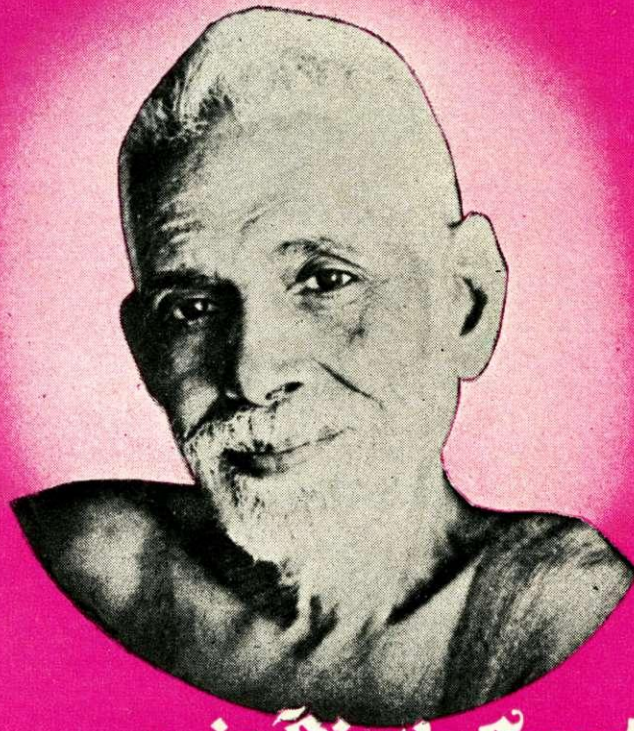




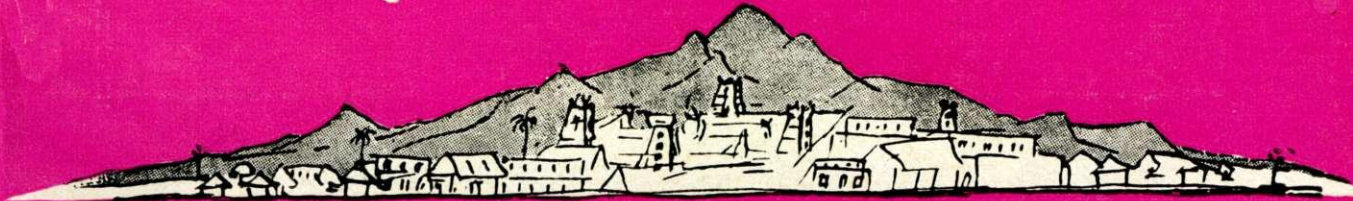
# THE MOUNTAIN PATH

Vol. 16, No. IV

October 1979



Sri Bhagavan's Birth Centenary



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



Grant me Thy Grace  
ere the poison of delusion  
grips me and, rising to my  
head, kills me, Oh Aruna-  
chala !

—*The Marital Garland  
of Letters, verse 64*

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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. 16

OCTOBER 1979

No. IV

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The Arunachala Hill picture in the cover page was  
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— Editor.

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**The Mountain Path**

(A QUARTERLY)

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

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**THE MOUNTAIN PATH**

is dedicated to  
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi





## The Mountain Path

Vol. 16. No. IV, October 1979

EDITORIAL

### Renunciation

.....

**W**HY is renunciation praised above everything else in all sacred lore? Nothing we call ours is permanent, and hence attachment to anything brings about misery. We are but sojourners on earth and transience makes all pleasure *tuchchha*, contemptible.

In his *Bhajagovindam*, Shankaracharya says :

*Day and night, evening and morning,  
winter and spring, pass and return. Time  
plays, the days of our life slip by, yet the  
cord of hope breaks not.*

And Marcus Aurelius, the Stoic, says :

*Time is like a river made up of events  
which happen, and its current is strong ;  
no sooner does anything appear than it is  
swept away, and another comes in its place,  
and will be swept away too. (Meditations,  
IV, 43).*

Impermanence is thus the chief attribute of the phenomenal world, which includes man's life and man's works. No relationship therefore can be anything but transient; attachment to anything is bound to end in misery.

Perception of this truth is the first step in the Buddhist path. It is also this truth that is elucidated by the *Kural* (of Tiruvalluvar) : "From whatsoever the mind has been weaned, from that there is no misery." That is why the Lord says in the *Gita* : "Giving up the world which is transitory and miserable,

attach yourself to Me." The 'Me' here denotes the One Self behind all appearances and individuality. And giving up the world does not mean giving up this or that object or activity, but getting rid of the sense of 'I' and 'mine'. One has to perceive the One Self behind all individuality and recognize that it is the Power of the Self (*Prakriti*) which operates everywhere. Then all distinctions of 'I' and others disappear. And so renunciation really means giving up the wrong notions of a separate individuality and its private possessions.

This truth is brought out clearly in the story of Sikhidhwaja and Chudala in *Yoga Vasishta*. Sikhidhwaja is a king and Chudala his queen. They are living what is to all appearances a happy life. But in course of time the queen gets dissatisfied with it and enquires after what is beyond this appearance of worldly success, meditates upon the ultimate Reality of the Self and gains enlightenment. The king sees the spiritual aura about his wife and enquires of her about it, but would not believe her when she tells him of her spiritual enlightenment. He himself gets disgusted with worldly life and goes away to some solitary place unknown even to his wife.

The queen, being now an adept, takes over the responsibility of reigning over the country. She then assumes the form of an ascetic by her yogic power and visits her husband,

calling herself Kumbha Muni. She finds him needlessly torturing himself with severe austerities and asks him why he was undergoing such hardship. He replies that he has been trying to get *Jnana* by renunciation. Chudala tells him that he had renounced only comfort, not what ought to be renounced. Sikhidhwaja gets perturbed and says: "I have given up everything except this hut and some indispensable things required for day to day life." Chudala tells him that even if he gives up these bare necessities he would not have renounced. Sikhidhwaja says: "Only this body remains then. I shall destroy it by falling down from yonder rock." The queen says: "Even then you would not have renounced everything. You have to give up that which claims to have given up everything."

At this the king wakes up and begins to enquire into the nature of the Self. The queen as Kumbha Muni visits him off and on until he gets completely enlightened and then she takes him back to their kingdom, revealing her identity, and they both live happily, performing all their duties while established in the One Self of all. Until we renounce the renouncer, the ego only swells with the pride that apes humility or flees from the natural obligations of one's station.

The essence of the *Gita*, considered as a manual of Karma Yoga, is contained in this injunction:

Renounce all *tamasic* and *rajasic* action and perform only *sattvic* action; but even while performing *sattvic* action, remember to renounce the fruit of action.

It is not action, but the sense of doership and the desire for its fruit, that one should give up.

The teaching of the *Bhāgavata* is similar, but with an important distinction. It is not duty but *prema* that moves one; the love of one to the exclusion of others rises and

expands into love of many, and from the love of many to the love of the universal One, from the love of form to the love of beauty as such. This is the way of the *gopis*. The urge behind action is not advantage for oneself, but for the beloved. All thought of *dharma* abandoned, one acts in self-surrender to the chosen master. For love one acts, for love one lives, for love one is ready to die. Where there is love, no sacrifice is too heavy and no suffering is too painful. Heroes confront hideous death with joy, martyrs count pain a privilege, when they serve country, cause or principle. If the power of love is thus irresistible and immeasurable, this selflessness is not, like the yogi's surrender, a cultivated effort it grows naturally in the rich soil of love.

Once the clamour of desire is stilled whether by *prema* or yoga, it is easy enough to hear and obey the voice of *buddhi*. Renunciation of the fruits of action (as taught in *Bhagavad Gita*, XII.12) is to follow the path of duty with cheerful self-abandonment, to do right for it is right in scorn of consequence. When renouncing fruit one does one's duty, the heart is filled with peace, and inner growth becomes possible. As one climbs up the mountain path the height seen soars above the height climbed, but every stage of the ascent widens the visible landscape. The path of bhakti taught in the 12th chapter is not frothy sentiment. It is love and compassion for all, stern in its strength, standing rock-like amidst the surge of time and rising above the region cloud of doubt and depression. Seeking nothing for oneself, one's actions are not only efficient but passionless and pure. This yoga or skill in action is the mastery of the world, not a weak withdrawal from its troubles and temptations. In the midst of action one attains *samatva*, peace, balance.

Several sayings of Jesus Christ also illustrate the apparent contradiction and the underlying harmony between the ascetic or

negative aspect of renunciation and its humane and creative aspect. When it is said, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it," it only echoes the call for the surrender of the little self and its limited dharma, the call that is heard in *Mamekam saranam vraja* (Surrender yourself to Me alone). The teacher who said, "Love thy neighbour as thyself" also says, "If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." The explanation of the need for sacrifice before creation is provided in a simple analogy from nature. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

This life eternal is the identity with the One behind the many, the stillness behind the movement, the being behind the appearance which we call birth, life and death. In this state there is no duality and therefore no question of liking or aversion, of attachment or renunciation.

Both Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo exalt the key phrase *tena tyaktena bhunjitha* in the opening verse of the *Isopanishad*. This simultaneous call to renunciation and enjoyment has been claimed as the essence of Hindu dharma, which is not rejection of this world, but its true mastery through detachment, its perpetual renewal through the elimination of selfish desire. Indeed, Rohit Mehta treats this doctrine as a definition of *swadharna*, as an injunction to accept and use and so transform one's little universe. *Samsara*, the state of bondage, it has been well said is infatuation with one's limited power and knowledge, and the frustration arising from their inadequacy to fulfil one's insatiable desires. When concern shifts from the part to the whole, from the periphery to the centre, then means and ends come together, discord changes into

## CONVERSATION—13

By  
Darlene Delisi<sup>1</sup>

Sri Bhagavan never fully stretched Himself on the bed like anyone of us to sleep at night. It is a marvellous phenomenon which perhaps might not have been noticed by many. He used to have a few round pillows for His back to recline on, in which position He used to remain all night. Sometimes he used to support His head with the hand also, but always only in the reclining pose. We have never seen Him sleeping on His back fully stretched or lying down full on His side!

<sup>1</sup>Gathered by the writer while talking with Sri Kunju Swami.

harmony, and desire, the cause of all subjection and suffering, dies a natural death. That which is free and whole and alone functions ever appropriately and rejoices in the life of all selves. As Ortega y Gasset says, "I am both I and my circumstances." How can one quarrel with oneself, that is, with one's circumstances?

Thus renunciation is not the moral constraint of self-denial or the physical rejection of some selected objects. It is rather the liberation of the spirit from craving after the forms of things; it is a steady expansion of being and an even more abundant life through the progressive access of strength and joy. Freedom from ego is the sole means of achieving freedom from desire. Transcending the ego, the Self as a whole manifests in manifold forms, and enjoys the universe as a whole which is also manifest in innumerable forms. One feels no need to possess or appropriate any part for oneself. In an infinity of delight, what room is there for personal desire? But where there is no desire, there may still be duty and obligation, love and compassion. The free man finds delight not in satisfying



his private desires, but in pursuing the universal good. He becomes a *Sarva-loka hite ratah* (One who delights in the good of all).

And so we see that real renunciation is not the giving up of this or that object or habit, but the renunciation of the ego. Walt Whitman put this idea in simple human terms when he declared proudly, "I don't give lectures, or a little charity. When I give, I give myself."

To give up the ego, all that is necessary is to inquire and find out what it is. As stated in the *Forty Verses*, "When the mind, turning inward inquires 'Who am I?' and reaches the Heart, the ego disappears crestfallen and the One Self appears of its own accord as "I-I". Though it appears thus it is not the ego; it is the all-pervading real Self."

What comes after this "attainment" is not something gained anew, but only the steady perception of the ever-present reality of oneself as Awareness. To realize the Self which is always present and to remain as That, is the real attainment. All other attainments are like those which appear in a dream.

One who has thus discovered the truth about oneself plays the various roles of life with ease and perfection, established in the One Self of all.

Though this is the fundamental and real state of all, very few perceive it, very few aspire for it and get established in it. We find it stated in the *Gita*: "Among thousands of mortals, few pursue spiritual perfection. And fewer still understand it." Understanding it is nothing but being That.

Such a phenomenon we saw in Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, who in his teens discovered the Reality of his being as Awareness and remained thenceforward as that Reality. Renunciation was effortless and spontaneous in him. As people approached him, he helped them from where they found themselves. He took part in all activities around him and lived in a normal *sahaja* state. His very presence took one deep into one's own reality and showed one also how to live in the world under every circumstance of life.

For all earnest seekers there is ample guidance available in his works, such as the *Essence of Teaching (Upadesa Saram)* and *Forty Verses (Ulladu Narpadu)* with its supplement. His *Talks* and *Day to Day* life also have been recorded. It requires only earnestness on our part to follow the Path and get firmly established in the One Reality which enables one to practise one's *swadharma* with clarity and vision and fulness of competence and joy.

On another occasion Bhagavan recited from memory a poem of a Vaishnava Saint, in which occurred the words "Fold me in thy embrace, O Lord", when the arms of Bhagavan joined in a circle round the vacant air before him, and his eyes shone with devotional ardour, while his voice shook with stifled sobs which did not escape our notice. It was fascinating to see him acting the parts he related, and be in such exhilarated moods as these.

—S. S. Cohen in *Guru Ramana*, p. 9.

## With the Two Great Poet-Disciples

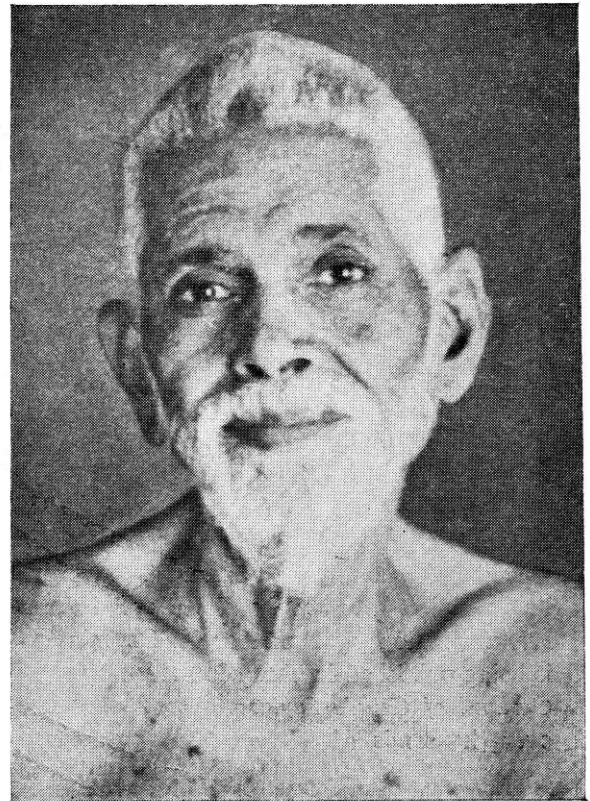
(Reminiscences—4)

By  
Viswanatha Swami

**SRI MURUGANAR** came to Bhagavan during September holidays in 1923. He was then a Tamil Pandit in a Christian Girls High School in Madras. He had studied *Tirukural* with great devotion and was following its teachings in his own life. No wonder he was held in the highest esteem by his pupils as well as by his fellow-teachers.

He came to know of Bhagavan Ramana through some devotees in Madras as well as Dandapani Swami, who before sannyasa was his father-in-law. Conditions in his family life also favoured renunciation: yet he continued working, coming to Bhagavan during holidays. He was so keenly devoted to Bhagavan that he used to come direct from his school to Sri Ramanasramam with his coat and turban on and return to Madras only when his school reopened. He was drawn to Mahatma Gandhi, whose saintly life in the midst of worldly activities commanded his respect and esteem. He composed several poems in praise of him as well as national songs in general, which were published by Sri Ramana Padananda in 1943 with the title *Sutantara Gitam*.

Being a scholar, poet and devotee, he brought to Bhagavan on his first visit a decad of verses in Tamil, each stanza ending *Desika Ramana ma deve* (Great Lord and Teacher Ramana!). During his later visit in December he composed a poem beginning *Annamalai Ramanan* in praise of Bhagavan following the pattern of *Tiruvembavai* of *Tiruvachakam*. Seeing that, Bhagavan suggested to him that he



could compose songs following the themes and plan of *Tiruvachakam* of Manikkavachagar. Muruganar felt shocked at the idea and exclaimed: "Where is Manikkavachagar and where am I?" But later, he thought it was a prompting from the Master, though gently expressed, and began following the suggestion relying on Bhagavan's Grace. And the result is the magnificent collection of thrilling songs in Tamil, well-known as *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, the third edition of which was



*Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni*

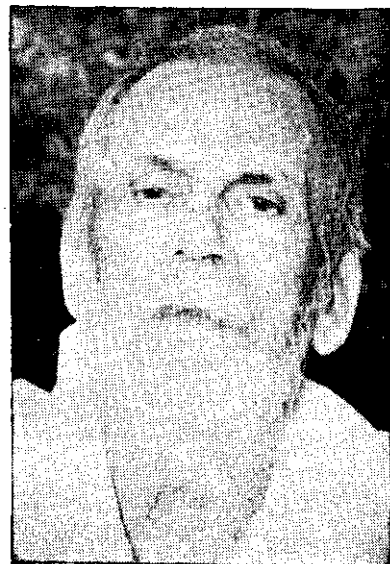
published by Sri Ramanasramam in 1974. Muruganar has also given us Bhagavan's teachings in Tamil verse form. The work is known as *Guru Vachaka Kovai* and its English translation by Professor K. Swaminathan is being published in THE MOUNTAIN PATH, as *Garland of Guru's Sayings*. There are more-over thousands of his verses being arranged and published in several volumes under the title *Ramana Jnana Bodham*.

A few years after his coming to Bhagavan his mother passed away and Muruganar came and settled down at the feet of his Master. It was after this that he composed the numerous songs in *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* as his devotional offering to Bhagavan. Scholars who had worked with Muruganar on the Tamil Lexicon Committee say that Bhagavan Ramana chose a very worthy scholar to sing his glory. Poets worship the Divine through their poetry. That alone is sufficient *sadhana*

for them. They are moulded unawares into the likeness of the object of their worship.

We have to be grateful to Muruganar for making Bhagavan write *Udapesa Undiyur* (The Essence of all Teaching) and *Ulladu Narpadu* (Forty Verses on Existence), which are the most important of Bhagavan's philosophical works. The beautiful song on *Atma Vidya* was also composed by Bhagavan at Muruganar's request.

Muruganar too chose like me to live independently. We have lived together on the Hill (Arunachala) near the Mango-tree cave for some months. Ganapati Muni was then residing in the Mango Tree Cave. He felt an urge to see Bhagavan every evening and be with him for an hour or two. I used to accompany him. A few months later a room was found for him in the Palakothu flower garden adjoining the Ashram on the West. Bhagavan used to go alone that side every day after lunch. Sometimes he would visit that room also. Ganapati Muni told Bhagavan that he had seen many other forests, but not that at Arunachala. Bhagavan, who knew very well every inch of Arunachala, offered



*Muruganar*



to take the Muni one day into the interior of the forest. Ganapati Muni could not bear even the slightest heat of the sun on account of a yogic experience he had, known as *Kapalabhedha* (breaking of the skull), and so Bhagavan waited for a cloudy day. Such a day came soon and Bhagavan asked me if it would suit Nayana to go into the forest then. I replied that he would gladly jump at the opportunity and went ahead to his room to inform him of Bhagavan's intention. In a few minutes Bhagavan came to our room in Palakothu and we three set out. Bhagavan took us through the third forest path. After going for more than a mile, Bhagavan chose a cool and shady spot adjoining a huge rock to rest a bit. As we were sitting there a rustling sound was heard indicating someone was approaching. And in a minute Muruganar stood before us. Bhagavan put his finger on his nose and asked him with surprise: "How did you come here? Even a forestguard could not have found us out here." And Muruganar replied: "I knew that Bhagavan had promised Nayana to take him into the forest on some suitable day. I also wanted to join the party and was coming to the Ashram earlier than usual. But today, not finding Bhagavan at the Ashram, I proceeded to Palakothu where I found Nayana's room locked. I learnt from the watchman Sabhapati that Bhagavan had gone towards the forest with Nayana and Viswanathan. I made my way straight to the forest. Going along the second forest path, I found a footpath going further into the interior. I took the path and straight I arrived here." Bhagavan replied: "Is there a short cut like that? We shall return by it." Nayana patted Muruganar and said: "It is an indication of

## CONVERSATION--14

By  
Darlene Delisi<sup>1</sup>

When Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni had his wonderful yogic experience of *Kundalini* rising to his head (*Sahasrara*), he had intense pain in his head. We had all gathered around him and he asked us to put our hands over his head and we were all thrilled to feel the remarkable heat of *prana* over his head. I was one of them.

That day as Bhagavan was returning from His round of the Hill (*Giripradakshina*), He was taken to *Nayana* (Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni) who was then living in the Mango-tree cave. As soon as Bhagavan arrived *Nayana* took His hand and put it on his head. Bhagavan kept it there for some time and uttered: "Everything will be all right", and left for Skandashram.

On his way back, Sri Bhagavan said: "He has divulged his pain to me, but to whom am I to turn to?". A devotee nearby asked Bhagavan: "Has Bhagavan also had such an experience? Is it then what He refers to in 'Marital Garland of Letters' V. 55: "Rain Thy Mercy on me ere Thy fire burns me to ashes, Oh Arunachala!"

Sri Bhagavan, with a benign smile said: "Hum Hum" (Yes, yes)!

<sup>1</sup> Gathered by the writer while talking with Sri Kunju Swami.

how you are attuned to Bhagavan by His Grace." And we returned to the Ashram before 4 p.m.

I am thrilled when I recollect my intimate contact with Bhagavan and these two great poet-disciples of his.

Think of God and attachments will gradually drop from you. If you wait till all desires disappear to start your devotion and prayer, you will have to wait a very, very long time indeed.

—Guru Ramana, p. 48

# THE GREAT EXPERIENCE

By

Lucy Cornelissen

WHEN somebody is called a mystic what is often meant is that he or she is a crank, or at least an abnormal individual. In a more polite way he might be called a neurotic in view of his peculiar behaviour. Under the influence of his religious ideas, he may claim to have personal experiences of direct contact with higher worlds if not with the Divine Itself, and to receive messages to be delivered to mankind. The mystics of ancient times were the prophets and seers who have given us the Scriptures, and in some cultures, particularly of the East, they discovered certain techniques for developing such 'mystic' capacities. In India these techniques were called 'Yoga', a genuine mystic science meaning 'union' (with the Supreme). Strange to say: Whereas the triumph of natural science in the nineteenth century drove back all sorts of mysticism into obscurity and contempt, it looks as if the twentieth century will be overwhelmed by a flood of mysticism, genuine or spurious.

Are there characteristic traits to discriminate genuine mystic experience from sheer nervous derangements classified by to-day's medical science under the term 'neurosis'?

There are some, already laid down critically at the beginning of our century by the American philosopher and psychologist, William James, who became famous by his Grifford Lectures 'Varieties of Religious Experiences'.

In his lecture on 'Mysticism' he proposes four practical tests to look for. These are the four points:

"(1) *Ineffability*: The handiest of the marks by which I classify a state of mind as

mystical is negative. The subject of it immediately says that it defies expression, that no adequate report of its contents can be given in words. It follows from this that its quality must be directly experienced; it cannot be imparted or transferred to others. In this peculiarity mystical states are more like states of feeling than like states of intellect. No one can make clear to another who has never had a certain feeling, in what the quality or worth of it consists. One must have musical ears to know the value of a symphony; one must have been in love oneself to understand a lover's state of mind. Lacking the heart or ear, we cannot interpret the musician or the lover justly, and are even likely to consider him weak-minded or absurd. The mystic finds that most of us accord to his experiences an equally incompetent treatment.

"(2) *Noetic quality*: Although so similar to states of feeling, mystical states seem to those who experience them to be also states of knowledge. They are states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. They are illuminations, revelations, full of significance and importance, all inarticulate though they remain and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority for aftertime.

"These two characteristics will entitle any state to be called mystical, in the sense in which I use the word. Two other qualities are less sharply marked, but are usually found; these are:

"(3) *Transiency*: Mystical states cannot be sustained for long. Except in rare instances, half an hour, or at most an hour or two, seems to be the limit beyond which they fade

into the light of common day. Often, when faded, their quality can but imperfectly be reproduced in memory; but when they recur it is recognised; and from one recurrence to another it is susceptible of continuous development in what is felt as inner richness and importance.

“(4) *Passivity*: Although the oncoming of mystical states may be facilitated by preliminary voluntary operations, as by fixing the attention, or going through certain bodily performances, or in other ways which manuals of mysticism prescribe; yet when the characteristic sort of consciousness once has set in, the mystic feels as if his own will were in abeyance, and indeed sometimes as if he were grasped and held by a superior power.”

It is worth applying this test to Sri Ramana Maharshi's wellknown Great Experience which overwhelmed him when he was a schoolboy of sixteen. He describes his death-experience thus:

“It was about six weeks before I left Madurai for good that the great change in my life took place. It was quite sudden. I was sitting alone in a room on the first floor of my uncle's house. I seldom had any sickness, and on that day there was nothing wrong with my health, but a sudden violent fear of death overtook me. There was nothing in my state of health to account for it, and I did not try to account for it or to find out whether there was any reason for the fear. I just felt ‘I am going to die’ and began thinking what to do about it. It did not occur to me to consult a doctor or my elders or friends; I felt that I had to solve the problem myself, then and there.

“The shock of the fear of death drove my mind inwards and I said to myself mentally, without actually framing the words: ‘Now death has come; what does it mean? What is it that is dying? This body does.’ And I at once dramatized the

occurrence of death. I lay with my limbs stretched out stiff as though *rigor mortis* had set in and imitated a corpse so as to give greater reality to the enquiry. I held my breath and kept my lips tightly closed so that no sound could escape, so that neither the word ‘I’ nor any other word could be uttered. ‘Well then’, I said to myself, ‘this body is dead. It will be carried stiff to the burning-ground and there be burnt and reduced to ashes. But with the death of this body am I dead? Is this body I? It is silent and inert but I feel the full force of my personality and even the voice of the ‘I’ within me apart from it. So I am Spirit transcending the body. The body dies but the Spirit that transcends it cannot be touched by death. That means I am the deathless Spirit.’ All this was not dull thought; it flashed through me vividly as living truth which I perceived directly, almost without thought-process. ‘I’ was something very real, the only real thing about my present state, and all the conscious activity connected with my body was centred on that ‘I’. From that moment onwards the ‘I’ or Self focussed attention on itself by a powerful fascination. Fear of death had vanished once and for all. Absorption in the Self continued unbroken from that time on. Other thoughts might come and go like the various notes of music, but the ‘I’ continued like the fundamental *śruti* note that underlies and blends with all the other notes. Whether the body was engaged in talking, reading, or anything else, I was still centred on ‘I’. Previous to that crisis I had no clear perception of my Self and was not consciously attracted to it. I felt no perceptible or direct interest in it, much less any inclination to dwell permanently on it.”

Viewed in the light of the above general pattern of a genuine mystical experience, we find (1) the ineffability not being stressed, rather the contrary: the intellectually lucid



though simple narration of what happened is such that one may have some doubts about the 'mystical' character of it.

Compare the following description of a similar experience by J. A. Symonds, quoted by Prof. James :

"Suddenly", writes Symonds, "at church or in company, or when I was reading, and always, I think, when my muscles were at rest, I felt the approach of the mood. Irresistibly it took possession of my mind and will, lasted what seemed an eternity, and disappeared in a series of rapid sensations which resembled the awakening from anaesthetic influence. One reason why I disliked this kind of trance was that I could not describe it to myself. I cannot even now find words to render it intelligible. It consisted in a gradual but swift progressive obliteration of space, time, sensation, and the multitudinous factors of experience which seem to qualify what we are pleased to call our Self. In proportion as these conditions of ordinary consciousness were subtracted, the sense of an underlying or essential consciousness acquired intensity. At last nothing remained but a pure, absolute, abstract Self. The universe became without form and void of content. But Self persisted, formidable in its vivid keenness, feeling the most poignant doubt about reality, ready, as it seemed, to find existence break as breaks a bubble round about it. And then what? The apprehension of a coming dissolution, the grim conviction that this state was the last state of conscious Self, the sense, that I had followed the last thread of being to the verge of the abyss, and had arrived at demonstration of eternal Maya or illusion, stirred or seemed to stir me up again. The return to ordinary conditions of sentient existence began by my first recovering the power of touch, and then by the gradual though rapid influx of familiar impressions and and diurnal interests. At last I felt myself

once more a human being, and though the riddle of what is meant by life remained unsolved, I was thankful for this return from the abyss — this deliverance from so awful an initiation into the mysteries of skepticism.

"This trance recurred with diminishing frequency until I reached the age of twenty-eight. It served to impress upon my growing nature the phantasmal unreality of all the circumstances which contribute to a merely phenomenal consciousness. Often have I asked myself with anguish, on waking from that formless state of denuded, keenly sentient being: 'Which is the unreality — the trance of fiery, vacant, apprehensive skeptical Self from which I issue, or these surrounding phenomena and habits which veil the inner Self and build a self of flesh-and-blood-conventionality? Again, are men the factors of some dream, the dream-like substantiality of which they comprehend at such eventful moments? What would happen if the final stage of the trance were reached?'"

Though this report may be considered richer in psychological detail, it is at the same time much darker, apart from the fact that, though repeated, it left no clear 'knowledge' about the character and the meaning of the experience.

The similarity of both the experiences is striking. How can we understand this difference in interpretation, let alone the effect between the two, namely the transiency in the one case, in spite of frequent recurrence of the same state and a definite shift of Identity in the other?

We do not know. However, it might well be that the greater clarity in the case of young Venkataraman and his unhesitating readiness to accept once and for ever the new centre of Identity as his real Self might be due to his having no preconceived notions about mysticism and things associated with it.

Thus the youngster took it as That, revealing Itself to him : The true nature of Man.

As to (2), the noetic quality, there is no doubt that it left a clearcut step of certitude on the youthful subject of this inflow from a higher dimension of Consciousness.

Also (3), the transiency of the mystic event is confirmed in the case of Ramana Maharshi, though it seems to have remained in his memory with the clarity it had when actually experienced. Sometimes recurrences happen as with Symonds, when the message has not been clearly understood ; in the case of Ramana Maharshi there was only one recurrence of the experience many years later, known as the experience at the Tortoise-Rock. His reaction then too was the same : he noted quietly what was happening, namely, that the 'death' of the body does not touch one's true Self.

What Prof. James termed (4), Passivity is for most people the most striking feature of the mystic experience. Strangely enough Sri Ramana Maharshi does not mention it in his report quoted above. However, in *Day by Day with Bhagavan* Devaraja Mudaliar reports under the date of 22-11-45, that Sri Ramana Maharshi, talking about the Great Experience of his said : "Some force, call it atmic power or anything else, rose within me and took possession of me. I became a new man."

The strongest proof of a genuine contact with a higher dimension through a mystical experience is the change of personality. The schoolboy of Madurai was after the Great Experience no more the same Venkataraman. The change was complete, final and irreversible.

Usually even a hardboiled egoist gets turned into a compassionate and understanding person by a genuine mystical experience. With the young ascetic of Arunachala it seems to have been different. He did not show any sign of sympathy towards his mother, who wanted him back home. How could he ?

The Swami she was addressing in tears was not 'her son' any more.

At this early stage of his raw 'personality' he might not have been able to explain the change clearly ; thus he spoke only of the power of karma. Years later his mother joined the small community that had formed itself around the young sage. His attitude remained the same : he never granted to her by any sign or behaviour a privilege of being 'the mother of the Swami'. For him there was neither Swami nor disciple, there was no mother and no son ; there was only the one sole Self. Which however did not hinder his looking after her in the most tender way, when she was ill, and particularly during the hours of her passing away. But he had done the same with others . . . .

The change of 'personality' went deeper still. Though the Great Experience itself was transient, the insight and higher Knowledge about Man and his real nature not only lasted, but remained his sole being for the rest of his life. That Great Experience had made him a new being, vulnerable neither to slander nor to fame, neither displaying siddhis nor flaunting supernatural knowledge. He became what Harindranath Chattopadhyaya aptly termed 'the greatest impersonality of the present century.'

The wonder is that this boy did not shrink from the terrible grip of 'Death' on him, but confronted Death like young Nachiketas, forcing Him thus to unveil His secret ; that he recognised its meaning, accepted it as the Centre from which he would have to live the rest of his life and impart the secret to others as far as imparting was possible.

And his greatest fascination was — and is — that he never tried to fascinate. For the Truth of Man is neither charming nor terrible, but just Truth.

He was born a century ago. Was he ? He who lives consciously as the Self is never born. How can he have died ?

# RAMANA MAHARSHI

## and How We Experience Our Bodies

By  
Douglas E. Harding

*'I am the body' is the cause of all the mischief. This delusion must go. That is Realisation.*

*Grief exists only so long as one considers oneself to be of definite form.*

*Find out if you are physical.*

*Identification of the Self with the body is the real bondage.*

*To be full of light is the aim.*

*The person soaked in the I-am-the-body idea is the greatest sinner and he is a suicide.*

From Ramana Maharshi's *Talks*.

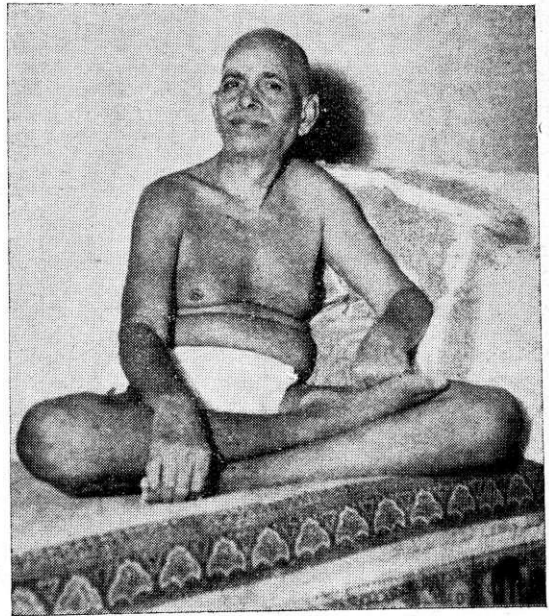
**T**O find out how we experience our bodies — correction : how we *believe* we experience them — we have only to listen to the way we talk. Then we hear *three* altogether contradictory stories, which is strange when you come to think of it. Of all the matters we should be clear about and agree upon, this should surely stand near the top of our list, seeing that we are all possessed of the essential evidence, most intimately and most constantly. We all have the necessary inside information. We are all first-hand witnesses of how our bodies present themselves to us, and the bodies themselves appear much the same. Yet to listen to us you would think we weren't one species but three quite different ones.

For ease of description only, I am going to label these three conflicting stories or body-views (1) the common-sense story, (2) the spiritual story, and (3) the enlightened story.

1. *The Common-sense Story :*

**'I AM THIS BODY'**

"He touched me". "I am tall". "I came here". "I was born in 1909, am now 70, and shall probably die before the end of the Century".



In all such sentences (and they form a great part of our talk) I am, without any doubt or qualification, identifying myself with my body. What happens to it happens to me. What it does I do. Its achievements and shortcomings, its beginning and ending, are mine. And the law itself, following the lead of common sense, confirms the identification. It



accuses me of doing what my hand does — stealing, wounding, killing, whatever — and imprisons or executes me accordingly. It would be little use my pleading that I'm not my body, and what this hand gets up to is none of my business. At best, I'd find myself locked up in a hospital for the criminally insane, instead of a prison.

### 2. *The Spiritual Story :*

#### 'I AM IN THIS BODY'

Of course I can go on to explain that this common-sense identification with the body is no more than a useful (or indispensable) social fiction, and the truth is that I am not my body. Instead, I am *in* my body. What this statement signifies is perhaps not very clear to me. Presumably what I mean is that I haunt my body like a ghost of some sort, or that I'm a genie goblin or spook who is temporarily trapped or entombed inside this 150 lbs of flesh and blood. A spook who animates this corpse in a most mysterious fashion, and whose story runs something like this :

"Since birth I've been incarnated, confined in this 'house of clay'. But soon it will break up and I shall go free. Then I shall ascend to my heavenly home, or descend to another place, or look for a new 'house of clay' to inhabit — I'm not sure which. Meantime it is just possible to make a brief escape. In other words, I may have an out-of-the-body experience, travelling around the world as an invisible observer of what's going on. And, it may be, looking down on my body lying there on my bed and wondering whether and when I shall find myself inside that thing again."

### 3. *The Enlightened Story :*

#### 'THIS BODY IS IN ME'

According to this third view, I neither *am* my body nor am I *in* it. On the contrary, my body (along with the rest of my world) is *in me*. I am emphatically not this thing

## CONVERSATION—15

By

Darlene Delisi<sup>1</sup>

One, Swami Atmananda, gave me *Chyavana-prasa Lehyam* (an ayurvedic tonic for strength and vitality) and asked me to give it to Bhagavan with details of how it should be taken with milk etc. He also asked me to write to him after giving it to Bhagavan and how Bhagavan was taking it. I came to Bhagavan and narrated everything and gave the tonic to Him. After a few days I requested Bhagavan what I should write to Sri Atmananda. He said that I should write to him that Bhagavan was taking it according to his instructions (Bhagavan was never in the habit of taking milk). So, I intercepted and asked him: "Bhagavan is taking the tonic only with hot water". Bhagavan, with a smile, said: "Write that He is taking it with *Payas!*". When I blinked, not knowing what He meant by it, He told me: *Payas* in Sanskrit means both milk and water!"

<sup>1</sup>Gathered by the writer while talking with Sri Kunju Swami.

and I am not its inhabitant. I am nothing whatever. These sensations of warmth and pressure and pain and pleasure, these tastes and smells and touches and sounds, these moving coloured shapes called 'my' hands and feet, that curious creature staring at me out of my mirror, and all the rest — what are they but a passing show going on in this all-embracing Space which I am? They are like flocks of birds flying through my Air and leaving no trails, like shoals of fish swimming through my Ocean without a ripple, like a succession of actors appearing on my Television Screen and disappearing again without ever leaving a mark on it.

The quotations from Maharshi's *Talks* which preface this article are a small but typical sample of many similar sayings of his. What they amount to is this: *bodies dissolve on close inspection*, and the closest inspector

## DIVINE GRACE

(From a book *Divine Grace Through Total Self-Surrender* by D. C. Desai, Bhagavan read out for our benefit the following quotations, from Paul Brunton :)

“Divine Grace is a manifestation of the cosmic free-will in operation. It can alter the course of events in a mysterious manner through its own unknown laws, which are superior to all natural laws, and can modify the latter by interaction. It is the most powerful force in the universe.

“It descends and acts only when it is invoked by total self-surrender. It acts from within, because God resides in the heart of all beings. Its whisper can be heard only in a mind purified by self-surrender and prayer.

“Rationalists laugh at it, and atheists scorn it but it exists. It is a descent of God into the soul's zone of awareness. It is a visitation of force unexpected and unpredictable. It is a voice spoken out of cosmic silence--It is 'Cosmic Will' which can perform authentic miracles under its own laws”.

— from *Gems from Bhagavan*, p. 28.

of your body is — you ! And in one form or another all the great mystical traditions of the world say the same thing. Here are a few random examples :

While keeping my physical frame, I lost my sight of my real Self. Gazing at muddy water, I lost sight of the clear Abyss.

(CHUANG-TZU)

I no longer have colour or tangibility or size ; I am a stranger to all these things.

Now you see me, my child, with your eyes, but cannot understand what I am by staring at me. (HERMETICA)

The body does not know how to discourse or to listen to a discourse. . . . That which is unmistakably perceivable right where you are, absolutely identifiable

yet without form — that is what's listening to this discourse. (RINZAI)

Uniform thyself. (TAULER)

The notion that man has a body distinct from his soul is to be expunged ; this I shall do by . . . melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid. (BLAKE)

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,

Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him ? (TENNYSON)

To Zen, incarnation is excarnation ; the flesh is no-flesh ; here-now equals emptiness and infinity. (D. T. SUZUKI)

For a Self-realised being the body does not exist. (ANANDAMAYI MA)

The enemy of real spirituality is vague uplift or religious waffle, as imprecise as it is unpractical. If we mean business, if we are serious about Liberation, what can we actually do about it, right now ? If the world's Sages are right, and we have any love and reverence for Maharshi, and bondage to the body is the damaging lie he insists it is ; and if, conversely, conscious excarnation is the healing truth, — if this is so, then exactly how can we see through the body-lie before we put down this magazine ? Well, here are some suggestions. (But first, a warning. If you find the prospect of disappearing alarming, and you are unwilling to discover that your outwardly substantial body is inwardly nothing whatever, then be careful *not* to carry out the following simple experiments. Just reading through them is quite safe : they will be without any meaning or effect.)

Look at the hand that is now holding THE MOUNTAIN PATH open at this page, and honestly answer these questions, on present evidence, dropping memory and imagination. :

*Are you that hand, but not the paper it is touching?*

*Are you inside that thumb now, and not inside the paper? If so, what's it like in there? Gloomy, wet, very crowded?*

*Are you, at this moment, looking AT those objects OUT OF another object, peeping at it through two little holes in this object — so that the set-up is basically symmetrical, a thing-to-thing affair, with a gap between the things? How does this thing see that thing? How does a THING experience?*

*Finally, shut your eyes and see whether you have any boundaries, and shape, and structure. Are you a human being now, or Being itself?*

Occasionally I'm asked whether I have ever had an out-of-the-body experience, I can only reply that I've never had any other sort, and find it hard to imagine what an in-the-body-

experience would be like. I'm still waiting for someone to describe it to me.

Let us not cheat ourselves. This article does not describe three alternative ways of relating to the body — *being* it, or *being in* it, or *containing* it. In honest fact, there is only one way: only the last of these actually occurs, or makes any sense at all. The other 'ways' are just hearsay, unexamined dogmas, lies about ourselves we have been too timid to challenge — as if anyone were in a position to tell you what it's like where you are. It isn't sensible or healthy or practical to live from a lie of any sort, but when that lie is about your very Core — look out! Or rather, look in. Examine again the only spot you are the only authority on, namely the spot you occupy. *See it for yourself.*

*Man considers himself limited and there arises the trouble. The idea is wrong. He can see it for himself.*

*Are you in the world, or is the world in you? — SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI.*

## SEEING GOD

By N. H. Thakker

*I am a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan and have strong faith in what He does for us.*

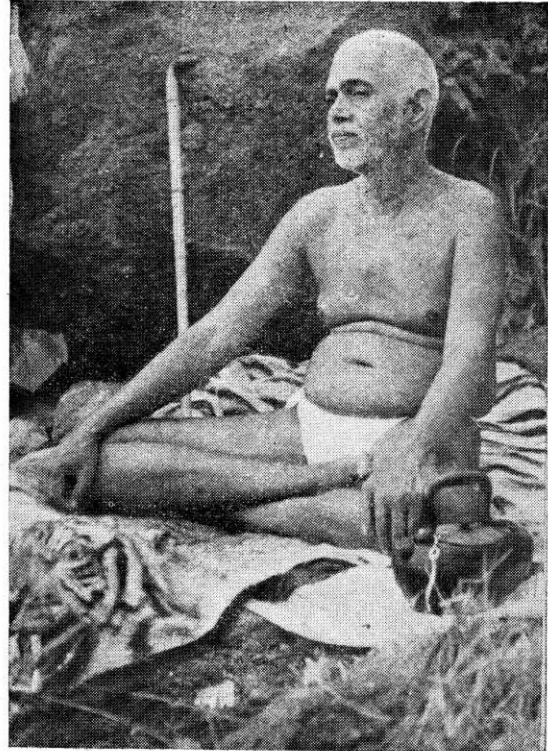
*With this feeling I was going to the operation theatre of a first class Clinic in Bombay, to undergo an operation. On the way I had an experience of seeing God in a poor beggar's pitiful face. My operation was a success by the Grace of Sri Bhagavan. I want to share this experience with my fellow-devotees.*

*I was with a friend in his car on my way to the Nursing Home and the car halted at the traffic signal post. There I*

*saw this poor beggar's face. I can afford to get treated in a first class Nursing Home, but what will be the fate of this man? I looked into his eyes and SAW GOD there. My eyes were filled with tears. My hands automatically went to my purse and I hurriedly emptied its contents into his hands, and the car drove off, as the green signal came round.*

*I saw God in that beggar. . . . Truly, where would one go to seek for God? Are not all the poor, the miserable, God?*

# SAYINGS OF SRI BHAGAVAN<sup>1</sup>



1. *Today a crippled disabled Brahmin came and complained: "O, Bhagavan, right from my birth I have been suffering. Is it due to my past actions?" Sri Bhagavan said:*

*"We have to say that it is due to past actions. Then, if one asks what is the cause of those past actions, we have to bring in previous past actions and so on without end. Instead of enquiring into karma or actions, why not enquire whose karma it is? If we are the body, then let the body ask the questions. When you say, you suffer, it is your thought. Happiness is our natural state. That which comes and goes is the ego. We think we are miserable, because we forget our essential nature, which is Bliss. Even an emperor, in spite of his wealth and power, often suffers because of his disturbed mind. The sage, who does not know where his next meal will come from, is ever happy. See who enjoys Bliss."*

2. *Today two Congress volunteers asked the following questions :*

**Devotee:** *By obtaining wisdom through your grace, I want to teach and spread the knowledge all over the world.*

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<sup>1</sup> Selections from the Diary (in 1939) of Sri Annamalai Swami.

### A LETTER FROM HENRI HARTUNG <sup>1</sup>

Dear Ganesh,

Thank you for your letter requesting me to contribute an article for the Souvenir 'RAMANA SMRTI'. I accept with devotion to write an article either about my meeting with Bhagavan in 1947 or on a special aspect of His teachings.

I will also be organising a few meetings for Sri Bhagavan's Birth Centenary:

*Two in Switzerland:*

- (i) *December 2, 1979:* In Geneva, with the Ramakrishna Mission here, and by Swami Nityabodhananda, Director of 'Centre Vedantique'.
- (ii) *January 2, 1980:* In Fleurier, with our "Centre de Reccontres Spirituelles et de Meditation".

*Two in France:*

- (i) *January 27, 1980:* In Paris, by Patrick Lebail.
- (ii) *April 13 1980:* In Gretz, near Paris, by Patrick Lebail and Swami Ritajananda, Director, Ramakrishna Mission in France.

The main object of organising these meetings will be meditation in silence. I also intend introducing Sri Maharshi's teachings and perhaps, some Indian Music. I hope too that my book on Sri Maharshi will be ready before the end of this year. This will be my cherished homage to my Guru, Bhagavan Ramana.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Henri P. Hartung, Le Pasquier 2115 FLEURIER Switzerland.

be brought out in a *Long Playing Record* as announced in our July issue.

Devotees are requested to acquire and utilize this collection of moving songs which are expected to be released by the middle of October.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Arunachala Siva* in full, other compositions of Sri Bhagavan and some songs on Him will be brought out as a cassette by the middle of November.

\* \* \* \* \*

An exclusive Telugu Cassette on hymns and songs by and on Sri Bhagavan will also be brought out before the end of December, 1979.

In addition to having already released a cassette, *Ramananjali* which has become very popular, the *India Book House, Bombay* are bringing out another cassette, this time purely in Hindi, entitled: *Ramana Bhajans*, the words being provided by *Sri Ramanath Shastri*.

On August 14, 18, these *Ramana Bhajans* in Hindi and Sanskrit were recorded at Chamundeeswari Studios, Bangalore, by the same *Ramananjali*-group of singers.

The music direction was done by the experienced and reputed *Sri D. S. Dixit*, who took special personal interest and *Symala Bhuve*.

The lyrics are musical and the tunes are very charming.

\* \* \* \* \*

### KUMBHABHISHEKAM

Under the guidance of a traditional expert, it is proposed to perform a *Jeevanodharana Kumbhabhishekam* to the shrines of Sri Maharshi and that of His Mother. Repairing of the worn out portions in and about the temple and the rituals alone would be carried out.

An auspicious day has been fixed and on *November 22, 1979*, this important function will be celebrated. A detailed account<sup>1</sup> of how it is going to be performed is given hereunder for those who are interested.

All devotees are welcome to participate in the function.

*Sri Krishnananda (Mangudi Krishnamurthi Iyer)* is in sole charge of this sacred function and he is exerting himself to the best of his ability to make it a correct and solemn observance

### <sup>1</sup>KUMBHABHISHEKAM OF SRI RAMANESWARA MAHALINGAM AND SRI MATRUBHUTESWARA SANNIDHANAM.

#### PROGRAMME

#### November 19, 1979: Monday:

- 7-00 a.m. *Anujna, Dhana Pooja, Rakshoghna Homa, Vasthu Shanthi.*
- 4-00 p.m. *Mrit-Sangrahanam Ankurparnam.*
- 7-00 p.m. *Ghata Sthapanam — Yaga Pooja.*

#### November 20: Tuesday:

- 9-00 a.m. *Yaga Pooja.*
- 7-00 p.m. *Yaga Pooja.*

#### November 21: Wednesday:

- 9-00 a.m. *Yaga Pooja.*
- 7-00 p.m. *Yaga Pooja.*

#### November 22: Thursday:

- 7-00 a.m. *Yaga Pooja.*
- 8-00 to 9-00 a.m. *Maha Kumbhabhishekam.*
- 7-00 p.m. *Mahabhishekam.*

3. **D.:** *Why is Atma not pratyaksha (experienced directly)?*  
**B.:** *Atma is itself pratyaksha. Is there anything more tangible than that? It is experienced vividly when body-consciousness is lost.*  
**D.:** *Bhagavan replies to questions with ease, but body-consciousness is still there.*  
**B.:** *Since the thought is very strong it is there.*  
**D.:** *How did body-consciousness come to us?*  
**B.:** *Through our not raising the question. If we look at our Self then nothing exists apart from us. The One being which exists in sleep exists in the wakeful state also. There is neither the body nor the world in sleep. When we wake up, we identify ourselves with the body, and mind and we see the world. This wrong identification is the cause of all sorrow. Everyone experiences his existence and remarks that 'I slept', 'I dreamt', 'I woke up', and 'I didn't know anything'. He is there in all these states. How can one find one's Self by external search?*
4. **D.:** *What is meant by satsanga (association with the wise)?*  
**B.:** *Satsanga means being in the Self. When that is not possible, then the association with the wise is recommended.*  
**D.:** *How can we obtain satsanga?*  
**B.:** *Due to the merit earned through the worship of the Lord, by good deeds and by the austerities performed in the past, one obtains satsanga. To have faith in the words of the Lord or Guru one must have performed nishkama karma (desireless action) in the past. He will reach the goal by practice as shown by the Guru.*
5. *Once a devotee asked about siddhis.*  
**B.:** *Being in the Self is the true siddhi, because that is not transient. The siddhis as commonly understood come and go according to one's prarabdha (fate).*
6. **D.:** *Some devotees at the Ashram live according to their own will and pleasure. Why doesn't Bhagavan correct them?*  
**B.:** *To correct myself is to correct others.*
7. **B.:** *As is the mind so is the world. Everyone lives in his own mind and in his own world. But the joy experienced in sleep is common to all without differentiation.*
8. *Once a devotee asked for Bhagavan's permission to worship him by touching his feet.*  
**B.:** *Bhagavan's feet are in the heart of the devotee. Hold them fast. That is true worship. This body will disappear one day, so don't be deceived by worshipping the person.*
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## Incidents Connected with the Life of Sri Bhagavan

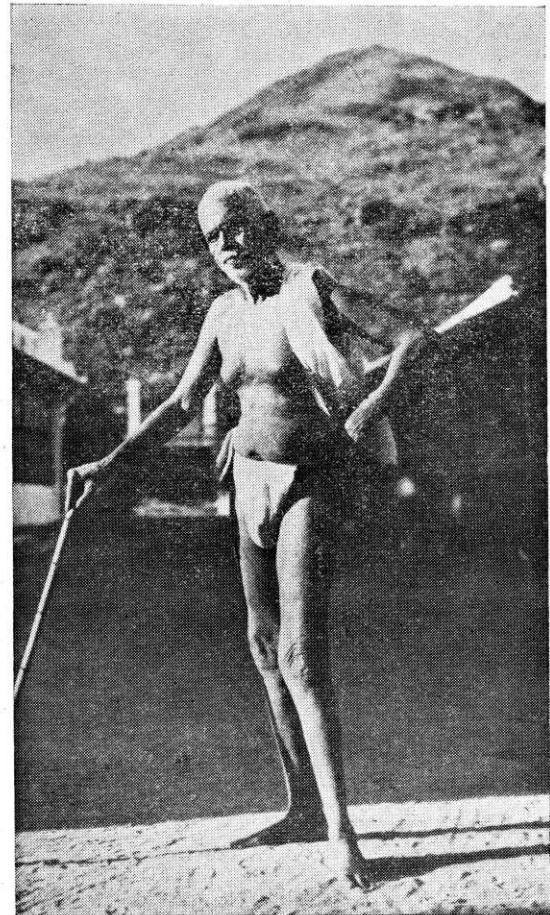
By

M. V. Krishnan

ON August 29, 1896 S. Venkataraman (later Sri Bhagavan) left Madurai for Tiruvannamalai. One week later S. Venkataraman (later known as Munagala S. Venkataramiah later Ramananda Saraswati) went home from Madurai to Sholavandan and told his mother that a Brahmin boy who was studying in an adjoining school had run away from home. At that time he little realised that he was to meet the runaway boy later (in 1918 at Skandasramam) and that he was to be in close proximity to Sri Bhagavan from 1933 to 1950 and that he was to compile the *Talks*.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the 1930's Dr. T. N. Krishnaswamy Iyer wanted to visit the Ashram and be with Sri Bhagavan during the week-end. He asked a friend to accompany him. This friend at that time did not even put on his shirt. He was in his dhoti and upper cloth and had two or three rupees in his purse. He readily agreed to go then and there. Both travelled up to Katpadi by train and took a bus to Vellore and changed into another bus for Tiruvannamalai. In Vellore the friend wanted to take something to Sri Bhagavan. On the roadside he saw a woman selling *kovai kái*. He bought the lot for a few annas. It was about 1 viss or 1½ Kg. in weight. Since he had no bag to carry the vegetable he bundled them at one end of his upper cloth. Both of them reached Tiruvannamalai in the evening. The vegetable bundle was put in front of Sri Bhagavan when both the devotees paid their respects. On an enquiry from Sri Bhagavan, the bundle was opened. Sri Bhagavan saw the contents and said that if *kovai kái* was cooked with brinjals it would be tasty. The next morning a devotee arriving from Madras



through Villupuram brought brinjals! The curry was cooked in the morning and all of them relished it.

\* \* \* \* \*

In 1937 an elderly American came along with a group to visit Sri Bhagavan. The trend of the discussion was that the five senses were to be put under check. Since the old American was deaf he could not follow the discussions. Sri Bhagavan remarked that the Ame-

ican needed to control only four senses, as the fifth (hearing) was already under check. Someone in the hall explained this to the American, and he beamed with joy.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mungala V. Krishnan went to Delhi in December, 1940, in search of a job. He could not secure a job up to the end of February, 1941. So he wrote to his father Sri Venkataramiah saying that he had to return to the south as no job was available. This letter was shown to Sri Bhagavan who went through it and said: "Let him stay on in Delhi". In March he got a job. From then V. Krishnan prospered very well.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sri Bhagavan could very well probe deep into the minds of devotees and visitors. He said the following about a *sannyasi*-devotee who used to sit daily before Sri Bhagavan for 3 or 4 hours in meditation: "Aspirants who sat motionless even for longer times have been deceived," meaning thereby that he lacked concentration or humility or both.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sri Bhagavan said the following to Sri Salem Rajagopala Iyer about a devotee: "He has some eye defect. When he keeps his eyes open tears fall down. Others mistake this for deep *bhakti*." This devotee used to visit people in various towns and demonstrate the tears flowing from his eyes.

\* \* \* \* \*

When Sri Bhagavan was in Skandashram two devotees were having heated discussions regarding *siddhis* (occult powers). One devotee did not believe in such powers while the other was a firm believer. A challenge was accepted by the latter, who undertook to convert a copper into a gold coin. It was agreed that this should be done in the presence of Sri Bhagavan. On the appointed day the two devotees were sitting in front of Sri Bhagavan. A copper coin was produced and everybody examined it. It was given to the devotee who kept it for minutes in his closed palms

## A Simple Surprise

S. V. Ramanathan and M. V. Krishnan, sons of Munagala S. Venkataramiah (Compiler of *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*) came to the Ashram with their parents in 1930, summer. They were just 13 and 10 years of age. One morning they were standing near the old dining hall (where now Sri Bhagavan's *Samadhi* stands) when Ramu, the elder brother, remarked that for the last few days no onion *saambar* had been tasted by them. At the precise moment Sri Bhagavan was passing by the boys, as he was returning from the kitchen. He smiled and asked Ramu: "So, you want *vengaaya* (onion) *sambaar*!" The boys blushed and kept quiet.

Next morning, the boys were served with *vengaaya saambar*. Everybody thought it was only onion *saambar*. Sri Bhagavan later in the day asked Ramu how he relished the *saambar* to which he replied: "Very well".

Ramu, however, was surprised to know the truth only a few days later when his mother told him that what he ate was not onion but garlic *saambar*! As there was no onion at that time in the Ashram and yet Sri Bhagavan wanted to fulfil the boys' wish, He, through His expert culinary knowledge, brought the smell and taste of onion to garlic itself!!

and then opened it. There was a sovereign. Sri Bhagavan with a faint smile told him to part with the sovereign and repeat the miracle. The challenge was not accepted!

\* \* \* \* \*

Sri Ramanatha Dikshitar, a pupil in a *Veda Patasala*, was a puny figure, about 4 feet and 6 inches in height. He used to spin cotton yarn, get it woven and present the cloth to Sri Bhagavan for his loin cloth. This Ramanatha Dikshitar was also a freedom-fighter and a follower of Mahatma Gandhi. Once he wanted to go to Vedaranyam to take part in '*salt satyagraha*'. Sri Bhagavan jocularly remarked that the police would be afraid of him. When Ramanatha Dikshitar went and joined

the *salt satyāgraha*, he was not arrested, the police just ignored him!

\* \* \*

After Sri Bhagavan moved down and settled near the Mother's *samadhi* there was only a thatched roof over the *samadhi* and an adjoining hut. Some devotees decided to build a more solid hall. So bricks and building material were gathered. The bricks were carried near the site by the devotees. Sri Bhagavan also wanted to work but the devotees would not permit him. One moonlit night, when all were asleep, a devotee woke up and found that Sri Bhagavan was missing. He woke up the others and they all began to search for him. They found Sri Bhagavan taking part in bringing bricks to the site from a kiln opposite the Ashram!

\* \* \* \* \*

In the early twenties there was a big mango tree near Palitheertam. Chinna Swami was also in the Ashram, although he had not yet taken charge of the management. Dandapani Swami, a huge figure, was another Ashram

inmate. Chinna Swami and Dandapani Swami did not like each other. One night Dandapani Swami wanted to settle scores with Chinna Swami, so he seized Chinna Swami to crush him. Bhagavan appeared on the scene and slapped with his hand on the back of Dandapani Swami, who immediately put Chinna Swami down. No words were spoken and each retired to his place of rest. Later Dandapani Swami described the slap as 'terrific'.

\* \* \* \* \*

The following incident is unconnected with Sri Bhagavan but it is interesting :

Ramanatha Dikshitar, who was short and frail, seldom spoke to others and when he did he was full of humility. There was another devotee who was well built and tall. This devotee once got angry with Ramanatha Dikshitar, and raised himself to his full height and thundered : " Do you know who I am ? "

Dikshitar meekly replied that it was the very purpose for which every devotee was in the Ashram !

## THE GRAND PARADOX

By Ira

*Know that whatever pain you experience is only the firmness of your ego plugging the wellspring of the Reality of Bliss.*

*And whatever happiness you ever know is only your ego loosening, allowing the mere fragrance of the Waters of Life to seep through.*

*What you call 'pleasure' is only a lesser degree of pain; and 'pain' is only the non-perception of ever-present Bliss,*

*for Reality shines beyond them both and is neither pleasure nor pain.*

*Liberation is referred to as 'bliss', and this is the Grand Paradox: that this Surpassing Beatitude can never be experienced by any one. That the pursuer of Joy is himself the antithesis of it. That Reality is One Alone. And where there is the duality of knower and known, there is still only darkness and ignorance.*

*Your glory lies where you cease to exist.*

## A Search For Arunagiri Yogi

By

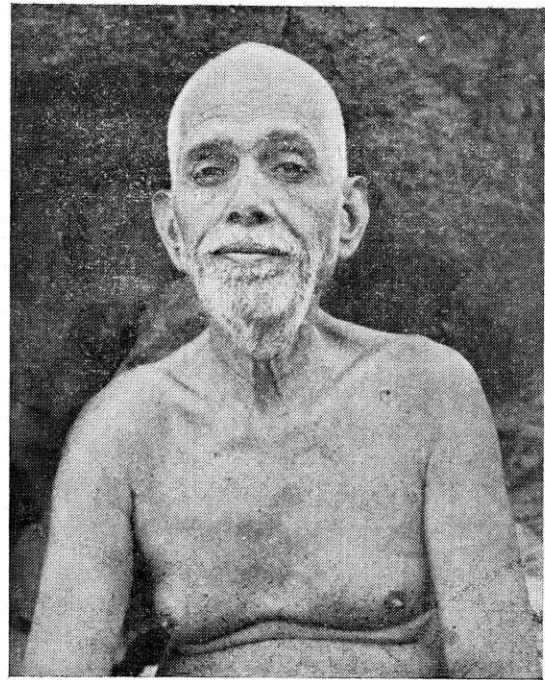
Evelyn Kaselow

WHILE we were doing *pradakshina* with Kunju Swami, he told us the following story :

Bhagavan had related to the devotees on numerous occasions the story how he found an unusually large leaf of a banyan tree on Arunachala, how he searched for the tree, was stopped by the hornets, and so forth. Kunju Swami and others mused about how many devotees had scaled even the Himalayas, and they thought there would be nothing to scaling this small mountain and finding the banyan tree and Arunagiri Yogi. Bhagavan, of course, did not at all encourage this.

Nevertheless, Kunju Swami, Muruganar, Mungala and some others tried to find out the tree, and began to ascend the Hill from Pachiamman Koil on the north-east of the Hill.

It seems that owing to the heat — or perhaps it was not Sri Bhagavan's will that the party should succeed — all the devotees entered into a state of panic and despair at finding themselves lost in the forest. Muruganar was crawling on all fours, and when Kunju Swami asked him why, he said he could not at all walk. Kunju Swami found another devotee who had stripped himself of all his clothes, excepting a loin cloth, lying prostrate on the ground; he had accepted the fact that he was going to die. Yet another was sobbing uncontrollably that he would no more see his loved ones. Kunju Swami said that his mind remained calm as usual. No one ever returns from this place, it is said, yet Kunju Swami had adopted the attitude: "Let anything happen to the body. Who cares if we don't go back alive?" Then, looking at the plight of his companions, Kunju Swami began to feel sad. Bhagavan had the habit of entrusting



people to his care for *pradakshina* and to take other trips. Kunju Swami felt he had betrayed Sri Bhagavan's trust. Then he thought he might never see Sri Bhagavan again. He began to cry. For the first time in his life he mentally begged Sri Bhagavan for a boon, to save their lives.

An old woodcutter then appeared on the scene and led them to safety. All the devotees were in a daze. They had been carrying food but not thought of eating it. Once back on the road however, a shower came down and brought them back to their senses.

Kunju Swami told this story with great enthusiasm, and in such detail that the narration began after Adi Annamalai and ended only at the main highway!

## Health, Sickness and the Message of Sri Ramana Maharshi<sup>1</sup>

By

Wolter A. Keers

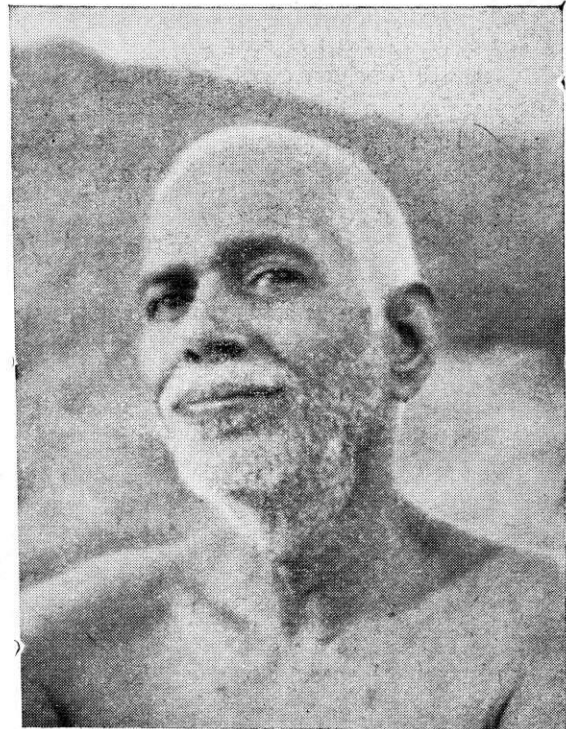
It is an enigma to some how Sri Ramana Maharshi could have died from a disease like sarcoma, and the problem does not become easier now that there are more and more indications that there are usually psychological causes for this disease, like a refused and suppressed hatred. How can one explain this in a Sage?

When we look from the outside, we see a person called a Sage, a man or a woman, and we are told that he or she no longer has an ego. But as long as we live as if we were a person, such a statement does not mean much: it is one more concept, one more idea. The only importance of it is that it is an indication that liberation or freedom is a possibility, and this in itself does bring about a deep change in our attitude, even though we may not be aware of it.

But what is called a sage is completely incomprehensible to the mind. Thought and feeling cannot say anything about it. How can a fleeting thought understand what is eternal Presence?

The only way to understand a sage is to become a sage. And to appeal to the sage within you is not as hard as it may sound. A little reflection will show you yourself cannot be captured in any idea. You are that in which ideas arise, that which remains long after they have disappeared. Then how could you be identical with an idea?

What you really are is therefore totally unimaginable. And the only difference between the sage and the ignorant man is that the sage knowingly lives as the unimagined, whereas



the ignorant man believes every now and again that he is an image appearing in mind: I am a man, I am a woman, I am a rascal, I am not so bad after all . . . nothing is too crazy to believe in. The moment a thought appears, saying "I am bad", we nod our heads and say: "Of course, of course, how bad I am". And when the next day another thought comes, telling us the opposite, we again nod our heads and say: "Of course, of course, after all I am not all that," and so on.

Liberation could be defined as the total absence of any faith in what thought tells us about ourselves and others.

<sup>1</sup> From an evening talk with the writer, who is the editor of *Yoga Advaita*, Amsterdam.



Recently an old friend of mine telephoned from a great distance, and wanted to discuss some problem or other. At one moment he remarked: "Ah yes. . . . but I am not enlightened. . . .!!!" So I asked him: "How do you know?"

There followed a long (and expensive) silence.

The idea "*I am not enlightened*" must be seen, one day or the other, as an absurdity. Just imagine: a thought comes floating by, saying "I am not enlightened". How does this thought know anything at all about enlightenment?

When a four year old says that Einstein is crazy, we laugh, and find such a remark quite cute. But our own belief in whatever message is packed in a thought is just as infantile: we are like little children asleep, repeating quite unconsciously whatever any thought may wish to tell us. So the statement "*I am not enlightened*" or the statement "*I am enlightened*" or "*I have already understood quite a lot*" are plain absurdities. But we believe in them, and this is our bondage. In Ashtavakra's words: We see the Knower — the silent witness that we are — as something other than that; as someone who is not enlightened.

But what we are is something so completely different that no words can measure the distance between our beliefs and the truth. What we are, have always been and shall ever be, is beyond bondage and liberation. What we are can never be bound and can never be liberated. Liberation is nothing but the disappearance of the superstition that we are a projection in time that has to become liberated.

So there is the problem in understanding what the word 'sage' refers to. As long as we imagine ourselves to be an appearance in time, we can only see what is called 'a sage' as a man or a woman. With all my conviction that Sri Ramana Maharshi was a great sage, I could not help wondering when I first

thought about him such things as why he should eat and drink like other human beings. It was only after he took me into myself and made me see that I am not a body, neither an eating body nor a fasting body, that I could clearly understand what the problem had been: I had projected my own vision of ignorance upon my surroundings, even upon One whom I regarded as the greatest of lights.

The moment I clearly understand that I am not a body, I can understand that what is referred to as 'a sage' is also not a body. And once this has been understood clearly, it will be seen that health and sickness do not apply to 'a sage', but to a body.

The moment I clearly understand that I am that one, indivisible Presence in which the world, every body, sick or healthy, appears and disappears, it begins to dawn that I always am the in-ground of all things, big and small, sick and healthy. In time, on the level of appearances, there are big and small, pleasant and unpleasant, sick and healthy. The 'sage' is what all these opposites have in common. And to talk about a healthy sage is just as absurd as talking about a sick sage.

Then there is another point: The question "why" can never be answered in terms that are acceptable to thought. But let us look closer. How many factors have been necessary to bring this article into being? One bundle of factors: my father was born almost in the extreme South-West of the country, my mother in the extreme North-East. How could they meet? One factor was the invention of railways, of the steam-engine—was it not by Mr. Stevenson? How did *his* parents meet? — You see, in five minutes it becomes clear that even the smallest event has billions of billions of causes. That is true for a blade of grass growing on the roadside, and it is true for the wild growth that settled on Sri Bhagavan's arm.

It is of course a pleasant and soothing idea to believe that the One we love so much fell ill because he took over someone else's karma.



Or for the skeptic unbeliever, at the other extreme, it is a pleasant idea to think : " You see, those so-called sages in India are also ordinary people, and the rest is superstition." But whatever one may believe, nothing is explained. Every event has billions and billions of causes.

So let us stick to the facts and see if they can tell us something, once we have dropped the question about causes.

When I go back to 1950, I see something completely inexplicable, an appearance called Sri Ramana Maharshi, whose mere presence takes me at once and without even a trace of an effort, into the core of my being. I see a frail figure, hardly able to walk and leaning on the arm of an attendant, but so radiant that I cannot bear to look at his eyes, unless I completely surrender ; I see a face, on which from time to time an expression of pain appears, and which five seconds later smiles at a small child with a radiance that makes the sun look dark ; I see all these things, and in the first place his looking at me, not understanding yet that this is not the full truth, but that in reality it is Love, looking at Itself. I see that many others experience the same clarity, the same, all-penetrating presence that is love and knowledge itself. And at the same time my mind tells me that this inexplicable radiant phenomenon, this Light of Lights suffers what must be excruciating pain.

There is one thing we might say about it : that this was a living lesson on how to face pain and disease. Just as the sixteen year old boy Venkataraman did not run away from the panic of death, so the old man that he was in appearance, did not run away from pain, did not wish to make any effort to get rid of it, and accepted pain and pleasure with the same radiant indifference. There was not a trace of any desire to prolong his existence in time, and not a trace of a desire to end it all quickly. To him, obviously, every appearance, be it a lovable small child or a terrifying disease, was a manifestation of light,

of love, and therefore completely acceptable and even divine.

So to me, in this sector called " living with a body ", his handling of pain has revealed that to the disciple pain need not be a terrifying phenomenon to run away from, but on the contrary, can be a *sadhana*. It is not pain that purifies us, as the European tradition often thinks, but the total acceptance of pain. When there is no defence left and no fight and no idea that we ought to become ' realized ', pain reveals itself as one of the uncountable themes in the cosmic symphony, where melodies in major and in minor together form the celestial song that can be heard only after total surrender to the Light that we are, the Light Love Itself came to show us in the inexplicable and radiant manifestation that we were allowed to call Bhagavan.

Only this Love comes to show us what is right and what is good. In our ignorance we invariably think that we are making progress, when there are pleasant feelings and when the body is healthy. But there are people who started on the inner enquiry after an accident or a disease left them handicapped. Good and bad are not determined by circumstances, but by our inner attitude. Good is what breaks down the belief in a person, bad is what strengthens it.

The total acceptance demonstrated by Sri Bhagavan is the absolute and immediate death-blow to all defences and consequently to an ego or a person, which is nothing but a centre of defence.

This is *vichara marga*, the direct " path " : not to strive for enlightenment in some near or distant future, but the total surrender to what we really are, *here and now*.

In hundreds of ways, this Light of Arunachala, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, has demonstrated the fact that we are freedom itself, not to be attained or acquired, but to be recognised this very instant.

Truer than this Truth there is none.

# Sri Ramana's Wondrous Grace<sup>1</sup>

By  
A Self-styled Devotee

**M**Y first visit to the Ashram took place during the annual birthday celebrations of Maharshi. Thousands of *bhaktas* had gathered for the event. Maharshi was sitting in a small enclosure that had been erected for him. Pilgrims came in a line, prostrated themselves before him, paid their respects and then passed out of the quadrangle. A continuous stream of people passed in this way for a couple of hours. I was all along anxious to catch his eyes but could not do so. When the crowd became thinner, I got up, walked up to the enclosure and took my stand just outside it, towards the right of Maharshi. With folded hands and tearful eyes I stood there, eagerly expecting to catch his eyes. Though some people were asked to pass on to make room for others, I was fortunately not disturbed. I continued standing there, allowing ample room for other pilgrims to pass on. I waited and waited. Mixed emotions pulsed within me and tears flowed down my cheeks. My whole being was irresistibly being drawn towards him. At last he was turning his head towards his right, that is, in my direction. Expectation rose high, but, alas, his gaze passed on without falling on me! Frustration further intensified my sense of helplessness and my whole being poured forth silent entreaty in convulsive sobs. Ah! now, immediately after, I seemed to obtain a side glance from his eyes, while a sweet smile beamed on his face. A peculiar sensation passed through my body and my whole being seemed to be churned. A minute later I passed out of the quadrangle.

On the third morning of my stay I entreated an inmate of the Ashram to put my case



before Maharshi. He looked at me for a moment, and then advised me to write down whatever I intended to say on a piece of paper. Write down! What should I write down?

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from the *Golden Jubilee Souvenir*, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, 1946, pp. 372-376.

But I was not in a thinking mood then. I wrote down whatever came to my mind. He very kindly took the piece of paper, went to the hall, followed by me, and placed the paper before Maharshi, speaking something to him in Tamil. Maharshi read it and smiled, and smiling he turned towards me. I was sitting there, with folded hands and eyes filled with tears. As he looked at me I was overwhelmed and powerful emotion convulsed my body, which set Maharshi laughing. He laughed merrily for some time and then silently folded the paper and left it on a book-shelf which stood nearby. He did not speak to me nor did he seem to pay any further attention to me. The mind cannot remain in a tense state for long; sheer exhaustion calms it down. My mind calmed down after some time.

After the night meal devotees used to spend half an hour in meditation in the hall in Maharshi's presence. Mechanically I followed them that evening and sat with them in the hall. A few minutes passed. Then suddenly I felt a pleasant coolness inundating me. It seemed to emanate from my very bones, cooling the whole being. Is this the spiritual fragrance spoken of as emanating from Maharshi? Whatever it might be, I had no doubt that it came from Maharshi and at his will.

This was on the night of the third day of my visit. On the next day, while sitting before Maharshi, I experienced a sudden pull in the region of the heart. I was astonished and, as I sought to observe it, it passed away. Nothing like the experience of the previous night was repeated. The remainder of the day passed in keen expectation, but nothing happened, even during the meditation period after the night meal. Perhaps expectation obstructed its manifestation.

Two days later I attended the usual morning prayers and meditation period. Discussions generally take place when devotees assemble in the hall after breakfast. Maharshi also answers questions from earnest seekers. That morning also discussions were going on.

As they were talking mostly in Tamil (a language not known to me) my attention was not attracted till I found some people turning their heads and laughing at me. On enquiry I learnt that they were discussing the subject-matter of my first letter to Maharshi. I took part in the discussions and, as I was in the back row, some distance away from them, they asked me to come nearer so that there might not be any difficulty in following each other, and I obeyed. I was thus brought very near Maharshi's seat. Our discussions over, I heard Maharshi say, "He is concentrating on the reflection and complains that he cannot see the original."

It struck me forcefully. What did he mean by reflection and what was the original? I shut my eyes and tried to find out the meaning. Immediately after, I felt a pull in the region of the heart, similar to what I had felt two days previously, but much stronger in intensity. My mind was completely arrested — stilled, but I was wide awake. Suddenly, without any break in my consciousness, the "I" flashed forth! It was self-awareness, pure and simple, steady, unbroken and intensely bright, as much brighter than ordinary consciousness as is sunlight than the dim light of a lamp. In ordinary consciousness the "I"-sense dimly remains in the background, — as a matter of inference or intuition, — the whole of the consciousness being occupied by the object. Here, "I" came to the foreground, occupied, or rather became, the whole consciousness and intensely existed as pure consciousness, displacing all objects. I *was*, but I was neither the subject nor the object of this consciousness. I *was* this consciousness, which alone existed. There were no objects. The world was not, neither the body nor the mind — no thought, no motion; time also ceased to exist. I alone existed, and the "I" was consciousness itself, self-luminous and alone, without a second. . . Suddenly, and again without any break in my consciousness, I was brought back to my normal, ordinary consciousness.

A great miracle had been performed in broad daylight in the presence of so many people, without their knowing it. No argument of the greatest philosophers and scientists of the world will now make me doubt the possibility of experiencing the "I" in its pure state of pure consciousness, without any subject-object relationship. Of course, I myself had not the least inkling of such a state even a second earlier, and I never expected to get such an experience. I, an insignificant creature, wallowing in the mud of mundane existence, and without any *sadhana*, being granted this supreme experience! — an experience which is rarely obtained even by great yogis after the austere spiritual practices strenuously performed for ages together.

As soon as I was brought to my normal consciousness, I opened my eyes and looked at Maharshi. I knew from the heart of my heart that it was Maharshi who had very graciously granted me this experience, but he appeared to be quite unconcerned, as if nothing had happened! He was not even looking at me! How could he have performed this miracle? Was it by his Silence? I looked at my comrades. They did not seem to notice me, and so were ignorant of what had happened. In like manner, unknown to others, to how many people has he graciously granted this and even higher experiences? He only knows. Such is the wonder of his Grace! — his unique Grace!

Truly has it been said — "Unasked Thou givest, this is Thy imperishable fame."

## Grab Hold for the Four

By Darlene Delisi

The following conversation took place on the southern slope of Arunachala on August 21, 1978, about an hour before sunset. Sri Kunju Swami was recalling incidents in his life with Sri Bhagavan. He told me about their first meeting at Skandasramam ... how he was left alone with Sri Bhagavan and was anxiously awaiting Sri Bhagavan's first words, which he (Kunju Swami) was going to take as UPADESA. Sri Bhagavan said nothing, but was carefully mixing something in a bowl. Sri Kunju Swami took this to be some special potion which would be given to him. However, to his amazement, Sri Bhagavan placed it on the ground and opened up a nearby basket. Out of the basket ran four little puppies! Sri Bhagavan then told Kunju Swami, "Grab hold of the four, and let them go one by one." Of course, Kunju Swami took care of the puppies and he took these first words of Bhagavan to mean 'grab hold of the four VEDAS.'

Coincidentally, many years later when the Ashram had grown up at the foot of the Hill, the residents of the Ashram were expected to help doing some sort of work. Sri Kunju Swami went to Bhagavan to ask what kind of work he should do. Sri Bhagavan replied, "STOTRA, JAPA, DHYANA and VICHARA" (see THE MOUNTAIN PATH, April, 1972).

Sri Natesan, who was interpreting Kunju Swami's talk for me, asked me if I understood what had been said. "Yes", I said. "But it's not that easy to do, is it?" said Natesan. "Oh, no! It isn't! You don't know the wild horses of my mind! is", I replied. As soon as Natesan related to Kunju Swami what I had said, Kunju Swami immediately looked at me directly and said, "but IT WORKS!" What a flame that enkindled! "It works!" "It works!" STOTRA, JAPA, DHYANA, VICHARA . . . coming from one who knows.

# ALTITUDE IN PRAYER

**By**

**May Keats**

"PRAYER," said Emerson, "is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul." So in our moments of inner silence the soul rises up in jubilation as with our inner eyes we begin to behold the wonder and magnitude of the universe in which we live. We are rapt in awe as we ponder its infinite mysteries, its illimitable and immeasurable immensity. When we see pictures of far off galaxies we know that the billions of stars there are moving ceaselessly, according to some great law, and we marvel that man in his earthbound home has within himself the capacity to discover some of these laws. The physicist tells us that everything in the Cosmos is, in the final analysis, energy. The naturalist shows us the infinite form and variety of life on this planet, and we wonder how such things can be.

In our soliloquy we come to a place where we leave all outer phenomena and go to the world of the mystic to whom has been revealed something of the Infinite Invisible wherein lies all cause. The world of effect is forsaken and we seek to dwell for a while in the world known only to the Illumined Ones. Deep in the soul of the mystic is an inner Kingdom, the Kingdom of Infinity Itself. Though man can never understand this, yet here is something he can experience and know by experi-

ence. The mystic dwells in a world of Consciousness, sharing the ONE and only Consciousness. Here is the first gleam of light on the meaning of Omnipresence, which must be omnipotent and omniscient as well. Consciousness being ONE, indivisible and infinite, "I AM THAT". Great and wondrous now is the soliloquy of the beholding and jubilant soul, as there comes the contemplation of the greatest of all mysteries — that of ONENESS. The gates of a freedom never before imagined are now thrown wide open. Here the domination of external forces dissolves into nothingness. Now comes release from personal sense, as both mind and body lose their seeming power. All seeking comes to an end; there is only a resting, the being still till the realisation comes, "That which I am seeking that I AM." We begin to know what Jesus meant when he said, "I and the Father are One". We have reached the realm that eternally IS, and know that all that IS is good.

To contemplate thus is to throw off the deadness of mortal existence. Our inner eyes are being opened, where before we were blind. As our awareness deepens, "veil after veil will lift but there must be veil after veil behind". (*The Light of Asia*, by Edwin Arnold).

**Khanna: Are our prayers granted?**

**Bhagavan: Yes, they are granted. No thought will go in vain. Every thought will produce its effect some time or other. Thought-force will never go in vain.**

*Day by Day*, p. 230

# REMINISCENCES

By

R. Narayana Iyer  
(Sub-Registrar)

**S**RI BHAGAVAN was not always the same. Most of the time he was a very pleasing person with a fascinating welcome smile. However, on occasion, he could be stern and look forbidding. At such moments people were struck with awe and deep searching of the heart.

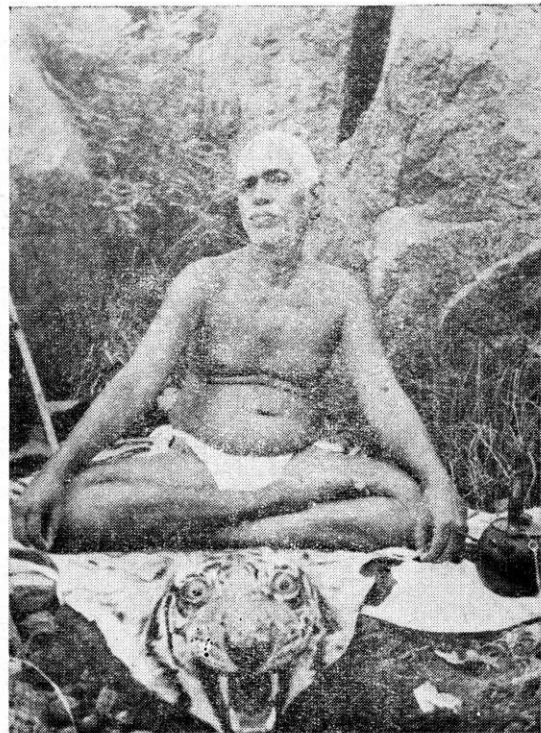
\* \* \*

One hot Sunday afternoon an old devotee placed before Sri Bhagavan some palmyra fruits (*nongu*). Bhagavan severely remarked: "Why do you do this daily? You are a *sannyasin*. You must beg of others the wherewithal to procure these. You must say that they are for me. You know that I cannot eat them without others present sharing them and so you have to get some quantity, and this you do using my name, as though I desire it! Can't you keep quiet and mind your business? You prostrate before me and think that you have won me over. Every prostration is like a blow on my head. All sorts of things are done outside these four walls with impunity, as though these walls hide and protect them. Who likes these prostrations?" And on and on he went in a tirade against all and sundry who posed like pious men but were hiding a lot of impurity. It was not one individual that was attacked. The atmosphere in the hall was tense, and one by one, the devotees sneaked out.

But such moods were only momentary, and he could switch on to his wonted geniality the next instant.

\* \* \*

Once Sri T. P. R. and I decided to ask Sri Bhagavan for an explanation of the 6th



stanza of *Arunachala Ashtakām*, and went to the hall after Sri Bhagavan returned from his usual walk on the Hill. In the meanwhile something moved us. Sri Muruganar prostrated before Sri Bhagavan and went out on his usual round for begging food from the town. We had just then ground in the mortar jack fruit for a sweet dish in the midday meal and Sri Muruganar had given some donation for *Biksha* since it was his mother's death anniversary. He was not there to taste the dish and we were sorry. The fact that he was going out after giving something for a *Biksha* in honour of his mother was taken to the notice of Sri Bhagavan. Instantly there was a



change in the face of Bhagavan. He knew that Sri Muruganar was not a favourite with the Ashram management. "Who has to invite him to stay for meals? Chinnaswamy does not like him. He is the master here." There was tension in the atmosphere. T.P.R. and I whispered to each other that we would choose some other time for the exposition and closed our books. Sri Bhagavan saw us doing so and asked us what the matter was. We replied what we had come for. Instantly Sri Bhagavan said, "Why not now?" and started explaining. It was wonderful! Every sentence started a mighty current. It didn't stop there. Wave after wave of the same exposition came to us unsolicited for a day or two more whenever we sat before him.

\* \* \*

Sri Bhagavan had his head shaven once a month on the full moon day. Natesan was the barber who used to do this service. Bhagavan sat on a stool and Natesan would stand and shave him. Once Sri Bhagavan suggested to Natesan in all seriousness that it would be more comfortable for the barber to sit on the stool while he himself would sit on the floor!

\* \* \*

It was past 8-30 one night when I came to the Ashram on one of my visits. Everyone had retired to rest after the night meal. I went to the office. Chinnaswamy was sitting in his place talking to some Asramites. When he saw me enter he said, "Narayana Iyer, don't go near Sri Bhagavan's couch. He is resting on the verandah near the well. He had had a fracture of his collar bone and a plaster has been put on it. He should not be disturbed. Prostrate at a distance and come away noiselessly." I was shocked to hear the news. If any other reason had been given it could have restrained me. But the mention of a 'fracture' made me eager and anxious to see Sri Bhagavan. I went on tiptoe and prostrated quietly. He evidently saw me and said, "Narayana Iyer, come, sit by my side on the couch. Only then can I see you

## CONVERSATION-16

By

Darlene Delisi<sup>1</sup>

Bhagavan's classmate, one Vilacheri Mani Iyer together with his friend, Vembu Iyer, used to visit Sri Bhagavan at Skandashram often. One day, early in the morning, outside the Skandashram near the spring, on a big boulder two persons were seen lying. They beckoned to me and, asked me to go to Bhagavan and seek his permission whether 'Brahma' and 'Vishnu' could come in. This gave me great surprise, but anyhow I went inside and announced the 'names' to Bhagavan. He smiled and bade me to let them in. When I went and told them, they came in and had Bhagavan's darshan. They also stayed for a few days and went away.

After they had gone I asked Bhagavan what they meant by saying: "'Brahma', and 'Vishnu' had come".

Bhagavan said in his usual, calm manner: "What is to be done? They have the *Bhavana* (mental attitude) that I am Lord Siva and Mani Brahma and Vembu Vishnu!"

<sup>1</sup> Gathered by the writer while talking with Sri Kunju Swami.

and talk. Otherwise the bandage they have put might be disturbed and there might be pain." Implicitly I obeyed when he said this, notwithstanding my fear of Chinnaswamy's reaction if he should happen to see me there. He said, "I was going up the steps. A dog was chasing a squirrel. I barred its way by putting my walking stick in front of it. The stick slipped and I fell down and got hurt on the collar bone. They say it is a fracture and the native bone-setter of the village, an old devotee, was sent for. He has put this bandage with some green leaves and black gram paste and I am enjoined not to move lest it be disturbed."

He narrated the incident as though it was some one else's body that was injured and was suffering!

## SONG OF AT-ONE-MENT—(I)

By

K. Forrer

JESUS said unto them :

1. *"If God were your father, ye would love me : for I proceeded forth and came from God ; neither came I of myself, but he sent me."*

(*St. John, VIII, 42*).

The pharisees, whom Jesus addresses, are our own feelings personified. We too call some man our father even as they called Abraham their father.

If we knew God to be our Father, we would love Jesus, for then we would see ourselves as his closest kin, and would know that we are at-one with him and God even here and now.

But instead we are forgetful of our Real Father, we believe ourselves to be separate beings from God's Being and relegate Him to the heavens far beyond the universe, feeling alone instead of all-one.

This forgetfulness, this false belief of separation, is the sole cause of all our misery, for in that imagined separation we cut ourselves asunder from God's boundless Bliss, His imperishable Happiness.

To save us from that illusion is the one purpose of God's Message and the one cause of His messenger.

2. *"And he that sent me is with me : the Father hath not left me alone."*

(*St. John, VIII, 29*).

If we see God as some mysterious Being in the skies, then it is difficult to understand how he could be with his messenger, when that messenger had 'proceeded forth' from Him and had come into the world,

But if we remember that God is not a limited being, that He is everywhere at all times, in fact that everything is in Him like objects in the infinitude of space, then that oneness between God the Father and His son, no matter where the son may happen to be, is not so hard to understand.

For just as the rays of the sun, when sent out into space, do not really become separate from their source, so the messenger of God, when he is sent into the world, does not really lose his identity with the Father.

And just as the light of the sun is one and the same as the light of its rays, so is the boundless Bliss of the Father also the boundless Bliss of the son.

What is more puzzling than is this, that we, seeing God encompassing us as the sunlight bathes the things of the world, nay more, filling every corner of the universe and beyond, do not also have the same incessant experience of blissful Union with God as Jesus has.

It is due to our ego, a false spirit which poses as the Real.

While Jesus is ego-less, we are deceived by our ego, and this constitutes the whole and sole difference between Christ and ordinary man, between Enlightenment and ignorance.

This false spirit disposed of, we too would be able to say : "the Father hath not left me alone", and we too would be enjoying His boundless Bliss without end.

3. "I and the Father are one. I am in my Father and ye in me, and I in you."  
(St. John X, 30; XIV, 20)

Despite Jesus' assurance that we are totally at-one with him and thereby with God, we cling to the false belief of separate existence. God is spirit we say, and we think that we are the body.

Because of this we fear the death of the body, for it means to us the end of life.

But do we lose existence when we become unaware of the body and the world, when our mind ceases to function?

No. We do not become non-existent just because we lose body-consciousness.

For when we go to sleep, though becoming unaware of both body and mind, we do not cease to be, since we awake as the same person that went to sleep.

This shows that being is really independent of physical awareness, independent of body and mind.

True Being then is an unbroken continuum, and it matters little whether or not we become aware of the body and the world.

For just as the Real Sun does not perish because its reflection disappears from a dried-up lake, so does our Real Nature not cease to be, even though the body, its means of projection, perishes, or temporarily ceases to act as a reflector as during the states of deep sleep, swoon or anaesthesia.

To fear death, then, is but fear of losing a false appearance of our True Nature.

Were we to realize its falsity, all anxiety would vanish, just as fear of an imagined robber in the dark will vanish with the coming of daylight.

At-one-ment with Christ, unity with the Imperishable Father is therefore not something that has to be gained anew, since we are always ONE. All that has to be done is to realize our True Identity *here and now*,

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## ILLUMINATION

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By

Wei Wu Wei

Are you Awakened, Mr. Wu?

*Madame, I have never been asleep!*

You were born Awakened, Mr. Wu? How wonderful!

*I do not remember having been born, Madame.*

Nor indeed do I, Mr. Wu!

*I cannot believe that Madame was born asleep!*

Then when did I cease to be Awakened, Mr. Wu?

*The conditioning of Madame began when somebody took the liberty of slapping her slightly 'behind'.*

Indeed, indeed, Mr. Wu, how unfortunate!

*As unfortunate as indelicate, Madame, but it would have happened nevertheless: conditioning is inevitable in Relativity.*

If it began with a slap, Mr. Wu, how might it end?

*I would not suggest the same method, Madame, but so must it be!*

Perhaps, Mr. Wu, you might be the doctor?

*In neither event would Madame be aware of the occurrence.*

But why should that be, Mr. Wu?

*Awareness, Madame, has neither beginning nor end.*

---

and the false, superimposed appearance of ego will evaporate of its own accord.

To be rid of that ghost-image is Enlightenment indeed!

(To be continued)

## How the Guru Called Me

By

Sam. Wickramasinghe

WHEN the now defunct Tata Airlines plane took me from Colombo to Madras in December, 1946, pleasure-bent, little did I realise then that it was to be the beginning of a more wonder-filled journey, finally bringing me to where I am now — in an Ashram!

Sight-seeing from Madras, with camera slung over shoulder in full tourist style, I found myself one day in Brindavan Gardens, Mysore, in the company of some fellow citizens, one of whom was a balding Professor honeymooning with his bride. An evening saw all of us seated near Harding Circle, and there the Professor began talking about a friend of his, one Paul Brunton, with whom he had rowed in the English Channel and who was supposed to be staying in Mysore at the time as the guest of the Maharajah. Snatches of the conversation (which did not interest me at all) came to my ears, and I heard something about some books written by this Brunton and also some mention of a Maharshi — although I did not even know the meaning of the word *Maharshi* at that time.

The Professor asked me whether I had read any of Paul Brunton's books, and when I said, 'No', he suddenly decided that all of us should make a visit to the Maharaja's Palace the next day to look up his friend. Unfortunately the friend was out holidaying in another resort of the Rajah somewhere near the Himalayas — and that ended Brunton, his books and the Rishi for me — so I thought.

About a year later, an office pal one day shoved a book in front of me and almost



demanding that I should read it. The title was *Search in Secret India* and the author was Paul Brunton! For a few moments I failed to recall the name, but eventually, when the scene at Mysore surfaced, I recounted the incident to my friend. That evening as I read

the book, which gripped me from the start, vague doors seemed to open somewhere inside and very soon the author's other works, including *Wisdom of the Overself*, came to my hands in a mysterious fashion. Reading *Hidden Teachings Beyond Yoga* was a profound experience, as I had the strange feeling that here I was treading on familiar ground, something which I had known and understood in some forgotten past. It was the beginning of the Infinite Road.

Very soon I found myself thrown out of employment, for being cheeky, with an extra month's pay in the pocket. At 21 years this was an exhilarating feeling of freedom with so much money to spend. Already numerous dreams were taking shape in the mind. But Grace had other plans and the book-thrusting office-mate appeared again, saying calmly with a knowing smile on his face: "Now that you have the time and money, you should go and see the Maharshi!"

A few weeks later, I was in India again — this time at the feet of Sri Ramana in the company of a different group of 'tourists'! Major Chadwick was there, the Californian Rappold and another American lady, Arthur Osborne and a few others. The Ashram authorities very kindly extended the usual three days' hospitality to a week, and then let me wait a further fortnight, arranging for me to stay with another Sri Lankan, Thambithurai, in the very hut of Paul Brunton near the pond!

The two weeks passed too soon, with not too many visitors then, but every moment vibrant with Bhagavan's illumined presence. When departure time came and I took a tonga to the station one early dawn, a feeling of sadness overwhelmed me. It was full moon as I stood at Villupuram for the connecting

"The more we control thought, activity and food, the more shall we be able to control sleep. But moderation ought to be the rule, as explained in the *Gita*, for the *sadhaka* (practiser). As explained in the book, sleep is the first obstacle for all *sadhakas*. The second obstacle is said to be *vikshepa* or the sense objects of the world which divert one's attention. The third is said to be *kashaya* or thought in the mind about previous experiences with sense objects. The fourth *ananda* (bliss) is also called an obstacle because in that state a feeling of separation from the source of *ananda* enabling the enjoyer to say, 'I am enjoying *ananda*' is present. Even this has to be surmounted and the final stage is *samadhana* or *samadhi* has to be reached where one becomes *ananda* or one with the reality and the duality of enjoyer and enjoyment ceases in the ocean of *Satchidananda* (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss) or the Self."

—from *Gems from Bhagavan*, p. 38.

train, and it seemed as if Bhagavan's voice was reproachfully inquiring inside. "Son, whither art thou going?"

Many summers have passed since then — many summers full of professional activity and many travels out of homeland, including a second visit to the Ashram in December, 1970. Looking back now it is easy to see the links connecting one event to another and realise that, with all the externalised activity, another journey began that day in the Presence of Bhagavan over 30 years ago — an Inner Voyage of discovery where the Grace of the Supreme gave silent direction in the form of Sri Ramana as 'tourist' guide! After his *samadhi*, other lights shone and showed the way, like Sri Yogaswami of Jaffna and Poondi Swami, near Kalasapakkam, embodying in various names and forms of the One majestic Grace.

# Garland of Guru's Sayings

By **SRI MURUGANAR**  
*Translated from Tamil by*  
**Professor K. Swaminathan**

773

What our Master clearly teaches  
 By way of great, good, powerful *tapas*  
 Is only this and nothing more :  
**BE STILL.**  
 Apart from this, the mind has no  
 Task to do or thought to think.

774

The stillness shining as pure Being  
 Is our true nature, the Self-state.  
 Only through rare, strenuous *tapas*  
 This stillness is attained. Praise those  
 Abiding in it as paragons of virtue.

775

He who, being ignorant of the truth  
 That he is the Self, regards this body  
 As himself can only perish  
 With perishing flesh, caught in the web  
 Woven dreamlike by his own Illusions.

776

The Lord supreme, as flawless, true  
 Awareness stands for ever whole  
 And sole, not to be known or worshipped.  
 For one to claim a separate being  
 Apart from Him is utter folly.

777

For a false 'I' to spring and leap  
 Away from the unbroken sky  
 Of pure Awareness is a sin,  
 The heinous sin of violating  
 Dharma by dividing into  
 Two the unity of being.

778

Except creating for one's private lordship  
 A mental world apart from God's, how can  
 Some other rule than His come near  
or touch  
 The Real World that shines as  
moveless Being.

779

Bondage is the false, ruinous thought  
 That one exists apart from Being,  
 The one true Being. Since one can never,  
 Never stand in alienation,  
 Destroy as soon as it arises  
 The thought of separateness.

780

Swerve not from your true state,  
thinking some thought.  
 But if you do, commit not the same folly.  
 "Do nothing that you later may regret.  
 Even if you did it once, never repeat it."

[The last two lines are from *Kural* No. 655.]

781

Pine not yearning, "When, O When  
 Shall I realize the Self  
 And gain the bliss of union?"  
 Ever the same, omnipresent,  
 The state of true Awareness is  
 Neither far nor near in space.



782

Seeing whence we came and going back  
To where we came from is the way,  
The best way, to remove the evils  
Found nowhere else but in the place  
We have got into.

[The body and the world may have shortcomings, not the Heart, our permanent home.]

783

O mind, you wander far in search of bliss  
Not knowing your own natural state of  
Freedom.

Your home of infinite bliss you will regain  
If only you go back the way you came.

[Turn inward, not outward.]

784

Until you taste the bliss at the heart's core  
The senses five will never subside.  
Till these distracting senses utterly die  
You will not gain true Being's bliss.

785

O heart of mine, instead of being  
Confused by this conceptual world,  
Enter within and seek the source.  
Then in the realm of pure Awareness  
You experience sheer *advaita*  
Where the one Self as all things functions.

[*Advaita* — non-duality.]

786

If in an earnest seeker 'tis a fault  
Even to slip from the summit high  
Of Self-experience, true, *advaitic*,  
Come think, would it be right for him  
To interfere in others' affairs?

787

If blind to others' shortcomings  
One only notices their merits,  
One gets no chance of being disgusted  
But finds one's whole life wholly pleasant.

788

"Mine is the only mind amenable  
To my correction." If letting go this truth  
One broods o'er others' faults, one only fouls  
One's own mind more and more.

789

O heart of mine, the wise ones shower  
Affection on you, not because  
You are filled with virtue's sweetness, but  
Because they in their greatness have  
Forgiven and forgotten all  
Your heaped-up faults.

790

To err is human. When those strong in  
virtue  
Err, they do not hide it in their pride.  
They own their lapse instead, and quietly  
Reform themselves.

791

Since ritual practices are helpful  
They are worth observing. But if they  
Stand in the way of the highest practice,  
That of self-enquiry, drop them  
As not now good enough.

792

If all you wish for is fulfilled  
Think not it is due to your *tapas*.  
Know it is but God's good grace, and cling  
With more and more love to His Feet.

I feel very much enlightened and uplifted by His Grace, and am trying to abide in the Self in silence.

At long last Sri Bhagavan shed His Grace on me. A few months back, I had the blessed *darshan* of Sri Bhagavan in a dream. He was in a standing posture with a *kamandulu* in one hand and a staff in the other, exactly the same posture that I saw during my first visit to the Ashram on that evening, more than four decades ago. I fell at His Holy Feet, clasped them to my heart's content and wept and wept, praying for His Grace: "O! Bhagavan. I take refuge in you. Will you not show me your Grace? I feel helpless in this path of Self-enquiry". The vision ceased but the uplifting influence, solemn and serene, conti-

"The entire universe is condensed in the body and the entire body in the Heart. Thus the Heart is the nucleus of the whole universe. This world is not other than the mind, the mind is not other than the Heart; that is the whole truth."

—from *Gems from Bhagavan*, p. 41.

nues to guide me on, revealing the inner Glory of the Self.

Sri Bhagavan is the ocean of Nectar, full of Grace and Peace. True, Sri Ramana declared, "Where can I go? I am always here". Salutations again and again, to Sri Bhagavan, the *Sadguru*, abiding in the hearts of all as the Heart Supreme!

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## THE NOW

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By

Wei Wu Wei

Good morning, Mr. Wu, how happy I am to see you!

*May I congratulate Madame on her absence?*

My absence, Mr. Wu? But I am present!

*Then may I thank Madame for noticing my absence?*

I do not understand, Mr. Wu!

*But Madame can only act from her absence, whereby my presence appears.*

But, Mr. Wu, we are both present.

*Never quite simultaneously, Madame!*

Are we not both present now, Mr. Wu?

*Apparently, Madame, because momenta-*

*rily we arrest the incidence of temporality, but not factually.*

You are only present, Mr. Wu, when I see you?

*How else, Madame, could presence appear?*

And I am only present when you see me, Mr. Wu?

*The pleasure is not exclusively mine, Madame: many of us have the good fortune to share it.*

But how can that be, Mr. Wu?

*How could that not be, Madame? Looking is always absent, the seen is always present.*

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## Dialogue with the Maharaj

By  
A Devotee

(The following is an account of the conversation between a devotee of Sri Bhagavan who had been recently to Bombay and *Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj*<sup>1</sup>).

**Devotee:** The deeper my dhyana, the weaker my body is becoming and this distracts my mind. Would Maharaj suggest something?

**Maharaj:** For some time it may happen like this. Even Ramana Maharshi had some physical suffering at one time (burning sensation). Don't be afraid of it. Gently continue your meditation along with study and *nama-smaranam* (remembrance of the Name). In sadhana, each one's experience will be different due to the differences in the *prakriti* (nature) and qualities (*gunas*) of the instrument.

**D:** I request Maharaj to bless me with the necessary courage and inner strength to ignore the body and mind.

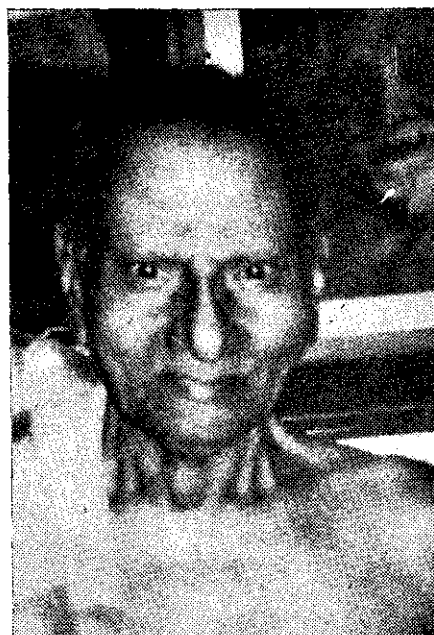
**M:** With full, unshakable faith in Ramana Maharshi continue your practice. You can come here and listen to me, but remember that your Sad-Guru is Ramana Maharshi.

**D:** Maharaj, I am thinking of returning to Tiruvannamalai tomorrow, if possible.

**M:** Yes, Alright.

**D:** Would Maharaj give me something of his as prasad which I can keep with me?

**M:** What do I have? Here, take this fruit and sweets. But my real prasad for you is this; that you should have *purna nishta bhakti* (full, unshakeable devotion) to your Guru, Ramana Maharshi, come what may, rain or sun-shine, pleasure or pain, life or death, your faith should never shake. You don't have to go anywhere or see any other saint. He is your Guru.



*Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj*

**D:** Would Maharaj say a few words concerning what is the benefit of being here in his presence?

**M:** It cannot be measured. You cannot measure space, and similarly, the good fortune of those having a Sat Guru is immeasurable. If you can understand this, you are fortunate.

**D:** Before coming here, I thought that my heart was getting cold, but now I find that it is agreeably warming up in the presence of Maharaj.

<sup>1</sup> For an article on whom see our issue of Oct. 1978, p. 236.

**M:** Let anything come or go. You are only a witness. Don't get upset or involved in anything. It is all only on the mental level and apart from you. Whatever experience is derived through the mind should not affect you.

You are beyond everything, being beyond the five elements. The mind is made of those elements only.

**D:** During my stay here, I am beginning to see within myself deceit, lies, emptiness. The relationship with parents, wife and friends seems to break away and I am left with a feeling of being alone and know that I must walk alone. I am moved by it.

**M:** If it is so, you are very fortunate. But don't describe this experience to all and sundry. That lone entity — does it have a form? (It is formless).

Someone said one day to Bhagavan, "Is it true that the *Jnani* is conscious in all the three states, even when he is sleeping?"

"Yes", replied Bhagavan.

"Then why does Bhagavan snore?"

Bhagavan replied, "Yes, I know that I snore. I could stop it if I wished, but I like it".

*A Sadhu's Reminiscences*, p. 94

\* \* \*

Bhagavan never encouraged people who came and started to confess their sins. He would not allow them to continue but shut them up by telling them not to dwell on the past but to find out who they were now in the present. The point was not the act but attachment to it that mattered. Dwelling on it in retrospect was the worst thing they could possibly do. This itself was attachment.

*A Sadhu's Reminiscences* p. 37

## TO JACK

(July 13, 1979)

By Charles Reeder

[Jack Norman faithfully read all the works describing Sri Bhagavan's *Upadesa* and continually strove to practise *atma vichara* in his everyday life and this poem was written to guide Jack on the night of his death (in an automobile accident).]

In shattered brilliance  
the world gives away, friend,  
it was your own dream,  
soft as metal  
In this Ramana is thy being.

Like a relief map  
the depth of your striving  
covered everything  
it was great, friend,  
we felt its greatness  
it was your own love

Now it is gathered into one point.  
In this Ramana is thy being.

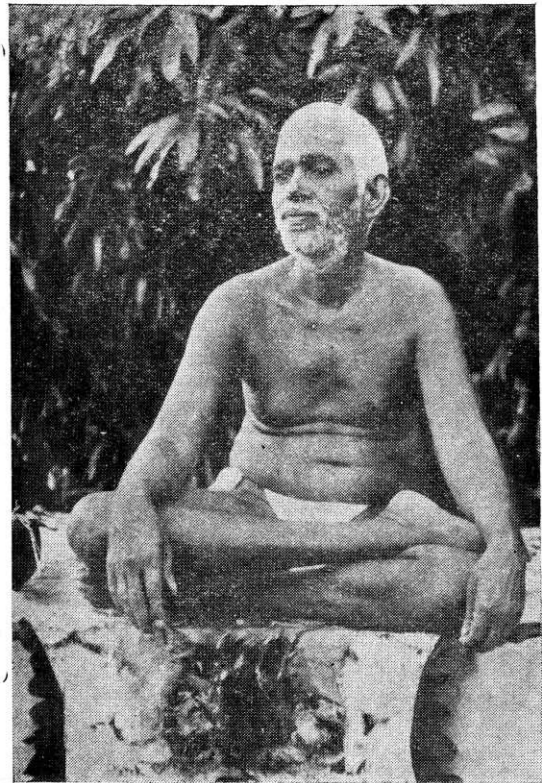
Now you are plumbing your dream,  
its greatest depth ;  
if it be so, friend, then go with God  
it is your own playing  
in the fountain of your source.  
Our love is that leaping spray  
and you continue always  
like the welling sound of mountain bells  
in the depth of your own high valley  
and know always, in this Ramana  
is thy own true being.

## INTRODUCING....

.... Sri Subramania Swami

**M**ANY have come to Sri Bhagavan and stayed with Him for a number of years, but it was given only to a boy, *Subramaniam*, to grow under the shade of Sri Bhagavan from his boyhood. His dedication and devotion to Sri Bhagavan are worth emulating. Even today visitors to the Ashram will find an energetic, active and enthusiastic person going about supervising work of all kinds and seeing to the cleanliness and proper maintenance of the Ashram. Subramania Swami, as he is now known, says that Sri Bhagavan liked the Ashram to be kept spic and span all the time, and Himself set an example of such tidiness.

In 1917, when Sri Bhagavan was staying in Skandashram, the boy, Subramaniam, was brought to Arunachala, by a sadhu and left with his father, Sri Kumaraguru, who was then staying in a cave near Virupaksha Cave, interesting himself in preparing herbal medicines. Kumaraguru took his son to Skandashram and



*Sri Subramania Swami*

prostrated before Sri Bhagavan. The boy began to cry for no known reason. Sri Bhagavan's mother who came out gave him a banana which not only quietened the boy but made him jump with joy. Both of them had lunch with Bhagavan. This first sharing of food with his Master is still cherished by Subramania Swami.

After this, his mother, grandmother and others came to Tiruvannamalai and settled down there. The boy was admitted in a school; but he would spend most of the day time not in the school but with Bhagavan up the Hill and later at the present Ashram. He was present when the holy body of Sri Bha-

gavan's mother was interred and remembers what a great crowd of people had assembled and how he and his father served gruel to many hundreds of people on that day. After Bhagavan came down to live at the present Ashram, Subramania Swami recalls, elderly devotees used to come and with great joy tell Sri Bhagavan : "It is in answer to our prayers that Bhagavan has descended to a place where we can have easy access to Him". He says that every action of Bhagavan was in fact a spontaneous response to the devotees' prayers!

He stayed with Bhagavan, day and night. He would sleep in the Hall where Bhagavan used to recline and get up as early as 2 a.m. and go out with Him and returning help in cutting vegetables. People would come and sit in front of Sri Bhagavan in the Hall, some put searching spiritual questions, some would argue, but some would merely enjoy the glorious presence of Sri Bhagavan. Food, all of them used to take along with Bhagavan and there was absolutely no sense of privacy or reservation with Bhagavan. He was available to all at all times.

His father, though not a permanent inmate of the Ashram, was very useful to the Ashram during his visits, looking after the garden and attending to hard manual work. He was liked by one and all in the Ashram. His love for dogs earned for him the name, 'servant of the dog Kamala'! His father's full approval and encouragement of his continuous service to Sri Bhagavan built up Subramania Swami spiritually too. Bhagavan would talk to him freely and frankly, as a mother to her child. However, he deemed it his great privilege to apply daily some ointment and massage the holy feet of Sri Bhagavan, both in the morning and at night. At those times, he would hold Sri Bhagavan's feet and pray that He should bless him and save him from *samsara*.

Once, when the temple elephant came to the Ashram and had left after taking its usual quota of rice and jaggery balls, some rice had got scattered. Bhagavan happened to be there

and turned to Subramaniam and said : "Look ! What the elephant has spilled is food for thousands of ants. This is the secret of nature."

He could not pronounce some words correctly due to some defect in his tongue. He uttered Arunachala as 'Arunajala'. Bhagavan asked him to put a pebble in his mouth and try it. It worked!

Subramania Swami is of the firm faith that doing intense service without expecting any recognition or reward is the best form of *guru-seva*. Sri Bhagavan instructed him to be engaged in inner search amidst all activity. Bhagavan told him : "Do not give up your inner identity even in the midst of activities involving attraction and distraction. Be true to yourself and the truth will reveal Itself to you in due course."

He was intensely attached to Sri Chinna-swami, the brother of Sri Bhagavan, the then *Sarvadhikari*, and asserts that but for Chinna-swami's untiring services and dedicated work the Ashram would not have come up to its present glory.

He vividly describes to interested listeners the last scene of Sri Bhagavan's earthly existence. When the end was nearing He asked him and other attendants to put Him in *Padmasana* (sitting) posture. Subramaniam obeyed by properly holding His feet with his right hand and His back by the left — his last golden opportunity of touching the Holy Feet! He cried and appealed to Sri Bhagavan : "What will happen to us all if you leave us? Please save us and bless us," He graciously said in reply : "*Hum, hum*" (yes, yes).

He also witnessed the wonderful phenomenon of a shooting star that moved on high up in the sky and disappeared behind Arunachala, just when life became extinct in Bhagavan's body.

Subramania Swami, now past sixty, still lives and works as usual in the Ashram. His dedication to service is total.

May he live long in the service of his Master!



# THE HAPPENING

By  
Wei Wu Wei

Are you enlightened, Mr. Wu?

*Madame, 'Wu' is merely a shadow.*

How can that be, Mr. Wu?

*Madame, a shadow is only such because it is surrounded by light.*

The appearance may be seen as a shadow, but what Mr. Wu IS — is the light.

*Madame, I bow. Such also is a description of Madame.*

As also of that crow, Mr. Wu, and of the tree from which he is crowing.

*Madame, I prostrate. May we agree that there is only light and its shadows?*

So it appears, Mr. Wu, but shadows are illusions which are created by light.

*Alas, Madame, as 'you's we are both shadows, but as I — we are both the light.*

Then, Mr. Wu, shall we both bow, for neither need prostrate?

*What 'we' do, Madame, only matters to 'us': What 'we' ARE is Absolute Absence.*

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## BOOK REVIEWS

THE CONDENSED GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA: By Swami Akandananda. Pub.: Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras-600 004. Pp. 322. Price: (subsidised) Rs. 5/-

*Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita*, running into five volumes, is a major classic in the world's spiritual literature. It contains a day-to-day record of the conversations between Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and his devotees and disciples during the years 1882-1886. Swami Vivekananda, on reading some portions of this document, wrote to Master Mahashaya. "Socratic dialogues are Plato all over — you are entirely hidden. Moreover, the dramatic part is infinitely beautiful. Everybody likes it — here or in the West."

The author issued a condensed English version of the original Bengali in 1907 and the book went into several editions till 1942, when it was withdrawn from circulation after Swami Nikhilananda's full English translation of the Bengali volumes came out. It is, after 37 years that the *Condensed Gospel* is being re-issued and it is a most welcome feast, for it whets the appetite for the fuller account. Personalities like Vivekananda, Keshab Sen, Ishvarchandra Vidyasagar, Dr. Mahendranath Sarcar, Girish (dramatist) appear in these pages in their natural setting and serve to draw out the Wisdom that transcends philosophies and theologies.

God, says the Teacher, is both with form and without form. It depends upon the temperament of the seeker how he will realise Him. To see Him, however, needs an intensity of devotion and love. "Cry unto the Lord with a yearning heart and you shall see Him. People would shed a jugful of tears for the sake of wife and children. But whoever cries out for the Lord! To see God one must love Him, heart and soul."

The Paramahansa was no respecter of persons when it concerned the Divine. He had no patience with people who did japa with the mouth but went on thinking about other things in the mind. He recalls: "Once when Rasmani (founder of the Temple) came to visit the Temple, she came inside the Temple of the Mother when I was worshipping as priest. She asked me to chant the Holy Name. I sang but observed that she was thinking of something else and sorting the flowers for worship. I gave her a couple of slaps. This made her sit quiet with hands folded in adoration."

The Master says with wry humour:

"Everybody is anxious to be masters. How many are there who care to be disciples?" In another context, he exclaims: "There is not a fellow under the sun who is my disciple. On the contrary, I am everybody's disciple."

There are profound revelations thrown out with delightful ease. "*Sandhya* loses itself in Gayatri. Gayatri loses itself in Om, the sacred symbol in the Vedas for Brahman, the Absolute and Unconditioned. Om in the end loses itself in Samadhi."

It is not that the Master satisfied everybody's curiosity. He chose to speak or not to speak depending upon the spirit of the questioner. Read, for instance, the following interesting interlude:

Syam Babu: Sir, the Theosophists believe in *Mahatmas*. May I ask whether you hold that the *Mahatmas* are real beings?

Sri Ramakrishna: If you care to take my word for truth, I say 'Yes'. But will you be good enough to let these matters alone?

It is spiritually rewarding, if devastating to the ego and the intellect, to read this intensely human and elevating account of the movements and sayings of the Paramahansa.

MANTRAS: SACRED WORDS OF POWER:

By John Blofeld, Pub.: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, 40, Museum Street, London. Pp. 106, Price: £ 1.95.

"A friend interested in the apparent similarity between yogic experience and the states induced by hallucinogens persuaded me to try mescaline. The drug's effect on me was terrifying. . . I underwent a shattering disintegration accompanied by mental torment that was well-nigh unendurable. . . For hours the agony continued, intensifying rather than abating. Quite literally, I longed to die! At last, in a spirit of total self-abandonment, I called piteously upon my *yidam*, using of course her mantra. In a flash the situation was transformed! Horror gave place to bliss of the same high order of intensity!"

This is one of the striking instances of the power of the Mantra narrated by the author, an Englishman who has spent his lifetime in China and South-East Asia in learning and practising Buddhist meditations and techniques for at-one-ment. *Yidam*, he explains, is the deity who dwells within. For there is no Buddha or Budhisattva or deity outside of oneself. The reality personifies 'the divine potentiality with which

every creature is endowed the essence of being to be found within each individual while yet transcending all individual bounds, being non-dual, infinite, eternal.' And each such deity has a Mantra that has the power to invoke the divinity in question. The yogic method for this evocation is described:

"The *Yidam* is conceived of at the outset as an external deity, for the deluded instinct which makes men search for a god outside themselves must not be violated but satisfied until the aspirant has been led to discard it. Soon he attains direct intuition that the *Yidam* dwells within; next he perceives his own identity with the *Yidam* and, at a later stage, recognises the *Yidam* as being also identical with the Ultimate Source. Thus the separateness of the realms of form and void is discovered... to be illusory. The inconceivable is conceived by embodying it conceptually up to the moment when the need for concepts ceases."

The author quotes the Lama Anagarika Govinda asserting that the real power of mantras resides less in their sound than in the mind of the mantra-wielder.

The seeker is advised to make his 'mind stay still instead of chasing thoughts'.

The technique of Mantras, as it has been shaped in Tibet and China, is aware of other traditions, e.g. the Indian. His section on the celebrated Mantra "*OM MANI PADME HUM*" is specially educative. Before reciting the Mantra the practitioner must put himself in the proper poise of consciousness, seeking the weal of one's former enemies, yearning for the good of all sentient beings and longing for universal happiness, he gazes upon 'the lovely features of the Bodhisattva, now radiantly visible to his inner eye' and proceeds to recite the Mantra, which is explained as follows:

"OM, symbolising the origin, the Supreme Source, the *Dharmakaya*, the Absolute, is a powerfully creative word often held to be the sum of all sounds in the universe — the harmony of the spheres.

"*MANI PADME* (jewel in the lotus) signify such pairs of concepts as: Mind contained within our minds; the eternal in the temporal; the Buddha in our hearts; the goal (supreme wisdom) and the means (compassion).

"*HUM* is the conditioned in the unconditioned (being to OM as Te is to "Tao" in Taoist philosophy); it represents the limitless reality embodied within the limits of the individual being, thus it unites every separate being and object with universal OM; it is the deathless in the ephemeral, besides being a word of great power that destroys all ego-born hindrances to understanding."

Many have wondered about the significance of the hideous forms that are portrayed in many of the illus-

trations pertaining to these traditions. Blofeld notes: "These portray... the indomitable powers needed to crush the ingrained passions and evil tendencies where-with the ego defends itself against valiant efforts to achieve its dissolution. Were the adept to cling to beauty and flee from horror, dwell always upon joy and exclude terror from his mind, how would it be possible for him to attain to the non-dual realm? It takes not 'one' but 'both' to lead to neither".

Based upon personal experience and authentic knowledge, this treatise is a classic that has appeal both to the scientist and the spiritual aspirant.

**THE SOUND OF THE ONE HAND:** By Yoel Hoffman Pub.: Sheldon Press. Marylebone Road, London. Pp. 303, Price: £ 4.95.

When the Japanese edition of this book was first published in 1916 purporting to be a critique on the pseudo-Zen of the day it caused quite a flutter. For it contained a number of Koans that had not been published till then. Both the koans and their answers had been traditionally transmitted from master to pupil in the Rinzaï sect. But gradually the book became a classic and we have here an English version along with a commentary by Dr. Hoffman that explains many difficult concepts.

In this exhaustive introduction the author gives a succinct history of the Zen movement beginning with the pilgrimage of Bodhidharma from India to China the many changes that the discipline of *dhyaana* underwent in China and the subsequent developments, culminating in the several sects of Zen in Japan. He refers to the 'venomous debate' between the 'sudden' method represented by a Chinese master and the 'gradual' method represented by the Indian master, Kamalashila, in which the latter was the victor.

What is a koan? A koan is a 'divine mirror that reflects the original face of the both the sacred and the secular'. It is designed to break the intellectuality which is regarded 'as a defence against the truth'. There are in these pages 281 koans with steps that lead to their answers. The notes at the end help the reader to grasp the point. The disciple thinks and thinks and when he is about to give up, he receives some unexpected impact on the physical being and he perceives the truth.

The work is not meant for light reading. It calls for concentration and study in depth.

**YOGA AND INDIAN PHILOSOPHY:** By Karel Werner. Pub.: Motilal Banarsidass, Bangalow Road, Delhi-110 007. Pp. 192. Price: Rs. 40.

The book under review is a very learned and reliable introduction to Yoga and Indian Philosophy, firmly

based on original research. A former lecturer in Sanskrit and now the Spalding lecturer in Durham University, the author has a good knowledge of the Yoga systems. Karel Werner draws important parallels between the findings of modern European Existentialists and the insights of the Vedas and the Upanishads. He also brings out the humanism of Indian philosophy, since man's position in it is central, and man, not the world, is the starting point of philosophical enquiry. The seven chapters of the work fall naturally into two parts — philosophy and Yoga. The first part deals with cosmology, consciousness, and liberation. The last three chapters explain the several systems of yoga, including Hatha Yoga, their origin and purpose, and finally the place of yoga in modern thought. The last chapter gives an admirable account of Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Ramana and Aurobindo. In the words of the author, "No matter how quickly or how slowly depth psychology may be able to cope with this question, (psychotherapy) Yoga is already here as a developed, systematic way of exploring the inner dimensions of man's mind, a method of self-knowledge..." The impact of Yoga on Western mind is threefold — popular, scientific, and religious-philosophical.

The author deserves credit for setting out clearly the inter-relation between philosophy and yoga. His statement that Indian philosophy has not fallen into the extreme of totally objectifying reality and divorcing it from consciousness, that philosophy has never become subservient to religious dogma and that religious thought has never ignored the results of philosophical investigation are very important observations and well worth remembering.

M. P. PANDIT.

**PHILOSOPHY: EAST AND WEST:** edited by H. D. Lewis. Pub.: Blackie and Son (India) Ltd. 103/5 W. H. Marg, Bombay-400 001. Pp. 226. Price: Rs. 40/-

These essays in honour of Prof. Mahadevan are mostly by foreign scholars and deal with a variety of topics. Some are directly or indirectly on mysticism, others on Advaita Vedanta and Comparative Philosophy. Archis J. Bahm discusses the standards on which comparative philosophy should be based and concludes that the evolution of a good and reliable standard of evaluation is a matter of time. Margaret Chatterjee writes on classification, delving deep in comparative philosophy and the sociology of knowledge. Writing on "Transcendental Imagination", Oliver Lacombe discusses the *kalpana sakti* of Kant, Heidegger, and of Sankara, and holds that a through investigation of the relationship between intellect and imagination will settle the conflict between extreme rationalism and full-fledged irrationalism. The writings on Mysticism by Zaehner and Otto are examined by Geoffrey Parrinder.

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Grace Edith Cairns describes the axiological contributions of East and West to the spiritual development of mankind. Elaborating the values developed by Indian and Chinese thinkers, she concludes that the many-faced values of Truth and Beauty cannot be actualised unless *ahimsa* prevails. Hajime Nakamura criticises the widely held view that all that is modern today in the East is "Western". The Advaita philosophy in some of its aspects is the theme of the papers by Kalidas Bhattacharyas, Sengaku Mayeda and Barlingay. Prof. H. D. Lewis deserves our warm appreciation for the very good work he has done.

**GLOBAL HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: Volume one. The Axial Age,** by: John C. Plott with J. K. Dolin and R. E. Hatton. edited by R. C. Richmond. Pub.: Motilal Banarsidass. Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-110 007. Pp. 240. Price: Rs. 45/-

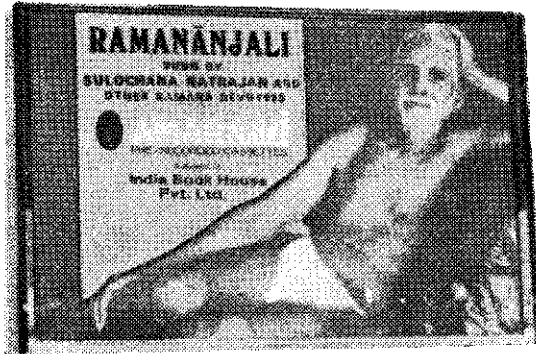
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system as correlated into the inter-cultural and multi-dimensional global perspective. Prof. Plott took his Ph. D. Degree from Benares where he studied Indian Philosophy and Gandhian pacifism, and is the author of other books, like "A Philosophy of Devotion", "Bhakti at the Crossroads" and "Sarva Darsana Sangraha". The Director of the Eastern Institute, Tokyo, Hajime Nakamura says in his Foreword that, though a Westerner, the writer has paid due attention to non-Western traditions.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part glances briefly at the mythical age and passes on to the Classical Age about the 6th century B.C. and to thinkers like Confucius, Lao Tzu, Socrates, Buddha, Mahavira and Zoroaster. The next section discusses the ethical speculation of these thinkers regarding man, law and deity. The second part compares the metaphysical teachings of Greek thinkers like Plato and Aristotle with those of the Hindu thinkers and more particularly with the six darsanas. Synchronological charts at the end are very detailed and reveal at a glance the wide ramifications of the global philosophy.

When the oneness of humanity is being emphasised, it is only appropriate that we should cultivate a synthetic and unitary approach to philosophy also, instead of persisting in the old provincial and ethnocentric attitude to human culture.

**ADVAITA VEDANTA:** By R. Balasubramanian. Pub.: Madras University Philosophical Series, Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras-600 005. Pp. 298. Price: Rs. 12/-

This book on Advaita Vedanta is based on Mandana Misra's classic "*Brahma Siddhi*", which consists of four chapters, namely, Brahma Kanda, Tarka Kanda, Niyoga Kanda, and Siddhi Kanda. The originator of what is called *Bhamatt prastana*, Vacaspati Misra, is said to have been considerably influenced by Mandana.

This monograph has six chapters. The first and the second deal with the *pramanas* and more particularly emphasise the unquestionable validity of Sruti. The third chapter discusses the nature of Brahman, refuting all the rival theories. The chapter of the Critique of Difference is based on the Tarka Kanda and concludes that difference is illusory and identity is real. The next chapter discusses Avidya; the last deals with the way and the goal of Advaita. Karma and Jnana and the nature of mukti are clearly explained by Dr. Balasubramanian, who is fair to both sides in every controversy. Students of Advaita Vedanta will be greatly benefitted by a thorough study of this book.

**INTERPRETATION AND BELIEF:** By Austin Farrer. Edited by C. C. Conti. Foreword by E. L. Mascali. London Pub.: SPCK. Holy Trinity Church, London NW1 4DV. Pp. 210. £ 5.95.

Austin Farrer, whose essays and sermons are published here, was Warden of Keble College, Oxford. This work is a posthumous publication and contains a Prologue on Credibility and 17 essays arranged under the three heads of canon, creed and criteria. The attempt is to interpret teachings of the Gospels in the light of rational analysis and to prove them correct. All the interpretations are within the framework of theistic belief. "Our faith is that God is infallible, the Church is not: She is *indefectible*." The book is well worth a deep and attentive study.

**SRI SANKARA VJAYAM:** Pub.: Ganesh and Co., Madras-600 017. Pp. 37. Price: Rs. 1.50.

The book under review is the second edition of a famous work on Sankara's life and achievements. It is noteworthy that the date of Adi Sankara's birth is given as Kali 2593 or 509 B. C. which agrees with genealogies preserved in the Sankara mutts of Kamakoti Dvaraka and Jagannatha. The main incidents, miracles and all, in the life of the Acharya are interestingly narrated. The style is lucid and simple and the successive incidents are revealed as in a panorama. The cover is adorned with the traditional portrait of the great Acharya. There are three appendices which discuss the place where Adi Sankara attained eternal bliss.

**DIVINITY OF MAN:** By K. S. Mani. Pub.: Ganesh and Co., Madras 600 017. Pp. 80. Price: Rs. 5/-

The author of this small book came under the spell of Pramathanatha Mukhopadhyaya the reputed scholar in Philosophy who worked untiringly with Sir John Woodroffe in his edition of many Tantric works. In 1936 he took Sannyasa under the name of Swami Pratyagatmananda and published his monumental "Japa Sutra" in six volumes in Sanskrit with an elaborate commentary in Bengali. Sri Mani gives here the main teachings of Swami Pratyagatmananda. These are in fact the important doctrines of Hinduism. That man's divinity is not taken merely as axiomatic. It is substantiated in the subsequent chapters on "The Concrete Whole of Existence" and "Karma and Evolution", which explain some obscure problems in karma theory and the sadhana for realising the Atman. The different planes of existence are intelligently discussed. The second part of the book contains six essays on Vedanta or the Science of Reality. The author corrects many wrong views held by people regarding Advaita Vedanta and Maya. The book is a valuable help for the correct understanding of the

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**BHAVANOPANISAD:** Text and commentary of Bhaskararaya. Rendering in English, notes and annotations by S. Mira M.A. Pub.: Ganesh and Co. Madras-17. Pp. 88. Price: Rs. 6/-

The Bhavanopanisad belongs to the Sakta school and is held in very high esteem by the worshippers of Sakti. Bhaskararaya has, in his commentary on this Upanisad very lucidly explained its esoteric significance. In the place of Brahman the Divine Mother, Parasakti, is worshipped as the Supreme Power. This worship may also be internal, as emphasised in this Upanisad. Bhavana is a way of meditation which itself is inner worship and a means of realization. There is considerable misunderstanding and ignorance in this field. These are likely to disappear a careful reading of the commentary by the great Bhaskararaya. The book is very well got up. The notes appended are brief but very helpful to the reader. The frontispiece contains the Sri Cakra in relevant colours.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRY.

**THE FEMININE, SPACIOUS AS THE SKY:** by Miriam and Jose Arguelles. Pub.: Shambala Publications Inc., P.O. Box 271, BOULDER, Colorado-80302, USA (1977 Paper-bound), Pp. 151, (including Appendices and Bibliography). Price: \$ 6.95.

This is a warm book, in which the husband-wife authors expose themselves in the best sense of vulnerability. Readers must endure their scholarship's over balance against experience and their devotion to the way of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, which puts early limits on other paths; otherwise it is a fresh, wide and beautiful book — a beauty which is much magnified by the profuse photographs and drawings, a number of them unavailable but for the authors' skillful drafting of often rare cultural artifacts.

The idea of *The Feminine* is explored through vast areas such as history, philosophy and religion, Psychological growth, art symbology and mythology. The feminine is defined as the unborn vastness of space as impersonal intelligence, as receptivity, as the unconditional void which is "fundamentally open" and can be "interpreted, seen or related to in many different ways". Then action, discipline and articulation are the masculine characteristics which actualize and complete the feminine.

The qualities ascribed to the feminine, which are in all of us irrespective of our physical sexual identity, go so far toward the status of the Transcendent that later on the masculine and everything else in the play of manifestation is pushed down into the "lesser" feminine with which the text began. If the feminine which for

its play must have the masculine, that survives and stands out as "Unceasing Emergence".

In their wide-ranging scholarship and use of quotations from Chinese, Tibetan, Indian, Arabic, Babylonian, Greek, Italian, Egyptian and American cultures and from peoples like the Eskimos, Maori (New Zealand), Hopi (USA), Dogon (Africa), and Nahuatl (Aztecs, Mexico), the authors have accepted some current misunderstandings, but these are overshadowed by fresh insights like dividing the great religious into a trinity of Christianity, Islam and Buddhism which seek new adherents; and a trinity of Judaism, Taoism and Hinduism which quietly don't. And precious gifts like the instruction quoted from Saint Francis de Sales:

If the heart wanders or is distracted, bring it back to the point gently and replace it tenderly into its Master's presence. And even if you did nothing during the whole of your hour but bring your heart back and place it again in Our Lord's presence, though it went away every time you brought it back, your hour would be very well employed.

Get the book, read it with discrimination, and it will entice you into the rims of the worlds.

RONALD JORGENSEN.

**THE BOOK OF THE LOVER AND THE BELOVED:** By Ramon Lull, Pub.: Sheldon Press, Marylebone Road, London, Pp. 116. Price: £ 1.95.

This mystical classic by the celebrated Franciscan tertiary, Ramon Lull, (1232-1316) of the Majorcan Palma, a Moorish region, is a synthesis of Arabic and Christian thought. Influenced greatly by the Sufis, he recognized the role played by Divine grace and advocated free and not forced conversion. He wanted posterity to remember him as "the Fool of Love", in conformity with the Franciscan approach of Christ through Folly. Unlike the earthly *joglars*, he sang only of the love of God, and dared appearing before the Papal Court as a Fool.

The book that came out of his facile pen, *Blanquerna*, pictures him as a troubadour (lover) intoxicated with the love of Christ (his Beloved). It is a religious romance. Blanquerna, hermit in the mountains near Rome, had once been Pope, and when he was "in prayer and considered the manner wherein to contemplate God and his virtues", the present book came out. *Blanquerna* is most probably an imaginary character, but the author acknowledges the Sufi influence in the writing.

The present book is a portion (Chap. 99) from *Blanquerna*, dealing with the brief approach towards the soul's learning to reflect on God. The book of 336 verses has been "divided into as many verses as ther

are days in the year", each verse meant to facilitate contemplation of God in one day. "The Lover" here is the Christian devotee and "the Beloved" is Christ; the relation between them is through love which makes one realize that the Beloved "is — but none knows where" (219). The book is designed as a guide to contemplation.

This fourteen century French work was translated into English around 1923 by Allison Peers. A revised edition of this translation appeared in 1946, but was not reprinted subsequently although the book was in great demand. The present edition of Kenneth Leech is substantially the same translation, with some modernization of language here and there. Leech has also provided an excellent introduction concerning the author as well as the book.

The author's religious persuasion is Franciscan and his cosmological standpoint is Neo-Platonist. He believed that the Holy Trinity is mirrored in the created order, and while explaining the Trinitarian structure of creation he employs the reasoning (intellectual and mathematical) that was typical of al-Ghazzali. Living in an Islamic country and exposed to Islamic ideas, it is natural that his thoughts were influenced by Islamic theology and mysticism although his life-long battle was against Islam. In this context, the book is eminently interesting. There is here both a deliberate and unconscious fusion of Christian and Islamic ideas.

Mysticism provides a platform for such fusion, and Lull has made excellent use of it.

S. Y. KRISHNASWAMY.

**THE BLUE CLIFF RECORD:** Translated by Thomas Cleary and J. C. Cleary. Volumes II and III. Pub.: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1977, Boulder, Colorado, U.S.A. Pp. 201 and 185. Price: \$ 5.95 each.

The Blue Cliff Record — a translation of the ancient Chinese koan text *Pi Yen Lu* — contains one hundred koans handed down from dozens of masters of the schools of Ch'an Buddhism. The original preface to the text, written in 1128, pays high tribute to the

man who motivated the compilation of these koans through the depth and extent of his instructive commentaries:

"... the Ch'an Master Hsueh Tou had the true eye which transcends any sect and goes beyond patterns; he upheld the true imperative and did not reveal a customary standard. He took up the hammer and tongs to smelt and forge Buddhas and Patriarchs, and versified the transcendental noses of the patchrobed monks. A silver mountain, an iron wall; who could dare try to bore in? A mosquito trying to bite an iron ox cannot manage to penetrate. If you do not meet a great Master, how can you thoroughly comprehend the abstruse subtleties?...

"Pu Chao (the writer of this preface) was fortunate to be close to the Master's seat and was able to hear what he had never heard before. Companions in the Way compiled it into a volume, and this stupid oaf has reported the root and branches of the master".

The text has since become a classic work in the study of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism. Each of the one hundred koans has been built upon in verse form by Hsue Tou, and then more comments and related anecdotes have been added by his student.

Now, with the translation into English, a further set of notes has been added which try to explain some of the culture-rooted expressions used in the Chinese original. In spite of these notes the reader sometimes fails to understand — in a *literal* and not in a mystical sense — what the Master has said. In such cases one tends to get "stuck on the phrases and sunk in the words", for the state or image transmitted by the Master has gathered too much dust on its travels through the centuries and across cultural boundaries. The central koans, however, are simply phrased. The Blue Cliff Records will serve as a highly valued book of instruction, an active tool for anyone ready to be helped by the great Teachers of ancient China.

JOHN HARPER.

### RAMANA MAHARSHI CONTACT LETTER

Seekers interested to contact other seekers on the path and also receive books about Sri Ramana Maharshi may write to the address given below for more information.

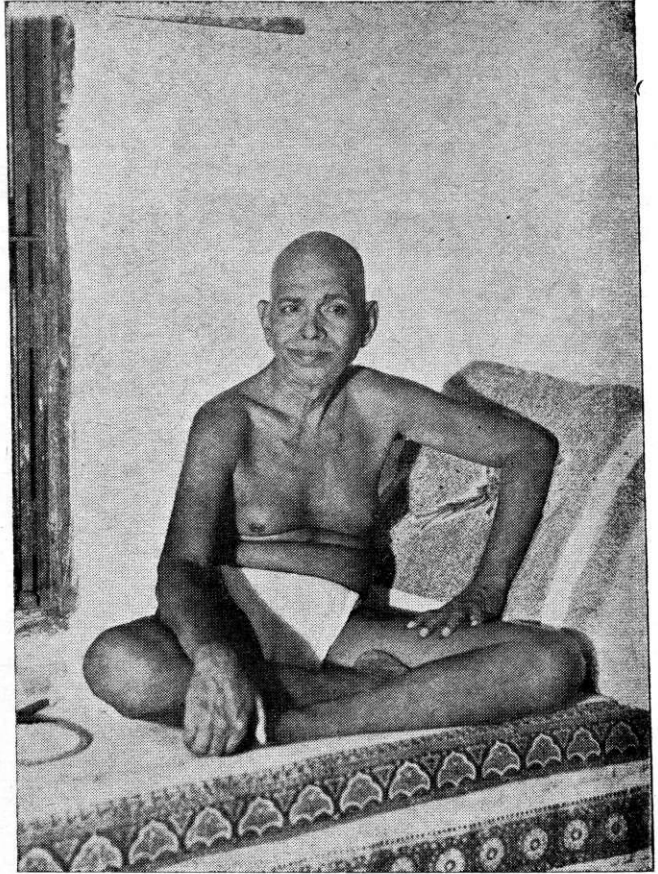
*Ramana Maharshi Contact Letter,*  
6, Hillcrest, WITHDEAN, Brighton - BN1 5FN  
ENGLAND

[Telephone: (0273) 553115]

# ASHRAM BULLETIN

Sri Bhagavan's  
Birth Centenary  
Celebrations

MAJOR PROJECTS  
IMPLEMENTED AS  
TRIBUTE TO  
BHAGAVAN RAMANA



Thanks to the enthusiasm of Ramana-bhaktas extending help, much progress has already been achieved in fulfilling many of the items in the Centenary programme. Devotees have responded readily to our appeal not only by way of contribution of funds but also by offering useful suggestions.

*Till the end of September the total amount of donations received from devotees has touched Rs. 5 lakhs.*

If such enthusiasm is maintained, we are sure that the celebrations to be conducted throughout 1980 will be a great success.

We have pleasure in giving some details of progress already achieved.

## MUSIC/RECITATION/ELOCUTION/ESSAY COMPETITIONS IN SCHOOLS/COLLEGES

Students of different age groups are being given an opportunity and incentive to study the life and teachings of Bhagavan Ramana through these competitions in

English, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi and Sanskrit. Thousands of students in schools and colleges in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar and Delhi are participating.

## AT BANGALORE

A big beginning has already been made in Bangalore, Mysore, Dharwar, Mandya and Kumta in Karnataka state.

The inter-school competitions and inter-collegiate elocution contests at Bangalore were held in Bangalore



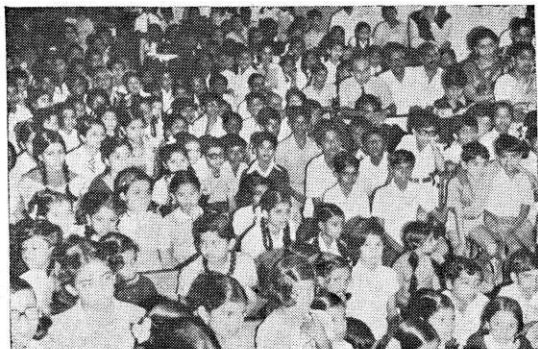
*Sri A. R. Natarajan spoke with emotion. Seated are Prof. Venkatasubbiah, Sri V. Ganesan and Sri B. C. Mruthyunjaya.*

High School, Jayanagar, on Sunday, September 9. It was very well organised by the Principal of the school and an old devotee of Sri Bhagavan, *Sri B. C. Mruthyunjaya*. Over three hundred students, selected out of three thousand entrants, spread over sixty-four schools participated. The standard was very high and competitors had studied relevant passages from Sri Bhagavan's life and teachings.

\* \* \* \* \*

On September 9, the competitions were initiated after a prayer-meeting. Prof. Venkatasubbiah presided, while *Sri V. Ganesan*, represented the Ashram. After *aarti* to the large portrait of Sri Bhagavan, *Smt. Sulochana Natarajan* and her daughters, *Sarada* and *Ambika*, sang devotional songs on Sri Maharshi.

In his presidential speech, Sri Venkatasubbiah extolled Sri Bhagavan as a unique sage who gave to the world a direct spiritual path most suited to this scientific age. He was happy to see young and tender



**BANGALORE:** Enthusiastic students at the prayer meeting who participated in the Competitions in Bangalore and a tastefully displayed black-board.

## PRIZE DISTRIBUTION AT BANGALORE

The prizes for the winners of the inter-school/collegiate competitions were distributed by *Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji* of Sai Spiritual Centre at Bangalore, on September 16, at the Rotary Hall of Friendship.

The Swamiji said that *Upadesa Saram* and other works of Sri Maharshi represented the quintessence of Upanishadic thought and could be easily practised with great advantage by one and all.

*Dr. Balasundaram*, former Principal of Rishi Valley School, spoke eloquently about Sri Ramana's emphasis on individual effort and Self-enquiry. *Kumaris Sarada* and *Ambika* sang a few songs of Sri Bhagavan.

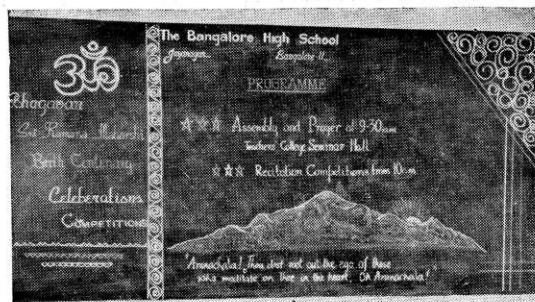
The inter-collegiate winners, *Kumaris Sashikala Nambiar* and *Sharada Rao*, spoke enthusiastically about the simplicity and directness of Bhagavan's teachings.

faces beaming with enthusiasm. Sri B. C. Mruthyunjaya gave the full details about the competitions. *Sri A. R. Natarajan* gave a vote of thanks.

Reports are awaited from other centres.

## L. P. RECORD AND CASSETTE PROGRAMMES

On July 4, 5, *Smt. Sulochana Natarajan*, *Kumaris Sarada*, *Ambika*, *Sri H. K. Narayana*, *Sri Kesava Kumar*, *Sri Chinna* and other Ramana-devotees gave an inspired rendering of a number of songs by and on Sri Bhagavan at the H.M.V. Studio in Madras. These songs would



### A LETTER FROM HENRI HARTUNG <sup>1</sup>

Dear Ganesh,

Thank you for your letter requesting me to contribute an article for the Souvenir 'RAMANA SMRTI'. I accept with devotion to write an article either about my meeting with Bhagavan in 1947 or on a special aspect of His teachings.

I will also be organising a few meetings for Sri Bhagavan's Birth Centenary:

#### Two in Switzerland:

- (i) December 2, 1979: In Geneva, with the Ramakrishna Mission here, and by Swami Nityabodhananda, Director of 'Centre Vedantique'.
- (ii) January 2, 1980: In Fleurier, with our "Centre de Reccontres Spirituelles et de Meditation".

#### Two in France:

- (i) January 27, 1980: In Paris, by Patrick Lebail.
- (ii) April 13 1980: In Gretz, near Paris, by Patrick Lebail and Swami Ritajananda, Director, Ramakrishna Mission in France.

The main object of organising these meetings will be meditation in silence. I also intend introducing Sri Maharshi's teachings and perhaps, some Indian Music. I hope too that my book on Sri Maharshi will be ready before the end of this year. This will be my cherished homage to my Guru, Bhagavan Ramana.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Henri P. Hartung, Le Pasquier 2115 FLEURIER Switzerland.

be brought out in a *Long Playing Record* as announced in our July issue.

Devotees are requested to acquire and utilize this collection of moving songs which are expected to be released by the middle of October.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Arunachala Siva* in full, other compositions of Sri Bhagavan and some songs on Him will be brought out as a cassette by the middle of November.

\* \* \* \* \*

An exclusive Telugu Cassette on hymns and songs by and on Sri Bhagavan will also be brought out before the end of December, 1979.

In addition to having already released a cassette, *Ramananjali* which has become very popular, the *India Book House, Bombay* are bringing out another cassette, this time purely in Hindi, entitled: *Ramana Bhajans*, the words being provided by *Sri Ramanath Shastri*.

On August 14, 18, these *Ramana Bhajans* in Hindi and Sanskrit were recorded at Chamundeeswari Studios, Bangalore, by the same *Ramananjali*-group of singers.

The music direction was done by the experienced and reputed *Sri D. S. Dixit*, who took special personal interest and *Symala Bhuve*.

The lyrics are musical and the tunes are very charming.

\* \* \* \* \*

### KUMBHABHISHEKAM

Under the guidance of a traditional expert, it is proposed to perform a *Jeeranodharana Kumbhabhishekam* to the shrines of Sri Maharshi and that of His Mother. Repairing of the worn out portions in and above the temple and the rituals alone would be carried out.

An auspicious day has been fixed and on *November 22, 1979*, this important function will be celebrated. A detailed account<sup>1</sup> of how it is going to be performed is given hereunder for those who are interested.

All devotees are welcome to participate in the function.

*Sri Krishnananda (Mangudi Krishnamurthi Iyer)* is in sole charge of this sacred function and he is exerting himself to the best of his ability to make it a correct and solemn observance

### <sup>1</sup>KUMBHABHISHEKAM OF SRI RAMANESWARA MAHALINGAM AND SRI MATRUBHUTESWARA SANNIDHANAM.

#### PROGRAMME

##### November 19, 1979: Monday:

- 7-00 a.m. *Anujna, Dhana Pooja, Rakshoghna Homa, Vasthu Shanthi.*
- 4-00 p.m. *Mrit-Sangrahanam Ankurarpanam.*
- 7-00 p.m. *Ghata Sthapanam — Yaga Pooja.*

##### November 20: Tuesday:

- 9-00 a.m. *Yaga Pooja.*
- 7-00 p.m. *Yaga Pooja.*

##### November 21: Wednesday:

- 9-00 a.m. *Yaga Pooja.*
- 7-00 p.m. *Yaga Pooja.*

##### November 22: Thursday:

- 7-00 a.m. *Yaga Pooja.*
- 8-00 to 9-00 a.m. *Maha Kumbhabhishekam.*
- 7-00 p.m. *Mahabhishekam.*

**“Ramana Vaibhavam”**

A  
LONG PLAYING RECORD (L. P.)  
OF COMPOSITIONS OF

**SRI BHAGAVAN**



(including the whole of UPADESA SARAM in Sanskrit)

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Compositions of Sri Kavyakanta Ganapathi Muni,

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Sri Satyamangalam Venkatarama Iyer,

Sri Sadhu Om and Sri C. N. Sastri

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**SRI RAMANA**

*Sung by Ramana-devotees, led by*

**Smt. Sulochana Natarajan with ‘Ramananjali’ group.**

Price (Inclusive of Taxes) **About Rs. 50/-**

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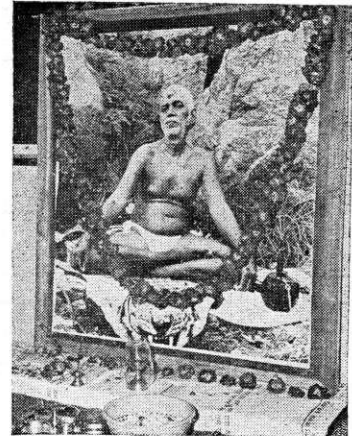
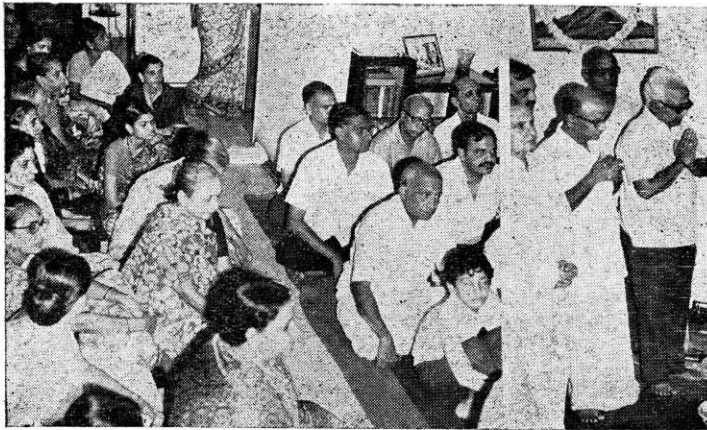
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SRI RAMANASRAMAM P.O.  
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South India.





**AHMEDABAD:** A large coloured portrait of Sri Bhagavan was presented by Sri Ramanasramam to the Ramana Kendra in Ahmedabad. (l. to r.) Devotees seen on the solemn occasion. (standing) Sri P. M. Trivedi, Sri S. C. Khanna, Sri K. Sivaraj, Sri N. S. Sundaram, Sri P. G. Mahadevan. The beautiful portrait of Sri Bhagavan.

## NEW CENTRES (RAMANA KENDRA)

### HYDERABAD

We are happy to announce the founding of a Centre in Hyderabad on July 22, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Dr. K. Subrahmanian (member of the Editorial Board of THE MOUNTAIN PATH). Every Sunday, the Ramana Kendra holds *sat sang* for over an hour, when in addition to chanting, prayers and talks, meditation is given importance.

### AHMEDABAD

The Ramana Kendra in the capital city of Gujarat State — Ahmedabad — was founded on April 14, 1978 and has been holding *sat sangs* in the houses of devotees of Sri Bhagavan. Thanks to the efforts of Sri K. Sivaraj (Addl. Chief Secretary to the Government of Gujarat), who is a staunch devotee, it is proposed to secure a site for the Kendra and construct a shrine and a reading room and Library.

The office-bearers of this Kendra are: Sri P. G. Mahadevan, Sri K. Sivaraj, Sri N. S. Sundaram, Sri S. C. Khanna, Sri Manubhai Vyas, Sri P. M. Trivedi and Sri K. M. Parekh.

### BOMBAY

We are glad to report that the necessary formality of the registration under the Trust Act, the Kendra in Bombay has been completed on May 10, thanks to the tireless efforts of Sri Jagdish Munshi and Sri P. V. Somasundaram. Under the dynamic leadership and guidance of Sri N. D. Sahukar, we are sure that the Bombay

## SRI BHAGAVAN'S PORTRAIT

On August 5, a special function was arranged in Ahmedabad at the residence of Sri K. Sivaraj, when a large portrait of Sri Bhagavan was presented by Sri Ramanasramam (through Sri V. Ganesan) to the Ahmedabad Kendra. The meeting was well attended by the Ramana-bhaktas inspite of rains.

Sri P. G. Mahadevan (News Editor of *The Times of India*), President of the Kendra, heartily welcomes Sri Ganesan and thanked the Ashram for the gift. Sri Sivaraj, with his deep knowledge of scriptural lore and the teachings of Sri Ramana, gave a scintillating speech explaining the strength and simplicity of the method of *Vichara*.

May this Kendra prosper with Bhagavan's continued Presence and guidance!

Kendra will attract and help aspirants coming to India from all over the world.

The Trustees appeal to devotees in India and abroad to donate liberally and help to collect Rs. 5 lakhs for the consideration of a new building with a large prayer and meditation hall, Library and a few guest-rooms at the premises of Mahatma Gandhi Seva Mandir, Swami Vivekananda Road (Opp. the Tank), Bandra, a suburb of Bombay. The registered office is: Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi Centre, 10/155, Adarsh Nagar, Near Century Bazaar, Worli, Bombay-400 025.



*Await Release!**New Cassette!!*

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**ARUNACHALA SIVA**

(all the 108 verses composed by Sri Bhagavan)

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SRI RAMANASRAMAM, P.O.,

**TIRUVANNAMALAI - 606 603, South India.**

### SUNDARA MANDIRAM, TIRUCHUZH

The ancestral property of Sri Bhagavan at Tiruchuzhi, which amounted to more than fifty acres of land (which later became the property of the Ashram), was sold in Sept. The amount realised is being exclusively utilised for improvement and maintenance of *Sundara Mandiram* at Tiruchuzhi and *Ramana Mandiram* in Madurai.

### STATUE OF SRI BHAGAVAN

In our July 1979 issue, p. 177, we published an article by the Sculptor, *Sri Kalasagaram Rajagopal*, explaining how he happened to undertake making the statue of Sri Bhagavan. We are happy to report that the statue is nearing completion, thanks to the hard work of the sculptor. As soon as the casting in bronze is completed, devotees intend taking it round the Hill, with the chanting of "*Arunachala Siva*"—the *nama* (Name) that moved Sri Bhagavan from His childhood.

### "RAMANA SMRTI" SOUVENIR

The old reminiscences gathered and kept in the Ashram archives have now been taken up and are being edited by *Sri Jim Grant* and *Professor Swaminathan*. We have also received very good articles on Sri Maharshi and His teachings contributed, specially for *Ramana Smrti*, by eminent scholars and writer-devotees. The Souvenir will contain many illustrations, Tributes and Special Articles and detailed information about the Ashram with charts and plans.

The Souvenir will definitely be not only interesting but worth preserving as a precious possession.

### ELECTRIFICATION OF GIRIPRAKSHINA ROAD

The electrification of *giripradakshina* road scheme has met with some criticism mostly from western devotees who feel that the natural beauty of the *giripradakshina* road should not be spoiled.

We are making efforts to revive the use of the 'forest' path which was used by Sri Bhagavan and others in those olden days. This runs all round just at the foot of Arunachala. We have applied to the Forest Department to permit us revive this old foot-path so that devotees who want to do *giripradakshina* without distractions can do it undisturbed with the satisfaction of treading the sacred path sanctified by the feet of Sri Bhagavan.

AUM NAMO BHAGAVATE  
SRI RAMANAYA

By

FATHER ANTHONY ELENJIMITAM

On my return to Assisi for a week from Turkey, I am happy to receive the books you so kindly sent me for our *Yoga Meditation Center*<sup>1</sup>. The books contained in the parcel are:

1. *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi.*
2. *Letters from Ramanashramam.*
3. *Day by Day with Bhagavan.*
4. *The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi*
5. *The Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi in His own words.*
6. *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge.*

These books are priceless gifts from Bhagavan to our Center. Thanks. This will be a valuable addition to our research library.

Not being able to take part physically in the Centenary Celebrations of our beloved Bhagavan at Sri Ramanasramam I seize every opportunity I get to spread the gospel of Sri Ramana. In fact, in Turkey, where Sunni orthodox Moslem religion prevails, I broadcast the message of Bhagavan to groups of Sufis who are followers of the great Jellaludin Rumi, the author of *Mathnavi*, which is the esoteric version of the *Koran*. Whether in Christian mysticism, in Hindu Advaita Vedanta, or Sufi Islam we always begin with Self-Enquiry and end up with Self-realisation. Time permitting, I will send you an article on Ramana and Jellaludin Rumi, after my return from Switzerland in October.

May the grace of Bhagavan shine and smile over us all!

<sup>1</sup> *Yoga Meditation Center*, vicolo S. Croce 8, 06081, ASSISI, Italy.

### TRANSLATIONS

The translation of *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* into Telugu, Bengali and Marathi have already been completed. While the Telugu and Marathi versions are already in the press, the Bengali edition is yet to be taken up for printing. Efforts are being made to have this precious book rendered into other Indian languages as well.

The *National Book Trust* has brought out Hindi and Marathi translations of Professor K. Swaminathan's book: *Ramana Maharshi* and proposes to bring out translations in Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and other languages.

\* \* \* \* \*

Through the efforts of *Dr. Ramakrishna Rao*, *Dr. Hegde* and *Sri T. R. Jayaraman*, Sri Bhagavan's philosophy is being introduced as a subject for study in Mysore University and Bangalore University.

We hope that the authorities in other Universities will do likewise.

### FILM ON BHAGAVAN

An eminent musician and film-maker in Bombay, *Sri D. S. Dixit*, has come forward to make a documentary on Sri Bhagavan in colour.

Meanwhile the Government of India, Ministry for Information and Broadcasting, have also been approached so that the Government brings out a documentary on Sri Bhagavan, which will be distributed and shown all over India in all cinema theatres, with scripts in various languages.

### AFFORESTATION

The afforestation of the Arunachala Hill was taken up, thanks to the Government of India, in 1977 and we are already enjoying the fruits of it. After several years, Tiruvannamalai is experiencing intermittent rains almost every month.

We would request the Forest Department to strictly prevent destruction of trees and plants already on the Hill and to nurture the new saplings to implement the afforestation scheme.

We are sure, within a couple of years, holy Arunachala will be covered with the pleasant green foliage of trees and plants, even as it used to be in the good old days when Sri Bhagavan first beheld it as a youngster of sixteen.

### CENTENARY FUND-RAISING TOUR

After informing the innumerable devotees of Sri Bhagavan scattered all over the world, requesting them to participate and help complete the various projects that have been undertaken to celebrate Sri Bhagavan's Birth Centenary, the Centenary Committee felt that a representative from the Ashram should visit important cities in North India and meet devotees. *Sri V. Ganesan* was entrusted with the task of taking up the tour; in the meanwhile, devotees had sent letters of invitation to him.

\*\*\*\*\*

### RAMANA KENDRA, MADRAS

The Kendra in Madras conducts every Sunday-evening *Vedaparayana*, *puja* and invariably a discourse by some eminent devotee on Sri Bhagavan's teachings, or some aspects of Vedantic philosophy, in general.

Among those who spoke during the quarter, mention should be made of the names of *Professor K. Swaminathan*, who gave four talks, *Sri K. K. Nambiar*, Chairman of the Kendra, who spoke on two evenings, *Sri Arjuna*, Deputy Commissioner, H.R.C. and E, *Sri K. Sankara Menon* of Kalakshetra, who spoke twice, *Pulawar T. Kumaraswamy*, *Sri V. Ramamurthi I.A.S.* and *Smt. Prema Pandurangam*.

Besides the functions on Sundays, special *pujas* and *bhajans* by lady-devotees are being conducted on all *Punarvasu* days.

\* \* \* \* \*

On September 16 the *Punarvasu* day — there was a *bhajan* programme by *Smt. Alamelu Venkataraman* and party for about an hour and a half. The songs in the *bhajan* included compositions by Sri Bhagavan and Sri Muruganar.

*Sri T. N. Venkataraman*, President of the Ashram, who graced the Kendra on that day, presented *Smt. Alamelu Venkataraman* with a photograph of Sri Bhagavan.

\*\*\*\*\*

Accordingly, Ganesan started from the Ashram on July 4, 1979 and visited Asansol, Raniganj, Jamshedpur, Calcutta, Varanasi, Allahabad, Kanpur, Baroda and Ahmedabad, and returned to Ashram on August 19. Wherever he went there was enthusiastic reception and devotees expressed great willingness to help raise funds for the Centenary.

We, including Ganesan, feel highly indebted to the following devotees, who unreservedly offered their assistance, guidance and help.

*Sri S. Kulathu* (Asansol), *Sri G. Doraiswami* and *Sri G. Sathyanarayanan* (Raniganj); *Sri G. Ramamoorthy* (Jamshedpur); *Sri P. Subramaniam*, *Sri V. R. Lakshminarayanan*, *Dr. and Mrs. Purnima Sircar*, *Sri B. N. Chatterjee*, *Sri Sauman Mukherjee*, *Sri Ramamurthy* (Calcutta); *Dr. Siddheshwar Nath* and *Mrs. Rani* of Ayodhya (Varanasi); *Sri Pawan Kumar Mandhyan*, *Sri Ramesh Chandra Kapur* (Allahabad); *Sri H. C. Khanna*, *Sri A. C. Sinha*, *Sri Laxmankumar Sastri*, *Sri Om Nath Rohatgi*, *Sri K. C. Kapur*, *Sri S. Sathya Narayana Tandon*, *Sri Ramasrandas Khanna*, *Sri S. Narayanan* (Kanpur); *Sri Ramesh Chandra Amin*, *Dr. Satyavati*

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Thanks to the devotees, we are not only hopeful of collection of funds towards our estimated cost of expenditure to execute all the Centenary projects, but also are happy to find a keen awakening in them in spreading the teachings of Sri Maharshi to every nook and corner of India. The co-operation and assurance extended by devotees have encouraged us to rededicate ourselves more vigorously to the task on hand.

### PORTRAIT-GIFT TO BHAVAN IN LONDON

Sometime back we were informed by one of the devotees of Sri Bhagavan residing in London that a VIP visitor to *Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan* in London had remarked that he was missing a picture of Bhagavan Ramana in the picture-gallery there, though he was happy to see many of sages and saints.



LONDON: The benign bust photo of Sri Bhagavan now adorns the *Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan* in London.

A big photo of Sri Bhagavan's Bust was immediately made. We requested our dear friend Mr. Z. Z. Buday, a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan with his own house in Ramana Nagar, to take a large size photo

### RAMANA KENDRA, DELHI

*Vidyodaya Day* was celebrated on July 22. After recitations from *Upadesa Sara* and *Sat Darsana*, there was a programme of music provided by *Kumari Prabhavati Venkatesh* and other children. *Professor K. Swaminathan* and *Sri S. N. Tripathi* spoke on the significance of the *Vidyodaya Day*.

*Swami Pranavananda* visited the Kendra on August 12. September 2 was observed as Muruganar's Day. A group of ladies from Netaji Nagar gave a musical rendering of some of Muruganar's songs. A number of deserving school children were given gifts of books and other study material. Two principals of DTEA Higher Secondary Schools, *Sri J. N. Ganju* of Lodi Estate, and *Sri Sivaramakrishnan*, of Mandir Marg, spoke on the occasion.

*Sri K. K. Nambiar*, of Madras, gave a talk on September 16.

The Kendra is actively engaged in making arrangements in Delhi Schools and Colleges for the Competition Scheme organised throughout the country by the Centenary Celebrations Committee.

of Sri Bhagavan's Bust and present it to the London Bhavan, on behalf of Sri Ramanasramam.

We are happy that the portrait was duly presented to the Bhavan in London by Mr. Buday and that Sri Bhagavan is now housed there.

We express our thanks to *Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan* for having accepted the picture.

### GAVESHANA KENDRA

The building known as *Gaveshana Kendra* is being constructed near the Ashram by *Ramana Kendra, Delhi*, and is designed to be a Research Centre, where the life and teachings of Sri Bhagavan, as well as other philosophical and spiritual traditions, can be studied in depth. The three rooms on the ground floor have now been completed.

During the month of June, a ceremony was held to dedicate the building. On July 22, another *puja* was conducted in one of the rooms, which has been set aside temporarily for work on preservation and repair of rare books and MSS.

Work has been started on improving the Ashram collection of photographs and movies of Sri Bhagavan. The assistance of devotees on these projects will be appreciated, and regular notification of needs will be made in the *Ashram Bulletin* in THE MOUNTAIN PATH.

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**ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA**

**Celebration in Canada of Ramana's Advent at Arunachala**

The devout *bhaktas* at *Arunachala Ashrama* both in New York City and at Nova Scotia celebrated the 83rd Anniversary of Sri Bhagavan's Advent at Sri Arunachala in a grand way at Nova Scotia, Canada. The celebration began with a special *Sri Chakra Puja* performed on August 31, in *Sri Arunachala Ramana Mandiram* there.

Soft breezes swept over *Sri Arunachala Ramana Mandiram* on R.R. 1 near Bridgetown on September 2, 1979 and carried the soul-stirring sound of hymns and prayers offered on the 83rd Anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's Advent at Sri Arunachala to the low hillocks guarding the picturesque valley of Nova Scotia (Eastern Canada).

A hundred Indian men women and children from different parts of Canada gathered at the precincts of the Temple and chanted prayers in unison with great devotion which made one forget temporarily that the celebration was not in India, but in a foreign land.

The programme opened with Ganesha Puja conducted by *Dr. Lakshminarayana* of Moncton, New Brunswick,

and followed by an introduction by *Mr. B. K. Raju*, who had been instrumental several years ago in acquiring the land on which the Temple stands and recovering the framed-house of the Temple. He expressed great pleasure that so many Indian families had come to celebrate Sri Bhagavan's Anniversary.

*Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagavat* warmly welcomed the guests and invited them to come to the Temple and *Arunachala Ashrama* any time they wished.

Sri Bhagavat introduced his friend, *Sri G. P. Jain*, editor of *Sevagram Farm Weekly*, New Delhi, who had arrived in Nova Scotia two days before to attend the anniversary celebrations and study the work the Ashrama was doing in the western Hemisphere.

Sri Jain thanked Sri Bhagavat for inviting him to the function and assured that he would carry the deep impression made on him by the devotees of Ramana Maharshi who were opening the West to the teachings of the Sage of Arunachala.

After some more select bhajans, *Miss Evelyn Kaselow*, briefly spoke on her visit to Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, during March, 1979. She described it as a great spiritual experience for her.

The celebration ended with the distribution of '*Prasadam*' to all participants on the spacious lawns of the Temple.

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(QUARTERLY)

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