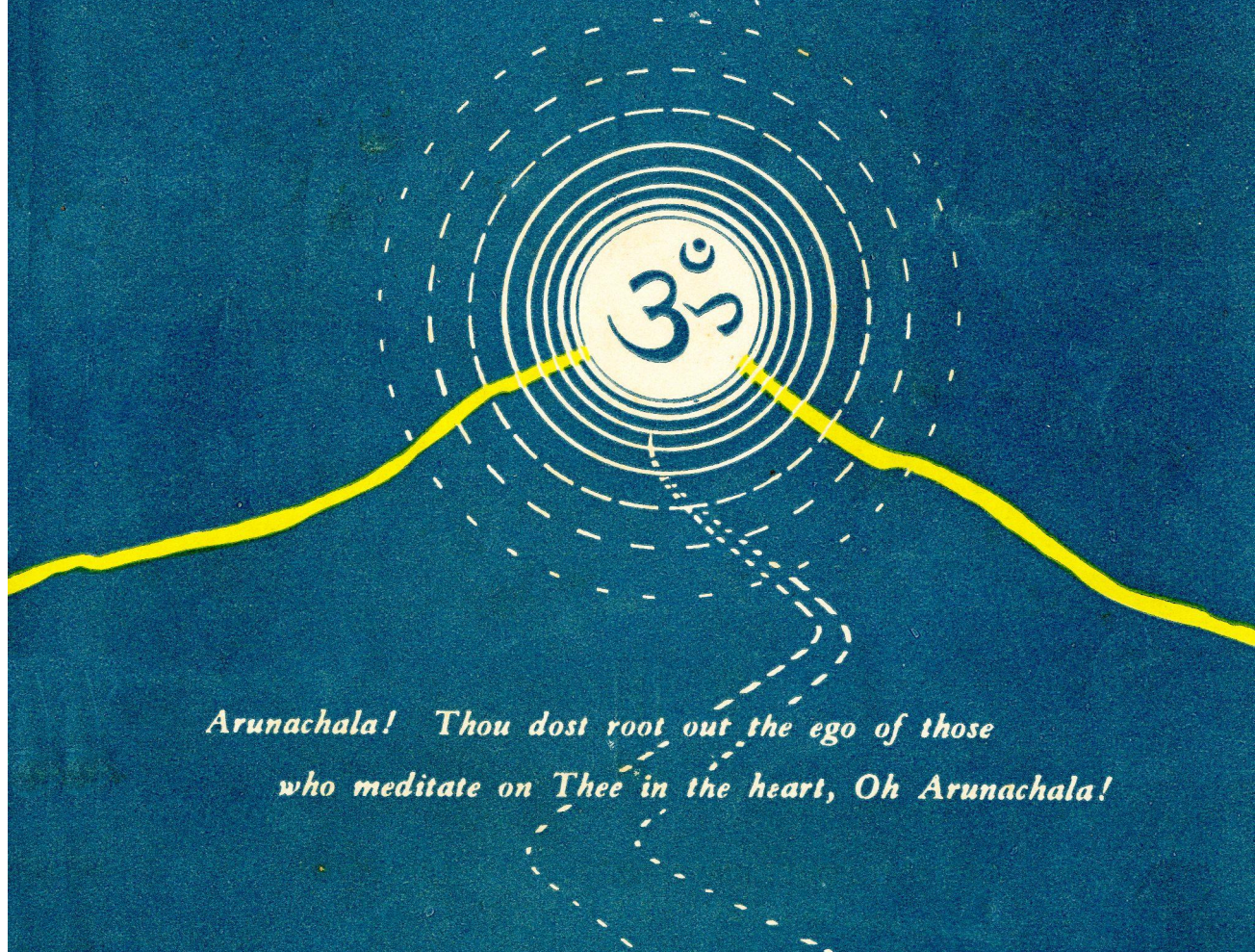


the
Mountain
path



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

vol. vii, no. 3, july 1970

Dazzling Sun that
swallowest up all the
universe in Thy rays,
with Thy Light open the
lotus of my heart I pray,
Oh Arunachala!

—The Marital Garland
of Letters, verse 27

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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

JULY 1970

No. 3

CONTENTS

	Page
EDITORIAL :	
Religion in History — Arthur Osborne ..	115
IN MEMORIAM ARTHUR OSBORNE ..	116
To the Readers of <i>The Mountain Path</i> — Mrs. Lucia Osborne ..	118
My Obeisance to Sri Osborne — V. Ganesan ..	119
An Important Announcement ..	119
Garland of Guru's Sayings (Poem) ..	120
Paul's Hymn to Love — Michael N. Nagler ..	121
Spaceless and Timeless (Poem) — Wei Wu Wei ..	123
Reflections on Samadhi and the Sahaja State — Prof. U. A. Asrani ..	124
Alexander the Great (Poem) ..	128
The Unfailing Guidance — Zulie Nakhooda ..	129
His Grace — Nonentity ..	131
Be'ng Conscious — Wei Wu Wei ..	133
Knowledge (Poem) — Muruganar ..	136
Lal Ded (Laleswari) — J. L. Raina ..	137
Glory of Arunachala ..	141
Extracts from an article on Spiritual Director in Judaism — Rabbi Zalman N. Schachter ..	144
Practising the Presence — Joel S. Goldsmith ..	145
Asceticism and Solitude ..	146
Arunachala (Poem) — A. K. Vattal ..	149
How I came to the Maharshi — Apa B. Pant ..	150
In This Your Nothing I Find My All — P. J. Saher ..	152
The Monkey Canto of the Ramayana of Tulsidas (Poem) — Kamta Charan Shrivatsava ..	153
Yoga Vasishta Sara ..	154
Mother and Father (Poem) — Muruganar ..	155
Modern Science and Self-Knowledge — Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan ..	156

CONTENTS—(Contd.)

	Page
108 Names of Sri Bhagavan ..	158
The Vedaparayana ..	161
Book Reviews ..	163
Ashram Bulletin ..	168
Introducing . . . Smt. Lakshmi Ranganadham & Sri B. S. Ranganadham ..	178
Letters to the Editor ..	180
Life Members — Sri Ramanasramam ..	185
Life Subscribers — The Mountain Path ..	186

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.

●

To Our Subscribers

1. The official year of the quarterly is from January to December.

2. SUBSCRIBERS IN INDIA should remit their annual subscription by Money Order only as far as possible and not by cheque. The words 'subscription for *The Mountain Path* for year/years' should be written on the M.O. coupon and the full name and address written in BLOCK LETTERS on the reverse of the coupon.

Life Subscription should be sent by cheque drawn favouring *The Mountain Path* and crossed.

The journal will not be sent by V.P.P.

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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.

●

Contributions for publication should be addressed to 'The Editor, *The Mountain Path*, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, Madras State'. They should be in English and typed with double spacing. Contributions not published will be returned on request.

●

The editor is not responsible for statements and opinions contained in signed articles.

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No payment is made for contributions published. Anything herein published may be reprinted elsewhere without fee provided due acknowledgement is made and the editor is previously notified.

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Contributions are accepted only on condition that they do not appear elsewhere before being published in *The Mountain Path*. They can be published later elsewhere but only with acknowledgement to *The Mountain Path*.

●

THE MOUNTAIN PATH
is dedicated to
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

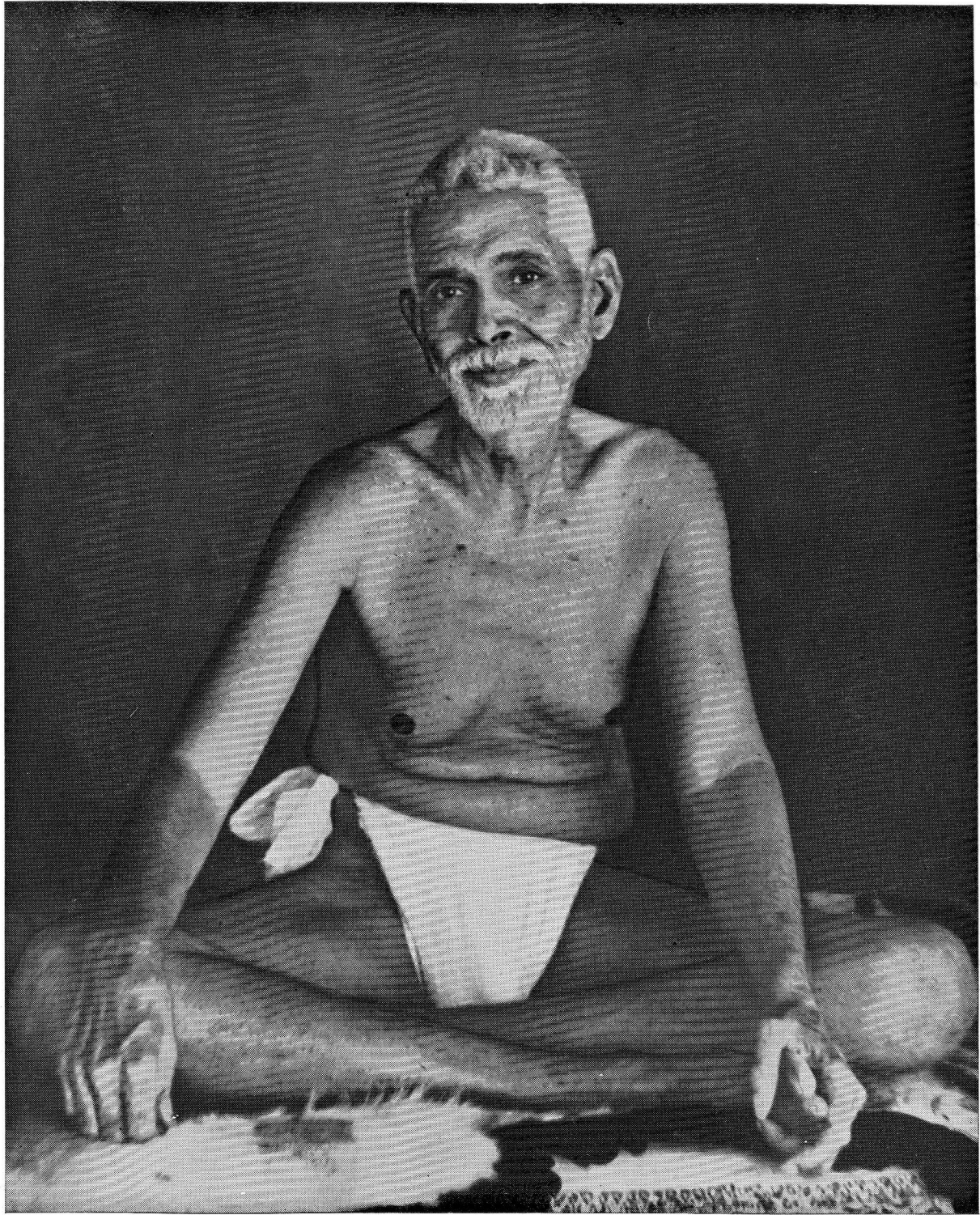
Grace in Words

மனத்தி னுருவை மறவா துசாவ
மனமென வென்றிலை யுந்தீபற
மார்க்கநே ரார்க்குமி துந்தீபற .
எண்ணங்க னேமனம் யாவினு நானினு
மெண்ணமே மூலமா முந்தீபற
யானு மனமென னுந்தீபற .
நானென் றெழுமிட மேதென நாடவுண்
னன்றலை சாயந்திடு முந்தீபற
நூன விசாரமி துந்தீபற .
நானென்று தானத்து நானென் றென்றது
தானகந் தோன்றுமே யுந்தீபற
தானது பூன்றமா முந்தீபற .

17. *When unceasingly the mind
Scans its own form
There is nothing of the kind.
For every one
This path direct is open.*
18. *Thoughts alone make up the mind ;
And of all thoughts the 'I' thought is the root.
What is called mind is but the notion 'I'.*
19. *When one turns within and searches
Whence this 'I' thought arises,
The shamed 'I' vanishes —
And wisdom's quest begins.*
20. *Where this 'I' notion faded
Now there as I, as I, arises
The One, the very Self,
The Infinite.*

— BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI





Editorial

RELIGION IN HISTORY

By

ARTHUR OSBORNE

ESSENTIALLY religion is not in history. The essence of religion is pure timeless awareness ; and since this is participation in the Immutable it is by its very nature immune to history. Mentally and doctrinally, however, the awareness is explained differently in different religions.

However, religion as an institution controlling life in every domain — philosophy, art, literature, social life, etc. — is subject to history. As an institution every religion changes, and the change is always a decline.

This is at once obvious in all those religions which have a known historical point of origin. In every one of them the point of highest purity is during the life time of the founder and the years immediately following him.

However, the subsequent course is not a simple decline ; it is more elaborate than that. There is first the burgeoning of the latent possibilities that were in germ form at the origin. The incandescent white heat of the origin cools down to a golden glow, but this lights up the landscape, revealing hitherto neglected beauties. Thus the simplicity of the Early Church is replaced by the gorgeous Catholicism of Mediaeval Christendom with its Gothic cathedrals, its Gregorian music, its code of chivalry, its miracle working saints, its initiatic orders. A parallel development took place in Islam with the blossoming of the great Sufi Orders, their poet-saints, their superb mosques, their miraculous powers, and in Buddhism with the splendour of the Mahayana.

During this gorgeous flowering season a religion never questions the superiority of its primitive origins. When this season has run its course decrepitude sets in, as with a man or a tree ; the doctrine becomes

academic, the art superficial, the paths technically intricate, and there is a general decline. Or the decline may take the form, as in ancient Greece and modern Europe of turning away from spiritual to mundane preoccupations.

There is another sense also in which the decline is not unilinear ; that is that it is halted periodically by partial and temporary readjustments. In Christianity one such was the founding of monasticism ; another the monastic reform in which St. Bernard was a central figure ; another the founding of the orders of Friars, Franciscan and Dominican ; others also.

All religions follow the same course — a decline arrested by periodical restitutions. Krishna declared it to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita. "I proclaimed this imperishable yoga to Vivasvan, he to Manu and Manu to Ikshavaka. Thus handed down by tradition, the royal sages knew it, until it was lost through long lapse of time. Today this same ancient yoga, this supreme secret, I have expounded to you, because you are my worshipper and friend."

The yoga or religion is imperishable, only men's understanding of it is lost through long lapse of time. Krishna declared also its restitution. "Whenever right decays and wrong prevails I manifest myself. For the protection of the upright, the destruction of the evil and the establishment of right I take birth from age to age."

A readjustment normally means a stabilisation on a lower level. That is the Hindu doctrine of the four yugas or ages. Similarly in Judaeism, the rigorous and intricate Mosaic law was necessary for a people who could no longer be controlled by the formless Abrahamic monotheism.

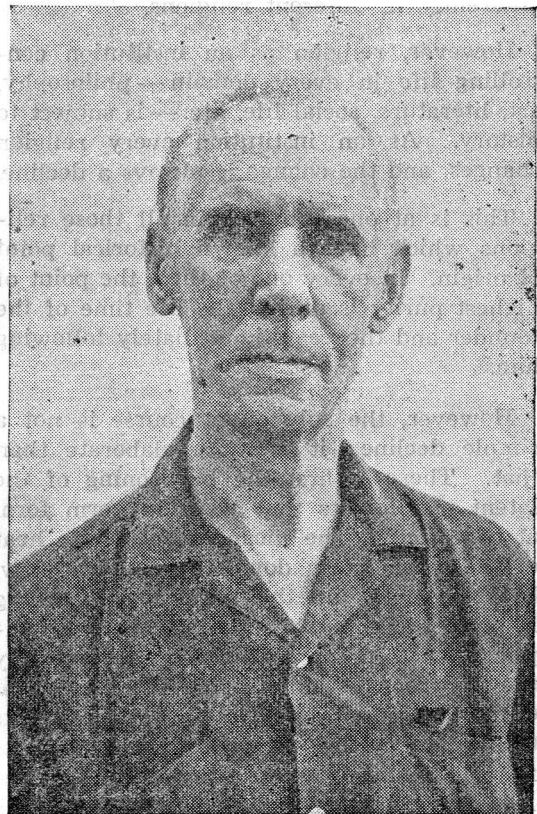
IN MEMORIAM ARTHUR OSBORNE

(25-9-1906 — 8-5-1970)

The death of Mr. Arthur Osborne, which took place in Bangalore on May 8, will be deeply mourned by Sri Bhagavan's devotees and by students of religion all over the world. In the April 1970 issue of *The Mountain Path* introducing Mrs. Osborne's article "How I came to the Maharshi" he described it as a chapter from their joint work, **Our Quest**, which he said "may or may not be completed." His foreboding proved right. Now Mrs. Osborne has to complete the story all by herself. To the admirers of Mr. Osborne and *The Mountain Path* it is a consolation to know that the brave lady has agreed to step into the breach and for the present take charge of the quarterly which her husband had built up so nobly in so short a span of time.

After taking a degree in History from Oxford in 1927, Mr. Osborne joined the faculty of the University of Bangkok in Siam. In 1941 during World War II he was arrested and interned by the Japanese. How he had been drawn by Rene Guenon to the traditional wisdom of the East and how he came to the Maharshi and found at last what he had been seeking all his life is beautifully described in his book **Ramana Arunachala**, one of the great little classics of religious literature. This masterpiece is made up mainly of a series of brilliant and moving articles which he wrote to newspapers in the steady white heat of devotion on the morrow of Sri Bhagavan's **Mahanirvana**.

His wife and three little children had come and settled near the Ashram in 1941. Released in 1945, Mr. Osborne came straight to South India, put up his own charming little bungalow near the Ashram and lived there almost continuously — in the bright serenity of Sri Bhagavan's presence.



In deciding to tread Sri Bhagavan's path as the straightest and shortest to the summit, Mr. Osborne expounded it with extraordinary clarity and brilliant simplicity in his writings on Sri Bhagavan inspiring and drawing a vast number of devotees to the path all the world over. In **The Rhythm of History** (Longmans) one notices the broad sweep of his historical knowledge and his capacity for generalization and reflection as a student of world history

and of comparative religions. One of his latest works, **The Question of Progress** (Principal Miller Endowment Lectures) delivered at Madras University and published by the Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan, discusses the theories of Marx and Toynbee, dwells on the special features of Hinduism and Judaism and presents Buddhism and Christianity as still living ethnic religions. While degeneration is the ineluctable fate of all religions, there is also the everpresent possibility of regeneration. The Hindu doctrines, rightly interpreted, are true, complete and valid for all times. Hinduism's **sanatana** quality, eternal because dynamic, is evidenced by its long succession of saints and sages from the earliest times to Sri Ramana Maharshi. **Buddhism and Christianity in the light of Hinduism** (Rider & Co) presents the wide-stretching band of the Hindu spectrum including as it does the living contents of the religions founded by Buddha and Jesus. In **The Incredible Sai Baba**, the basic identity between Sri Sai Baba and Sri Ramana Maharshi is brought out in the few purely advaitic utterances of Sri Sai Baba and the use of his miraculous powers is explained by emphasising his saying: "I give people what they want so that they start wanting what I want to give them".

Mr. Osborne's most enduring work was done on Sri Bhagavan; he edited **The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi** and wrote the most popular biography **Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge**. These two works, like that admirable compendium **Teachings of Ramana Maharshi in His Own Words**, were first published by Rider & Co., and later issued in Indian editions, the biography by Jaico and the other two works by Sri Ramanasramam. While he has thus written with great lucidity and always wisely on Sri Bhagavan, many discerning readers might find that his **Ramana Arunachala** is the finest gem among them all, for it deals in the most charming and persuasive manner with Sri Bhagavan's uniqueness and universality, with his essential modernity and his deep spiritual affinity with Gautama Buddha, with his availability and effectiveness as a guru.

As founder and first editor of the Ashram's quarterly journal, *The Mountain Path*, Mr. Osborne was able to attract excellent articles from a host of eminent writers all over the world. His own editorials succeeded in explaining in the clearest and most simple language the most profound and precious spiritual truths. Besides these "leaders" which were connected with the special topics of each issue and which also preserved a certain continuity of theme, he contributed to the magazine articles and poems written from different points of view and under appropriate names, like Abdullah Qutbuddin, Sagittarius, H. Sebastian Gubbins, Bodhichitta, Saldas and A. Rao.

In cherishing his memory it would be in the fitness of things if a generous selection from all his writings could be brought together in a uniform series of well-edited volumes.

In Mr. Arthur Osborne's death we have lost a great editor and writer. He was loved by all who came in contact with him personally or through his writings and it will be hard to fill the void.

We offer our deepest sympathy and condolences to his wife and family in their bereavement. Absorbed in Sri Ramana Arunachala may he live forever in our hearts!

To the Readers of
THE MOUNTAIN PATH

The physical death of my beloved husband and spiritual perfect companion for over 32 years was less unexpected than might have seemed to fellow devotees. He prepared me for it already in 1968, while in his usual good health, adding that his heart would give out which actually happened in the end—on May 8, 1970. Immediately after this warning he started preparing future issues of *The Mountain Path* enough to cover the following year and editorials for another year. The present July 1970 issue carries his last editorial. After completing this tremendous work in a comparatively short time his health broke down. Several times he was on the point of death. I was hoping he would be with us till the end of next year and may be fully recover as it would have ended another of his 4-year cycles to the rhythm of which his life's pattern had run so far. But it was not to be. A doctor friend who was present with me till the end told me that to watch death taking place so beautifully and peacefully was a really inspiring experience which he will cherish throughout life. The last words I heard in his beloved voice were: "Thank you". Humanly the more loveable a person the greater the heart-ache and void for those left behind but here all one has to do is to turn to one's heart and remember only his great Release and then serenity and peace take over. He has not gone away, he is here!

The Mountain Path will go on. I have been asked to carry on as I have been doing most of it already ever since Arthur's collapse in health so as to relieve him of all concern about it. His outer activity had ceased almost completely for the past two years or so except for meditation, which should have been a real cessation of activity, so radiant was his face in repose. When asked for an opinion he would often say just to write as I thought best and it would be all right. So I will carry on his work for the present, with Sri Bhagavan's Grace, till a more satisfactory arrangement takes place and I hope there will be generous cooperation on the part of contributors to the journal, for what was easy for my husband is hard work for me lacking his erudition and intellectual qualities. The best I can do is to write from knowledge derived from spiritual experience.

The Mountain Path is Sri Bhagavan's concern!

Mrs. LUCIA OSBORNE
 (Editor, *The Mountain Path*)

May 23, 1970

MY OBEISANCE TO SRI OSBORNE

By
V. GANESAN
Managing Editor

I HAVE been deeply affected by Mr. Arthur Osborne's passing away. He was and is very very dear to me and yet by his physical departure he has established me in him and he lives in my thoughts constantly.

I sensed 'something' very great in him even as far back as 1956, the time I was drawn by Sri Bhagavan to the spiritual path. The amazing fact was that Mr. Osborne immediately understood me and took me into his fold, in spite of my childish pranks, abortive emotional outbursts and spiritual immaturity. When I had to leave the Ashram twice to seek employment elsewhere he was firm in saying each time: "I know for certain you will come back. Your place is Sri Bhagavan's abode." His intuition proved true.

After some years the Ashram journal *The Mountain Path* was started. It gave me an opportunity to come into closer contact with Mr. Osborne, which enabled me to serve Sri Bhagavan and understand His teachings better. Thus I received from him great support, solace and guidance. What I am today, however insignificant the development, I could not have been, but for his

understanding and intuition. I say 'understanding' since novices in the spiritual path like me require sympathetic and patient understanding from elder developed souls. The lack of it in elders may lead youngsters astray and throw them into the fold of pseudo-gurus, who would flatter them and thus bury their real spiritual urge and push them into the myre of intellectual fallacies. I am absolutely sure that Mr. Osborne's understanding and wisdom in dealing with me has saved me from such fallacious intellectual pitfalls. For this I bow down and do obeisance to him!

There are a few personal experiences I have had which convinced me of his saintliness and spiritual greatness. Two years back I have been blessed in being able to understand Mr. Osborne's great spiritual evolution and fullness. Ever since I have been talking to my friends about him as a great spiritual genius and urging them to have at least a glimpse of this realised man.

Thus, Arthur Osborne for me is *Arunachala-Ramana-Osborne!* May he ever live in us and bless us all!!

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

We wish to inform our readers that from January, 1971 it is proposed¹ to reduce the size of *THE MOUNTAIN PATH* from Double Crown 8vo to Demy 8vo (14 cms. x 22 cms.). This change is being made chiefly with the object of reducing the cost of production. It will also make the issues handy and ensure their not being damaged in transit.

If readers have any suggestions to make we will be glad to consider them.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH, }
July 1, 1970 }

V. GANESAN,
Managing Editor

¹The decision was taken in consultation with Mr. Osborne in April, 1970 itself.

GARLAND OF GURU'S SAYINGS

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

134. The devotee's mind is the fond cowherd maiden
Filled with true love. The Heart is Lord Krishna
Who kills the ego, as the bright red blaze
Destroys the moth.
135. Beyond his destined length of days Markanda lived, defying Death.
Worship of Siva, the Death of Death,
Wears out and tears the strands of Time.
136. And what is Shiva-worship now ?
Beholding but His glorious presence
In ether, fire, air, water, earth,
Sun, moon and every living being,
Each apt response and timely service
To these amounts to Shiva-worship
Excellent and ever-fresh.
137. When the ego false
With ancient memories fraught
Is burnt up in the Heart's
Fire of Awareness,
The remnant ashes manifest
Abidance, the true form
Of the Supreme.
138. The King of kings, the Seer of seers,
Having assumed the guru's form,
Kindles through his unspoken word
The fire of pure awareness
And calcines in the heart's crucible
The cowardung of the cowering self
To sacred ashes, his sweet gift.
139. The red auspicious mark
On a lady's forehead signifies
The flame of knowledge which
consumes
- Heaven, earth and hell,
As the inert ego introverted
Turns towards the Self and burns.
140. There is no deed too hard
For soul-force to accomplish ;
Soul-force is power of love divine.
To say that numbers or weapons can do
Something that soul-force cannot
is but the folly of reliance
On the body vile.
141. The truth they know not who assert
That power and peace are different
things.
What abides as peace within
Appears to outward sight as power.

[What to inward sight is peace
Appears as power to outward sight.
One and the same thing both
To those that truly know.
—BHAGAVAN]
142. The seeker strict in discipline
Gains divers powers of punishment.
But perfect meekness is the mark
Of the master of awareness true.
143. From Him who offers all, the Self,
the whole,
Why ask for some few silly *siddhis* ?¹
Why from a bounteous patron beg
For old, stale gruel ?
144. Having reached the Sage's Feet,
That world of infinite awareness,
Who would pray for *siddhis* ?
In Heaven where nectar flows in
plenty
Who would go in for old, sour gruel ?

¹Thaumaturgic powers.

PAUL'S HYMN TO LOVE

By

MICHAEL N. NAGLER

LIKE Swami Vivekananda in our own age, the disciples of Jesus the Christ absorbed the loving impact of a perfect spiritual being and hence reveal at times the unmistakable first-hand experience of their own Realization. St. Paul, for example, almost surely did not see Jesus in the flesh, yet he interpreted the eternal Law for his world and his time with the authentic, uniquely thrilling voice of one inspired not only by a great teacher (Sanskrit, *āchārya*, Hebrew, *Rabbi*, as they called Jesus), but — through him — by the greatest teacher of all, the Self.

His condition speaks very much to our own. He was a Jewish intellectual born in the commercially prosperous exilic community of the Greco-Roman city of Tarsus, north of Syria. His world, too, was cosmopolitan, intellectually oriented, politically agitated, and spiritually starved. Occult mystery religions flashed into being, expanded into wide but short-lived prominence, and died down like so many wayward sparks shot forth from the blazing love of Jesus for mankind. This fire Paul came to feel in the very act of trying to quench it, and lived thereafter for the sole purpose of passing it on to Hellenistic Judaism and the entire world.

He calls it, in the international language he spoke from childhood, *agapē*. This was the most suitable of the three common words for "love" in the Greek of his period, *erōs*, *agapē*, and *philia* or *philotēs*. *Erōs* had strong connotations of selfish, personal desire, particularly sexual, and had long been used by the Hellenistic poets in the sense from which the modern adjective derives — hardly a suitable term for Paul's meaning in any context, least of all for that of the ancient Corinthians with their well-known propensities. *Philia*, on the other hand, was too

devoid of feeling; it was philosophical in concept and contractual in practice. *Agapē* not only conveyed the uplifting feeling of strong love, but it had equally strong overtones of forbearance and respect. As a concrete noun, incidentally, it was used to denote the *satsangs* of the early Christian brotherhoods.

In the finest expression Paul gave to this concept, the famous lyrical passage of *Corinthians* I.13, English translations will often render *agapē* as 'charity', for historical reasons: the useful and mildly miraculous powers (*siddhis*) which the disciples enjoyed as the results of divine grace they referred to in Greek as *charismata* and grace itself as *charis*. The earliest English translators, much more familiar with Greek than we are, simply transcribed the latter word, through the Latin form *caritas*,¹ as 'charitie.' This was excellent Greek, since *charis* had been used for direct blessings from a god since Homeric times, but it is no longer adequate English. What is Paul's *agapē*? This "highest way" of his (Greek *hodos*, Sanskrit *marga*) is nothing more nor less than bhakti yoga. In the first of the surviving letters which were his desperate attempts to reinspire the foundering Christian community of Corinth, he speaks almost word for word the language of the *bhakti marga* of the *Gita*:

Pursue *agape*; you should strive jealously for the spiritual, but this the better to impart divine wisdom . . .

For better is he who imparts divine wisdom than he who merely speaks in inspired frenzy (14.1-5).

For better indeed is knowledge than mechanical practice

Better than knowledge is meditation

But better still is surrender in love

¹ *Charis* and *caritas* are not really related, but the ancients thought they were.

For there follows immediate peace.²

For we know fragments and we speak of God from fragmentary knowledge,

But when complete fulfilment comes, then will this fragment-knowledge pass away (13. 9-10).

Those will I surely rescue from the fragment's cycle of

Birth and death, to fulness of eternal life in me.³

Jesus had striven, as every spiritual teacher, to direct the awareness of his disciples beyond the transitory powers that may accrue from even relative awareness of the divine spirit to the eternal spirit itself. This explains the ambiguity of Paul's attitude to divine blessing, such as *propheteia* as a living process (*sphota*) or in its recorded examples (*smṛti*; cf. his Chap. 14. 12-21). Though inherently better than ordinary, worldly talk, what good are such gifts without their divine inspiration, by which alone they can be put to their appropriate use in the service of God's will (12. 28-30) ?

Similarly, against the background of universal mysticism the apostle's reference to "speaking in tongues" at the beginning of our passage becomes clear : through his love Paul and the others were able to communicate in whatever language spoken by those eager to listen, even as Sri Ramana Maharshi conveyed the same message through the diverse media of English, Sanskrit, Malayalam and other languages, as well as his native Tamil. This power Paul rightly called inspiration, regarding it as continuous with the mysterious "speaking in tongues" which were not known "languages of men" but rather "of angels" (13. 1) or "in the spirit" (14. 2). But in any case, it is love, not languages, that must be sought.

Another point should be of particular interest to us : there is an old variant in verse 3 for the word *kauthēsōmai*, "that I be burned," namely *kaukhēsōmai*, "that I boast." This alternative does not fit the pattern of Paul's argument, which as we have seen is to replace a relative good by a still higher, absolute one. Furthermore, Greeks and Jews of Paul's audience might well have known of self immolation as a

severe form of outward renunciation, for it seems that a Buddhist monk burned his body in Athens during the reign (and perhaps in the presence) of Augustus (cf. Josephus, B. J. vii. 8.7).

Divine love is the inspiration as well as the theme of the 'hymn to love' which is the center of the First Letter. In a sense, of course, the letter appears as a particular point in history, a confluence of the great streams of Greek and Hebrew civilization. For it certainly descends, in this sense, from Socrates' 'hymn to love' (*erōs*) in the *Symposium*, and also from the orthodox Law and the "prophecies" of the Torah and the Mishna. It also recalls the literary form of the 23rd Psalm, when it rises to lyrical heights of personification and returns to a calmer, more detached level of thought, just as the Psalm rises to and returns from an ecstasy of direct address to the Lord. Yet in another sense it stands outside of history, itself a *propheteia*, an inspired revelation of universal Truth. By this he encourages us to cultivate virtues, of course, but beyond them :

"Let me show you the most excellent way."

If I speak the languages of men and of the angels, even, but have no divine love, count me as hollow bronze or a tinkling cymbal.

And if I can make prophecies and know the secrets of the universe and all the sciences, and have complete faith so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

And if I can make prophecies and know need me and give over my body to be burned away, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love fills the heart, love always avails, it is not love where there is envy, not love which brags or puffs with selfish pride.

² B.G. XII, 12 from the new translation of my teacher, Prof. Eknath Easwaran (Sadhana Records BCCM 701, box 381, Berkeley, California); reproduced with his kind permission.

³ *Ibid.*, XII, 7.

Love is never ungainly, never eager for personal profit, nor irritable, nor reckoning up wrongs ;

Never rejoices at injustice, but rejoices with the truth ;

Love has perfect patience, perfect faith, perfect hope, flawless endurance.

Love will never fail—whereas scriptures shall be forgotten, tongues pass away, and sciences grow dim.

For we know fractions only, and from fractions make our judgments ;

But when fulfilment comes the fraction will be no more.

As long as I was a child I spoke like a child, I reasoned and reckoned as a child does ; but when I became a man, did I not give up childishness ?

For we are catching now reflections in bewilderment, then we shall see face to face ; now I have partial knowledge, then shall I know completely, even as I am known.

But for the present there abides faith, hope, and love—these three, but far the best of these is love.

Spaceless and Timeless

By

Wei Wu Wei

I am not extended in space, I have no duration in time,
I have neither extension nor absence of extension,
Neither presence nor absence of duration,
Because only objects can extend, only objects have duration,
And I am not an object.
But the absence
Of the presence and of the absence
Of 'space' and 'time'
Is what I AM.

Therefore
I am Here,
Every 'here', but no 'where'.
I am Now,
Every 'now', but no 'ever'.
See ?
What are you looking for ?
There is nothing to be seen,
Either within 'mind' or reflected without.
Looking ?
You can't see what is looking.
Nor can you see me,
For there isn't a 'me' to be seen.
Why ?
Because I am the looking,
All looking,
And all that any thing could be.

REFLECTIONS ON SAMADHI AND THE SAHAJA STATE

By

Prof. U. A. ASRANI

A LOT of confusion about Hindu Yoga and about Mysticism in general, and a lot of debate about them, which can be summarised but can never be settled, appears to be due to the fact that the goal of Hindu Yoga, as well as that of Mysticism, outside the Hindu fold, has never yet been universally decided. Many authoritative writers like Dr. Radhakrishnan and William James have accepted the principle that mystics, irrespective of age, creed or clime, speak a common language and form a common brotherhood. Aldous Huxley has built up his *Perennial Philosophy* on that basis. But what exactly is the final target, which that common fraternity aims at, has not yet been defined. There are in general two types of targets, discernible within the present life, which have been kept in view by mystics.

Since visions and sounds are also a type of 'samadhi'—called 'savikalpa samadhi'—and since trances and ecstasies are their accompaniments, we may call this conception of the target the 'samadhi target' in general. In the U.S.A. the term 'Peak Experience' or 'Transcendental Experience' usually of a spasmodic or ecstatic nature, has very often been used. R. M. Bucke has popularised another type of mystical experience, which he called 'Cosmic Consciousness'. Here, in India, we cover all of them in the blanket term 'samadhi' which is of several types (see below) and has several stages, approached by well-known techniques.

On the basis of the teachings of his 'Guru'—the illustrious Sage Sri Ramana Maharshi—Arthur Osborne regards even the highest 'samadhi' as not the ultimate aim of the mystics. The ultimate aim, he says, is the 'sahaja' or 'natural samadhi'

in which full spiritual or transcendental consciousness is maintained along with full outer awareness, but free from the ego sense. This state is beyond ecstasy.

Sri Ramana Maharshi—whose dialogue on this point has been quoted by Mr. Osborne—mentions six ascending stages of 'savikalpa' and 'nirvikalpa' samadhi, on the authority of Sankara's *Vivekachudamani*¹ and *Drgdrsyaviveka*. "By constantly practising these six types of samadhi" says Ramana Maharshi, "at all times and without intermission one can attain the state of natural thought-free awareness (*sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi*). Until this state is attained, the ego is not completely destroyed. Once this state is attained, one may seem to others, to see and hear, to eat and sleep, but it is only an appearance." Thus we have the authority of such a great, recent and well-known mystic, that this is the final target; and that various types of samadhi including the highest nirvikalpa samadhi are but a means to that end. Indian mystic tradition has used several terms in describing one who has attained this sahaja state; the most common is Jivanmukta.

Dr. S. N. Dasgupta² gives in his monumental work *History of Indian Philosophy* (Vol. II) the history of the concept of the Jivanmukta, i.e., liberated in the body. Although this term was used as such for the first time probably in the *Yoga Vasishtha* (Sixth Century A.D. ?), the concept of it comes much earlier. The *Chandogya Upanishad* says, "When all the desires of the

¹ Sankara—Commentaries on *Chandogya Upanishad*, VI. 14.2; *Brahma Sutra*, IV. 1.15.19; and *Sariraka Bhashya*.

² Dasgupta, S. N.—*History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, pp. 245-52; and Vol. IV. 99.88, 418, 486 and 446.

heart are quenched, then even a mortal becomes immortal. In this condition, even while living, he has the feeling of identity with the Brahman." Sankara elaborated this concept in his commentaries on *Chand*, Up. VI. 14-2 and *Brahma Sutra* IV, 1-15-10 as well as in his *Sariraka Bhashya*. The momentum of past karmas may carry life forward, like the momentum of a potter's wheel in spite of the freedom of the ego which a Jivanmukta has achieved; but actually he is liberated in this life itself. 'Videha Mukti', i.e. liberation after death, follows as a natural consequence.

Dr. S. N. Dasgupta² draws pointed attention to the fact that a Jivanmukta, in spite of his knowledge of the essence of all nature and phenomena, and in spite of being neutral to all happenings, is far from an exclusive or unnatural man. Unaffected in every way within himself, he can yet take part in the enjoyment of others; he can play like a child and sympathise with the sufferings of others. Dasgupta² refers also to the psychological qualities of such a sage, given by *Yoga Vasishtha* and compares them with those outlined by the *Bhagavad Gita*³ as pertaining to a *Sthitaprajna* sage (We will presently see that psychologically, there is considerable similarity between the two) and prefers the exposition of the former. The *Bhagavad Gita*, though it does not deny such qualities to a saint, yet does not mention them either, and seems to lay stress on the aspects of passivity and detachment in the character of a saint.

The very theme of the *Bhagavad Gita* revolves round the idea that even the perfect sage can and should wage war, if necessary, for the preservation of virtue and for preventing the prevalence of vice; nothing could be more realistic than that. But Dr. B. L. Atreya, who has made a comparative study of *Yoga Vasishtha*, quotes passages indicating more explicitly this aspect of a sage's life. The *Yoga Vasishtha* itself mentions as the fruit of its study, the Jivanmukta state, God-consciousness and the highest bliss, above pleasure and pain. This highly revered book on Jnana Yoga says: "He (the sage)

behaves with his fellow beings as the occasion and the status of the person demand without the least stain on his mind...to the knave, he appears as a knave. He is full of courage in the company of courageous people, and shares the misery of miserable ones (V. 77, 13-14)." "He regards his activities as part of the cosmic movement and performs them without any desire (V.6.1) outwardly very busy, but at heart calm and quiet (VI b. 98.5)."

The *Bhagavad Gita* mentions the ideal or perfect mystic state under several epithets; the *Sthitaprajna* is only one of them. The others are *Sthirabuddhi*, *Yogarudha*, *Jnananishtha*, *Bhagavadbhakta* (dear to God), *Karma Yogi* and *Gunatita*. Some scholars see a difference of content or level in these epithets; but the same equanimity of mind—not mere frustration—tolerance of modern psychologists but elation—tolerance as well—and the same self control, unselfishness, non-attachment and freedom from cravings, runs evenly through the qualification of those epithets. It is remarkable that Sri Krishna thus implicitly establishes that a Karma Yogi (the mystic of action), a Bhagavad Bhakta (devotional mystic) a Raja Yogi (one established in Yoga) and a Jnani (a man of self-realisation) all meet at the Summit, which is the sahaja or the jivanmukta state. This is characteristic of the *Gita*. On the whole, it aims at emphasising the common target of all techniques, instead of their differences.

S. C. Chatterji and D. A. Datta⁴ state that this concept of a jivanmukta introduced by Sankara is shared by the Buddhists, the Jains, the Sankhyas and other Indian thinkers. Mukti or Liberation in Indian mystic parlance signifies freedom from all suffering and terms like *apavarga*, *kaivalya*, etc., indicate the same state. It has only two types; one before death (jivanmukti) and the other after death (videhamukti).

³ *Bhagavad Gita* (II. 54-71).

⁴ Chatterji, S. C. and D. M. Datta — *Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, p. 42; pp. 285 and 407.

S. N. Sengupta² says that this concept of *jivanmukta* is accepted by three most prominent (out of six) schools of Indian Philosophy, viz., the Sankhya, Yoga, and Vedanta. According to a description given by Paul Deussen it appears that the remaining three are not worth considering as regards mystic achievement. Purva Mimamsa is concerned mainly with Vedic ritual, Nyaya mainly with logic and Vaisesika mainly with classification of things under categories.

In Sankhya liberation is taken to mean the destruction of the three-fold misery (*dukka-traya-bhigata*) — compare also *Sankhya Karikas* 67 and 68. According to S. N. Dasgupta the *Tattva Kaumudi* tries to base its remarks on this point on *Chandogya Upanishad*. Other commentators quote *Mundaka Upanishad* II.2.8. and *Bhagavad Gita* IV. 13. The Sankhya Sutras actually use the term 'jivanmukti' (III. 77.82). With the advance of the stage of emancipation the Yogi ceases to have inclinations, even towards the process of concentration, and there is only knowledge. This stage of samadhi is called 'Dharma Megha Samadhi.' At this stage all the roots of ignorance... become destroyed and in such a stage the Yogi, though living, is emancipated." (S. N. Dasgupta². Dharma, i.e. right or ethical living, "rains out from a Yogi at this stage as naturally as rain drops from a cloud; hence the title, Dharma Megha.")

As regards Vedanta, with support of the great commentator Sankara, and the reputed text, *Yoga Vasishtha*, no other authority needs to be quoted. Among later reputed writers Vidyananya (14th century) wrote a treatise called *Jivanmukti Viveka*.

S. N. Dasgupta, in Vol. IV of the same book, quoted extensively above (p. 88)² shows that Madhavacharya—the founder of a famous cult of Bhakti (i.e. devotional or emotional mysticism) — also favours the conception of *Jivanmukti*. On pages 418, 428 and 445 Dasgupta² gives similar reference to other Bhakti cult texts, confirming this concept, and even mentioning 'nirguna' i.e.,

quality — less or impersonal devotion. However, some bhaktas persist in asserting that the technique of Bhakti itself (devotion to a personal god) is the real and only aim of all mysticism, superior even to *Jivanmukti* or *Videhamukti*. Nevertheless Indian Bhaktas are not escapists or quietists, intent only on maintaining their emotional samadhi trances, ecstasies or visions the whole day, neglecting their worldly work. They believe that with the spirit of dedication to God any type of work or profession is equivalent to worship of God. A butcher, Sadhana by name, earned, during the mediaeval Bhakti period of Indian mysticism, the appellation of a true Bhakta; so also some ladies doing actual household chores. Thus with them the spirit of dedication was the final target and not trances or visions.

Along with some Bhaktas quite a number of Christian and theistic Muslim mystics claim that the goal consists in love of God and not in *Jivanmukti*. However, among Indian Bhaktas the ninth and the last stage of devotion — *Atma Nivedana* — goes beyond the 'Beloved Other' — into a state of complete merging in, or identity with God. Whatever may have been the technique of Bhakta Tukaram of Maharashtra, he speaks very much like a *Jivanmukta* sage, when he says: "Speaking I am silent; and dead, I am alive. Although among people, I am not. My renunciation is in enjoyment, my non-attachment is in attachment. I have broken all bonds either way." He says: "I am not what I appear; ask God for an explanation of this enigma."⁵ Bhakta Kabir, one of the topmost Bhaktas of mediaeval India, has some passage in his writings the out-spokenness of which has perhaps yet to be excelled by any other devotional mystic. He has a poem in which he describes the state of *sahaja* as excellent. In another he says: "It is very good that God is forgotten; a calamity has fallen off from my head... My mind has become as crystal clear as the water of the Ganges. Now God runs after me, calling, On Kabir! Oh Kabir! "No doubt all that is ascribed to Kabir, may not be

⁵ *The Mountain Path* — January 1967, p. 81.

originally his ; but this much is certain that the creed of the mystic school which Kabir founded not only tolerates but even appreciates such a 'blasphemy.'

Thus Hindu philosophic as well as mystic tradition supports the concept of the sahaja or jivanmukta state by a very wide consensus as the acme, the perfection or the maturity of all types of mystic effort.

Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis by D. T. Suzuki, Erich Fromm, etc., reveals that the Satori of Zen so contrives that all mental activities will be working in a different, more satisfying key ; more peaceful, more full of joy...the tone of life is altered ; it is rejuvenating. This description also indicates some state akin to the Jivanmukta state.

All the twenty-four Tirthankaras (propagating leaders of founders) of Jainism are reputed to have been Vitaragis (above attachments). *Visesha Gatha* 1332-1333 and *Uttara Dhyayan* Chapter XXII Gatha 8 give the characteristics of a vitaraga personality ; they also remind one strongly of those of a jivanmukta sage. The Taoism of Lao Tse (China Sixth century B.C.) also recommends a state similar to the vitaraga state as its Summit.

Quite a large number of Sufis have the outlook, that visions of God cannot be the end and aim nor can ecstasies ; these are regarded by them as hurdles to be crossed (pp. 151, 153 and 189)⁷. Above the state of Wajad (ecstasy) there is a higher state recognised by most Sufis, which they call Wujud (literally it means existence, but it may mean natural or pure existence like that of a jivanmukta). The Sufis have a stage of mystic ascent, which they call Marfat, i.e. knowledge or realisation of the identity of the little self with the Haq or Reality. But Sufis recognize even above such a realisation a higher stage called Haquiquat (literally realism ; it is interpreted by some as being equivalent to the Jivanmukta stage). Again Sufistic tradition recognises three stages of Fana (i.e., mystic death or extinction or merging). The last is merging in God ; but

that is not the end. The final stage in the series, higher than all the three stages of Fana is called Baqua-bi-Allah, i.e., living eternally in God or Baqua-bad-al Fana, i.e., eternal life after mystic death or after mystic merging in God (Typescript notes of the Sufi Laher Baba of Ahmedabad on the Philosophy of Love). This last stage of Baqua may also be something like a return to realism after complete merging into God. Arthur Osborne remarks that "Dissolution of ego-sense in a state of ecstasy is known as Fana...but the final state is Baqua or stabilization and is beyond ecstasy. The plainest evidence on this point is that of the Sufi book *Kasful Mahjul*. It speaks in an oft quoted couplet of four stages of detachment or renunciation ; 1. From the world. 2. From the fruits of piety, after death. 3. From God Himself (reminding one of Kabir's couplet : *Good that God has been forgotten*). 4. From detachment itself reminding one of the concluding verses of Bhartrihari's famous book *Vairagya Sataka* ; — 'I have now renounced renunciation itself.' Therefore there can be no doubt that the final stage recognised by some Sufis at any rate, is evidently a return to Jivanmukta life and realism. Sufi poet Al Ghazali also speaks of 'effacement from effacement of the Self'."

Jacques de Marquette⁶ states that, though Christian mystics are definitely theistic, some of them at any rate have gone beyond dependence on God and beyond separateness to Unity with Him, i.e., beyond sublimation to complete maturity, integration of personality and realism, as modern psychologists would put it. Kalyana Yoga number (p. 296) quotes from St. Paul himself in this regard. Among Christian mystics absorption stages called 'Marriage of Union', 'The Void of Spirit', 'The Infinity of Unity' and 'The Prayer of Simple Regard' indicate definitely stages of absorption or samadhi beyond were visions or raptures. 'The soul seems to be God himself...seems to be more God, than it is soul' (St. John of The Cross). Several other quotations are given in the Report of

⁶ Jacques de Marquette — *Comparative Mysticism*, pp. 151, 153, 175 and 189.

the Bucke Memorial Society Conference, January 1965 (pp. 77-80). According to Evelyn Underhill even this sense of unity with God yields equanimity in success and failure. Again terms like Unitive Life or Perfect Justice, used by some Christian mystics, or what Bernard Bosanquet calls 'salvation' appear to indicate states similar to the sahaja or jivanmukta state of Hindu yogis, with its complete return to realism, in spite of being detached from the ego. St. Theresa describes the highest stage of Christian mysticism in her 'Interior Castle — Seventh mansion' in terms which very strongly remind one of the descriptions of the jivanmukta state. She calls it Unitive Life or Spiritual Marriage. It is not an ecstatic state, she says, and she mentions that the special practices of mental absorption become unnecessary at that stage. The intellectual keenness and organizing capacity of

several mediaeval Christian mystics gives further confirmation of this similarity.

Thus it appears beyond dispute that the sahaja state or jivanmukta state, is almost universally recognized as the real acme or final target of mysticism. Some scholars put it as one of the two alternative final aims or ends of mysticism. Some mystics they say choose according to their temperament to keep absorbed in their quiet retreats, in states of absorption; while others are so constituted that they return to normal life and work for the good of humanity. The prevailing opinion, however, is that states of absorption are a means to the final stage of the jivanmukta. Different mystic schools may differ in their techniques and the evaluation of their samadhis or absorption states; but they appear to meet at the summit of the jivanmukta state.

Alexander the Great

.....

From Ancient Irish Poetry

Four men stood by the grave of a man,
The grave of Alexander the Proud:
They sang words without falsehood
Over the prince from fair Greece.

Said the first man of them:
"Yesterday there were around the king
The men of the world—a sad gathering!
Though today he is alone".

"Yesterday the king of the brown world
Rode upon the heavy earth:
Though today it is the earth
That rides upon his neck."

"Yesterday," said the third wise author,
"Philip's son owned the whole world:
Today he has nought
Save seven feet of earth."

THE UNFAILING GUIDANCE

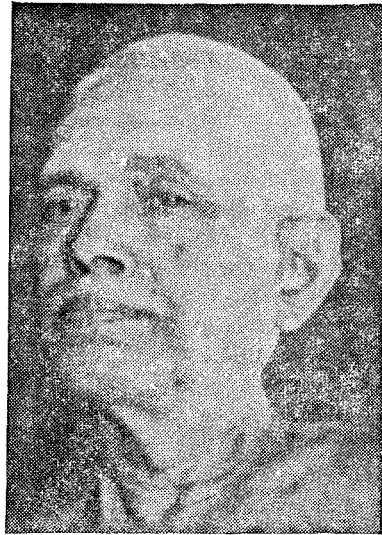
By
ZULIE NAKHOODA

I BECAME aware of the guiding grace of Sri Bhagavan through several crises that I faced during a month-long trip in the various countries of Europe.

The philosophy that serves as the base of the technique is simple and preached through the ages by the sages and the saints, i.e. the identification with the Paramatma, the merging of the individual self, with the universal Self manifested in all living creatures and the whole universe. In the measure as we make progress on our spiritual path the elements of discord with others diminish and gradually one is at peace with the world and oneself.

In this write-up I wish to relate some personal experiences which brought me an awareness of the grace that is always abiding with us if only we turn to it in the right spirit in all sincerity. The experiences are described to pay a tribute to Sri Bhagavan and in appreciation of the guiding light given at critical times even in matters which might be considered trite by some from their point of view.

I am one of those who came under the spell of Sri Bhagavan's grace after he left the mortal body. It was a photograph in the issue of *The Mountain Path* that I came across by chance. The serene benignity of the smile and the gracious and penetrating look exuded peace and joy that held me spell-bound. It was at a time of uncertainty and frustration when his grace entered my life, and I found my moorings. Surrender to this power, entity, force or whatever it may be called, changed my circumstances and created conditions that led me to emotional stability and economic security. Since then, the pictorial representation of Grace incarnate, the photograph of Sri Bhagavan has been my beacon light bringing me relief in



times of trouble and giving me refuge in days of anxiety and sorrow. It accompanies me wherever I go as it did during my trip abroad last month, where several incidents took place which strengthened my faith and made me aware of His constant and guiding presence.

To quote only two incidents :

The occasion when I witnessed the response to my plea was on my arrival in Teheran. As a matter of fact, I had not wanted to stop at Teheran — tired and homesick as I was — after a month away from home. Besides, I had received no confirmation about the arrangements for my stay in Teheran from the two people contacted there. But, since there was no immediate connecting flight to Bombay — I had no alternative but to spend two days in Teheran. The other aggravating factor was the time of arrival — about 10-30 p.m. Despite all my self-confidence and experience of travelling alone, I must admit, I was nervous about the situation: a lady all by

herself, stranded at the airport in the middle of the night, with limited foreign exchange and no knowledge of the local language. All that I could do during the flight from Athens to Teheran was to pray and pray hard to my never-failing resource.

And sure enough, the response came. When after landing I stood in the queue for customs and passport checking — wondering what next, an Iranian officer came up, and looking at my saree inquired if I was Mrs. N. On my replying in the affirmative, he told me that two ladies were waiting outside for me and I should see them as soon as I was through with the customs. What a relief it was to know that I was not alone after all and would have a roof over my head in this strange city. When I met the two ladies I did not know who they were nor at whose request they had come to receive me. I was amazed to find that it was thanks to an unexpected source that these arrangements had been made as none of my expected contacts had turned up! I was housed comfortably in the home of the Director of an educational institution, was given an opportunity to see some welfare agencies in Teheran and escorted back to the airport to take the flight to Bombay.

Another incident happened in Vienna, where I spent a week-end to see an old friend on my way home. I was staying at a "Pension" a decent private establishment known to my friend. She had a full programme for me during this short stay to make it fruitful and enjoyable. The schedule for mornings, afternoons and evenings was handed over to me on my arrival. It was on the last day, perhaps the busiest, that I went for a shower in the morning. As usual, there was running hot and cold water and the taps had to be adjusted according to the required temperature. Somehow, in my hurry to get out and be ready in time to keep all the appointments I turned on only the hot water tap and before I could realise what was happening, steaming hot water was pouring all over me. I was scared and confused and could not even touch the tap to

turn it off as it had also become burning hot by then. Fortunately I slipped and the fall threw me half out of the shower through the plastic curtain and as I pulled myself out, parts of my body were already stinging with the scalding. This painful feeling was an indication that blisters and inflammation would follow. The feeling of discomfort, the anxiety about how I shall be able to wear my clothes and go through the day's programme even leave for my country were weighing heavy on my mind and making me feel miserable. In my small toilet bag, there was no ointment for burns — so I tried to contact the two ladies who managed the establishment. But with my lack of knowledge of the German language and their poor English we made no headway.

And then I fell back on my last resource — praying fervently to Sri Bhagavan and concentrating on the photograph, I let the healing influence of the glance of grace from the photo pass over the affected parts for a few minutes. Soon I started feeling better and gradually the burning sensation was gone. Within a quarter of an hour, I was able to dress and go out as scheduled. The injury of the fall in the shower was also forgotten and I was able to join the tour in the afternoon which took us to places like the Vienna woods, old churches and a children's village — all of which involved a lot of walking. It was only after reaching home — four days after the incident and one more stop on the way that I felt the pain and applied medicament. This was remarkable in view of the fact that the bruise was on the knee and quite severe. Under normal circumstances this would have made it impossible for me to walk let alone up and down as we did that afternoon.

Such is the Grace of Sri Ramana Maharshi and I am grateful for all the experiences which have saved me from difficult situations and reaffirmed my faith in the unfailing guidance and help that is received when prayed for. I hope and pray that the grace of Sri Bhagavan may be with me till the end of my earthly life and even thereafter!

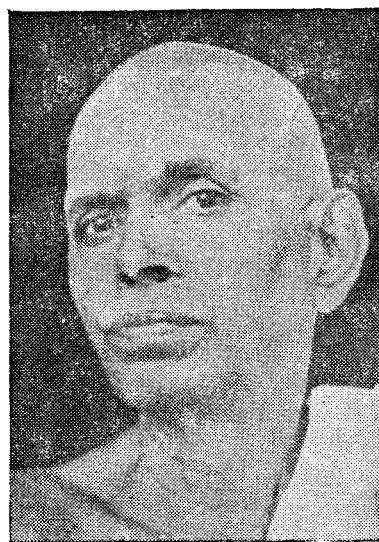
HIS GRACE

By
NONENTITY

WHILE reading *The Mountain Path* (October 1968) I could not resist thinking why people should come forward to record only their spiritual experiences as a result of coming in contact with Bhagavan. Some, I find, go to the extent of giving instructions for the practice of 'Who am I?' enquiry elaborating what the Master has already taught. I am a gross materialist and my approach to Bhagavan was prompted by the highly self-centred desire to improve my material position. I am not sure whether there are, among the devotees, persons who had a similar yearning, but I do not feel shy to admit my lowly interest and to proclaim that I have been benefited by His Grace to this end.

When I was a student at Trichinopoly one of my college mates told me that there was a Rishi at Tiruvannamalai and, in my ignorance, I could only visualise a Rishi of the line of those mentioned in the Puranas. In 1928, when I had an opportunity to visit Tiruvannamalai, the brother of my friend who was a school teacher there, took me to the Ashram and I had my first darshan of Bhagavan. My original picture of the Maharshi was then wiped out. Although I had an inborn reverence for great men I knew little of Bhagavan's teachings; nor did I have any knowledge of Vedanta. I had however a vague idea of yoga after seeing Kadappa Satchidananda Paramahansa Yogiswara and reading his book in Tamil during my school days. Ten years later it was my good fortune that my interest in Sri Ramana was revived through an intimate friend, a devotee who had visited the Ashram several times. The flickering glimmer of devotion was kept up by an aged relative, who was also an ardent devotee.

This relative narrated a miracle which occurred in his home and this enhanced my longing to come closer to Bhagavan. He had



an ailing daughter whose health had deteriorated to such an extent that she could hardly move from her bed. In desperation he wrote to his friend in Tiruvannamalai, a firm devotee of Sri Bhagavan requesting him to invoke His blessings for the recovery of his daughter. At midnight the relative who was sleeping in the open, a few yards away from his house, was awakened by the sick daughter. He was astonished at her being able to walk by herself up to his bed. The girl explained that an old man helped her to walk and led her up to his place. She had to be carried back to her bed. From that day she improved in health. It is thirty years today since this incident and she is well and happy.

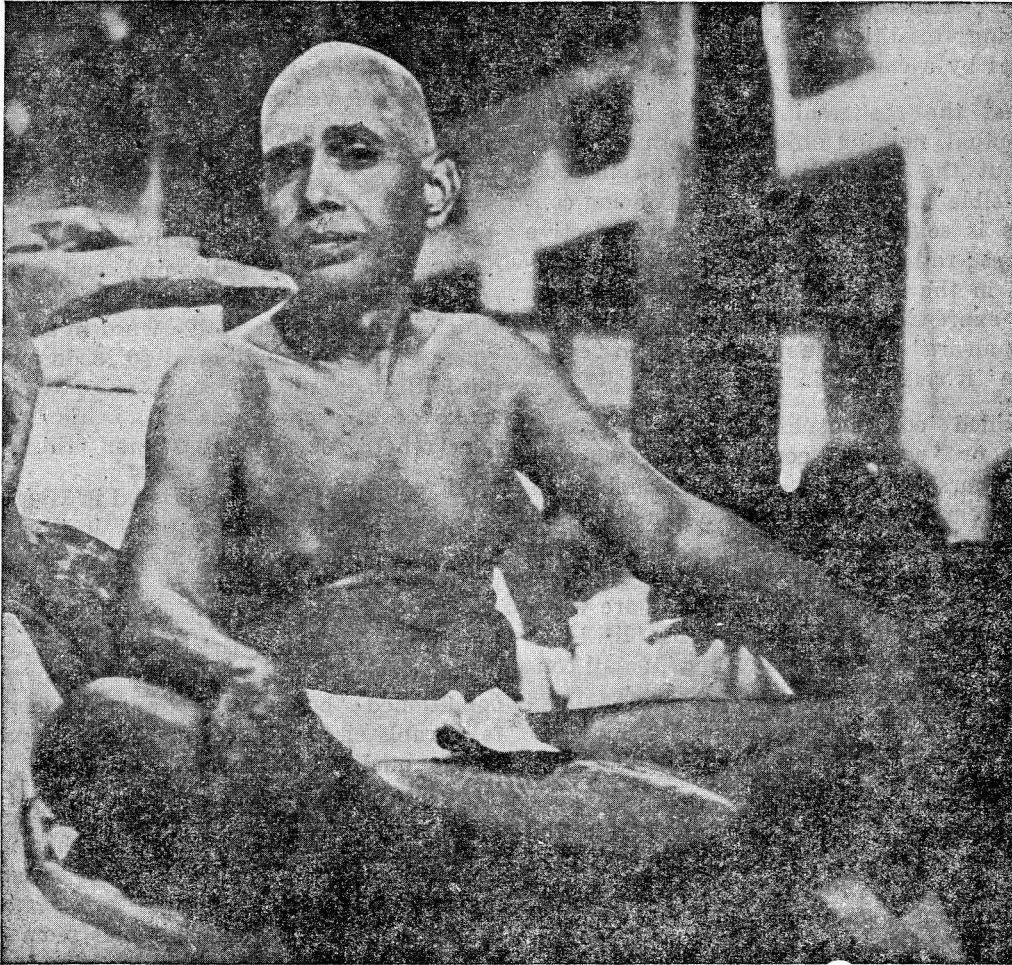
At that time I was struggling as a temporary government employee on a very meagre salary and with great family commitments. In my desperation I wrote a post card to Bhagavan asking for his grace and a reply came stating that my letter was perused by Him. This gave me solace and immense joy. A few months later I received

an offer of appointment in the Central Government in Delhi and I left the South for better employment and stepped on the threshold of prosperity. Since then I am constantly thinking of Bhagavan and the repetition of his name is my daily ritual for the past twenty years or more. I consider myself lucky for having had a few chances of visiting the Ashram during Bhagavan's life time and also a year before his Samadhi and a year thereafter. It was during one of these visits that an old copy of *Tiruchuzhi Puranam* was received by Bhagavan and this was being read out in the afternoon. While some devotees might have been meditating in His presence or listening ardently to the reading of the *Puranam*, I was mentally praying for material advancement to relieve me of the great burden of family life — an unusually big family with eight children in various stages of growth. As though

in answer to my prayer, the reading ceased as Bhagavan apparently was puzzled by the term '*Otrai kannan*' (one-eyed man) which occurred in the text. The dictionary was brought and there was the explanation that the word referred to Kubera (God of wealth). Bhagavan seemed amused when the dictionary mentioned five legs for Kubera. How did I interpret the situation? One of my eyes was defective and I have five sons. The defective eye deteriorated gradually while my status and financial position improved from time to time. Now I have one eye, after enucleation of the affected eye, but I am not a Kubera yet. Nevertheless I feel and believe that I may attain that state before I pass away. (Somewhere I heard that Kubera is only the custodian of the wealth of the *devas* and perhaps he does not enjoy that wealth! — This is only aside for I cannot show any weakness in my faith).

SRI MAHARSHI : "What is *time*? It posits a state, one's recognition of it, and also the changes which affect it. The interval between two states is called *time*. A state cannot come into being unless the mind calls it into existence. The mind must be held by the Self. If the mind is not made use of there is no concept of time. Time and space are in the mind but one's true state lies beyond the mind. The question of time does not arise at all to the one established in one's true nature."

— Talks, p. 554.



BEING CONSCIOUS

.....

By
WEI WU WEI

Consciousness is the self of which everyone is aware. No one is ever away from his self and therefore everyone is in fact self-realised.

— SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI.

WHAT we normally mean by 'consciousness' is consciousness-of-self or self-consciousness. This is divided conceptually into objectivised 'subjects' and their apparent 'objects', both psychic images,

whereby and whereof the apparent universe is constructed. In this divided consciousness the subjective element appears objectively as 'selves' and the objective element as 'others'—which is other-than-self, perceived and so cognised extended in three spatial dimensions and one temporal whereby 'form' is rendered perceptible by duration.

This consciousness is relative, divided, and dependent upon the concepts of 'self' and

'other', reasoning by the comparison of opposing qualities applied to conceptual objects by a conceptual subject.

What the Maharshi indicates is nothing conceptual, nothing objective, nothing divided, but the integrality of being-conscious, indivisible and absolute. Such being-conscious is selfless, for 'self' is an objective concept; rather may what is implied be indicated in the language of relativity by some such expression as 'awareness unaware of being aware'—as we may be said to 'experience' it relatively in deep sleep.

Divided consciousness is our personal living or 'waking' consciousness, whereas the Maharshi speaks of our impersonal, basic, and integral awareness which must be unconscious of being-conscious as of any conceptual quality or attribute whatever. And this consciousness remains what-we-are when divided consciousness is asleep, for 'life' and 'death', 'waking' and 'sleeping', as all conceptualised and relative experience, have only that relative kind of pseudo-existence which is subjected to extension in space-time.

"Consciousness", said Schroedinger in the language of physics, "is a singular of which the plural is unknown", which in metaphysical language means that being-conscious is neither singular nor plural, since it cannot be a conceptual object relative to any other conceptual object, but is merely a sign, indication, or symbol for whatever may be supposed to cognise whatever may be supposed to be cognisable.

NOTE: *We are only conscious in relativity. Absolutely there can not be any thing to be conscious of any other thing.*

Being conscious of being conscious is not 'being conscious' at all. Which is why, Absolutely, there is absolutely no difference between the concepts of 'consciousness' and 'unconsciousness'.

II

To a Maharshi, as has been pointed out, who basically is absolute mind but who was obliged to communicate in the forms and

language of relativity, there was no difference between positive and negative. Moreover he lived his 'life' in the positive *ambiance* of Vedanta, although his teaching was based on negation, as was that of the Chinese Masters.

This is why he could speak of 'Self' as though it were not relatively a positive entity objectified in split-mind, and why he could refer to the Absolute as 'That'—which is the most objective word in any language. He was conditioned so to do and, to him, it made no difference since what he spoke of in such terms was *neither* 'self' *nor* 'other', *neither* 'that' *nor* 'this'.

The positive way is traditional in Hinduism as in Hinayana Buddhism, but it is a long way round indeed, implying successive and innumerable 'incarnations', compared with the negative way, of Taoist origin, termed by Ch'an Buddhists the "Sudden School", which was able to produce 'liberation' from conditioned 'bondage' at any moment in favourable circumstances and in the hands of highly qualified Masters.

It is evident also in innumerable examples of the Maharshi's statements to his more qualified devotees, that he himself regarded instantaneous 'awakening' as perfectly feasible and his words sometimes seemed to imply surprise that anything so simple and obvious should fail to be evident. Evident it may, indeed, sometimes have been, but if the devotee were still bound by positivity to his relative conditioning the desired fulfillment would still be withheld.

III

The Maharshi, in the passage quoted, went on to say that "Realisation consists only in getting rid of the false idea that one is not realised. It is not anything new to be acquired."

Sri Ramana's pronouncements need no confirmation from other sources, but as a matter of historical interest one may recall that an identical statement was made by Chinese Masters such as Hui Hai and Huang

Po, and the Maharshi himself repeated it in slightly different words, all the Sages implying that the sole hindrance to 'enlightenment' is the notion that we could be anything but 'enlightened' already.

Such a radical approach, so widely affirmed, surely needs closer analysis than it has hitherto received?

It must surely be obvious that the 'enlightenment' referred to could not be a state of mind or any objective or relative condition whatever, for such are subjected to 'time' and are impermanent. In fact the term, as defined, could only apply to whatever basically we are. Nothing less, and nothing else, could substantiate such statements.

All, then, are equivalent to stating that what prevents us from awareness of what we are is the — inevitably absurd — notion that we could be anything else!

If none of the Sages was able to tell us what that is, there must be some good reason, some very good reason indeed, for their silence or forbearance. What could such a very good reason be? Surely there could only be one reason which fulfills these exacting conditions, and that reason must be that it cannot be expressed in, or revealed by, relative language?

So what is there that cannot be so revealed? Precisely the one 'object' the eye cannot see, the only 'knowledge' that knowing could never know, the 'awareness' of which being-aware never could be aware. In other words — *This* which relativity cannot express relatively because it is not relative.

Is that all we can say, as far as we can go? All we can say — no doubt, yes, but as far as we can go — no doubt at all, no. Why? Because it is only all we can 'say' or 'do' — subject to the limitations of *relativity*.

And that is surely the answer: relatively 'we' are 'bound' forever — by relativity. Absolutely we have never been 'bound' — for there have never been, absolutely, any 'us' to be 'bound' at all!

How could anything or nothing be bound by what it is? How could anything or nothing be freed from what it is? What could there be to be Absolute?

No wonder the Masters all seemed to wonder, to wonder why we couldn't see the obvious! Perhaps they weren't looking in the opposite direction? Perhaps they weren't looking for 'the Absolute' as something relative?

IV

WHY I CANNOT BE BOUND

A body can be bound with chains, a psyche can be bound by complexes, a conceptualised phenomenon can be bound, i.e. can consider itself bound, and all can be freed — for 'bondage' and 'liberation' are relative concepts also.

But nothing conceptual could bind anything but a concept. I cannot be anything, for *I cannot be conceived*, so how could I be bound? The 'proposition' cannot even be posed — since it cannot make sense.

No relative qualification whatever can be posited of the purely nominative I.

People think, and even maintain, that they can regard 'I' as a concept, but they are mistaken: the error is due to an abuse of language. I cannot be a concept because I cannot conceive what is conceiving. What people conceive is 'me', just as they conceive 'you', both objects, and in both cases they confuse the object with the subject, but subject cannot conceive subject except as an object — which it is not and can never be.

This simple example explains the mechanism of the false notion which is conceived as 'bondage', and which is nothing less than mistaking a conceptual and relative object, a phenomenal 'me', for noumenal and absolute I.

I am notoriously invulnerable simply because nothing in conceptual phenomenality can reach what-I-am since I am already all that it is! There are no two objects involved which could affect one another.

Moreover how could phenomenal objects extended in conceptual space-time achieve any kind of contact with what is space-less and in-temporal? In order to make contact two objects are necessary, and only objects are extended in space-time.

Objects are phenomenal manifestations in mind of what noumenally I am: therefore all they can ever be is what I am, and they cannot, and have no need to, make contact with all they already are, ever were, and ever could be. 'Contact' is a relative concept which, like all relative concepts, is inapplicable to the absolute.

The notion of 'me' and 'you' being in any way different or separated from what they are, which I am, is untenable even in the logic of relativity within the limitations of which 'we' are confined in these discussions.

Therefore a conceptualised 'I' is not I at all! And that is so because I am the source and origin of everything which appears to be, including the process itself of conceptualising. Therefore I cannot be conceptualised, since I cannot conceptualise what is conceptualising which ultimately I am.

What is there even apparently 'mysterious' about all this, all this so simple and obvious is-ness? Indeed and surely, how and indeed *however*, could it possibly be otherwise?

V

Let me quote the great Huang Po:

QUESTION—"Does the Buddha really liberate sentient-beings?"

ANSWER—"Factually there are no sentient-beings to be delivered by the Thathagata. If even 'self' has no objective existence, how much less has 'other-than-self'!

Thus neither 'Buddha' nor 'sentient-beings' exist objectively. . . . I assure you that all things have been free from bondage since the very beginning."

There is no one to be 'delivered', for only an object could appear to be 'bound'.

And 'liberation' is liberation from the notion of there being anything to be 'liberated'—which is the notion of being 'me' instead of being I.

Knowledge

By
Muruganar

The Master showed me and I saw
That knowledge is the Self's sole substance.
Knower, knowing and thing known
All are but knowledge; one, not many.
And being this pure knowledge, I
Blossom bright as all these worlds.

LAL DED (LALESWARI)

By

J. L. RAINA

(Continued from our last issue)

LAL DED was a follower of Shaivism and very liberal as its exponent with an ultram-monotheistic basis as is evident from her inspired verses. Shaivism bases its theory on the one Self or Sadasiva, transcendent and immanent. Siva and Shakti are one in their essence but different aspects of the same Reality. They are eternally inter-related. Shakti is Siva in disguise. Her creative function acts as a force of obscuration in order to create many out of one.

"I was one and became many. I found Him everywhere visible and invisible", says Lal Ded.

But to return to her story: Unmindful of obstructions Lal Ded went on her way to realise her great longing leading a life that had already become unconventional by then. At times she would leave the house at dead of night and return next morning when the sun rose high in the heavens to attend to her household duties. Often she was silent absorbed in herself. Her husband, whose curiosity and suspicion were increasing day by day, did not dare to accuse her openly and scarcely had the courage to speak to her. The mother-in-law, who was furious by now, kept on goading and rebuking her son for his leniency. He therefore determined to follow her in the dark at night to catch her with the object of her love. When she went out at night he followed in her footsteps silently. Behold! he was startled to see her walk across the river Vitasta without fear. On reaching the middle of the river she bathed and returned with an earthen jug full of water. This changed the attitude of the hiding husband who now felt he should respect her. But doubt overwhelmed him all the same, unable to believe the evidence of his own eyes. Perhaps some jugglery was at play. Going behind her he

aimed a stone at her jug which broke into pieces but the water, as tradition says, did not spill out and remained motionless as if condensed. This dumbfounded the puzzled husband more than ever and on reaching home he related the story to his mother. Both of them were struck with awe. Lal Ded came home still with the condensed water on her shoulder and filled all empty pots with it; the rest was thrown out through the window into a ditch which was also filled to the brim. This ditch is to this day called 'Lalla trag' but little water is found in it now. The above amazing feature drew crowds of people to the place.

The neighbours knew already of the hardships Lal Ded was undergoing at the hands of her mother-in-law and the husband. But she was bearing it all with great patience and even now a girl in Kashmir considered to be gentle is addressed as 'Lal Ded', one who has developed in her all great qualities. From now on people started coming to Lal Ded and falling at her feet in reverence. This she found disturbing, so one dark night she disappeared into a dense forest without human habitation to be with nature in all its purity and meditate in solitude. After a while her husband went into the jungle in search of her and succeeded in bringing her back; but it was impossible for her now to fit into a life which she had abandoned for good. She was roaming about, her mind fixed on her Beloved, unmindful of rain and snow and the hot sun, leaping from one cliff to another and caring little for what the world had to offer.

Seda Mol used to be the family priest in her parents, home and it is said that he became her Guru under whose instructions she had started her spiritual practices. She was advanced through her constancy and

one-pointedness and was nearer Infinity than her guru. Lal Ded starts her teaching by relating her own experience :

“I went to find Him with longing in
my eyes.
While searching I waited nights and
days.
But I beheld the sage, the wise
Dwelling in my own abode,
And that moment was auspicious.”

It is obvious that the One she found dwelling in her own abode (herself) does not refer to an earthly guru.

Lal Ded believed in self-purification through selfless service (*nishkama karma*) and was intent to help others to a life leading to it. She undoubtedly attended to her household duties and observed the daily routine meticulously.

Tradition says that on a solitary occasion when Seda Mol visited Lal Ded her husband requested him to admonish her so that she took more interest in her home. A discussion ensued and the points raised were to define the best light, the best friend, the best *tirtha* (sacred place) and the most comfort-giving state in the world. Her husband and Seda Mol gave commonplace replies pertaining to worldly comforts. After listening to them Lal Ded, improving upon it, said :

The best light rests in ecstasy,
God is the best Friend,
To trace him is the most sacred task
Leading to the most happy state.

Once at the bidding of her mother-in-law Lal Ded went to ask Seda Mol to attend a religious ceremony at their house. She did not enter the house of the guru but called for him aloud from a distance. The wife of Seda Mol resented this mode of calling and rebuking her for it, replied angrily that the guru was absorbed in meditation. Lal Ded was quick to retort : “How is he in meditation? He has been hit by the horse in the pasture of Nandan Marg”. On hearing this remark Seda Mol came out and struck by her insight fell at her feet apologising for

the harsh words of his wife. He admitted that while he was in meditation he was thinking of his untamed horse left roaming in the pasture land. It was a revelation to him that Lal Ded could read other people's minds.

After returning from the jungle Lal Ded had grown careless and unmindful of ordinary things. She began to wander half-nude often dancing and singing in divine ecstasy. She was thus wandering about when her father-in-law met her and reprimanded her severely for going about in this manner. Her reply is revealing :

“Foulness I burnt from my soul,
My mind with its desires died,
Then my name of Lalla (half-nude)
spread abroad.
Patiently sitting on my bended knees
I kept my mind from earthly passions.
There is no you and I,
There is no object for contemplation
Nor even contemplation.
All actions have been lost in forget-
fulness.”

Considering the external world to be nothing but an illusion she justifies her nakedness by asking ‘what garment could be better than to be clad by sky and air’. Then expressing her attitude of detachment :

“Let him hurl abuse upon me, let him
pronounce blame,
Let each one say to me what pleaseth
him.
Yes, let him worship me with the
offering of his soul or with flowers.
Still keep I untouched and undefiled
by all this,
So what difference does it make ?”

Lal Ded seems to have come to the conclusion ultimately that investigation is the surest way of attaining salvation. She says : “Lalla has worn out her body by attempting to gain salvation by good works not knowing that these lead only to further transmigration and are in vain. The only hope of salvation is finding out one's identity with the Supreme. The wonder of it ; who I am and who He is ? To doubt this identity

is indeed a great doubt." And again :

"From what quarter did I come and by what road. To what quarter shall I go and how shall I know the road? In the end if I gain good guidance all is well. For there is no substance in an empty breath."

"My body befouled with mud, Thou remained hidden from me. The livelong day I passed seeking for me and Thee. When I beheld Thee in myself there was unrestrained rapture."

In Lal Ded's monism the advent of divine Grace plays a prominent part nevertheless. Though seekers must strive to their utmost or surrender totally yet ultimately it is through Grace that their true state of identity with the Supreme reveals itself. This could be compared to a drop of our striving merging with the limitless sea of Grace, in essence both identical.

"By the mercy of the Supreme
I got awakened and as for myself
I did not meditate on anything."

"I, Lalla, wearied myself seeking for Him. I laboured and strove even beyond my strength. I began to look for Him and I saw that bolts were on His door and in me. As I was longing for Him I became fixed and there where I was I gazed upon Him — myself."

Human efforts take one far enough to see by Grace that they are of no avail in the end. Grace alone reveals that the gate barred to all human efforts is a gateless gate. Being fixed that is the mind becoming still one realises that there never were any bolts. True Identity is revealed.

It is doubtful whether Lal Ded was conversant with the Shaivistic philosophy in theory but in practice *Karma-Mala* (the round of daily duties) practised in the households of Kashmiri pandits, is conducive to gaining spiritual insight. Work performed with detachment, puja, meditation, reflection on spiritual matters, listening to the chanting or reading of holy scriptures; all these constitute *Karma-Mala*.

According to Shaivism the routine of daily life effected in the right spirit and manner, involves both *Karma-Mala* and *Mayavi-Mala*. The bad effects of the latter are minimised by *Karma-Mala* performed as sadhana. The *malas* (impurities) appear in the jiva and his limitations. They can be eradicated by constant spiritual practice till the realization dawns that the jiva and the Supreme Being are not different.

Lal Ded says :

"When by repeated practice of Yoga the whole expanse of the visible universe ascends and becomes merged in void; where the eternal void itself becomes dissolved then nothing but Bliss remains. O, thou learned ones! This is the true doctrine."

Lal Ded teaches that Truth lies in one word OM which contains all scriptures. This is reminiscent of Thayumanavar's "one wondrous word" on which Self-realization hinges :

"One Word, a wondrous word exists
Which in Itself contains
All other words; by it is purged
The soul of all its stains."

A number of miracles are associated with the name of Lal Ded but not much significance is attached to this feature in Shaivism regarding them as an ordinary routine of those who had conquered the elements of matter. Lal Ded disdains supernatural powers which are a temptation to a seeker and may lead to the enhancement of his ego :

"Why cool the flames, stop the flow of
a stream
Walk on water, fly in the air?
These are only jugglers' feats
To deceive people."

The verse below describing the all-pervasiveness of the Supreme is like an echo from the *Bhagavad Gita* :

"Thou alone art the heavens and Thou
the earth
And Thou alone art the day and night
and air,

Thou alone art the real offering, the
incense, the flowers,
All things that have birth, all that is.
What then could I offer Thee ?

Lal Ded's liberal outlook in Shaivism consisted in turning the Kashmiri people away from rigid ritualism to which their religion had degenerated under repression. She was not against rituals as such but against sacrificing true religion for rituals and against animal sacrifices.

"Wilt thou sacrifice a living being to a
lifeless idol ?

Real worship rests in whatever action
you do

Every word spoken is the Mantra."

She appreciated the value of idol worship as a symbol and reminder, fulfilling the need of the less evolved section of the people.

Purity of mind does not depend on externalities. But if she was not an upholder of rituals as the times demanded she did not oppose their performance. What she advocated was a simple life, simple worship and avoiding difficult paths. It is enough to remember and practice one mantra. Worship of God according to her teaching consists in carrying out smoothly the ordinary routine of life in a detached manner and in a spirit of selfless service. No need to abandon the world :

"What use is leaving home and why to
woods ;

Be firm in your faith

That alone will lead you to happiness.

What use is turning a recluse or running
away ?

Be wise to know Siva is always with
you,

Do not run away, times must change."

Lal Ded's teaching was clear and simple meant predominantly for simple people. Her poetry became popular and is quoted freely

to this day by people of all faiths. Her saying influenced the common folk and gave them courage. She tried to draw out their narrowness of mind wavering between their traditional religion clouded with ritualism and the new ideas imposed upon them. She exhorts them to rely on God and not to fear men bringing to their minds the value of surrender.

"Your is a restless mind.

Do not entertain any fear in your heart.

He is Himself taking care of you.

It is only His will that prevails."

The highway robbers of desire, lust and pride should be slain then the real and true Lord will be found. Ashes is all that is.

Lal Ded's teaching couched in such simple language expresses her own experience and is so profound in its simplicity as to touch the heart of the learned people also. Among her followers was a Muslim saint *Ali Sani* better known as Shah Hamdan who was greatly influenced by her. Another one was Sheikh Nur-ud-Din who prevailed upon the Government to adopt a more humanistic attitude towards the religion of the Kashmiri people. Lal Ded's sayings and verses *Lalla-Vakyan* were collected and translated into Sanskrit nearly three hundred years ago by the learned Rajanak Baskara Acharaya. Another collection *Lalishwari Viakhinni* was made by Baskara Razdan. In recent times Sir R. C. Temple was so captivated by Lal Ded's inspired songs and sayings that it induced him to make a thorough study of Shaivism in the context of Indian philosophy and this work he dedicates to Lal Ded.....

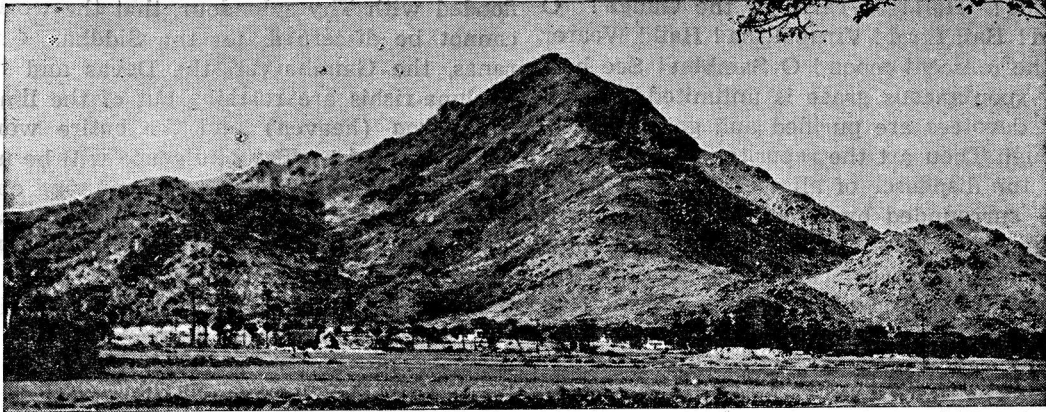
Thine is a song that enslaveth me,

Son of an alien kin and clime.

The living words of Lal Ded are inspiring and that coming from the depth and simplicity of her heart have a universal timeless appeal!

Man can will what he does, but he cannot will what he wills.

— SCHOPENHAUER.



GLORY OF ARUNACHALA

ARUNACHALA MAHATMYAM¹

CHAPTER II

Brahma and Vishnu praise Siva — The Glory of the immovable linga of Siva

BRAHMA continued: I then chanted the Vedas with all my (four) faces, praised Siva and adored him mentally in this manner: I prostrate constantly to Siva by whom all this (world) is illumined and supported, the Great Being, the sole origin of the entire universe. Just as those born blind cannot know the sun, so also those not favoured by Thy grace cannot realize (the glory) of this effulgence which illumines the entire universe. This is the taintless earth-linga (*bhulinga*). It can be perceived only by the eye of Self-knowledge. It can be perceived and experienced only by the inner vision of Thy devotees. It is boundless and It shines in the hearts of yogis like an object reflected in a mirror. This is Thy (true) form, O Lord of the Devas! Or this is Sankara's true power (*shakti*). This is subtler than the subtlest. It is not separate from my Self. Even if there is such a separate thing it also merges in my Self.

Should an insignificant individual become favoured by Thy Grace he undoubtedly becomes great. There is nothing apart from

Thee. How then can there be anything greater than Thee? There is nothing even apart from me who have found refuge in Thee. The mind which has surrendered to Thee will never consent to wander away. When that is so how can speech praise Thee? O Lord! Great God! Thou must show Thy mercy. Thou that existeth even beyond the worlds! Thou must accept (protect) me as Thy devotee in any manner agreeable to Thee.

I praised the Lord in this manner and humbly prostrated myself repeatedly before Him and stood in his presence with clasped hands. At that moment the resonant voice of Vishnu was heard like the roaring of the sea. He sang the praises of Sankara again in clear words: Hail! Lord of the three

¹ Continued from our last issue.

A CORRECTION

In the last instalment (April issue, p. 65) it was explained that '*Naimisaranya*' meant the wood of *nimi* trees. Readers will kindly note the following explanation and take it as the correct one: When certain rishis of the Brigu Gotra, headed by Saunaka approached Brahma the Divine Creator, and asked him to name a place suitable for tapas in Kali Yuga, Brahma made a wheel of kusa grass and said this wheel will roll by itself and where the rim falls off — that is the place to live. Thus was the spot selected: *nemi* means the rim of the wheel, where it got destroyed, *seerna*, is *naimisa*.

worlds! Hail! Wearer of the Ganga! O Lord! Hail Lord! Virupaksha! Hail! Wearer of the crescent moon! O Sambhu! See how Thy spontaneous grace is unlimited! By it Thy devotees are purified and gain wisdom. Though Thou art the repository of all learning, the dispenser of all wealth, the Ancient One, surrounded by all like a father by his progeny and have Thyself assumed all these forms, yet are we incapable of adoring even one of these forms with new hymns. That being so, how can we, O Lord, praise Thee fully? Thou alone knowest Thyself. Only with Thy grace, is it possible (to know Thee). Did not the wasp seize a worm and metamorphose it into itself? Similarly did not the Devas become lords (of wealth) by obtaining a sprinkling of Thy wealth (grace)? Does not burning result from contact with fire? Just as fire appears different under different conditions of space, time and action, even so, Thou, although single, appearest to have different forms under different conditions. Lord, Thou art Grace Itself! Sankara! Reveal Thy true Being, Support of all! Let the eyes of both of us enjoy bliss.

Thereupon Sambhu became gracious to us who prostrated ourselves before him. From the column of fire emerged the blue-throated one (Siva) of tawny complexion, wearing the crescent moon. The Lord with the axe and the fawn in (two of) his hands, signed to us (with the other two hands) to be fearless and offered protection. Looking at us he said: Sons! I am pleased with your devotion and the turning of your mind to Me. May you be the creator and protector of the worlds. I have come to grant boons. Ask the boons you desire.

On hearing this we were delighted and with folded hands each of us prayed accordingly. I, the creator of the three worlds, praised like a child the invincible form with Vedic mantras: O Lord who graciously grantest boons at all times! Effulgent Being! Great God! Taintless One meditated upon by Yogis! Prostrations to Thy form which always grants boons graciously! The sky and the interspaces are so

flooded with Thy splendour, that the worlds cannot be discerned, for the Siddhas, Charanas, the Gandharvas, the Devas and the Brahma-rishis are roaming out of the limits of *swarga* (heaven) and the entire world being affected by Thy effulgence will be unable to produce moving and unmoving entities. Therefore Thou must kindly withdraw Thy effulgence and abide as an immovable linga named Arunachala for the welfare of the world. The men who devoutly worship this effulgent form of Arunachala will be superior to the Devas. Let the hosts of Siddhas, Brahma-rishis and the residents of all the worlds be born as men on earth to have the opportunity of worshipping this Linga. Let the celestial wishfulfilling trees appear and grow here as beautiful trees bearing fruits of various kinds. Let the lions and the wild beasts get rid of their sins which are obstacles to Liberation and wander about in this place in great peace. The sun whose journey varies with the solstices cannot cross over the top of this linga. O Lord! May Thou be worshipped with beautiful garlands to the accompaniment of the sounds of *dundhubi* (a kind of drum), conches, etc. and the songs and dances of the *apsaras* (celestial beauties). Let men who approach Thy presence obtain benefits like immortality, Siddhahood, superiority over others (*isitvam*) and Liberation. O Arunachala! Let all men who come to Thee attain superiority over others (*isitvam*), power of controlling others (*vasitvam*), material prosperity and the three kinds of supernatural powers (*kala anjanas*). Thou must proclaim Thy presence here by making broken limbs whole, healing all diseases and fulfilling all desires.

Siva said "Be it so". Thereupon Vishnu, the Lord of Lakshmi, saluted the Lord of the Arunachala Hill, the granter of boons, and prayed: Extremely merciful one! Be gracious to me. Lord of Sonagiri (Red Hill)! Great Lord! Thou who hast manifested Thyself for the good of the entire world! Just as I acquired the ability to preserve the worlds and became the Lord of Sri (Goddess of prosperity) by worshipping Thee, even so let all others benefit by their devotion to Thee. Those of little merit will

not be able to adore this very wonderful form of Thine. Lord! Neither Brahma nor I could find Thy bounds. Let the men who worship and adore Thee with circumambulation (*pradakshina*), prostration, dance and songs become free from sins and attain the aim of life. Let those who worship Thee with fasting (*upavasa*), vows (*vrata*), sacrifices (*satra*), personal service (*upachara*) offering of flowers etc. (*puja*) gain sovereignty (over others). Lord here manifest in the form of the Aruna Hill! May he attain the eight kinds of prosperity (*ashta aisvarya*) who plants near this abode of Thine a grove, or erects a shelter (*mantapam*) or digs wells, tanks, etc. or studies the scriptures (*sastras*) with discrimination or circumambulates (this hill) rolling on the ground (*anga pradakshina*); May his sins leave him at once and let him become pure. May Thy devotees meditate upon Thy lotus feet without forgetting either of us.

"Let it be so" said the Wearer of the Crescent Moon and assumed the form of the immovable linga of Arunachala. This is what is known as the effulgent linga (*Tejolinga*). It is the origin of all the worlds. It is famous in the world as *Arunadri* (the Red Hill). At the time of the deluge (*pralaya*) when the four oceans rise up together and submerge all the worlds leaving only this region untouched, Pushkara and the great clouds, after flooding the three worlds with unbroken streams of rain big as elephants' trunks, will seek rest on the slope of this Hill. When the great elements are resolved into their quintessence (*prakriti*) this Hill will contain all the latent seeds of future growth unobstructed (i.e. their powers of sprouting intact). As soon as the deluge is over the devotees at the Holy Feet of Aruna-

chala will be the Brahmins called up by me (Brahma) to whom the Vedas will be revealed. All the branches of learning, arts, rare scriptures, Vedas and Agamas will be available here permanently and in their genuine entirety. Sages (*munis*), observers of religious vows, ascetics with matted locks etc. dwell in its caves shining forth with the splendour of tapas in great glory. He who is known as 'Sadasiva' (Eternal Siva) is Himself the five great *murtis* (manifestations) which have become the five letters (Namasivaya) and the five letters based on the letter 'A'. He transforms himself into sound. It is He who is worshipped by the Protectors of the eight quarters (*ashta dikpalas*) as the eight lingas (*ashta lingas*). (Alternatively) This Linga is the Sacred Syllable, the sacred mantra, the vital air, worshipped by the eight guardians of the eight quarters as the eight lingas (*ashta lingas*). It is He who, in the form of the eight *murtis* grants the eight *siddhis*. In order to live here the foremost among devas abandon their regions and forego even the desire for liberation.

In this manner the merits of the earth when mature are consummated as *Arunadri* (Arunachala) manifest on it, and It grants the boon of devotion (*bhakti*) to the hosts of devotees. Hosts of Devas come here from the Kailasa and Mount Meru and adore Sambhu, the Lord of Sonadri who fulfils their desires.

On hearing with devotion these words of Brahma, Sanaka's mind was filled (with joy) and prostrating himself before his father he asked him to narrate the entire essence of the Vedas.

—(To be continued)

"Ask of your self, inquire into your self, pursue your self, investigate within your self and never let others tell you what it is, nor let it be explained in words".

— DR. T. SUZUKI quoting a Ch'an Master in
Essentials of Zen Buddhism, p. 320.

Extracts from an article on SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR IN JUDAISM

By
RABBI ZALMAN N. SCHACHTER

MOST spiritual directors deal with persons of highly dedicated calibre. Hassidic rebbese¹ deal with all kinds of persons from every walk of life. So great was their influence that almost all of Eastern European Jewry became one large monastic community. The hassidic² conventicles in each town became the place of ecstatic transport to G-d.³ The fellowship of the hassidim was of immense depth.....

Most of the discussions among hassidim centred around the instructions they received from the rebbe at the yehidut.... The many and various ways of describing the yehidut⁴ are all attempts to describe the moment of merging of the two persons, rebbe and hasid, in the Infinite One. In this sense, the word yehidut can be translated as "the oneing of G-d-rebbe-hasid.".....

In psychotherapeutic terms, the yehidut is the counselling situation in which the hasid seeks the rebbe's counsel for his special condition. This counsel was given in a highly structured situation (not unlike the Mondo of Zen). Sometimes it was necessary for the rebbe to shock his hasid into insight and enlightenment. However, the yehidut was most often an occasion for compassion on the part of the rebbe. So strongly did compassion figure in the yehidut that even the children of a rebbe and hasid could not miss it. (there follows a delightful episode).

Once the children, the sons of R'Shmuel of Lubavitch, were playing at the game of rebbe and hasid. R'Zalman Ahron, then seven years old, was playing rebbe, while his younger brother, R'Shalom Dovber, then five years old, played hasid. The younger brother girded his loins with a prayer sash, knocked softly at the door, and when invited to enter, approached his

brother on tiptoe and said: "Master, please give me a tiquin (healing prescription) for my soul." "What have you done?" the elder brother demanded.

"I have stolen a pickle from Mother."

At this point R'Zalman Ahron laughed: whereupon R'Shalom Dovber in the heat of frustration turned to his elder brother and said:

"You are not a rebbe. A rebbe never laughs at the distress of a hasid."

Another time the two brothers were playing the same game in the same positions. R'Shalom Dovber asked for a tiquin for not having recited the blessing after eating an apple. R'Zalman Ahron replied: "For the next 40 days you are to recite a blessing out of the prayer manual after eating any food." "You did not do it right" the younger brother reproached him. "How can you say this?" R'Zalman Ahron argued. "I myself watched Daddy through the keyhole when a hasid asked him the same question, and gave you his reply." "I too watched Daddy" R'Shalom Dovber replied. "But you don't do it right. Daddy always sighs before he answers."

This childhood game proved prophetic, for it was R'Shalom Dovber who later became rebbe and not his elder brother. The yehidut always ended with a blessing which expressed the rebbe's compassion for his hasid. Hasidim saw in this blessing an apportioning of the divine energies needed to fulfil the rebbes instructions.

¹ *Rebbe* or *Rabbi* — spiritual teacher or mystic.

² *Hasid* — a seeker or follower of a Rebbe.

³ G—D in Judaism the name of God is not spoken hence the dash.

⁴ *Yehidut* — a spiritual confrontation of the hasid with his rebbe.

The institution of the yehidut continues to our own day. Even the President of the State of Israel, who considers himself a follower of the Lubawitcher Rebbe, waived protocol to come to see his master like any other seeker.

— From *R. M. Bucke Memorial Society Newsletter Review*.

PRACTISING THE PRESENCE

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By

JOEL S. GOLDSMITH

THE study of truth is the smallest part of our life's demonstration. Far too many students study too much. It really takes a very small statement of truth to spark our consciousness into action, and then it is that action that brings about the development of our spiritual consciousness. It is not what we read that does it: it is what we do with what we read that does it. In other words, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." That is a beautiful statement! But reading it, and even repeating it does not increase our spiritual consciousness. The statement, whether we read it or hear it, is but a seed.

The word of God, the truth in our consciousness, is what we live by. Therefore, we must make it a practice every few minutes, every half hour, or every quarter hour to pause and remember some passage of truth, some quotation of Scripture, some statement out of the text book that we are studying. We must pause for a moment to realize, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," or "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me." Something, some message of God, some word of God must be entertained in our consciousness over and over throughout our days and throughout our nights, and then eventually we find that we are fed, clothed and housed by those very passages of truth more than we are by the food we eat. We find our business is fed, our talents, or our capacities are increased more by the word of truth in our consciousness than by any natural ability.

This, we may call practising the presence of God, and when we are pondering the word of God and maintaining it in our consciousness, it is contemplative meditation. This acts like priming the pump, because it takes only a few months of this type of living until a new experience comes to us, and we find that in moments when we are not thinking truth, in some moment of need, a word of truth will come into our consciousness from the Invisible, something that we ourselves did not consciously think of. We might say that God put the word in our mouth or in our ear.

This is the stage of spiritual consciousness when we begin to live by Grace. At this point in our development, when we can open our ears and receive impartations from within, we are living by Grace, taking no thought for our life, and we know that there is an invisible Presence and Power, bringing harmony into our experience without conscious efforts. Then we come into the fuller attainment of spiritual consciousness; then we know:

The Spirit of God dwells in me and goes before me. The Spirit of God is the light unto my countenance. The Spirit of God is a lamp unto my feet. The Spirit of God is my high tower. It is my abiding place and hiding place. It is my bread, my meat, my wine and my water.

All this is provided by the Spirit of God that dwells in us, and which makes itself known to us in the moment of the attainment of some measure of spiritual consciousness.

ASCETICISM AND SOLITUDE

When Sri Manu Subedar, the author of *Gita Explained By Jnaneswar*, visited the Ashram he complained to Sri Bhagavan that most of the books were meant for Siddhas, who have already achieved knowledge, and that these books were not of much help to sadhakas. Thereupon Bhagavan got out the *Maha Bhakta Vijayam* and read out the entire dialogue between Jnaneswar and his father Vithoba which embodies the views of sadhakas and siddhas. Sri Manu Subedar incorporated this dialogue in the revised edition of his book in the form of an Appendix. This is now reproduced in *The Mountain Path* with some slight alterations.

The story goes that Vithoba had gone to the forest to practise asceticism. The king desired to see the father whose children had impressed him greatly and sent messengers to bring him to the capital but the latter refused to come. Then the children went to him and Jnaneswar, having climbed on the lap of his father, engaged him in a discourse at the end of which he persuaded him to come back to the capital.

VITHOBA: Would one taste what had been ejected once even if it was some delicious dish? Should not the righteous stick always to their resolutions? Having retired from the world can I go back there, mix in a loving spirit with the undiscerning crowd or adore the king? The forest shall ever be my abode and the world yours. So go back and live happily in the world.

Jnaneswar: Why do you live in the forest?

V.: My son, what profit or pleasure is there hereafter for me to obtain by going back to the world? Going back there, far from being an aid, will only be a hindrance to salvation. This lovely forest is alone fit for *mouna nishta* (silent state) and hence I live on these slopes.

J.: The *Brahmanishta* (abidance in the Self) that you are practising while still full of such distinctions as city and forest is like trying to shut out the vision of the heavens by covering it with a canvas instead of closing the eyes; like a small bird thinking to bear the impact of thunder with its tiny feet; like trying to acquire virtue while engaging in acts of vice; like a hard-hearted man yearning for a sight of God; and like achieving *jnana nishta* (steadfast knowledge) without getting rid of the ego-sense. In that *nishta* (state) which transcends all

distinctions can there be any thought of duality?

V.: So long as the notion 'mine' persists, the ego-sense and the perception of duality as this and that will not disappear. It is '*nirvikalpa nishta*' (a state which is free of concepts) that drives away all notions of duality. Such *nishta* can be obtained only by freedom from all *sankalpas* or desires and absence of all society. So I am here because the forest solitude is the proper place for *mauna nishta*.

J.: Knowing one's Self and being the Self alone is '*Brahma nishta*' and not living in forests.

V.: Even though one may know the Self in the presence of one's Guru, is it not necessary to stay in solitude to remain fixed in that Self?

J.: True *jnanis* (enlightened men) realized that *ajnana* (error) will not be destroyed, nor the sense of 'I' and 'mine' be got rid of by living alone in a forest, and doing penance and therefore practised *nirvikalpa samadhi* with a firm mind, ignoring all such distinctions as city and forest, home life and asceticism. If that is so, why should you oppose home life and live in this forest?

V.: If those who have seen the *sākshi* (witness) and become one with the Self, who

is a mere witness of all, remain in family life, it hampers their practice of samadhi, and they lose their experience of realization of the Self. Therefore, those, who have attained the bliss of the *sahaja* (spontaneous) state, will not dream even of engaging in family life.

J.: *Sahaja nishta* (spontaneous state) consists in being free both from desires and aversions. Can hating the town and loving the forest be such *nishta* ?

V.: How can he engage in the affairs of the world when there is no desire to act or not to act? And what use is there for one who living in the world is not fit to carry on its affairs? One should not remain in a place, where many desires might arise to cater to the comforts of this body, which catering can be compared to celebrating the marriage of a corpse.

J.: If one, who has given up all desires to engage in activities, engages in the practice of samadhi, is not that practice also an activity and why should he who has this occupation not have also the activity of leading a family life?

V.: Even if samadhi is an activity, it will remove all thoughts and anxieties. On the other hand, domestic life will create all kinds of thoughts and worries resulting in grief.

J.: When one is already Sat-Cit-Ananda (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss) why engage in *nishta sadhana* (practice of steadfastness)?

V.: Do not the wise say that *Brahma nishta* consists in realising the state of sleep while awake? If we do not realize it how can we experience bliss in samadhi?

J.: The Vedas say that proper bliss comes from being a mere witness of the diversions of the senses during the waking state, the activities of the mind while dreaming and of the state of void or blankness during sleep, and that state described as sleep while awake (or awakened sleep) is likened to a kite's shadow which while falling on objects is not attached to them. Can you then think that a state of blankness as

during sleep is real bliss and that such a state could be called awakened sleep?

V.: Waking and dream states will plunge one in the affairs of the world and render one a prey to the wild beasts of sense-perceptions. Hence only that samadhi where all affairs of the world cease and where there is a total void as during sleep is the proper samadhi.

J.: The best samadhi is not to remain in a state of blankness but like meeting blow with blow, to engage in the affairs of the world, check the sense-perceptions and become indifferent to them by opposing them with the sword of steady *jnana* like Janaka.

V.: Only Suka who got rid of all attachments was able to conquer the monkey-mind, which had accumulated many *vasanas* (deep-set desires) during countless generations and not Janaka who, without being in the sleep-like state, had steady *jnana* that he was Brahman.

J.: The mind was conquered by Janaka only by his wisdom — just as the monkey's movements are controlled by its master's wand or stick — and not by Suka who gave up all external achievements and betook himself to a life in forests.

V.: It is only by inhering in the seer that one can get rid of the seen. How could one get rid of the seen by being in the seen? Will not death be the result if, to cure a man of poison, poison is administered to him?

J.: As we administer one poison as an antidote against another, so a man is wise who practises imperturbable *jnana* against the dangers of the sense perceptions, both external and internal, and not he who is always in *nishta* filled with the fear lest at any time the wild beasts of sense-objects should come and attack him. The latter will experience only fear and never the supreme bliss of Brahman.

V.: What would not the sense objects do to one leading the family life when they are capable of subjecting to grief even those who have become ascetics and are always absorbed in *Samadhi nishta*? Can a dried leaf

that has fallen into a turbulent flood keep still in one place ?

J.: The sense organs will bring down one, who has not attained firm *jnana*, however long he may remain introverted, and cause him grief. Like a big rock one should remain unmoved amidst all sense activities and the unbearable sufferings that come in their wake. Only such a man can experience the bliss of Brahman. Ignorance will never disappear if one is not steadily fixed in *jnana*.

V.: However steadily fixed in *jnana* the darkness of Maya (worldly illusion) is sure to engulf one, unless always absorbed in meditation of Brahman giving up all society.

J.: If there is such a thing as Maya apart from Brahman, one would have to get rid of it by being always in *nishta*. It is like fighting with one's shadow when considering a non-existent Maya and ego and declaring that one must always be in *nishta*. As fighting with a shadow will result in exhaustion, there will be endless trouble, if you don't stay quiet in *mauna* realizing the unreality of Maya, but continue to eliminate : 'not this, not this.'

V.: How is one to attain *sahaja jnana* (spontaneous knowledge) without eliminating the unreal, becoming one-pointed in mind and remaining a mere *sakshi*, unmoved by all that takes place.

J.: The more we eliminate the unreal things as 'not this, not this' the more sense-objects will go on appearing, like winged white ants that swarm out from an anthill. The mind gets disturbed like a repressed ball rebounding. The more you remain a *sakshi*, the more will the delusion 'I am the body', etc. assert itself like the tail of a dog resuming its curly shape however much we try to keep it straight. So the only majestic bliss of Brahman is to realise by the *jnana* of enquiry that one is Brahman, and that *avidya* or ego and *maya* or unreality are entirely illusory like the appearance of silver in the mother-of-pearl.

V.: Is it possible to conquer the grief-causing sense-objects and to become one with the all-pervading blissful Self by not

doing any other sadhana but merely realizing as the result of *jnana vichara* (knowledge born of enquiry) that one is Brahman.

J.: If even a live cow cannot kill a tiger, can a dead cow do so ? Similarly what can the sense-objects do to the Self which is eternal, free from all defects, extends everywhere and is of the nature of bliss ? Like a fat cow afraid to face a tiger, sense-objects will not dare to trouble a *jnani* who by steady *jnana* has attained perfection. But even if they do, they will be extinguished as the cow by the tiger.

V.: What if the *jnani* by mixing with *ajnanis* (the ignorant) should get entangled in sense-objects, yield to disturbances of the mind and become sorrow-stricken, like a chaste woman becoming unchaste by mixing with prostitutes ?

J.: The steadfast chaste woman will maintain her chastity in spite of the company of any number of prostitutes. The unsteady one will find occasion for erring even without any evil company. Similarly the firm *jnani* will never lose his perfect realization though surrounded by any number of *ajnanis*. The unsteady one will find occasion for erring even without any evil company, and will lose his *jnana* even when in solitude.

V.: How can one become a *sahaja jnani* (one who remains in his natural state) if engaged in domestic affairs ?

J.: Though the *jnani* mixes with *ajnanis* and acts many parts with them, he will experience supreme bliss, just as a brahmin though acting the part of a scavenger on the stage and behaving accordingly, ever remains only a brahmin without becoming a scavenger.

V.: However firm *jnana* or the spiritual insight of a man may be, unless he contemplates at least for a time every day that he is Brahman, it will be very difficult for him to become a *Brahmajnani*.

J.: Is it necessary for the brahmin acting the part of a scavenger frequently to think he is a brahmin ? Will he become a scavenger if he does not think so ? Are

sacred strings necessary to distinguish one, whom all the world knows to be a brahmin? After the annihilation of the ego, 'I', should one still retain the knot of the ego-consciousness and go on meditating 'I am Brahman'? Like the brahmin, known by the world as such, is respected as a brahmin by everybody even when he does not wear a sacred thread, one who has renounced the notions of 'I' and 'mine' will always be respected by all and will always be enjoying supreme bliss of Self, even if he does not practice any meditation.

V.: Even when equal to *Jagadisa* (the Almighty) if one does not daily practise the meditation 'I am Brahman' one will undoubtedly become an *ajnani*. The ego sense which identifies one with the body, etc. will never vanish.

J.: When there is light in one's hands will darkness remain? Similarly if after vanquishing the ignorance that one is the body or its internal organs one has attained the

knowledge that one is the Supreme Itself, will *ajnana* remain even if it is bidden to remain? If one holds a cat in one's hand and asks the parrot to talk, will it talk? After realizing that Self, *Ishwara* and the world, etc. are all unreal, will Maya come, even if it is invited? The eunuch will stand ashamed to declare himself a man before a woman who knows his impotence. Similarly to one, who has recognized beyond all doubt in the presence of his Guru, that Brahman is real, while Maya is unreal, that Brahman is transcendental, free of all thoughts, while Maya consists of desires and aversions, and that one is Brahman and Brahman is one's Self, where are the desire or aversion, bondage or freedom, birth or death, country or forest, charity, penance, renunciation or family life? Can the power of Maya avail even a bit against one, who is like the eye of a dead sheep (which looks as if it could see while it cannot do so). Can it turn him again into *ajnana*? Please consider deeply.

Thereupon Vitoba was convinced and went back home.

In the exercise of mystical contemplation leave behind the senses and the activities of the intellect . . . that thou mayest arise as far as thou mayest, by unknowing towards union with Him who transcends all being and all knowledge.

— *The Mystical Theology*, Ch. 2.

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Patanjali: Success is near for the very energetic.
The success of yogis varies according to whether the means adopted are mild, medium or intense.

* * * * *

Human birth: In no other birth can the jiva attain knowledge of the Truth. A human birth is the stepping-stone to the path of Liberation.

— *Visvasara Tantra*.

HOW I CAME TO THE MAHARSHI

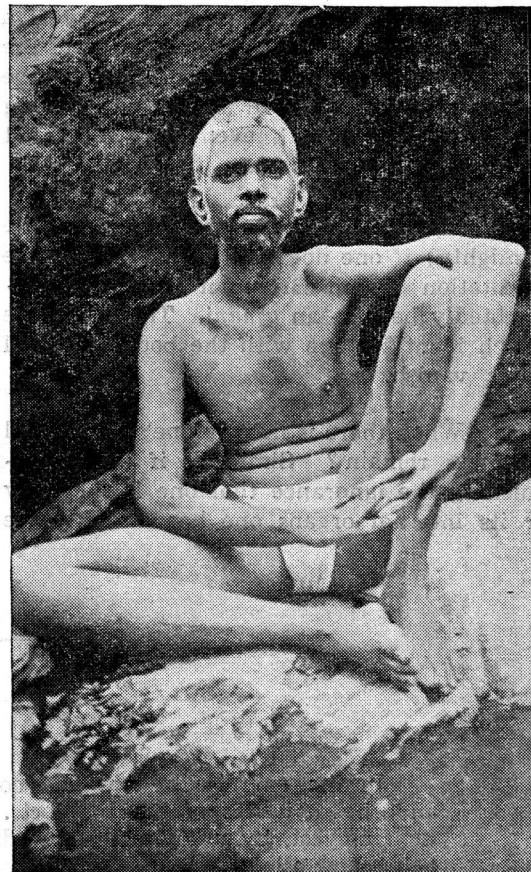
By
APA B. PANT¹

I MET Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi in 1937 through Sri Maurice Frydman. We spent a couple of nights at Sri Ramanasramam in Tiruvannamalai. I well remember the day we reached there. There was some kind of festival and the hall where Bhagavan used to give his *darshan* was overflowing. We just could not even get in. We found a seat in a corner and fell silent. In a minute or two, I felt that there was a radiance alight, that was filling the whole Hall. It was so quiet, so still and yet there was plenty of movement and whispering and mumbling all around. It was as if the conflicts in the mind and its operations were being seen in a totally different perspective. The impression was so indelible.

In the evening we had prasada with Sri Bhagavan. We all sat on the ground and ate the same food. Bhagavan was completely still and quiet; no conversation whatsoever. I had just returned from England and this was a bit strange for me as I was anxious to engage in some kind of argument and conversation. I had done a course of philosophy and thought I knew many of the answers to the eternal questions. I wanted to put these before Bhagavan. But somehow in his presence, I did not feel like opening my mouth.

At night, as it was hot, we slept in the open. I was sure I could not sleep at all. There was so much of turmoil and noise all around us in the Ashram. People were arguing, even shouting at each other. There was running and banging of doors. The whole night it was impossible to sleep. I did not know that in an Ashram like this people would be allowed to speak so loud at night.

In the morning I spoke to Sri Maurice Frydman about this noise. He said, what noise? There was no noise whatsoever; everything was very peaceful. There was



nobody who was speaking or arguing. In any case, he said, this is not allowed after 9 o'clock, as everybody goes to sleep or meditates!

I was stunned! I was sure I had not slept a wink and here was Maurice saying that nobody had opened his mouth!! Then, it dawned on me. Bhagavan had given me a message. He had spoken without speaking that the mind creates and is chattering and arguing illusions and that unless

¹He is now the High Commissioner for India in the U.K.

one goes beyond this turmoil there can be no living in Truth or Liberation (*Mukti*). He had given me in a flash the message that "Awareness is all".

Next day, we were again sitting in the Hall and Maurice was asking Him some questions. Bhagavan was sitting quiet, nodding his head as he did sometimes as if reflecting an inner vibration, so completely full of joy and radiance but did not answer Maurice's questions. Then, at one stage, He said laughing: "These all, each one of them, is a Buddha, but they just do not know it. If they would only know that they are Buddhas, always, there will be no problem!!"

Of course, all this happened nearly 30 years ago and it is only now after a long period of experimentation and experience that one reaches this understanding.

The same evening, as I was going to sit down for the evening meal, Maurice said to Bhagavan that I did an exercise of my father's, called the *Surya Namaskar*. Bhagavan looked at me very straight and said: "Let me see how you do it". So there, in front of all the people just before dinner I did 12 *Surya Namaskars* with breathing and *mantras* as my father had taught me, Bhagavan smilingly said: "Yes, it is a good exercise to be done after you have been sitting for hours in meditation and your knees and other joints feel a little stiff." I never used to do any meditation at that time. But I know now that it was these words which kept me on the *Surya Namaskars* and led me to daily meditation.

How can one speak of Bhagavan, when what one has to do is to experience Silence! "Awareness is all".

Arunachala

.....

By
A. K. Vatal

Nothing abides,
The shapes and dreams of many-splendoured things,
Time-stricken; grasping lives and scented loves,
Desires that garner matter and then swing
The trinket worlds around, All, pain enclosed —
Since all must end. A stilling sadness rings
The streaming movement. Whatever comes, goes.
Nothing abides.

Thou alone abide,
O Arunachala Siva
Open to all hearts. Lambent grace and peace
And mounded benediction! Thy rocks wrought
From Stillness. Thy luminous caves e'er seek
The star-linked souls. Thou guide to those who sought
Supreme Enlightenment. E'en the Gods cease —
But Thou, Thou alone abide!

IN THIS YOUR NOTHING I FIND MY ALL

By

P. J. SAHER

PURE Being is transcendental. That means the I is outside the realm of conceptual thought (atakkavacara). If our I, even prior to death, is atakkavacara then the question: "what will happen to me after death?" is, metaphysically and logically, unaskable. The knowledge of the ontological constitution of my I cannot be of additional but only of the residuary-legatee type. Suppose I want more space in my room then I cannot fetch it from outside as I could a chair. I can only have more space in my room by removing the objects already there until only pure space (as a kind of residuary legatee) remains. The discarding of all thoughts, all signs, all characteristics reveals Pure Being. Having no distinctive traits it is hardly distinguishable from its opposite, Non-Being. The important point is that Pure Being is something more than a mere sum of all things having Being, just as Being is something more than the total of all things in existence. Here Jean Gebser has coined an important term, *systase*. It means a convergence of a series of perceptions into a unity that is greater than the sum of its parts; an integrated whole is supposed to have a more complex Being. An integral insight into *systase* gives us according to Gebser, *synairese*. This means an insight into the reality of Being through the acquisition of a new kind of consciousness; this intensified consciousness need not be mystical. According to Gebser all things are transparent the moment we perceive them in their essential wholeness (*Ganzheit*). It is not indispensable to be a mystic to perceive that we live in a transparent world; the essential reality reveals itself to mystics and non-mystics alike. This revelation of transparency is called *diaphanierung* which means here the perception of the presence of anything simultaneously in all its aspects both past and present. This is the official ontology of the expressionist school on the Con-

continent and, is as such also called *expressio-nistische phaenomenologie*.

A similar ontology is to be found in *chassidism*, the East-European movement of Jewish religious revival which started at the beginning of the eighteenth century and whose exponent was the late Martin Buber. A central idea of *chassidism* is the unity of God and Nature. The ablest exponent of this view was the Maggid von Mesertisch to whom all phenomena are so many dresses put on by divinity. The Godhead is the inmost essence of all things, even those we otherwise condemn as filth. The devotee must, therefore, try to see through things until he perceives their core; for the inmost core of all things is divine. The innermost Being of all existence is God. That is also the ontology of Vedanta and Taoism.

The secret of immortality is the insight that Being transcends Time. What is the correlation between Being and Time?—and how does it affect our attitude to death? That has been the main content of Western philosophy as represented by Heidegger and of Indian philosophy as represented by Radhakrishnan. For Heidegger, all existence is in bondage to Time. This gives rise to the radical insecurity of being which plagues man in the form of the fear that death could at any time upset his programme. But this insecurity should goad us into discovering the immortal in us. As Dr. Radhakrishnan puts it: "In the uncertainty of life we feel a distant certainty through which alone this uncertainty is made possible."

The *angst* of the existentialists can be conquered by a direct experience of the unchanging element of Pure Being through a process similar to what St. Thomas Aquinas called *cognito dei experimentalis*. In such a direct experience man realizes

that: 'time is not all, that death is not all, principle is the defeat of death and the that it is possible to circumvent the time renewal of life. When the spirit is affirmed, process.....'. Faith in such a non-object dread is annulled.

The Monkey Canto of the Ramayana of Tulsidas

By

Kamta Charan Shrivatsava

(We give below the translation of a passage from the Kishkinda Kanda of *Ramacharitamansa*, otherwise known as *Tulsi Ramayana*. It is a rainy day in Kishkinda, the land of the monkeys. Sri Rama has crowned Sugriva king of the monkeys and in a mood of relaxation addresses his younger brother, Lakshmana. The observations are profound and similes drawn from nature make them more interesting.)

Thunderous clouds thick in the heavens detonate
 My heart is all a-tremble by love's absence desolate.
 The lightning-flash does not in the clouds remain.
 Ill-endures like the love of ignoble men.
 The clouds earth-prone break into rain
 Give in like the wise when they knowledge gain.
 The assaults of the rain-drops the hills endure
 As saints the vituperations of the impure.
 The rain-swollen streams with an abandon go
 Like the ill-bred when a little wealth they know.
 Water puddles mixed with earth foul and muddy become
 As the souls to illusion's enticements succumb
 The drops of water swelling into tanks
 As virtues come to the noble ranks.
 The waters of the rivers to the sea course
 Rest there like the soul without remorse.
 Grass crowding on the green earth confounds the way
 Like contentious hypocrisy over-laying what the scriptures say.
 The frogs all around please with their croaking note
 As boys intoning the Vedas in groups by rote.
 Many a tree new leaves accretes
 Like the initiate's heart when it discrimination greets.
 'Ark' and 'Jawas' hot weather plants lose their leaves
 As in kingdoms well ruled evil nothing achieves
 No dust the eye of search can see
 As where obtains fell anger no virtue can ever be.
 With crops rich-blest the earth in glory shines
 Like the opulence of the benevolent which to others inclines.
 The glow worms in clusters the dark nights crowd
 As though in session sit the proud.
 Bounds and bridges break down by the long heavy rains
 As when free women go wrong if nothing restrains.
 Skilful farmers are ridding their fields of all weeds
 As wise men folly, passion and pride with their deeds.

YOGA VASISHTA SARA¹

THE ESSENCE OF YOGA VASISHTA

.....

Based on a translation made by SWAMI SURESANANDA

CHAPTER VII

(METHOD OF PURIFICATION)

1. O Raghava, be outwardly active but inwardly inactive, outwardly a doer but inwardly a non-doer, and thus play your part in the world.

2. O Raghava, abandon all desires inwardly, be free from attachments and latent impressions, do everything outwardly and thus play your part in the world.

3. O Raghava, adopt a comprehensive view, characterised by the abandonment of all objects of contemplation, live in your innate Self, liberated even while alive (*jivanmukta*), and thus play your part in the world.

4. Burn the forest of duality with the fire of the conviction, 'I am the one Pure Consciousness' and remain happy.

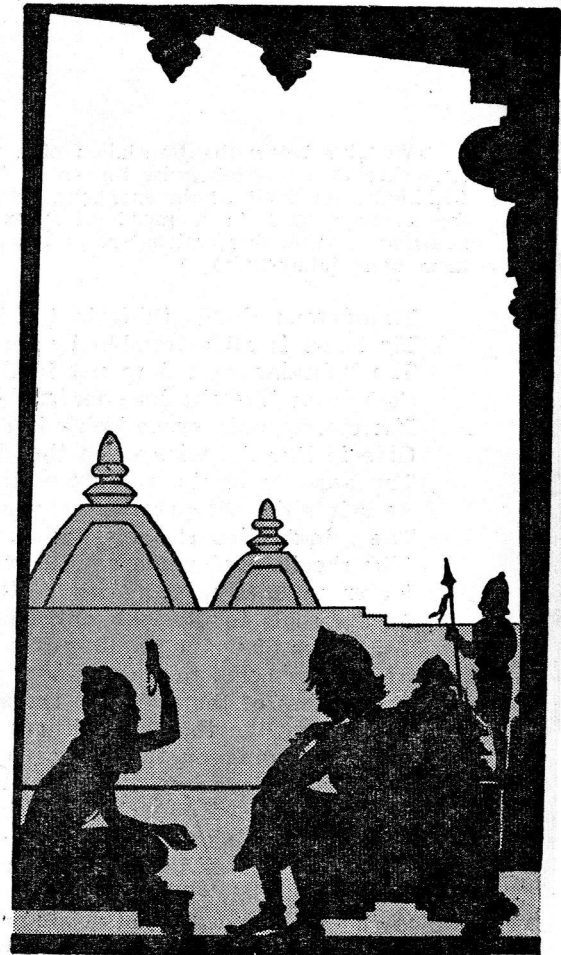
5. You are bound firmly on all sides by the idea, 'I am the body'. Cut that bond by the sword of knowledge 'I am Consciousness' and be happy.

6. Discarding the attachment to non-Self, regarding the world as a partless (whole) concentrated and with attention turned inward remain as pure Consciousness.

7. Remain always as pure Consciousness which is your constant (true) nature beyond the states of waking, dream and deep sleep.

8. O mighty-armed, be always free from mental concepts like the heart of a rock though not insentient like it.

9. Do not be that which is understood, nor the one who understands. Abandon all concepts and remain what you are.



10. Eliminate one concept by another and the mind by the mind and abide in the Self. Is this so difficult, O Holy man?

11. Sever the mind, which has on account of its cares become red hot, with the mind which is like iron sharpened by the study of scriptures.

¹ Continued from our last issue.

12. O Raghava, what have you to do with this inert and dumb body? Why do you feel helpless and miserable by joys and sorrows on account of it?

13. What a vast difference between the flesh, blood, etc (composing the body) and you the embodiment of consciousness! Even after knowing this why do you not abandon the idea of Self in this body?

14. The mere knowledge that this body is like a piece of wood or a clod of earth enables one to realize the Supreme Self.

15. How strange that, while the real Brahman is forgotten by men, the unreal

called *avidya* (nescience) appears very real to them (lit. struts about before them).

16. It is again strange that while the Supreme Brahman is forgotten by men the idea 'this is mine' called *avidya* is firmly held by them (lit. strongly confronts them).

17. When you do your work do it without attachment even as a crystal which reflects the objects before it (but is not affected by them).

18. The conviction that everything is Brahman leads one to Liberation. Therefore reject entirely the idea of duality which is ignorance. Reject it entirely.

Mother and Father

By
Muruganar

Mother He is and father too,
Apt for every kind of kinship,
Yes, apt and more than apt.
He is the womb from which are born
All moving things and things unmoving.
Dear child He is and cherished wealth,
Rich learning, wisdom ripe;
Blessed by the mouths that daily chant
Vedic hymns to mighty Rudra,
He dwells in the mind's eye
And the bright unbroken sky,
The light of lights that shines within
The deep heart's core;
Venkata,
All in One and One in all,
True seer in whom all Truth is seen,
Merciful, liberal giver of grace
Miraculously strong to save.
Yes, He is Mother and Father too.

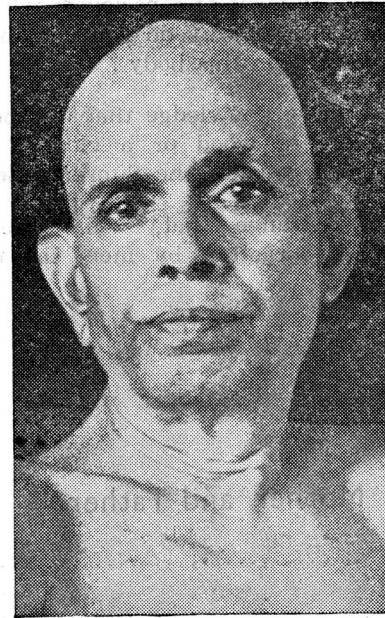
MODERN SCIENCE AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE

By
Sqn. Ldr. N. VASUDEVAN

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI very rarely referred to modern science. It may be because most devotees sought Sri Bhagavan's guidance to clear their doubts on the traditional wisdom of religious teachings as they understood them. Whatever the questions and however they were put to him, his answers were always conducive to creating the quest of the Self and thereby turning people inwards towards the Self. It is illuminating to note that Sri Bhagavan's answers to questions on modern sciences were homing beacons to Self-knowledge.

A young science graduate asked Sri Bhagavan about "the blank wall of ignorance" which the scientist encounters while searching for the ultimate truth of the universe. (See Chapter 3 of *Maha Yoga*). Before considering Sri Bhagavan's answer let us examine the scientist's predicament.

The scientist's conception of substance is only 'concrete' so long as he does not analyse it. For a long time, he thought that the 'concrete' and the 'real' were almost synonymous until he began to realize that many of the supposed attributes of the substance were mere projections of his own sense impressions outwards into the external world. He has chased the solid substance from the elements to the atom. The atom is not left in peace until it is split into electrons and protons. And behold the fascinating spectacle now! The protons remain in the centre, while the electrons escape from the orbit of one atom to that of another, "sometimes by steps, sometimes with a rush, caught in a *cul-de-sac* of meta-stability, hesitating before forbidden passages." Something similar to a scene during the annual festival in a temple in Kerala. Save, of course, this difference, the presiding deity within the atom is beyond scientific discernment.



What should the scientist do? Sit back and silently pray:

*From the unreal lead me to the real,
From darkness lead me to light,
From death lead me to immortality!*

Oh, yes, the scientist did make an earnest effort to find out what is real. The quest for the real continues unabated. More about space is known; a listening watch is kept in the U.S.A. in what is assumed to be the natural frequency of the Universe expecting intelligence from outer space; shortly we may explore and exploit the moon and planets. But we are unlikely to know the truth about Reality. For, we know already, thanks to Einstein, that space "means nothing apart from our perception of objects and time means nothing apart from our experience of events. Space begins to appear merely as a fiction created by our own minds . . ." (From 'the *New Background*

of Science' by Sir James Jeans). And what about objects themselves? They are equally fictitious creations of our minds. An electron or proton may merely be "a region" from which energy may radiate . . . to put it bluntly something unknown is doing we don't know what.

Now let us consider Sri Bhagavan's reply to the science graduate. He said that when one seeks to know anything other than oneself without caring to know the truth of oneself, the knowledge one obtains cannot possibly be right knowledge. (*Maha Yoga*, Ch. 3).

Very well, the modern science has recognised the mind as a worker of illusion. When does the mind weave fanciful images? When it emerges through the brain and the senses. In that mode, the gross names and forms are cognized. Since it cannot remain steady at this mode (for instance deep sleep), it is not its natural mode; to put it scientifically, it is not in its resonant state.

To bring the mind to its maximum resonance, it should be made to function at its mode of least "resistivity". Since every thought can occur only after the rise of the "I" thought, this thought can well serve as the triggering pulse to take the mind to its resonant state. In this state the mind inheres

in pure Being or Consciousness or Self. At its maximum resonance the mind subsides completely in pure Consciousness. This is Self-knowledge, or knowledge of Reality.

The great Ramana says: "The Self, which is knowledge, is the only Reality. Knowledge of multiplicity is false knowledge. This false knowledge, which is really ignorance, cannot exist apart from the Self, which is Knowledge-Reality. The variety of gold ornaments is unreal since none of them can exist without the gold of which they are all made."

"If the first person, 'I', exists, then the second and third persons, 'you' and 'he', will also exist. By enquiring into the nature of the I, the I perishes. With it 'you' and 'he' also perish. The resultant state which shines as absolute Being is one's natural state, the Self."

"To those who have not realized the Self as well as to those who have, the world is real. But to those who have not realized (like the modern scientist, for example) *Truth is adapted to the measure of the world*, whereas to those that have *Truth shines as the formless perfection* and as the *Substratum of the world*. This is all the difference between them."

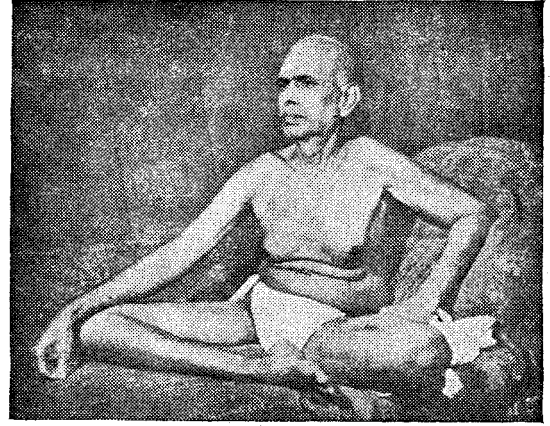
OUR NEXT ISSUE

It is proposed to devote the next issue of *The Mountain Path* (October, 1970) exclusively to the memory of Arthur Osborne, with special articles on him. Excerpts from Mr. Osborne's writings will also be reprinted.

108 NAMES OF SRI BHAGAVAN

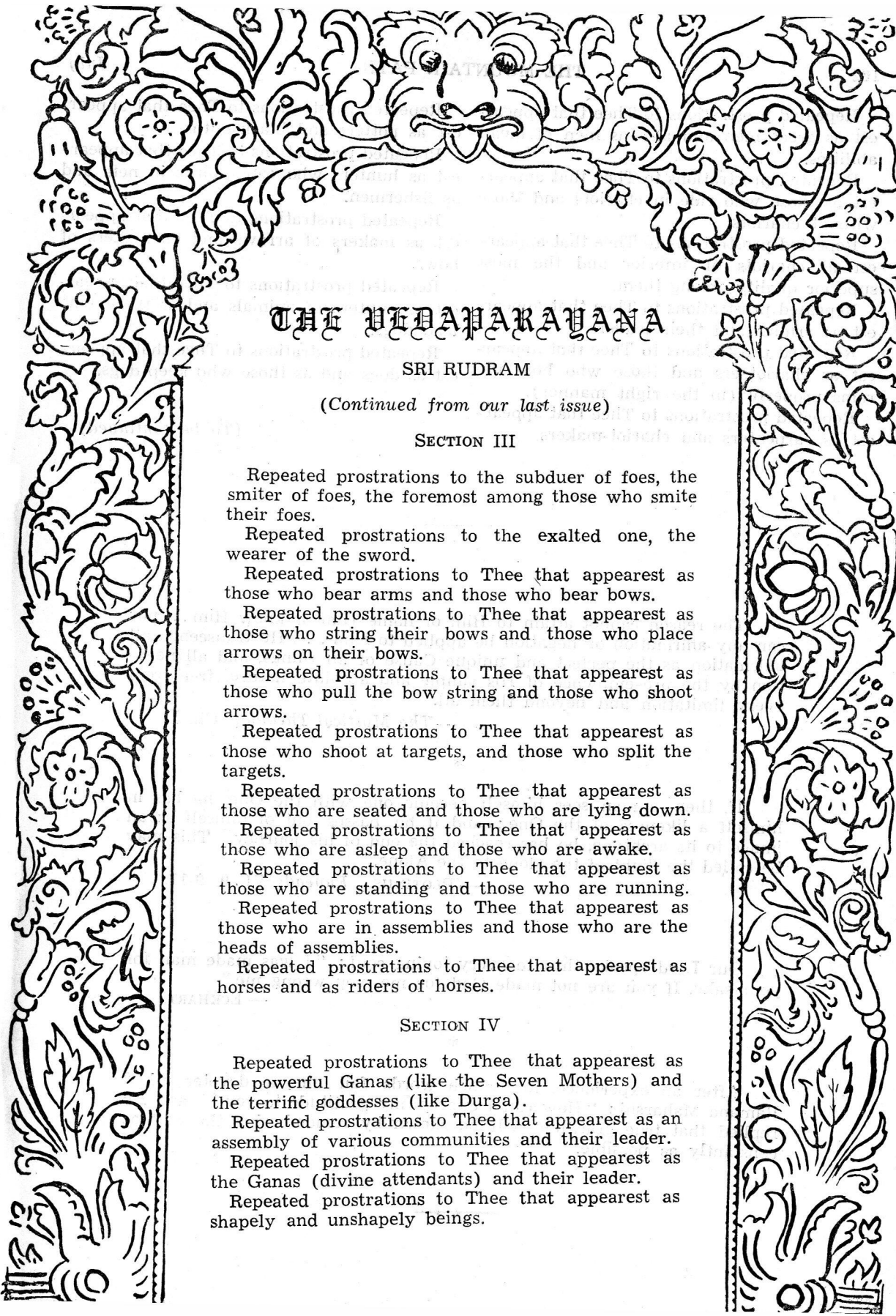
The 108 names in praise of Sri Bhagavan given below were composed by Sri Visvanathan (introduced to our readers in our issue of January 1967). They are chanted daily at the Samadhi Shrine of Sri Bhagavan during the pujas along with offerings of flowers. The English version is based upon translations made by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan and Sri Viswanathan himself.

1. *Mahāsēna mahōmsēna jātah*
Born of the effulgence of Mahasēna (Subrahmanya, foremost of jnanis)
2. *Srī Ramanā*
Sri Ramana (One who delights in his own Self)
3. *Guruh*
Revealer of the ultimate reality.
4. *Akhanda samvidākārah*
Awareness absolute
5. *Mahoujah*
Of great spiritual brilliance
6. *Kāranōdbhavah*
Born with a purpose
7. *Jagaddītavatārah*
Whose advent is for the welfare of the world
8. *Sri Bhūmināthasthalōttitah*
Born at the holy place of Bhūminatha (name of Śiva at Tiruchuzhi)
9. *Parāśarakulōttamah*
Scion of the line of Parāśara
10. *Sundarāryatapah Phalam*
Fruition of the austerities of the noble Sundaram Iyer
11. *Kamanīya sucharitrah*
Of charming, benevolent ways
12. *Sahāyāmba sahāyavān*
Who had the grace of mother Sahāyavalli (Name of Śakti at Tiruchizhi)
13. *Sonāchalamahōlinamānasah*
Whose mind was merged in the light of Arunachala
14. *Svarnahastakah*
The one whose palms bear auspicious marks
15. *Śreemad dvādaśānta mahāsthale labdha vidyodayah*
Who got illumined at the Great Holy Place Dwadaśantha (12th Centre of Shakti, i.e. Madurai)
16. *Mahāśaktinipātēna prabuddhah*
Who got awakened by the descent of Grace
17. *Paramārthavit*
Who thereby recognized the ultimate reality
18. *Tivrah*
Alert
19. *Pitru-pādānvēshi*
Who searched for his Father (Arunachala — Śiva)
20. *Indumoulīna pitrumān*
Whose Father was crescent-crested Śiva
21. *Piturādēsatah Sōna Sailam prāptah*
Who reached Arunachala at the behest of his Father
22. *Tapōmayah*
Glowing with *tapas*. (Attunement with the Divine)
23. *Udāseenah*
Indifferent (to everything mundane)
24. *Mahā Yogi*
Great Yogi (Established in Maha Yoga)



25. *Mahōtsāhah*
Of great enthusiasm
26. *Kusāgradhīh*
Of very sharp intellect (as sharp as the tip of a blade of kusa grass)
27. *Śānta sankalpa samrambhah*
In whom all turbulence of thought was set at rest
28. *Susandrik*
Of auspicious clear vision
29. *Savitā*
Sun of awareness
30. *Sthirah*
Established (in the Self of all)
31. *Tapah kshapita sarvāngah*
Whose body was emaciated by the rigour of tapas
32. *Phullāmbuja vilōchanah*
Whose eyes were blooming like lotuses (The one with lotus eyes in bloom)
33. *Chandrikāśīta hāsa sree manditānana mandalah*
Whose face shone with a beautiful moon-like smile
34. *Chūtavātyām samāseenah*
Who sat peacefully in the mango tree grove
35. *Chūrnitākhila vibhramah*
Who had destroyed all infatuation
36. *Vēda Vēdānta tatvajna*
The knower of the Truth of Veda and Vedanta
37. *Chinmudri*
Who revealed Reality in silence (The one with the chinmudra)
38. *Trigunātigah*
Who had transcended the three gunas
39. *Virūpāksha guhāvāsah*
Dweller in the Virupaksha cave
40. *Virājadachalākritih*
Of resplendent peaceful form
41. *Uddeeptanayanah*
With shining eyes
42. *Pūrnah*
All-pervading
43. *Rachitāchala tāndavah*
Motionless dancer
44. *Gambheerah*
Of great depth
45. *Paramāchāryah*
The great Preceptor
46. *Suprasannah*
Very gracious
47. *Abhayapradah*
Remover of fear
48. *Dakshināsyānibhah*
Who resembles Dakshinamurti
49. *Dheerah*
Personification of dignity (the Hero)
50. *Dakshinābhīmukhah*
Facing South (or gracious to the earnest)
51. *Svarāt*
Self-luminous
52. *Maharshih*
Great Seer
53. *Bhagavān*
Abode of auspiciousness
54. *Īdyah*
Adorable.
55. *Bhūmāvidyā visāradah*
Seer of Bhuma (Brahma) Vidya
56. *Vimalah*
Immaculate
57. *Dīrgha darśi*
Of vision unhampered
58. *Āptah*
Ever-present friend
59. *Rijumārga Pradarśakah*
Revealer of the straight path
60. *Samadrik*
Seer of the same (in all, the one with equal vision)
61. *Satyadrik*
Seer of reality
62. *Satyah*
Reality itself
63. *Praśantah*
Established in supreme peace
64. *Amita vikramah*
Of prowess unlimited
65. *Sukumārah*
The one of beautiful form
66. *Sadānandah*
Ever blissful.
67. *Mridu bhāshi*
Of sweet and soft speech
68. *Dayārnavaḥ*
Ocean of Grace

69. *Sri Sonāchala hridbhūta Skandāśrama nikhētanah*
Who dwelt in Skandashram, heart of Arunachala
70. *Saddarśanōpadēshṭā*
Teacher of Existence Absolute (*Sad-Darśana*)
71. *Sadbhakta brinda parivritah*
Surrounded by earnest devotees
72. *Ganēśa munibhringēna sēvitānghri sarōruhah*
Whose lotus feet were sought by the Ascetic Poet Ganapathi Muni
73. *Gītōpadēśa sārādi grantha samchinna samśayah*
Dispeller of all doubts through his teaching such as 'The Essence of the Gita'
74. *Varnāśrama matātītah*
Who had transcended all distinctions of *varna* and *asrama* (stages in life)
75. *Rasajnah*
Knower of the Essence
76. *Soumyah*
Benevolent
77. *Ātmavān*
Who had gained the Self
78. *Sarvāvanimatāsthānām āradhyah*
Adored by the votaries of all faiths
79. *Sarvasadguni*
Embodiment of all auspicious traits (good qualities)
80. *Ātmāramah*
Who revels in the Self
81. *Mahābhāgah*
Of natural greatness
82. *Mātru mukti vidhāyakah*
Liberator of his mother (from the cycle of births)
83. *Vinatah*
Utterly humble
84. *Vinutah*
Glorified by all
85. *Viprah*
Seer-sage
86. *Munīndrah*
Lord of Munis
87. *Pāvakōjjvalah*
Resplendent like fire
88. *Darśanādaghasamhāri*
Remover of evil by a glance
89. *Mounena śvātma bōdhakah*
Revealer of the Self in silence
90. *Hrichchāntikara sānnidhyah*
Whose very presence brings peace
91. *Smaranād bandha mōchakah*
Whose remembrance cuts asunder all bonds
92. *Antasthimira chandāmsuh*
The Sun annihilating all darkness
93. *Samsārārnava tāarakah*
Who makes the sea of transmigration fordable
94. *Sōnadreeśa stuti drashta*
The seer who composed the hymns in praise of Arunachala
95. *Hārda Vidya Prakāśakah*
Revealer of the wisdom in the Heart
96. *Avichyuta nija prajnah*
Who does not swerve from Awareness Absolute
97. *Naisargika mahā tapah*
Of spontaneous inherence in the Self
98. *Kamandalu dharah*
Bearer of a *Kamandalu* (ascetic's water-pot)
99. *Śubhra koupina vasanah*
Who wears a mere loin-cloth
100. *Guhah*
Dweller in the cave of the Heart (Subrahmanya)
101. *Dandapānih*
Bearer of the staff (of jnana)
102. *Kripāpūrnah*
Full of Grace.
103. *Bhavarōga bhishagvārah*
Physician healing the disease of primeval nescience
104. *Skandah*
The manifestation of Śiva (Skanda)
105. *Dēvātmah*
The supreme shining one
106. *Amartyah*
Immortal
107. *Sēnānih*
Leader of the hosts—(Subrahmanya)
108. *Purushōttamah*
Supreme Person



THE BHADHARAVANA

SRI RUDRAM

(Continued from our last issue)

SECTION III

Repeated prostrations to the subduer of foes, the smiter of foes, the foremost among those who smite their foes.

Repeated prostrations to the exalted one, the wearer of the sword.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who bear arms and those who bear bows.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who string their bows and those who place arrows on their bows.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who pull the bow string and those who shoot arrows.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who shoot at targets, and those who split the targets.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who are seated and those who are lying down.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who are asleep and those who are awake.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who are standing and those who are running.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as those who are in assemblies and those who are the heads of assemblies.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as horses and as riders of horses.

SECTION IV

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as the powerful Ganas (like the Seven Mothers) and the terrific goddesses (like Durga).

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as an assembly of various communities and their leader.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as the Ganas (divine attendants) and their leader.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appearest as shapely and unshapely beings.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as great men and also as men of mean
abilities.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as those who ride in chariots and those
without chariots.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as chariots of inferior and the most
superior quality among them.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as armies and their leaders.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as charioteers and those who hold the
reins properly (in the right manner).

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as carpenters and chariot-makers.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as potters and blacksmiths.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as hunters who catch birds in nets and
as fishermen.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as makers of arrows and as makers of
bows.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as hunters of animals and as those who
lead dogs.

Repeated prostrations to Thee that appear-
est as dogs and as those who keep dogs.

(To be continued)

The reason cannot attain to Him or name Him or know Him . . . nor
can any affirmation or negation be applied to Him . . . He transcends all
affirmation as the perfect and unique Cause of all things, and all nega-
tion by the pre-eminence of His simple and absolute nature, free from
every limitation and beyond them all.

— *The Mystical Theology*, Ch. 5.

*

If, then, a man sees himself become one with the One, he has in
himself a likeness of the One; and if he passes out of himself as an
image to its archetype, he has reached the end of his journey. This may
be called the flight of the alone to the Alone.

— PLOTINUS. *Enneads* VI, 9, 9-11.

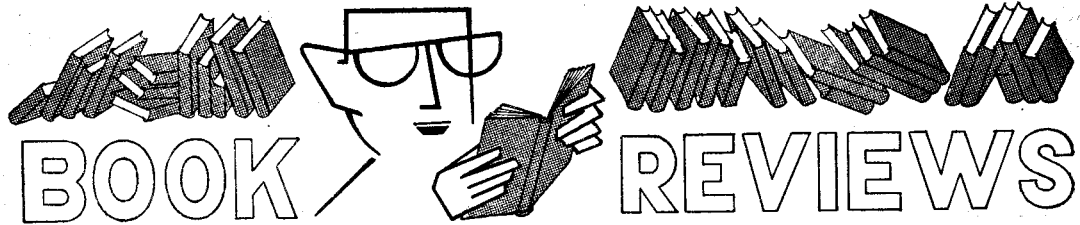
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Our Lord speaks thus to every loving soul: "I was made man for
your sake. If you are not made God for me, you wrong me."

— ECKHART.

*

After an experience, for which words fail one, a devotee asked
Ramana Maharshi: "How can I express my gratitude to you?" and He
replied that true gratitude will be shown by remembering the Self as
constantly as possible.



ADVAITA VEDANTA: A PHILOSOPHICAL RECONSTRUCTION: By Eliot Deutsch: East-West Center Press. Price \$6.00.

This book is a very valuable addition to the extant literature bearing on Advaita Vedanta. It is written with much insight and deep understanding. Within the brief compass of just one hundred and ten pages, it gives a cogent and clear account of the fundamentals of the system. The author has drawn from his intensive study of the great classics like Sri Sankara's commentaries on the *Upanishads*, the *Vedanta Sutras*, Sureswara's *Naishkarmya Siddhi*, Vachaspati's *Bhamati* and so forth.

The sub-title describes the book as a 'philosophical reconstruction'. The author defines 'reconstruction' as 'an effort to formulate systematically one's understanding of what is of universal philosophical interest.' 'The reconstruction of Advaita Vedanta that we propose to undertake' he writes in the Introduction 'is a recreative presentation of an Eastern philosophy in which the philosophy is lifted somewhat out of its historical and traditional context and is treated as a system of thought and path of spiritual experience capable of being understood by any student of philosophy.' He is convinced that the attempt will not distort or modernise the system.

He adds that the exegetical dimension of the Vedanta is of very little importance to Western students of philosophy who do not accept the authority of the Veda. Their criterion of philosophical truth is whether a system of thought is consistent with human experience.

Eschewing, therefore, both *Sruti* and *Anubhava*, the author seeks to present the system as a purely intellectual one based solely on reason. Even so, it is quite capable of standing its ground. Sri Sankara himself has said this in the introduction he has written to the 'Agama Prakarana' of Sri Gaudapada's *Mandukya Karika*. Herein perhaps lies the essential soundness of Advaita Vedanta that it can vindicate itself in three independent ways. *Sruti* (Scriptural authority),

Yukti (logical analysis), or *Anubhava* (experience), any one of these by itself is quite sufficient to support it. Sri Sankara has shown that *Sruti* by itself or *yukti* by itself can place the system on an unassailable basis. The experience of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Sri Ramana Maharshi have proved conclusively that Advaita Vedanta is the culmination of pure, unsophisticated *Anubhava*.

Besides the Introduction, the book consists of eight chapters. The concept of Brahman, both Nirguna and Saguna, is set forth in the first chapter. The levels of being or orders of reality, *paramartika* (absolute), *vyavaharika* (conventional) and *pratibhasika* (illusory), together with the criterion employed in the division are explained in the second. The relation between Brahman and the world is discussed in the third. Brahman and the world belong to two different orders of being and consequently there can be no causal relation between them. The world, therefore, is neither a product nor a manifestation of Brahman but a superimposition on it due to foundational ignorance. When we rise to true enlightenment the world will simply disappear leaving intact its substratum, namely, Brahman. By the interpretation of the Mahavakya '*Tat Tvam Asi*' and the analysis of the states of waking, dream, dreamless sleep and Turiya, the author shows that the finite self (*jiva*) is in essence non-different from Brahman. All this is explained in Chapter IV. Karma and the allied doctrines of transmigration are set forth in the next chapter. In the author's opinion, both are undemonstrable by any of the *pramanas* (valid means of knowledge). They are to be treated as a 'convenient fiction' which is however useful in explaining the inequalities of life. Advaita Epistemology and Logic form the topic of Chapter VI. The ethical discipline necessary to attain the enlightenment is set forth in the seventh. The last chapter gives some account of the path of knowledge and the nature of release.

At the end of the study, one's feeling is that it is undoubtedly a very profitable one, though

one misses some very important topics like the Advaita Theory of Error, the impossibility of Janaka-Karma-Samucchaya and the compatibility of the operation of Prarabdha Karma even in the state of Jivanmukti. These topics are quite relevant to the main theme of Advaita Vedanta and hence cannot be dismissed as having an exegetical or historical importance only.

With regard to the author's distrust of Sruti as a *pramana*, closer examination will show that there is nothing either illogical or dogmatic in accepting it. The eternal verities, as they occurred to the purified mind of the sages of the past, are enshrined in it. They are demonstrable in the experience of sadhakas.

And again in Page 104 he writes: '*Sadhana Chatushtaya* is clearly not one that any merely rational person can follow... Advaita Vedanta is clearly aristocratic in its contention that truth or genuine knowledge is available only to the few who are willing and able to undertake all the arduous demands that its quest entails.' Here again we cannot agree with the author. The central contention of Advaita Vedanta, as of the Upanishads, is that absolute liberation or Moksha is the birthright of all. But no one can expect it to be served to him on a silver platter. One must deserve it. Discipline and effort are therefore necessary. It is no doubt arduous but the prize is very great.

On the whole, the book is very informative and deserves careful study. The printing and the get-up are very attractive. Some misprints have remained undetected.

HINDU IDEALS: By K. Balasubramania Iyer.
Pub: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7.
Pages 103+xiv. Price: Rs. 2.50.

This book is a reprint of two courses of lectures delivered by the author under two endowments of the Madras University. The first course relates to the *Purusharthas* as understood and elaborated by the ancient Hindu thinkers and the second to 'Humanitarian Ideals.' In the first course of lectures the author defines the term *Purushartha*, mentions their number and brings out the sequence underlying the order in which they are stated. He explains that *dharma* and *artha* are *sadhana purusharthas*. Proceeding he says that while *artha* and *kama* are subservient to *dharma*, *dharma* itself is preliminary to *Moksha* which is the summum bonum of human endeavours. Apt though exclusive quotations are given from a very wide range of literature, Sanskrit, Tamil and English. A little more independent exposition would have been welcome.

In the second course of lectures the main aim of the author is to give the direct lie to Christian missionaries who used to criticise Hindu Ethics as world-negating and consequently being indifferent to human suffering and neglecting social service. To prove his contention the author draws freely from the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Puranas and so forth. He concludes by drawing pointed attention to the relief work carried on by the Ramakrishna Mission and the liberation movement of Mahatma Gandhi.

Some repetitions are noticeable in the book. Many misprints in the book could have been avoided.

As a source-book, it is highly valuable.

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SWAMI RAMATIRTHA:
By H. Maheshwari, M.A., Ph.D. Pub: M/s Shivalal Agarwala & Company, Agra-3. Pp. 192.
Price: Rs. 15.00.

The philosophy of Swami Rama Tirtha is Advaita Vedanta. But for him this philosophy was not a system of ideas. Advaita Vedanta of Rama Tirtha was an awareness in the depth of his being to which he responded with lyrical ecstasy and in terms of which he attempted to live his daily life. Dr. Maheshwari has done well by giving a biography of Rama Tirtha as an introduction to his philosophy.

The premonistic name of the Swami was Tirtha Rama. He was born in 1873 in a Gosain family in the Punjab. Struggling hard against poverty in his school life and early college period, he passed his B.A. examination in 1893. He stood first in the first class, and was awarded scholarships with the help of which he prosecuted his M.A. studies in Mathematics in the Government College, Lahore. At this time he practised ascetic discipline to which he had shown leanings since his boyhood, and started studying Hindu scriptures. He also read Hafiz an Sadi in the original Persian.

Having been admitted to the M.A. degree in 1895 he joined the staff of the Forman Christian College as Professor of Mathematics. In 1897 he met the Sankaracharya of Dwaraka Peetha and received from him his initiation into Advaita Vedanta. He now took to Vedantic studies, aiming at "the realisation of his own inner Godhead." Soon after he met Sri Swami Vivekananda, disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (not Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa, as the author says on p. 1), who had addressed the Parliament of Religions in U.S.A. in 1893 as a Hindu

delegate. In 1898 Tirtha Rama formed an association with Vedantic studies as its main activity. Next year he joined the staff of the Government Oriental College, Lahore. Here he exerted much influence on others. In 1901 he became a sannyasin, and inverted his name from Tirtha Rama to Rama Tirtha. He now began to speak in religious conferences as a preacher of Vedanta. In 1902 he visited Japan and addressed meetings. After a time he left for U.S.A. without any plan. There, having stayed for some time with an Indian resident, he lived as a guest of an American who became attached to him, and stayed in the States for a year and half more. He was regarded as a 'living Christ' by suffering people who received surprising cure for their ailments from him. He lectured at universities, churches and other institutions, on Vedanta, and was highly appreciated.

He returned to India in 1904 and took to silent contemplation. He thought of reconstructing Indian life on a universal basis and planned his *magnum opus* on the Veda and Vedanta philosophy. But his life was cut short by drowning in the Ganges while bathing (17th October 1906).

Vedanta philosophy came to Rama Tirtha as the fulfilment of his emotional cravings and spiritual aspirations and gave him a dynamic purpose in life and an optimistic attitude to it. "When viewed from the stand-point of God-self", he has said, "the whole world becomes an effusion of Beauty, expression of joy, outpouring of bliss." (p. 50). Dr. Maheshwari finds in Rama Tirtha a sort of reconciliation between Sankara's and Ramanuja's concepts of Advaita philosophy:

"His absolutism involves *Sankara-Mayavada* even though his mysticism breathes *Ramanuja-Lilavada*. The world, consequently, from the ontological point of view is false, and the world as manifestation is divine". (p. 57).

Similarly Rama Tirtha finds the Supreme Self (Atman) behind the empirical self. So he sings: "Divinity is the synonym of my true Self. What a vision! What a truth, what a grand fact!" (p. 67). He also realises that according to Vedanta, "God, the Governing Law without, and Self the impelling force within, are the same". (p. 81). The Swami stresses the universality of Vedanta as religion by saying that, unlike the religions which go after the teachings of individuals, "Vedanta has no affiliation to a person or a teacher or a sect, etc." It is truth, the end of knowledge. It is universal truth and not a monopoly of a particular religion—"truth that could be discovered by any one anywhere". (p. 98).

Dr. Maheshwari's presentation of Swami Rama Tirtha as man and as philosopher rightly avoids a

mere rational approach. He takes note of the different facets of the Swami's personality. "His *sadhana*", he says, is not an exclusive practice with ascetic privations or other worldly concentrations, but a sincere and truthful undertaking for a total self-culture aiming at spiritual self-perfection" which, besides discriminative knowledge, includes moral purity, catholicity of the heart, good acts, devotion, love and self-transcendence. (p. 183).

The author deserves congratulations for his exhaustive study of much of the available material and the conclusions he has drawn from it.

SOME ASPECTS OF SUN WORSHIP IN ANCIENT INDIA: By Kalyan Kumar Ganguli, M.A., Premchand Raychand Scholar, D.Phil. Pub.: Abhedananda Academy of Culture, Calcutta-5, 1965. Pp. 60. Price: Rs. 10.

The author says: "I have felt that the Vedic and post-Vedic religious orders have not been studied in a proper manner and in their true perspective." This, he thinks, has "led to misconceptions about the evolution of traditional religious ideas from the time of the Rigveda right upto the present". But his own 'proper manner' does not appear to be quite academic. For instance, his opinion that "the Rigveda was a document organised or collected under the behest of some persons for some purpose of their own" needs more than a bare statement to make it acceptable. In the book there are several such statements including the following: "The Bull was held in veneration by the Harappans" and also by "the Vedic Indians", and "in the Rigveda itself Surya is mentioned in a number of hymns as the most exultant Deity who manifests himself as the sun".

Some of his readers may expect the learned author to write another book in which his thesis will receive more convincing support from the material on which it is based.

PROF. A. C. BOSE.

JOURNEYS IN BELIEF: Edited by Bernard Dixon. Pub.: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. Pp. 239. Price in U.K. 28s nett.

This book which is a record of religious experiences and changes in beliefs of a number of people highlights their inherent hunger for truth, or God and that men are not satisfied to live by "bread alone". It seeks expression in intellectual analysis and meditation and often in dramatic conversions. Particularly interesting is the case of Douglas Hyde who had been an active communist for a number of years and who had the courage to admit that he was wrong by exposing the weaknesses and inconsistencies of

the communist doctrine and to become a Catholic. The account of the course taken by the process of change in his basic belief is revealing. He came to the conclusion from his own experience that it means mission "one half of reality" when one denies the spiritual side of Man and ignores the Grace of God at work in the world. Then there is Hector Hawton who broke the bond binding him to the Catholic church and gives an equally interesting account of what caused the erosion of his seemingly so solid and impregnable faith. He quotes Andrew Boyle, a Catholic contributor to *The God I Want* writing: "I would rather spend eternity in hell than in the company of a divine sadist capable of consigning any creature of his to perdition". This dogma of hell and perdition has been a stumbling block to many though by intellectual investigation and reflection one might discover that it is the state of our minds which creates for us, heaven and hell.

It is quite fascinating to follow these *Journeys in Belief* highlighting this flowing of God to men and of men to God as for instance in the story of Richard Acland who writes: "In trying to describe it elsewhere, I have said a trumpet blast from all the orchestra of heaven; a sudden rushing wind through all the interstices among the molecules of the body. These are symbolic approximations. The essentials are that this was no unreal supposition dreamed up in one's imagination; it was a real event, physically felt by the whole self. The part which is incommunicable is that through such an event Someone/ Something from outside has said: Now, as never before, you have been touched by Truth. And it is impossible to doubt it." Such an experience less fragmentary, steadied by meditation might reveal the "Someone/ Something" not from outside but coming from the core of our being, all-pervasive.

GEMS FROM THE TANTRAS (KULARNAVA) :
By M. P. Pandit. Pub.: Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17. Pp. 106. Price: Rs. 6.

Sri M. P. Pandit who has selected these gems from the Kularnava Tantra is too well known to the readers of *The Mountain Path* to need special introduction.

His scholarship, erudition and devotion to the task he has undertaken of explaining the delicate and elusive theme of Tantrism to the prejudiced modern mind find expression in these eclectic selections accompanied by English translations and his lucid commentaries. These selections represent a more universal aspect of Tantrism of particular interest to students of Tantra and also

to all spiritual seekers who may really find in them gems lighting up their sadhana.

"The natural state of communion is the highest; meditation and concentration are the middle; japa and chants of praise lower; ritual and outer worship are the lowest." (p. 18). This reminds one of Sri Ramana's verse in *Upadesa Saram*: "This is certain; worship, incantations and meditation are performed respectively with the body, the voice and the mind and are in this ascending order of value." (v. 4).

Gems from the Tantras is one more labour of love on the part of the author.

QUINTESENCE OF SRI VIDYA : The Mahamanustava of Sri T. V. Kapali Sastriar, by S. Shankaranarayanan. Pub.: Dipti Publications, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry-2. Pp. 61. Price: Rs. 6.

Quintessence of Sri Vidya is the title given to the hymn *Mahamanustava* consisting of 32 verses composed by the late Kapali Sastriar, a well-known Tantrist. Sri Shankaranarayanan has translated this hymn into English and appended an explanatory note to each verse. He has also provided a long introduction explaining the importance of Sri Vidya in the Tantric discipline. As stated by Sri M. P. Pandit in his Preface to the book, the hymn is not only a laudation of Sri Vidya, which is the same as the Mother Creatrix Lalita Tripurasundari, but shows also the path that leads to the Truth embodied by her and the way of treading it. The explanatory notes help the reader in understanding the fundamental truth of the essential oneness pervading multiplicity to which this Vidya gives expression in the formlessness and form of the Mother and her guiding grace. "It is she (*Kamakala*) who reigns as the eternal portion in the microcosm."

EVER OVERFLOWING BUT NOT SPILLING OUT: By Alone, Pub: Rayrikar & Sons Ltd., 361 Shukravar Peth, Poona-2. Pp. 282. Price: Rs. 5.

Overflowing is synonymous with spilling out but not so with the author of this book. This is reflected in the contents also, which follows naturally 'along the teachings of J. Krishnamurti'. If a man has a following and teaches he takes on the role of a guru even if he not only rejects gurus *ad hoc* but says that they have brought in all the miseries in this world. One may get a glimpse of ultimate realization without striving as happened in the case of Tennyson and others. Having had such an experience a man might try desperately to regain it, being his natural sublime state, but the more he strives

the less he is likely to succeed unless he strives in the right way along the teachings of a realized man, a *jñani* who can point the way and lead along the path he has trodden. The mind must be stilled so that this experience might come again and be held longer till it can be brought about at will and till it stabilises itself. Only a true Guru has the power of infusing Grace for such striving. Such an experience may be a turning point for some to start their sadhana in all earnest. Others consider themselves mistakenly as having reached the goal. Striving would be an obstacle, 'Just be as you are' is their motto. The trouble is that we are just as we are with all our limitations and vasanas inherited from countless ages. They have to be eradicated to still the mind. This is the greatest effort a human being is capable of. One state is a reflection of another. Ordinarily great effort is expended to achieve effortlessness in limited objects such as sport, music, etc. etc., how much more so when the goal is limitless, the realization of our sublime state veiled only by ignorance, by our 'conditioning'. Our effort should be to reject our conditioning and ignorance and not the guru who shows us how to do it.

The author with his obviously admirable qualities of heart and so obviously a bhakta confesses himself also a devotee of Sri Ramana Maharshi and cannot help speaking of saints and gurus as 'good men' trying to help. May Sri Ramana's Grace help him to 'look' in and find the living inner guru who is the core of his being and cannot be rejected. The outer guru can lead to the inner.

THE ART OF PLAYING MRIDANGAM, A PERCUSSION INSTRUMENT IN KARNATAKA MUSIC : By Kalaisikhamani Tinniam Venkatarama Iyer, Bharati Vijayam Press, Triplicane, Madras-5. (Copies obtainable from the author, 27 Muthukalathi Chetty Street, Triplicane, Madras-5.) Price : Rs. 6.

Music is called the *Ghandarva Veda*, the art of the Gods. There are spiritual sadhanas based

mainly on sound such is its power. Music in the form of bhajans played a considerable part in the spiritual life of such sages as Kabir, Thyagaraja, Mirabai and many more. Rhythmic harmony in music can be very helpful in stilling the mind, hence the expression 'breathhtaking'. The author of this book writes lovingly about the mridangam, an instrument *par excellence* for enhancing the value of Karnataka music by providing inspired rhythmic accompaniment. According to experts in the field this book gives a clear and easy to follow systematic description of the traditional exercises for playing this instrument and should prove useful to those desiring to acquire this art. An advanced course will follow inspired by the encouragement from music lovers. The book has been well edited by Sri R. Venkatarathnam, a disciple of the author.

SHAKINAH.

SANKARA'S CLARIFICATION OF CERTAIN VEDANTIC CONCEPTS : By Swami Satchidanandendra Sarasvati. Pub. : Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Holenarsipur (Mysore). Pp. 107. Price : Rs. 1.50.

In this exposition of certain important concepts like the *Atman*, *Vidya*, *Avidya*, *Maya*, *Ishvara* etc. the author seeks to prove that commentators like Vachaspati, Prakashatman and even luminaries like Appaya Dikshitar did not grasp their connotation correctly. It is an old controversy what Sankara meant or must have meant and certainly, the last word has not been said on the subject.

In describing *upasana* as 'creative imagination' (p. 103), the writer is less than fair to the discipline of inner culturing that has come to be designated by that name. One does not imagine things in this practice ; one develops the consciousness in such a way that the Reality is either contacted or realised. It is a concrete growth towards the Real.

M. P. PANDIT.

Enlightened men differ in their behaviour. This difference is due to the nature of their fructifying karma ; but there is no difference in their knowledge of Atman. The sage is not perplexed over such a question.

— Panchadasi of Vidyananya.

ASHRAM BULLETIN

SRI RAMANA AUDITORIUM INAUGURATED

ON SRI BHAGAVAN'S ARADHANA DAY

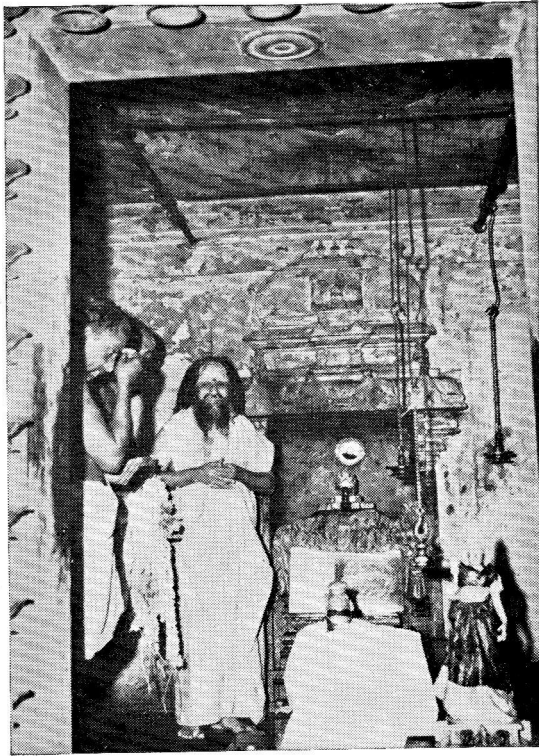
A VERY large gathering of devotees and visitors from all over joined the functions held on May 3, 1970, the 20th anniversary day of Sri Bhagavan's *Brahmanirvana* and the two preceding days. The opening function of the Auditorium synchronised with the Aradhana Day.

ON the preceding two days *Ganapathi Homam*, *Vasthu Santhi* and *Navagraha Homam*, functions preliminary to the opening of the Auditorium, were performed. On 3rd May, the Aradhana Day, the functions commenced with the recital of "Ramana Sad-Guru" song at 5 a.m. and Tamil Parayanam. Mahannyasa was commenced and done as usual. The newly constructed Auditorium and Meditation Hall in front of Sri Bhagavan's Shrine was kept closed to be declared open at 9 a.m. by Sri Santananda Swamigal of Sendhamangalam Avadhuta Swamigal's Adhishatanam at Pudukottai who was invited to grace the occasion.

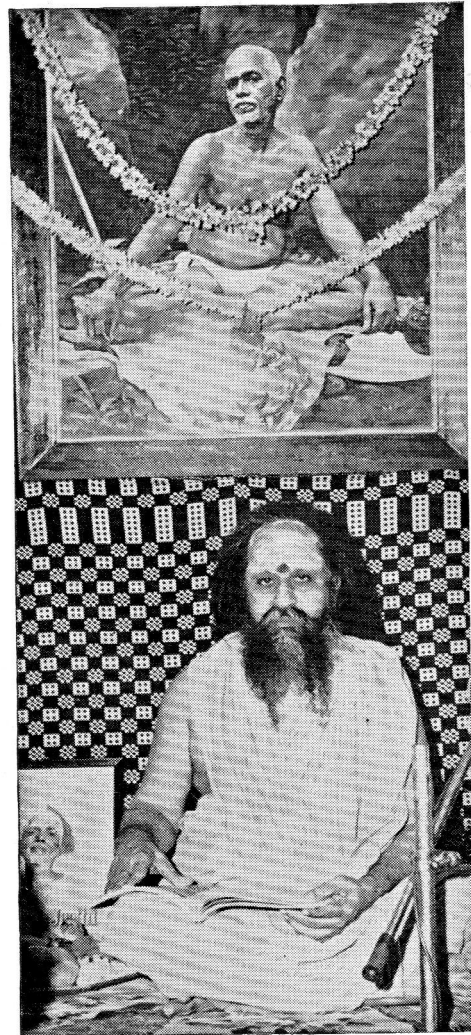
On arrival he was received in traditional style with *Poorna Kumbham* by Vaidiks. Sri T. N. Venkataraman, President and Sri K. Padmanabhan met the Swamiji at the entrance and after introducing the Ashramites took him to Sri Mathrubhuteswarar Shrine where Aarti was performed. He was conducted to the main entrance of the Auditorium at the appointed time. In reverential mood and prayer Sri Santananda Swamigal opened the entrance and follow-

ed by the entire gathering entered into the Auditorium. He walked on straight to Sri Bhagavan's Shrine of Grace where worship was offered with Aarti. After this he viewed the construction and took his seat on a dais erected for the occasion in the Auditorium. The vast gathering settled down to hear him.

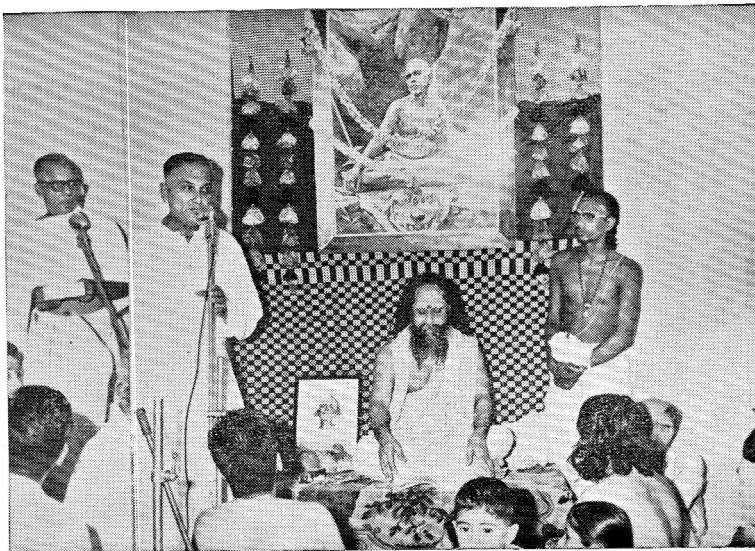
On behalf of the President, members of the management of Sri Ramanasramam, members of the Auditorium Committee and the large gathering of devotees, Sri T. P. Ramachandra Iyer welcomed Sri Santananda Swamigal. Conveying the happiness of all who had assembled in having Swamiji in their midst he said words of formal welcome were least significant before Sri Bhagavan's Shrine and His ever permeating Presence. Holy Arunachala was traditionally known to be regarded as the Lord Himself, ever present, and all-pervading. Sri T. P. R. described the genesis and completion of the new construction by the determined endeavours of the President and Board of Management with the devoted efforts of the architect, engineers and the workers and by the sustained efforts of Sri V. Ganesan, Managing



Top: Sri Santananda Swami inside the Mathrubutheswara Shrine.



Right: Sri Swami engrossed in himself with *Ramana Jyoti* in his hands.

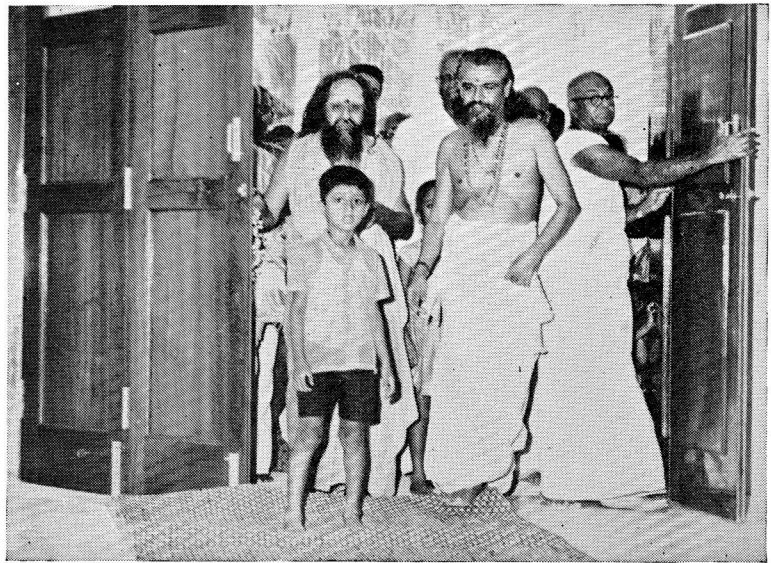


← Sri T. P. R. (*extreme left*) welcomes the Swami and the devotees. Sri S. P. Mukherjee proposes a vote of thanks.



← Sri Santananda Swami waving
Arathi to the Shrine of Grace of
Sri Bhagavan.

→
After declaring open the RAMANA
AUDITORIUM Sri Swami is seen
stepping into it.



Bottom : Sri K. K. Nambiar recollects
and thanks those devotees, past and
present, who have rendered invaluable
services in making this noble task a
great success.





Sri Santananda Swami's speech, full of devotion to Sri Bhagavan, is listened with rapt attention.

Editor, *The Mountain Path*. He narrated the history of the completion of the Mother's Shrine, Sri Bhagavan's Shrine of Grace and the Samadhi Mantapam of Sri Niranjanananda Swamigal. Sri T.P.R. referred to the spontaneous assistance rendered by various devotees and donors to the new construction. He referred in particular to the tireless efforts of Sri V. Ganesan. The Souvenir *Ramana Jyoti* successfully brought out by him largely aided the Building Fund.

In recognition of the valuable advice and assistance of the Architect Sri K. Subbarayan, Sri K. Padmanabhan, Engineer and the Contractor Sri Chinnappa Naidu along with Sri Raghava, Sri Dikshit, Sri Seshagiri (Engineers) and Sri Anjaneyalu, Chief Mason, they were individually presented to Sri Santananda Swamigal who blessed them and gave away respective mementos presented to them by the Ashram while Dr. T. N. Krishnaswamy read out their respective names.

Swami Santananda then addressed the gathering. He began with the prayer recital:

"*Ramana Sadguru Ramana Sadguru
Ramana Sadguru Pahimam
Ramana Sadguru Ramana Sadguru
Ramana Sadguru Rakshamam.*"

The devotees assembled also joined in the recital. It is rare, the Swamiji said to have human birth

and yet strangely enough we see that Santi (peace) is so wanting only in human beings. There seems more peace in the animal kingdom and still more among birds and plants. He felt greatly touched by the dynamic peace in the atmosphere of Sri Bhagavan's Shrine and Presence and was reminded of his earlier days of association with this place. In those days Bhagavan's abode was on the Hill.

"The one Bhagavan I saw then is the same Bhagavan I see now in the many hearts and faces before me. When I opened this Hall and approached the Shrine through this vast Auditorium I felt the gates of my heart open and experienced His Presence as before. Indeed Sri Bhagavan has opened the hearts of all in His Presence. Without any distinctions of any kind as to caste and wealth Sri Bhagavan has given to one and all the quintessence of all Vedantic Sastras in the easiest assimilable manner. Should we not imbibe it? If there is one to feed us through the mouth and he does so, should we not at least gulp the food down? What use is it if we cannot do even that? But even to such who will not take much trouble Sri Bhagavan's Grace will flow and help, provided they do not swerve from Truth and pray to Him." Here Swamiji quoted from *Thirumanthiram* and from *Sivapuranam* (conveying the idea that you can worship His Feet by His Grace alone).

Sri Swamiji added "All of you are really blessed and those who had the great fortune of serving Him are already blessed. It is rare to gain the opportunity of rendering personal service to the Guru, which is enough to ensure one's deliverance if one is only God-minded." Sri Swamiji concluded with the prayer recital of *Sri Arunachala Pancha Ratna*.

Sri S. P. Mukherji thanked the Swamiji for his presence and address and the President and management of the Ashram for undertaking the task of constructing the hall. He specially congratulated Sri V. Ganesan for his great efforts to bring out the Souvenir volume *Ramana Jyoti* and

the members of the committee for aiding him in this regard, and their continued interest and assistance.

Simultaneously with these proceedings the Mahabhishekam was performed at Sri Bhagavan's Shrine. There was Upanishad Parayanam and Archana was done ending with Mangala Aarti. Feeding the poor on a large scale was done in addition to feeding visitors and devotees.

Swami Santananda had his bhiksha at the Ashram with devotees and was presented with Holy Prasad and Bhagavan's books and photograph before he left in the evening.

Commemoration of Bhagavan's 20th Mahasamadhi In London

The small meeting hall at Friends House, London, a Quaker Centre, was crowded to capacity on Tuesday the 14th of April 1970 by the devotees and admirers of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. They had gathered under the chairmanship of Mr. Apa B. Pant, the High Commissioner for India, to commemorate the 20th Mahasamadhi of Sri Bhagavan.

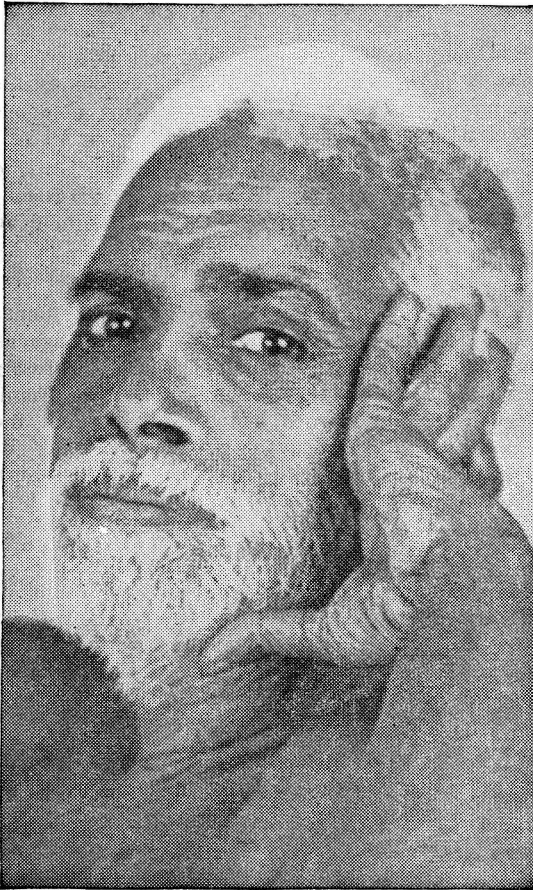
OF the eleven speakers at least seven had met the Bhagavan at Sri Ramanasramam during his life time. The eighth one, Madame Waleria Sikora, a Polish lady, was, it can be said, in touch with Him when she was in a Middle East desert during the war years and the Bhagavan was in Tiruvannamalai.

A large garlanded portrait of the Bhagavan, received from Sri Ramanasramam, was by the side of Chairman Pant, who told the delighted gathering that he will find for it a place of honour in the precincts of the India House building in Aldwych. This was his spontaneous response to the suggestion made by Dr. C. H. Sharma, a devotee of Sri Bhagavan, who also urged the High Commissioner to find a corner in the Mission for a library dealing with the life and work of the Bhagavan. The High Commissioner's response to this admirable suggestion was also prompt. He said, "Why a small corner? We will have a big library. If any one gives us the books we will accept them. If not the Indian Government will buy them. We have money for this kind of work."

Swami Avyaktananda, head of the Vedanta Movement in Britain, radiated joy, peace and goodwill during his brief speech. By his mere presence throughout the meeting and by that of

Swami Bhavyananda, head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre in London, we were privileged to catch a glimpse of the state of being which results from a dedicated life as well as from the *darshan* and *upadesha* of a great master. This in itself must have inspired many in the audience to press on even more fervently and devotedly with their own sadhana. Bhikshu Nirmalananda of the Gandhi Mission Society of Madras, who had arrived in London two days before the meeting, described his visit to Sri Ramanasramam during the lifetime of the Bhagavan. We were amused to hear a picturesque and lively description of his life during the exciting days of the Swaraj Movement, enriched as it was by the opportunities available then of meeting the great souls who graced India's soil such as his own master Gandhiji, the Bhagavan, Sri Aurobindo and the poet Tagore.

Maung Maung Ji, a life-long theosophist and a Buddhist preacher in London, presented a joyful beaming face which belied his seventy years. We were delighted to hear of his childhood spent in the company of Krishnamurti as a protege of Annie Besant, as well as his visit to the Bhagavan as a very young boy. The Bhagavan advised him that far more profitable than pouring over printed



words, however sacred their subject matter, was the practice of virtuous living.

An unusual account was given by Madame Waleria Sikora, a Polish lady of radiant appearance. She spoke with the simplicity and spontaneity one can imagine finding in her conversation with intimate friends. Her story was both remarkable and memorable. She referred to the time she spent during the last war working with the forces in the desert as a member of General Sikorski's Polish Army and told the audience how one day in a vision an Indian appeared by her side at the foot of a staircase at the top of which stood "the book of wisdom." Her companion proceeded to lead her to the top before disappearing. She described this astonishing occurrence to her superior officer, a Polish General, who promptly showed her several photographs. He asked her if the visionary Indian resembled any shown there. She unhesitatingly picked out one face and her listeners at the meeting knew who that was long before she held up

the selfsame photograph of the Bhagavan in his "Ramana Arunachala" pose. This has been with her ever since. Since then he has appeared to her at different times and she knows that He is guiding her in her work.

Indeed every one, including Lord Sorensen, Chairman of the World Congress of Faiths, Mrs. Meherangiz Munsifs, a staunch Bahai, Mr. Francis Watson, Dr. C. H. Sharma, Mr. Vishnu Dev Narain, of the Hindu Centre and Mr. Paul Warwick had a fascinating and inspiring story to tell. While Lord Sorensen described the Bhagavan as the authentic saint of Arunachala, Mr. Warwick, who is connected with an ashram group in Manchester, spoke with conviction of the importance which the practice of *Atma Vichara* has for him. It was encouraging to hear of the dedication of his friends in Manchester, confirming the constantly increasing interest in spiritual practices in the western world, particularly those originating in Asia.

Mr. Pant, the Chairman, had introduced the speakers who provided much variety in nationality, appearance and personality. He himself, quite apart from his distinguished position in London, had an especially appropriate qualification for presiding over the meeting since he had visited Tiruvannamalai himself. He spoke as one who, despite his involvement in international affairs, has never lost touch with the spiritual heritage of his native land. It seemed perfectly obvious that he should offer to the sponsors of the commemoration meeting a room in India House to "house" the portrait and to start a Ramana library.

The readers of *The Mountain Path* would like to know something of one of the speakers who did not speak because modesty held him back. This was a most unusual young man called John Champneys. It is rare enough for a 20-year-old English boy to feel attracted to the spiritual message of an Indian Rishi and to be filled with a longing to visit his ashram. In John's case there is a unique factor because a childhood illness has left him confined to a wheelchair. Despite this enormous setback he has managed to obtain a place at the University and we are convinced that his determination combined with Sri Bhagavan's Grace, will enable him to make the journey to Arunachala.

At the end of the meeting one devotee had this to say: "We cannot imagine anyone present feeling unresponsive to the lure of Arunachala-Siva, that enchanted name which soared from the tape-recorder and reverberated around the room,

mingling with the smell of incense sticks as darkness fell outside, Arunachala calling us back to our spiritual home. The Bhagavan's beautiful smile in the portrait seemed to beckon us too and it is almost certain that more than one earnest prayer reached out to him, asking for permission to visit Tiruvannamalai in the very near future. The wonderful atmosphere was such that we have no doubts about His response."

The meeting concluded on a happy note. It was struck by Miss Nel Halina Noel, one of the sponsors who, as soon as the Chairman Pant concluded his observations, took the platform.

She said, "I stand before you at the suggestion of the sponsors to say how grateful we are to His Excellency and other speakers who have contributed to the success of this commemoration gathering. Before this meeting, for months I have been thinking where do we go from here? After the excellent tributes to the Sage of the Ramanashram, I felt we should give a practical shape to the Ramana Maharshi's message. I think this evening we have a good opportunity to lay a foundation for such a project. With the co-operation of His Excellency and others I hope we can set up an organisation which will look after the Ramana Maharshi Library."

Then this is what Miss Noel added: "The library and the portrait of the Bhagavan at India House are excellent things but my dream goes further than that. Would it be possible to send one person every year to the Ashram for a stay of say three or six months — if not more? We are glad the Indian High Commissioner will accept the beautiful portrait of Ramana Maharshi which was sent by the Ashram which deserves special thanks for the support given to the sponsors for many months to make this meeting a success."

Miss Noel ended with this note: "I believe where there is a will there is a way and I do believe all the three points I have mentioned are possible of fulfilment. The world today needs the creation of better understanding. I think one of the methods is to exchange ideas. We have to spread somehow the teachings of Ramana Maharshi and do everything possible to consolidate people with each other."

The High Commissioner nodded — almost to say "We agree with you, Miss Noel."

At the conclusion of the meeting refreshments were provided to the accompaniment of taped hymns from the Sri Ramanasramam.

At Ramana Kendra, Delhi

Gurupuja was celebrated on April 19 at Vinayaka Mandir, Sarojini Nagar, with Vedaparayana, recitation of *Upadesa Sara*, and singing of songs by and on Bhagavan.

An 'echo' meeting was held on May 3rd to mark the opening of the Auditorium at Sri Ramanasramam. The weekly satsangs were held in various parts of Delhi.

* * *

On June 14, Brahmasri Sukhabrahmam Ramaswami Sastrigal gave a discourse on Bhagavan and the Advaitic tradition. Quoting profusely from the Upanishads, the Puranas and the Tamil poet-saints, the learned lecturer brought out the uniqueness of Bhagavan's realization and its innumerable links with Northern and Southern Saivism.

At Kolhapur

Dharma-Tatva or Satsang Mandal of Kolhapur celebrated on the 3rd May, the 20th Brahma Nirvana Day of Sri Bhagavan in a very informal and fitting way in the evening. The programme was as under:

- (i) collective meditation;
- (ii) talks on Maharshi's message and its value by Sri G. S. Kulkarni and Sri G. M. Kodolikar;
- (iii) reading of a prayer-pamphlet on 'Sad-Guru' published on the occasion by Prof. G. V. Kulkarni.

Everyone present could feel the Master's presence on the occasion, May His Grace continue!

At Madurai

Sri Bhagavan's 20th Aradhana was performed as usual at Sri Ramana Mandiram in Madurai on the 3rd May 1970. The celebrations commenced with Vedic chants at 6 a.m. with Upanishad parayanams. Special poojas were performed at the shrine with Sahasranama archanas and neivedyams. Prasadam was distributed.

The celebrations were continued till the 7th May, by devotees of Sri Bhagavan and the members of the Divine Life Society on a grand scale. A large gathering took part in which Sri A. R. Raghavan, Sri Sowmya Narayanan and Sri Ramanaprasad spoke on Bhagavan's life and teachings.

At Nellore

The Ramana Goshti of Nellore observed the 20th Aradhana day of Sri Bhagavan on the



Gurupuja at Belgaum.

3rd May 1970, at the Ramana Kutir. Many devotees took part in the functions including Sri G. L. Narasimharao and G. V. Subbaramiah. The function was gone through with much devotion.

At Belgaum

Bhagavan's 20th Mahasamadhi day was celebrated at Sambra, Belgaum, on May 3. Many devotees, including some from Londa, participated. After Vedaparayana and *Upadesa Sara*, songs by Bhagavan, Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni, Muruganar, Janaki Mata, Sadhu Om, Dr. Padmanabhan and others were sung. Col. B. G. Vellal gave a talk on purity of mind and intellect as the condition for absorbing and reflecting Bhagavan's teachings.

At Ramana Bhakta Sabha, Madras

Guru puja was celebrated on May 10 at Dharmalayam, 94, Mowbrays Road, Alwarpet, Madras. After Vedaparayana and *Upadesa sara*, Dr. T. N. Ramachandran, Tagore Professor, Madras University, gave a talk on Bhagavan and the Vedantic tradition.

* * *

PILGRIMS

Sadhu Parthasarathy of Sri Vaishnavi Shrine Thirumullaivayal, together with the members of the Vallimalai Satchithananda Swami Thiruppu-

guzh Sabha arrived at the Ashram on the evening of 5th April 1970. For an hour and half they gave a musical recital of *Thiruppugazh* songs with devotional fervour in the old meditation hall before Sri Bhagavan's couch and in an atmosphere of His all pervading Presence. After its conclusion, Sadhu Parthasarathy spoke from his own personal knowledge about the life and activities of Sri Vallimalai Swamigal with special reference to the Vallimalai Swami's devotion to and contacts with Sri Bhagavan.

On Tuesday 7th April 1970 the *yugadhi* day Sadhu Parthasarathy had a sahasranama archana done at Sri Bhagavan's Shrine and offered worship to Devi with Aarti at mother's shrine. This was followed by a Bhajan by the members accompanying him, at the meditation hall. The entire party had biksha at the ashram with Asramites and visitors.

In the evening Sri Parthasarathy, went round the Ashram Campus noticing the several improvements and changes effected, since he last visited this place 18 years ago, and called on Sri T.P.R. at his quarters. He also saw Sri Muruganar and Sri Ramana Padananda. Sri Parthasarathy and his party left on the 8th morning having obviously spent a happy time here.

* * *

Major I. J. Taneja, who regularly spends his yearly holidays at our Ashram engaging himself in sadhana as enjoined by our Master, was at the Ashram for a month in May. He is now employed in Assam, a long distance from our Ashram! While here, as usual, he went round the Hill daily. He told the *Managing Editor* how he got this time the experience of oneness of Arunachala-Ramana-Self, which made him serene and happy. He was requested to note down his spiritual experiences for the benefit of our readers. For him, he said, Arunachala is not merely a spiritual home but the real Home itself!

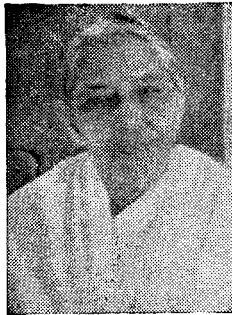


Major I. J. Taneja

* * *

Smt. Suri Nagamma (introduced to our readers in the issue of July 1965, p. 207) who also visits the Ashram every year without fail, was amidst

us for nearly three months. Her presence in the Ashram gave spiritual encouragement to those who came in closer contact with her. This time, while here, she was engaged, in cooperation with Sri Krishna Bhikshu and Sri G. L. Narasimharao, in preparing the Telugu version of the *Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi*, edited by Arthur Osborne, and other important original



Smt. Nagamma

works of Sri Maharshi in Telugu. Her personal reminiscences, anecdotes and accounts of Sri Bhagavan's Grace and human aspect, were really thrilling and strengthening one's spiritual fervour. How fortunate were those who had the opportunity to be here in such close proximity imbibing His spiritual radiance and enjoying also His Grace, in human form, was the pleasant reaction of one of the devotees at the Ashram on hearing the reminiscences of Smt. Nagamma!

* * *

Sri Rani Padmavathi Devi, Maharani of Khairagarh (Member of Parliament) and her brother-in-law, Sri Raja Shankar Pratap Singh, Raja Sahib of Chichchli (also M.P.), visited the Ashram on the 11th June, breaking their journey from Madras to Bangalore, for a few hours which they spent meditating in the Nirvana Room and the Old Hall. The Maharani told the *Managing Editor* that she has been a devotee of Sri Bhagavan since 1945 and had His darshan several times. She visited the Ashram also after His *Mahanirvana*, she knows *Upadesa Saram* by heart and follows Sri Bhagavan's teachings always. She mentioned how the chain around her neck attached with the locket of Sri Bhagavan was lost thrice and all three times she got it back to her great delight and in mysterious circumstances. The Maharani intends to construct a Guest House like the Khanna's Guest House, in which they were accommodated, and donate it to the Ashram. She is very eager to be at the Ashram on the *Deepam Day* (11-12-1970); she is most welcome!

* * *

On May 30th Smt. Tarakeshwari Sinha, M.P., accompanied by Smt. T. N. Ananthanayaki, M.L.A., visited the Ashram and paid her homage to Sri Bhagavan. She was shown round the Ashram

by the President; and a few books on Sri Maharshi were presented to her.

* * *

Horst Rutkowski a German devotee left for Germany in the third week of May after a stay of nearly three years in the Ashram. He writes as follows:

Dear President & Dear Ganesan!

I am thanking you both for your kind permission to stay such a long time in this Ashram. It was a hard time of sadhana but full of grace for me. And now I will be able to continue my spiritual practice in Germany. Once more thank you for everything.

* * *

Miss Julie Wellings of the States was introduced to Sri Bhagavan's teachings by Mrs. Barbara Rose (referred to in our issue of April '70, p. 105) and has been staying at the Ashram for the past few months, presently occupying *Ramana Shanti*, the house donated to the Ashram by Mrs. Rose. She is sincere in her sadhana as enjoined by Sri Bhagavan and she will continue to stay here for some time more. She writes:



“We do not understand what it is that has happened to cause you to wish to spend so much time in an ashram,” so write my parents. I do not really understand how it has come about that I should be so fortunate as to have come to this place. Such is the will of Sri Bhagavan and how can some one like me hope to understand it? But being here is truly a blessing. Such joy fills the heart as one prostrates before the samadhi or on the occasions when one is privileged to circumambulate Arunachala in the company of other devotees, or indeed, whenever the mind turns to Bhagavan. Continually I give thanks to Bhagavan for being so kind to one so ignorant. His guidance is unfailing and all-inclusive. Relieved of the burden of making decisions or plans, the mind can be applied to the task of enquiring into the source of all the thoughts which afflict it. And as the thoughts subside the presence of Bhagavan is felt in the heart. *Om Sri Ramana Maharshi Satguru Maharajiki Jai!*”

OBITUARY

The Last Rites For Mr. Osborne

The news of Arthur Osborne's passing away was received with profound sorrow early next morning on Saturday the 9th May 1970 by all the residents and devotees of Sri Ramanaramam and Ramana Nagar. It was known that his health was not as good as usual the last two years but only a few days before he and Mrs. Osborne left for Bangalore to spend the hottest month in a cooler climate they went round the Hill of Arunachala (*pradakshina*) 8½ miles barefoot. It was a full-moon night and those who met them on the way found him looking even brighter than usual though weak. The news of his passing away within a few days of reaching Bangalore was therefore as shocking as it was sudden and cast a gloom on all of us. His death was very peaceful without a sign of struggle. The intervals between his breaths started lengthening till they ceased at about 2.35 p.m. on Friday the 8th of May 1970. The body was brought to Tiruvannamalai the same evening first to the ashram then to their residence.

All the asramites, the President of the Board of Trustees Sri T. N. Venkataraman, Sri V. Ganesan the managing editor of *The Mountain Path*, devotees and friends came to express their sorrow, condolences and sympathy with Mrs. Osborne in her bereavement and to pay their last respects.

The body was buried in the garden of the Osbornes' residence according to Hindu rites as is done usually for sadhus, adorned with holy vibhuti, kum-kum and flowers while Sri Kunju Swami and Sri T.P.R. solemnly recited Sri Bhagavan's *Akshara Mana Malai* as they did for Sri Bhagavan, other devotees joining in the chanting. Amidst these chantings the remains were laid into

The *Mandalabhishekam* to the Samadhi of Arthur Osborne, on the 48th day after his passing away, was performed on June 24, 1970 in the presence of the ashramites and visitors, including Sri T. N. Venkataraman, Ashram President, the *Managing Editor*, Ganesh and of course, Mrs. Osborne, Editor, *The Mountain Path*, in an atmosphere of great serenity. The Samadhi was covered with flowers and garlands, Sri T. P. Ramachandra Iyer, Sri Ramaswami Pillai, Sri Kunju Swami and others sang *Aksharamana Malai*, *Arunachala Pancharatnam* and *Siva Puranam*. A *biksha* was offered at the Ashram to the devotees.

the grave in an atmosphere of great serenity which continues.

Thus ended the earthly life of a great devotee of Sri Bhagavan, a great Editor and writer who not only expounded Sri Bhagavan's teaching to the world his books having been translated into several languages in the West and East, but who also lived His teaching. His great qualities of mind and heart and extraordinary loveable satvic nature enabled him to become a true seeker of the highest order awaking a feeling of peace and love in those who came into contact with him. Absorbed as he is in Sri Bhagavan may he live for ever in our hearts!

Condolence Meeting At Ramana Kendra

At a largely attended meeting of the Ramana Kendra held in C-III Air Port Lane on 16-5-1970, Professor K. Swaminathan and Shri Ramdhari Sinha Dinkar spoke at length of Mr. Osborne's intellectual and literary qualities and of his devotion to Bhagavan. The following resolution moved by Shri M. L. Sondhi, M.P., was unanimously passed, all the members standing in silence for two minutes :

This meeting of Ramana Kendra, Delhi, expresses its profound sorrow at the passing away of Mr. Arthur Osborne, Editor, *The Mountain Path*, and places on record its high appreciation of his devoted and eminently successful efforts, through his many books and articles, to make the message and teachings of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi more widely known and better understood throughout the world.

At Madurai

The news of the passing away of Mr. Arthur Osborne, Editor of *The Mountain Path* was received with sorrow by devotees of Sri Bhagavan at Ramana Mandiram and the members of the Divine Life Society. To express their sorrow and for the peace of the departed soul, a Prayer meeting was arranged and held on 11th May in the evening. Prayers were offered with recitals from the *Gita*.

Sri A. R. Raghavan, Sri K. Vanamamalai spoke recounting the great qualities of head and heart of the late Mr. Osborne and conveyed their deep condolences to friends and members of the bereaved family. Before the end, as a mark of respect two minutes Silence was observed by all assembled.

* * * *

Prof. G. V. Subbaramayya

An ardent old devotee of Sri Bhagavan, Sri G. V. Subbaramayya (introduced to our readers in July 1968 issue p. 235.) passed away at Nellore



Prof. G. V. Subbaramayya

on May 16, 1970, and the sad news was received by all devotees and ashramites with deep regret. He was conscious to the last and the end was peaceful and sudden. A keen student of English literature he took his degree in 1922 and became a lecturer and later on Principal of the P. B. N. College at Nidubrolu. Proficient in his own mother tongue, Telugu and in Sanskrit, as much as in English, his writings included a poetical rendering of Kalidasa's great lyric *Megha-Dhuta* in Telugu verse and a collection of his English poems in two volumes. He first came in touch with Sri Bhagavan in 1933 which proved a turning point in his spiritual life and progress. He imbibed Sri Bhagavan's teachings strengthened by his frequent visits to Tiruvannamalai and spread it among the members of his family and a large circle of friends. A good conversationalist he used to draw Sri Bhagavan spontaneously into talks over a variety of topics. He has translated Sri Bhagavan's teachings into English notably the *Ramana Gita* in verse. By virtue of his association with Sri Bhagavan and the teaching he imbibed he became a familiar figure in Andhra Pradesh where, in his retirement he was spreading Sri Bhagavan's Gospel in various places. After 1963 he set himself the task of rendering *The Andhra Maha Bharatam* into English verse and has almost completed it receiving the blessings of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Sankaracharya and the eminent scholar and statesman, Sri C. Rajagopalachari.

May he rest in eternal peace at Sri Bhagavan's Lotus Feet. All the ashramites convey their sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Sri B. M. S. Naidu

Sri. B. M. S. Naidu passed away at his residence in Bangalore, on the 10th May 1970, after a short illness. News of his sad demise was

communicated by his son Gopalji and was received with great regret by us and all the ashramites and devotees of Sri Bhagavan. One of the oldest devotees of Bhagavan, he came from a pious family, traditionally devoted to sages and saints. Firmly devoted to Sri Bhagavan from very early times and to his last days he was a very popular figure, widely known in Bangalore as a centre for all information about Sri Bhagavan and Ashram activities. He made extensive religious tours, visiting many holy places and meeting several sadhus and great personages. He made his residence at Bangalore a veritable home for spiritual activities devoid of distinctions, where Bhajans and Discourses were frequently conducted. As an Automobile Engineer he was having his own workshop, dealing in sales and service. Great concerns like The Rolls Royce and Bentleys were represented by him. We convey our deep sympathy for the bereaved family, and share their grief. We pray for his eternal rest in peace at Sri Bhagavan's Lotus Feet.

Shri Nanik G. Motwane

Shri Nanik G. Motwane, a devotee of Sri Bhagavan, an industrialist and noted freedom fighter died at his residence in Bombay on March 12, 1970 after a long illness. He was 68.

Mr. Motwane who was a social worker, a volunteer in the Congress, and active supporter of Mahatma Gandhi developed the 'Chicago Radio' loudspeaker system, which later became 'The Voice of India' of the freedom movement.

After partition, Mr. Motwane devoted himself to the rehabilitation of refugees. He was a Rotarian and a member of numerous organizations.

Mr. Motwane is survived by his wife, four sons and two daughters. May his soul rest in peace!

THE MOUNTAIN PATH LIBRARY

New Additions

Concentration — An Approach to Meditation — by Ernest Wood. The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A. Price : \$ 1.25.

East and West Series (Nos. 147-148) — *The Bhagavad Gita* — English Translation and Explanatory Notes by T. L. Vaswani. Gita Publishing House, Mira Nagar, 10, Sadhu Vaswani Path, Poona-1, India. Price : Rs. 2.50.

East and West Series (Nos. 149-151) — *The Bhagavad Gita* — English Translation and Explanatory Notes by T. L. Vaswani. Gita Publishing House, Mira Nagar, 10, Sadhu Vaswani Path, Poona-1, India. Price : Rs. 2.50.

Echoes from Orient—by William Q. Judge. Theosophy Company, Bombay.

The Voice of the Silence—Translated and Annotated by "H. P. B." Theosophy Company, Bombay.

The Yogi and the Devotee—by Ninian Smart. George Allen & Unwin Ltd. Price in U.K. 30s. nett.

Advaita Vedanta—A Philosophical Reconstruction—by Eliot Deutsch. East-West Center Press, Honolulu. Price: \$6.00.

Christianity and Buddhism—Sinclair Thompson Memorial Lecture, Fifth Series by The Ven. Bhikku Buddhadasa Indapanno. Sublime Life Mission, 5/1, Atsadan Road, Bangkok.

No Religion—by Buddhadasabhikku. Sublime Life Mission. 5/1, Atsadan Road, Bangkok.

Hindu Ideals—by K. Balasubramania Iyer. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. Price: Rs. 2.50.

Stories as told by Swami Ramdas—By Swami Ramdas. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. Price: Rs. 2.50.

In Quest of God—by Swami Ramdas. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. Price: Rs. 2.50.

God-Experience—by Swami Ramdas. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. Price: Rs. 2.50.

The Date of the Maha Bharata War and the Kali Yugadhi—by Prof. K. Srinivasa Raghavan, Srinivasanagar, Tambaram.

The Way to Happiness—Bodhi Leaves, No. B 46, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Ceylon.

Women in Ancient India—Bodhi Leaves, No. B 47, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Ceylon.

Indian Philosophical Annual—Vol. IV, 1968—Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras., Price: Rs. 10.



M/s. Motwane Pvt. Ltd., donated a loudspeaker set to Sri Ramana Auditorium. Sri P. B. Kotak and Sri P. V. Somasundaram (*extreme left*) received it in Bombay from Sri Motwane (*extreme right*) on behalf of the Ashram.

Ramana Jyoti

The Ramana Jyoti Souvenir Committee which met on the Aradhana Day (3-5-1970) perused the Audit Report on Ramana Jyoti accounts and approved of it. A sum of Rs. 61,107.61 which was the net surplus over expenses in publishing the Souvenir was transferred to Sri Ramana Auditorium Account. As requested by the Souvenir Committee we are publishing hereunder a copy of the Audit Report.

SRI RAMANA JYOTI SOUVENIR ACCOUNT

Income and Expenditure Account for the period ended April 24, 1970

EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
	Rs. P.		Rs. P.
To Expenses including Printing	.. 11,021 94	By Donations	.. 1,603 34
To Postage	.. 1,031 53	By Donations for Printing	.. 8,500 00
To Surplus to Auditorium Account	.. 61,107 61	By Donations for Art Page	.. 29,298 69
		By Advertisements	.. 32,963 50
		By Sale of Souvenir Copies	.. 795 55
Total	.. 73,161 08	Total	.. 73,161 08

Bangalore,
April 29, 1970.

Examined and found correct
(Sd.) J. SRINIVASAN,
Chartered Accountant.

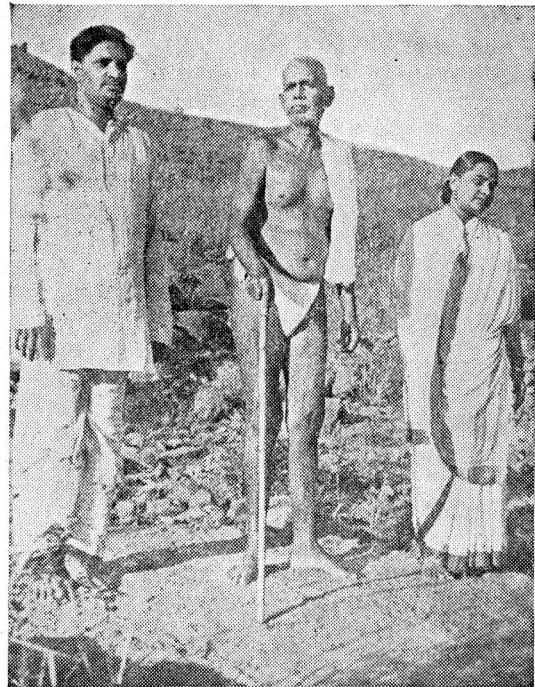
INTRODUCING.....

Smt. LAKSHMI RANGANADHAM
and Sri B. S. RANGANADHAM

SRI B. S. RANGANADHAM and his wife LAKSHMI are old devotees of Sri Bhagavan. It was Lakshmi who was first drawn to Him. Her mother, who was of a pious disposition, desired to live near and under the protection of a saint. On the advice of her third son, Sri Satyanarayana Rao, who was a teacher at Vellore and a devotee of Sri Bhagavan, she came to Tiruvannamalai in 1930 and began to live in a house in the town with her daughter, Lakshmi and son, Sri Narasimha Rao.¹ All of them used to go to the Ashram daily to have *darshan* of Sri Bhagavan and to render what assistance they could there.

Sri Narasimha Rao, is a lawyer, assisted Sri Niranjanananda Swami, the then *Sarvadhikari*, in all his office correspondence and other works. This led to an intimate contact with Sri Bhagavan who took particular interest not only in him but also in his mother and Lakshmi. He helped Lakshmi to gradually pick up Tamil by making her read books like *Ribhu Gita* and *Bhakta Vijayam* in his presence. In those days the Old Hall was not generally crowded. Once when Lakshmi was making ornamental patterns on the floor (*rangoli* or *kolam*) Sri Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni noticed her. He turned to Sri Bhagavan with an enquiring look. Sri Bhagavan then said: "Yes, yes, this is Lakshmi who has been responsible for drawing all the members of her family to this place." On another occasion when Sri Bhagavan's sister, *Athai* and her husband were setting out on a pilgrimage to Rameswaram, Sri Bhagavan asked her, "What are you going to do about this child?" Thinking that He was referring to Alagammal, the child of the now President, who was standing near, she said: "Her parents are here to look after her." At this Sri Bhagavan said that he did not refer to Alagammal but to Lakshmi who was standing behind her, looking gentle and innocent. *Athai* immediately rose to the occasion and replied: "Why, she is under your care!" Such incidents show not only Sri Bhagavan's grace but also His affection and human interest in Lakshmi.

Lakshmi's great devotion to Sri Bhagavan made her compose several poems and verses in Telugu on Him. One of these poems is *Sri Ramana Vijayam*, a life-sketch of Sri Bhagavan. Another is *Ramana Manasam* of 108 verses advising the



Smt. & Sri Ranganadham with Sri Bhagavan

the mind to hold on firmly to the Lotus Feet of Sri Bhagavan.

Lakshmi's husband, Sri B. S. Ranganadham, a retired Executive Engineer in the service of the Governments of Madras and Andhra Pradesh, is also a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan. He was used to be addressed affectionately as *Alludu* or son-in-law by Sri Bhagavan and the other inmates of the Ashram. Sri Bhagavan used to say that his devotion was *antarangika*, that is of the heart. It was Sri Ranganadham who carried the large portrait of Sri Bhagavan to Madurai and installed it ceremoniously in the *Ramana Mandiram*.² For the past few years he and his wife

¹ He is G.L.N. who occasionally contributes short articles on Sri Bhagavan.

² at 11, Chokkappa Naicken Street, Madurai, the place where Sri Bhagavan had the Experience of the Self.

have been bearing the cost of preparing *kumkum* required for worship in the Ashram. Sri Ranganadham has always placed his technical knowledge at the disposal of the Ashram. He rendered particular service at the time of the construction and consecration of the Shrines of Sri Bhagavan's Mother and His own and the new Ramana Auditorium. He was for a time member of the Committee for the management of the Ashram, which functioned before the present Board of Trustees came into existence and also its Secretary. He was likewise one of the Trustees appointed by the Government of Madras for the period 1967-1969.

As has been indicated already not only Lakshmi but Lakshmi's entire family are devotees of Sri Bhagavan. Sri Sambasiva Rao, her eldest brother (see the *Ashram Bulletin* of January, 1964 issue) always helped the Ashram in legal and other important matters. It was he who was chosen by Sri Bhagavan to place a mark in Sri Bhagavan's

Will in place of His signature in 1938. He was the Secretary of the Ashram managing committee from the time of the *Mahanirvana* of Sri Bhagavan till his death in 1962. Sri Satyanarayana, another brother of Lakshmi, breathed his last almost in the presence of Sri Bhagavan. Another brother, Sri Subba Rao, used to celebrate Sri Bhagavan's *Jayanthi* at Nellore every year with procession carrying a large photograph of Sri Bhagavan. The procession still continues, though Sri Subba Rao is no more now. The mother of Lakshmi used to be addressed affectionately as 'mother' by Sri Bhagavan.

The unique devotion of the family has been glorified by Sri Pranavananda Saraswathi of Vellore, a long-standing devotee who wrote several books on Sri Bhagavan in Telugu, in one of his Telugu songs in the following words :

"O Ramana! Thou art the Refuge and Saviour of the *Griddalururs* (the name of the family) "

Worship of Sri Chakra

A respectable and orthodox gentleman asked about Sri Chakra.

Sri Maharshi replied: "It has a deep significance. There are 43 corners with sacred syllables in them. Its worship is a method for concentration of mind. The mind is wont to move externally. It must be checked and turned within. Its habit is to dwell on names and forms, for all external objects possess names and forms. Such names and forms are made symbolic of mental conceptions in order to divert the mind from external objects and make it dwell within itself. The idols, *mantras*, *yantras*, etc., are all meant to give food to the mind in its introvert state, so that it may later become capable of being concentrated, after which the superb state is reached automatically."

— from *Talks*, p. 380.



..... to the EDITOR

REMEMBER HIM

We are a little group having read your book 'Ramana Maharishi' (in French). It really interested and pleased us very much. We, personally, dream to go and visit Tiruvannamalai and all the sites you mentioned, but unfortunately we are very far. Anyway, who knows?.....

I tried the meditation the way Mr. Paul Brunton advises in his book *The Secret Path* but my constant journeys required by my job stopped my first efforts. Do you think you can help me (or us) with may be just a few tips? Have you written other books? Can we obtain them through Rider & Co?

Awaiting with interest and thanking you in advance for your answer.

Veillez bien excuser mon Anglais.

CARLOS SEROR-MORILLO.

The teaching of Ramana Maharshi can be followed in the life of the world. Just set aside a regular time mornings and evenings for your spiritual practices. The best time is at dawn and before going to sleep. If you are very busy you can begin with a few minutes and gradually increase the time. You do not say what path suits you or your group. To begin with simply try to remember that Ramana Maharshi is the living inner Guru in your heart seeking you even more than you seek Him. However busy you are you can always take off a few minutes to think of Ramana Maharshi or Arunachala (both are the same). The first sloka (verse) in The Five Hymns to Sri Arunachala composed by Ramana Maharshi says :

- (a) Arunachala! Thou dost rout out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh, Arunachala!
- (b) Arunachala! Thou dost rout out the ego of those who dwell on their spiritual identity with Thee, Oh, Arunachala!

The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi contain everything Ramana Maharshi himself wrote or translated from scriptures and His instructions taken down by devotees.

EDITOR.

SURRENDER TO HIM

Excuse me that I did not renew my subscription for *The Mountain Path* earlier. In fact the last months I did not read at all any spiritual books. I only meditated, because I was and am in great trouble due to the poor health of my husband. He was operated some weeks ago in the stomach... and now after 6 weeks in hospital he is at home, has great pains, cannot sleep and has lost in weight very much, now weighs only ca. 45 kg. Besides the trouble with my husband and my ill son, who also is at home I have much office work (in order to earn my living), household-work and in the evening I have the Yoga classes. In spite of all this I meditate regularly and hope that the illuminated Yogis and Masters will help me because I am very sincere in my spiritual sadhana. Do please send me *The Mountain Path* for the year 1970.

Please remember my husband in your prayers that he may soon recover.....

EUGENIA BASILEWSKY,
Sweden.

Please accept our heartfelt sympathy in your great trouble. It must be hard indeed for you to have a sick husband and son at home and to have to work for your living and still manage to attend your Yoga classes.

Try to remember that this life is only a dream from which you may awaken one day just as you wake from a night's dream. The only difference is that life is a more sustained prolonged dream. While it lasts it is good, even if very difficult, to try to accept whatever comes in a

spirit of surrender in full faith that whatever happens has a purpose and does not last and that Bhagavan knows. Suffering may also be helpful in preparing us to receive Grace and make us more onepointed. You just do whatever seems necessary to the best of your ability and leave the results to Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. Surrender all your burdens to Him. He will bear them for you. His is all-pervasive and contains also all the illumined Yogis and Masters. The more you remember and think of Him the better it will be for you and your family.

May Sri Bhagavan bless you and guide you to real peace!

EDITOR.

HAVE FAITH IN HIM

I am requesting your suggestions and comments on the following experience I had. I was visiting your Ashram in October 1969 for the first time with my family and remained there for two days. It left a great impression on me and I am highly attracted to Sri Bhagavan. Daily our conversation and thoughts turn to Him. I became an annual member of your Ashram and *The Mountain Path*. On the 25th December '69 we performed Sri Bhagavan's Jayanthi simply with a few devotees in my house, a discussion on his teachings and bhajan at night.

On the 12th of January I met with a serious incident when I was on leave for seven days, and my house was burgled and I lost Rs. 5000 materials including all clothing and provisions and nothing was left in the house. But this calamity did not affect me or my wife and we simply take it a sign of Grace of Sri Bhagavan and our concentration has become greater after this. But my friends and some of my colleagues, who disbelieve, are trying to disturb my calmness by urging me to take action about this incident.

Dear Sir, your editorial in the January issue on concentration and detachment has greatly impressed me. I consider that you are best qualified to clear my doubts and lead me to the right and correct path. Kindly advise me on meditation and sadhana during this kind of obstruction under such conditions. I made up my mind to become a Life member of the Ashram. (This he had done already).

CH. JAGANNADHA RAO,
Bhadrak, Orissa.

We sympathise with the incident of robbery in your house. However it is good to remember what Sri Bhagavan said on the subject of cases of distress coming to devotees; namely that peo-

ple thank God when good and pleasant things happen to them but they should also thank God for what they consider bad things happening to them, which is what you and your wife seem to be doing and shows a spirit of true surrender. Bhagavan knows what is good for us and even a misfortune can be a blessing in disguise either to strengthen our detachment or wipe off some of our bad karma and prepare us for an act of Grace. Your attitude is spiritual and praiseworthy and so long as we are in order with ourselves there is no need to be disturbed by the opinion of others.

As to your sadhana you could devote a regular time for it morning and evening; the best time is at dawn and sunset or just before going to sleep. If you have been practising nama-japa you may continue doing so. It would also be very helpful to meditate on Sri Bhagavan and remember Him if possible during working hours. He will protect you and guide you towards lasting happiness and peace. Just have full faith and trust in Him and all will be well.

EDITOR.

LEAVE EVERYTHING TO HIM

I am in need of a solution of a strange type and am narrating it briefly. I have been twice initiated (*diksha*) by two different persons. A third person, a Mahatma Sidh Tantrik comes into contact with me and this Mahatma orders me to rename the first *diksha* which I did (*Visarjan*) in the Narmada with a *Sankalpa* in March 1962. Thereafter my miseries began; health, wealth, happiness all have vanished and to this date I am suffering inspite of a lot of *puja, bhajan, japa, dhyana* etc. etc. but to no effect.

Will you please suggest to me some Sidh Tantrik who may very kindly rid me of this sin?

It is a very very long story of suffering which I do not deem fit to trouble you with in broken English, but I suppose I have put the point clearly and I hope and beg of you to do the needful.

With wide open mouth (*sic*) I shall be awaiting your kind reply.

N. N. PALERYA,
Narsinghpore.

Sri Krishna says in the BHAGAVAD GITA:

"I undertake to protect and secure the welfare of those who without otherness meditate on Me."

You can apply this also to Sri Ramana Maharshi or Rama or your Ishta devata. There is only one God under various aspects. Why not leave off

all your other practices and concentrate on God in your heart as Sri Ramana Maharshi or Krishna or Rama. They are one and the same. You can also do japa. You will be liberated from what you consider to be your sin, which is not a sin, since you obeyed only the instructions of someone you believed to be a Mahatma in good faith. Nobody can harm you if you turn to God in all faith and pray from the heart for protection like a child turning to its father. He will hear the prayer of a sincere devotee in distress. Ramana Maharshi can deal with all your Mahatmas and Sidh tantrikas. Don't you worry.

EDITOR.

THE SOURCE

In all your writings on Bhagavan's teaching we find that one must concentrate on the right side of the chest while asking the question Who Am I? Can we go beyond our bodily consciousness if we concentrate inside our body like that. Kindly let me know what is your experience. Excuse me for the trouble.

RAMANA DAS,
Dharwar.

The spiritual heart is on the right side and is not like the physical organ. You may take it as a focussing point to dive inwards and may find an immense darkness or all-pervading Light and thus ultimately reach the very Source. This takes one not only beyond bodily consciousness but to Infinity.

EDITOR.

ON PRANAYAMA

I shall be much obliged if you kindly put some light on Pranayama and its process. How is it helpful in meditation? I shall be highly grateful if you please do me the favour of supplying the January issue of *The Mountain Path*.

K. D. SHARMA,
Dalhousie.

Breath control properly performed increases one's strength. Sri Bhagavan said that control of breath may be internal or external. The antah pranayama (the internal breath-regulation) is as follows:

Naham chinta (I-am-not the body idea) is rechaka (exhalation)

Koham (Who Am I?) is puraka (inhalation)

Soham (I am He) is kumbhaka (retention of breath)

Doing thus, the breath becomes automatically controlled.

Bahih pranayama (external control) is for one not endowed with strength to control the mind. Pranayama need not be exactly as prescribed in Hatha Yoga. If engaged in japa, dhyana, bhakti etc. just a little control of breath will suffice to control the mind. The mind is the rider and the breath the horse. Pranayama is a check on the horse. By that check the rider is checked.

To watch the breath may be one way of doing pranayama. The mind abstracted from other activities is engaged in watching the breath. That controls the breath; and in its turn the mind is controlled.

If unable to do so, rechaka and puraka need not be practised. Breath may be retained a short while in japa, dhyana etc. Then, too good results will follow.

Regulation of breath is prescribed for making the mind quiescent. Quiescence lasts only so long as the breath is controlled. So it is not permanent. Control of mind spontaneously effects control of breath. A more advanced man will naturally go direct to control of mind without wasting time in practising control of breath. One should not stop with pranayama as an aid for controlling the mind but proceed further.

GURU'S GUIDANCE

Although it may be true that, ultimately one has to discover or realize things for oneself, because the true Guru must be found within, hence doubts be silenced in due course, nevertheless as a beginning sadhaka, I cannot but feel the need for personal counsel. Therefore, my following questions:

(a) In my letter dated January 20th to Sri Venkataraman I asked whether it is right to accept other gurus beside my chosen ideal, Sri Ramakrishna, regarding Him as the embodiment of Truth.

Now I realize I should not have asked that question, for the answer has already been given by Sri Ramana Maharshi in the TALKS: Pages 20-21 & 46: *God, Guru and Self are identical, after all. Only the forms appearing before us are different. But what I actually meant to ask is, whether H. Inayat Khan (Sufi) is a true spiritual guru or not. To be frank, I admit in some respects I am not certain, though as a whole I feel his teachings to be really inspired by the spirit of Truth. In the same way, I have once thought that pranayama and hatha yoga were right for me, but now I realize it must be abandoned as being unsuitable for me. I am now trying to harmonize the ways of bhakti, jnana and karma-*

yoga, with emphasis on love (the heart) and making *nama-japa* (repeating mentally the name of Ramakrishna), while trying to visualize him in the region of the heart. I find it difficult to do so, therefore I picture him in front of me, and also I rather prefer talking to him (like the prayers of Christians) and practising "recollectedness" during the whole day. At present I dislike *japa*, but am told to continue steadily for several years and see then. . . . I believe I have not told any "secrets" for these are common to beginners, I suppose. Anyway, I hope you do not mind giving me some advice, for I believe you have seen or realized much more than mere glimpses of Truth.

(b) As regards dharma or religious duty (or should dharma be regarded as a preliminary stage: in order to purify the heart, rooting out attachments to sense enjoyment, passions like anger, and above all, to become less selfish?) I often wonder what "the ideal householder" is like? I have been told of the example of Nag Mahasay, but he, as well as Sri Ramakrishna, were householders in name only, having in fact lived as sannyasins. The example of Sri Ramanuja (leaving his wife in an angry mood) is even less inspiring, although it may be right for ripe souls. And king Janaka was, in fact, already a jnanin and could therefore live in this world while not being of it. But what is the right way of living for an aspirant, still identified with the body? I know that *bhoga* (sense-pleasure) should be renounced in order to have real *yoga* (the two cannot be combined) and the ultimate goal of a householder also is to absolutely abstain from sex (*brahmacharya*) as a condition *sine qua non* for every true seeker. . . .

(c) My third question is a trivial one. Doesn't the "American author and translator of Tibetan manuscripts" refer to Mr. Evans-Wentz and not (as stated by Mrs. Piggot) to Mr. Paul Brunton? Probably the footnote would be correct on page 4.

Forgive me if causing you trouble. I would be grateful if you could throw some light on the above.

HENRI WINARDI,
Bogor, Indonesia.

It is perfectly in order to ask questions and for advice when in doubt while doing sadhana. Many such letters come from all corners of the world and we consider it as service to Sri Bhagavan to reply to them in the spirit of His teaching with His Grace. Those which might be helpful to other sadhakas are being published in our magazine and a number of devotees have told us that their

replies have also been answered by reading the column of THE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. If there are too many letters, some are held over for the next issues. All sincere queries will be dealt with in due course.

To return to your letter. It is better to follow one Guru absorbing at the same time the teachings of other genuine spiritual masters, who leave no doubt in your mind, and taking from them whatever helps you on your chosen path. When climbing to the summit of a mountain only one path is chosen availing oneself on the way of whatever helps to keep up one's strength and determination. Esoterically the teachings of genuine masters is the same in essence though sometimes differing in form and lead to the same goal. There is no necessity for you to try to harmonize the ways of bhakti, jnana and karma-yoga. If you practise one of these paths spontaneously and sincerely the other two will spontaneously become harmonized with your chosen path as they are not exclusive of each other. There is no true love without wisdom nor true wisdom without love; and NISHKAMA KARMA follows in their wake when such a situation arises even if one does not go out of the way to practise it.

Practising NAMA-JAPA helps to purify the heart. If you dislike it, try to visualise your Guru whom you seem to love as your chosen ideal, in your japa and it may enhance your devotion and become a pleasure to practise. The more you remember and meditate on the Self which is the only reality underlying all forms and names the less desires for sense pleasures will assail you.

The dharma of a householder is to have a family and children and look after their welfare. After two or three children a true spiritual seeker will adopt BRAHMACHARYA and turn his energy towards transcending samsara and attaining Realisation.

The American author and translator of Tibetan manuscripts refers to Evans-Wentz and not to Paul Brunton.

EDITOR.

ON THE RIGHT PATH

I read with interest your editorial: *Concentration and Detachment*. Para 5 of your editorial should give much hope and encouragement to persons who for various reasons go astray unfortunately. You have indeed correctly stated ". . . but on the other hand a flow of Grace may be released far in excess of what practice seems to account for." The case of Sage Arunagiri-

nadhar, who as a result of a sudden revulsion attempted to commit suicide by falling from the top-most height of the gopuram of Sri Arunachaleswara temple at Tiruvannamalai, is an example of that unaccounted Grace of the Lord. His deeds from all accounts were such as not to invoke blessings and yet Arunagirinadhar became one among the great Saivaitic Saints who is remembered and worshipped by many to this day.

As vouchsafed by many readers, foreign as well as Indian, I am sure such editorials give added colour, dignity and seriousness to *The Mountain Path*. They, to my mind, contribute to the popularity which is the prime reason for its acceptability even to a stray reader. Moreover, articles are so arranged that the reader does not lose interest and continuity of thought as care is taken to select and put articles of almost similar ideas seriatim.

May Bhagavan in His Grace bestow on you and your family excellent health long life and vigour for continued active participation in bringing out *The Mountain Path*.

M. C. MENON,
New Delhi.

Thank you for your appreciation and kind wishes. Actually cases are known of people with much graver misdeeds to their discredit than Arunagirinadhar, who became great saints. What about Valmiki who was a robber and murderer to begin with. Another one is Angulimala, who was even worse and utterly without mercy he used to mutilate his victims by cutting off their fingers and wearing them as a necklace. Under the influence of the Buddha who went to him without any fear, he became a saint and attained enlightenment. Such people have usually great courage and determination turned in the wrong direction and when put on the right path the results will come accordingly. A sage knows the potentiality of a man and whatever his duty.

EDITOR.

AN APPRECIATION

This is just a note to thank you so very much for your sympathetic editing of the reminiscences of our dear Maharshi that I sent you a while

ago, and which you printed in the last number of *The Mountain Path* (Jan. 1970, Page 4). You gave all the essentials pertaining to the Maharshi and left out all the frills.

One thing I would like to mention (not important but just to set the record straight). It was Dr. Evans Wentz who was at the Ashram at the same time I was; we had many pleasant talks. Paul Brunton was the man who told me about the Maharshi after I had read his book *Search in Secret India* in 1932. That sparked me to go "in search" of myself. That was many years ago, and yet it seems like yesterday! Again thank you for your kindness and trouble.

MAUD A. PIGGOTT,
Hollywood, U.S.A.

A MEMORABLE VISIT

The writer of this letter is the niece of the world-famous Dutch painter van Gogh, an authoress of standing and a prominent social worker who came to India on the invitation of the government.

... It was a great and wonderful experience for me to be in your home and to feel the atmosphere you have been building up during so many years of dedication and love.

Even now I am engaged almost the whole day as people are in our modern way of life in cities and I feel homesickness for my stay in Tiruvannamalai. I felt quiet and content, light and cheerful when being with you and visiting the Ashram and climbing the Mountain. I was also happy to be in Pondicherry but it is quite different from your place.

I do hope to come back again if I will be allowed, but I doubt if I will get this great opportunity again. If not I will always keep a very sweet wonderful memory of my visit to you with my dear brother, Sharma. I do hope that I can keep this feeling of happiness experienced in your place.....

MARIA SCHROEDER VAN GOGH.

Whatever happiness is experienced is a reflection of the bliss of Brahman. When the *vritti* is directed to the contemplation of the Self within, the reflection of happiness is unclouded.

— Panchadasi of Vidyaranya.

Sri Ramanasramam¹

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¹Continued from our July, 1969 issue, giving further additions of the *Life Members* of the Ashram and the *Life Subscribers* of *The Mountain Path* enrolled afresh after June, 1969.

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AN APPEAL

The devotees who are not yet *Life Members* of the Ashram are requested to become one by remitting a sum of Rs. 100/- (for India only) or £ 10-0-0 or \$ 30.00, to the PRESIDENT, SRI RAMANASRAMAM, TIRUVANNAMALAI, S. INDIA, by a cheque or draft on any bank in the world, in favour of SRI RAMANASRAMAM.

Likewise, it is also requested of the devotees who are not yet *Life Subscribers* of our journal, THE MOUNTAIN PATH, to become one by remitting a sum of Rs. 125/- (for India only), or £ 12-10-0 or \$ 30/-, to the MANAGING EDITOR, THE MOUNTAIN PATH, SRI RAMANASRAMAM, S. INDIA, by a cheque or draft on any bank in the world, in favour of THE MOUNTAIN PATH.