuable volumes. After the introductory studies of Hiriyanna and Radhakrishnan on the subject, these classics serve even today as advanced accounts of the breadth of Indian thought over the ages, Indian thought which has a fundamental of the past unity amidst immense diversity.

Dr. K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

ZEN BUDDHISM By Christmas Humphreys.
A Mandala Book. Unwin Paperback. p. 241
Price: £1.95.

When Bodhidharma, disciple of Prajnatarā, originally born in Big Conjeevaram, landed in China in the year 520 A. D. the Emperor Wu at once invited him to his capital. A devout Buddhist that he was, the monarch had done many good deeds and of them he spoke to the monk, enthusiastically: 'I have built many temples and monasteries. I have copied the Sacred books of the Buddha. I have converted Bhikkus and Bhikkunis. Now what is my merit?' To which this silent, ferocious-looking Indian Buddhist replied, 'None whatever, your majesty!' The Emperor, taken aback at this brutal answer, tried again. 'What is to be considered as the First Principle of the Dharma?' he asked. 'Vast Emptiness, and nothing holy therein,' replied the Patriarch. 'Who then, asked the Emperor, not unreasonably, 'now confronts me?' 'I have no idea,' said Bodhidharma.

Dr. Humphreys narrates this historical incident while describing how the great teaching that is currently known as Zen originally came to China from India and thence travelled to Japan. In this classic work he gives the background — historical and spiritual — of the Zen, traces its growth in the countries where it was introduced by the famed teacher from India, the modifications it underwent, and discusses — as far as the subject permits of discussion — the practices and traditions of the system.

It is difficult to quote from this writing, for every line is quotable for the lofty wisdom condensed in the minimum of words. Zen is a direct path, not a ladder to be climbed step by step. It does not seek solution on the plane of oppositions but beyond them. It aims at experience of truth as distinct from understanding about it. There are three signs of the awakening of Zen: 'A sense of serenity, a sense of flow, and a sense of rightness in all action.'

Bodhidharma himself compressed the Zen into four propositions:

"A special transmission outside the Scriptures;
No dependence upon words and letters;
Direct pointing to the Soul of man;
Seeing into one's own nature."

There is a long chapter on *Satori*, the enlightenment that takes place as a result of the assiduous practice of Zen. It is not just a flash of intuition nor a sudden knocking out of the mind, "When *Satori* is achieved, whether for a second or for an hour, it is violent, cataclysmic, an unmistakable conversion from the old mode of consciousness to a new."

The author has a high sense of humour which makes it enjoyable to sail along with him in his voyage to the Unknown. He prescribes a few preliminary exercises:

Laugh — at the way in which you are taking yourself so seriously;

Be serious — deadly serious about the tremendous importance of your daily routine.

Undress — take off your conventional beliefs, rules and prejudices.

Then proceed: Form the habit of synthesis of thought; learn to objectivise; meditate; encourage the intuitive factor in the mind; expand your understanding till it hurts; stop rushing about; relax; walk on.

A must for everyone who is ready to culture his mind.

M. P. PANDIT.

I. THE SECRET OF SELF-REALIZATION
pp. 99. Price: Rs. 12.00

THE ULTIMATE REALITY AND REALIZATION
pp. 215. Price: Rs. 21.00

SELF-REALIZATION THROUGH LOVE
pp. 79 Price Rs. 6.00 wrapper Rs. 12.00 calico.

By I. K. Taimni

Pub: The Theosophical Publishing House,
Adyar, Madras 600 020.

The first book is a translation of Ksemaraja's *Pratyabhijna Hridayam* with an elaborate commentary by the author. The nature of the mind, *atma* and *nityodita samadhi* dealt with in twenty *sutras* are lucidly commented on by Taimni.

The second is a translation of *Siva Sutra*. There are all told 77 *sutras*. The most interesting section in this is the second one which deals with *mantras*. The very first *sutra* of this section is '*cittam mantrah*'

The Third is a translation of *Narada Bhakthi Sutra* with commentary by the author.

All the three contain the text in Sanskrit, transliterated in Roman with English translation and a lucid commentary.

II THE MIRROR OF LIGHT: pp. 90 Price: £2.0

THE THEORY OF CONSCIOUS HARMONY
By Rodney Collin Watkins, London, pp. 212
Prize: £ 3.75.

Rodney Collin was profoundly influenced by Ouspensky and looked on life as a spiritual pilgrimage. The two books contain the wisdom of a man who sought truth at all costs. The tone is gentle, sweet and persuasive. There is no dogma of any kind, there is only concern, a deep concern, for the welfare of man. A few gems from the books.

"The motion of the heart is so quick, so elusive — this is the trouble. So that, except with a constant listening, the motion of the mind always pours over it and swamps it."

"As conscience grows, self-importance dies."

"The best way to learn is to teach, provided that the one who teaches is the deepest 'I' that really knows."

"A blend has a better flavour than any one of its components. Each individual loses its own particular flavour and acquires the better flavour of the whole. If we really understand this we may feel a pang at realizing that our 'I' had to die in order that the greater I, which is included in 'we', may be born."

III. A PHILOSOPHY OF DELIGHT: By J. H. Rayner. Watkins, London, 1976. pp. 66. Prize: £ 2.00.

Rayner is an electronic engineer who is also profoundly interested in philosophy. He believes that it is not speculative philosophy but a practical one which will enable one to cultivate an awareness of reality. One's ordinary duties can be performed better 'if one shifts his psychological centre of gravity.' 'A man wrapped up in himself makes a damned small parcel.'

The book discusses lucidly the different ways that will lead to 'an increasing awareness of oneself as a part of a universe of great majesty and design.' These are discussed in the light of the Christian Gospels. A well written book useful to all spiritual aspirants.

DR. K. SUBRAHMANYAN.

YOGA THERAPY: By Dr. R. K. Garde. Pub: R. K. Taraporevala Sons & Co, 210, D. N. Road, Bombay-400001. pp. 131. Price not mentioned.

Dr. R. K. Garde of Poona is well known for his medical services and wide knowledge of Ayurveda and Hatha Yoga. He has given in this popular book a world of information on all aspects of yogic practices conducive to a better life and better health. Every page of this book is a guiding light for a life free from mental worry and physical diseases. This perfectly scientific treatise gives the principles and practices of simple and effective Asanas, Bandhas, Vaman Vidhi, Neti, Basti etc., for Nadi Shuddhi. It finds a remedy for removing environmental deterioration. It gives the cure for the chronic complaints such as anaemia, blood pressure, obesity, coronary diseases, goitre, and tuberculosis. It has a very interesting chapter on sublimation of the sex energy. A glossary of technical terms adds to the value of book.

THE AWAKENING OF KUNDALINI: By Gopi Krishna. Pub: Taraporevala & Sons, 210, D. N. Road, Bombay-400001. pp. 129. Price not mentioned.

This is an Indian Edition under the auspices of the Kundalini Research Foundation, New York. Sri Gopi Krishna has founded a popular Institute at Nishat,

near Srinagar, Kashmir. He has dedicated himself to propagate this evolutionary dynamism which can transform man into a superman. This serpent power woke up in him in December 1937 at the age of 34. Since then he carries on research in this Cosmic energy, this ethereal Fire with which the Rig Veda begins — *Agnim Ite Purohitam*. There is evidence of Siva-Shakti worship and Kundalini Sadhan even 3000 years before Jesus. This Shakti cannot be attained by Asanas and Pranayam, not even by meditation, says the author. It is attained by deep INNER ATTENTION which awakens a wider state of consciousness. The author writes appreciatively of Ramana's *Vicharamargam* and Jung's Self-analysis. About Sex Energy, which is often regarded as the basis of Tantra Yoga, the author says, "It must be subdued and sublimated." He does not advocate monasticism. He condemns all drugs and intoxicants. The book makes very interesting reading.

THE WISDOM OF YOGA: By K. P. Bahadur. Pub: Sterling Publishers, A/B-9, Safderjung Enclave, New Delhi-16. pp. 116. Price: Rs. 30.00.

Sage Patanjali's Yoga Sutras form the fountainhead of Yoga philosophy. This book by Sri Krishna Bahadur presents a lucid, analytical exposition of the four chapters of the Patanjali Yoga Sutras — *Samadhi, Sadhana, Siddhi* and *Kaivalya* padas. The author gives us a clear English rendering of the 194 aphorisms contained in the Yoga Sutras with an illuminating commentary upon each aphorism. He follows also the ancient commentaries by *Vyasa* and *Vachaspati Misra* in elucidating the Sutras.

"Samyama Siddhis can lead the sadhak to some marvels; but it cannot lead him to seedless Samadhi" says the author, who believes with our Bhagavan in the limitations of Siddhis.

He quotes Buddha who said that the Siddhi of crossing a stream by walking attained after 25 years of Yoga, is not worth one anna which can row a passenger to the opposite shore in a few minutes.

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI.

YOGA UNVEILED: Part I. By U. A. Asrani. Pub: Motilal Banarsidas, Bangalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-110 007. Price: Rs. 40/- (Cloth bound) Rs. 25/- (Paper back).

A synthesis of Reason and Revelation, of Science and Mysticism, is attempted in this book. It is intended to show "that the acme of all mysticism is not only allied to science, in the region of Ideal Mental Health but that it brings besides ethical and aesthetic values, hitherto avoided by science, within the purview of

science itself — in Evolutionary Biology and Psycho-physiological well-being." Yoga deals with the highest consummation of man and how to realise it. And this is intimately connected with the Rock-Bottom Reality of the Cosmos. An attempt is made here to unveil Yoga, lay its secrets bare for all to see.

The author postulates the problem neatly: "Shall we take the whole as Real or the Parts as real? This is a vital practical dilemma for Man. The Yogis of India have dissolved — not 'solved' — this dilemma by retaining the consciousness of parts on the Plane of Action, and by adopting some philosophy of the whole, like the Vedanta or the Sankhya, on the Plane of feelings." There should be the same experience on these planes. A Sahaja Samadhi or Stithaprajna state need not be a Part realisation in some plane. True Mental Health can be easily achieved by these practices. This is the author's contention.

Possibilities of a Jnana Yoga Therapy are discussed with sincerity and conviction. They are valuable as they issue from the actual experience of the author.

The author, an octogenarian, has chosen to come out in print at this age, after patiently testing and verifying his theories in the light of his life-long experience. No reader can fail to share the enthusiasm and aspiration of the author. We look forward eagerly to the publication of subsequent Parts.

SRI GARIB DAS: By K. C. Gupta Pub: Impen India. 2/18, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110 002. pp. 216 Price: Rs. 40/- (\$ 8.00)

Sri Garib Das belongs to the illustrious line of mystic poets and saints who led the Bhakti movement in medieval India. He was born in a Hindu family and lived his whole life in Haryana in the eighteenth century. But his thoughts couched in popular songs have a universal appeal. Garib's main influence has been Kabir and he acknowledges Kabir as his Guru. His songs are like Kabir's, simple and profound at the same time. In addition, they carry the local colour and language and the robust common sense of the rustic folk. No wonder his songs are popular amidst the simple guileless village folks of the region.

This is the first time, we understand, that a systematic and critical study of the life and works of Garib Das has been undertaken. The author has to be congratulated on the discussion, in depth and detail and with sympathy, not only of the mysticism and philosophy of Garib Das but also his language and poetry in all their native richness. The chapters on Origin and Development of the Bhakti movement and Political, Social and Religious conditions provide the proper setting for a genuine appreciation of the saint's works.

S. SHANKARANARAYANAN

ISAVASYA: An Invitation to Infinite Living, by Dr. K. B. Ramakrishna Rao, Copies can be had from the author, 10, Professors' Quarters, Manasagangotri, Mysore-6. Pp. 17, Price: Rs. 1.25.

This is a new translation of the Isavasya Upanishad with a new commentary. The Isavasya Upanishad has been translated into English and commented upon by several scholars. There are, however, wide variations among them. This is because several verses of the Upanishad are rather obscure and it is difficult to arrive at their precise meaning. As the present translator and commentator says, it is quite likely that we have lost the clues to the correct understanding of the terms used in these verses. Again it is difficult to say whether there is a single theme or cogent line of thought running through all the verses as they have come down to us, especially in the order in which we find them. Dr. Ramakrishna Rao thinks that the entire Upanishad is "an invitation to infinite living", to the realization that one is not the finite being that one imagines oneself to be but the Infinite. He has taken great pains to prove this. But, while doing so, he has stretched the meaning of several words so as to make it suit his particular theory.

The book is a useful addition to the existing literature on this important Upanishad.

EXPLORING PSYCHIC PHENOMENA: Beyond mind and matter. By D. Scott Rogo. Pub.: The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill. U.S.A. — 60187, Madras/India, London/England, Pp. 168, Price: \$3.75.

Psychic phenomena like telepathy, precognition and out-of-the-body-experience were looked upon with suspicion for a long time. But now there is a general interest in them. Para-psychology has taken its due place among the sciences and there is a great deal of literature on it. It is not, however, easy for most people to get at all the material that has been published and study it scientifically. The author of this book has, therefore, rendered a distinct service to people interested in the subject by not only giving in a clear and succinct form all the information that is available but also evaluating it carefully. He is very cautious in drawing conclusions and sometimes leaves it to the reader to form his own conclusion. Separate Chapters have been devoted to extra sensory perception, psychometry, telepathy, dreams and precognition, psychedic E.S.P., Out-of-the-body-experience, thoughtography experiments in search of the dead, cases suggestive of a life after death and myths about psychic phenomena. The book is highly interesting and valuable.

M. C. S.

AMAR CHITRA KATHA: (Literally) "Immortal Stories in Pictures". Pub.: India Book House Education Trust, Rusi Mansion, II Floor, 24, Nathalal Parekh Marg, Bombay-400039. Price: Rs. 2.50 (per title).

While the publication of stories in cartoons for children, an idea imported from the West, has taken root in India for quite a long time, *India Book House Education Trust* have made a healthy departure from the stereotype in choosing for treatment topics from ancient Indian Classics and the lives of sages and saints. The pictures are clear and well-drawn, the script well-written, the production superb and the price moderate.

Here are notes on a few of the scores of titles published. (List from Publishers on application).

SAINTS:

(1) *Jnaneswar* — The famous Saint of Maharashtra of the 13th Century who entered Samadhi at the tender age of 21 when fully alive. His discourse on the *Bhagavad Gita*, '*Jnaneswari*', is a scripture in its own right and has been translated into several languages.

(2) *Tulsidas* — The famous saint, poet and author of '*Tulsi Ramayana*' in Hindi. Mahatma Gandhi's favourite book, next only to the *Gita*.

(3) *Soordas* — The blind poet and composer whose songs in Brij, an old dialect of Hindi, are popular all over North India.

(4) *Kabir* — The mystic teacher and poet of the fifteenth century. Of unknown birth and abandoned near a tank near Varanasi, the child was brought up by a Muslim couple. He was a weaver and honoured alike by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs.

(5) *Purandura Dasa*—(1484-1564) is regarded as the Father of Karnatak Music. His songs, of which 800 are extant, are most popular in Karnataka and the South and are full of devotion.

(6) *Tukaram* — Saint from Maharashtra of the Seventeenth Century, was a shop-keeper. His *Abhangs* are extremely simple, yet profound; thousands of them are popular all over Maharashtra; every school-going child knows some of these.

PURANAS:

(7) *Yayati* — A famous episode from the *Mahabharata* on which several dramas, ballads, discourses and poems have been composed in several Indian languages.

CLASSICS:

(8) *Kadambari* — A Sanskrit prose classic of Bana Bhatta of the 7th Century. The original has a special charm for lovers of Sanskrit.

(9) *The Gita* — Illustrated graphically so that the young reader is attracted to the original scripture of 18 chapters in 700 verses.

(10) *Dasavatara* — (The Ten Avatars of Lord Vishnu):

- (1) *Matsya* (fish), (2) *Kurma* (tortoise), (3) *Varaha* (boar), (4) *Narasimha* (Man-lion), (5) *Vamana* (Dwarf), (6) *Parasurama* (The Lord with an axe), (7) *Rama*, (8) *Krishna*, (9) *Buddha*, (10) *Kalki*.

THE GENEALOGICAL TABLES OF SOLAR AND LUNAR DYNASTIES: (with Charts and Text containing notes). By Dr. K. Rajaram, 187, Lower Palace Orchard, Bangalore-3. Available from: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Basavangudi, Bangalore-4 and Vedanta Book House, Chamrajpet, Bangalore-18, Price: Rs. 10.00.

Everyone knows that Sri Rama of the *Ramayana* belongs to *Surya Vamsa* (Solar Dynasty) and Sri Krishna of *Bhagavata* and *Mahabharata* belongs to *Chandra Vamsa* (Lunar Dynasty). But few know the origins of these Dynasties and how they spread out into a multitude of branches. The same is true of the *Hari Vamsha* to which belong sages like Parasara, Vyasa and Daksha Prajapati.

Dr. K. Rajaram deserves all praise for the endless pains he has taken to trace the roots and the enormous branches of these family trees.

The book accompanying the three charts contains a brief note on each one of the personages whose names (all numbered) occur in the charts.

Serious students of our puranas and Kavyas would find this book most useful for reference.

L. P. K.

RAMANA MAHARSHI, *Geistige Unterweisung*, uebersetzt und kommentiert von Satyamayi. Verlag der Helfenden, D — 8101 Kruen/Obb. Pp. 58. Preis: DM 7.50.

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, *Ueber das Selbst*, Vierzig Verse. Uebersetzt und kommentiert von Satyamayi. Verlag der Helfenden, D — 8101 Kruen. Pp. 59. Preis: DM 7.50.

We want to inform our German readers, that the above mentioned two separate German booklets are: the first, the translation of Bhagavan's '*Spiritual Instruction*', and the second, His teachings condensed in the famous '*Reality in Forty Verses*.'

Letters to the Editor

VOICE OF THE SILENCE

I am interested in Bhagavan. There is an enduring relationship that has remained unbroken for some years. And, in His Silence and Love, you and I are therefore related.

It is not so easy for the devotion to the Master of Masters — Sri Ramana — to flourish, for the *vasanus* keep the mind roaming outward from the Heart where Love and Peace are sustained. We have by sadhana to turn the mind back to the Heart, for it does not want to go there, deluded as it is by its own movements. The Grace of the Supreme Master is always there, but we have to aspire for it.

The same is true of *Sat Sanga*. We can all wish one another well, hold one another's hand in sympathy but still the sadhana has to be done by one's own self. Mere socialising, taking care of the outward loving duties (service — *nishkama karma*, may become a distraction, and pride can be built up in this way. Is that not so? So, we must try to remain silent following the example of the Master of Masters Himself, who is none other than Sri Dakshinamurti.

I am somewhat sad to hear that Sri Bhagavan's voice was never recorded. So many photographs, but no voice! It was clearly His will that all take seriously His *upadesa* of Silence! I am sure He would have answered me: "My Real Voice is Silence and is recorded in every listening Heart. Play this recording at all times and be at Peace as the Self."

Gary B. CHICOINE, BELFRY, U. S. A.

A PRAYER

I hope that one day I may be fortunate enough to visit the Ashram at Holy Arunachala. In the meantime my aim is to realize in my daily experience that state which is best expressed by my favourite passage from *The Teachings of the Maharshi*, regarding *Sahaja Samadhi*:

"In this state you remain calm and composed during activity. You realize that you are moved by the deeper Real Self within and are unaffected by what you do or say or think. You have no worries, anxieties or cares, for you realize that there is nothing that belongs to you as ego and that everything is being done by something with which you are in conscious union."

Reuben R. PENNA, Croydon, U. K.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

For the CENTENARY YEARS of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, it is proposed that practically all the articles in *The Mountain Path* during the years 1979 and 1980 will be on or about Sri Bhagavan. We request devotees to contribute articles in 1500 to 2000 words or less on Sri Bhagavan and His Teachings and their reminiscences of the Master.

MAHARSHI'S UNIVERSALITY

What is Maharshi's attitude towards Vaishnava *sadhakas* and the followers of Lord Muruga and Devi (*Sakti*)? Some of us were of the opinion that Sri Ramana being an incarnation of Lord Siva or Arunachala did not encourage Vaishnavism. Did he accept them and approve of their path? Did the Maharshi accept worship of Vishnu and other Gods as paths towards Realisation?

N. R. KUNJIKUTAN, Ernakulam,

These doubts can never arise for any who has studied THE COLLECTED WORKS OF RAMANA MAHARSHI edited by Arthur Osborne. For instance, the 8th verse of REALITY IN FORTY VERSES, says: "Under whatever name and form one worships That which has no name or form it is only a means of perceiving it. To know the truth of one's Self is the true Reality and to merge and become one with it is the only true perception (Realization). Understand this."

Devotees looked upon Maharshi according to their own previous UPASANA and He encouraged them from their own standpoint and led them on to the ultimate Reality beyond all Name and Form, which is one's own Reality as well. There is thus no question of his disapproving any UPASANA.

Once in the early twenties, He even allowed a Vaishnava BHAKTA to put the usual NAMAM (Vaishnava mark) on his forehead and remained with it the whole of that day. His famous disciple, Ganapati Muni, saw Him as Lord Muruga and sang a Hymn of Forty verses on Him as such. Bhagavan Himself arranged those verses and helped to publish the booklet. When He heard the mysterious

CALL from Arunachala and He left Madurai for Tiruvannamalai, He left behind a note that He was going away in search of his Father. Though Maharshi's state was transcendental He accepted the devotee approaching Him and showed him the way to the Supreme Reality. It would be wrong to speak of Him as a Saiva or Vaishnava or as approving of one system rather than another.

Editor.

APPRECIATIONS

May I take the liberty of congratulating you on the January '78 issue and the excellent Editorial... as well as the 'Muni and the Maharshi'. Each issue is so carefully constructed.

MRS. GIOVANNI BAGAROTTI,
Tarrytown, U. S. A.

The Mountain Path is really very good. The Editorials are well-written and quite thought-provoking. The mix of articles caters for every type of seeker and the book reviews are extremely informative. All this displays a committee of very open mind and the widest perspective.

In the last two issues I find a topic which forcibly catches my attention, namely Sri Ganapati Muni. The author puts facts clearly and captivately too. *Sri Ramana Gita* for long has fascinated me by its mellifluous Sanskrit and the clearness of rendering of Sri Bhagavan's teachings. Can you send me a copy of *Uma Sahasram* in Sanskrit?

PATRICK LEBAIL, Neuilly, France

THE HOLY DARSHAN

This time I would come alone—and would be grateful for any small corner in the shadow of the "Mountain Path"! That would be towards the end of May. I suppose that pilgrims are less numerous, now that it is summer.

My sister (aged 82 years) has gone back to France. She told me that her stay at Sri Ramanasramam was the greatest and most wonderful experience she has had in India. She did not know anything about the *Tejo Linga* and the glory of Arunachala, yet she saw the Mountain as a huge flame! Flames coming out of the rocks!!

JEAN CLAUSSE,¹ France
(now residing in Madras)

TO OVERSEAS SUBSCRIBERS

A Request

All overseas subscribers whose subscriptions end with the issue of October, 1978 are requested to send their renewal of subscription for 1979 well in time to reach us by December, 1978 latest.

This will immensely help us, saving time and expense of sending a reminder later :

Subscription Rate

£ 2/- or \$ 4/- by sea mail

£ 4/- or \$ 8/- by air mail

(for Americas \$ 9/- by air mail)

To be sent to :

The Managing Editor,
THE MOUNTAIN PATH,
SRI RAMANASRAMAM P.O.,
Tiruvannamalai - 606 603, India

YOU 'ARE', Mr. WU!

A Letter to

Mister WEI WU WEI

(in answer to his *Teaching the Truth*)²

You 'ARE', Mr. Wu!

My heart rejoices —

then, may be, I am too —

because, you see,

if my heart sees that YOU ARE,

then it may be able to know that

I AM.

Strangely, Love is greater than I!

To LOVE is also to BE —

No doubt, TO BE is also to LOVE —

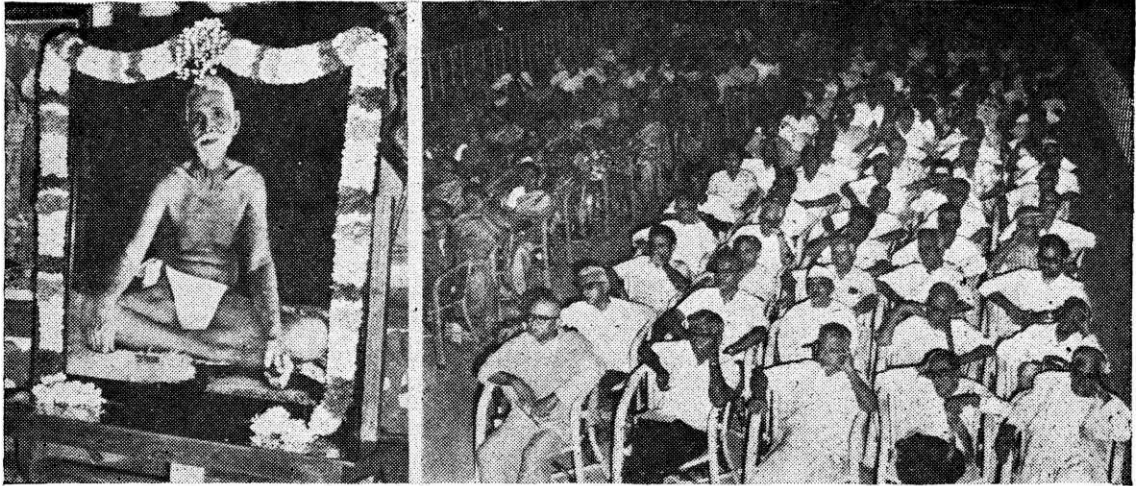
but that is so much more difficult!

Is that not so, Mr. Wu?

A Pupil.

¹Whose interesting account of how he came to the Maharshi appeared in our October, 1972 issue.

²see P. 105 of our April '78 issue.



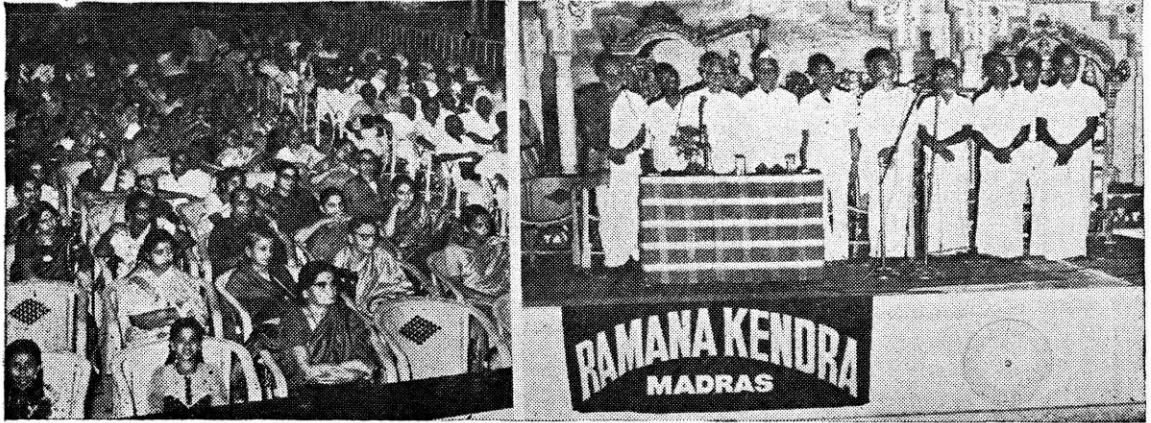
The life-size coloured portrait of Bhagavan Ramana presented to the Ramana Kendra, Madras, by Sri Ramanasramam. A section of the audience of devotees.

ASHRAM BULLETIN

GOVERNOR RECEIVES PORTRAIT OF BHAGAVAN RAMANA *A Memorable Function At Madras*

On June 6, a memorable function took place in Madras, when a life-size portrait of Bhagavan Ramana was presented by Sri Ramanasramam to Ramana Kendra, Madras.

The Ashram President, Sri T. N. Venkataraman, who himself took the portrait from Tiruvannamalai to Madras, and at this public function held at Astika Samaj, Alwarpet handed it over to the Governor of Tamil Nadu, H. E. Shri Prabhudas Patwari who received it with great devotion on behalf of the Madras Kendra.



The lady-devotees listening with rapt attention. On the dias are seen (l to r) Messrs. Vazhuthur Rajagopala Sastrigal, —, D. S. Sastri, Governor Sri Prabhudas Patwari, K. K. Nambiar, T. N. Venkataraman, K. Natesan, P. S. Easwaran, Dr. T. K. Ramana Kumar, and R. Venkatakrishnan.

A large gathering of devotees attended the function which began with a welcome with *purna kumbha* and Vedic chants to His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu. After a prayer song sung by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan and her daughter, Sarada, the meeting began with a welcome address in chaste and simple Sanskrit delivered by Sri Vazhuthur Rajagopala Sastrigal.

Sri D. S. Sastri explained in some detail the progress made by Sri Ramanasramam since Sri Bhagavan's *Brahma Nirvana* and praised Sri T. N. Venkataraman for the atmosphere of peace and cleanliness in the Ashram and the regularity of its daily routine, which helped visitors in their *sadhana*.

Sri K. K. Nambiar, Chairman of the Kendra, gave an account of the founding of the Kendra at Madras. As the increasing circle of devotees felt the need for a *Ramana Centre* in Madras, it was decided to start one and affiliate it to the Ramana Kendra already established and functioning in Delhi, incorporating in it the *Ramana Bhakta Sabha* which had been functioning in Madras since 1950 under the diligent guidance of Professor K. Swaminathan. The move to form Madras Kendra received a powerful impetus from a devotee's generous offer of a gift of land, about 4 grounds in extent, in a convenient locality in Alwarpet. Accordingly, the first meeting of the Kendra was held on Feb. 5 at 1-A, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer Road, Alwarpet, adjoining the promised land.

The weekly meeting of the Kendra is held every Sunday at 4.15 p.m. After Veda Parayana and recitation of *Upadesa Saram* and of some sacred texts, a period of silent meditation follows. Then there is a short speech on Sri Bhagavan's life and teachings. Arrangements have also been made for making available for perusal or sale, books, periodicals and photographs,

dealing with Bhagavan's life and philosophy. On Thursday evenings study of Sri Bhagavan's works is taken up

Then, the President of Sri Ramanasramam, Sri T. N. Venkataraman, in his short speech gave an account of the working of the Ashram which welcomed devotees and visitors to the Master's shrine of Grace.

He then presented the beautiful colour portrait of Sri Bhagavan which was accepted by His Excellency the Governor on behalf of the Kendra. He also presented Sri Prabhudas Patwari with a similar colour photo of the Maharshi but smaller in size for being



His Excellency the Governor is being received with *purna kumbha*.



H.E. the Governor Sri Prabhudas Patwari, pays tribute to the Maharshi. Next to him (seated) are Sri K. K. Nambiar, Chairman of the Ramana Kendra and Sri T. N. Venkataraman, President of the Ashram.

Sri D. S. Sastri, Vice President of the Kendra, hails the efforts of the Ashram President to maintain the traditions of the Ashram.

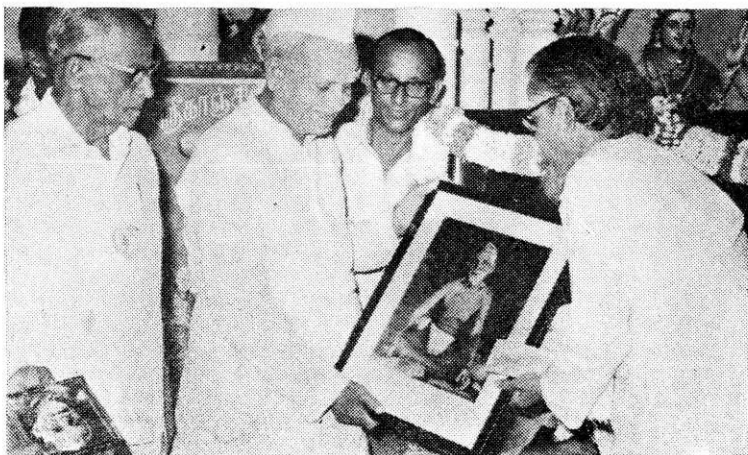
hung in the Raj Bhavan and another one to be kept by the Governor on his working table.

His Excellency the Governor said, in his address, that Sri Ramana Maharshi was one of the greatest seers of India who taught the path of *Jnana* (Knowledge) and himself exemplified it in his life. He added that the clear teaching of the Path of Self-enquiry was Sri Ramana Maharshi's rare gift to mankind, and that he opened out new vistas of enlightenment in keeping

with traditional Vedic teaching and at the same time suited to modern times. Sri Patwari expressed appreciation of Sri Ramanasramam's services in publishing works by and on the Master.

The Secretary of the Kendra, Sri P. S. Easwaran, proposed a vote of thanks and invoked the benign Grace of the Master.

The function concluded with the chanting of *Upadesa Saram*.



Sri Prabhudas Patwari received from Sri T. N. Venkataraman the portrait (small) of Sri Bhagavan, to be hung at Raj Bhavan. Sri K. K. Nambiar is seen to the right of the Governor.

BRAHMA NIRVANA CELEBRATIONS OF BHAGAVAN

The Twenty-eighth *Brahma Nirvana* of Bhagavan, celebrated at His shrine of Grace in the Ashram on May 4, began, as usual, with *Ekadasa Rudram* and *Mahanyasa* and the chanting of the *Taittiriya* and *Mahanarayana Upanishads*. This was followed by elaborate puja at the beautifully decorated shrine. *Aarti* or the waving of lighted lamps and camphor was watched by a large gathering with great devotion.

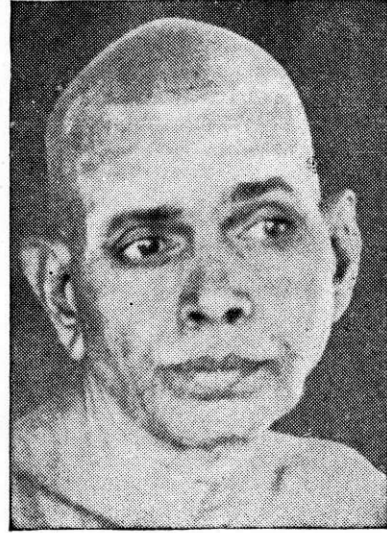
A welcome feature of this year's function was the large scale poor feeding with special dishes, thanks to a devotee who bore the additional expenditure.

At KOLHAPUR

On May 4, *Ramana Satsang Mandal*, celebrated the *Aradhana* of Sri Bhagavan, in the midst of earnest devotees. Smt. Prematai Shinde and Smt. Padmatai Potekar, who are sisters of Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje, gave their reminiscences of Sri Maharshi with emotional fervour. Smt. Snehal Vaidya and Smt. Jyotsna Kulkarni gave an account of their elevating impressions of the Ashram. Prof. B. R. Potekar read out a passage — translated into Marathi by him—from *Talks with Sri Maharshi*. Prof. G. V. Kulkarni read out a short biography of Bhagavan Ramana in inspired



Mrs. Prematai Shinde giving reminiscences of Sri Bhagavan to the audience at Kolhapur on the occasion of Brahma Nirvana Day.



verses (101 Ovis). Prof. Krishna Guras, Prof. S.N. Dixit and Miss Sunanda Kulkarni also spoke. After *Aarthi* prasad was distributed. In the morning there was puja and abhishekam and a talk on Bhagavan's life and teachings.

At POONA

Bausahib Y. N. Athavale and his son, Dr. D. Y. Athavale, as usual celebrated Sri Bhagavan's *Aradhana* with puja, *pravachana* and *prasad*. The function was attended by a large gathering of devotees.

At CALCUTTA

Ramana Kendra, Calcutta, celebrated Sri Bhagavan's *Aradhana* on June 4, at Sankara Hall in Calcutta. Sri Aykudi Rama Sastrigal, a great scholar in Sanskrit and *Asthana Vidvan* of Sringeri Mutt, spoke on 'Siddhas' and presented Sri Bhagavan as a Master *Siddha-Purusha*, quoting freely from *Srimad Bhagavata*. Sri H. R. Chaddha gave his reminiscences of Sri Bhagavan. The function concluded with *bhajan* by Chinmaya Mission Bhajana group.

At DELHI

Ramana Kendra, New Delhi, observed Bhagavan's *Aradhana Day* with solemnity, with Vedaparayana and recitations, on April 14, as well as on the *Tithi* on May 4. The Mother's day also was celebrated on May 30.

RAMANA KENDRA, DELHI

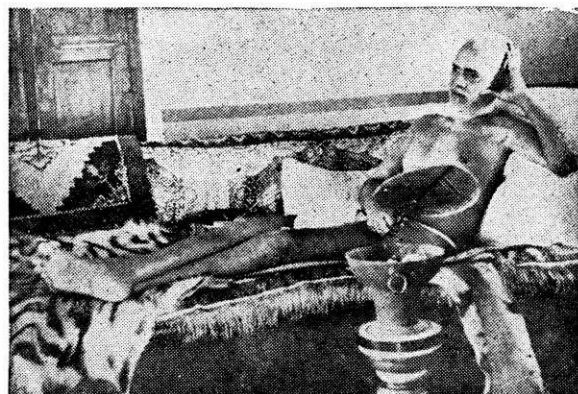
The Kendra had the usual summer series of lectures. Sri N. Subramania Iyer (ANNA) of Ramakrishna Mission, Madras, gave a scholarly talk on the Vedas on April 4.

Brahmachari Yagna Chaitanya of Chinmaya Mission gave a series of seven lectures in English on *Sat Darshana* during April-May, 1978.

Sri Giridhari Prasad of Sri Ramalinga Mission, gave an illuminating talk on Manickavasagar in Tamil on May 31. All the lectures were well attended and highly appreciated.

Sri K. K. Nambiar, Chairman of Ramana Kendra, Madras, accompanied by his wife, visited the Kendra on April 8. In his talk, Sri Nambiar recounted interesting anecdotes [from his long association with Bhagavan.

The Indian Institute of Natural Therapeutics is conducting a month's training course on Nature Cure at the Kendra premises from June 10. Readers may be interested to know that Sri Arun Sarma, Deputy Director of the Institute, is a grandson of Sri Lakshmana Sarma ('Who') — author of *Maha Yoga*.

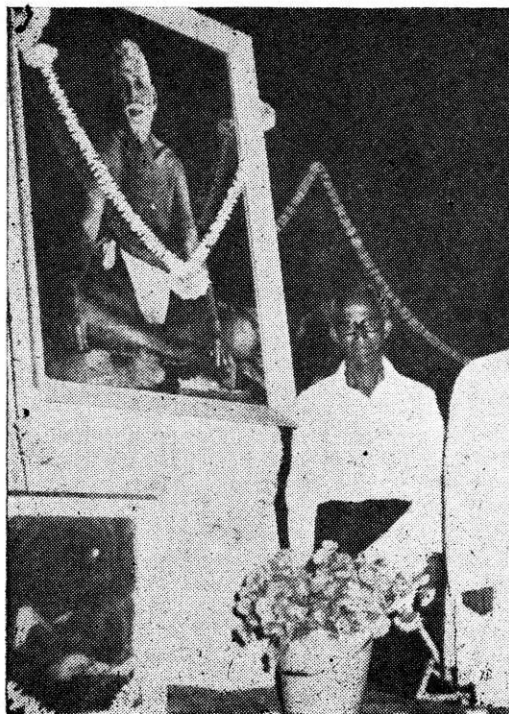


RAMANA JAYANTI IN BOMBAY

Though belated, the *Ramana Jayanthi Celebration Committee, Bombay*, celebrated the 98th Birthday (*Jayanti*) of Bhagavan Ramana in Bombay on March 28, 1978, in the midst of a large gathering of devotees. The function was enriched by the presence of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj.

Smt. Mani Sahukar presided and lucid lectures were given by Dr. Framroze A. Bode, Sri N. D. Sahukar, Brahmacharini Radha and Sri K. K. Nambiar, Chairman of Ramana Kendra in Madras, who happened to be in Bombay at that time. The function was held at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Auditorium. Sri P. V. Somasundaram, Secretary of the Committee, proposed a vote of thanks.

BOMBAY RAMANA JAYANTI: (l to r) Sri P. V. Somasundaram, H. H. Nisargadatta Maharaj, Sri Harilal B. Dresswalla, Brahmacharini Radha, Dr. Framroze Bode, Smt. Mani Sahukar and Sri K. K. Nambiar.



SRI RAMANASRAMAM FREE DISPENSARY

Donations in kind and in cash are invited from philanthropists and devotees for running the Ashram Dispensary.

Cash Donations are exempt from Income Tax. Please send them to :

The President,
Sri Ramanasramam Charities,
Sri Ramanasramam P.O.,
Tiruvannamalai-606 603, Tamil Nadu.

THE KHANNA FAMILY

*Sri Hari Chand Khanna*¹ of Kanpur is one of the old devotees of Sri Bhagavan and he visits the Ashram almost every year and often with some members of his family. He and his wife, *Smt. Premvati Khanna*, stayed at the Ashram, mostly in quiet meditation, for two months at a stretch. The lady's prayers for a long stay in Arunachala were met by a fall in the train which rendered her bed-ridden but was far from serious.



Mr. Khanna



Mrs. Premvati Khanna

Their grandson, *Pavan Khanna*, preferred to spend his annual holidays at the Ashram and thus arrived much earlier. To see him his parents, *Gp. Cap. Kailash Khanna* and *Smt. Sunita Khanna*, also arrived with their third son, *Gagan*. Added to these two more young lads, *Anil* and *Rajiv*, arrived from Bombay. Almost the entire Khanna family thus came and stayed at the feet of the Master.

¹ Introduced to our readers in our April, 1970 issue p. 109.

With effect from December 15, 1977, the following have been appointed as Trustees of Sri Ramanasramam, by the Sub-Court, Tiruvannamalai, in addition to the Hereditary Trustee, Sri T. N. Venkataraman.

Sri S. S. V. S. Muthiah Chettiar,
Tiruvannamalai.

Sri P. Thandavarayan, B.A., B.L.,
Advocate, Tiruvannamalai.

Sri P. S. Vaikuntavasar, Vanur.
The Tahsildar, Tiruvannamalai.

The affairs of the Ashram are being conducted smoothly under their expert guidance and participation.



NEW TRUSTEES : (l to r) Sri S. S. V. S. Muthiah Chettiar, Sri P. Thandavarayan and Sri T. N. Venkataraman. Two other Trustees — Sri P. S. Vaikuntavasar and the Tahsildar, Tiruvannamalai — are not in the picture.

Smt. Premvati Khanna was completely cured of the effects of the fall and she attributes this to the grace of Sri Bhagavan. Readers may remember how this good lady was given *mantra diksha* by Bhagavan.² Devotees at the Ashram are always very happy to have this devout couple amidst them.

* * * *

Sri Lakshmanaswami of Gudur, and his Ashram are well-known in Andhra. He was drawn to Sri Bhagavan in his teens and he visits Sri Ramanasramam almost every year along with a band of devotees. This year too he came and spent a week at the Ashram. We are always happy to have these sincere devotees at the Ashram. Earlier he arranged to have a cow from our Ashram, transported to his Ashram in Gudur.

* * * *

Devotees in Karnataka would be happy to know that *Sadguru Shakuntamma* of Dharwar is now staying at our Ashram. She arrived with *Sri S. R. Patil* and an attendant lady. She spends all her time in meditation in her room.

* * * *

Sri N. Panchapakesan, who has been associated with Ramana Kendra both at Delhi and in Madras, and is a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan stayed at the Ashram for a few days with his wife. Before leaving for Dubai also he visited the Ashram and paid his homage to the Master.

* * * *

Sri B. S. Patil of Bijapur spent ten days at the Ashram absorbed in contemplation. This dedicated *bhakta* is loved by all in the Ashram; and his repeated visits are always welcome.

* * * *

² See *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, p. 229: "In the afternoon Khanna's wife appealed to Bhagavan in writing: 'I am not learned in the Scriptures and I find the method of Self-enquiry too hard for me. I am a woman with seven children and a lot of household cares, and it leaves me little time for meditation. I request Bhagavan to give me some simpler and easier method.'"

Bhagavan: 'No learning or knowledge of Scriptures is necessary to know the Self, as no man requires a mirror to see himself. All knowledge acquired has to be given up eventually as not-Self. Nor is household work or care for children an obstacle. If you can do nothing more, at least continue saying 'I', 'I', to yourself mentally all the time, as advised in *Who Am I?*, whatever work you may be doing, whether you are sitting, standing or walking. 'I' is a *mantra* greater than even OM'.

Miss Mithoo Rabadi, who is no stranger to the Ashram, spent a month here with a friend, Miss Ketty. Both helped the Book-stall staff, in addition to pursuing their spiritual sadhana.

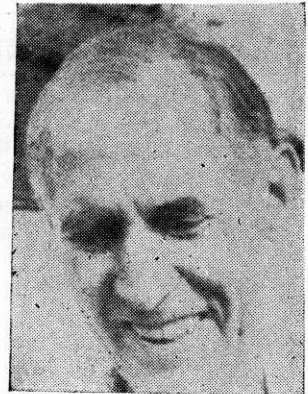
* * * *

An earnest devotee from *Arunachala Ashrama, New York*, has arrived at our Ashram with an important message and purpose. He is *Jim Grant*. He will be staying with us for a few months and assist the Ashram in formulating projects to celebrate the forthcoming Centenary of Bhagavan.

ARTHUR OSBORNE DAY

On May 8, devotees gathered at the samadhi of Arthur Osborne the founder-editor of *The Mountain Path*, at his residence to observe the death anniversary. Mrs. Lucia Osborne was away in England and so could not attend. Yet the celebration went off very well with singing of Hymns by and on Sri Bhagavan and distribution of prasad.

Mrs. Lucia Osborne is undergoing treatment and her health is improving. We pray to Sri Bhagavan that He showers His Grace on this old devotee and brings her back home in good health.



Arthur Osborne

OBITUARY

SRI C. L. MADNANI

We regret to announce the demise of our young friend, Sri C. L. MADNANI, on January 20, 1978. He was powerfully drawn to Sri Bhagavan and visited the Ashram twice.

He now rests in eternal Peace at the Lotus Feet of Sri Bhagavan.



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Sri Bhagavan's Birth Centenary

The Birth Centenary of Sri Bhagavan coming off in January, 1980 is to be celebrated in a fitting manner.

The event is to be commemorated by something concrete apart from publishing a Souvenir, which is also contemplated as one project. Any other project such as new publications, reprints, or fresh translations of works on and by Sri Bhagavan or even any charitable activity, will be appropriate to the occasion.

Devotees are requested to send suggestions so that a consensus can be arrived at and activities planned in time.

We are also planning to form a Committee to be entrusted with this laudable work.

Suggestions may please be sent to :

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