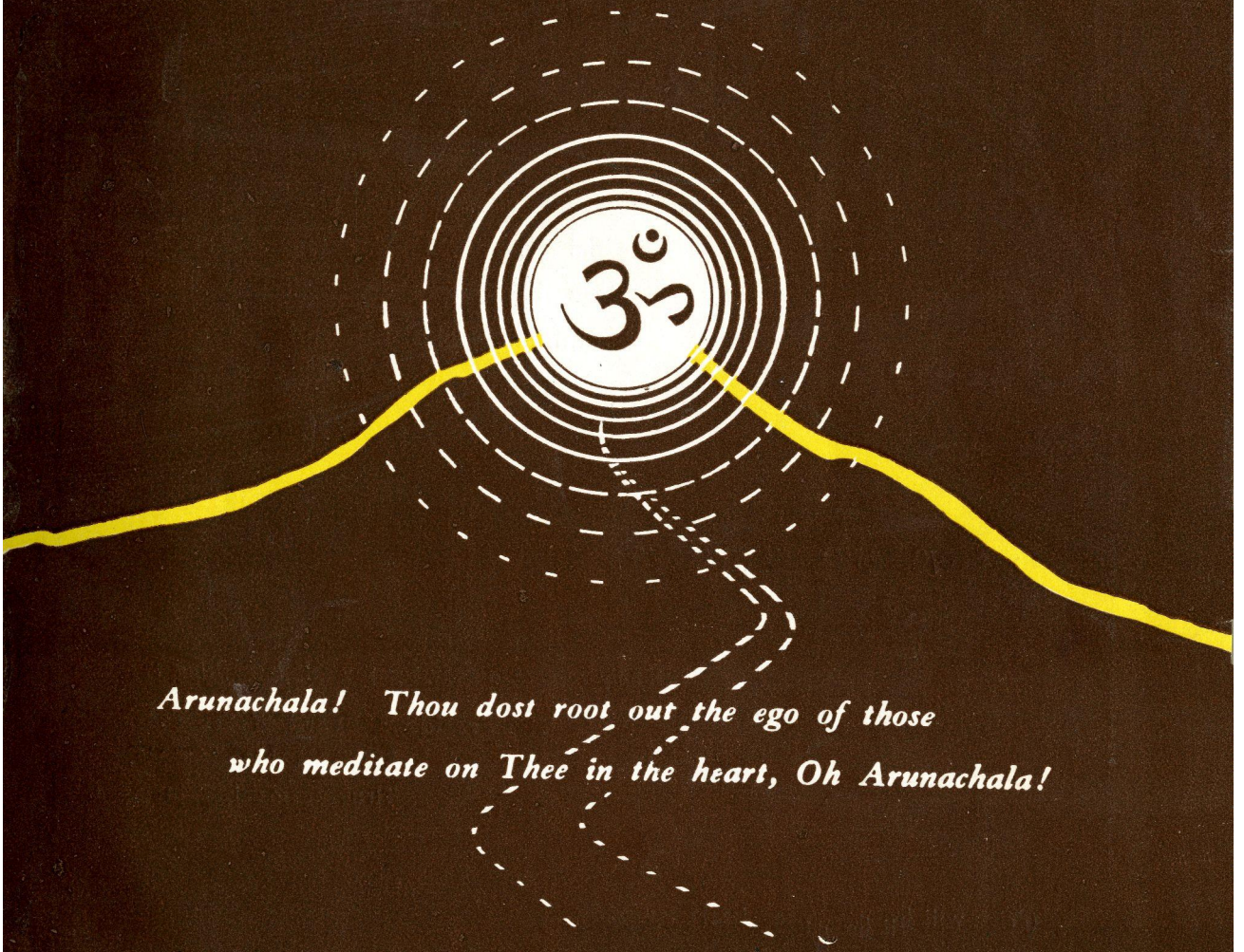


the
Mountain
path



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

vol. vii, no. 1, january 1970

Thou, unruffled by
Anger! What Crime has
marked me off (for Thy
wrath), Oh Arunachala?

—*The Marital Garland
of Letters*, verse 25.

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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

Vol. VII

JANUARY 1970

No. 1

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GRACE IN WORDS: The Verses (UPADESA SARAM) in Tamil reproduced on the fly-leaf facing the frontispiece is the facsimile of Sri Bhagavan's own handwriting. The translation is a new free rendering into English by Prof. K. Swaminathan.

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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

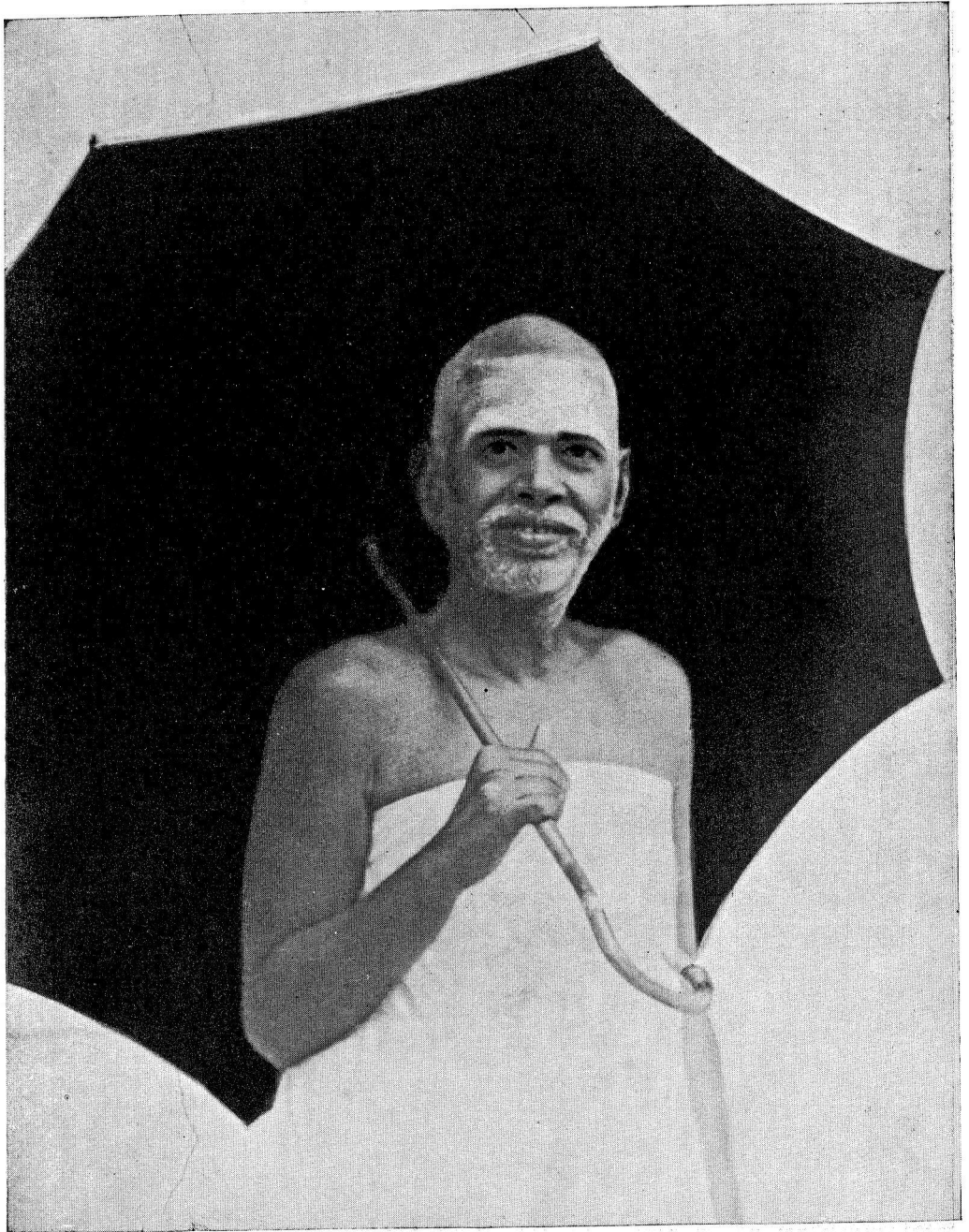
Grace in Words

வளியுள் ளடக்க வலைபடு புட்போ
ஆளமு மொடுங்குறு முந்தீபற
வொடுக்க வுபாயமி துந்தீபற.
உளமு முயிரு முணர்வுத் செயலு
முளவாங் கிளையிரண் டுந்தீபற
வொன்றவற் நின்மூல முந்தீபற.
இலயமு நாச மிரண்டா மொடுக்க
மிலயித் துளதெழு முந்தீபற
வெழாதுரு மாய்ந்ததே ஆந்தீபற.

11. *Holding the breath controls the mind,
A bird caught in a net.
Breath-regulation helps
Absorption in the heart.*
12. *Mind and breath (as thought and action)
Fork out like two branches.
But both spring
From a single root.*
13. *Absorption is of two sorts:
Submergence and destruction.
Mind submerged rises again;
Dead, it revives no more.*

— BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI







THE 'MOUNTAIN' PATH

(QUARTERLY)

Editor: ARTHUR OSBORNE

Vol. VII

JANUARY, 1970

No. 1

CONCENTRATION AND DETACHMENT

Editorial

WHAT is needed is simply to take things as they come, reacting in the way one feels to be right, interfering as little as possible. Then things will come right of their own accord and the Grace will flow unimpeded. One does not have to induce the divine Grace to flow, only to refrain from obstructing.

There are two kinds of obstruction which prevent this and make the path long and arduous. They are distraction and attachment. Therefore their opposites have to be cultivated; that is concentration and detachment.

Let us first consider concentration. The untrained mind is seldom able to concentrate steadily on any thought at all, for any length of time. It flits about fitfully from thought to thought. The same is to be seen in conversation — for instance at a social gathering — nothing is talked through to a conclusion, no subject is seriously discussed, just butterfly talk flitting from one topic to another. Let the person with untrained mind see how long he can hold it to any one theme. He will be doing well if he can get

beyond thirty seconds! How much training, then, will be needed to hold the mind to pure awareness!

Some teachers prescribe exercises for concentration, but this is seldom more than a parlour game. When it does have any effect it is apt to do more harm than good unless the mind is at the same time being purified. Concentrated egoism is more dangerous than distracted.

The mind automatically gets strengthened and purified simultaneously by being turned to prayer or incantation or to meditation on (or experience of) pure being. Practice is needed and it may be difficult at first, but on the other hand a flow of Grace may be released far in excess of what practice seems to account for. Particularly may this be so in one who has already developed the power of concentration, even though it be in a completely different field — chess, for instance, or science or art, or it may even be in crime or egoism. One who has openly used his power of concentration in an evil way may, when induced to turn it aright, make equally spectacular progress. There

are a number of famous examples of this. The Sage Valmiki, author of the *Ramayana*, was a murderer and robber until a sudden revulsion turned him in the right direction. The same was the case with one of the great Marathi poet-saints of Mediaeval India. Buddha went out into the forest to seek Angulimala, a notorious killer and plunderer, conquered him by the spiritual power flowing through him, and brought him back as a yellow-robed monk. Similar stories are told, if I remember aright, of St. John the Evangelist on the Island of Patmos and of St. Francis of Assisi. The necessary ruthlessness was already there; it had only to be turned against the ego by one tremendous act of will and the power of concentration enabled Divine Grace to flow through them.

If lack of concentration destroys a man's ability to maintain steady self-awareness, lack of detachment destroys his will to. What is needed is to be detached and concentrated at the same time. Or it might be said that what is needed is true humility, because humility is not in essence comparative at all. It does not mean comparing oneself unfavourably with others (in which there may be a good dose of hypocrisy) but appearing in utter poverty and submission before the Supreme. But the ego throws out tentacles, clutches at possessions, enjoyment, status, power, and puts up a fight. The qualities which religion denounces as 'sins' are in fact those which inflate the ego and prevent its total submission. Whether one speaks in terms of duality or Oneness, whether one calls That 'God' or 'Self', the fact remains that the ego must be deflated enough to pass through the eye of a needle before it can return to That. Ethical philosophers have tried to make out that the conception of 'sin' arises from social convenience and that only those actions are condemned which harm society. They are quite wrong. Sins are modes of action which harm primarily oneself by inflating the ego and making it unwilling to submit.

Attachments are the roots of the ego in the twofold sense of clinging and nourish-

ing. The ego cannot renounce the world inwardly as long as it clings to it through attachments; it cannot become tenuous enough to pass through the eye of a needle so long as it is nourished by attachments. The ego and its attachments are mutually dependent: the ego cannot be destroyed so long as there are attachments and attachments cannot be destroyed so long as there is an ego. The 'holy war' can take either the form of attacking attachments in order to starve out the ego or attacking the ego so that with its death the attachments also will perish. Actually both types of campaign have to be carried on simultaneously. Neither is a passport to success; both require courage and perseverance. Also both require skill and alertness because the ego is very cunning. Deprived of one outlet it will switch its attention to another. Deprived of a gross outlet it will find a subtle one. When vigilance is relaxed over a captured stronghold it will return there, so that one can never count on demolishing them one by one. The ability of the ego to spring up in a new form as soon as the old one is threatened is symbolised in mythology by the hero's combat with an enemy that constantly changes form. He has to be equally alert and change with it—into an eagle when it becomes a bird, a lion when it becomes a beast, and so on. The constant springing of attachments is symbolised by combat with a giant or monster who grows two new heads for each one that is cut off. The only way is to strike to the heart.

This is the opposite approach of striking at the ego itself which Bhagavan recommended. Naturally, no scope is to be given to attachments. They are to be kept in check and renounced as far as possible; but the main attack is on the ego itself. Bhagavan compared the ego to a tree and its attachments to the branches. If you cut off branches it still continues to put out new ones; Self-enquiry is an attempt to uproot the tree itself. As I have said, there is no easy recipe for success; the quest is a path for heroes; but it is the part of wisdom, as in warfare, to use one's forces to the best advantage, and the attack on the ego itself

through Self-enquiry affords the most direct approach to victory. But it must be a real attack. Mere theorising is no attack and can produce no victory. A man's understanding that his ego is unreal will do very little to weaken his propensities, which nourish it and which hold him back from the bliss of realized Identity. Attachments have a strong emotional force and can only be demolished by a stronger force. It is often love and devotion that supplies this. A man who, on the basis of doctrinal understanding, criticises a divine lover is like one who sits at the foot of a mountain with a good route map in his hand and declares scornfully of a climber: "That fellow will never reach the top; his map only goes three quarters of the way up." Perhaps so; but perhaps when he reaches that point he will see the way clear with no need for any further map. And in any case he is already above the heat and miasma of the plains, while his critic may be no better off for his unused map.

But with love also, it must be real love, capable of destroying attachments. That is the test. Some have asked how one is to

love God. The prescription sometimes given—by counting His blessings on us and thinking of all our sins and His forgiveness—is quite phony. Even humanly one does not love out of gratitude. Such a mentality presumes two persons, God and ego; but if God is All-Powerful and ego loves Him out of gratitude for caring for his wants he can equally well blame Him for not caring for them, for sending sickness, privation, bereavement, and ultimately death. It is a wholly false mentality. This individual is by nature drawn to That Universal; it only has to stay still and forget its desires and interests and the natural power of divine attraction will be felt. And that is love. Individual attachment is also felt, and the attraction must be powerful enough to overcome the attachment.

The two methods of knowledge and devotion may seem mutually exclusive in theory but in practice they are not. One can seek the inner Guru while at the same time worshipping the outer. The quest is a war in which whatever weapon proves effective can be used.

Beingness

By

G. N. Daley

THE Self is Awareness: objects and things as seen by ego-consciousness are the insentient Not-Self, and just as Universal Mind creates the illusory appearance of matter so does individual mind create the illusion of separated self and separated things. The mechanism of thought and feeling is the same as, and can be said to create, the separated "I". In order to dispel this illusion it is only necessary to trace the "I" back to its source by asking, "Who am I?"

until it is seen that the ego "I" and mind arise and cease together, just as creation arises and ceases with Universal Mind. Continual Vichara and effort will ultimately remove all trace of the ego "I" and awareness alone will remain, not even perceiving the unity of all. Thus will consciousness be brought to the point of *just Being* in Now-space. There is a formless state beyond this which is also just Being, but that is of no immediate concern, just BE now.

THE WAY OF THE SPIRIT

By
M. A. PIGGOTT

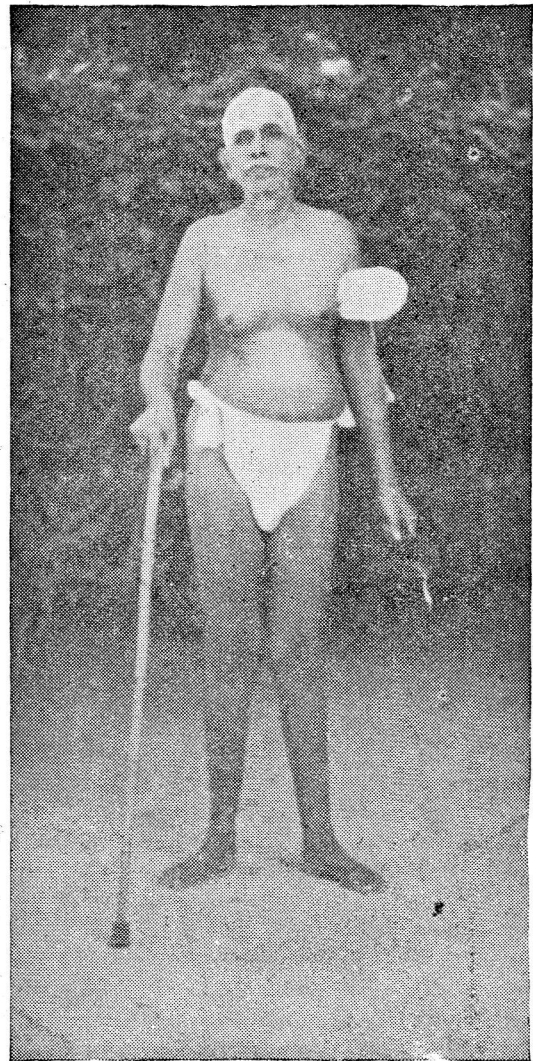
This article relates to visits made to the Ashram of Sri Ramana Maharshi in the years 1932-3. Since that time there has been a continual flow of visitors from all parts of the world. This entailed much outward alteration and many changes have taken place.

I HAD visited India before, but it was my first trip off the beaten track. Staying with friends or in the luxurious hotels of Bombay and Calcutta, provided with modern conveniences, can give little indication of the conditions to be met with when leaving highways. But this was an adventure in a cause, and nothing else mattered.

For some years it had been my wish to meet one of the real Holy Men of India, but so far it was a vain one. I had, it is true, spoken with a few saintly men and also some fakirs of the mediumistic type, who were no doubt sincere enough in their way. But they were not what I was seeking. Then I was told of Sri Ramana Maharshi. And even from the little I heard, I knew I would travel anywhere and put up with any inconvenience in order to reach him.

The friend who gave me the welcome news of his existence offered to take me to him, and so we arrived at Tiruvannamalai late one afternoon. We put up at that none too clean accommodation the 'dak' bungalow or travellers' rest-house, which is all that is offered to the wayfarer who strays from the cities. No bedding is provided and there is seldom much furniture. But we left my servant to wrestle with such details and made our way to the bazaar and then up the Ashram in a cart drawn by a pony. The end of our drive found us somewhat battered but full of expectation.

Several of the people living in the Ashram, mostly devotees, came out to greet us. Amongst them was the younger brother of the Maharshi. He was dressed in the ochre robe denoting a Sannyasin — one who has renounced the world. The others were not



strictly monks in the western sense of the word, nor is an Ashram a Monastery. It is a place where people wishing to study or follow a spiritual life may live. Often there

are no orders or binding rules, and anyone can come and go as he pleases. Even women, though not allowed to sleep on the premises, are welcomed.

Most of the people spoke English and greeted me in a most friendly manner. This was encouraging, for I was nervous, having been told that I was the first European woman so far to visit the Maharishi, or Maharshi, as he is generally called. We were then taken in at once to see the Holy Man, and after making the Indian salutation, by holding the two palms together and raising them thus joined to the forehead, we laid our offerings on the ground before him. He was seated on a divan upon which was spread a large leopard skin. In front of the divan sandal-sticks were burning and a small brazier of coals, on which a special kind of incense was constantly being thrown.

About a dozen people were present in the hall. They spoke in low tones to one another, and a child prattled to his mother. But soon these sounds ceased and there was quiet. I sat cross-legged on the floor with the others, though a chair had been thoughtfully provided for me.

For a while nothing happened. I tried to concentrate my mind. Suddenly I became conscious that the Maharshi's eyes were fixed on me. They seemed literally like burning coals of fire piercing through one. They glittered in the dim light. Never before had I experienced anything so devastating — in fact it was almost frightening. What I went through in that terrible half hour, in a way of self-condemnation and scorn for the pettiness of my own life, would be difficult to describe. Not that he criticized, even in silence — of that he was incapable — but in the light of perfection all imperfections are revealed. To show how little responsible he was for my feelings, he told me later on that doubting, self-distrust and self-depreciation are some of the greatest hindrances to the realization of Reality.

Presently the Maharshi got up and went for his evening walk. This was the signal for a general exodus, and we all trooped outside.

One of the devotees offered to show us around the Ashram, a cluster of small white-washed buildings and huts, all spotlessly clean, and joined together in some cases by a covered passage-way. The Ashram was picturesquely situated half way up the famous holy mountain of Arunachala. It was on this mountain side that the Maharshi took up his abode more than thirty years ago, and ever since then it has been his home. He was, at the time of my visit, about fifty years, but looked older, owing no doubt to the privations and austerities practised in early life.

It was dark when we returned for the evening meditation, and most of the people not living permanently in the Ashram had left. The hall was compellingly still. The eyes of the Holy One blazed no more. They were serene and inverted. All my troubles seemed smoothed out and difficulties melted away. Nothing that we of the world call important, mattered. Time was forgotten. Life was one, in its many aspects.

Late the next afternoon my friend had to return to his home leaving me behind in charge of my elderly servant, a fatherly and trustworthy man, who saw to it that the water and milk were properly boiled, and that, on my return each night from the Ashram, a suitable meal was waiting for me at the travellers' rest house.

From that time onwards, started a routine that was to be the same for many weeks. The rickety cart would turn up at six in the morning. It took me up to the Ashram and came back again at seven-thirty in the evening for the return journey. I soon acquired a technique of balance that promised safety if not comfort and the drive lost most of its original precariousness. However it was never peaceful owing to the small insect life inhabiting the straw on which I had to crouch!

Up at the Ashram I was given a small hut, seven feet by seven, for my use during the day. In it were a wooden plank, a chair and a table on which were a basin, towel and soap. Not luxurious, but the thought and care with which it had been provided

touched me more than I can say. However, being a European, my bones were not accustomed to wood unrelieved by a mattress, and the midday rest taken after the noon meal, was hardly one so far as I was concerned.

There were two chief meals, one at eleven-thirty in the morning and the other around eight in the evening. I ate with the others at the morning one. The food was more or less the same at both — rice, with an assortment of vegetables and milk curd. Everybody sat on the floor in front of an individual strip of banana leaf.

* * *

Everyone gathered in the hall. Most people were quiet and taken up with their own thoughts. But sometimes there were visitors, travelling monks or devotees who came for the Maharshi's blessing, and they would sing sacred songs and tell allegorical tales.

Among those who turn up at the Asram for a short stay was an American author,¹ whose books and translations of Tibetan manuscripts are well known. We had many enlightening talks, and I was glad of his presence for another reason. Asking questions in the open hall was rather an ordeal, but backed by him I lost some of my diffidence. We pooled our problems and came to the Maharshi with them, trivial or profound. An interpreter was always on hand, for although the Maharshi understands English he does not speak it with ease. He knows immediately, however, whether the exact shade of meaning has been accurately translated, and if not he perseveres until one has understood him completely. One day we brought up the question of *guruship*.

"Is it necessary for spiritual attainment to have a *guru* or spiritual teacher?"

The Maharshi ordered a certain treatise to be read, in which it was stated that as in all physical and intellectual training a teacher or instructor is sought, so in matters spiritual the same principle holds good.

"And," he added, "it is hard for a man to arrive at the goal without the aid of such a one."

I turned to him. "But you had no *guru*?"

A rustle of shocked horror ran through the hall. But the Maharshi was not in the least disturbed by my audacious remark. On the contrary, he looked at me with a twinkle in his eye. Then he threw back his head and gave a joyous, whole-hearted laugh. It endeared me to him as nothing else could. A saint who can turn the laugh against himself is a saint indeed.

My companion next wanted a ruling on the vexed question of vegetarianism. Everyone had something to say about that. The outcome boiled down to this:

Food affects the mind. Certain kinds make it more *sattvic* — alive, vibrant. For the practice of any kind of *yoga*, vegetarianism is absolutely necessary. But on my asking if one could experience spiritual illumination whilst normally eating flesh foods, the answer was 'yes', qualified by the injunction to leave them off and gradually accustom the body to the purer types of food. "But in any case," went on the Maharshi, "once you have attained Illumination, it will make little difference what you eat. It is the early stages that are important. On a great fire it is immaterial what fuel is heaped."

Another problem discussed was that of the different kinds of *Yoga*, and the benefit of various methods.

The Maharshi said that in the end there was only one approach to the goal, and that was through the realization of what the Self is. Why waste time on other roads which at best will only lead to the final path? Better be on that path itself all the time, and lose no precious moments. Meditate on the Self, on that alone. There is no other goal. The Maharshi's philosophy and teaching is the purest Advaita — non-dualistic — as will be seen in a talk I shortly had with him.

I had been in despair of ever getting the Maharshi alone. It is hard to unburden the soul before a crowd. But early one morning I came into the hall and found him there unattended, emanating a wonderful stillness and peace. I asked quietly if I might talk

¹ Mr. Paul Brunton, the author of *A Search in Secret India*.

But this was unusual. The Maharshi did not heal, in the accepted term of the word. Talking about it one day, I asked him if one could use spiritual power for healing. He remarked, "Yes, if you think it worthwhile," but added that it required a great deal of force, which might be used more profitably in other directions.

* * *

I was told that the Maharshi had his finger on the pulse of the whole Ashram. For instance: when in the hall, he was supposed to know what was going on, even in the kitchen — and incidentally I was surprised to find that he himself assisted in the cutting up of vegetables for the daily meal. I was also told that he knows what is passing in the minds of people. Of this latter ability, I had a small personal experience.

It was in the afternoon and I was in the far corner of the hall reading the translation of a collection of aphorisms written in — to me — a flowery and artificial vein. I was bored and slightly irritated. Suddenly one of the devotees stood before me with another book in his hand — all the Ashram books were bound in brown paper and looked exactly alike — and said, "The Maharshi asks me to give you this. He thinks it will be more sympathetic to your type of mind." It was. How could the Maharshi know what I was reading? I was sitting far away, with many people in between us, blocking his line of vision. But I had previously noticed that many times he would answer a question in my mind, whilst it was only in the process of being formulated. This happened too often to be a coincidence.

* * *

Every experience has to end and the last day of my visit to the Ashram arrived, and with it a great sadness filled my heart. I must go back to worries, problems and irritations. Here all was peace. Here it was comparatively easy to live in the mood of the spirit. Is this why so many holy people retire to solitude, I wondered. Is it only in conditions such as these that the hidden verities emerge from under the covering of distractions? Still, all of us cannot follow such a life. Is

the answer to live in the world, if we must, but not be of the world? There was nothing new in the idea, yet in this place I seemed to understand it for the first time.

That afternoon I had my farewell talk with the Maharshi. He was so gentle and human. We discussed the difficulties of everyday life and mundane problems. I asked again about the relation of the body to the 'I'. He gave this simile.

"You came up from the bungalow this morning in a cart. Yet you do not say, 'The cart came up'. You say 'I came up'. You did not make the mistake of identifying yourself with the cart. In the same way, look upon your body as you do the cart. Treat it well, and it will be a good servant and instrument. But do not be deceived into thinking it is 'I'." He again stressed the necessity to see only the Self in everything. Act automatically, so to speak, and let 'It' do the work. "And 'It' always will," he added. "Do not look for results. Do what is right in the given moment and leave it behind you."

At the end of our talk, he quoted that wonderful saying from the *Upanishad* 'When to the man who understands, the Self has become all things, what sorrow, what trouble, can there be, to him who has once beheld this unity?'

As I went to say goodbye in the evening the Ashram people clustered round in sympathy for my departure. I felt I had made and was leaving true friends. They were so simple and yet so genuine.

There was a service taking place in the adjoining Temple, and an old Sanscrit hymn was being chanted. Just as I stepped into the cart the Temple bell rang. This brought a smile of happiness on everyone's face. Apparently, to hear a temple gong in the act of departure is a wonderful omen and brings peace.

As I left Tiruvannamalai in the dawn of the next morning, I caught a last glimpse of Arunachala, the Holy Mountain, on which lives one as one of the saints of earth. It was red and glowing in the rising sun.

I wept.

TWO KINDS OF SILENCE

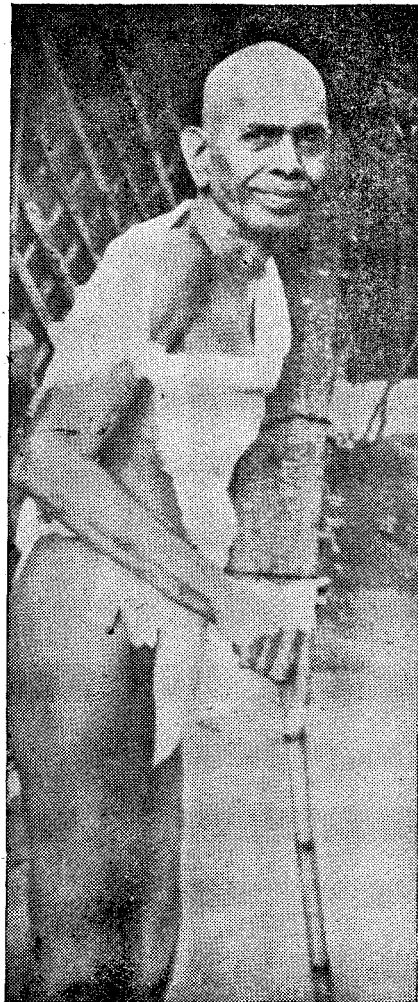
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By
Prof. N. A. NIKAM

DIFFERENT people have had different sorts of experience at Ramana Ashram. If I were to describe my experience on entering the Ramana Ashram for the first time, I would describe it as an experience of two sorts of silence: the silence of death and the silence of illumination. As I entered the ashram, I perceived a group of people sitting around in utter silence around somebody who was reclining on a sofa. On seeing this, I stopped and withdrew a little, and became grave and solemn, and behaved exactly as I would or have done when I enter a house in which someone is dead. It was a grave and solemn silence, the silence of sorrow and grief, as it were. It was natural that I should experience this on seeing the group of people who were sitting in silence around somebody, as, till then, I had no experience of silence other than the silence that is associated with death. But this experience of mine was also appropriate, as Ramana Maharshi had died to the body. The silence that I experienced therefore was symbolic; it symbolised the death of the body. This was significant. Ramana Maharshi was dead to the body, and yet he lived.

Yet, when I lived in the ashram for two or three days, I experienced an altogether different kind of silence. In the first instance, it was a silence of meditation. Its direction was towards a stillness that was coming into being, hour after hour, accompanying all my physical activities at the ashram. It was followed by an ineffable kind of calmness and joy, or joy and calmness, where one was indistinguishable from the other.

But the final phase of this experience was a silence that *communicated* through silence. It was a silence that was teaching; it was a silence that was speaking. Indeed, it was a silence of illumination, where one had no



desire to ask questions, or discovered that one had *no* questions to ask; or, if there were indeed any questions to ask, they were directed to one's own self, and so, the experience of this sort of silence went more and more inward, and the silence became an experience of a presence. And it still is that experience of an ever-present presence.



THE 'MOUNTAIN' PATH

(QUARTERLY)

Editor: ARTHUR OSBORNE

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No. 1

CONCENTRATION AND DETACHMENT

Editorial

WHAT is needed is simply to take things as they come, reacting in the way one feels to be right, interfering as little as possible. Then things will come right of their own accord and the Grace will flow unimpeded. One does not have to induce the divine Grace to flow, only to refrain from obstructing.

There are two kinds of obstruction which prevent this and make the path long and arduous. They are distraction and attachment. Therefore their opposites have to be cultivated; that is concentration and detachment.

Let us first consider concentration. The untrained mind is seldom able to concentrate steadily on any thought at all, for any length of time. It flits about fitfully from thought to thought. The same is to be seen in conversation — for instance at a social gathering — nothing is talked through to a conclusion, no subject is seriously discussed, just butterfly talk flitting from one topic to another. Let the person with untrained mind see how long he can hold it to any one theme. He will be doing well if he can get

beyond thirty seconds! How much training, then, will be needed to hold the mind to pure awareness!

Some teachers prescribe exercises for concentration, but this is seldom more than a parlour game. When it does have any effect it is apt to do more harm than good unless the mind is at the same time being purified. Concentrated egoism is more dangerous than distracted.

The mind automatically gets strengthened and purified simultaneously by being turned to prayer or incantation or to meditation on (or experience of) pure being. Practice is needed and it may be difficult at first, but on the other hand a flow of Grace may be released far in excess of what practice seems to account for. Particularly may this be so in one who has already developed the power of concentration, even though it be in a completely different field — chess, for instance, or science or art, or it may even be in crime or egoism. One who has openly used his power of concentration in an evil way may, when induced to turn it aright, make equally spectacular progress. There

THE WAKEFUL SLEEP

By
ANONYMOUS

SELF is pure awareness. The jiva, the non-self, is a reflected image of that awareness. An aspirant should meditate on the pure awareness and experience the realization of the Self, disregarding the non-self.

Self shines by Itself. Jiva is but a temporary reflection that appears to exist through a supporting medium. It vanishes as soon as this support is withdrawn, like the reflected sun in a pot of water. Here too, the sun is self-luminous and independent. The sun in the water pot, on the other hand, is only a temporary appearance through the medium of the water-pot. No sooner the water dries up in the pitcher than the reflected sun also disappears. The appearance and disappearance of the reflected sun does not at all affect the real sun. Similar is the relationship between the self-effulgent Self or Atman and the reflected-self or jiva. In the living conditions of the world, is it possible to visualise separately the jiva and Atman? The answer to this is given in the following stanza: "The jiva appears to exist only in the waking and dream states. In deep sleep, it merges with the mind. In that state, it is the self-effulgent Atman that directly illuminates the ignorance-ridden jiva which is the sole enjoyer of worldly experiences." — (*Laghuvakyavritti-4*)

All the worldly experiences are dovetailed within the waking, dream and deep-sleep states. It is evident that the entity that enjoys the experiences in the two states of waking and dream is the reflected-self which cannot exist without holding on to one or the other sense-perceptions through its intellect. If, in these two states, there are no sankalpas or vasanas, the non-self jiva masquerading as 'I' will not be perceived at all. Just as the water in the pitcher is the cause for the sun to be reflected, the ever-changing pattern of perceptions forms the

basis and support for the existence of the jiva. Because the jiva is a reflected image incapable of independent existence, it is clear that the 'self'-knowledge of the jiva can only be secondary. There can be no reflection of sun if there is no water. This fact is made clear in deep sleep or sushupti. Even though one is not aware of the experience of deep sleep while in the state of deep sleep, no one will deny his own experience of deep sleep.

If we can investigate and understand sushupti, then the secret underlying experiences in the world can be explained. What is the proof that deep sleep is an experience? It is the fact that the person who gets up from sleep recalls that experience. "I had sound sleep; I knew nothing", that is the first thing that a person remembers on waking up. It is not possible to recall a thing which one has not experienced at all. This memory of experience reveals a few things: It is the same 'I' of the waking-dream states who went to sleep. What obtained in sleep was happiness. Yet, at that time, 'I' was unaware of the same. In short, in sushupti, 'I' the enjoyer and the ignorance that stood as a bar for the enjoyment alone existed. Here, it is certain that the ignorant 'I' giving up its individualised, egoistic existence seeks a state of uninterrupted peace. The Upanishads have proclaimed this truth. In sleep, there is no difference between the thief, sannyasi, father, son, animal and bird. What happens is this. The reflected self or jiva which earlier animated itself through the various sense perceptions both in the waking and dream states, having dissolved its exclusive existence, merges temporarily with the pure Self, which caused the jiva to be reflected, leaving no trace of cognised objects. The jiva thus 'enjoys' an un-interrupted peace, unconsciously though, but is not allowed to remain in that state for long because the

inescapable vasanas that follow the jiva fuse themselves into a curtain of ignorance. On waking up, again the sense perceptions emerge from this curtain of ignorance, and associating itself with them, the jiva gets entangled in the mundane world. As a matter of fact, the jiva in sushupti, is at the threshold of the eternal truth of existence-bliss. But as it reaches this state weighed down with a dark curtain of false notions that formed its basis in the waking and dream states, the jiva is deprived of conscious enjoyment of the existence-bliss at the actual time of experience. Hence the jiva, time and again, returns to the sense-ridden and objectified field of perception.

It has already been stated that the vasanas of the waking and dream states create a dark cover in the deep sleep state and, at the time of waking, the same old vasanas rise up from out of this cover of ignorance. The seekers of truth in India have succeeded in destroying the vasanas even in the waking state and thereby have been able to have the direct experience of this truth free of ignorance. Even today that experience can be within the reach of those who make bold to destroy the vasanas completely in the waking state. Thus, in deep sleep, it is the pure effulgent Self that gives light to the cover of ignorance in which the jiva is merged in that state. This cover of ignorance in which the jiva merges is insentient. Its

insentience is illuminated by the self-effulgent Atman. If it is possible to remove the dark curtain that prevents the direct perception of Self in sushupti, the Self reveals Itself by Itself, just as the sun is revealed when the dark clouds move away from over the sun. It is just because the jiva stands at the brink of bliss that it is able to enjoy the peace of bliss in deep sleep even though unaware. The jiva, caught up in the muddle of worldly experience, cannot exist without such frequent sojourns into bliss. That is why sleep is the experience most liked by all. Let us see what Śankara Bhagavatpada says about this experience of bliss in the *Dakshinamurthi Stotra*: "A coat of ignorance stands over the jiva in sushupti. The condition of jiva here is like that of an eclipsed sun or moon. The sense activities, useful only in the perceptive living world, having been dissolved for the time being, the jiva here merges with the Self. Such is the state of jiva in sushupti. On waking, it recognises its 'self-existence' as: 'it is "I" myself who went to sleep earlier.' My obeisance to Guru Dakshinamurthi, the embodiment of the ultimate truth." (Verse 6)

Translated from the original in Malayalam by Sri G. Balakrishnan Nair, entitled: *Laghuvakyavriithi*, appearing in "Paramapurushartham, December 1967".

— Courtesy: Chinmaya Mission (Regd.), Ernakulam.

The Infinitude of God's Love

By M. M. Pararasasingham

God's love, boundless, immens'nable, fills th'earth,
 Heaven, the depths o'hell ——— a cleansing, celestial fire.
 It burns the dross, reveals gold of proven worth,
 Retrieves what is priceless, buried in the mire.
 How oppressive seem the dread hours spent within the shell
 To the throb, the heart beat, the life in darkness enclosed,
 Until the first faint gleam of light breaks the spell,
 And the world in its beauty and loveliness lies disclosed!
 God, who is love supreme, ne'er will'd a state
 O'suffering for man, that will without end prevail.
 O Soul! for thee will birth and death alternate
 Until SELF is born anew out of thy travail,
 Formless, beyond world's shore
 With radiance all aglow.

The essence of Advaita is contained in the four *Mahāvākya*s : (i) *Tat Twam Asi*, (ii) *Ayamātmā Brahma*. (iii) *Prajñānam Brahma*, and (iv) *Aham Brahmāsmi*. All these indicate the same truth or answer, the question being "Who am I?"

We will now see how Śri Śankara analyses and explains to us the first of the *Mahāvākya*s, the great dictum of the Upanishads — *Tat Twam Asi* or "That thou art", to make us understand *Ātma Vidya*, the doctrine of the knowledge of the 'Self,' or spiritual essence.

"That thou art," represents or signifies, nay affirms, that man is possessed of, or is himself, "That one thing, which when it is known, all things are known". 'That' or 'Tat' is the *Ātman*, which is impartite, undivided amongst divided things, — the spirit, of all beings. It is the inconceivable, the biggest of all (*Paramātman*), the indescribable, without form, name and qualities (*Nirguna*). "It" cannot be compared with any other, as "It" is all-comprehensive; others do not exist as part of "It", as the Infinite has no parts, but others are in "It". What "It" is cannot be realised unless experienced. Can one realise or know how sugar tastes, unless one actually tastes it? One cannot, even after several comparisons are made, to each one of which one would only answer "Not this, Not this." Similar is the *nēti* theory expounded in the Upanishads and explained to us in great detail by Śri Śankara that *Ātman*, the *Paramātma*, cannot be realised unless by self-experience.

The existence of "Thou" or *Twam* cannot be taken as a separate entity as *Tat* does not have the "Other" or the second, *Ekamevādwaitiyam*; This *Twam* considered as *Jivātma*, is the same as *Tat*, the *Paramātma*.

The body which is perishable is considered as "I", but it is not actually so, for the mind comes into the picture. We experience the body and the mind being at different places at the same time, as the mind works in a different field even when the body is engaged on a specific work. Then, can we say that the "I" is the mind? Even

this is not so, for during deep sleep when both the mind and the body do not work, there appears to be another entity, which experiences, on becoming awake, the happy state of the soundness of sleep. In the awakened state, the mind, intellect, consciousness, *ahankār* or ego, and all the *indriyās* work. It is only the inner Self or *Antarātma* that is active to experience the dream state. In the deep sleep state, all these are silent. Thus arises the question as to who this real or genuine experiencer, the real "I" is. The answer is the 'Self', the *Ātman*, the Changeless, the Permanent, the Eternal, as opposed to the body, the mind and the intellect, all of which change. The 'Self' or *Jivātma* is therefore nothing else than the attributeless *Paramātma*, and there are no two or separate entities. The term *Asi* of the *Mahāvākya* connotes this identification of 'Thou' or *Twam* with 'That' or *Tat*.

Śri Śankara explains that *Brahman* is the only one and there are no *Jivātmas*, they being part and parcel of Him nay Himself and gives the example how the contents of empty pots which appear separate, merge with the open atmosphere when the pots are broken. Similarly, he says that with the getting over of the idea of 'I'ness as a separate entity, the breaking of this ignorance, the *Jivātmas* disappear and merge with the *Paramātma*, the basis of all existence, the existence itself.

Accepting that *Jivātma* and *Paramātma* are one and the same, there arises the doubting of the very character of God, nay the very existence of God, when we begin to think about the creation of the world and of persons therein with differing attitudes. If *Brahman* is All-wise, All-powerful and All-compassionate, how can one reconcile oneself to the grim tragedy and suffering in life, full of sorrows and unhappiness? It cannot be the work of a benign God and one gets the feeling that it is not the work of any God at all, but the machinations of a blind irrational fate.

Śri Śankara now introduces *Jagat Mithya*, next in importance to the *Mahāvākya*s, to

are a number of famous examples of this. The Sage Valmiki, author of the *Ramayana*, was a murderer and robber until a sudden revulsion turned him in the right direction. The same was the case with one of the great Marathi poet-saints of Mediaeval India. Buddha went out into the forest to seek Angulimala, a notorious killer and plunderer, conquered him by the spiritual power flowing through him, and brought him back as a yellow-robed monk. Similar stories are told, if I remember aright, of St. John the Evangelist on the Island of Patmos and of St. Francis of Assisi. The necessary ruthlessness was already there; it had only to be turned against the ego by one tremendous act of will and the power of concentration enabled Divine Grace to flow through them.

If lack of concentration destroys a man's ability to maintain steady self-awareness, lack of detachment destroys his will to. What is needed is to be detached and concentrated at the same time. Or it might be said that what is needed is true humility, because humility is not in essence comparative at all. It does not mean comparing oneself unfavourably with others (in which there may be a good dose of hypocrisy) but appearing in utter poverty and submission before the Supreme. But the ego throws out tentacles, clutches at possessions, enjoyment, status, power, and puts up a fight. The qualities which religion denounces as 'sins' are in fact those which inflate the ego and prevent its total submission. Whether one speaks in terms of duality or Oneness, whether one calls That 'God' or 'Self', the fact remains that the ego must be deflated enough to pass through the eye of a needle before it can return to That. Ethical philosophers have tried to make out that the conception of 'sin' arises from social convenience and that only those actions are condemned which harm society. They are quite wrong. Sins are modes of action which harm primarily oneself by inflating the ego and making it unwilling to submit.

Attachments are the roots of the ego in the twofold sense of clinging and nourish-

ing. The ego cannot renounce the world inwardly as long as it clings to it through attachments; it cannot become tenuous enough to pass through the eye of a needle so long as it is nourished by attachments. The ego and its attachments are mutually dependent: the ego cannot be destroyed so long as there are attachments and attachments cannot be destroyed so long as there is an ego. The 'holy war' can take either the form of attacking attachments in order to starve out the ego or attacking the ego so that with its death the attachments also will perish. Actually both types of campaign have to be carried on simultaneously. Neither is a passport to success; both require courage and perseverance. Also both require skill and alertness because the ego is very cunning. Deprived of one outlet it will switch its attention to another. Deprived of a gross outlet it will find a subtle one. When vigilance is relaxed over a captured stronghold it will return there, so that one can never count on demolishing them one by one. The ability of the ego to spring up in a new form as soon as the old one is threatened is symbolised in mythology by the hero's combat with an enemy that constantly changes form. He has to be equally alert and change with it—into an eagle when it becomes a bird, a lion when it becomes a beast, and so on. The constant springing of attachments is symbolised by combat with a giant or monster who grows two new heads for each one that is cut off. The only way is to strike to the heart.

This is the opposite approach of striking at the ego itself which Bhagavan recommended. Naturally, no scope is to be given to attachments. They are to be kept in check and renounced as far as possible; but the main attack is on the ego itself. Bhagavan compared the ego to a tree and its attachments to the branches. If you cut off branches it still continues to put out new ones; Self-enquiry is an attempt to uproot the tree itself. As I have said, there is no easy recipe for success; the quest is a path for heroes; but it is the part of wisdom, as in warfare, to use one's forces to the best advantage, and the attack on the ego itself

Unsteady breathing, a sickness in itself, is steadied. It has us progressively happier for no apparent reason. As our tonal quality improves we appreciate it as an attuning.

Our cells awake. We are relieved of internal confusions and external objectifications. As our focus changes from out to in, and

from in to through, our attention is led from peripheral to central awareness.

Effulgence of consciousness follows. Afflictions disappear. Intuitive faculties long dormant awake. Foresight and prevision are possible. Silently or audibly intoned, Gayatri is good to live and die with.

As - It - Isness

By

Wei Wu Wei

'DIFFERENCES' and 'preferences' are relative, and are applicable only to phenomena: noumenally there cannot be any such spatio-temporal notion as 'discrimination'.

That is why 'non-objective relation' accurately defines the phenomenal situation of a Sage *vis-à-vis* all manifestation.

'What I am — you are; what you are — I am' thereby becomes the only possible 'relation' of the Sage to all phenomena.

All phenomena can only be images conceptually extended spatially and temporally in relative or divided mind. Their subjectivity is that of the Sage, subjectivity-as-such or Suchness, for phenomenal or relative 'subjectivity' is an objectivised illusion. Therefore no barrier can factually exist, nor to a Sage *appear* to exist, between relative 'self' and 'other'.

A Sage, therefore, cannot 'love' or 'hate' any phenomenal manifestation, nor can a Sage be 'loved' or 'hated' by another appa-

rent Sage, whose only identity is his own and noumenal — which of course is not different from non-identity. Which is why he has nothing about which to argue, nothing to affirm and nothing to deny, why, in short, positive and negative, 'yes' and 'no', are in no manner different. Non-objective relation, therefore, is at the same time 'equanimity' in relativity.

Even 'presence' and 'absence' are meaningless to him, since whatever is present spatio-temporally is absent as such intemporally, and what is absence phenomenally is presence noumenally. This, again, is why *samsara* and *nirvana* are doctrinally "not-different", why *Buddhas* and *the ignorant* are 'identical', for in indivision no form of duality can be.

Is it not very simple and obvious? If we look from 'wholeness', unicity, instead of from division, duality, what we behold is just as-it-isness, for 'acting', metaphysically, is im-mediate (*wu wei*), whereas all relative acting is re-action (*yu wei*).

YOGA VASISHTA SARA¹

THE ESSENCE OF YOGA VASISHTA

Based on a translation made by SWAMI SURESANANDA

CHAPTER V

THE DESTRUCTION OF LATENT IMPRESSIONS

1. O Rama, this enquiry into the Self of the nature of 'Who am I?' is the fire which burns up the seeds of the evil tree which is the mind.

2. Just as the wind does not affect the creepers in a picture, so also afflictions do not affect one whose understanding is fortified by firmness and (always) reflected in the mirror of enquiry.

3. The knowers of truth declare that enquiry into the truth of the Self is knowledge. What is to be known is contained in it like sweetness in milk.

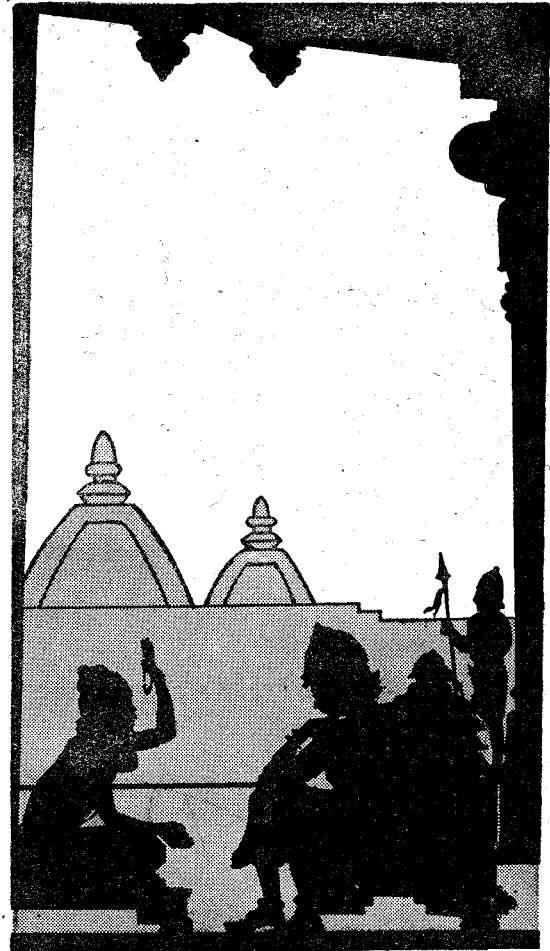
4. To one who has realized the Self by enquiry Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are objects of compassion.

5. To one who is fond of enquiring (constantly) 'What is this vast universe?' and 'Who am I?' this world becomes quite unreal.

6. Just as in a mirage the idea of water does not occur to one who knows (that it is a mirage), even so latent impressions do not rise in one whose ignorance has been destroyed by realizing that everything is Brahman.

7. By the abandonment of latent impressions or by the control of breathing mind ceases to be the mind. Practise whichever you like.

8. O pure soul, cherish the association of sages and the true scriptures; you will attain the state of Supreme Consciousness not in the course of months but days.



9. Latent impressions cease to be active when one associates with sages, discards all thoughts of samsara and remembers that the body has to die.

10. O Raghava, even ignorant persons convert by the firmness of their conviction, poison into nectar and nectar into poison.

11. When this body is taken to be real it serves the purpose of a body, but when it

¹ Continued from our last issue.

is seen to be unreal it becomes like space (unsubstantial).

12. O Rama, while lying on a soft bed you wander about in all directions with a dream body ; but now (in this waking state) where is that body ?

13. Just as a respectable man avoids contact with an outcast woman carrying dog's flesh, so also one should discard the thought 'I-am-the-body', even if everything were to be lost.

14. When the aspirant (sadhu) thinks only of Brahman and remains calm and free from sorrows his egoity dies of itself.

15. If one realizes the unity of things everywhere, one always remains tranquil, inwardly cool and pure like space without the sense of 'I'.

16. If inwardly one is cool the whole world will be cool, but if inwardly one is hot (agitated) the whole world will be a burning mass.

In My Heart

By
A. K. Vattal

In the gathering of new bodies,
Their false ecstasies of life,
I pushed headlong into matter,
Struck the pain-springs of such lives,
And my pain-throbs turned to crimson

On my Hand
On my Hand.

Came the moment of Thy meeting,
Prophecies from Caves of light,
Turned the anguish of the senses,
To the new, cool paths of life,
And the pain-throbs turned to peace-
drops

In my Heart
In my Heart.

Unreluctant worked Thy Presence,
Glory-gilded as a dream,
Sought me out — my inmost being —
In caressing light that streamed ;
With Its Glory filled its message

In my Soul
In my Soul.

TIRUVANNAMALAI

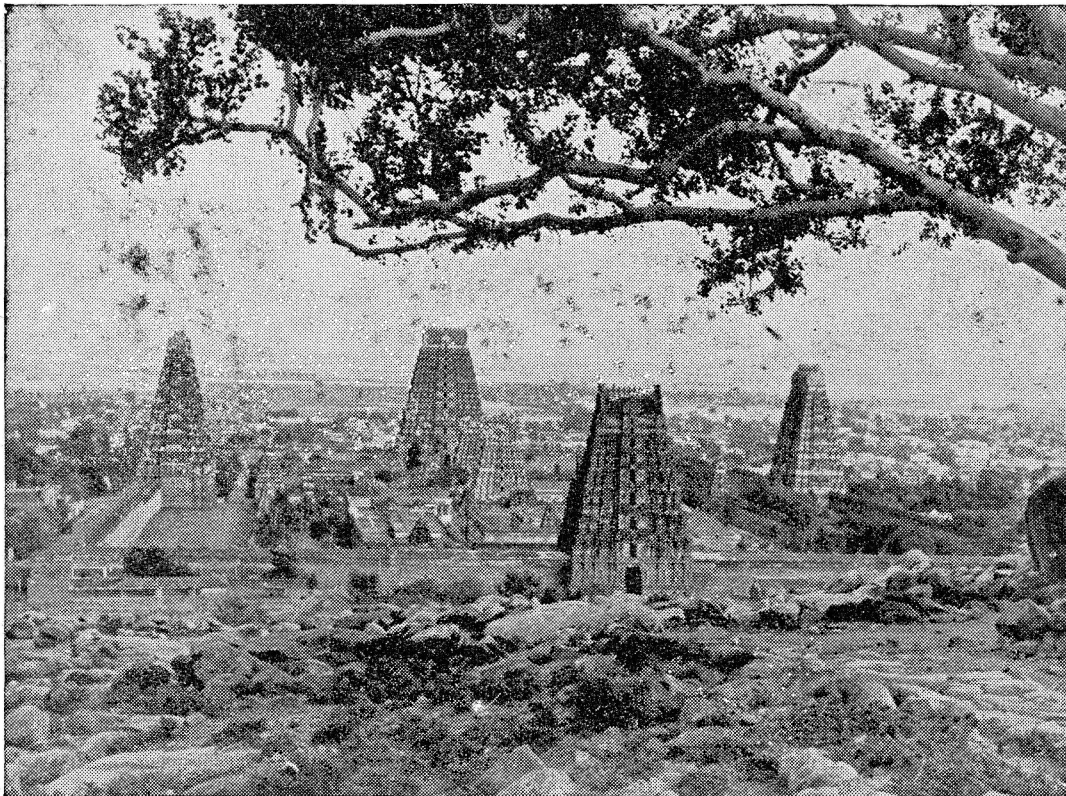
By

K. S. SUGAVANAM, I.A.S.

STILLNESS and peace, a closed Garbhagriha, storing vibrant spiritual power, 'prākārās' and other details of structure built according to the rules of the Agama-shastras, a significant background (may be mountainous background or proximity to a

Tiruvannamalai is in the North Arcot district about 120 miles from Madras on the road to Salem.

In the distant past, this place was in the Chola Kingdom; in the 14th Century, it came under Hoysalas; later Vijayanagar



Arunachaleswara Temple seen from the Hill Arunachala.

life-giving river with rich, green, vegetation), an elevating purity (physical purity and freedom from any particular stigma) — these are a few characteristics of a place of worship. In the southern part of our country we have quite a number of temples which are conducive to spiritual fervour. Tiruvannamalai is one among them.

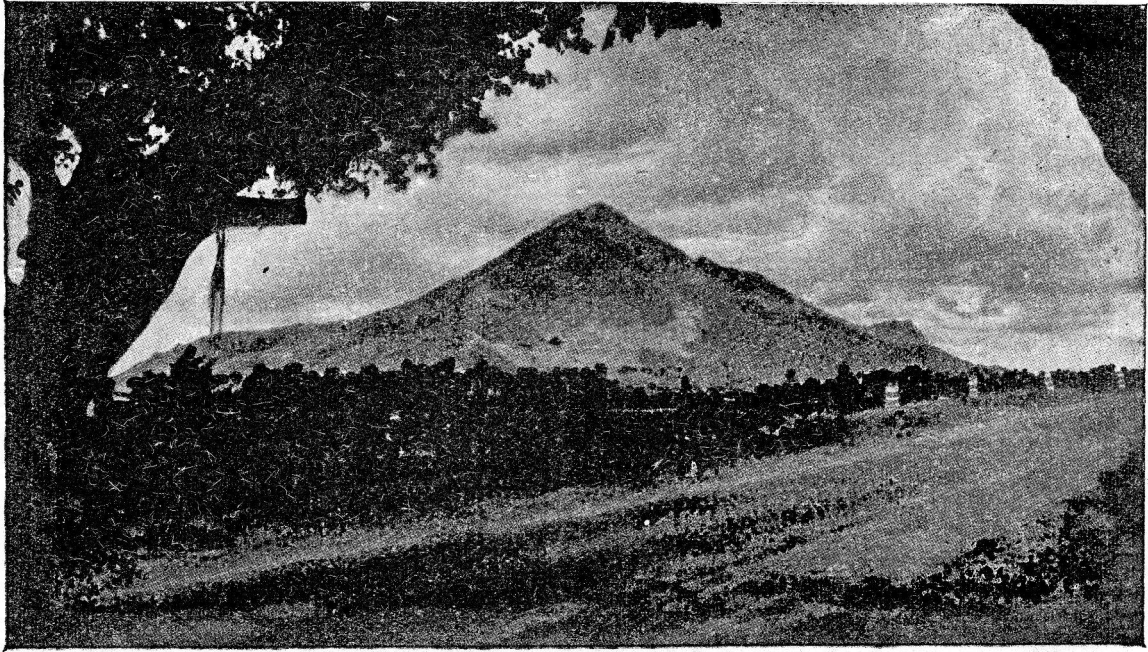
kings and Thanjavur Naickers held sway over it. The present form and condition of the temple is due to them all, and of course the more recent Kumbhabhishekas.

'Tiruvannamalai' should be broken up into 'Tiru' and 'Annamalai'. 'Tiru' is the Tamil equivalent of 'Shri'; 'Annamalai' means literally unapproachable or inaccessi-

ble mountain. Geographically speaking the fact is that the mountainous formation there is quite old, considerably older than the Himalayas. That is its physical aspect; spiritually it represents the Impassable State of God-Consciousness.

Among its Sanskrit names like Muktipuri, Shivaloka, Shuddhanagara, Goureenagara, Shonadri, Analagiri etc., the most famous is Arunachala (अरुण + अचल) meaning ruddy mountain. It is apt since among Panchabhuta Sthalas, this Sthala represents Agni

in further we come to the fifth *prākārā*; there we see Vallala Maharaja Gopura with Kalabhairava on its southern wall. In the eastern part of fourth *prākārā* Kiligopura (Parrot gopura) is prominent; inside this are 'Dwajastambha' and 'Deepastambha'. In the third *prākārā*, we have the Vakula tree which is the Sthalavruksha there, and also images of many gods. Next we pass through Adhikara Nandi (we would also have seen a bigger Nandi in the fifth *prākārā*) to second *prākārā*, with images of saints, Utsavamurthis and Venugopalaswami there-



The Arunachala Hill

Tatva; among Shadādhāra Sthalas, it is Manipura Chakra Sthala (gross correspondence of Manipura Chakra in the human body is the liver, which is the storehouse of sugar-heat and energy).

The temple is surrounded by walls, these being pierced by gates on four sides with towering 'gopuras' over them; the one on the east is Rajagopuram and measures 217 feet in height. As we enter the temple through this gopura to its right is the thousand-pillared 'mandapam'. When we get

in. In the first *prākārā* we behold Dakshinamoorthy and Chandikeshwara. And at last we approach the heart of the temple, namely the Garbhagriha. There the Lord is shining in Linga form and is dearly called as Arunachaleshwara. His Consort is installed separately and Her *sannidhi* is approached through the northern gate in second *prākārā*. She is known as Apeethakuchambika.

There are a number of 'tirthas' in and around the temple.

Purana

Sharabhopenishad, Suta Samhita, Rudra Samhita, Bhaskara Samhita, Shivamahapurana, Shivarahasya (among Sanskrit works) and Kandapurana, Periyapurana, Arunachalapurana, Tevaram, Tiruvachakam, Tiruppugal (among Tamil works) speak about the greatness of this place.

The puranic story associated with this place is this: once Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu were quarrelling, each claiming superiority over the other. Annoyed by this unedifying quarrel, the Lord appeared before them as a column of resplendent fire and assured them that whoever was able to locate the origin or limit of it is greater than the other. Lord Vishnu earnestly pursued to trace the origin down in the form of 'Varaha'; after a tiresome job, he found his efforts to be abortive and admitted his inability to do so. Lord Brahma who went up flying in the form of 'hamsa' was not so modest; not being prepared to accept defeat, he falsely claimed to Lord Vishnu that he did see the top of the blazing fire, with a *Ketaka* flower as witness to testify to his statement. The all-knowing Lord cursed that Brahma should not be worshipped in temples, and the *Ketaka* flower not be used in His worship, because of the blatant lie. Finally, upon request, the column of fire assumed the shape of Lingodbhava.

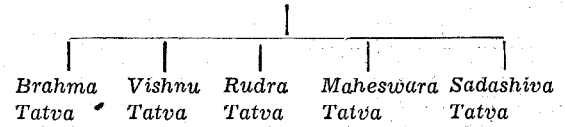
The above story does not stem from any sectarian zeal; its purpose is not to cry down Lord Brahma or Lord Vishnu. It has esoteric significance: everyone is likely to be swept off by his own ego and make tall claims. In its height of spiritual ignorance, the jiva loses all perspective and humility.

Ego-consciousness is so powerful that the jiva caught in it is not prepared to concede the smallness of a rattling ego and a little human intellect. Only the benign grace of God Consciousness can save the jiva. The sweet-smelling *Ketaka* is perhaps indicative of the principle of *moha* with attendant infatuation and wishful thinking.

And, apart from the historical evolution of Rudra worship in the Vedas and Pashu-

pati worship in Indus Valley civilization into Shaivism, and a lack of such an evolution in the case of Brahma, there is fundamental significance in why Shiva Tatva is worshipped and why Brahma Tatva is not worshipped. It is not due to deep fear of death entrenched in every human being. For Shiva Tatva is not identical with Rudra Tatva. To understand better we repair to Shaiva Siddhanta; there the scheme is as follows:

Shiva Tatva (with Shakti Tatva)



From Brahma Tatva onwards, the five Tatvas represent

सृष्टि, स्थिति, संहार, तिरोभव and अनुग्रह

All of us recognize the more familiar first three Tatvas immediately as the creation, existence, and destruction (or perhaps temporary dissolution); jiva going through these creation, existence and destruction of different physical bodies again and again without realizing its nature is covered by the fourth Tatva which means concealing or hiding i.e., because its own nature is not revealed to the jiva, it is bound down to small principles and concepts and hence repeated births and deaths become inevitable. This repetition of a cycle is due to maya, represented by Maheshwara Tatva. Finally, it flashes upon the jiva that it is only Pure Awareness, absolutely free, unbound and unfettered; such a recognition is due to Grace. This is Anugraha. Sadashiva Tatva stands for this.

Thus Shiva Tatva (accompanied by Shakti Tatva representing pulsating energy), comprising as it does all five Tatvas, is most complete. Hence the worship of that Tatva is more prevalent in general, and more common with people of above-average degree of intuitive perception. In contrast to this, creation is the act of jiva getting another body-consciousness in this gross plane; though apparently glorious, it is like chaining the

through Self-enquiry affords the most direct approach to victory. But it must be a real attack. Mere theorising is no attack and can produce no victory. A man's understanding that his ego is unreal will do very little to weaken his propensities, which nourish it and which hold him back from the bliss of realized Identity. Attachments have a strong emotional force and can only be demolished by a stronger force. It is often love and devotion that supplies this. A man who, on the basis of doctrinal understanding, criticises a divine lover is like one who sits at the foot of a mountain with a good route map in his hand and declares scornfully of a climber: "That fellow will never reach the top; his map only goes three quarters of the way up." Perhaps so; but perhaps when he reaches that point he will see the way clear with no need for any further map. And in any case he is already above the heat and miasma of the plains, while his critic may be no better off for his unused map.

But with love also, it must be real love, capable of destroying attachments. That is the test. Some have asked how one is to

love God. The prescription sometimes given—by counting His blessings on us and thinking of all our sins and His forgiveness—is quite phony. Even humanly one does not love out of gratitude. Such a mentality presumes two persons, God and ego; but if God is All-Powerful and ego loves Him out of gratitude for caring for his wants he can equally well blame Him for not caring for them, for sending sickness, privation, bereavement, and ultimately death. It is a wholly false mentality. This individual is by nature drawn to That Universal; it only has to stay still and forget its desires and interests and the natural power of divine attraction will be felt. And that is love. Individual attachment is also felt, and the attraction must be powerful enough to overcome the attachment.

The two methods of knowledge and devotion may seem mutually exclusive in theory but in practice they are not. One can seek the inner Guru while at the same time worshipping the outer. The quest is a war in which whatever weapon proves effective can be used.

Beingness

By

G. N. Daley

THE Self is Awareness: objects and things as seen by ego-consciousness are the insentient Not-Self, and just as Universal Mind creates the illusory appearance of matter so does individual mind create the illusion of separated self and separated things. The mechanism of thought and feeling is the same as, and can be said to create, the separated "I". In order to dispel this illusion it is only necessary to trace the "I" back to its source by asking, "Who am I?"

until it is seen that the ego "I" and mind arise and cease together, just as creation arises and ceases with Universal Mind. Continual Vichara and effort will ultimately remove all trace of the ego "I" and awareness alone will remain, not even perceiving the unity of all. Thus will consciousness be brought to the point of *just Being* in Now-space. There is a formless state beyond this which is also just Being, but that is of no immediate concern, just BE now.

jiva afresh. Hence Lord Brahma standing for this Tatva is not worshipped.¹

There is another story associated with this Sthala: once in a sportive mood, Parvati closed the eyes of the Lord. Though it was momentary, it plunged the world in darkness. To make good for the mistake and inadvertence, Parvati worshipped the Lord in the form of Prithvi Linga in Kancheepura Kshatra; the Lord asked Parvati to do tapas at Arunachala to get to Him. While Parvati was doing penance in this place with the help of sage Gautama, on Kartika Pournima day, the Lord appeared as a column of fire; Parvati got back Her original state and then appeared the Ardhana-reeshwara form.

To celebrate this, we have a ten-day festival in the month of Kartika starting on Uttara Nakshatra day; on tenth day which will be full-moon day, indicative of Deepa Darshna a beacon is lit on the mountain which is visible from many miles, with Deeparadhana to Panchamurthi in the temple, at the same time. On the 12th day, the Lord with His consort has a *Giripradakshina*, circumambulation of the mountain; the distance is eight miles. This Brahmotsava attracts thousands of people. Formerly, all these were being celebrated on a grand scale, with the beacon light burning for a number of days. Now things have become more modest. 'Economy measure' — this is said to be the justifiable reason. But the actual reason is lack of or decrease in religious fervour due to increasing apathy and rise of pseudo-intellectuality of people.

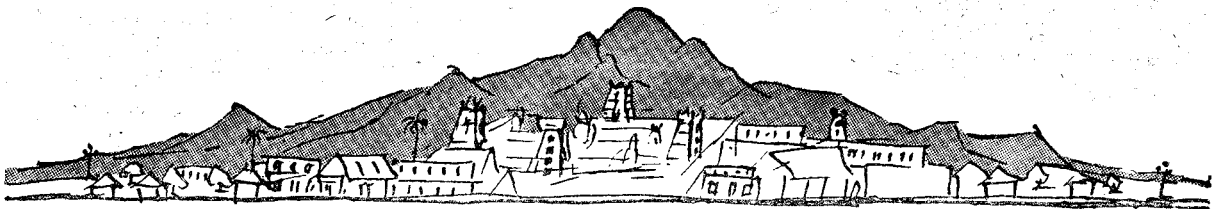
Saints in this Place

The saints who came here to worship the Lord were Tirujnanasambandar, Tirunavukkarasar, Manikkavasagar, Gugai Namashivayar, Guru Namashivayar etc. It is also said that Arunagirinathar, disgusted

with worldly life, tried to put an end to himself by falling from Vallala gopura (referred to above); Lord Subrahmanya is said to have saved him, given *deeksha* to him and introduced the first few words of the opening verse in praise of Himself; Arunagirinathar who now ripened into ardent devotee of Lord Subrahmanya began his *Tiruppugal* with those opening words. Later, the saint went in the shape of a parrot to bring a Parijata flower and when he came back, he could not find his human body. So sitting on Kiligopuram (or Parrot gopuram, referred to previously), he sang *Kandar Anubhuti* remaining in the body of the parrot.

In modern times, the place has been hallowed by the stay of saints like Seshadri Swami. Most notable among them was Ramana Maharshi. While still in his teens, he experienced a sudden fear of death one day. He enacted the body's death, but realized that *he* was quite apart from the body whether it was alive or not. This firm realization made a deep imprint on him; up till then he was studying in a school in Madurai. The intensity of vairagya surged high, he felt an irresistible call towards Arunachala where he went in search of his Father. For months together he was staying in Patalalingeswara Sannidhi, which is to the south-west of the thousand-pillared mandapam (see above) in the temple. He stayed here in the exalted state of Sahaja Nirvikalpa Samadhi. When he moved out of the temple, around him grew gradually an Ashram known as SRI RAMANASRAMAM now. He was a living demonstration of the fact that to be in Advaita state is possible, despite the super-imposition of bodily existence and worldly activities.

¹There is only one temple dedicated to Lord Brahma which is near Pushkar Lake.



“ENQUIRE”

By
QUIS SEPARABIT

I will begin with an incident :

Some time back recently I had been to Ramanashram (Tiruvannamalai-India)

as I came to a Hall where Ramana Maharshi used to sit quite informally and where some people were sitting in silence before him—I am just pointing out the location.

In that hall—I came.....and sat there alone, because it was very early—still there was dark outside. I sat before his couch—his former sitting (rather, to be very clear, his former ‘reclining’) sit.....

I sat before him (so to say). He said to me: “Enquire”.

I was on move towards ‘enquiry’

.....again he said “enquire”—more forcibly (I am using some adverb).....

.....“Enquire”..third time!

I again pulled myself (of course, psychologically).....

Again.....“Enquire”.....

I then asked him; Should I enquire (of course, within myself) ‘Who am I’?

“No” he said;

“Enquire.....only enquire”

I was in a state of attention.

Now, as I proceed.....

“Can there be “enquiry”—a *state of enquiry*—(which probably Bhagavan may be hinting at), without the object to enquire into—to go into—?”

We have not thought over this phenomenon—this wonderful state—up to this time.....

May not be Bhagavan secretly leading us—putting us—into that state

.....I may say, of pure enquiry?

If we have followed up to this.....

It is a state of attention—it is a *state* of enquiry (and *not* at all, *what* we have to enquire)!

The state of attention (—of enquiry—) is without a centre!

By the intensity of enquiry, by Bhagavan’s Grace, by the fire of enquiry.....we may go (*because, it is only that*).....we may go to “who I am”, without these words.....which state is *unrecognizable*!!

If we think (even slightly) that we have to enquire “Who am I”.....then the whole thing is lost.

If we go with the idea that we have to enquire of ‘who I am’, [.....which has been mostly done.....]

It may lead us to ‘indentification’, absorption, or perhaps to a pointed-concentration [and, that itself may give us pleasure also, a sort of an elated sensation].....but, that is absolutely not the thing.....

[Negatively only we can say that much].

We should approach the issue of “enquiry”, newly.....

and find out for ourselves what *comes* out of it.....out of pure enquiry.....

We should “experiment”!

[.....and not go into the trained way of ideology, and get frustrated, some time or other.....unnecessarily],

We should not stop in Ramana Maharshi with what he had said, but with what he is saying.

[Kindly understand the significance of the sentence.....do not take it literally].

THE FALSE AND RIGHT SENSE OF "I"

By

JOEL S. GOLDSMITH

THE Infinite Way revelation is that God is infinite individual being and, therefore, God constitutes our being. All of us that is spiritual, eternal, and immortal is God-being. That of us which is mortal, human, and finite is not an expression of God, but an illusion. It cannot be raised up to the atmosphere of Christhood. It must "die," and it might just as well "die" in this minute. That "death" is the death of the false concept of God and man that has been built up throughout the years, and that constitutes what may be called the human experience. But as we "die daily"¹ to that human experience, we are reborn into the spiritual experience.

God constitutes our being in the same sense that Jesus acknowledged his sonship with the Father and at the same time denied power to his humanhood. "I can of mine own self do nothing."² If a person can of his own self do nothing, that is about as thorough and complete a denial of his personal selfhood as can be made. Can we hope to make a better demonstration than Jesus did and claim something more for ourselves than he claimed? When he was called "good Master," Jesus even went so far as to deny that, too: "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God."³ The truth is that only God is real and that God, the Father, appears individually as God, the son. That spiritual identity of the son is our real identity: sonship.

If we were to say that we express God, we would be trying to do something. We would have some power of our own, the power to express God. But this we do not have. We have no power to express God. God, being infinite, God alone can express Itself. We do not reflect God; we do not express God: God expresses Itself as our individual being. It is God expressing, not man expressing, and

God expressing becomes you and me in our spiritual identity. Nevertheless, even with that sonship, God always is the presence and God always is the power. Never do we have power, never: all power is God-power as it flows forth from the God-head, appearing as our individual capacities. It is always the capacity of God, and that is why it is infinite. If it ever became your capacity or mine, it would be limited. Because all capacity is God-capacity, all capacity remains God and remains infinite.

The fullness of God's power was made evident through Jesus because he thoroughly understood his own nothingness and thus became that instrument through which the allness of God could appear. In some degree each one of us can do that. There may even be those on earth who may duplicate the work of the Master and show forth God's allness in its completeness. We do not know of its ever having been done, and we may never know if it ever is done because, as a rule, the higher a person goes in spiritual awareness, the further does he retire from the human scene. So his accomplishments may be more in the invisible than in the visible. But so far as potentiality is concerned, anyone who can sufficiently understand the nothingness of humanhood can in that degree show forth the evidence of, or bear witness to, God's allness.

The Trouble-maker

There is only one reason for discords or inharmonies of any nature, and that is a false sense of "I". What problem is there that does not concern the word "I" or that could not have been eliminated if there had not been a little "I"? If the personal sense of "I" is out of the way, there is no pro-

¹ I Corinthians 15: 31.

² John 5: 30.

³ Matthew 19: 17.

blem. The only problem that anyone ever has is I, I. I am the only one that ever has my problem. And if there were no I, I would have no problem. The trouble-maker is I. If I could just do away with "I," what a pleasant sweet life I would have—not a single problem.

We want to fulfill that part of Paul's teaching that says, "I die daily." Only let us hurry up the process and instead of "dying" bit by bit and having it so drawn-out and painful, let us do it all at once and see if that little "I" cannot "die" one beautiful, grand "death" so that we may be reborn of the Spirit.

The correct sense of "I" will eliminate every problem from the face of the earth: personal, family, community, national, and international. There is only one error on this entire earth, and that error is a false interpretation or false sense of "I". As long

as I think that I must make a living, find a home, or decide what to do next year, just that long will I be facing problems of one nature or another. If I ever come to a place of realization of the grand truth that has been revealed by Christ Jesus, who was probably the last of the Masters on earth to reveal the I, the problems will dissolve.

Not only Christ Jesus but all the great spiritual lights of the ages reveal that the only I is God; and that God as individual Being is living Its life as you and as me. "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us."⁴ The Word, I, became individualized as you and as me and dwells here as us. But, through the years, we have entertained a false sense of that I, and instead of recognizing that the I is God, we have taken the I to ourselves as person, built up an identity, and then tried to maintain it and sustain it.

⁴ John 1: 14.

That's That

By

Madhukar P. Padukone

As I sway in mid-day sun,
My head carolling
The poet in me steps out and says,
Boy, why dont you go hell-bent for He
Who knows All and All That ?
I answer in reply,
"Do foreigners scan the Indian sky,
And see the bright forebears sigh,
Dont sing Madhu, all songs are done ;
And why in English do you sing ?"
My country-men dont ken the loose footed
denizen,
They wrap their souls in meters,

A thousand folds hide their dithers,
Are they men or are they Gods ?
Reach for the sky
And from here you try
Not in any balloon or sat-a-lie
They twinkle so by morn to die
The Seven Great Rishis guide our
Dust-in-eye
But in English they say,
Why? Its only a Great Bear :
That's that
That's all there is to
IT.

GARLAND OF GURU'S SAYINGS

Translated by Prof. K. SWAMINATHAN
from the Tamil of Sri MURUGANAR

107. The life of folly lived by the filthy ego
Fond of its location in the flesh
Is no true life ; it is a dream,
A passing fancy seen
In the auspicious, blissful
Self supreme.
108. True ascetic and true Brahmin
Is he alone who has discarded
The petty ego body-based.
Hard, hard it is for those
Who still retain regard
For *asram* or *varna* to cast off
The heavy burden of their ego.
109. One who sees otherness and difference
Cannot by study of the Vedas four
Become a Brahmin,¹
Who sees his ego dead and knows
The Vedas' import, he alone
Is a Brahmin. Failing here,
One swelters inly, fallen and despised.
110. Kannappa, ripe in love, scooped out
His eyes and in the Lord's face
planted them.
But till he plucked and planted them
He too retained a trace of pride
In those bright, beautiful orbs of his.
Attachment to the body dies
Hard indeed.
111. Kannappa's application
Of the eyes he was so proud of
Was by the three-eyed Lord ordained
To save his devotee from Death,
The folly that one is flesh inert.
112. Seen aright, the Primal Ruler's
World plan comes to this :
If ego rises, all things rise ;
If it subsides, they all subside.
113. The ego-life that people lead
In the three worlds delusion-bound,
What is it but the dance of ghouls
Clinging to corpses in the burning
ground ?
114. Here, right now, is a wonder of
wonders.
Listen.
The bustling, hustling zeal in action
Of folk who cannot think at all
Unless omnipotent Awareness
Makes them think !
115. Much like the Zeal of the cripple
who declared
" Single-handed I will meet
This host of enemies, lay them low
And raise a pile of corpses here
If someone would but lift and prop
me ! "
116. If even the Wind God could not stir,
alas
Nor Fire God burn the flimsiest little
straw,²
How can one with one's separate
ego-strength
Do anything at all ?
117. With knowledge by illusion veiled,
Staggering under a load of sin,
Blind and unseeing the Supreme
The egos play their comic role
Like figures on the temple-tower.³
118. Sensible passengers do not carry
Their luggage on their own poor heads
In a fast train hauling under
steam-power
Heaviest loads like wisps of straw.
119. Even so since the Power supreme
Does, as it must, sustain all things,
Men should leave their burdens of care
On that Awareness and feel free.
120. In meditation, while the ego
Lingers, fear and quaking come
Sometimes. But when the ego dies
At last in pure awareness, quaking
Stops. Stillness alone prevails.

¹ The word means 'seer' as well as 'Brahmin'.

² In the *Kenopanishad*.

³ Grimacing as if they carry the tower while
in fact they are carried by it.



THE VEDAPARAYANA

(We published in our last issue the concluding portion of the Vedaparayana chanted before Sri Bhagavan's shrine in the morning. We now publish the first part of the evening chanting. This starts with the Eight Hymns to Dakshinamurti. Although we have published a translation of it in our issue of January 1963 we reproduced it here for the convenience of readers.)

HYMN TO DAKSHINAMURTI

INVOCATION

That Shankara who appeared as Dakshinamurti to grant peace to the great Ascetics (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanat Kumara and Sanat Sujata), who revealed his real state of Silence, and who has expressed the real nature of the Self in this Hymn abides in me.

THE HYMN

He who teaches through silence the nature of the supreme Brahman, who is a youth, who is the most eminent Guru surrounded by the most competent disciples that remain steadfast in Brahman, who has the *mudra* indicating illumination,¹ who is of the nature of bliss, who revels in the Self, who has a benign countenance — that Father² who has a southward-facing form,³ we adore.

To Him, who, by Maya, as by dream, sees within himself the universe which is inside him, like a city that appears in a mirror, (but) which is manifested as if externally, to one who apprehends, at the time of awakening, his own single Self, to him, the primal Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him who like a magician or even like a great yogi displays, by his own power, this universe which at the beginning is undifferentiated under the varied conditions of space, time and karma and posited by Maya : to Him, the Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him, whose luminosity alone, which is of the nature of existence, shines forth, energising the objective world which is like non-existent; to Him who instructs those who resort to Him through the text 'That thou art', to Him by realizing whom there will be no more falls into the ocean of rebirth; to Him who is the refuge of the ascetics, the Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him who is luminous like the light of a lamp in a pot with many holes; to Him whose knowledge externalises through the eye and other sense organs: to Him who is effulgent as 'I know', and the entire universe shines after him: to Him the unmoving Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be.

They who know the 'I' as body, breath, senses, intellect, or the void, are deluded like women and children, and the blind and stupid, and talk much. To Him who destroys the great delusion produced by ignorance; to Him who removes the obstacles to knowledge, to the Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him, who sleeps when the manifested mind gets resolved, on account of the veiling by Maya, like the sun or the moon in eclipse, and on waking recognizes self-existence in the form 'I have slept till now', to Him the Guru of all that moves and moves not, Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him, who, by means of the *mudra* indicating illumination, manifests to his devotees his own Self that for ever shines within as 'I', constantly, in all the inconstant states such as infancy, etc. and waking, etc. — to him whose eye is of the form of the fire of knowledge, the Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To the self who, deluded by Maya, sees in dreaming and waking, the universe in its distinctions such as cause and effect, master and servant, disciple and teacher, and father and son, to Him, the Guru of the world, Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

To Him whose eightfold form is all this moving and unmoving universe, appearing as earth, water, fire, air, ether, the sun, the

moon, and the soul: beyond whom, supreme and all-pervading, there exists naught else for those who enquire — to Him the gracious Guru Dakshinamurti, may this obeisance be!

Since, in this Hymn, the all-self-hood has thus been explained, by listening to it, by reflecting on its meaning, by meditating on it, there will come about lordship together with the supreme splendour consisting of all-self-hood; thence will be achieved, again, the unimpeded supernormal power presenting itself in eight forms.

SRI RUDRAM

(The Hymn to Rudra)

NAMAKAM

We invoke Thee that art the leader of the hosts of celestial beings and bearest the name of Ganapati. Thou art the poet of poets, of unsurpassed fame, the foremost among the shining ones. Lord of the Vedas: Pray listen to our prayer and graciously occupy the place kept for Thee.

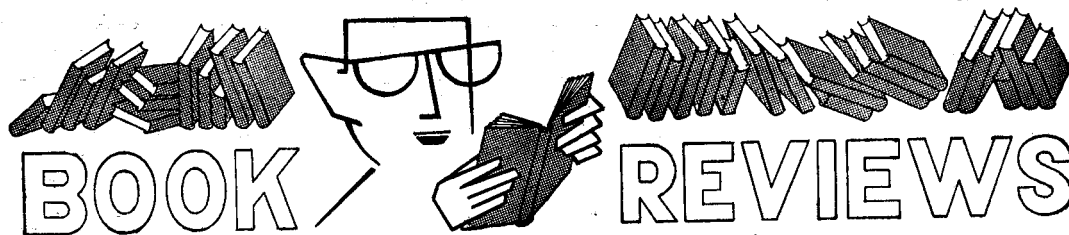
Grant me (the devotee of Rudra) the joys and pleasures of this world and the higher world, the desire for them, the fulfilment of that desire, relations who are well-disposed to me, auspiciousness, prosperity, a good place to live in, fame, good fortune, riches, a director, a supporter, welfare, steadfastness, the good will of all, honour, knowledge, intelligence, ability to teach, control over sons and servants, ploughs, freedom from obstacles, sacred rites, their fruits, freedom from (chronic diseases like) consumption, freedom from acute diseases (like fever) medicines, long life, absence of enemies, fearlessness, good conduct, a good bed, a good morning and a good day.

Om Peace! Om Peace! Om Peace!

¹ There are many traditional *mudras* or postures of the hands which are used in Indian dancing and iconography, each of which has its own meaning. In the October 1966 issue of *The Mountain Path* there is an article: *The Language of the Mudras in Indian Classical Dancing*, by Gita Sharma.

² 'Father' because he is the universal father, or, the supreme father of all.

³ The Supreme Guru is the spiritual north pole and therefore traditionally faces south.



ONTOLOGY OF ADVAITA: By Dr. K. B. Ramakrishna Rao. Pub.: Insitute of Philosophy, Sringeri, Mysore. Pp. 34. Price: Rs. 5.00.

Dialectics in Advaita Philosophy are endless. Dr. Rao's forceful defence of the sole absoluteness of Brahman is another restatement of the position after rebutting the charges of irrationality and inconsistency from the opponents, especially of the schools of Dualism and Qualified Non-Dualism. The author protests against what he feels to be compromise moves by some of the defenders of the Advaita philosophy and refuses to give true value to the Many that is the world. He calls for a clear demarcation between the ontological and the epistemological situations.

After reading the whole treatise, one wonders if F. Schuon is not right after all in saying that "The All-possibility must be by definition and on pain of contradiction include its own impossibility." (P. 8). Dr. Rao objects from his logical point of view. Suffice it to say that the Reality breaks the bounds of the logical intellect of man and lends itself to be *known* in the only way it can be known — knowledge by identity. In this experience all definitions lose their rigidity and all possibles reveal their truth. The One can be Many without ceasing to be One. As the author rightly says the One is not a numerical one.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF NIRVANA: By Rune Johansson. Pub.: Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. Pp. 141. Price: 35 sh.

Nirvana is, as the author writes, a much misunderstood term. It means one thing in the Vedantic context and quite another in some of the important texts of Buddhism. The present work seeks to examine the implications of the word through a study of some of the major Nikaya texts and see how far the older connotation agrees with the findings of modern psychology on the subject.

Is Nirvana a state of mind? Or is it a condition of consciousness which can be attained by a progressive dispossession of mental activity? And what is the content of Nirvana? Is it an emptiness or a state of positive peace or bliss? The writer takes up a representative collection of verses from diverse Pali books and points out how at different stages of the historical evolution of Buddhism, Nirvana went on changing its significance. In terms of modern thought, Nirvana, observes the author, is "a state of calm contentment and of complete intellectual insight. It is a state of internal freedom, where all dependence, insecurity and defence have disappeared. Ethical behaviour has become second nature, and the attitude towards others is friendliness, acceptance and humility."

There is a comparison between this 'ideal state' and what is called 'mental health' by modern psychology, especially in its emphasis of *adaptation* to moral norms, to the physical and social world, adjustment of one's rhythm to suit circumstances—outer and inner/and *integration*. The author is conscious that this is only a superficial similarity. Nirvana is a peak state of consciousness freed from all kinds of stress, open to the vibrations of the Infinite; modern psychology touches only a fringe of the domain of consciousness, the area projected as mind.

A good essay that stimulates thinking on Nirvana.

SRI VALLABHACHARYA: By Bhai Manilal C. Parikh, Pub.: V. M. Parikh, Harmony House, Rajkot (Gujerath). Pp. 299. Price: Rs. 20.00.

This is the first book of its kind in English on the great teacher of the Pushti Marga, the Way of Grace, Sri Vallabhacharya. An Andhra by birth (15th century A.D.) his teaching holds powerful sway in Western India even today. The author has produced this work after a good deal of study, research and travel to the places sanctified by the Acharya.

After a detailed, documented treatment of the background and the birth and childhood of Vallabha, the writer narrates the circumstances in which the young pilgrim was commanded by a divine Voice, in the legendary land of birth of Lord Krishna, to communicate and propagate the Way of direct relation with God. Thus came into being a fresh form of the Bhakti Movement that was already in vogue in India: the emphasis here being on Grace of God instead of on devotional effort on the part of the seeker. One of the main fundamentals of this Doctrine is that the soul is weighed down by many kinds of sin and no amount of human effort is able to rid the soul of this impediment. Man has to recognise this limitation, surrender himself to God and be a recipient of the answering Grace that flows from above. It is this Grace that nourishes, *pushti*, man in his upward journey.

The Acharya toured, spoke and wrote widely on this Doctrine of Grace as adumbrated in the Bhagavata and built up a socio-religious frame of life in which any man, in whatever station of life, could fit himself. A distinctive feature of this path is the recognition of all the parts of the being, of all the spheres of life, to progress and participate in the Glory of God. No outer renunciation is called for. Special ritual is provided as an aid to inner effort.

This comprehensive book studies the Pushti Marga in relation to other religious and spiritual movements in the land, evaluates its role in the religious evolution of the country today and makes a reliable reference work on the subject.

M. P. PANDIT.

PHILOSOPHY IN LATIN AMERICA: Three Argentine Thinkers: By Solomon Lipp. Published by Philosophical Library, New York. Price: \$4.50.

While the Indian reading public is familiar with European and American philosophy, it is rather surprising that development of philosophic thought in other parts of the world remains a sealed book. Not many may, therefore, be aware of the early decades of the colonial period in Latin America which were characterised by the domination of Scholastic philosophy, employed as a tool to fortify a theological-political perspective fostered by the mother-country, Spain. Philosophy is not a mere intellectual exercise but a means to justify the structure of a new and powerful empire, which was out to ensure its perpetuation by resisting any potentially dangerous ideological currents.

Although one has still to await a detailed study of the development of philosophy in the various countries of South America, we are indebted to Solomon Lipp for making a survey and interpretation of the contributions by representative intellectual luminaries in Argentina, one of the principal countries of the Latin American continent. He has examined the various stages of the growth of philosophic thought in that country by making a thorough and learned research on the working of three major philosophers, viz., Jose Ingenieros, Alejandro Korn and Francisco Romero.

That not all the three are alike in manner and content in reflecting the contemporary scene in Latin America is effectively brought out in this valuable publication. Jose Ingenieros is an able exponent of the various currents of thought mingling in Argentina during the first quarter of the 20th century, such as the merging of positivism and Darwinism, the intermixture of socialist doctrine with Spencerian ideas, the influence of scientific naturalism and the psychological theories based on biological determinism. Quite different from him is the next thinker dealt with, namely, Alejandro Korn who has substituted for the depersonalising effects of biological determinism the rights of the human personality and the importance of spiritual values. He reminds one of Kant in the belief that it is a human characteristic to experience the need for a metaphysics, a need in which reason, emotion and will play a vital part. Further Korn is insistent that the absolute is unattainable, not only by the way of senses but via rational knowledge as well. Francisco Romero, the third Argentine thinker, conceives his mission to be that of leading the entire Latin American continent along the road to philosophic maturation. So time-consuming was this grandiose project that it left him little time for original creative writing. His philosophy can perhaps be looked upon as a refreshing contrast to the all pervading anguish, melancholy and overpowering sense of absurdity and desolation, so characteristic of certain sectors on the contemporary scene. Being essentially expansive and optimistic, one might well feel that his is an extrovert view directing his whole attention to an outward projection for the realisation and conquest of ever-broadening and far-reaching horizons.

THE ERA OF THE SYSTEM: By Gerald Rabow. Pub: By the American Library. Price: \$4.50.

As the subtitle aptly describes the contents of the book it is an ambitious scheme attempting to show how "the system approach", so useful in large-scale scientific and engineering projects,

can help solve society's problems". This approach may well be the next big influence of science on society, taking the spotlight from atomic energy and automation. Gerald Rabow has his Sc.D. in Engineering Science from Columbia University and is a Senior Scientist with IT & T.

One wonders however useful the scheme might be in its mechanical spheres, what effects it might create in organisms vibrant to every throb of life, thought and feeling. Wouldn't it be a miracle if it is successfully applied in solving the present imbroglions in the vital centres of Delhi, Vietnam, Chicago, Peking and Jerusalem? The youth culture centred on L.S.D. has come out of the alleys and streets today and in Max Lerner's words, they have become "part of a sea of grass, and it would take a strong blade to resist the wind that is sweeping along the whole sea."

One cannot resist the feeling after reading the book that as human beings are free agents and not machines, they transcend any system and methodology and hence cannot be brought within the gambit of any paper-built solutions.

ARGUS.

1. THE KEY TO THE FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS followed by 2. EVOLUTION, PARADISE AND THE FALL: By G. H. Mees, M.A., LL.D. Published by N. Kluwer. Deventer, Pp. 94 and 96. Prices not given.

Symbolically the beginning in Genesis has reference not to a new cycle which coincides with the end of an old one so that one cannot speak of a "beginning" as such, but to the beginning of the spiritual path. In Buddhism they call it the entering of an individual into the stream of returners. He begins to emerge from a state of chaos and to differentiate between heaven and earth, is placed before a choice and makes his choice. For him a new cycle has begun.

Genesis or becoming portrays the stages in man's spiritual development from the state of ignorance or chaos to enlightenment, symbolically ascending from earth to air. Genesis is interwoven with the symbolism of the elements. Astrology is also derived from the same source as Genesis but has degenerated in modern times to predictions mostly. The seven days of Genesis are traced along the path of the Sun, the Moon and the planets known as the Zodiac with twelve divisions into houses or signs.

The second chapter of Genesis deals with man's evolution before the Fall and the Fall is dealt with in Genesis 3, traditionally a fall from the spiritual path in the opposite direction, from Air to Earth.

The author has taken upon himself the tremendous task of bringing back to life the meaning of the basic symbols of the ancient traditions of mankind which have almost fallen into oblivion. He does that with amazing erudition and convinced that the symbolic interpretation of tradition makes for "harmony and unity of aim among men". He quotes Origen who holds that Scripture has not only a body but soul and spirit which is according to the patterns and shadows of heavenly things. What is above is also below.¹ Ancient ways of teaching were syncretic that is unifying whereas modern ways are rational in closed departments and divergent. The spiritual-intuitive function is starved with too much emphasis on material perception and thought. The four functions are out of harmony in the average man of our time so that people and the world at large are in a state of disunity and disruption.² These two books make very interesting reading and are a valuable source of information. SHAKINAH.

PHILOSOPHY OF EXISTENCE: By John Micallef. Published by Philosophical Library, New York. Pp. 235. Price: \$ 6.50.

Prof. John Micallef tries to prove existentialism by testing existence against existence. If one can look on existence only through the focus of one's awareness, what about the awareness of others or what is more pertinent awareness *per se*. The author is seeking for the truth as a way of life. He repeatedly mentions becoming aware of his self as a self in the thing which he beholds and of himself as a person in the self of the other which beholds him as he beholds the other. This surely does not lead to clarity. Some of the poems of the author are rather elucidating:

In the maze of my thoughts lost condemned
to move, turn in circles
that grip my mind
. . . I drag my feet from wall
to wall and block my mind in my own
search . . . and another one
How long how long must I endure
my mind guideless as it wanders in
contradiction
haunted by dread, drugged by resentment
through this labyrinthine quest in the
dungeons of dread

¹ Milton with the intuitive insight of a poet queries:

. . . what if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven.

² Rene Guenon is quite in accord. He maintains that a civilization which breaks away from its spiritual roots and leaves on rationalist and materialist values cannot have stability or endure for long.

THE WAY OF THE SPIRIT

By
M. A. PIGGOTT

This article relates to visits made to the Ashram of Sri Ramana Maharshi in the years 1932-3. Since that time there has been a continual flow of visitors from all parts of the world. This entailed much outward alteration and many changes have taken place.

I HAD visited India before, but it was my first trip off the beaten track. Staying with friends or in the luxurious hotels of Bombay and Calcutta, provided with modern conveniences, can give little indication of the conditions to be met with when leaving highways. But this was an adventure in a cause, and nothing else mattered.

For some years it had been my wish to meet one of the real Holy Men of India, but so far it was a vain one. I had, it is true, spoken with a few saintly men and also some fakirs of the mediumistic type, who were no doubt sincere enough in their way. But they were not what I was seeking. Then I was told of Sri Ramana Maharshi. And even from the little I heard, I knew I would travel anywhere and put up with any inconvenience in order to reach him.

The friend who gave me the welcome news of his existence offered to take me to him, and so we arrived at Tiruvannamalai late one afternoon. We put up at that none too clean accommodation the 'dak' bungalow or travellers' rest-house, which is all that is offered to the wayfarer who strays from the cities. No bedding is provided and there is seldom much furniture. But we left my servant to wrestle with such details and made our way to the bazaar and then up the Ashram in a cart drawn by a pony. The end of our drive found us somewhat battered but full of expectation.

Several of the people living in the Ashram, mostly devotees, came out to greet us. Amongst them was the younger brother of the Maharshi. He was dressed in the ochre robe denoting a Sannyasin — one who has renounced the world. The others were not



strictly monks in the western sense of the word, nor is an Ashram a Monastery. It is a place where people wishing to study or follow a spiritual life may live. Often there

Jean Paul Sartre the existentialist par excellence who seems to have started it all defines as the first principle of existentialism that man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Not simply what he conceives himself to be but he is what he wills. According to him there is no human nature because there is no God to have a conception of it. This is an assertion that only human nature is a no-nature. Shen Hui calls it seeing into nothingness. In Buddhism this principle goes infinitely deeper by asserting that this no-nature is Buddha-nature in its absolute purity and harmony. Again the author asks :

Is there anyone I could ask?
Anyone who has the answer?

Existentialism obviously has not the answer. Sages know the truth and they can guide one out of this maze. They show the way to return to the Source, to find out our true state where there is no room for misery or uncertainty. In modern times Ramana Maharshi shows the way predominantly through the *vichara* "Who am I"?

A NEW ROAD TO ANCIENT TRUTH: Tenko-San. Publishers: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. Illustrated. Pp. 183. Price: 35sh.

A New Road to Ancient Truth are extracts from the writings of Ittoen Tenko-San translated by Makoto Ohashi in collaboration with Marie Beuzeville Byles with an introduction by Marie Byles.

Truth is one, the paths leading to it vary. Tenko-San's path is new and extraordinary for our times of rampant materialism. It is more a way of life than a path and demands total dedication to poverty, living in the present moment alone and as Christ said, taking no thought for the morrow. The adherents of this way of life never depend on payment for services rendered in fact they do Takuhatsu i.e. selfless service however menial wherever required with complete faith that everything necessary will come and so it does.

Tenko-San could have had a successful business career had he not realized that in society particularly in business the emphasis is on strife against each other and above all on gain by all

means. He gave up his career and possessions to put into practice his new way of life. Soon others gathered round him and thus was born Ittoen, the Garden of the One Light. Tenko-San died only last year.

This book is the first translation to appear in English about this new way of life which accepts all religions without starting a new one. The main emphasis is on the One Light which should permeate all. Those who are prepared to die to the self are welcome to join Ittoen. The anecdotes and poignant little stories of the people help to understand how Tenko-San's influence is said to be profound in Japan. Doing Takuhatsu in the West would have probably resulted in more strikes and labour trouble.

One cannot help admiring the courage and one-pointedness of those dedicated people, dedicated not only to poverty but performing what in Hinduism would be pure *nishkama karma* and what is more taking upon themselves the responsibility for all the evils of the world which according to the author should lead to the healing of discords and peace if accompanied by humble selfless service trying to realize the One Light, Reality or God.

The book though a translation is written in a refreshing and lively style reminiscent of Marie Byles.

GANDHI — THE MAN OF THE AGES: By T. L. Vaswani. Pub.: Mira Publications, Poona-1. Pp. 72. Price: Rs. 3 or 5 sh. or \$1-00.

In the welter of literature about Gandhi one is apt to approach a new book about him with some mental reservations. The present book by T. L. Vaswani is a pleasant surprise. Apart from bringing out the significance of Gandhi's advent and his message not only to India but with a vista embracing humanity it also gives a very human touch to his personality coming from the author who knew Gandhi intimately and who was himself a dedicated patriot, mystic writer and a man of great purity of character. In *The Man of the Ages*, Gandhi's personality goes to the heart because it is written from the heart.

L. O.

stayed with me in silence for hours, and in the end they helped me gently to set my foot back onto the earth. Twenty-four hours after our arrival I left the site as someone changed into what he had always been!"

* * *

There were also, as usual a number of visitors from abroad. Their names and the countries from which they came are shown below:

*Arrivals of Foreigners in Sri Ramanasramam
from 1st Oct. 1969 to 10th Oct. 1969*

Marechal Michelle (Paris)
Tanka Harumiko (Japan)
Johan Willem Frederik Ebbinge (The Netherlands)
Ebbing, Barwolt Sybrando (The Netherlands)
Antoni—Charles (Paris)
Careron Sylvie (France)
Singleton Peres Lamila (London)
Brown Patrick Michael (U.S.A.)
Lawrence David (Calif. U.S.A.)
Rosenkrentz Stuart (U.S.A.)
Jeanson (Paris)
Abrahams Keith & Irene (U.S.A. & England)
Swami Narikutti, Barry Owen Windsor (Australia)
Susan Cohn (U.S.A.)
Arnold J. Cohn (U.S.A.)
Wellings Julie (U.S.A.)

* * *

Mr. M. R. Grover, Retd. I.D.A.S. from Dehra Dun, a long-standing devotee paid one of his usual visits in December and he wants to express the following to fellow-devotees:

"In my childhood I have been inspired by stories from the Mahabharata and similar ones which my father used to read or tell me. One evening looking at the moon I was startled to see pictures moving across it of gods and goddesses and saints one after another; Narayana, Vishnu, Lakshmi, Guru Nanak and others.

I began to meditate when I was 30. One morning I had the experience of my heart expanding with a feeling of indescribable bliss. Then I got frightened that my body would disintegrate and die and what would happen to my family? This started my heart contracting again. Another time I dreamt of a majestic personage seated in great splendour. I made my salutations whereupon he asked me "What do you want"? I replied I wanted to see God. Under his intense gaze my heart started expanding again. This time I felt fear and with it this experience subsided. The saint explained to me that my nervous system

was not strong enough, advised me to continue my sadhana steadfastly without too much strain or impatience and assured me that there would be fulfilment gradually in due time. Then I heard of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, obtained some books about Him and finally came to Ramanasramam with my wife in 1962 after retiring from service. I felt at peace and that this was a truly holy place. The only regret was that I did not manage to come during His lifetime on earth.

I came to Ramanasramam again in 1965. The very first night I felt I was rising from my bed up and then down again and there was Sri Bhagavan smiling with Grace and assurance. It made me feel so happy. After retiring to Dehra Dun some months later again Bhagavan appeared to me in a dream. I offered Him 1 rupee which He accepted. Next morning I sent 5 rupees to the ashram without any explanation. Mr. Osborne to whom I narrated the dream explained that it meant I had been taken up by Sri Bhagavan. Now my faith is firm."

* * *

Raphael Corona from Mexico, who is now at the Ashram says:

"After finishing my studies I went to America to work. There life was luxurious and I indulged in it but still there was discontent. I was seeking a meaning to life and a purpose. A friend introduced me to *The Search in Secret India* by Paul Brunton. This was a real revelation and I was immediately drawn to the path of a spiritual seeker. I became a vegetarian and started travelling giving up my previous values. In a desert in Nevada I heard a voice telling me to go to India to Arunachala. Nobody I asked could tell me anything about it.

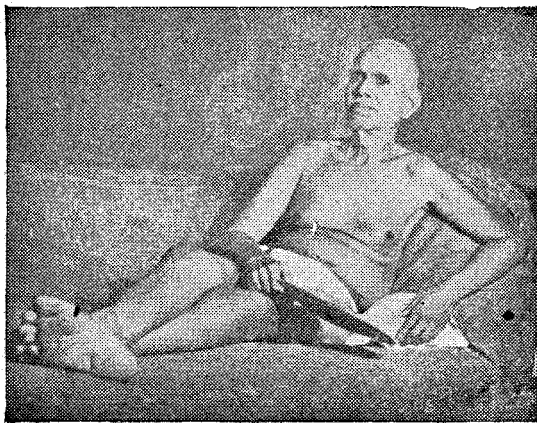
At last I came here to Ramana Maharshi—Arunachala and immediately felt at home."

* * *

THE MASTER'S 90th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

The ninetieth jayanthi or birthday of our Master, Sri Ramana Maharshi was celebrated at His Shrine of Grace on the Christmas Day, December 25, 1969, in the presence of a large gathering of devotees from all parts of the world. The day started with *Mahanyasam* (the consecration of the waters) and was followed by *Vedaparayana* (the chanting of Taittiriya Upanishad) by a group of persons well-versed in chanting. Next came the puja at the Shrine with the pouring of the consecrated waters over Sri Rameswara Mahalingam and the decoration of the lingam with flowers, clothes, etc. A *sahasranama*, or the

offering of flowers and bilva leaves to the accompaniment of the one thousand sacred names of Sri Bhagavan followed this. A Laksharchana, one lakh names of Sri Bhagavan, was also commenced on this auspicious day. Then came the



final ceremony in which lights burning camphor, etc. were waved before the linga. South Indian temple music (*nadaswara*) was played by a fine band at appropriate intervals. The puja was followed by the usual feasting of visitors and devotees. A large number of poor persons were also fed, as usual. In the morning as well as in the evening a group of devotees, mostly children, from Shankara Vihar, Madras, under the leadership of Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, gave a wonderful bhajana, which was liked, especially by the western devotees. In the night Brahmāsri Bangalore Krishnabhagavathar gave a *harikatha* on Sri Purandaradasa and with that the functions came to a happy conclusion.

SRI RAMANA AUDITORIUM

We have great pleasure in reporting that the work of construction of Sri Ramana Auditorium is progressing well. The structure has come upto the roof-level. The concrete roof of beams and slab is likely to be cast in the first week of January 1970. The work on the floor, the doors, the windows etc. is likely to be completed by the end of April 1970. An expenditure of nearly Rs. 40,000 has been incurred till now. It is hoped that by the Grace of Sri Bhagavan and the co-operation of His devotees the additional sum of Rs. 60,000 required will also be realized in due course, and the Auditorium opened formally on (the day of) Sri Bhagavan's Mahasamadhi Day.

The Souvenir *Ramana Jyothi*, proposed to be issued in connection with the Auditorium is being

printed and is expected to be released for distribution and sale in January 1970.

KARTHIGAI DEEPAM

The Holy Karthigai Deepam Day was observed on Sunday the 23rd November 1969 by all the Ashram inmates, and devotees of Sri Bhagavan, the congregation including many foreign visitors and from outside as well. After the usual *parayanam* in the evening, the devotees and visitors assembled together in the vicinity of the Mahanirvana Room, where Sri Bhagavan's portrait was installed on the usual couch, facing the Hill affording full view of the Beacon on top of Arunachala. At the appointed hour of 6 p.m. one and all had dharsan of the Jyothiswarupa Maha Deepam lit on top of Arunachala simultaneously with the Holy Deepam lit in front of Sri Bhagavan's portrait amidst Vedic chants. Old devotees of Sri Bhagavan seated besides the couch recited *Arunachala Aksharamanamalai* and *Sivapuranam*, followed by distribution of Holy Prasad as usual. The inmates of the Ashram then did Giri-pradakshinam. An atmosphere of grace and devotion was felt throughout the whole day.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH LIBRARY

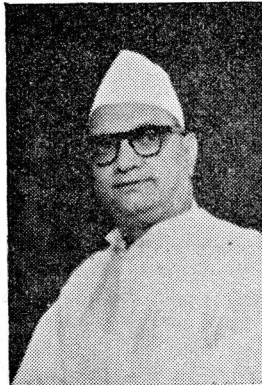
New Additions

- Practical Lessons in Yoga* by Swami Sivananda.
- The Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi to the World of Thought.* Gandhi Centenary Volume, published by the University of Madras.
- Upanishad* by C. Rajagopalachari.
- Shri Vallabhacharya, Life, Teachings and Movement* by Manilal C. Parekh.
- A Theory of Thought Process* by Robert Ownes Jones.
- Discussions on the Styx* by Mathias R. Heilig.
- The New Road to Ancient Truth* by Tenko San.
- Ontology of Advaita* by Dr. K. B. Ramakrishna Rao.
- Evolution, Paradise and the Fall* by G. H. Mees.
- The Key to Genesis* by G. H. Mees.
- Philosophy of Existence* by John Micallef.
- Life's Deeper Aspects* by N. Sri Ram.
- Kant's Theory of Time* by Sadik J. Al-azm.
- The Commonwealth of the Mind* by Walter H. Slack.
- Man's Invincible Surmise* by Gerald M. Spring.
- Crisis in Consciousness* by Robert Powell.
- Three Argentine Thinkers* by Solomon Lipp.
- The Psychology of Nirvana* by Rune Johnson.
- Significance of Dependent Origination* by Nyanatiloka Maha Thera.
- Prayer and Worship* by Francis Story.

INTRODUCING.....

SRI JAYADEVLAL DAVEY

Sri Jayadevlal Davey, banker, comes of a pious family of Gujarathi Brahmins. This is how he came to Sri Bhagavan. When he was about twenty his mother sent him one day with *biksha* (food offered in alms to *sannyasins*) to Sri Dandapani-swami, who was then living in the Ekambareswara temple situated in Sowcarpet, Madras. This Swami, a devotee of Sri Bhagavan, showed Davey a photograph of Him, and strongly advised him to go to Sri Ramanasramam and meet Sri Bhagavan. According-



Sri Jayadevlal Davey

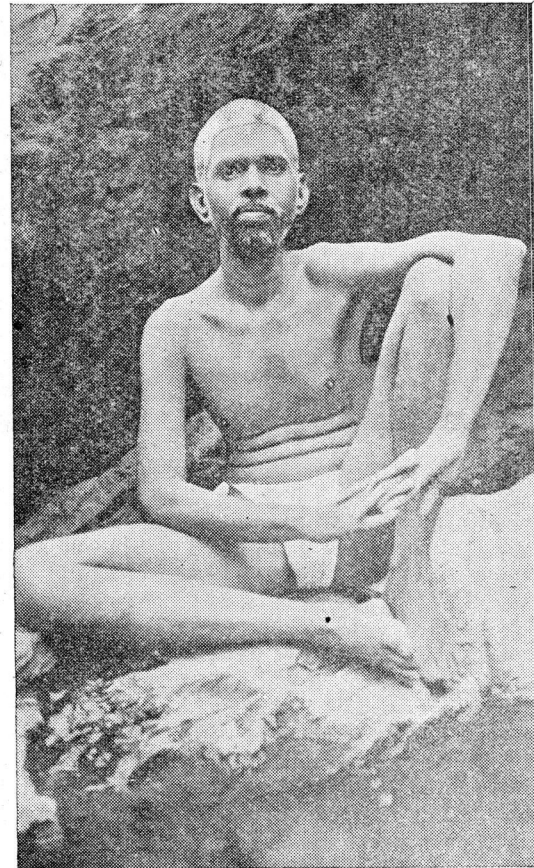
ly Sri Davey soon proceeded to Tiruvannamalai taking with him a garland of roses and some sweets. When he entered the Ashram he saw Sri Bhagavan and His attendant, Sri Madhavaswami, coming towards him. He placed the garland and the sweets in Sri Bhagavan's hands and paid his obeisance to Him, and then followed Him into the Hall. Sri Bhagavan's presence and the peaceful surroundings had a remarkably soothing effect upon him.

This first visit was made in 1928. Thereafter Sri Davey began to visit the Ashram frequently, very often bringing



Smt. Rajibai

his wife, Rajibai, with him, for darshan of Sri Bhagavan. He once prayed to Sri Bhagavan to give him some *upadesa* (spiritual instruction). Upon this Sri Bhagavan asked him whether he was practising any *sadhana*. When he replied that he was repeating the *Gayatri Mantra* daily Sri Bhagavan said: "The word *dhimahi* occurring in the mantra means 'I meditate'. Now, do you know who is this 'I' who meditates? If you do not, you must find him out." From this time onwards Sri Davey



began to love Sri Bhagavan with the love of a son for his father.

On another occasion Sri Davey's wife, Rajibai, persuaded him to ask Sri Bhagavan to bless them with a child. All their four children, had died in infancy and they were therefore anxious to have a child who would not meet with premature death. Sri Bhagavan thereupon explained to them that just as all the flowers of a mango tree do not produce fruits and as all the fruits do not become ripe, so also all the children who are born do not live to a ripe old age and that people must put up with their losses, consoling themselves with the thought that everything happens according to the will of God. This explanation consoled the husband and wife and thereafter they never felt any grief over the loss of their children or longed for another child.

In 1937, Sri Davey took a photographic film of Sri Bhagavan. This film is of immense interest and is even now exhibited to the devotees who gather on occasions like the Jayanthi. Sri Davey was also in a way responsible for bringing out the valuable *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* by Swami Ramananda Saraswathi, a well-known and important publication of the Ashram, by offering to get the manuscript in form of a diary typed out.

At the time of the Kumbhabhishekam of the Mathrubutheswarar Shrine in 1949 he placed his spacious house in Madras at the disposal of the *Sarvadhikari*, to whom he was devoted, the latter's visit being for the purpose of collecting stores and materials required for the ceremony.

Although there were numerous devotees who came to see the *Sarvadhikari* all of them always enjoyed Sri and Smt. Davey's generous hospitality.

Sri Davey and his wife were present at the Ashram at the time of the Mahanirvana of Sri Bhagavan. They first saw a bright light come out of Sri Bhagavan's body and, like a mist, cover the whole Ashram and every one in it. They next saw (like others) a bright star-like object in the sky which started to move northwards at the precise moment of the Mahanirvana. They continue to visit the Ashram regularly even after the Mahanirvana rarely missing any important function like the Jayanthi or the Aradhana.

If you create a mental conception of 'God'
Such objective concept must inevitably
Prevent you from apperceiving what God is.

— WEI WU WEI.

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EXPENDITURE — (Contd.)				INCOME — (Contd.)			
1967 Rs.		Rs. P.	Rs. P.	1967 Rs.		Rs. P.	Rs. P.
50,210	Brought Forward	..	48,693 43	48,395	Brought Forward	..	47,842 04
	To Maintenance of Sundara Mandiram:			2,711	By Pooja	..	2,343 54
	Expenses	597 71			„ Pradosha Pooja	..	242 42
	Less: Receipts	51 00			„ Laksharchana	..	492 22
264		—————	546 71	1,355	„ Mandalabishekam
	„ Sennalakudi Land Expenses	767 76					
	Less: Receipts	732 76					
		—————	35 00				
296	„ Telephone charges	..	333 80				
290	„ Auditor's Fees & Travelling Expenses	..	350 00				
	„ Depreciation:						
	Furniture at 6%	372 60					
	Electrical Installation at 10%	355 20					
	Cycles at 10%	31 38					
763		—————	759 18				
638	„ Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year	..	202 10				
52,461	Total	..	50,920 22	52,461	Total	..	50,920 22

EXAMINED AND FOUND CORRECT

(Sd.) J. SRINIVASAN,
Chartered Accountant

BANGALORE,
24th September 1969.

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended December 31, 1968—(Contd.)

EXPENDITURE — (Contd.)				INCOME — (Contd.)			
1967 Rs.		Rs. P.	Rs. P.	1967 Rs.		Rs. P.	Rs. P.
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<u>52,461</u>	Total	..	<u>50,920 22</u>	<u>52,461</u>	Total		<u>50,920 22</u>

EXAMINED AND FOUND CORRECT

(Sd.) J. SRINIVASAN,
Chartered Accountant

BANGALORE,
24th September 1969.



..... to the EDITOR

EXPERIENCE—I

Fortunately I am one of a vast number of readers of *The Mountain Path*, the unique spiritual journal from Sri Bhagavan's Ashram.

Being inspired by your replies which seem to stem from experience I am writing this letter to you with a fervent hope of getting an answer. Your clear exposition of Sri Bhagavan in your *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self Knowledge* led me to subscribe to *The Mountain Path*.

Ever since I began to read about Self-Enquiry I started doing it at once and the response from within is rather encouraging. Please permit me to narrate a short dream I had. It was 4-30 a.m. Sri Bhagavan sat on some mat on a veranda with a few devotees assembled around him. I was one of them very close to Him. I saw in the dream Sri Bhagavan embracing an old man who was suffering from an incurable and contagious disease. Seeing this I thought immediately how lucky I would be to be also cured like this. (I am a chronic asthma patient). Meanwhile my wife entered with other ladies and Sri Bhagavan asked me to allow them to get in.

About my sadhana. Strictly following the Path I still the mind taking care that no other thoughts enter while meditating. In the beginning I felt relief, later as the concentration became more steady I experienced short glimpses of Pure Bliss which last for some seconds depending upon my physical capacity to retain the breath. This experience comes very frequently now but it ceases when I try very hard. Please comment.

P. SUBBARAO,
Kharuman.

It is a sign of Grace to be able to follow the path of Self-Enquiry and get encouraging results. The dream you had signifies that you can help your wife and the other ladies. Sickness, dist-

ressing as it can be, can also be taken as a sign of Grace. It shortens your accumulated karma and prepares you for better sadhana if accepted in the right spirit of surrender. It is better not to try too hard while meditating but in a relaxed mood "let go" of thoughts one by one. If your breathing troubles you, simply watch it as it comes and goes without counting and of its own accord it will become slower, better and calm the mind. When your experience of Pure Bliss becomes more steady there will be no concern about breathing.

EDITOR-

EXPERIENCE—II

I wish to say a few words about some experiences similar in character to those I had in April this year.

I was prosecuting in a case in one of the law courts in Colombo. During the course of my work I felt a completely strange attitude towards the result of this case; a balanced attitude towards success or failure in a piece of work I was engaged in.

While I was in this frame of mind I suddenly felt a sense of deep quietude within me inspite of my activities in the court. This stillness continued for a period of about two and a half hours and I was fully aware of it. In short it can be expressed as a *calm expanse* within me.

I had similar experiences lasting for short spells on earlier occasions too. My deliberate efforts now to repeat and experience the *calm expanse* is not crowned with success so far.

Dear Sir, I wish to read your comments in *The Mountain Path*.

D. SIVAPRAGASAM,
Ceylon.

What you describe is nishkama karma i.e. doing what is necessary to the best of one's ability with

a balanced attitude towards success or failure. Work without attachment to the fruit. Such an attitude is a great help in sadhana and leads to the experience of peace or a CALM EXPANSE within you as you so aptly describe it. Deliberate efforts to repeat such an experience are seldom successful usually on account of too much tension. Just continue your sadhana and meditation without making deliberate efforts of any kind. Simply try to be calm or still the mind by not entertaining thoughts of any sort as far as possible without undue tension and this experience may repeat itself spontaneously.

EDITOR.

THE PROPER METHOD

I have been a devotee of Sri Bhagavan for the past five years but could not carry on sadhana regularly because of the nature of my employment. Beginning of this year Bhagavan has been gracious to provide employment with regular hours and I have been meditating ever since regularly. I have a problem. I hope you will help me.

First I shall explain how I meditate. I do not say *Who am I?* as Bhagavan has explained, instead I only repeat I-I-I mentally. I try to focus my entire mind on this soundless voice I-I-I which arises from the right side of my chest. Is this the proper method of Self-Enquiry? If not please kindly explain the proper method. Now my problem is that, if I remain free from other thoughts (except the thought on which I am meditating) only for a short while I fall asleep and I dream. This is not deep sleep but a sort of dream-sleep. Please explain to me how I can remain awake during my meditation. I pray to Sri Bhagavan for His Grace.

Please explain to me in full detail about the membership of the Ashram.

KABAL SINGH PARMER,
North Vancouver, Canada.

We are glad to hear that your initial impediment for doing regular sadhana has been removed by Sri Bhagavan's Grace.

The most fundamental, the first thought in each individual is the "I" thought. All other thoughts come after it. Holding fast to this "I" thought other thoughts are excluded. This helps concentration and the "I" thought may merge into "I-I" which is all-pervasive. Actually Self-Enquiry according to Sri Bhagavan's teaching aims at reaching the source of the "I" thought; "Who am I?" This should not be repeated like a mantra. Enquire and remain intuitively alert.

If other thoughts arise ask "To whom"? and they will vanish one by one. The integral "I" thought, implicit in such enquiry, having destroyed all other thoughts, is itself finally consumed. By Self-Enquiry "Who am I?" the mind gets introverted and with perseverance one acquires increasing power to abide in the Source, the real Self. If one merely continuously repeats to oneself inwardly "I-I" focussing the entire mind thereon that also leads one to the Source as Sri Bhagavan teaches. So you can practice either whichever is more congenial to you.

Lapsing into sleep or dreamy states during meditation happens to many in the beginning and even later. This can be avoided by renewed and more intense effort to remain alert. With time and practice it will trouble you less.

To become a life member of the Ashram one should remit \$ 30. You will receive communications, invitations and prasad from the Ashram. Actually it is more in the way of a donation to the Ashram than anything else.

EDITOR.

SAHAJA STATE

I enjoyed reading Prof. U. A. Asrani's article "Peak and Plateau" in the *The Mountain Path* April 1969. But I would beg to differ with him on the point of behaviour in the Sahaja State. He has noted therein that the "Vita-Raga" state of the Jains is the same as the sahaja state and that the equanimity of the sahaja state is not static and the behaviour in the sahaja state may exhibit desires and drives, very strong ones too... But the outlook is altered to the extent that as soon as the game is over, whether won or lost, the mind is relaxed like that of the perfect sportsman."

In support of his view he says that he is speaking on the basis of personal experience. Now coming to the Jain view of Vita-Raga state I may bring to your notice that the Jains don't accept desires and drives in the Vita-Raga state, not even fleeting ones, let alone the strong ones. They are emphatic on this point.....

AMARENDRAVIJAYJI,
Prudawara, Rajasthan.

According to Ramana Maharshi and Hindu sages the sahaja state is one of perfect equanimity not disturbed by emotions since the ego has been eradicated once and for all, nor by the exhibition of apparent emotions such as anger or displeasure. Sri Ramana Maharshi sometimes exhibited anger or displeasure with people not behaving in a right way and his anger was terri-

are no orders or binding rules, and anyone can come and go as he pleases. Even women, though not allowed to sleep on the premises, are welcomed.

Most of the people spoke English and greeted me in a most friendly manner. This was encouraging, for I was nervous, having been told that I was the first European woman so far to visit the Maharishi, or Maharshi, as he is generally called. We were then taken in at once to see the Holy Man, and after making the Indian salutation, by holding the two palms together and raising them thus joined to the forehead, we laid our offerings on the ground before him. He was seated on a divan upon which was spread a large leopard skin. In front of the divan sandal-sticks were burning and a small brazier of coals, on which a special kind of incense was constantly being thrown.

About a dozen people were present in the hall. They spoke in low tones to one another, and a child prattled to his mother. But soon these sounds ceased and there was quiet. I sat cross-legged on the floor with the others, though a chair had been thoughtfully provided for me.

For a while nothing happened. I tried to concentrate my mind. Suddenly I became conscious that the Maharshi's eyes were fixed on me. They seemed literally like burning coals of fire piercing through one. They glittered in the dim light. Never before had I experienced anything so devastating — in fact it was almost frightening. What I went through in that terrible half hour, in a way of self-condemnation and scorn for the pettiness of my own life, would be difficult to describe. Not that he criticized, even in silence — of that he was incapable — but in the light of perfection all imperfections are revealed. To show how little responsible he was for my feelings, he told me later on that doubting, self-distrust and self-depreciation are some of the greatest hindrances to the realization of Reality.

Presently the Maharshi got up and went for his evening walk. This was the signal for a general exodus, and we all trooped outside.

One of the devotees offered to show us around the Ashram, a cluster of small white-washed buildings and huts, all spotlessly clean, and joined together in some cases by a covered passage-way. The Ashram was picturesquely situated half way up the famous holy mountain of Arunachala. It was on this mountain side that the Maharshi took up his abode more than thirty years ago, and ever since then it has been his home. He was, at the time of my visit, about fifty years, but looked older, owing no doubt to the privations and austerities practised in early life.

It was dark when we returned for the evening meditation, and most of the people not living permanently in the Ashram had left. The hall was compellingly still. The eyes of the Holy One blazed no more. They were serene and inverted. All my troubles seemed smoothed out and difficulties melted away. Nothing that we of the world call important, mattered. Time was forgotten. Life was one, in its many aspects.

Late the next afternoon my friend had to return to his home leaving me behind in charge of my elderly servant, a fatherly and trustworthy man, who saw to it that the water and milk were properly boiled, and that, on my return each night from the Ashram, a suitable meal was waiting for me at the travellers' rest house.

From that time onwards, started a routine that was to be the same for many weeks. The rickety cart would turn up at six in the morning. It took me up to the Ashram and came back again at seven-thirty in the evening for the return journey. I soon acquired a technique of balance that promised safety if not comfort and the drive lost most of its original precariousness. However it was never peaceful owing to the small insect life inhabiting the straw on which I had to crouch!

Up at the Ashram I was given a small hut, seven feet by seven, for my use during the day. In it were a wooden plank, a chair and a table on which were a basin, towel and soap. Not luxurious, but the thought and care with which it had been provided

ble to bear but the very next moment he might be smiling quite untouched by it. His exhibition of anger served a purpose. You may have elucidated this matter already with Prof. Asrani, who also speaks in his article of "that perfect unselfishness and detachment of the sahaja state".

EDITOR.

A REQUEST

Having perused the immensely beautiful translation of "Sri Sukta" published in the July issue of *The Mountain Path*, I request that a translation of SOUNDARYA LAHARI of Sri Sankara be translated in equal manner and be published in your distinguished magazine, assuring that all the Goddess worshippers will be grateful to you.

DR. CRISHA M. P. VERNENCAR,
Betim, Goa.

We will consider this matter.

EDITOR.

ON SANKALPA

In your illuminating issue of July 1968 Page 242 reference is made that a "Jnani" has no sankalpa and one with 'sankalpa' is no 'Jnani'. Perhaps it may be worthwhile to consider this a bit more, lest wrong conclusions be made.....

After all "sankalpa" is just an activity by way of fulfilling any promise or purpose or any objective. Many do "sankalpa" prior to jap or dhyana. What about the following "sankalpa" (which is in this sense an activity of assurance or promise) coming as it does from the Lord Himself:—

"Whenever virtue declines and vice prevails
.....I will be reborn (Gita IV, 7, 8).

"I look after the welfare of my devotees".....

".....surrender unto Me and I shall relieve you of all sins; grieve not.....etc.

Can we then interpret from these that He is no Jnani, although Lord and Jnani are the same.....

K. R. RAO,
Bombay.

Your letter was held up owing to our absence from the country. The assurances of Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita quoted by you do not denote activities due to sankalpas. They flow from compassion and Grace: "I have nothing whatsoever to achieve in the three worlds, O son of Pritha, nor is there anything unattained that should be attained; yet I engage in action." "As ignorant men act attached to work, O Bharata, so should

the wise man act unattached for the welfare of the masses."

You yourself reply to your question with the statements by Sri Bhagavan and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Since all sankalpas are born of mind and the Jnani has no mind, he also has no sankalpa. Sri Ramakrishna says that the ego of a Jnani is a mere appearance, like a line drawn across water. That is quite clear. A Jnani in human form does not denote sankalpa either even if ignorant men do not recognize Him as such. A Jnani is always in the sahaja state in human form or disembodied. (VIDEHAMUKTA).

EDITOR

CLARIFICATION

I have been anxious to write to you a letter in appreciation of your personal contribution in particular and of *The Mountain Path* in general to those who are anxious to know who they are, but I have been hesitating to write and disturb you without a cause.....Please also let me know as to whether I can write to you for clarification of certain doubts that occasionally arise in my mind.

B. RAMAKRISHNA RAO,
Bombay.

By all means write. "The Mountain Path" is here to answer such doubts as a sacred duty in His service. Some letters are held over for future editions of "The Mountain Path", if too many for one edition. They will get answered in due course.

EDITOR.

LIQUIDATION OF EGO

... Your editorial of the October Number of *The Mountain Path* wherein you note that the most pernicious egoism is that of the person who has already advanced far enough on the path to obtain certain experiences throws some light on my doubts.

But, still the question remains as to how can one retain strong egoism and advance on the path towards the liquidation of the ego so far as to obtain Kevala Nirvikalpa Samadhi. And if one who has received Bhagavan's initiation and Grace may succumb to the lurking ego what is the difference between one who has received Bhagavan's initiation by either of the ways (through silence, look or touch) and the one who has not?.....

AMARENDRAVIJAYJI,
Cambay, Gujerat.

The experience of kevala nirvikalpa samadhi may be true with some sadhakas and only imagined with others. Sadhakas and occasionally even people who do not follow any sadhana may get glimpses of Reality. This experience may inflate the ego after the initial glow has subsided or bring to the surface the remaining hidden vasanas to be eradicated or will make the expert-encer humble enough to realize that all his efforts were no more than a drop in a sea of Grace. From this point his sadhana should start in all earnest to make the mind pure and steady enough to hold this experience should it repeat itself.

The pitfalls on the spiritual path are many all along. Even those who have obtained siddhis may fall into them by displaying those siddhis for the aggrandisement of the ego. What really matters is sincerity, onepointedness and humility. The less we let our mind be preoccupied with the progress or lack of it of others the better for our own progress. Let all effort be directed toward the elimination of our ego. In the measure as we succeed in this our uncertainties and whatever agitates

the mind will cease of their own accord. The difference between one who says he has received Bhagavan's initiation and Grace and the one who thinks he has not may be that the latter has it and the former only imagines he has it. Bhagavan is not limited to his physical body. Someone asked Him once whether a Guru has any solicitude for the struggling in samsara and He replied: "You cannot even imagine to what an extent . . ." It is so now. Just turn to Him.

EDITOR.

* * *

A TRIBUTE!

I consider *The Mountain Path* the finest journal of its kind and trust it will continue to widen its circulation and become known to discriminating and earnest seekers of the Light.

E. OVEREND,
Yorkshire.

Thank you!

EDITOR.

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touched me more than I can say. However, being a European, my bones were not accustomed to wood unrelieved by a mattress, and the midday rest taken after the noon meal, was hardly one so far as I was concerned.

There were two chief meals, one at eleven-thirty in the morning and the other around eight in the evening. I ate with the others at the morning one. The food was more or less the same at both — rice, with an assortment of vegetables and milk curd. Everybody sat on the floor in front of an individual strip of banana leaf.

* * *

Everyone gathered in the hall. Most people were quiet and taken up with their own thoughts. But sometimes there were visitors, travelling monks or devotees who came for the Maharshi's blessing, and they would sing sacred songs and tell allegorical tales.

Among those who turn up at the Asram for a short stay was an American author,¹ whose books and translations of Tibetan manuscripts are well known. We had many enlightening talks, and I was glad of his presence for another reason. Asking questions in the open hall was rather an ordeal, but backed by him I lost some of my diffidence. We pooled our problems and came to the Maharshi with them, trivial or profound. An interpreter was always on hand, for although the Maharshi understands English he does not speak it with ease. He knows immediately, however, whether the exact shade of meaning has been accurately translated, and if not he perseveres until one has understood him completely. One day we brought up the question of *guruship*.

"Is it necessary for spiritual attainment to have a *guru* or spiritual teacher?"

The Maharshi ordered a certain treatise to be read, in which it was stated that as in all physical and intellectual training a teacher or instructor is sought, so in matters spiritual the same principle holds good.

"And," he added, "it is hard for a man to arrive at the goal without the aid of such a one."

I turned to him. "But you had no *guru*?"

A rustle of shocked horror ran through the hall. But the Maharshi was not in the least disturbed by my audacious remark. On the contrary, he looked at me with a twinkle in his eye. Then he threw back his head and gave a joyous, whole-hearted laugh. It endeared me to him as nothing else could. A saint who can turn the laugh against himself is a saint indeed.

My companion next wanted a ruling on the vexed question of vegetarianism. Everyone had something to say about that. The outcome boiled down to this:

Food affects the mind. Certain kinds make it more *sattvic* — alive, vibrant. For the practice of any kind of *yoga*, vegetarianism is absolutely necessary. But on my asking if one could experience spiritual illumination whilst normally eating flesh foods, the answer was 'yes', qualified by the injunction to leave them off and gradually accustom the body to the purer types of food. "But in any case," went on the Maharshi, "once you have attained Illumination, it will make little difference what you eat. It is the early stages that are important. On a great fire it is immaterial what fuel is heaped."

Another problem discussed was that of the different kinds of *Yoga*, and the benefit of various methods.

The Maharshi said that in the end there was only one approach to the goal, and that was through the realization of what the Self is. Why waste time on other roads which at best will only lead to the final path? Better be on that path itself all the time, and lose no precious moments. Meditate on the Self, on that alone. There is no other goal. The Maharshi's philosophy and teaching is the purest Advaita — non-dualistic — as will be seen in a talk I shortly had with him.

I had been in despair of ever getting the Maharshi alone. It is hard to unburden the soul before a crowd. But early one morning I came into the hall and found him there unattended, emanating a wonderful stillness and peace. I asked quietly if I might talk

¹ Mr. Paul Brunton, the author of *A Search in Secret India*.

But this was unusual. The Maharshi did not heal, in the accepted term of the word. Talking about it one day, I asked him if one could use spiritual power for healing. He remarked, "Yes, if you think it worthwhile," but added that it required a great deal of force, which might be used more profitably in other directions.

* * *

I was told that the Maharshi had his finger on the pulse of the whole Ashram. For instance: when in the hall, he was supposed to know what was going on, even in the kitchen — and incidentally I was surprised to find that he himself assisted in the cutting up of vegetables for the daily meal. I was also told that he knows what is passing in the minds of people. Of this latter ability, I had a small personal experience.

It was in the afternoon and I was in the far corner of the hall reading the translation of a collection of aphorisms written in — to me — a flowery and artificial vein. I was bored and slightly irritated. Suddenly one of the devotees stood before me with another book in his hand — all the Ashram books were bound in brown paper and looked exactly alike — and said, "The Maharshi asks me to give you this. He thinks it will be more sympathetic to your type of mind." It was. How could the Maharshi know what I was reading? I was sitting far away, with many people in between us, blocking his line of vision. But I had previously noticed that many times he would answer a question in my mind, whilst it was only in the process of being formulated. This happened too often to be a coincidence.

* * *

Every experience has to end and the last day of my visit to the Ashram arrived, and with it a great sadness filled my heart. I must go back to worries, problems and irritations. Here all was peace. Here it was comparatively easy to live in the mood of the spirit. Is this why so many holy people retire to solitude, I wondered. Is it only in conditions such as these that the hidden verities emerge from under the covering of distractions? Still, all of us cannot follow such a life. Is

the answer to live in the world, if we must, but not be of the world? There was nothing new in the idea, yet in this place I seemed to understand it for the first time.

That afternoon I had my farewell talk with the Maharshi. He was so gentle and human. We discussed the difficulties of everyday life and mundane problems. I asked again about the relation of the body to the 'I'. He gave this simile.

"You came up from the bungalow this morning in a cart. Yet you do not say, 'The cart came up'. You say 'I came up'. You did not make the mistake of identifying yourself with the cart. In the same way, look upon your body as you do the cart. Treat it well, and it will be a good servant and instrument. But do not be deceived into thinking it is 'I'." He again stressed the necessity to see only the Self in everything. Act automatically, so to speak, and let 'It' do the work. "And 'It' always will," he added. "Do not look for results. Do what is right in the given moment and leave it behind you."

At the end of our talk, he quoted that wonderful saying from the *Upanishad* 'When to the man who understands, the Self has become all things, what sorrow, what trouble, can there be, to him who has once beheld this unity?'

As I went to say goodbye in the evening the Ashram people clustered round in sympathy for my departure. I felt I had made and was leaving true friends. They were so simple and yet so genuine.

There was a service taking place in the adjoining Temple, and an old Sanscrit hymn was being chanted. Just as I stepped into the cart the Temple bell rang. This brought a smile of happiness on everyone's face. Apparently, to hear a temple gong in the act of departure is a wonderful omen and brings peace.

As I left Tiruvannamalai in the dawn of the next morning, I caught a last glimpse of Arunachala, the Holy Mountain, on which lives one as one of the saints of earth. It was red and glowing in the rising sun.

I wept.

TWO KINDS OF SILENCE

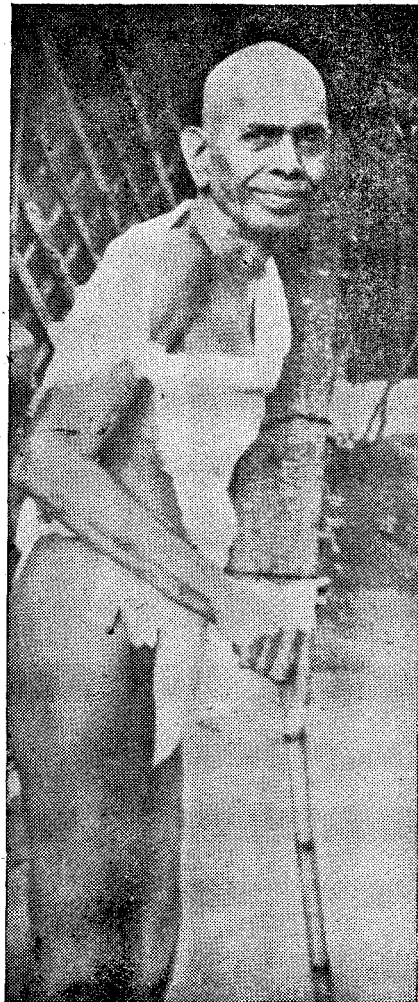
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By
Prof. N. A. NIKAM

DIFFERENT people have had different sorts of experience at Ramana Ashram. If I were to describe my experience on entering the Ramana Ashram for the first time, I would describe it as an experience of two sorts of silence: the silence of death and the silence of illumination. As I entered the ashram, I perceived a group of people sitting around in utter silence around somebody who was reclining on a sofa. On seeing this, I stopped and withdrew a little, and became grave and solemn, and behaved exactly as I would or have done when I enter a house in which someone is dead. It was a grave and solemn silence, the silence of sorrow and grief, as it were. It was natural that I should experience this on seeing the group of people who were sitting in silence around somebody, as, till then, I had no experience of silence other than the silence that is associated with death. But this experience of mine was also appropriate, as Ramana Maharshi had died to the body. The silence that I experienced therefore was symbolic; it symbolised the death of the body. This was significant. Ramana Maharshi was dead to the body, and yet he lived.

Yet, when I lived in the ashram for two or three days, I experienced an altogether different kind of silence. In the first instance, it was a silence of meditation. Its direction was towards a stillness that was coming into being, hour after hour, accompanying all my physical activities at the ashram. It was followed by an ineffable kind of calmness and joy, or joy and calmness, where one was indistinguishable from the other.

But the final phase of this experience was a silence that *communicated* through silence. It was a silence that was teaching; it was a silence that was speaking. Indeed, it was a silence of illumination, where one had no



desire to ask questions, or discovered that one had *no* questions to ask; or, if there were indeed any questions to ask, they were directed to one's own self, and so, the experience of this sort of silence went more and more inward, and the silence became an experience of a presence. And it still is that experience of an ever-present presence.