
THE MOUNTAIN PATH



Vol. 24, No. 3. July, 1987

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Didst Thou not call
 me in? I have come in.
 Now measure out for me,
 (my maintenance is now
 Thy burden). Hard is Thy
 lot, Oh Arunachala!

*The Marital
 Garland of Letters
 Verse 94*

The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

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

—The Marital Garland of Letters, Verse 1

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— 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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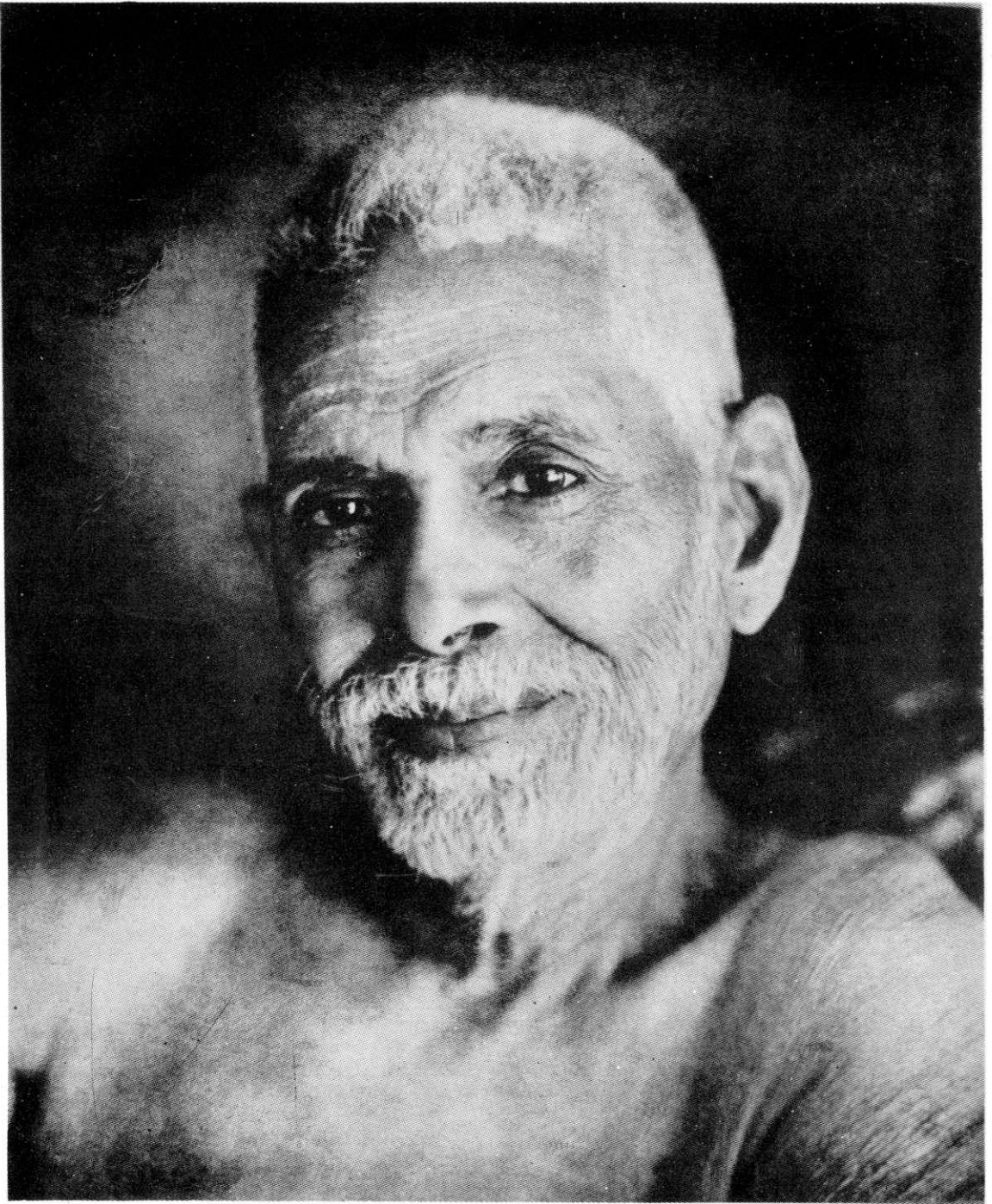
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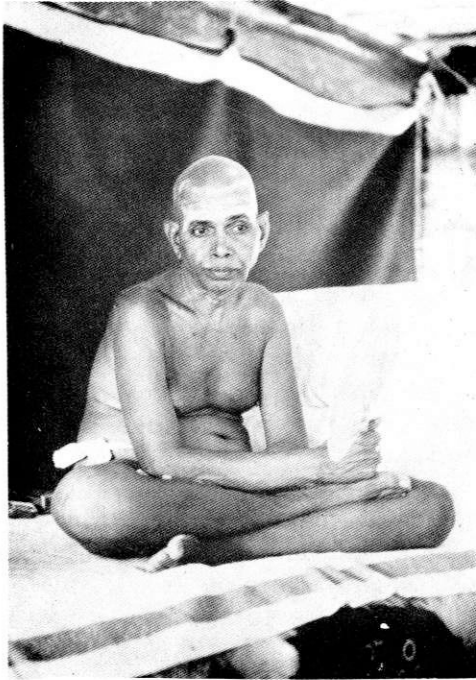
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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

is dedicated to

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi





EVERYONE wants to be free, free to do what one wants to do. No one likes to be fettered in any way. Bondage is sorrow, freedom bliss.

But we can't have absolute freedom. Our freedom to do something shouldn't conflict with other's freedom in any way. We can't act and speak as we like. There are constraints on our freedom. These constraints are in our interest and the interest of the society we live in. Like the traffic lights, they stop our movement temporarily so that all can move safely. We give up part of our freedom in our interest and in the interest of others.

We all want to have the freedom to pursue happiness. We set before ourselves a goal, work towards it and finally achieve it after overcoming several obstacles. When we achieve it, we are happy.

FREEDOM

Editorial

But this happiness doesn't last long. So we pursue another object and achieve it after trials and tribulations. The happiness of this achievement is also short lived. It is mainly because nothing outside can give us permanent happiness. Still our pursuit continues. The pursuit of happiness becomes transformed into the happiness of pursuit.

We want to be free and happy because freedom and happiness are our real nature. Real freedom consists not in seeking this or that but in seeking the source of the seeker. So long as there is the sense of individuality, the sense of ego, there cannot be freedom. The mind is for ever seeking, for ever restless. There is no

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real freedom so long as we are bothered by the mind. Real freedom is freedom from the restless mind. Total freedom is beyond the mind. It is realised when the chatter of the mind ceases, when there is no seeking of any kind, even of freedom.

“In the state of freedom,” says Sri Bhagavan, “there is no sense of doership, there is no sense of enjoyment or of individual will. This state is realised through meditation or surrender”. What is meditation? J. Krishnamurti says: “In meditation, you are not important, you have no place in it; the beauty of it is not you, but in itself. And to this you can add nothing. Don't look out of the window hoping to catch it unawares, or sit in a darkened room waiting for it; it comes when you are not there at all...” *The Only Revolution* (Victor Gollancz, p,88). In meditation, the medi-

tator and meditation, the seeker and the sought, the seer and the seen, become one.

Freedom comes into being through surrender also. Sri Bhagavan says: “The other way is to kill the ego by completely surrendering to the Lord, by realising one's helplessness and saying all the time, ‘Not I but thou, O Lord’, giving up all sense of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ and leaving it to the Lord to do what He likes with you. Surrender can never be regarded as complete so long as the devotee wants this or that from Lord. The surrender is love of God for the sake of love and nothing else, not even for the sake of liberation”. We shall enjoy the liberty of spirit when we lose our individual freedom, our individual will, when we lose our sense of ‘me’ and ‘mine’. We are totally free when we are His ‘captive’.

“That which rises as ‘I’ in this body is the mind. If one inquires as to where in the body the thought ‘I’ rises first, one would discover that it rises in the heart. That is the place of the mind's origin. Even if one thinks constantly ‘I’ ‘I’, one will be led to that place. Of all the thoughts that arise in the mind, the ‘I’—thought is the first. It is only after the rise of this that the other thoughts arise. It is after the appearance of the first personal pronoun that the second and third personal pronouns appear; without the first personal pronoun there will not be the second and third.”

— Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi
in *WHO AM I?*

Introduction To “The Essence of Instruction”

By Arthur Osborne

There is an old legend that a group of Rishis once lived in the Daruka forest together, practising rites by which they acquired supernatural powers. By the same means they hoped to attain final Liberation. In this, however, they were mistaken, for action can only result in action; not in the cessation of action; rites can produce powers but not the Peace of Liberation which is beyond rites and powers and all forms of action. Siva, determined to convince them of their error, therefore appeared before them as a wandering *sadhu*. Together with him came Vishnu in the form of a beautiful lady. All the Rishis were smitten with love for this lady and thereby their equilibrium was disturbed and their rites and powers were adversely affected. Moreover their wives, who were also living with them in the forest, all fell in love with the strange *sadhu*. Incensed at this, they conjured up an elephant and a tiger by magic rites and sent them against him. Siva, however, slew them easily and took the elephant's skin for a rope and the tiger's for a wrap. The Rishis then realized that they were up against one more powerful than themselves and they

bowed down to him and asked him for instruction. He then explained to them that it is not by action but by renunciation of action that one attains to Liberation.

The poet, Muruganar wanted to write 100 verses on this theme but he could not readily proceed beyond 70 verses. It then occurred to him that Bhagavan was the proper person to write the verses relating to Siva's instructions. He therefore begged Bhagavan to compose them and Bhagavan accordingly composed thirty Tamil verses. He himself later translated these thirty verses into Sanskrit. These thirty verses were subsequently translated by Bhagavan into Telugu under the name of *Anubhuti Saram* first and *Upadesa Saram* afterwards. Bhagavan likewise rendered them into Malayalam verses. The Sanskrit version, known as *Upadesa Saram*, was daily chanted before him together with the Vedas and continues to be chanted before his shrine; that is to say that it is treated as a scripture. He refers to the various paths to Liberation, grading them in order of efficiency and excellence, and showing that the best is Self-enquiry.

“Are you born now? Why do you think of other births? The fact is, there is neither birth nor death. Let him who is born think of death and the palliative thereof.”

— Sri Bhagavan in *Maharshi's Gospel*

LEAVES FROM DEVOTEES'
DIARIES

SRI BHAGAVAN'S BHIKSHAS

"You cannot conceive of the majesty and dignity I felt while so begging. I felt like a king and more than a king."

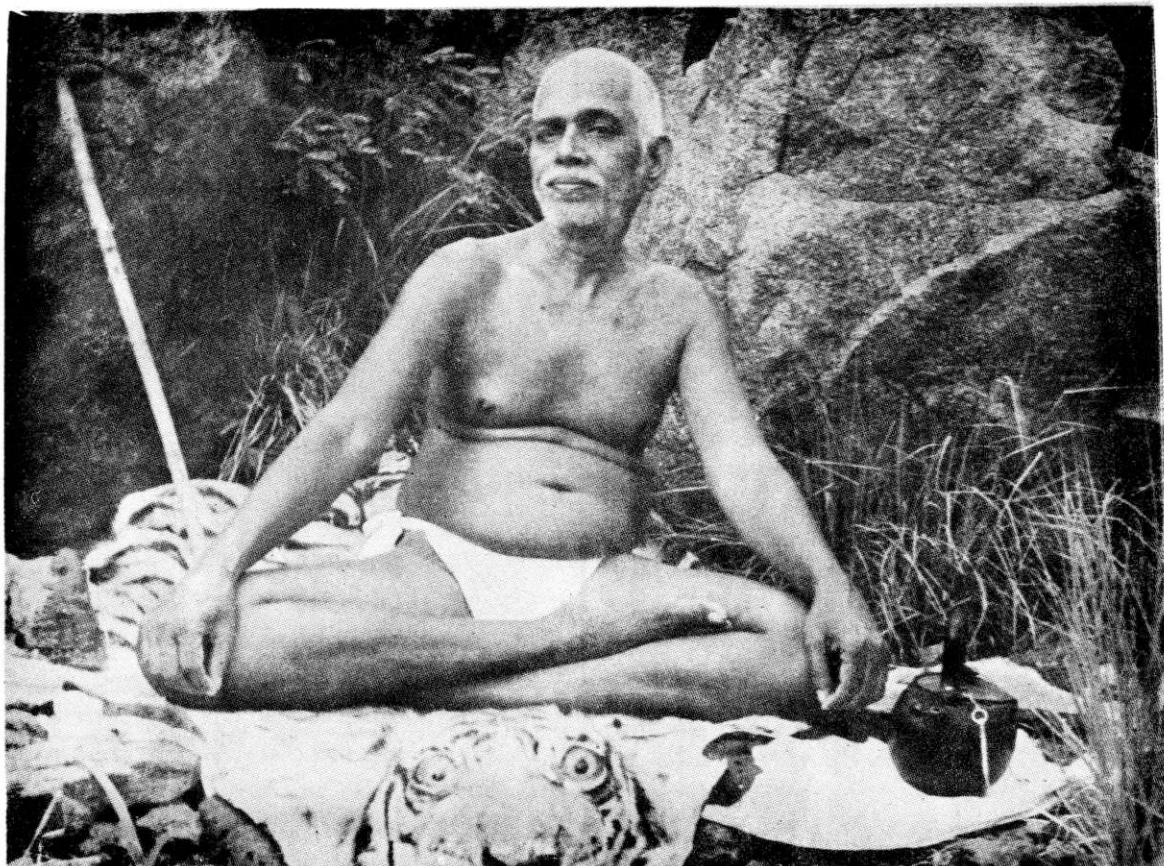
— Sri Bhagavan

"In Araianinallur when Venkataraman came out of *samadhi*, hunger pressed him hard. He was not accustomed to ask anything of anybody; however, he approached the temple cook for a morsel of food, who directed him to the *archaka*. By then the evening ritual of temple worship was over, and Venkataraman was asked to come out along with others, so that the temple doors might be closed. The priest and others, closing the doors, started for the Kilur temple which was about six furlongs away, in order to conduct *Puja* there also. Venkataraman accompanied the party and on reaching the Kilur temple fell again into a state of Self-absorption, from which he was roused by the priest who wanted to close the doors. The temple drummer, who had all along been watching the youth, said to the *archaka*, "Give him my share of *prasadam*". It was accordingly given. The youth was then led to a Sastry's house close by to get some drinking water. But before it could be fetched, he fell into a state of deep *samadhi*, which was rapidly forming itself into a fixed habit. When he regained normal consciousness, he found himself at some distance from where he originally stood, with his food

scattered and a crowd watching him intently. He picked up some of the scattered food but could eat only a little. The next morning he went to the house of one Muthukrishna Aiyar, a Brahmin *Bhagavathar* and asked him for a meal. He was referred to the dame inside. The good lady rejoiced to see the lad arrive on the day of Sri Krishna's nativity (for, that was the *Janmashtami* day), gave him a bounteous rural repast and insisted on his eating it all despite his satiety."

- from SRI RAMANA, *The Sage of Arunagiri*
by Aksharajna, p. 17-18

"There used to be in Gopura Subrahmanyeswara Temple, a *Mowna Swami* (a silent *sadhu*). One morning when I was going about the Thousand-Pillar-Mandapam, he came with a friend. He was a *Mowna Swami* and so was I. There was no talk; no greetings. It was soon mid-day. He made signs to his friend to mean: "I do not know who this boy is, but he appears to be tired; please get some food and give him it." Accordingly they brought some. It was boiled rice. Each grain was sized. There was sour



water underneath. There was a bit of pickle to go with it. That was the first *bhiksha* given to me by Sri Arunachaleswara. Actually there is not an iota of pleasure in what I eat now. All the meals and sweets (*pancha bhakshya paramanna*) are nothing compared to that food," said Bhagavan. "Was it on the very first day of Sri Bhagavan's arrival in that place?" someone asked.

"No, no, the next day. Taking it as the first *bhiksha* given me by *Ishwara*, I ate that rice and pickle and drank the water given me. That happiness I can never forget," remarked Sri Bhagavan. *Mouna Swami* used to give him the milk which flowed out of the Goddess Uma's shrine. This was not pure milk but a curious mixture

of milk, water, turmeric powder, sugar, plantains (raw or ripe) and sundry other articles; and the *Brahmana Swami* would gulp it down with indifference.

The temple priest, who noticed it one day, was greatly pained, and ordered that the pure milk poured over the Goddess and collected immediately should, without any admixture, thenceforward be sent daily through the *Mouna Swami* in order that he might give part of it to *Brahmana Swami*'.

— from *SELF REALIZATION*
by B. V. Narasimha Swami, p. 49-50

"When I was living under the *madukha* tree; a twenty-year old dancing girl, by name *Rathnamma*, saw me one day while

going to and from the temple to dance. She grew devoted to me and got disgusted with her profession, and told mother that she would not eat unless she could give food to the Swami. So both of them brought me food. But I was then in deep meditation and opened neither my eyes nor my mouth, even when they shouted. But they somehow woke me up by asking a passer-by to pull me by the hand; they then gave me food and left. When Rathamma insisted that she must daily feed the Swami before she ate, her mother said, 'you are young and so is Swami, and he does not wake until somebody touches and pulls him. We can't do that; what can we do?' Rathamma then asked a first cousin of hers for assistance, and with his help used to give me food daily. After some time, however, relatives of the boy felt this work to be undignified and so stopped sending him. She, however, would not give up her resolve to feed me; so at last the old mother herself came regularly, and being elderly and thinking that therefore there was no harm in it, used to wake me up by shaking me and then gave me food."

— from *LETTERS* by Suri Nagamma, p. 306-7

"I believe there is some other story about Sri Bhagavan going to the town for the first time for *bhiksha*," said one devotee. "Yes, there used to be one lady devotee. She very often used to bring me some food or other. One day she arranged a feast for all the *sadhus* and pressed me to dine along with them. I signed her to say that I would not do so and that I would be going out begging. I had either to sit and eat with them all or go out for *bhiksha*. Yes, it was God's will, I thought, and started out for *bhiksha*. That lady had doubts as to whether I would go out for *bhiksha* or join the feast. She sent a man behind me. As there was no escape I went to a house in the street

"Purushothama Ramana"

By V. Ganesan



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to the left of the temple and standing in front of it, clapped my hands. The lady of the house saw me and, as she had already heard of me, recognized me and called me in, 'Come in, my son, come in. She fed me sumptuously saying, 'My boy, I have lost a son. When I see you, you seem just like him. Do come daily like this, my boy.' I subsequently learnt that her name was Muthamma," said Bhagavan.

* * * *

"Ramachandra Iyer's grandfather once took Bhagavan to his place, it seems," said a questioner. "That was long back, perhaps in 1896. I was then at Gopura Subrahmanyeswara temple. He used to come to me daily, sit for a while and then go. I was in *mouna*. So there was no talk or consultation. Even then he had great devotion. One day it seems he invited someone to his house for a feast. In the noon, before meal time, he came to me with another person. Standing one on either side they said, 'Swami, get up. Let us go.' 'Why?' I enquired by signs. They told me the purpose. I refused. But would they go? They caught hold of my hands and forcibly pulled me up. He was tall, stout and with a big belly. I was at the time lean and weak. I was nothing before him. His friend was even sturdier. What could I do? I was afraid they might even carry me in their arms if I resisted any further. I knew they were inviting me with great *bhakti*. So, thinking it was no use arguing with them I walked with them. From the main entrance they took me into the hall with great respect, spread a big plantain leaf and fed me sumptuously and then sent me back. That is the only family house here where I have eaten on a leaf."

— from *LETTERS* by Suri Nagamma, P. 214-5.

* * * *

"I was still in Virupaksha Cave and about four or five years after I came to Tiruvannamalai. It is a funny story. One day when Palaniswami and myself went round the hill and came near the temple it was 8 p.m. As we were tired, I lay down in Subrahmanya Temple Palani went out to fetch food from the choultry. Then, the head of the Easanya Mutt was going into the temple. As usual there were a number of disciples around him. One of them saw me and told him about it. That was enough. While returning, he came with ten of his disciples and stood around me. He began saying, 'Get up, Swami. We shall go.' I was in *mouna* then, so I showed by signs that I wouldn't accompany them. Was he the man to listen to me? 'Lift him up bodily, lift,' he said to his disciples. As there was no alternative, I got up. When I came out, there was a bandy ready. 'Get in, Swami,' he said. I declined and showed them by signs that I would prefer to walk and suggested that he should get into the bandy. He took no notice of my protestations. Instead, he told his disciples, 'What are you looking at? Lift Swami and put him in the cart.' There were ten of them and I was alone. What could I do? They lifted me bodily and put me into the cart. Without saying anything more, I went to the Mutt. He had a big leaf spread out for me, filled it with food of all kinds, showed great respect and began saying 'Please stay here always.' Palaniswami went to the temple, enquired about me and then came to the Mutt. After he came, I somehow managed to escape from there. That was the only occasion on which I got into a cart after coming to Tiruvannamalai. Subsequently whenever new people arrived they sent a cart, asking me to go over to their place. If once I yielded, I was afraid, there would be no end to that sort of invitation and so I sent back the cart

refusing to go. Eventually they stopped sending carts. But that was not the only trouble with them. Even if I did not go to them when invited, I used to go round the hill, when sometimes I used to visit the Mutt. He would then go in and say something to the cook. At meal time he would have a big leaf spread out for me, sit by my side and instruct the cook to serve me food over and over again. On other days he would not eat along with the disciples in the Mutt, but when I visited the Mutt he used to sit by my side for food. How could I eat all that was piled on the leaf? I used to touch a little of the various preparations. The balance used to be mixed together by the disciples and the inmates used to eat it saying, 'It is Swami's *prasadam*.' Noticing that, I gave up eating from a leaf. Whenever I felt like eating there in the Mutt, I used to stay in Pachiamman Koil or somewhere nearabout, go to the Mutt soon after the *naivedya* bell was rung, stay near the main entrance and ask for the *nivedana* (food offering to God). They used to bring it, and give it into my hands. I used to eat without the aid of a leaf. Salt is not put into that *nivedana*, as it is a Siva temple. Even so, I didn't mind it at all. All that I wanted was to satisfy my hunger. As the head of the Mutt was staying upstairs, he knew nothing about it for some time. One day he saw it accidentally. 'Who is it that is giving Swami food without salt' he enquired angrily. Subsequently

he learned all the facts and left the matter at that."

—from *LETTERS* by Suri Nagamma, p. 213-14

* * * *

"During the month that he spent in Arunagirinathar temple the young Swami lived the life of a mendicant, begging alms in the streets of Tiruvannamalai. He would stand in front of a house and clap his hands; if any food was brought he would receive it with both hands and eat it standing on the road. He avoided begging from the same house twice, and walked along a different street each day. Recalling this period of personal begging, Ramana Maharshi said to a devotee much later: "You cannot conceive of the majesty and dignity I felt while so begging. The first day, when I begged from Gurukkal's wife, I felt bashful about it as a result of habits of upbringing, but after that there was absolutely no feeling of abasement. I felt like a king and more than a king. I have some times received stale gruel at some house and taken it without salt or any other flavouring, in the open street, before pandits and other important men who used to come and prostrate themselves before me, then wiped my hands on my head and passed on supremely happy and in a state of mind in which even emperors were mere straw in my sight. It is because there is such a path that we find tales in history of kings giving up their thrones and taking to begging".

— from *RAMANA MAHARSHI*
by K. Swaminathan, p. 17-18.

"Without yielding to the doubt 'Is it possible, or not?', one should persistently hold on to the meditation on Self. Even if one be a great sinner, one should not worry and weep 'Oh! I am a sinner, how can I be saved?' and concentrate keenly on meditation on the Self; then, one would surely succeed."

— Sri Ramana Maharshi

TARGET AND ARROW

By V. Ganesan

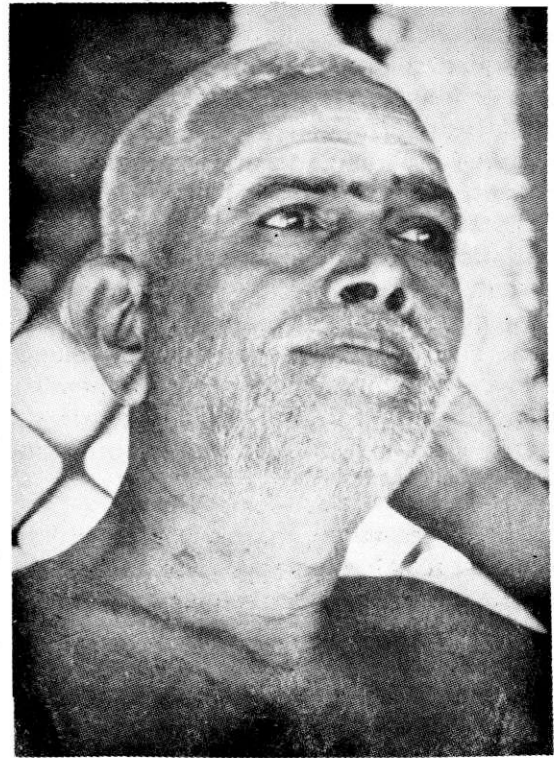
"The 'past' and 'future' depend upon the 'present'. They are also 'present' while they are current. There is only the 'present'."

- Sri Bhagavan in Ulladu Narpadu, v.15

If what is, is all that is known then it is quite obvious that this principle of 'IS' alone is the Truth. This principle of 'IS' is the NOW. This 'Now' is the only experience man always has. The postulation of the 'past' and 'future' is therefore a superimposition on this vital state of experience, the 'Now'. The 'present' is all that one is confronted with, all the time. The act of translating it into 'past' and 'future' is a sordid deviation from the Truth.

Thoughts of 'past' and 'future' alone bring about the time factor. Cause and effect take place only in the realm of past and future. In the eternal 'Now' thought has no place. Also, cause and effect do not exist there. Since 'space' itself is only a projection and 'time' depends on a mind for its recognition, both time and space do not have their own true existence. The present moment, the Now, alone is true. The Now is "indefinable or indescribable, since it is as it IS."

In 'Ulladu Narpadu' verse 16, Bhagavan makes it more specific and emphatic: "நாமன்றி நாளேது நாடேது"? "Without me, the 'I', where is time, where is space?"



This blazing Sun, this Silent Sun, Bhagavan lived as a commoner in our midst, His life an open book without any trace of that need for privacy that even the least busy amongst us values. He was available to all, at all times, beyond restrictions. Just as His profundity lies in the casualness of His herculean spiritual achievement, His greatness lies in His

simplicity. He was unique. His realisation was unique in the annals of all spiritual history. For the boy studying at school who had no particular interest in spirituality, who knew no procedural technique, no yogic meditation nor any modes of spiritual *sadhana* to flower suddenly into a sage of steady wisdom is unique! There was in Him no earlier preparation, no *sadhana* of cleansing the mind to acquire sharpness and stability, nor was there any evolution thereafter. And what was the nature of His realisation? It admitted no stages. From one point of view it required no effort; from another point of view it was infinite effort concentrated in just one moment of self-enquiry. Therefore its completeness or fullness, though instantaneous, was total. His realisation was in a flash, but it did not vanish like a flash. It remained permanent. Bhagavan later confirmed that in that state of His there was no change, no gradation and that that state continued vibrantly for ever. The spontaneity and instantaneousness took place not in time but in eternity. In Bhagavan the 'Now' remained the very same NOW every 'time', thereby giving no room for a 'then' or an 'after'. There was no 'past' and therefore no 'future', either.

I feel, it is most appropriate here that I should record a remarkable statement of Bhagavan which He spontaneously uttered, revealing the truth of the glorious happening of His Self-Realisation. Sri N. Balarama Reddiar who, happily for us, happens to live in our midst, narrated the following :

"One winter evening around 6.30 p. m after *Veda Parayana*, Bhagavan as usual was stretching Himself on the sofa. As He was doing so, without anything whatsoever to occasion the utterance, He suddenly and spontaneously said : 'It is said that I took twenty minutes to realise' - 'அதுதப்பு' ('It is wrong'). After a few seconds He

added : 'ஒரு கஷணம் இருக்கலாம்' : ('It may be a moment'). But again He corrected Himself. 'அதுவும் சரியில்லை' : ('Even that is not correct'). "டைம் எங்கே அதிலே?" ('Where is time-element in it?').

Sri Balarama Reddiar continued :

"After hearing this I thought to myself : 'Why should Bhagavan make this statement? Usually He does not say anything without being asked. So, He must have been prompted by some mysterious force from within to speak thus. Perhaps, to enlighten the devotees as to the actual process of realisation, in which the time element did not exist at all, He must have uttered those words'."

For Ramana, Time stood still !

The Self, the Consciousness, revealed itself to Ramana in a flash and remained for ever as a state of perpetuity, as the centre without any circumference. It is the Eternal Present not permitting any movement in time. It is the One without a second, a whole consuming all and a perfection devoid of any tinge of inequilibrium.

Any philosophical or metaphysical truth has to be within the grasp of every human being's experience. Therefore, the normal, simple and spontaneous experience of everyday life is the basis on which Ramana Way is strongly built.

Let us now go into an analysis of what exactly is the time-element, and how to transcend it.

What are past, present and future? They indicate a duration, that is, 'time'. Time is not a point but an extension. Time therefore is an internal cognition, a subjective acceptance, not an external object to feel tightly gripped by. Time is divided into three convenient compartments as

past, present and future. The 'present' moment is the centre between the two extremes of 'past' and 'future'. The moment our full attention is drawn to our relationship with time we realise that one lives for ever only in the present. Past remembrances and future anticipations are unreal in as much as even they are only recollected in the present. The present alone IS because of its inescapable reality.

Every past event was a present one when it actually occurred. Likewise, every future event will be experienced at that time as a present event only. Thus when scrutinised, past and future are seen only as the manifestations of the present time. They rest entirely upon it. Not only that but they possess no independent existence of their own. Time, in other words, is an unbroken chain formed by successive links of present events only.

As such, the present alone is real time. Yet, how to determine as to where the present moment starts and where it ends? The present possesses no duration—it has no beginning and therefore no end. Turning our attention to the full knowledge of the 'Now' takes us into a different but stupendous dimension. A profound truth thus lies unnoticed and unattended all the time, but within our grasp and immediate experience. We have been quite unconscious till now, about the profundity of the 'NOW' and turning our full attention on this time-awareness necessarily has to revolutionise our lives!

Let us look into it more pointedly.

Because we always live in the present which alone is our existence-continuum, we come to know experientially that we may know time only as a form of self-consciousness: the awareness is always the 'NOW'. If we do not ponder over



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either the past or future—both are the substratum of mind—what remains as stillness is the present moment, the 'NOW'. The awareness aware of itself is the 'NOW' and awareness of others is the 'past' or the 'future'. In short, the 'past' and 'future' mean the mind and the 'NOW' is the Consciousness.

When one's attention is focussed on the 'Now', the existing Principle, the Self, the movement of time is nullified. When the 'Now' is realised as the only time, the tongs of the bewildering time-element are made powerless. When the inner space which is merely a point—a centre without circumference—is realised, the conditioning of the baffling vastness of outer space is transcended.

Thus by turning within, which is nothing but cognising only the ever-existent 'NOW' as also the all—pervasive centre in oneself they—time and space—the means themselves, are simultaneously realised to be the end—the target hitting the arrow.

In a state of stillness, time is arrested and such motionlessness is eternity. This eternity is ever here; even at this present moment it is with us. We have only to look at it attentively. This state is our Being, Our Existence. Taking a repose in the Self is effecting an arrest on time. Where time is not, the Self is fully revealed. However, the Self as Awareness is ever there whether one cognises it or not.

So, just as this quietude, the Self, through movement of the mind extends into activity and thus mysteriously is forgotten through ignorance, time also through its movement extends itself into past and future thereby camouflaging the Eternity that alone IS. To feel, to realise this Eternity within, one has to inwardly arrest the ever-flowing currents of thought. Thoughts controlled, stillness is achieved.

“The mind becomes quiescent by the inquiry ‘Who am I?’. The thought ‘Who am I?’ will destroy all other thoughts, and like the stick used for stirring the burning pyre, it will itself in the end get destroyed. Then, there will arise Self-realisation.”

— Sri Bhagavan, in WHO AM I ?

ved. In stillness the ever-present 'NOW' is vibrantly experienced. To put it better, this experiencing principle is the Self and it pulsates as the 'NOW'.

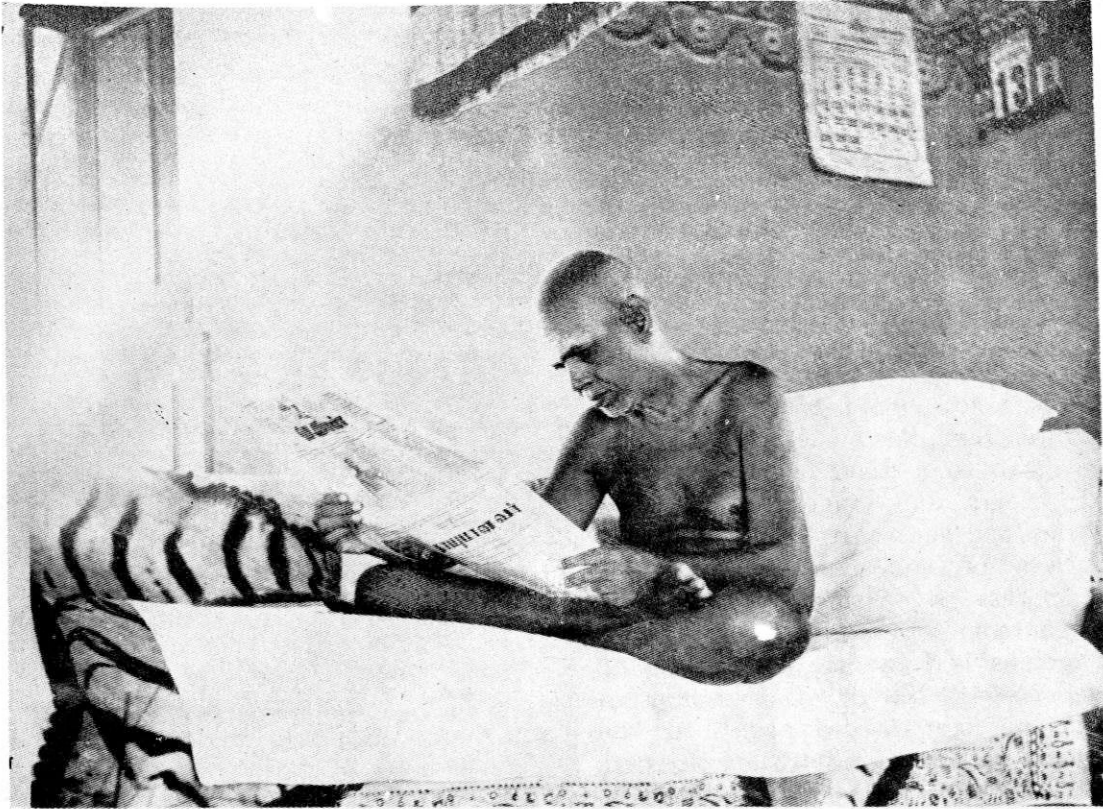
Here, we have a clue.

The very effort to arrest the thoughts or the movement of time implies that there is someone who subdues them. Thoughts and time occur only in the mind. Mind constantly breaks up awareness into a series of unending process of thoughts, thereby splitting up our Being into compartments of years, months, days, hours, minutes, seconds and thus renders us permanent prisoners of 'time'.

Fortunately, the key to the prison is also with us only. This key is hidden in the very mind which forms the prison walls. The mind, thus, has to revolt against itself!

So, what next ?

One has to question: To whom is the mind? Whose mind? When this volcano of enquiry erupts the mind's octopus-clutch on thought—form is smashed. The price we have to pay for such freedom is negligible. This price is to drop summarily the age-old and deep-rooted concept of identifying ourselves with the body-mind-complex. The snapping of



the fetters which are the mind and emergence of the freedom which is pure Consciousness, the Self, are instantaneous and simultaneous.

The *Mundaka Upanishad* says that the arrow is the *jiva*, the target is the *Brahman* and the bow used to shoot the arrow at the target is *OM*. In making the arrow hit the target there is the possibility of a miss. But suppose the target itself moves to hit the arrow, where is room for any slip? What exists is only the Self; the mind and time appear, come and go as ripples. They do not have their own reality of existence. Hence all *sadhanas* done with the help of the mind are like the arrow hitting the target; but in Bhagavan's way mind itself is traced to its source and consumed in the Self. This is like the target hitting the arrow. In such a case can there ever be a mishit? Since the target

is the centre without a circumference, it is the all-consuming Eternity. Stillness is this Eternity. This eternal stillness engulfs everything. Bhagavan refers to this process as “*ஊராதல்காண்*” - “Becomes consumed”. This is the divine play of the target devouring the arrow!

Ramana is the Target!
 Ramana is the Centre!
 Ramana is the 'NOW'!

Let us not only adore Him but adhere to His words of Wisdom. Listen to this quintessence of wisdom so graciously uttered by Sri Bhagavan: “Your duty is to be; not to be this or that, simply BE. I AM THAT I AM sums up the whole Truth. The method to reach it is 'BE STILL'. Simple being is the Self.”

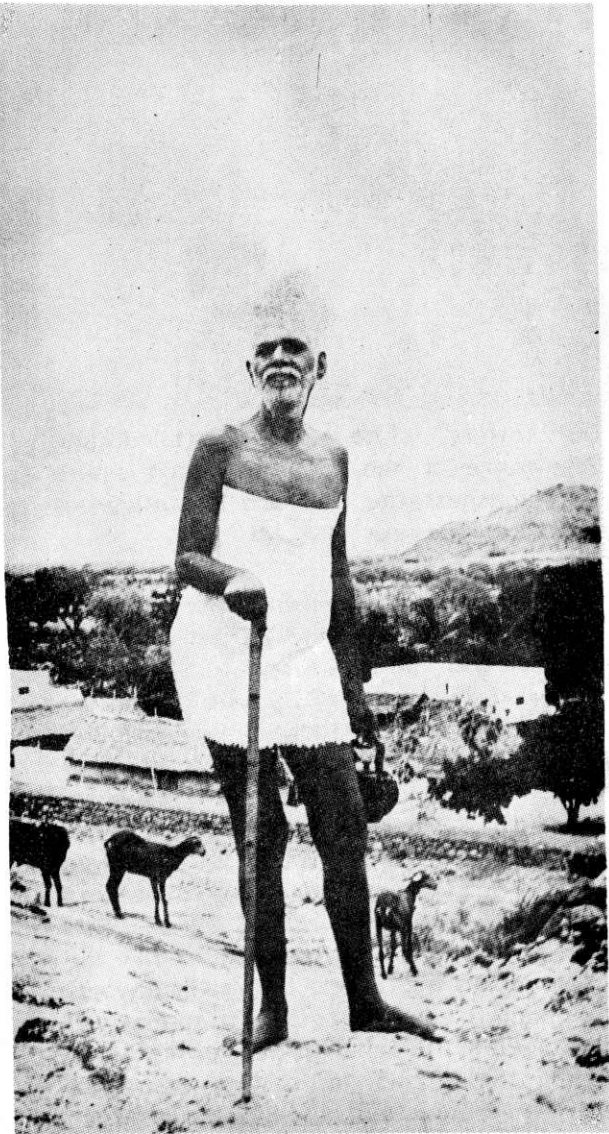
The time to gain this wisdom is 'NOW' and the place 'HERE'.

CENTRAL TEACHING OF THE MAHARSHI

By T. V. Kapali Sastri ¹

Who has not heard of the age-old mystic teaching 'Know Thyself' that has come down to mankind from immemorial time? Seers and sages of different countries and ages have lived and taught this truth of Self-Knowledge and left their impress in varying degrees upon their contemporaries, passing on their life-messages as heritage to posterity. Still if the common run of mankind is proof against the light they brought to the world and gets on well quite unconcerned, treating such things as irrelevant to its life's purpose, certainly it is not because there is want of stimulating thought and information on these profound subjects or of living exponents of the ancient teachings, but obviously because there in the bulk of mankind no need felt, no necessity arisen, no inward turn warranted; in other words, Nature is not yet ready to turn round to the Mechanic of whom she is the mechanism. It is this last fact that one has to bear in mind when one finds that a few alone receive tangible benefit, out of a thousand that come in contact with a great soul.

Ever since Sri Ramana Maharshi - the Sage of Arunachala - stepped into Tiruvannamalai forty years ago, ² he has not moved out of it, living there these



¹ Collected Works of T. V. Kapali Sastri, Vol 3 p,197-201

² written in 1936

years the life of enlightenment that sprang upon him while at home and still in his teens. Of late there has been a growing literature available to English-reading public, giving accounts of his life, of his teachings and their philosophic implications, of his devotional poems, crisp philosophical verses and other compositions, of the experiences of some of those who have come under his influence, of his conversations, and of his views by way of answers to questions put to him on several subjects connected with spiritual life. Surely, by such help as books can give, one can, if so minded, get an intelligent grasp of the central principles of spiritual life as lived and expounded by the great sage. But an intellectual belief, reasoned conviction, can go only some way, and not all the way if it does not undergo the drive of a deeper urge, of a spiritual or divine necessity, if it does not submit itself to the momentum of a dynamic faith. Herein precisely lies the need and value of the guide, of the guru of one who has in himself realised the Truth of which his life is at once a commentary to the initiate and a message to him who has ears to hear.

But how are we to recognise that here is the Guru, the *Siddha*, the perfected soul that can transmit the Truth to others? Well, how do we recognise a leader who is singled out from thousands of men that he leads? Or again, as Douglas Ainslie would put it straightly - "How do I see the Sun on looking out of the window? By the use of my eyes and incidentally of all my other senses collaborating." This is indeed the root of the matter. The fact is this: that the self-evident Truth makes itself clear to the vision of the inner man that presents itself as an unflinching faith throwing with certitude, as it grows, the whole being of the earnest seeker into a consuming zeal for the discovery and consummation of the supreme aim. Thus it is

faith and not reason that opens the doors of the soul's chamber to the Truth, God or Guru, the faith that determines the trend of reasoning, getting itself verified and strengthened by experience, while reason simply collaborates.

The Guru then is the living fire that warms the logs of wood around in general while the dry ones catch the fire. No method suggested by the *Shashtra* alone, no book however sacred it be, can give the initiating touch that opens the third eye in us. The Guru gives the method, not the written instruction, not necessarily the spoken word even. The word, the real initiation, *upadesha* or *diksha*, is a silent one, a power, an influence issuing from the being and consciousness of the Guru, the *Jnanin*, who has realised the Lord, the Self of all existences, in his own being and so knows him in other beings, in the All. And in the language of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Jnanin* knows that all is in Vasudeva and all is Vasudeva. Therefore, Sri Krishna says 'The *Jnanin* is myself', 'The *Jnanins* are there to initiate', *upadekshyanti te Jnanam Jnanins-tatvadarshinah*. The *Jnanin* alone is the real Guru, for none else but God is the Teacher, and He revealing Himself in the *Jnanin* initiates the soul, faithful, chosen, fit and devoted.

That the grace of the Guru, the Divine representative and his personal touch occupy a central place in the scheme of spiritual life is the general rule, exception being found occasionally and once in an age when a rare soul — here the Maharshi is an instance — requiring no help from a human source is directly receptive to the Divine Grace and gets into immediate touch with the Sole Initiator, the Supreme Self.

As one who has come under his influence and known him for well-nigh a quarter of a century, I may here refer to the central teaching of Bhagavan Sri Ramana

Maharshi that can always bear repetition and may act as a stimulant for those who are interested in the life of the spirit and who have the faith to follow up the Truth that the Maharshi's life unfolds.

He had completed his sixteenth year and a few months had passed when one afternoon fear of death took possession of him driving him to seek refuge somewhere. He was soon convinced, not by mental reasoning, but by an inner movement—we can call it Grace now—but he did not know it to be such then - that when the body perishes, with it the 'I' does not perish. This 'I', this ego-self of Venkataraman³ went deeper and deeper to discover its source, to know where it was rooted, to realise whence it came to the surface. As he went still further in, it was no longer his effort, he found that the 'I' which, struck with fear of death, started the quest, was being forcibly dragged and drawn in by Something tremendous, like a mountain of magnet attracting to itself a piece of steel. The 'I' was drowned, fell into an abyss, lost itself as it were; but there arose another 'I' the Parent Self, the Original Being, the source and support of the surface man.

Since then it is this Supreme and Real Self within, that has taken charge of the personal self and outer being, of the mental activities, of his very bodily movements. "My *Sadhana!* The whole work was finished in twenty minutes, in less than half an hour," said the Maharshi.

³ Original name of Sri Ramana Maharshi

Hence he lays stress upon this *Sadhana* of searching for the Self within one's own being, in the heart and often mentions this as the direct method and as superior to other Vedantic *sadhanas* such as 'I am He', 'I am Brahman', 'All is Brahman' 'All this is not Self', *neti neti* etc., etc. "Go deep to find Thy Self that is the real 'I' everything else can wait. Other problems can be solved afterwards if they arise," is often his exhortation.

"Liberation, *mukti*, lies in the loss of ego". An egoless Self—conscious life is the life of the *Jivanmukta*, the liberated soul, who lives and acts from the depths of the Truth, the Heart, unaffected by the shocks of the world in ignorance. He, the *Jivanmukta*, has been the ideal of mankind as conceived by the ancient Indian spirit, and is the fruit of the human race, the highest result of all true human culture that has so far been possible for the Spirit in man. Therefore he is the Godman who, while he is well aware of the divergent ways taken by the intelligence of others in ignorance of the One Supreme Truth, has his own life on earth guided by the Lord of All, by the Self behind all selves, by the One All-controlling and Independent, Eternal and Supreme Being. He, the liberated man, in short, is an effulgent manifestation of the Atman, and here or in the next, regardless of embodiment, is firmly settled in the ineffable Performance, ever radiating his up-lifting influence upon those around.

Hail the Maharshi!

"As thoughts arise, destroying them utterly without any residue in the very place of their origin is non-attachment. Just as the pearl-diver ties a stone to his waist, sinks to the bottom of the sea and there takes the pearls, so each one of us should be endowed with non-attachment, dive within himself and obtain the Self-Pearl."

— Sri Bhagavan, in WHO AM I?

SANKARA LIVES TODAY

By Professor K. SWAMINATHAN

A salute to the Master who is no other than the Self.

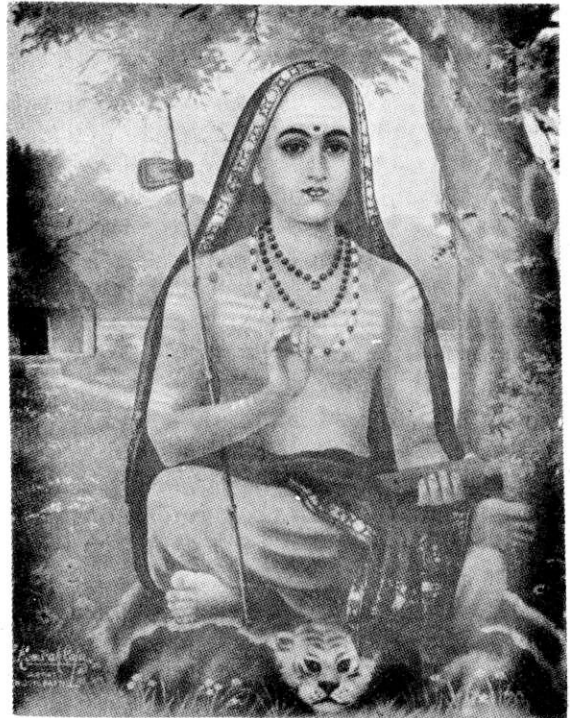
In his charming little book, "What Is It All About and What Am I?" (Navajivan), Richard B. Gregg, an American admirer of Gandhiji and ardent exponent of *ahimsa* cheerfully accepts Adi Sankara's Advaita and quotes in support of it several passages from J. Krishnamurti.

Asked why he took J. K. as the authentic 20th Century voice of Sri Sankara, he replied, "What am I to do? J. K. speaks as Sankara without knowing it and Sri Ramana speaks knowing it. But then people in the West know J. K. and few outside India know Ramana."

That was 30 years ago. Today Sri Ramana is more widely known and his service to the Master in translating his works, in clarifying his ideas and correcting misunderstandings of him by critics and commentators, is worth recalling.

In Sri Ramana's *Collected Works* one finds verse translations of *Dakshinamurti Stotra*, *Atma Bodha* and *Hastamalaka*, besides analytical prose summaries of *Viveka Chudamani* and *Drik-Drisya-Viveka*. In two Invocations, Sri Ramana declares, "Sankara who is no other than the Self, now as the Self within my heart, speaks in Tamil."

In the *Talks, Day by Day*, and *Letters from Ramanasramam* there are innumerable appreciative references to and clear explanations of Adi Sankara's philosophy.



Sri Ramana went further and argued that Gandhiji, who went up and down the country preaching truth and *ahimsa*, and Sri Aurobindo, who sat still for 40 years in Pondicherry as if the outer world did not exist, were both, willy-nilly, followers of the Master. Gandhi did what Sankara did. Sri Aurobindo did what Sankara said.

Sankara's light is, like the Sun's, inescapable and all-creative. For it is "the light within, the light without, the light in each and yet transcendent, the light of lights, self-luminous, the light of Self, Siva Himself."

— Courtesy *Tattvaaloka*, April / May 1987.

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LETTER OF A FRIEND

By A Czech Devotee

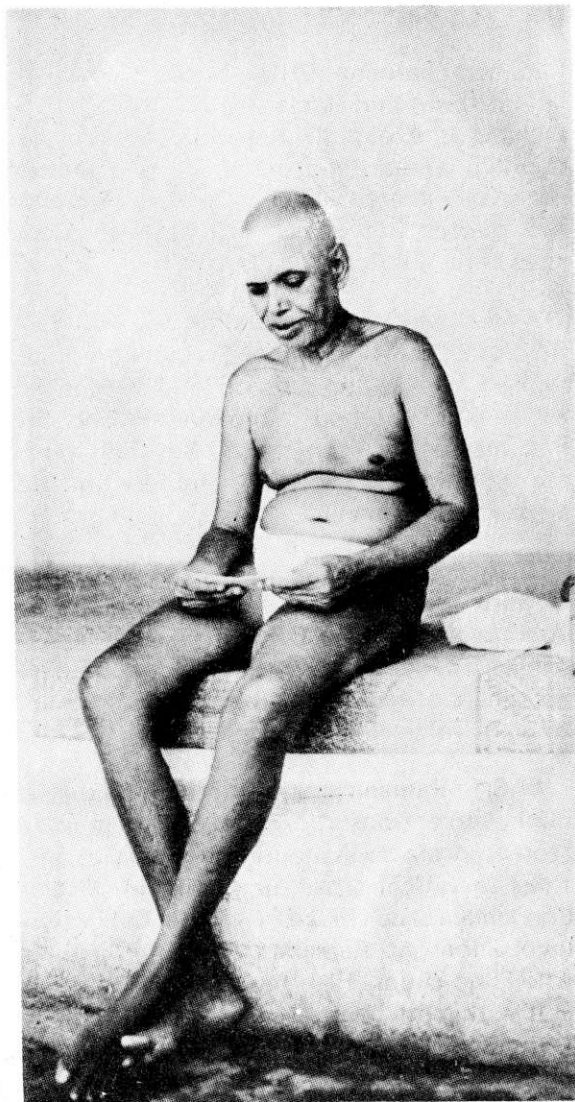
Dear Friend,

You can never rid yourself of the false I. That is impossible. But you can and must know yourself, that is the Self as it is, in its purity and truth. The very moment you succeed, the false I will disappear.

The method is this: Turn your attention away from objects of which you are aware and focus it on that in you which is aware of everything—of the world, of thoughts, i. e. of all objects and even of the absence of all objects and which is aware of itself. THAT is you, your consciousness; not consciousness of anything external but consciousness of itself or better yourself.

Your true self is Self-consciousness, awareness which knows itself as consciousness. If you are conscious of something, it is possible only because you are there as an observer of consciousness. You must become consciously this consciousness. Unconsciously you are this consciousness all the time. You need just become aware of what you already are and that is done by focussing consciousness, on the very ability to be aware, to be conscious. We do not create or reach our Self (consciousness) but we become aware of it. That is the realisation of the Self.

You may also concentrate on your feeling: "I am, I exist", on your pure existence, not that you are a man, father, body, mind etc. but just that you are. Abide in this



sense of your existence as pure being all the time. That leads to the same goal, to the knowledge that you are just conscious being or being as consciousness.

This is what Sri Ramana means when he exhorts us: "Just be. Do not be that or this, but just be. Pure being is your true nature." Full awareness of your pure being is required.

Since everybody knows that he is, that he exists, what can be easier than to remain quiet and aware only of one's being? There is no need to seek it but just to experience it with full attention.

Knowledge here means "realising, to be aware of, be conscious of". That is the whole secret of Self-realisation.

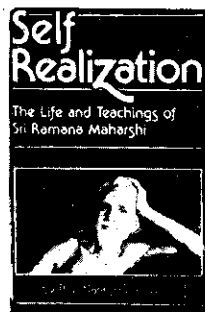
You may try the whole day to become aware of this awareness, of this being, and after realising it to keep it constantly. That is possible only when you continuously and consciously turn your attention to its source which is consciousness itself, the very ability to be conscious, conscious even of the absence of all objects. It is you, your consciousness which is aware of yourself, of objects and of their absence. The void or emptiness is not at all empty. You are there as consciousness witnessing the void, i.e. the emptiness of everything except your consciousness i. e. except yourself.

At the beginning you must have at least one fixed hour daily for this practice. Perhaps early morning or late in the night when nobody can disturb you. In case of need you can go to the church or library or be amidst nature or any quiet place where you can sit in peace i. e. even in a car!

But you must gather all your power and overcome the inner laziness (*tamas*) which stands in the way of your regular practice. Where there is a will, there is a way. This

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is true always. External obstacles of which you complain are nothing more than the projection of your inner insufficiency.

A good preparation to the discovery of the Self i.e. "of consciousness" is to be perfectly aware of all our activities which we do through the day; but this exercise does not lead directly to awareness of consciousness. There is no other method to know, to realise, to become aware or be conscious of consciousness than to fix our attention on it. Awareness without attention is not possible.

Even the standpoint of an observer (*saks-ittva*) does not lead to realisation of the Self if we do not become observant of observing consciousness itself. So if we exercise the position of an observer, we must divert our attention from observing objects to the consciousness which observes and become aware of it; as we are it. We must be the self-aware observer; the main thing is not observation but the observing consciousness.

You must know that attention is nothing else than concentrated flow of consciousness through which one knows objects, absence of objects and what is most important - oneself. That to which we do not pay attention, for us does not exist. The only cause of our ignorance of the Self is our inattentiveness to it. The moment we pay attention to it we are aware of it, because it is always there as our pure formless and unlimited consciousness. Realisation comes from the right direction of our attention. It must be turned on ourselves, on the consciousness "*I am*".

We cannot know ourselves, become aware of our consciousness if the whole time we pay our attention to not-self, to objects in our consciousness, be it world, body or mind; that is, to what is not our consciousness.

"The body is the cross. Jesus, the son of man, is the ego or 'I-am-the-body'-idea. When the son of man is crucified on the cross, the ego perishes, and what survives is the Absolute Being. It is the resurrection of the Glorious Self, of the Christ-the son of God."

— Sri Bhagavan.

Therefore to become aware of our own consciousness which is our true nature or the Self only one thing is necessary: *To pay attention to our consciousness or pure being itself.* With the conviction that we are it. That is the whole secret of Self-realisation: to turn our attention on ourselves, on the consciousness which is aware of everything or on our sense of pure existence.

We are consciousness. Do not seek anything but just be aware that you exist as consciousness. The idea of seeking some thing or of something that is seeking is misleading. You are THAT. Be THAT consciously.

Atma-vichara is not a search. How can we search for something which is there always even now and which we are? It is investigation, research, examination of that which we are just now. There are not two 'I's— one seeking the other. The method and the tool of this self-investigation is our own attention properly directed with subtle *sattvic* understanding of attention itself.

RIGHT UNDERSTANDING + RIGHT ATTENTION = REALIZATION OF THE SELF.

Do not delay.

Your Friend.

SOME DIALOGUES OF THE BUDDHA

By G. Narayan

Ananda came to the Exalted One, saluted him, and sat down at the side. The venerable Ananda said this: 'The half of the holy life, Lord, it is the friendship with what is lovely, association with what is lovely, harmony with what is lovely'.

The Buddha replied, 'Say not so, Ananda! It is the whole, not the half of the holy life. Of a brother so blessed with fellowship with what is lovely we may expect this—that he will develop the Eightfold path'.

The middle way is lovely in the beginning, lovely in the middle, lovely in the end. It avoids the extremes of self-mortification and sensual indulgence, the opposite opinions of annihilation and permanence.

On another occasion Buddha explains to the wanderer Bhagyava: 'Some people and recluses blame me with empty lies that I have gone astray, that Gotama the recluse teaches this: "When one reaches up to the Release (freedom), called the Beautiful, and having reached abides therein, at such a time he regards the whole (Universe) as ugly".'

'But I never said that Bhagyava. This is what I do say: "Whenever one reaches up to the Release, called the Beautiful, then he knows indeed what Beauty is".'

So Bhagyava replies: 'Then, Lord it is they who have gone astray-Assured am I, Lord in the Exalted One. It is the Exalted One who can teach me in such a way that



I too may reach up to the Release, called Beautiful, and having reached it may abide therein.'

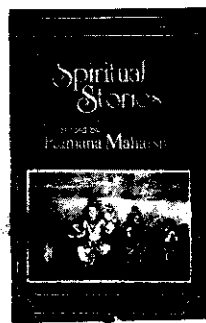
One who is sensitive to beauty is equally sensitive to that which is ugly. There is beauty in Nature, extensive in its quality. You watch and salute the pearl glow of the western sky after sunset, the lonely star shows its first appearance. There is the bird on the wing, almost without motion, up in the sky. The innocent smile of a child has a refreshing effect on the adult. The highest form of beauty comes with the abnegation of the self, with the Release (Truth) as the Buddha taught. There is a new vision of energy and insight.

Tradition associates woman with beauty. People talk of feminine grace, and in the role of mother she is specially beautiful. Human thought has achieved great beauty in music, mathematics, architecture, etc. Science and technology have added further refinement to living and culture. All the same that which is ugly is on the increase. There is over population and misery, few towns in India have parks, gardens or toilets. One hears frequent reports of battering of women and children. There is ever increasing pollution, violence and war whether it be in India or abroad. Human life has become cheap, and many human beings do not learn from experience. Any thinking man is reduced to helplessness and tears. There is an urgent need for a global outlook and a fresh assessment from statesmen, educators and men of goodwill.

The Buddha is misrepresented by some as an atheist, because he refrained from making any sharp definition of God as a person, or as a Father. As Sir Francis Younghusband puts it: 'But it may have been because Buddha had too great, not too small, an idea of God that he refused to restrict himself to a sharp definition of the Deity. There are certain things which are too great to be put into words. Who, for instance, would care to define love? Buddha did not presume to define God, but both he and his disciples were saturated with the conception of a Power behind the eye that sees and the ear that hears, and behind all the phenomena of Nature. They had no hard, cold, mechanistic, materialistic view of the universe. They never conceived of it as anything else than spiritual. They assumed as a matter of course that there was a great spiritual power driving through all things as through themselves, and making for ever higher perfection. Buddhism cannot therefore be regarded as mere atheism.'

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In this context it is interesting to note the following. Now on that occasion the the Exalted One was instructing, stirring, and gladdening the brethren with a pious talk about Nibbana: 'There is, brethren, an unborn, a not-become, a not-made, a not-compounded. If there were not, brethren, this that is unborn, not-become, not-made, not-compounded, there could not be made any escape from what is born, become, made, and compounded.'

'But since, brethren, there is this unborn.....therefore is there made known an escape from what is born, become, made and compounded.'

It is an integral part of religious genius to perceive and deny that which is false, so only the splendour of truth remains. With negative comprehension, illusion comes to an end. Gotami has lost her only child, and her grief is inconsolable. She visits friends and teachers but to no avail, and at last she is drawn to the Buddha. The Exalted One asks Gotami to go to the village and bring a mustard seed from a house where death had not visited. Gotami goes from house to house only to learn that either an aunt, or a father or a cousin had passed away. When she returns to Buddha, and in his presence, she realises that sorrow is universal. There is an ending of self-pity, and the birth of generosity and affection. Gotami at last finds solace. An extensive insight of this nature has in it the seeds of self-renewal.

Rohitassa who was son to a deva came to the Exalted One, when the night was far spent, and lit up the circuit of Jeta grove with a wondrous radiance. In his former days he was a sage with the magic power of flying through the air at great speed. He flew to reach the end of the world, without respite, to reach the end of becoming and decaying.

After journeying for a hundred years, he died before reaching the World's end. The Buddha tells Rohitassa, 'No, friend! I declare that there is nowhere whither going one would find no rebirth, no ageing, no decay, no falling away to rise up elsewhere in rebirth..... For, my friend, in this very body, six feet in length, with its sense impressions and its thoughts and ideas, I do declare you are the world, and likewise, the Way that leadeth to the ceasing thereof.' So saying, the Master summed up in the verse:

Not to be reached by going is world's
end.
Yet is there no release for man from woe
Unless ye reach world's end.
Yea verily
He that is wise and lives the holy life
He knows the world, He goeth to World's
end.
Calmed is he, for he knows. He han-
kereth
Neither for this world nor for any world.

Rohitassa retired by saying: 'Wonderful, O Lord! A marvel, O Lord! How well said is this saying that is uttered by the Exalted One.'

In a conversation with the venerable Radha, the Buddha is pressed to the extreme when Radha asks, what is the purpose of Release that is Nibbana. The Tathaagata replies patiently, 'This, Radha, is a question that goes too far. You can grasp no limit to this question. Rooted in Nibbana, Radha, the holy life is lived. Nibbana is its goal. Nibbana is its end.'

In yet another instance, when the night was far gone, a certain deva of wondrous beauty lit up the whole Jeta grove, and coming to the Exalted One saluted him and stood aside. Having pondered over blessings and goodly things, he wanted to know the greatest blessing. The Buddha replied:

1. Not to associate with fools, to associate with the wise, and to honour those who are worthy of honour - this is the Highest Blessing.

2. Vast learning, (skill in) handicraft, a highly trained discipline and pleasant speech - this is the Highest Blessing.

3. To cease and abstain from evil, abstinence from intoxicating drinks, and diligence in virtue -this is the Highest Blessing.

4. Reverence, humility, contentment, gratitude and the opportune hearing of the Dharma-this is the Highest Blessing.

5. If a man's mind is sorrowless, stainless and secure, and does not shake when touched by worldly vicissitudes—that is the Highest Blessing.

6. Those who thus acting are invincible

from every side they go to bliss—theirs is the greatest blessing.

The five hundred brethren had gathered as the Blessed One was entering into *mahaparinirvana*. They were seated in front of him and the Buddha was glad that they had lived the holy life and not the least among them was likely to fall into a lower state in spiritual attainment. They had no doubt or perplexity. He points to Ananda that when he is gone what he had taught and laid down, as Dharma and Vinaya (discipline) will be their teacher! Then the Blessed One spoke to the brethren 'Come now, brethren, I do remind ye: "Subject to decay are all compounded things." Do ye abide in diligence.' These were the last words of the Tathaagata.

"There is no reaching the Self. If Self were to be reached, it would mean that the Self is not here and now but that it is yet to be obtained. What is got afresh will also be lost. So it will be impermanent. What is not permanent is not worth striving for. So I say the Self is not reached. You are the Self; you are already That.

"The fact is, you are ignorant of your blissful state. Ignorance supervenes and draws a veil over the pure Self which is Bliss. Attempts are directed only to remove this veil of ignorance which is merely wrong knowledge. The wrong knowledge is the false identification of the Self with the body, mind etc. This false identification must go, and then the Self alone remains."

— Sri MAHARSHI in *Maharshi's Gospel*

Gita Saara Taalaattu*

(THE LULLABY OF GITA ESSENCE)

By Namaraya J.

- (79) "Does duality go? Does Jiva Chit attain?"
"That you must in mind-swallowing sleep ascertain".
- (80) "Not partite, this world, but Brahman's all-knowing this;
 Why then should form-filled appearance at all persist?"
- (81) "Though wise that sought after water was mere mirage
The eyes continue to beam in this badinage!"
- (82) "KNOWER, KNOWING and KNOWN—surely such Triputi's
 Tripartite thriving's amidst mul-ti-pli-ci-ties?"
- (83) "Divorced of dream-seer, sights are not existent,
"Knower knowing known—trick of mind—cent per cent!"
- (84) "What is the way that false differences may vanish
 Clarify! Pray, may I know. This my doubt banish!"
- (85) Spot-free mind submerging through Turiya yoga,
Troublesome Triputi's rid with its brouhaha."
- (86) "Though Atman glorious fills Jagat warp and woof,
 Why do I feel it not? Why's it as if aloof?"



- (87) "Sat, Chit and Ananda, these three when mixed up with
 Name and Form appear as Creation—cooked-up myth!"
- (88) "Thus mixed the first three remain hid; but when unfixed¹
 Brahman shines! Jagat's seen as last two's treach'rous tricks"
- (89) "Sayest thou, 'Know thy Self by Jnana's wondrous quest'?
 Is then this Atman, as part of seen, manifest?"
- (90) "Ajnana pried out by Jnana a priori²
 Self shines of itself. Plain truth this no theory."

* continued from last issue

1 By discrimination of Self from non-Self.

2 The path of Jnana where the Seer ever precedes the Seen.

- (91) "Oh, do please describe the state of
sweet Mukti's bliss!"
"BE! It's beyond words; like senses'
sensation is."
- (92) "Aren't there Free Ones other than
those of In-lost mind?"
"Yes! *Jivan Muktas in deed of king
Janaka's kind!*"
- (93) "Their qualities, deeds and, (of those
that have attained
Jivan Mukti), O please wax on their
words unstained!"
- (94) Conception, Birth, Growth, E-vol-u-
tion, dotage's
Decay, Death: all body's—dismiss thus
wise sages"
- (95) "Sight, Sound, Speech, Taking and
Walking: the seers find
Characterize asinine instruments of
mind"
- (96) "Hunger, Thirst—all Prana's; Sorrow,
Fun, Passion, Fear
And baiting Anger—all mind's not mine'
laughs the seer"
- (97) "Though always involved with home,
wife and host of kin,
Like lotus-leaf water, untouched is the
Jnanin".
- (98) "Though long connected with body,
the Christ-like³ kind
Stay free as from the shell does the
ripe tamarind."
- (99) "Though whirling in world's Un-Sat/
Chit/Bliss atmosphere
Wig-ear-in-slush⁴, unscathed thus
sports the Atman-seer."
- (100) "Churned out of curd, free floats but-
ter on butter-milk;
Though 'midst mentation mind-free
floats the Brahman-ilk."⁵
- (101) That all may, through Arjun, gain
Jnana's Sleepless Sun
Hast thou come Blessed Self, sleep
on, sleep on, dear One!"
- (102) Though ever with Copis countless
and having wed
Nymphs sixteen thousand whom Na-
raka⁶ had abducted
- (103) Thou didst Parikshit touch, while drew
back sages prime⁷
Brahmacharya's goal! Self! Sleep,
sleep on! Light Sublime!

PHALA SRUTI

(The fruit of going through this text)

- (104) They attain to that Liberation of the
Muktas, a liberation gained usually
only after much mundane migration,
merely by hearing and imbibing this
Truth-Lullaby
By which the Primal Being reveals to
the victorious Arjuna
The Substance
Of Primal Knowledge
Of SELF.

A list of the classical maxims and similes
used in the *Lullaby* are given below along
with verse reference

1. Bija Ankura Nyaaya v. 12
[seed sapling maxim]
also Bija Vriksha Ny.
[seed tree m.]
2. Suchi Kaanta Ny.
[needle lodestone m.] v. 21
3. Tapta Jala Agni Ny.
[heated water fire m.] v. 28
4. Tapta Aya Pinda Ny.
[red hot iron-piece m.] v. 30

3. Jivan Muktas.

4. The Earwig insect (Tamil: Pillai Poochi)
whose silvery sheen remains untouched
by the slush it inhabits.

5. Jivan Muktas as a whole.

6. Narakaasura Vadha, *Bhagavatam* 10.59

7. When Parikshit was born still, the sages de-
clared that he would live if only a perfect
brahmachari should touch him. While even
Suka, Narada and other *nitya brahmacharis*
developed cold feet, Sri Krishna stepped
forward boldly to effect the miracle.

- | | | | |
|--|-------|--|--------|
| 5. Rakta Sphatika Ny.
[red-dye crystal-mirror m.]
also Sphatika Varna Ny.
[crystal colour m.] | v. 32 | 13. Bimba Pratibimba Ny.
[subject and reflection m.]
also Surya Bimba Ny.
[sun and reflection m.] | v. 73 |
| 6. Kantha Chaameekara Ny.
[neck gold-ornament m.]
also Kanaka Kundala Ny.
[gold ear-ring m.] | v. 50 | 14. Samudra Budbuda Ny.
[ocean bubble m.]
also Samudra Taranga Ny.
[ocean wave m.] | v. 76 |
| 7. Pishta Peshana Ny.
[grind already-ground flour] | v. 52 | 15. Maru Mareechika Ny.
[desert mirage m.]
also Mrga Trshnikaa
[deer-thirst mirage m.] | v. 81 |
| 8. Andhakaara Deepa Darsana
Ny.[sight of light in the dark] | v. 56 | 16. Kamala Patra Udaka Ny.
[lotus-leaf water m.]
also Padma Patra Ny. | v. 97 |
| 9. Rajju Sarpa Ny.
[rope snake m.] | v. 60 | 17. Tintirini Phala Charma Ny.
[tamarind-fruit shell m.] | v. 98 |
| 10. Shuktikaa Rajata Ny.
[mother-of-pearl silver m.] | v. 61 | 18. Panka Keeta Ny.
[slush insect m.] | v. 99 |
| 11. Dagdha Pata Ny.
[burnt cloth m.] | v. 67 | 19. Takra Navaneeta Ny.
[butter-milk butter m.] | v. 100 |
| 12. Taru Chheda Aardra
[green in felled tree m.] | v. 69 | | |

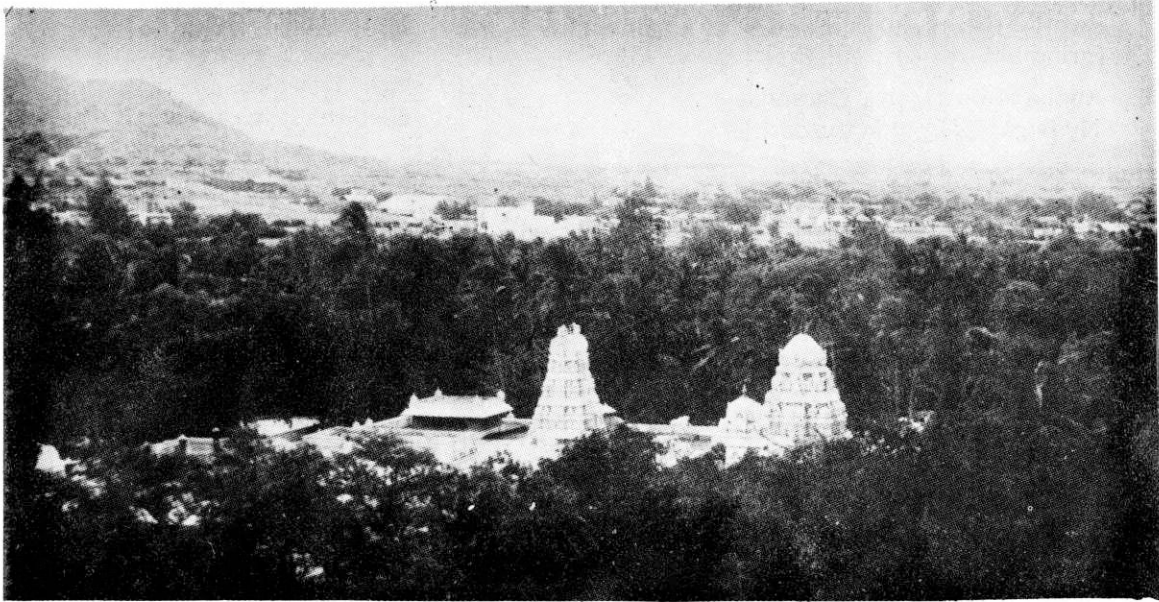
“In the case of the Maharshi, the state of God-identity, the realised state of consciousness, is continuous; it knows no interruptions. Ever since he realised the Self when he was sixteen, he has lived in that state of identity with the Self, i.e., the One Infinite.

He once described to me this state of consciousness, saying, “Even if the Trimurtis appear before me and give me darshan and ask me to choose a boon, I would tell them: ‘Be pleased, let me have no more darshan.’ That is to say, even the clear distinction between the seer and the seen which is implied in the darshan of the Lord can find no place in that state of Self-Realisation. (26-2-1949).”

**By T. V. Kapali Sastry
from THE MAHARSHI**

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MAHAPOOJA¹

By T. V. Kapali Sastry



SRI MATHRUBUTESWARA MAHASANNIDHANAM

The *Mahapooja*, or the *samadhi* anniversary of the Mother of Sri Ramana Maharshi, is celebrated every year in summer, on the ninth day of the dark half of the solar month *Vaikasi*; for on that day, came the solemn hour, the final *samadhi* for the Mother. There are two main items in the programme of this annual celebration; one is the feeding of the visitors and the poor on a large scale, the other is the special worship of the Lingam that is installed over the masonry work sealing the interred remains of the blessed soul.

Here we may make mention of a few facts suggesting a line of thought that may throw light on the meaning of the *samadhi* and the worship of the Lingam and the general feeding and may prepare the enqui-

ring mind that has faith in spiritual life and its possibilities for a change in the sense of values.

First about feeding. Generally, food is given as a matter of charity, as service of the poor, i. e. as service of God in the poor. When the feeding is associated with a great name, a saint or a religious institution, the religious man who does not believe in this form of charity learns to tolerate it! Now let us see if the feeding in Sri Ramanashram is undertaken as a matter of pity for the poor, or if there is anything else behind actuating this way of charity.

¹ Collected Works of Sri T. V. Kapali Sastry, Vol. III, p. 202-206; written in 1936.

Even on ordinary days, it is difficult for the visitor to return from the Ashram without the impression that the Maharshi evinces keen interest in feeding not only the hungry stomachs, but looks pleased to see that the visitor, whatever his status, avails himself of the opportunity of taking a meal at the Ashram; and this is so, notwithstanding the impersonal character of his dealings with men and things, of his general outlook on life, which is the inevitable expression of the intense deep life of the Truth he is centered in. Those who visit the Ashram frequently or have made a few days' stay, have often testified to the unusual appetite for food they experience which is a special feature of the Ashram atmosphere; and most of the devotees, even when they are on flying visits, would not forego the privilege of having a meal at the Ashram as it is consecrated, sanctified by the very air of the Ashram, permeated by the Maharshi spirit.

If these facts are borne in mind, it will be easy to understand the significance of a number of people being daily fed and of larger numbers on special occasions. Indeed the ashramites and devotees of Sri Maharshi take so much interest in such feedings because there is the common belief, a general understanding, that food in the Ashram is *prasad* in a truer sense of the word, an active symbol of the spiritual gift, a material vehicle of the awakening influence and gracious glance emanating from the presiding spirit — Sri Maharshi.

Let us next turn to the *samadhi* and the worship of the Lingam and look at the question in the light of known facts about the environmental changes in the life of Sri Maharshi before and after his Mother came to live with him in 1916. There are good people who are satisfied that the Mother of Maharshi was great because she gave birth to a great spiritual figure, and be-



MOTHER ALAGAMMAL

came greater after the close of her earthly life, deserving a place of worship, almost for the same reason. There is nothing essentially wrong in such a notion; for, a genuine faith of this kind is not objectionable and such beliefs of unsophisticated minds have got a value of their own, yielding good results always in the measure of the sincerity behind, governing and determining the course of conduct that is expressive of the conviction.

But such beliefs are no bar to others looking at the question from a different angle.

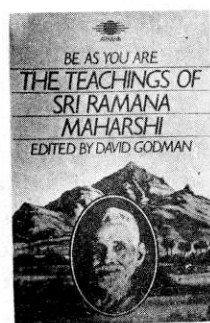
To make a proper study of the question is to learn as far as possible the attitude of Sri Maharshi towards this *samadhi*, to know something of the part he has played, to see how far the expressive element in him has been stimulated in this connection.

Looking back to earlier years, we can note certain landmarks in the story of his environmental life that have been the stimuli for drawing him out, to be responsive

to those that have sought him for help and guidance. Thus after 11 years of deep and intense *mounam* (silence in every sense of the word), his long-sealed voice opened in 1907 to give instructions to Kavyakantha Ganapati Sastrigal who afterwards became his great disciple. This was indeed the beginning of a new period in which he not only regained gradual control over the vocal chords and power of speech which had been, by long disuse, almost lost, but has been to this day answering questions and clearing doubts of earnest seekers and devotees who approach him.

Another period began in 1916 when his Mother came to live with him to the end. Within a short period of her advent, culinary arrangements were made, a regular kitchen was started, and visitors and devotees got lodging and boarding. In this period (1916-1922) i. e., the six closing years of her life, Sri Maharshi began to pay increasing attention to her needs. Gracious and sympathetic, he allowed her to have her share of his love and sympathy. Such was his spiritual stature that he would not mind the conventional *shastra* that a saint must keep himself aloof from his relatives. He was preparing her for the supreme consummation, the true *samadhi*. Apart from the silent spiritual way of helping her to build the inner life, he gave her useful instructions, narrated helpful anecdotes, corrected some of her world-old common notions of religious virtues in bathing and eating, of the kitchen religion, but never coerced her, always allowed her to have her orthodox way. For instance, he would remark in a jocose style, "O your cloth is touched by somebody, *madi* is gone, polluted, O religion is gone Yes, this onion, drumstick, great obstruction to *Mokhsa!*"

When the end came, the blessed lady completely resigned herself to the sage, making room for his proximity to be



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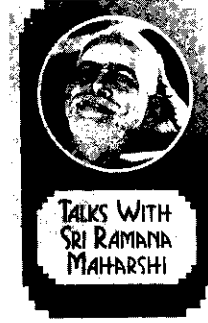
effective. On the last day of her life (May 19, 1922), from morning to about 8 in the evening, the great sage sat by the side of the gasping Mother, placing his right hand on her heart and the left on her head until life in her body became extinct and the soul got absorbed into the Spirit, into the Peace that passeth all understanding.

Some time after the event, when some one referred to the passing away of his Mother, the sage corrected with a curt remark "No, not passed away, அடங்கி விட்டது, அடக்கம் absorbed." On another occasion referring to the same subject, he stated, "Yes, in her case it was a success; on a previous occasion I did the same for Palaniswami when his end was approaching but it was a failure, he opened his eyes and passed away."

Further explaining in part what was happening during those ten or twelve hours when his hands were on the head and heart of his Mother, he said: "Innate tendencies, *vasanas* or subtle memory of past experiences leading to future possibilities, became very active; scenes rolled before her in the subtle consciousness, as the outer sense had already gone; the soul was passing through a series of experiences that might possibly have required many births of her, but for the quickening process worked by the special touch given on the occasion; the soul was at last disrobed of the subtle sheaths before it reached the final destination, the Supreme Peace, *Nirvana Samadhi* from which there is no return to ignorance."

Utterances to this effect regarding his Mother are aphorisms for which a plain commentary is to be found in the general atmosphere and his attitude to the *samadhi* and the temple constructed after the event. From Skandashram on the hill, he was for about six months daily visiting

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the *samadhi* at the foot of the hill where her remains were interred, until one day he suddenly sat and has continued to stay there to this hour! "Not of my own accord I removed from Skandashram . . ." he said, "Something placed me here and I obeyed; it is not due to my will, *sveccha*, it is *pareccha*, the will of others or of the Lord." "Lord, I have no will of my own. Thy will is my will," நிண்ணிட்டம் எண்ணிட்டம் is one of the oft-quoted passages of the Maharshi.

What has been so far stated is enough to show how he looks upon this *samadhi* with which, one may say, commenced a new period in the history of his life and the Ashram. The fact is well-known that from 1922 onwards, Sri Ramanashram has been steadily growing, the teachings and the influence of the sage are increasingly recognized and spread; especially in the last half a-dozen years the name of Sri Ramana Maharshi has touched some of the earnest hearts of Europe and America.

On one occasion Sri Maharshi is said to have remarked, "Where is she gone? She is here". This was taken to mean that she, his Mother, as a freed spiritual being,

lived with him in his atmosphere. If so, it may be that the principle of female Energy, *Shakti*, was required to extend and spread the influence of Sri Maharshi and that was supplied by his Mother effectively after her *samadhi*. This need not be discussed further here, as it can be best understood only by students of occult tradition and knowledge of the East as well as of the West.

The greatness then of Sri Maharshi's Mother rests much more upon other factors than on the fact of her great good luck in having been a good and pious-minded mother of a spiritual personage of a rare type. Her greatness lay in her capacity to receive his help and influence in the closing hours of her life and thereby to shuffle off the subtle coils of mortal ignorance before she could get liberated into the eternal station of the Supreme Peace. Above all, her worth and greatness are manifest in the increasingly felt influence of the spirit and teachings of the Maharshi, spreading across the shores and entitling her to take the place of the Madonna in the institution of Sri Ramana-shram where the Lingam Matrubhuteswara (the Lord who has taken her into Himself) is installed and offered daily worship.

TRUTH REVEALED

"Sooner or later the question 'Who am I?' will have to be faced. All that leads to this question is good. By itself nothing else is fully effective, for Self-knowledge comes only through Self-enquiry; but other methods purify the mind and help it to see its own limits. When the mind comes to the end of its resources and stands baffled before the unanswerable question, then a Higher Power takes charge of the mind and the Self stands revealed, the Real, the Wonderful."

— Sri Ramana Maharshi

HOW TO REMAIN HEALTHY THROUGH MEDITATION: A MENTAL THERAPY¹

By Lady Dr. Lobsang Dolma Khangkar

How to maintain health through moral and mental therapy? All those wishing to lead a good life must follow ten moral principles which are: not killing, not stealing and not indulging in sexual misconduct (discipline of the body); not telling lie, not aggravating divisive talks, not using harsh words and not engaging in idle gossips (discipline of speech); and not being covetous, not having malicious intention and not holding wrong views or philosophy (discipline of mind); observing these ten moral principles a person can live a long and healthy life.

Secondly, mental therapy, the practice of meditation: Get up early in the morning and maintain a cross-legged position when normally the air is pure. First press your right nostril with your ring finger and breathe the air deeply but with gentle force three times through the left nostril and release the air forcefully through the right nostril. Think that you are cured of all negative emotions represented by a hen in the paintings. This will help in curing all those disorders associated with the wind humour. Similarly do this second round of practice but with your left nostril pressed

hard and breathing through the right nostril three times and expelling the air through the left nostril forcefully thus curing negative emotions of hatred represented by a snake in the paintings. This will help in curing disorders associated with the bile humour. Finally, keeping both your hands gently released but in a meditative gesture breathe the air through both nostrils three times followed by forceful expulsion of air. And think this has cured the negative emotions of closed mindedness and disorders associated with phlegm humour. The closed mindedness is represented by a pig in the paintings. Generate a strong sense of ecstasy from the depth of your heart at the conclusion of every round of the meditation; this is helpful in keeping yourself active physically and mentally, and reducing tension.

Thus we can avoid suffering and cultivate happiness, gain relief from disorders temporarily and also attain peace ultimately.

We all need this very much at present.

1. From a talk given at Ramana Kendra, Delhi, on January 25, 1987.

“Anyone who proposes to do good must not expect people to roll stones out of his way, but must accept his lot calmly if they even roll a few more upon it.”

— Albert Schweitzer.

TWO DECADES OF

RAJA YOGA - THE ROYAL PATH

By Prof. Eknath Easwaran

The Sanskrit word 'yoga' comes from the same root as the English word yoke. In arithmetic yoga means addition; but in philosophy it has the double connotation of uniting and bringing under discipline. The scriptures give more than one definition of yoga. According to the *Katha Upanishad*, "When all the senses are stilled, when the mind is at rest, when the intellect wavers not, then, say the wise, is reached the highest state. This calm of the senses and the mind has been defined as yoga." The *Bhagavad Gita* implies that yoga can carry us beyond suffering when it says, "It is the breaking of contact with pain."

YAMA AND NIYAMA

By Prof. G. V. Kulkarni

The Yoga system, like other ancient Hindu systems of philosophy, accepts the Realisation of Being as the goal of life. According to Patanjali, its chief exponent and the author of its scripture, the *Yoga Sutras*, *Kaivalya* or Heaven is the state where man enjoys the supreme bliss of aloneness, completely immune to the play of *Prakriti*; and indeed, the very word 'Kaivalya' is from the root meaning 'alone'. In order to attain this goal it is necessary to withdraw one's mind from all distracting thoughts and tendencies. The definition of Yoga given by Patanjali himself at the very beginning of his great work is 'restraint of mental activities'.

THE KNOW-HOW OF YOGIC BREATHING

By Prof. K. S. Joshi

The word *pranayama* is composed of two parts, namely *prana* and *ayama*. The latter is a noun form derived from the root *yama* meaning 'to make silent.' Yogic breathing thus means a process by which *prana* is made silent. The word *prana* seems to have been in use in the Sanskrit language to mean two different things, namely: (i) the life force or the principle of life and, (ii) the air (*vayu*) which flows in the body. So far as yogic breathing is concerned, the word 'prana' must be taken to mean the air that we inhale and exhale, so that yogic breathing can be defined, for all practical purposes, as a process of making the breath silent.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

ARUNACHALA

By Arthur Osborne

I sought to devour Thee ;
Come now and devour me,
Then there will be peace, Arunachala!

You bade me give all for you—
Take now the giver too,
Survive alone, Arunachala!

Let now the deception end.
There was no lover or friend
Apart from Thyself, Arunachala !

Now that at last I know
All this a magic show,
Let it dissolve in Thee, Arunachala !

(The poem is based on v. 28 of Sri Bhagavan's "Marital Garland of Letters to Sri Arunachala".)

THE MOST MEMORABLE EVENT

By S. S. Cohen

For a number of years I have been staying away from the annual celebrations of Sri Ramanasramam. Advancing age after regular attendance for more than a quarter of a century appeared excuse enough. But the Kumbhabhishekam or consecration of the shrine over the Samadhi of Sri Bhagavan was an obligation and a pleasure. First of all it is for the Samadhi of my Guru; secondly it is an event which sanctifies to eternity one of the holiest places on earth.

Sri Ramana Maharshi was not an ordinary teacher, but an embodiment of Absolute Truth, so that it is the fitness of things that his devotees should perpetuate his Samadhi, the very heart of his Ashram, as a place of pilgrimage for those who follow him.

— "THE MOUNTAIN PATH" - July, 1967



all of great
nature
in saying

rep

ATTACHMENT

179



- to SELF
- to mother
- to Father
- to child
- to cat
- to dog



ILLEGAL

reps

HOW I CAME TO BHAGAVAN

By R. Anjaneyalu

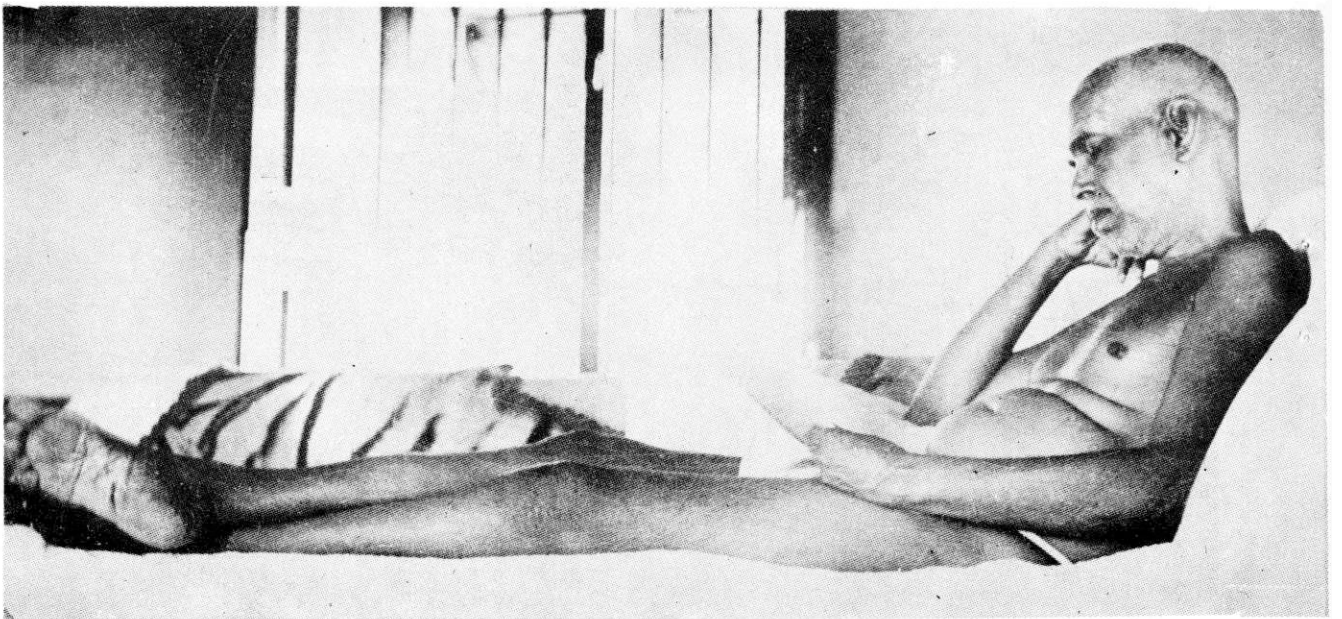
Sri Bhagavan acts in a mysterious way to draw His devotees to Himself. There was nothing extraordinary in my coming to the Ashram and yet, looking back, I wonder at the miraculous Grace He has showered me.

During 1967, finishing touches were being given to Sri Bhagavan's *Samadhi Mantapam* and the associated work for the completion of the corridor passage all round had to be rushed through. The *Kumbhabhishekam* had been fixed for the first week of June 1967. The Engineer, Sri K. Padmanabhan, with whom I was working in Bangalore, brought me to the Ashram and put me in charge of the work.

This was on the 14th of May 1967. I came merely to execute a business commitment. Then I had had no parti-

cular interest in matters of the spirit and knew little about meditation. The Ashram had very few rooms to spare for guests then and I was accommodated in the room above the dining hall, along with two of my colleagues from Bangalore. I was barely 23, very timid, and kept to my work during the day.

At about 1 a.m. on the second night after my arrival I began to feel very uncomfortable. I sensed a snake creeping slowly up from my toe, past my stomach and chest and over my head. I lay frozen and petrified. As it left the top of my head, I opened my eyes. I did not see any snake but saw a long serpentine blaze of light going from the top of my head into the darkness beyond. I sat upright, shivering uncontrollably and with palms intertwined between my folded legs. How long, I could not





Sri Anjaneyalu, with wife, Kanthamma and daughter, Ramani

tell! After a while I lay back in great peace. Since that day I wake up instinctively very early everyday and sit up enjoying immense peace.

The *Kumbhabishekam* work was completed in time and I returned to the Ashram in 1969-70 in connection with the construction of the main "Ramana Auditorium" in front of Bhagavan's *Samadhi*. During this period a strange and blessed event occurred. I lay one afternoon around 1-30 p.m. in my room and dozed off. I dreamt that four or five persons were manhandling me. Some kept pressing me down on the bed while others were holding on to my legs and tugging viciously. In this most unenviable plight, I suddenly became aware of a somewhat aged Bhagavan seated by my side. He had placed my head on His thigh and resting His palm on my right temple, said in Tamil, His head shaking slightly, "Do not fear. I shall take care."

The visit in May 1967 has been the turning point of my life. Although I had been working as a contractor in Bangalore, I was more keen in executing works for the Ashram. In the period of nearly twenty years, it has been my privilege, all due to His Grace, to take up and complete the construction of a number of Guest

units, the Ashram Library, extension to the Veda Pathasala, and lately the reconstruction of the Old Meditation Hall. These construction works for the Ashram suited me, for, as a petty contractor, I did not have much capital to invest; the Ashram was giving me the required advance and necessary encouragement.

All these works were taken up by me out of my love and attachment to the Ashram, permitting me to have marginal profits. The redeeming and established fact was that I gained considerable confidence and wherewithal to stand on my own to shoulder major works in Bangalore. My prosperity is due purely to Sri Bhagavan's Grace; and I have now been blessed with a decent cottage of my own in Bangalore as my abode, and a car to move about in.

Ever since my service to the Ashram began, Bhagavan has shown me that, if one goes about one's work, the responsibility for our well-being is His. The following incidents may be termed as His miracles.

i) It was in the first week of Dec. 1980, after my return from the Ashram, subsequent to Bhagavan's Birth Centenary, that my only daughter, RAMANI, named after

Sri Ramana, then five years old, took ill suddenly with severe headache and high temperature. She had to be admitted to a Nursing Home, and the diagnosis was 'Cerebral Meningitis'. Our prayers to Sri Bhagavan were no doubt heard by Him. The child, who suffered a lot for nearly three weeks and whose life had been given up by the doctors, recovered to the surprise of all and is now a healthy girl of eleven years.

ii) Repeated bouts of stomach ache forced me to get into the nursing homes thrice for treatment under specialists during the period 1982/1983. Consequent on a similar severe attack in May 1984, I entered again a Nursing Home, and the surgeon decided on an Appendectomy. And, he was forced to perform another operation alongside for 'Diverticulum'.

Though both the operations were successful and I withstood them well, complications that set in after a couple of days frightened the surgeon and other doctors, who began to doubt my survival. Our incessant prayers to Sri Bhagavan, whose pictures were ever before me in the Nursing Home, saved my life. All, including the doctors, were convinced that my survival was indeed a miracle!

iii) My daughter was once again saved from a serious eye trouble during Sep-Oct 1986 when I was fully tied up with the renovation of the Old Hall of Sri Bhagavan. I have furnished a detailed account of this 'miracle' in a letter appearing at page 27 of the Jan. '87 *The Mountain Path*.

Sri Bhagavan has indeed taken care of me all the time, materially and spiritually! When all hope is lost, His help comes in a most common-place, natural manner!

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**Moments Remembered
by Managing Editor**

UNDERSTANDING RAMANA

Here are some more reminiscences collected from the old devotees.

— V. G.

The stream of Bhagavan's devotees from the area around Wandavasi started, perhaps, with Keerai Patti and after Udandi Nayanar, Masthan Swami and The-suramma, continues to this day! A very devout group from Thellar, also near Wandavasi, consisting of Sri Jayarama Mudaliar, his brother Venkatesa Mudaliar and several others have been regular visitors since Bhagavan's days. Sri Kunju Swami recollected a humorous incident that occurred during the *Golden Jubilee Celebrations*, held here in 1946. "A big Pandai had been erected in the space north of the Old Hall when the verandah area at the entrance to the Old Hall was cemented for the function. Many eminent personages had spoken, discoursed, sung and even given concerts during the festivities. The Thellar group had sung songs in praise of Ramana, chiefly those composed by Sivaprakasam Pillai. When it came to *Ramana Pada Malai*, they had sung '*Ramanar Paadam Vaazhgavey*' 'ரமணர் பாதம் வாழ்கவே' at the conclusion of each verse instead of '*Ramanan Paadam*'..... 'ரமணன் பாதம்.....' In Tamil names, a final 'n' is a mark of familiarity and 'r' is one of respect.

"Bhagavan listened to it all without any reaction and when the group was depar-

ting, teasingly remarked: 'ரமணன்னு மரியாதைக் கொறவு போலெருக்காங்! அதாங் ரமணர்னு பாடினா. சிவனைக் கூட சிவர், சிவர்னு தாங் சொல்லணுங் போலருக்கு!'

"It seems 'Ramanan' is disrespectful. That is why they sang 'Ramanar'. Perhaps, we have to refer to Sivan also as Sivar, Sivar!"

The Thellar group continues to recite Bhagavan's poems in Tamil daily to this day.

* * *

The other day, when I met Sri Kunju Swami, he was almost in ecstasy. With tears in his eyes, he said: "Our Bhagavan is unique, indeed!" Then, he started narrating the following incidents:

"Sri Dandapani Swami (The father-in-law of Sri Muruganar) has done yeoman service to the Ashram. He was, for some time, the *sarvadhikari* also. Yet, in his last days, he had to leave the Ashram under unpleasant circumstances. While doing so he told Bhagavan: 'Bhagavan! I am leaving.' Bhagavan kept silent. Dandapani Swami left. He went back to the native place, but could not rest in peace. Old age already was taking its toll on him. One day, the Ashram received a letter in which he spilled all his woes

and worries and at the end prayed to Sri Bhagavan to 'save him'. Though some people in the hall did not react sympathetically to this old man's sincere appeal, Bhagavan was moved to read the letter of Dandapani Swami. After some time, He turned to Visvanathan (Viswanatha Swami) and said: 'You reply to him soothingly. In it quote the verse of Guhai Namasivaya :

“நல்லருணை நாதர் நமையுறுத்தல் நெஞ்சமே
கொல்லுதற்கோ பொல்லாக் குணம் போக்க—
கல்லில்
மழுக்குவார் கூறைக்கு மாறுபட்டோ வண்ணான்
அழுக்குவாங் கைக்கே அவன்
- ஸ்ரீ குகை நமச்சிவாயர்.

The reply was immediately sent. This verse reads :

“Lord Arunachala sends us troubles only to remove our defects not to kill us. The washerman beats the sari on the stone not because he hates it, but to cleanse it.”

* * *

On another occasion Sri Kunju Swami said: “The way Bhagavan used to prepare spinach (green leaves) is a lesson in patience and in the culinary art. Heaps of spinach would be gathered in the kitchen. Early morning Bhagavan would go there; we would follow. His instructions for cutting were specific. His method ?

“The spinach should be cut into three parts. First the top, the leaves; second, the stem and then the root. The leaves are used for making curry. The stems are bundled and tied together and put into the boiling sambar. The roots are all repeatedly and thoroughly cleaned in water and then crushed three or four times on the stone each time taking the juice out, until only pure fibre is left. This juice is mixed with the rasam. This

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HUNTING THE 'I'

by

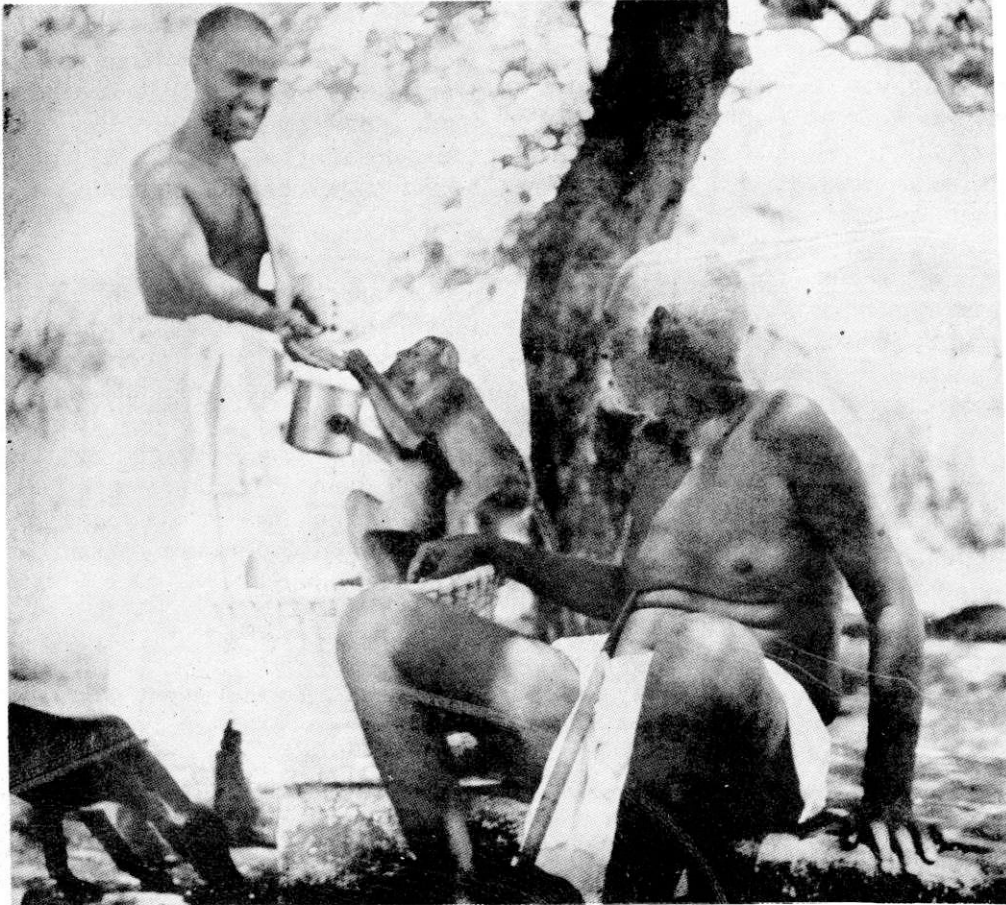
Lucy Cornelissen

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is the routine for cooking spinach! This demanded so much work and Bhagavan did it mostly Himself.

“Once we took all the roots, bundled them up and buried them under ground, in a place which Bhagavan did not frequent while going for His walk. Unfortunately, on that day Bhagavan did deviate from His usual route and passed by that very spot! Since the earth was freshly disturbed, Bhagavan just put His walking stick into it and some spinach roots surfaced. Bhagavan immediately understood the mischief! He sat down and dug out all the roots Himself, and washed them thoroughly, since the roots were all now covered with

mud. It took a long time for Him to clean them all. He went to the kitchen, crushed them repeatedly till all the juice was taken out. He Himself put the juice into *rasam* and only then continued His walk. Bhagavan did all this with a smile on His face and not a trace of irritation or anger! It was an object lesson for us all, who silently witnessed this with untold guilt. This lesson was imprinted in our hearts that day, so deeply that never afterwards did we think of idling or wasting anything.”

* * *

He continued: “Bhagavan’s views on orthodoxy will always remain a mystery.

One cannot say whether He recommended and supported it, or rejected and ridiculed it. Here are some instances.

“When Bhagavan was at Skandashram, Echamma was keen not only on feeding Bhagavan daily, but also taking *yatis* (Brahmin *sannyasins*) to her home and giving them *bhiksha*, in the traditional way. Once Sri Narayana Guru’s disciples, Govindanandagiri and Achutanandagiri, had come from Kanchipuram. After staying a few days in the town, the two came to live with Bhagavan. They were both well built, fair-complexioned and learned. Taking them to be Brahmins, Echamma invited them to her house. Neither party informed Bhagavan about this arrangement.

“On the day they had to go down for *biksha*, Govindananda and Achutananda informed Bhagavan about it. At once Bhagavan understood their predicament. If Echamma came to know that they were non-Brahmins, she might withdraw her hospitality! This would be a great embarrassment to the *sannyasins*. Bhagavan smilingly asked them both: ‘Don’t you know how to do *parishesanam* (a Brahmin ritual of drawing with water circles round the leaf before touching the food)?’

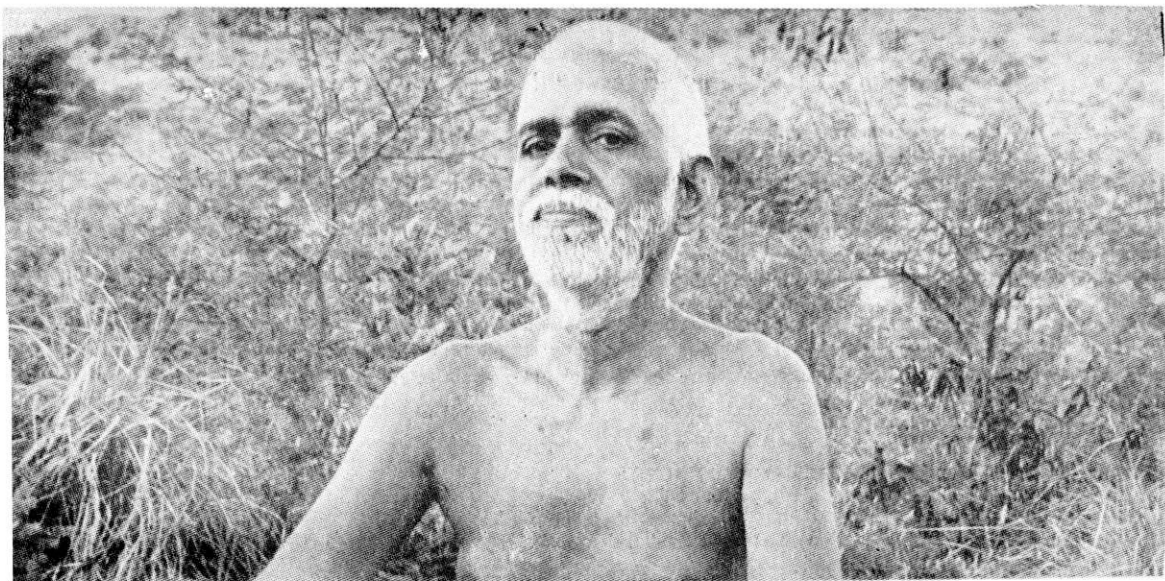
Govindananda and Achutananda, were quick to grasp the hint and answered: ‘Yes, Bhagavan! We had observed this in North India, where *sannyasins* have to do *parishesanam*, before eating!’ Bhagavan kept from Echamma all her life this ‘secret’ of the *sannyasins* to whom she had offered *biksha* to her heart’s content!”

* * *

“On another occasion, in the kitchen they had cooked some dishes with plenty of onions. The onion peels were thrown out but got scattered and began flying all over. Bhagavan, who happened to notice this during His walk, said: ‘Better collect them all and bury them under the ground. The orthodox cannot stand the thought that in Swami’s Ashram onion is being consumed!’”

* * *

Sri Kunju Swami went on: “When Ashram Veda Pathasala was started in 1938, Sri Krishna Ghanapatigal was appointed as its teacher. He was very orthodox. In the dining hall, the practice was that only after the Brahmins, the non-Brahmins and Bhagavan were served. During the second serving, as the food



had already once been served to non-Brahmins, it was considered polluted. Sri Krishna Chanapatigal felt unhappy and gently made this known to Bhagavan. Bhagavan, straightaway instructed that Chanapatigal should be served food separately inside the kitchen, before food was served at the dining hall. He did not stop at that. Thereafter for some days He would enquire whether food had been served to the Vedic teacher, before Himself entering the dining hall for lunch!"

* * *

"Sri Viswanatha Swami's brother, who had just then been released from Vellore prison (arrested for participating in the freedom movement) came to the Ashram. His parents were very orthodox. At the dining hall he sat down with the non-Brahmins. He was reminded by a few that he should go and sit only with the Brahmins. He told them in a loud voice: 'There is no difference of caste or creed in the presence of Bhagavan.' In his voice, one could discern an anticipation of approval from Bhagavan.

"Quite surprisingly for him, Bhagavan reacted differently! With a tinge of anger in His voice, He said: 'Oho! Has he transcended all limitations so as to do as he pleased? Will he eat at home seated along with non-Brahmins? Why this proclamation of equality only here? One should be normal and behave as one would at home. To live naturally is the best form of discipline."

Can any one classify Bhagavan either as one upholding orthodoxy or as one recommending reform?

* * *

Sri Ramani Ammal of Rajaplayam, is a permanent resident at Ramana Nagar. (She was 'Introduced' to our readers in our July '86 issue. p.188) She shared with me the following anecdotes:

"Once while I was seated in front of Sri Bhagavan, in the Old Hall, slices of some fruit were brought by a devotee and placed before Bhagavan. A monkey walked in. Though the attendant was not very keen on obliging the monkey, upon Bhagavan's behest he gave a piece to it. Receiving it the monkey bounded away, but another soon took its place, evidently informed by the former. A piece was given to him, this monkey also went away but a third one came for a share! Bhagavan gave a piece to it, saying: 'All right! Now don't go and inform any other, or else these people here will be angry with me!' This fellow left with his share and obviously followed Bhagavan's *upadesa* to the letter, as there were no further claimants from his class!"

* * *

"A very poor honey-gatherer of about 75 years came one day with a mere rag for a covering and a small vessel in hand. Approaching Bhagavan with her eyes shaded by her hands for better vision, she broke into terms of great endearment, repeatedly prostrating and expressing her uncontrollable joy. It seems she had been trying for the past 26 years to visit her 'dear one', but could realise it only then. Bhagavan asked her with great affection, 'What have you brought for me, Patti? Give me, I will take some!' He then remarked: 'If she is given a meal it would be good'. Such a 'suggestion' was executed as an order by Chinnaswami. Later Bhagavan said: 'Perhaps someone would like to give her a *sari*.' When the attendant nearby sprang to action, Bhagavan whispered to him: 'These people are not used to anything expensive; so, get something simple'. He later told the old woman: 'Patti, some rich people wish to give this gift for you. Please accept it."

Sri Ramani Ammal recalls that the Patti accepted the 'offer' with some reluctance.

Ramani Ammal was thrilled to see the way Bhagavan advised the attendant and later persuaded the old lady!

* * *

She continued: "There was an old shepherdess who used to visit Bhagavan in the early years, when He was on the Hill and would offer Him *koozhu* (gruel), saying: 'You are simply sitting like this all day long. At least, have this please.' She once came on the *Sivaratri* day around 1948 with a large pot full of *koozhu* and some sliced onions for side dish. Though a rich and variegated fare was to be served to all on that festive day, Bhagavan said that He cared more for the *koozhu* and urged others to partake of the sumptuous feast. When all there present expressed willingness to share the *koozhu* (overlooking the onion) and begged Him to taste the rest of the fare, Bhagavan agreed." Sri Ramani said: "I was there and watched Bhagavan intently. He sat in the dining hall and simply waited till all the items were served, then mixing them all up together, ate the gruel!"

* * *

"One day, I returned to the Ashram after visiting Patala Linga at the main temple and having Sri Arunachaleswara's *darshan*. Even today I wonder at my courage in standing before Bhagavan and, upon His prodding, relating to Him about the dilapidated condition of the Patala Linga shrine. Bhagavan enquired about the elephant tied nearby and then asked whether I had received *prasad* at the main shrine. I was so ignorant. I had carried the *vibhuti* all along in my palm and now respectfully held it out to Him. Like a child, He picked a tiny amount from that and applied it to His forehead."

When I asked Sri Ramani Ammal whether she had ever put a question directly to Bhagavan, she said: "Doubts vanished in front of Bhagavan. When doubts came to the mind, they were dissolved

Nrnaam nidarshanamayam Ramana Maharshih, that is how Nayana hails the Maharshi. Sri Maharshi is an example of ideal human conduct. The highest perfection of noble human conduct is there in him eternally shining. Whatever good in human conduct is to be found in me, however insignificant it be, is entirely due to his grace. His movement can almost always be predicted with certainty. One can always be sure of what his reactions would be. No doubt, occasionally, even his movements cannot be predicted. That is when, as he himself explained, a Divine Will makes him do this or that. (11-2-1949)

— from *The Maharshi*
By T. V. Kapali Sastry

in His presence, even before the question could be formulated. Some times, a discussion would begin among the devotees on the very topic and Bhagavan's remarks would solve the doubt! So, the opportunity of putting a question verbally to Bhagavan did not arise at all!"

* * *

An old pundit who occasionally visits the Ashram, from somewhere in the far south, narrated to me the following absorbing incident:

"Dr. Padmanabhan of Palghat had written many songs on Sri Bhagavan. He, like others, would show them to Bhagavan and have them corrected by Him. Bhagavan rarely corrected the contents, but He would correct the grammatical and spelling mistakes. That day Dr. Padmanabhan showed a verse to Bhagavan and He made a small change in it. But this correction had tremendous significance, indeed!

"In one line, Dr. Padmanabhan had written: 'நானும் அவரும் ஒன்றே' ['I and He are only one']. Bhagavan changed it into 'நானும் அவரில் ஒன்றே' ('In Him I am mingled')."

Change of two letters and what a transformation!



Devotional Thoughts On Self-Enquiry and Giri-Pradakshina

By 'A Honey-Bee'

Sri Bhagavan has always extolled the practices of Self-enquiry and circumambulation of the Holy Hill, as these practices reinforce each other and are complementary. Sri Bhagavan has also said that to go round the SELF within us is the highest form of devotion. All earnest seekers on the royal road of Self-enquiry - whether they are in close proximity to Tiruvannamalai, bodily or not - may therefore, with mind merged in the Heart and attention focussed therein one-pointedly, circumambulate the Self as the Heart which resides within each one of us. In so doing, whenever we can, we combine Self-enquiry with circumambulation of the Self, the combined effect of which should be immensely potent and beneficial. This practice would be helpful especially when we are unable to do *Pradakshina*, physically, because we cannot stay in Tiruvannamalai for as long as we would like to. In going round the Self as the Heart which resides within each one of us, in the manner described above, it may be recalled that the Mighty Fruit (ஞானப் பழம்), Lord Ganapati, walked around His Mother and said that He had circled the Universe to claim the golden apple from His Father—Lord Arunachala Siva.

May Bhagavan Sri Ramana guide us from sustained effort to effortless abidance in the Heart—*atma nishta* !



THE BUDDHA

(Verses from the *Dharmmapada* for study and practice, wherever there prevails conflict)

1. Hate is not conquered by hate. Hate is overcome by love. This is the law eternal. (Verse 5)
2. Many do not know that we are here in this world to live in harmony. Those who know this do not fight against each other. (Verse 6)
3. Victory brings hate, for the defeated man is unhappy. He who surrenders victory and defeat, he finds joy. (Verse 201)
4. All beings tremble before danger. Life is dear to all. When one considers this one does not kill or cause to kill. (Verse 130)
5. O let us live in joy, in love among those who hate! Among those who hate let us live in love. (Verse 197)
6. Overcome anger by peacefulness; overcome evil by good; overcome the man who lies by truth. (Verse 223)

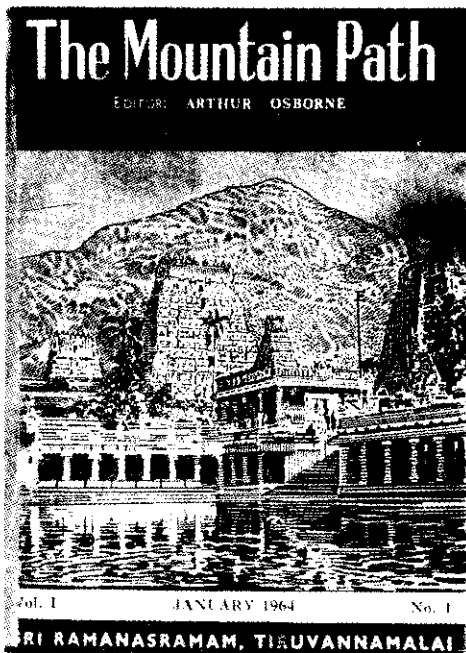


2. BHAGAVAN RAMANA

(Verses from *Sri Ramana Gita*)

1. In a society consisting of followers of diverse ways of life, Oh best of sadhus, society is like the body and the members like its limbs. (Verse 3)
2. One should build up one's own circle so as to serve the interests of society and then make it prosper so that society itself may prosper. (Verse 6)
3. Brotherhood based on a sense of equality is the supreme goal to be attained by human society as a whole. (Verse 10)
4. Through brotherhood, supreme peace will prevail among mankind and then this entire planet will flourish like a single household. (Verse 11)

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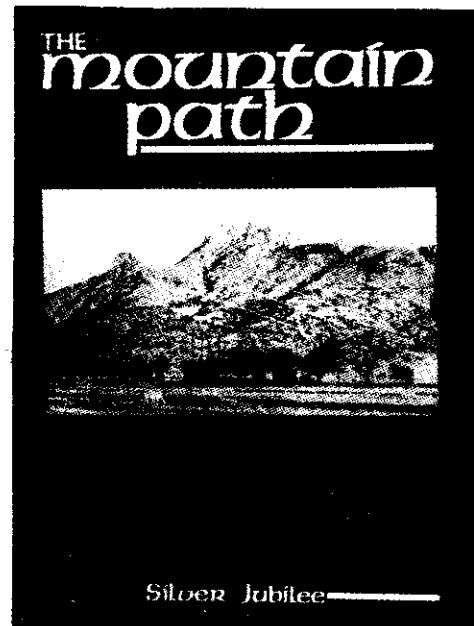
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MYSTIC DEATH AND RE-BIRTH

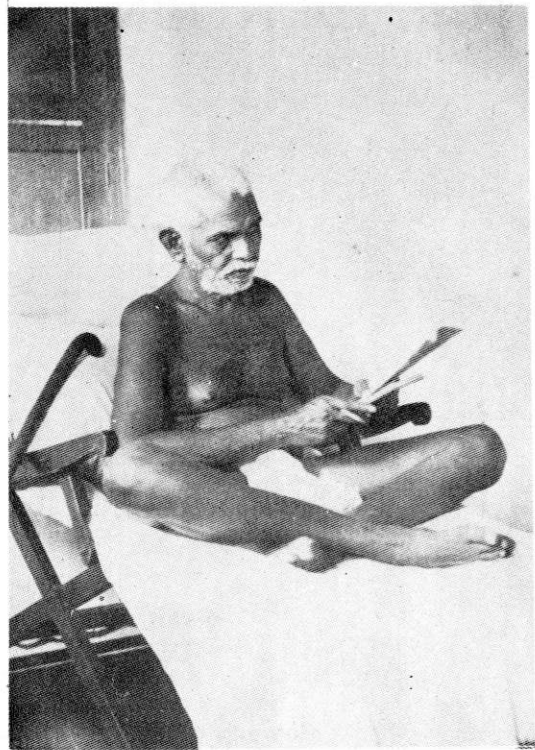
By ANBUMALAI

“Die before you die”, exhorted the prophet Muhammad,
 If to the Ultimate you aspire, this secret you must know,
 The Goal you cannot reach, until you die;
 Yes, 'tis death, the summit of spiritual achievement,
 The final destination of the mystic journey,
 The end of spiritual evolution.
 But not the body's death it is,
 It's the dissolution of individuality,
 The extinction of the ego,
 Setting you free from the delusion of bondage,
 As said by Bhagavan — “The ego is both bondage as well as the bound one.
 Otherwise there is no bondage.”

To remove the cloud of ego concealing the Sun of Self,
 The way supreme is the Path of Surrender,
 So direct and also smooth and easy,
 In the words of Bhagavan —

“When you surrender your false notion of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ to the Master then what remains is simply the Reality.”

A combination of humanity and Divinity is man,
 With humanity veiling his Divinity,
 So long as human nature survives,
 Your own Divinity you know not,
 But when dies the false I of ego-individuality,



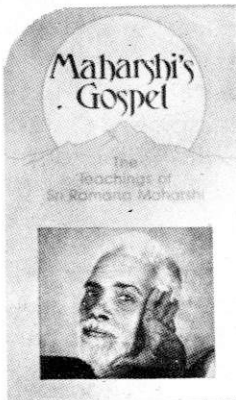
Then is revealed the true I of God or Self.
 On this point a saying by Ramakrishna there is —
 “Man's humanity must die before his Divinity can manifest.”

Without this death, the deepest of spiritual attainments
 Are as dust before gold,
 Before the egoless Sage, the greatest of Masters and Adepts have to bow their heads

In human shape he appears, but no mere
 man is he,
 'Tis Divinity openly manifest in flesh and
 blood,
 A walking-talking embodiment of the
 Absolute.
 Yet to stay in the world for its benefit,
 A faint trace of ego he seems to have,
 But as good as a charred piece of rope it
 is,
 A rope it appears, but of no use for tying
 anything.

For the mystic death and re-birth,
 An exquisitely beautiful symbol the
 ancient Sufis had-

The mythical bird known as the phoenix.
 At the end of its thousand year life-span,
 (at the end of many lives of spiritual
 evolution)
 It beats its wings to produce fire,
 (the fire of 'sadhana' or spiritual ex-
 perience)
 And when it is utterly consumed in the
 flames,
 (the mystic death or ego-annihilation)
 From the ashes is born a baby-phoenix.
 (the mystic re-birth or egolessness)
 As expressed by Christ in an esoteric
 utterance —
 "Unless you be born again you cannot
 enter the Kingdom of Heaven."



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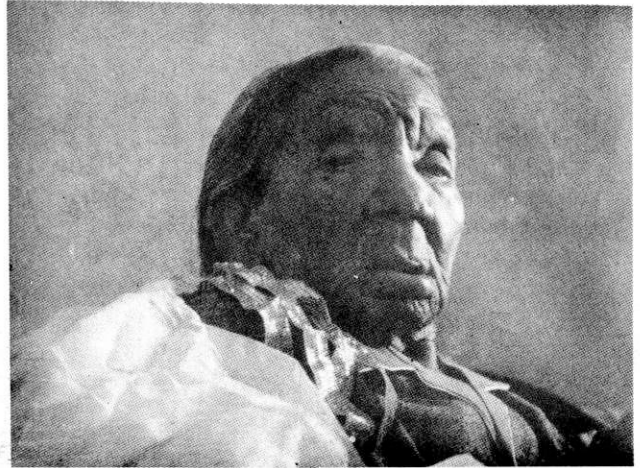
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MOTHER MAYI MA

By

Ilaya Raaja



Mayi Ma

Her piercing look—not at any person or object, but deeply indrawn—makes me feel that Bhagavan Ramana's 'look' would have been like this. Looking at those eyes one is instantaneously transported to a spiritual dimension. Mayi Ma, as she is fondly addressed, does not talk - much less a spiritual one. Sometimes when we talk to her, she repeats the sentences verbatim used by us, whatever may be the language uttered.

From the day I heard of Mayi Ma, I became powerfully drawn to her. Somehow, the details of what her name is or wherefrom she hails did not interest me at all. Her peace-permeating presence is all that I seek. I go to her at Salem (where she resides) again and again and every time I am struck by that purity—divine, serene.

When I came to know of her, I rushed to Kanyakumari where, I was told, she was living. On reaching there I was told that she had already left Kanyakumari. Yet, Mayi Ma's grace enabled me, the very same day, to gather information about her abode at Salem and I went there.

The very first meeting was a thrilling

one. Ma is always surrounded by many dogs. People also surround her. I put into Ma's hands the biscuits I had taken with me. Without any hesitation she gave some to the 'dogs' and some to 'us'. While distributing the biscuits to the 'dogs' and 'human beings', there was no sign of difference in Ma's face!

We were happy to sit still in Ma's presence. Suddenly I felt that her 'look' was directed at me. How to describe that penetrating, gracious look? It pierced through my heart and burnt away the past. Now, I realise the power of the glance, described in our scriptures.

Can you raise a fence around blowing wind or imprison the vastness of the sky?

No wonder, when a few people at Kanyakumari collected funds and raised a building in the name of 'Mayi Samaj' to house the Mother, she flew away from there. How can any organised institution, or its rules and regulations limit the Infinite Being that Mayi Ma is!

Mayi Ma has no organisation, Ma is no guru. Mayi Ma is Mayi Ma—being the Eternal. The truth that passeth all understanding!

INTRODUCING...

... Sri K. Vithoba Kamath

Sri K. Vithoba Kamath is one among the many devotees of Bhagavan who prefer to remain anonymous.

Born in 1924, he heard of Bhagavan through *The Sunday Times* of Sri M. S. Kamath and a book on Ramana by the same devotee. Even from early youth he has been inspired by Gandhian ideals.

Soon after his graduation in 1946, he visited Sri Ramanasramam and spent much of his time seated in the western end of the Old Hall, intensely observing Maharshi. He says, "Maharshi rarely looked directly at anybody and sat most of the time looking fixedly beyond. I thought he was doing *Tratak*. One day, a great desire rose in me to see Lord Krishna where Maharshi sat. Soon a darkness enveloped the scene, and I began to discern the form of Lord Krishna where Maharshi reclined. When this vision passed away, I told myself that this could have been my own projection and so perhaps, as a further test, I willed that I should see Gandhiji. The same process was repeated and I beheld Gandhiji this time! Later I was most fortunate to see Maharshi looking towards me with a slight smile."

Sri Kamath recalls that Bhagavan had a slow tremor of his head as He sat on the sofa. He sees vividly even now as he did then the grand spectacle of Maharshi returning from His walk on the hill, His body glittering like gold. On the day of his departure, he sat close to Bhagavan's sofa, south east of it. There was none on either



side of it. Bhagavan lay reclined looking due west. He put a question in English, "Sir, how to still the tossing mind?" There was no reply from Bhagavan, who kept looking on. Kamath was sure that Bhagavan had heard his question. He interpreted Bhagavan's silence to mean that Maharshi did not approve of such a question or that he should not have asked it. Five minutes passed. An elderly gentleman whom he later came to know as Sri A. Devaraja Mudaliar, came and stood before Bhagavan.

Maharshi looked at him and asked him in Tamil to ask Kamath: "Who asks this question? Is it the mind or you?" Kamath replied: "The mind."

Bhagavan: "If you see what this mind is, it will be stilled."

Kamath: "How to see what the mind is?"

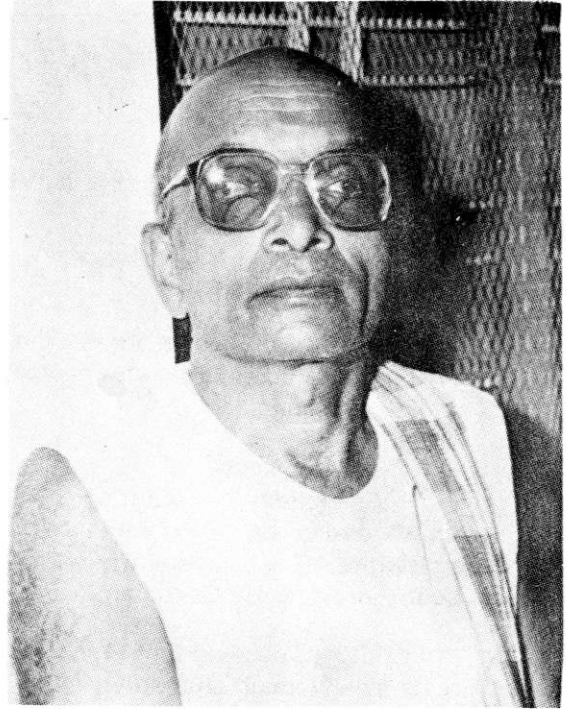
Bhagavan: "What is your idea of the mind?"

Kamath: "My idea is, it is thought."

Bhagavan: "Yes, mind is a bundle of thoughts. But the source of all thoughts is the 'I'-thought. So, if you try to find out who this 'I' is, the mind will disappear. Mind will exist only so long as you think of external things. But when you draw it from external things, and make it think of the mind or 'I'—in other words introvert it, it ceases to exist."

After a while, Sri Kamath departed. Sri Mudaliar met him outside the hall and noted down where he hailed from. The above conversation finds mention in *Day-By-Day with Bhagavan*, under the entry for 18-10-1946.

Kamath had the fortune of sitting close to Bhagavan, in the row opposite Him, during lunch hours. He recalls that Mahar-



Sri K. Vithoba Kamath

shi was keenly observing the leaves of all and directing the servers to rectify any shortfall. He Himself took very little, but mashed well with His hands, the rice served to Him. Kamath recalls that lady devotees had served the food.

Sri Kamath had stayed here for nearly a week. A few days before his departure one Dr. Roy, a blind and learned gentleman from Bombay, visited the Ashram. On the request of Sri Raja Iyer Post Master, Kamath had shown Dr. Roy around the Ashram. Sri Kamath recalls that Bhagavan had evinced great interest in knowing about the Braille system from Dr. Roy.

From Sri Ramanasramam Sri Kamath went straight to Vinobaji's Parandhaam Ashram at Paunar. He stayed there for two years serving under Vinobaji and returned to his village in Shimoga, (Uia) Bombay.

In Bombay some friends of his who were devotees of Swami Nityananda took him to the Ashram at Vajreshwari. Kamath recalls that they gave up hopes of having his *darshan* as the Swamiji was apparently in a wild mood then, berating somebody loudly and continuously, in a strange tongue. The group therefore retired to their guest room to rest. Imagine their surprise when a while later the door opened and Swami Nityananda stood at the doorway! He made very kind enquiries of Kamath and soon left!

Sri Kamath returned to Shimoga and took up cultivation of his ancestral land. In later years he had occasions to visit Kanhangad and Puttappathi also. His contact with sages and godmen yielded experiences ranging from the beatific to the bizarre.

Married and with four children, Sri Kamath has led a simple rustic life that has been healthy and spiritually satisfying. He visited the Ashram in 1986 after a lapse of 40 years. He visited again this year when he said:

"I have had personal contact with many sages. But, without intending in any way to belittle any of them, I can say that Maharshi made the profoundest impression on me. I cannot give any reasons for this.

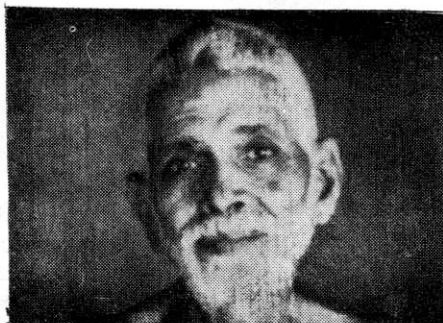
"Even now I cannot recall without a thrill the magnificent personality of the silent Maharshi; His look O! what a dazzling and piercing one it was! For those who were receptive the vibrations which were felt in His proximity were overpowering. This presence I feel here even now just as it was then over forty years ago!"

THE PATH OF RAMANA

"As on every path, progress is gradual and requires constant effort, whether or not there be the radiant foreglow of Truth come and gone again. Bhagavan expressly warned the disciple for whom he wrote 'Self - Enquiry': 'However, the Self-oblivious ego, even when once made aware of the Self, does not get Liberation—that is Self-Realization—on account of the obstruction of accumulated mental tendencies; and it frequently confuses the body with the Self, forgetting that itself is in truth the Self. Long cultivated tendencies are to be eradicated only by long continued meditation.' A miracle such as Bhagavan's own immediate realization of the Self is not to be achieved by others, and he never led them to expect it. Actually, to desire success or even to think about it is itself an impediment, since it means desiring achievement for the ego instead of trying to extinguish the ego by asking 'Who am I?'

"The vibrant awareness of Self is to be made more frequent and uninterrupted until it awakens as soon as one sits in meditation, and then until it becomes constant not only in hours of meditation but underlying all the actions of life. In proportion as it grows stronger and more continuous the ego is weakened and, what comes to the same, purified in preparation for its final immolation. Bhagavan said: 'The moment the ego-self tries to know itself it changes in character; it begins to partake less and less of the body, in which it is absorbed, and more and more of pure Consciousness, the Self or Atman'."

— by Arthure Osborne in RAMANA ARUNACHALA, p. 43-4



Mighty Impersonality

There is a ceaseless flow of works on Bhagavan, his teaching, his *sadhana*, his personality, his impersonality, his LOVE. But any number of books cannot exhaust the meaning of the life and message of the Maharshi. He is a *Jnanin* to the intellectual, the Lord to the *Bhakta*, a veritable Shiva to the ascetic, an unflinching Guide to those who are earnest in their Quest - a unique combination which refuses to be held in a human mould. Every attempt to describe or define his teaching falls short somewhere. And yet each such effort throws some light on the ineffable Consciousness that housed itself in the physical frame with which all are familiar as Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Here are two beautifully produced books authored by Sri V. Ganesan who is so aptly described by Lucy Cornelissen (in her Introduction) as one "with his feet on solid ground and his heart at the Feet of the Master". In the first one, *BE THE SELF*¹ which contains five talks expounding the Sage's teaching from different angles, the author strikes the right note in asking the seeker to be the Self, and not just know the Self. For, one can know in the way of the mind what the Self is, how it is to be reached or realised, what are its signs and so on; and yet one may be far from it. The only way to really know is 'to be'. It is only in a complete identification with the Self that one realises intimately what the Self is. And what kind of Person was he who has given this simple and direct instruction to solve the most profound of questions? Read :

¹ "BE THE SELF" by V. Ganesan. Pub: Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai - 606 603, Pp. 46. Price: Rs. 5/-

"This blazing sun, this Silent Sun, Bhagavan lived as a commoner in our midst, his life an open book without any trace of that need for privacy that even the least busy amongst us values. He was available to all, at all times, beyond restrictions. Just as his profundity lies in the casualness of his herculean spiritual achievement, his greatness lies in his simplicity. He was unique - his realisation was unique in the annals of all spiritual history. For the boy studying at school who had no particular interest in spirituality, who knew no procedural technique, no yogic meditation nor any modes of spiritual *sadhana*, to flower suddenly into a sage of steady wisdom is unique. There was, in him, no earlier preparation, no *sadhana* of cleansing the mind to acquire sharpness and stability, nor was there any evolution there after. And what was the nature of his realisation? It admitted no stages. From one point of view it required no effort; from another point of view it was infinite effort concentrated in



just one moment of Self - enquiry. There fore its completeness or fullness, though instantaneous, was total. His realisation was a flash. It remained permanent. Bhagavan later confirmed that in that state of his there was no change, no gradation and that that state continued vibrantly forever. The spontaneity and instantaneousness took place not in time but in eternity." (Pp. 27-8)

To know the exact nature of the realisation, let us hear what Sri Balarama Reddiar—a very old disciple with an authentic memory—recollects: "One winter evening around 6.30 p.m. after *Veda Parayanam*, Bhagavan as usual was

stretching himself on the sofa. As he was doing so, without anything whatsoever to occasion the utterance, he suddenly and spontaneously said: 'It is said that I took twenty minutes to realise.' 'It is wrong.' After a few seconds he added: 'It may be a moment.' But again he corrected himself, "Even that is not correct. Where is the time-element in it?"

The author draws upon his study of the seminal works of Bhagavan to underline the conditions to be fulfilled for any measure of success in the *sadhana*. Apart from a discipline of increasing wakefulness, self-introspection, active meditation, the seeker has to rely on the factor of Grace. What is Grace, how does it work, does it depend upon one's observance of codes of conduct and prescriptions of ritual? Sri Ganesan draws attention to the true nature of Grace: "Bhagavan identifies Grace with Guru. Grace as Guru within, pulls you, while Grace as Guru without, pushes you within into the Self. The transformation of the seeker into an adept is done by this operation of Grace, both from within and without... 'The highest form of Grace is silence; it is also the highest *upadesha*,' says Sri Bhagavan. This assertion of Bhagavan is a great change from the age-old common belief that Grace is to be obtained after strenuous efforts, that it has to come from some where above and beyond, that one has to deserve it, that it has to 'choose' one ... Bhagavan says that to make an effort to know one's real existence is due only to Grace. 'Your very desire for Grace is due to Grace that is already within you.'

How to obtain this Grace? By surrender. "Surrender should not be verbal or conditional. Prayer is not verbal. It is from the Heart. To merge into the Heart is prayer. That is also Grace." (*Talks*) And Bhagavan assures us that we are not alone in this endeavour. His Grace is always there to help. The discussion concludes with a clinching statement from Bhagavan: "Grace is the beginning, middle and end. Grace is the Self. Because of false identification of the Self with the body, the Guru is considered to be with body. But from the Guru's outlook the Guru is only the Self. The Self is one only. Self alone is. Is not then the Self your Guru? Where else will Grace come from? It is from the Self alone. Manifestation of the Self

is manifestation of Grace. All doubts arise because of the wrong outlook and consequent expectation of things external to oneself. Nothing is external to the Self." (Pp. 44)

To whom precisely is the *sadhaka* of this Quest to surrender? The 'Self' is too abstract, at any rate to begin with. It is to the Guru, the Guru who has graciously taken a human form to meet the requirements of the human mind which insists on something palpable, concrete, visually present. The surrender is to *Purushottama Ramana* whose single glance has been known to launch one on the supreme journey. This Ramana comes home to the reader in the pages of a remarkable album of portraits of Bhagavan that has just been made available.² In over twenty-five full-page portraits of the sage in various moods, the Best among men, *nrinaam nidarshana*, enters your being and floods it with waves of light and joy. Bhagavan in melting compassion, in tender concern, in touching love, in purposeful concentration, in amused moments, in thoughtful poise, in total abandon—all these and many more are a feast to the eye and the soul. It is an exercise in spiritual contemplation to look at these portraits one by one; it purifies, it elevates, it dissolves.



Enhancing the value of this collection, each portrait is accompanied, on the opposite page, by an anecdote revealing some aspect of the Maharshi, recounted by Sri Ganesan who is, by now, famous for his repertoire of anecdotes and equally for the engaging manner in which he narrates them. It is, indeed, difficult to make a choice, but we can quote a couple of them at random.

It is well-known that Bhagavan has testified to the presence of *Siddhas* on the hills of Arunachala. Here is a direct quote from his narration: "I was wandering on the Hill and suddenly I found a big cave. When I entered the cave I saw a number of waterfalls, beautiful gardens, tanks within those gardens, well-laid paths, fine lightning; everything there was most pleasing. As I went further and further

2 "PURUSHOTTAMA RAMANA" by V. Ganesan (Pub: Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bangalore) Available from: Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai 606 603. Pp. 30 (Double Crown size; fully illustrated) Price: Rs. 5/-

I saw a realised person seated like Dakshina-murti under the tree on the bank of a tank. Around him a number of saints were seated. They were asking something and he was replying to them. That place appeared to me very familiar. That is all. I opened my eyes. Subsequently when I saw *Arunachala Puranam* in Sanskrit I found two *slokas* in this regard. The cave and that *Siddha Purusha* have been described in them and so I was surprised that what happened to me was to be found in the *Puranam*..... Sometime back when the temple in Adi Annamalai was renovated, it has been reported that in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple a large tunnel was found and when people tried to find out the extent they said that it was extending to the very centre of the Hill. I thought that which occurred to me and is in the *Puranam* appears to be true and that the tunnel was the way to the place I had seen. It is reported that the *Siddha Purushas* come from the cave inside to the temple through that tunnel!"

Then there are true stories of Bhagavan's comradeship with the animal world: the monkey king, the lame cat which found its way back to Bhagavan after it was transported some twenty miles by heartless devotees, the sparrow that forgot its hurt when the Sage spoke to her, and so on. We have heard and read in the Epics and *Puranas* of saints and kings speaking to sub-human creatures but had always taken them with a pinch of salt. But not so after seeing the dealings between Bhagavan and the quadrupeds.

Whether with humans or with non-humans, Bhagavan's compassion flowed endlessly. There are many incidents recorded in these pages which speak volumes of the divine nature of this super-human personage whose human touches make one weep and forget oneself.

A portfolio to be dipped into again and again (If the left-side pages are numbered, it will help the readers in their study.)

— M. P. PANDIT

FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS

GURU POORNIMA (Vyasa Puja)	Friday	10.7.1987
KRISHNA JAYANTHI (Gokulashtami)	Wednesday	16.8.1987
VINAYAKA CHATHURTHI	Friday	28.8.1987
DAY OF BHAGAVAN'S ADVENT TO ARUNACHALA	Tuesday	1.9.1987
NAVARATHRI FESTIVAL (Commences on)	Thursday	24.9.1987
SARASWATHI PUJA	Thursday	1.10.1987
VIJAYADASAMI	Friday	2.10.1987
DEEPAVALI	Wednesday	21.10.1987
SKANDASHASHTI	Wednesday	28.10.1987
KARTHIGAI FESTIVAL (Commences on)	Wednesday	25.11.1987
KARTHIGAI DEEPAM	Friday	4.12.1987
SRI BHAGAVAN'S JAYANTHI	Tuesday	5.1.1988
PONGAL	Friday	15.1.1988
CHINNA SWAMIGAL ARADHANA	Tuesday	2.2.1988
MAHA SIVARATRI	Tuesday	16.2.1988
TELUGU NEW YEAR DAY	Friday	18.3.1988
TAMIL NEW YEAR DAY	Wednesday	13.4.1988
SRI BHAGAVAN'S ARADHANA

THE BLOOM OF INNER GLORY: By N. N. Rajan
(3rd edition) Pub: Sri Ramanasramam, Tiru-
vannamalai. Pp. 100. Price: Rs. 5/-

The author N. N. Rajan's small booklet 'Ramana Dhyanam' has enthralled several generations of Ramana devotees. His writing is naturally appealing being from one whose heart is in full bloom. The title of the book arrests attention, so do the contents. Reading the book, written in easy and simple style one wonders how it could come from the pen of a government servant. But then such miracles are part of the consequences which flow from devotion to Ramana. This book has been highly commended by Prof. G. V. Subbaramiah and Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan and that is praise enough. Even so one has to thank the author for collecting and putting in the appropriate places apt references from the scriptures. This revised and enlarged third edition with an appendix on the 'Highlights of the Teachings' is bound to be of very great value to seekers of truth in general and particularly to the practitioners of the Ramana Way.

— A. R. NATARAJAN.

HISTORY OF KONGU. By V. Ramamurthy. Pub:
International Society for the Investigation
of Ancient Civilization, 31, Poes Garden,
Madras-86. Pp. 391. Price: Rs. 75/-

Comprehensive and well-researched on the ancient Kongu land by a non-historian this book should receive a place of honour in any library or institution that deals with the history of India. Ancient Kongu territory consisted of modern Coimbatore and Periyar districts, part of Salem, Dharmapuri, Tiruchirappalli and Madurai district, and as a consequence, it not only served as a route for the northern migrations to south, but was also part of the Chera, Chola and Pandya kingdoms.

The book is well laid out and takes the reader through the early geography and prehistoric period of this land in the first three chapters. The author proposes a well documented theory that Dravidian language and civilization was introduced prior to Aryan migration in 1000 B. C. by a people who probably came from north-western part of India, i. e. Dwarka and Mathura and established cities with similar names i. e. Kapatapuram and Madurai, respectively; their culture and language was firmly established and therefore Vedic language could not

make any inroads. Chapters 6 to 9 deal extensively with the political history and genealogy of Chola, Chera and Pandya kings. The author puts forward some fresh epigraphic and numismatic evidences to shed light on some dark periods of history under the Kalabharas, following the Sangam age, and preceding the glorious well documented period under Imperial Pandya and Pallava dynasties. The last three chapters deal with the well documented political scene of this land under the three dynasties from the 6th to the 9 century A. D.

A book based on exhaustive, fresh research is a welcome addition and a good source material for further research. However, the book would have been even more valuable if V. Ramamurthy had dealt with the socio-economic-cultural development of this land in addition to the genealogical and political history of its kings.

— GITA BHATT.

YOGA- By Hari Prasad Shastri. Pub: Foyles
Handbooks, 125 Charing Cross Road, London.
Pp. 104

THE SEARCH FOR A GURU — Pp. 106-iv
MEDITATION-ITS THEORY AND PRACTICE —
Pp. 64.

SPRING SHOWERS - POEMS — Pp. 25.

These three books are also by Hari Prasad Shastri and published by Shanthi Sadan, Centre of Adhyatma Yoga, 29 Chepstow-Villas, London. (prices not indicated).

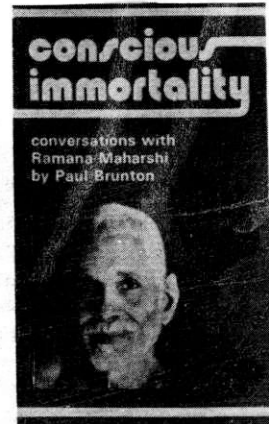
Dr. Hari Prasad Shastri, the founder of Shanti Sadan, the centre of the classical Yoga of Self-realisation in London, was not only well versed in Sanskrit and classical Indian philosophy but in Chinese, Japanese and Persian languages and literatures as well. After studying practical methods of Yoga as a disciple of Saint Dada of Aligarh, he had travelled extensively in Tibet and got permission from the late Tashi Lama to bring back to India many valuable manuscripts. Many may not be aware of the fact that Dr. Sun Yat Sen, the first President of China, was his pupil in the Shanghai University in the early years of this century, and that he was the founder of the *Asiatic Review*. Here is a bunch of most welcome and authentic literature on spiritual themes like yoga and meditation from such an eminent scholar, which we are confident would be appreciated by the public.

Yoga seems to be a familiar subject but in spite of so many books brought out to popularise it, the practical aspect still remains obscure. What is more, there are various kinds: Karma, Bhakti, Jnana, Raja and Hatha yogas. It is a science of being and becoming and therefore is not for the dreamy, the curious, or the unpractical. Dr. Shastri rejects the psychic and occult phenomena here, but deals with the traditional, metaphysical aspect formulated in the Upanishads and later worked out by the three great Acharyas. The intellectual basis of Yoga is described in the earlier part and the truth emphasised that the human consciousness is not really limited by the personality but is in fact the support of the entire universe. The author in the latter part of the book proves how this theoretical aspect of Yoga had been exemplified in the lives of three great Yogis, namely the Chinese monk Kobo Daishi, Narayana Prasad who was later known as Shri Dada, and Swami Rama Tirtha. The main thrust of the book seems to be to stress the limitations and the secondary place of reason, particularly valid in the present day generation which is according exaggerated value to logical polemics. The key to the successful application of the Yoga technique lies in having a Guru, for as the *Katha Upanishad* affirms: "That knowledge is not to be obtained by reasoning, but when it is taught by a competent teacher, O dearest, it is easy to understand."

The second book under review is a tale of spiritual development of a certain youth who had acquired a distate for the objects of the senses and who is named by the author as Brahmachari Prakash Swarup. The Brahmachari shares the conviction, familiar both in the East and the West and which seems to have been borrowed from the vocabulary of some ascetics like St. Thomas of Aquinas that considers woman as an essence which can only be defined as the somnivorious virtue of the poppy. Running away from innocent women like Nuri, Vasuli and Kirti, the Brahmachari is forced to appreciate the role of women in the human species, constituting as they do one half of humanity, from Manmathi, a lady saint. Almost at the end of the book, she gives him this sage counsel:

"Those who worship woman are companions of Devas, according to Manu. One of the chief causes of the degradation of the world, O ascetic Prakasha, is that men do not care to know that woman

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represents the Maha-Maya of Brahman. She is a symbol, a unit of the divine creative and sustaining energy, and man trifles with her."

The book is valuable for the insights one gets of the lives and ways of spiritual aspirants to be found in the deep recesses of the Himalayan ranges and the several temples and retreats there. It is all interesting to read about the country through which the Brahmachari passes, the people who cross his path, and his own difficulties and temptations. It illustrates the traditional attitude of a pilgrim following the path of Yoga, the goal of which is the attainment of mystical union with the Divine.

That the evolution of *Prakriti* (matter) is being regulated by the moral condition of man is the fundamental tenet of all systems of Yoga. Due to different stages of man's moral evolution, different kinds of dharma and adharma accrue and these again regulate physical and mental phenomena, according to which a man may get pain or pleasure. This is illustrated in Patanjali's second aphorism in the *Kaivalya* section where explaining the nature of *Prakriti* as a potentiality tending towards actuality, the sage likens it to a sheet of water enclosed within a field. As soon as the wall is broken in some direction by the farmer, the water flows out to irrigate the required field. Dr. Shastri makes a similar important point in the book on 'Meditation' which, he says, "does not create perfection, but allows perfection to disclose itself, by removing the obstacles to its realisation" (p. 10). Meditation *per se* may be valueless, but is a sure method whereby the knowledge of God-realisation is attained. It is a technique for purifying the psychological instruments of knowledge, and for awakening the faculty of spiritual intuition. For the means by which this can be aroused, the author, refers to the traditional triple practice of '*Tapas—swadhyaya—iswara-pranidhana*', all of which are described in detail in the last chapter. Another important point stressed in this book, which is valuable to the practitioner of meditation may be quoted in his own words:

"It is not enough to meditate for twenty or thirty minutes each morning, and then to allow the mind to run riot for the rest of the day, for this is only to fashion Penelope's web, which she wove in the day and unravelled every evening so that no progress was made." (p. 34)

The World and Me.

"Bhagavan: So long as you consider yourself the body, you see the world as external to you. It is to you that the imperfection appears. God is perfection and His work is also perfection, but you see it as imperfect because of your wrong identification with the body or the ego.

Visitor: Why did the Self manifest as this miserable world?

Bhagavan: In order that you might seek it. Your eyes cannot see themselves. Creation is the mirror. See yourself first and then see the whole world as the Self."

— TALKS, p. 272

"Spring Showers" is a collection of poems by Dr. Shastri first published in China dealing with the devotee's inner quest and discovery. The main theme of all these twenty-seven short poems stresses the value of the Mahavakyas of the Upanishads that Atman is Brahman, that Krishna is seated in the hearts of all Arjuns and that all outer search is vain. No longer the rules and regulations of the world fetter the liberated man and Dr. Shastri pinpoints it in the seventeenth verse thus:

"No longer does this old, barren wife, called Reason, satisfy me. She is cold, rigid, stern, pitiless and fickle; she guided me well through the winding, sandy paths of idolatry, hatha yoga practices, many superstitions. But she is barren; I must divorce her. I will make the lotus feet of my Guru, my guide, and the dust under those blessed, tender, peace-giving feet, will cure my shortsightedness"

— ARGUS

THE CONCEPT OF RUDRA-SIVA THROUGH THE AGES. By Mahadev Chakravarti. Pub: Motilal Banarsidas, Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-110 007. Pp. 291 — xii. Price: Rs. 150/-

Originally written as a Ph. D. thesis, this book is primarily concerned with the evolution of the various forms and attributes of Siva in ancient India. The author, an academic historian shows how Rudra, a minor but fearful deity of the Rig Veda, gradually became more and more important until he outstripped all his Vedic contemporaries (excepting Vishnu) to become one of the major deities of Hinduism. Mr. Chakravarti is particularly interested in establishing the source and distribution of the various tributary streams which have fed the ever-expanding river of Saivite mythology and art. He examines in detail the nature of phallus, bull and mountain worship in pre-Aryan India and shows how the facets of the native religion, along with many others, were gradually absorbed into Saivism.

The title is something of a misnomer for the book restricts itself to a survey of the animal, human and phallic representations of Rudra-Siva in art and literature. Although an attempt is made to show how these forms mirrored the beliefs and practices of Saiva devotees in various regions and ages, the metaphysics of the Saiva religion are largely ignored. Instead, the author is more concerned with assembling all the relevant scriptural, iconographic, numismatic and glyptic evidence which throw any light on how peoples' perception of Siva changed and evolved in historic times. The account is descriptive rather than interpretive; the author freely quotes the opinions of acknowledged experts, but his own views rarely intrude, except on a few occasions when he admits that certain theories are a little far-fetched. Considering that it is an academic treatise, and that it has over 1,300 footnotes, it is surprisingly easy and pleasant to read. It will not be read much outside academic circles, but it can be recommended to anyone who needs access to the primary source materials of early Saivite culture.

— DAVID GODMAN

A MEDITATOR'S DIARY, A Western Woman's unique experiences in Thailand Monasteries. By Jane Hamilton-Merritt. Pub: Unwin Paper-

"The self-Existant One has rendered the senses outward and therefore, a man sees outward and not within. Only perchance some wise one, desiring immortality, perceives-with inward look the Self within."

— KATHOPANISHAD

backs, 40, Museum Street, London. W. C. 1, England. Pp. 157 Price: £3.95.

In the last 20 years a significant number of westerners have spent long periods in the Theravadan monasteries of south-east Asia. In Thailand alone there are usually about 60 foreign monks undergoing training in various meditation techniques. Not many western women have experienced these monastic disciplines, largely because the Theravadan tradition no longer ordains nuns, but even so, there are usually about half a dozen foreign women practising meditation, full-time in various Thai monasteries. The author's and publisher's claim that the book reveals "a western woman's unique experiences in Thailand monasteries" is therefore something of an exaggeration. She is not even the first to write a comprehensive account of her experiences; over 20 years ago Marié Byles, an Australian woman, wrote two excellent books about her experiences as a woman mediator in a Burmese Buddhist monastery.

Jane Hamilton-Merritt is a professional writer, a former war correspondent and the holder of a Ph. D. from an American university. She has used her writing talents to produce an elegantly-phrased account of a period of her life in which she underwent intensive meditation in two Thai monasteries. At first she practised *samadhi*, or concentration meditation, as a day-

student in a Bangkok monastery, and then she graduated to *vipassana*, or insight meditation, as a resident of a northern Thai monastery. Her alternating experiences of pain, sensory distortions, visions and intense tranquillity are graphically described, and they are clearly meant to be the centre-piece of the book. Various pertinent elements of Buddhist history, culture and philosophy are also incorporated into the text, but they are always subservient to the main theme: the spectacular and rewarding consequences of Buddhist meditation.

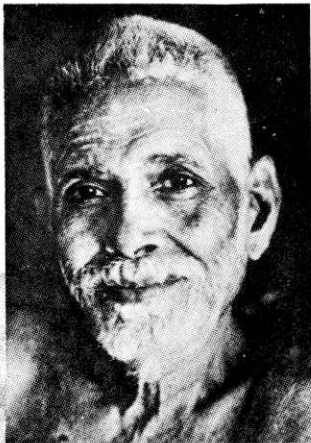
The author was not a Buddhist when she began her adventure-in-consciousness, and she clearly had difficulty in accepting some of the

basic tenets of Buddhism. However, by the end of the book, her undesirable experiences had convinced her of the validity of *vipassana* meditation. After mastering the rudiments of the technique she displays all the enthusiasm that one normally associates with the newly-converted. She clearly wants other people to take up Buddhist meditation and have the same rewarding experiences that she did. She will probably be quite successful; the intensity and the frightening aspects of her experiences may put some people off, but she will attract many others who want to experience something tangible and spectacular when they meditate.

— DAVID GODMAN.

“He who sees in this world of manifoldness that One running through all, in this world of death he who finds that One Infinite Life, and in this world of insentience and ignorance, he who finds that One Light and Knowledge unto him belongs eternal Peace. Unto none else, unto none else.”

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA



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Letters to the Editor

GURU RAMANA

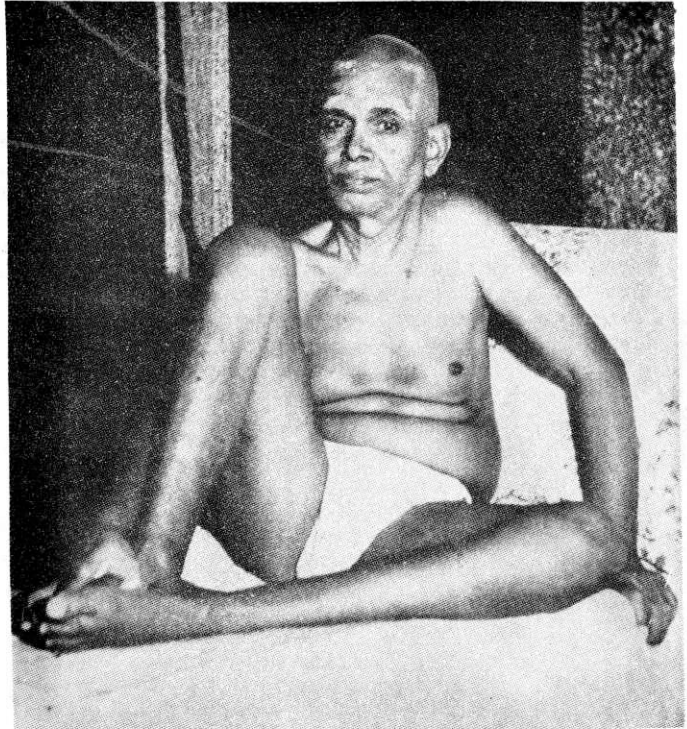
On page 106 of S. S. Cohen's *Guru Ramana* in the entry dated 17th June 1948, it is said that Sri Bhagavan had "tears pour out of His eyes....." when He quoted passages from the *Arunachala Purana*.

Many would love to read those passages which brought tears to His eyes. Why not publish a translation of the passages?

— Dr. K. C. Rajah, Paris.

Thanks for the suggestion. Here they are:—

"Once Siva remarked to Parvati that the Sun and the Moon were His eyes. In jest She then came behind Him and covered His eyes with Her palms. At once all of creation was enveloped in total darkness. Naturally there was panic among those in charge of keeping the cosmic clock ticking on with its cyclic processes. It was a complete black-out. Siva then opened His third eye providing, so to say, the emergency stand-by. Parvati realised Her folly, removed Her hands and later, as advised by Siva, descended to this world to do *tapas* in order to regain Her rightful place as His left half. After some penance at Varanasi and Kanchipuram, Parvati finally reached Tiruvannamalai, where she visited the Ashram of the Sage Gautama. As it happened he was away and so the other *Rishis* assembled therein sang the praise of Mother Parvati:



BHAGAVAN AND BHAVA

"1948 - June 17th, 8.30 a. m.
— *Guru Ramana*

Jagdish Sastri, a Sanskrit scholar and Maharshi's devotee, arrives from Madras. Sri Bhagavan enters into an earnest conversation with him. I hear him counting on his finger tips "*Tanana, rana rana.....*" from which I infer they are discussing metre of Sanskrit verse. Sri Bhagavan goes on speaking and gesticulating uninterruptedly for about 20 minutes, obviously explaining some passages. Then Sri Sastri mentions Vidyananda as saying that *Chit* can be Shiva and Shakti at one and the same time, as well as separately. Sri Bhagavan quotes from *Arunachala Purana* that in essence both are one and the same *Chit*, and reads from the book with deep emotion. He goes into ecstasy on Gautama's praise of Shiva. Though smiles light his face, tears pour out of his eyes, of which none has a suspicion till he wipes them and blows his nose."

**The Canto of Blindfolding
The Divine Eyes:**

V. 64. "Bringing forth the Eternal Siva from within you, you appear then within Him as the animating Sakti! With this, Thy mysterious nature (of Siva-within-Sakti-within-Siva), you procreate the multiple *jivas*. Is there anyone capable of finding out your nature which for ever remains non-dual!"

V. 66. "If the Supreme Reality of Siva becomes Maheswara, Rudra, Brahma and Vishnu you become simultaneously the *Saktis* known as Maheshwari, Rudri, Saraswati and Lakshmi. Other than these should He assume any 'other', you become correspondingly. Is there anyone capable of knowing you!"

V. 67. When the *Munis* and *Rishis* were praising Parvati thus, Gautama arrived, and coming near Her with hands raised above his head in supplication, prostrated before her lotus-like feet.

V. 68. Gautama, lofty in devotion, then addressed Her to Her delight- "What immense good have I done that Thy divine feet, that even Brahma (the First-born) and the *Ashta Dikpaalas* (the sentinels of the eight quarters) cannot hope to place on their heads bowed low, should be gracing this most humble abode of mine!"

V. 69. Hearing this, Parvati, gentle as a creeper, said - "Should need arise I shall go to the Spear-Wielder (Subrahmanya), or the Tusker (Ganesa) to remove my want. Or else I shall come to you, dear son, who have such love for me."

V. 70. She then related in detail all that had taken place till then during her penance on earth. Hearing the Mother of all speak thus, Gautama who had (by a curse) bestowed on Indra, doer of a hundred Yagas, in times of yore a thousand eyes, spoke as follows:

V. 71. "This Abode, the primal one, is known as the Abode Supreme and is sacred *par excellence*. One good deed done here multiplies manifold of itself. Therefore do Thou conduct your ardent penance here. Thy Lord will then surely come on His bull-mount and reabsorb you as His left half."

V. 72. "(O Mother) even Vishnu, Brahma, the Vasus, Indra, and a host of *Munis* had in days gone by, made their dwelling here and completed the penance of solitude. The place is right and the time auspicious. Thy penance is thus assured of success."

Then the Mother Supreme, the womb of all creation, said, "Indeed I shall do *Tapas* here and gain my end."

THE HEART CENTRE

Is it true that Sri Bhagavan has nowhere advised concentration on 'Heart Centre'? Many ambiguous statements exist regarding this. He also states that awareness of this centre is possible on realisation of Self. In my experience I have found that though concentration on *sahasraara* is powerful it is not possible to sink the mind. Attention on Heart Centre is also not easy till the *ajna* centre is purified. Once the practice gathers strength, sinking of mind in the Heart Centre becomes easy. There are many of Maharshi's sayings which seem to support this. What are your views?

In TALKS No. 368, a little girl asked a question, "Is it fair of Him to make us do *karma* and then punish us for bad *karma*!" Self is said to be everywhere as non-participating silent witness, in whose presence (proximity) action, including thought take place. Who then wills the thought? Thought is inert and cannot think. 'I' is a notion. *Chaitanya* is a non-participating silent witness. Whence then these thoughts? Is there anything which clearly explains how thoughts come to rise, although the source of all is Awareness, and how the 'I' notion (ego) gets entangled and assumes doer-ship?

— L. Subramanyan,
Pudu Perungalathur, Madras.

Bhagavan does not advise (on His own) any conceptualisation. He has consistently advised VICHARA during which the Heart is automatically felt on the right side. If the questioner persisted in concentration on the Heart Centre on right, Bhagavan would not have forbidden that.

Since Self is the only existent entity, to whom (or to what) do thoughts appear separately? The answer is: to ego-I. When investigating

into itself, the ego-I vanishes revealing the Self-I. Since the ego-I is a non-existing apparition, a 'notion' as you have called it, where is the question of unfairness on the part of God (Self) in getting the ego into bondage with thought or fairness in 'releasing' the ego from thought? How does it really matter whether the false Sun in the water is disturbed by waves or restored- see also Maharshi's Gospel p. 57.

— Editor

"AWARENESS IS" - 1

My name is Shaun Brown and I live in Australia. I am writing to you in order to try to get some verification of some of my spiritual experiences. The first is one which I have been having since my earliest childhood memories. I feel that although my body has changed and grown, the same 'I' has been or rather is in both. When I think of my childhood memories the strong impression, I get is the 'I', the feeling, that 'I' never changes. I have only known of Sri Maharshi for a year whereas I have been aware of this experience for many years.

The second is this: Once as I sat in meditation, I lost all awareness of myself and the outside world. My body and senses were non-existent. There was awareness of a sort but no thought of 'I'. Then I clearly felt the 'I' arise and outer awareness returned. I think the whole experience only lasted a minute or so. Ever since then, I hear silence with every sound. Sounds are still heard, but with the regular awareness of a total silence. I cannot properly describe it, but it is total silence and stillness and seems to have no bounds.

I can find no reference to these or similar experiences in the books on and by Sri Maharshi which I have read. I hoped that if I wrote to the Ashram there would be some record of Sri Maharshi's sayings in these experiences or that there would be some one there who would know what the experience is.

— Shaun Brown, Queensland, Australia.

We acknowledge receipt of your letter; it is not easy to reply.

However on this Path there can be no room for doubts. For, should they arise, ask 'to whom'? Thus any movement away from Self is nipped.

You say that ever since that revelation into Self, you hear silence with every sound. Understand that you are the silence from which sounds arise and into which they resolve.

Sri Bhagavan says while describing the after-effect of His Death Experience that "other thoughts might come and go like the various notes of music, but the 'I' continued like the fundamental *sruti* note that underlies all notes."

Maharshi's teaching is through and through the positive permanent force and presence of Mouna i. e. Pure Absolute Silence, that includes both silence and sound.

Given below is a translation of Sri Bhagavan's selections from Thaayumaanavar.

1. "Be established in that state of knowledge that frees one from all bondage; that state which has no thought, no sense of I, no location, no time, no direction, no duality, no removal, no division, no descriptive word, no appearances of light or darkness, no inside or outside, none at all."

2. "Though described such as 'not this' 'not this', it is not mere imagination, not emptiness but a presence that exists always of its own accord, that transcends all speech, free from any appearance of I sense, an all-swallowing Self-hood that swallows all *avidya* with finality like light 'swallows' darkness and making the awareness its own, nay, making you as its Self, it shines silently of itself as the knower."

Cling to the Self as far as possible - and you will get spontaneous guidance from within.

May Sri Bhagavan's blessings be with you!

— Editor

"AWARENESS IS" - 2

Thank you so much for your kind and helpful letter which was received yesterday, 31-3-1987. However there are one or two questions which I still have. In your letter you describe the

experience of silence as absorption into Self. Is that experience then an "experience" of the Self? I do not really know anything about *samadhi* and such things. I know that I have had the experience described in the letter. I cannot define that experience. I have read that in *samadhi* there is the feeling 'I am' and that one feels there is nothing different from oneself. But in the experience I had there was no thought of 'I' to be one with everything (which I did not feel either). There was no concept of this or that. It is hard to put into words and so far I have not succeeded.

I could have jumped for joy when I read the part of your letter where you said, 'you are the silence.' That is it exactly! Sometimes when I sit listening to the silence I remember the passage from the Bible 'And this man is the peace'... (Micah 5:5). The silence is what I am. It seems that I speak and am active but at the same time I am silence, stillness. Yesterday I had a new experience of merely witnessing thoughts. They seem detached from me in a way. It is hard to describe, and the experience varies in intensity. Sometimes the world seems distant, hazy like a dream. But perhaps this is just a mental state. I am also wondering: If the silence I experienced was the Self, why do body identification and thoughts and desires continue? They are not as intense as before but still they continue. At the same time I am this and also the silence.

Although the silence is more 'real' now than the body. Sometimes the thought 'I-am-the-body' comes to the fore. I am trying to make the experience deeper by concentrating along the lines you laid down through Sri Bhagavan's words (which are very helpful, indeed).

— Shaun Brown, Queensland, Australia.

The silence that you are is the Self. Bhagavan says in *Eight-Verses to Arunachala* (Verse 6): "There IS a being of pure awareness. In it and never separate from it, arises a wondrous power. This power (*Sakti*) forever conceptualizes and, vibrating in its current, perceives the shadow-like creation within and through the eye, etc without. All this is projected (amplified) by the single - mind-lens....."

The form-clutching tendency of mind steadily lessens as Silence is cultivated. So avoid conceptualizing the silence. BE that! An uprooted

tree does remain green for a while. What of that? A fan switched off continues to rotate. But its stopping is a foregone conclusion. So why think?

— Editor

RAMANA KRISHNA

Sri Jayaraman's beautiful series of articles on the '*Gita Saara Taalaattu*' begins as follows in the second instalment:

"When Sri Bhagavan was in the mango grove adjoining *G. umurtham* his uncle Nelliappa Iyer met Him there. So much had been the outer transformation that Nelliappa Iyer could recognize his nephew only after seeing the big light-red mole on the sole of Bhagavan's right foot!"

Concerning the big light-red mole, we know that Sri Krishna left His body exactly as He prophesied. According to the *Mahabharata*, Sri Krishna was resting in deep thought on the banks of a river when a hunter mistook the red soles of His Feet for a bird and shot an arrow through the sole, thereby ending the eighth avatar of Vishnu on earth.

In Prof. Subbaramayya's *Ramana Reminiscences* at page 115 the following is recorded:

"At this time I also became acquainted with Swami Narayanand Saraswati of Banaras who was on a visit to the Ashram. He knew the whole of the *Bhagavad Gita* by heart and was reciting all the eighteen chapters daily in the presence of Sri Bhagavan. The scene of his leave-taking was unforgettable. He prostrated, and prayed in Sanskrit addressing Sri Bhagavan as *Hey Narayana Swarupa* (O, Self of Narayana) Sri Bhagavan placed his hand on Swamiji's head and lifted him up."

We may wonder whether the big light-red mole which helped Sri Nelliappa Iyer recognize his beloved nephew, should not help us recognize Sri Krishna in Bhagavan Sri Ramana. A Tulsi garland strung out of these thought-leaves is hereby placed at the feet of Sri Ramana in all devotion. To conclude in Sri Bhagavan's own

words from verse 8 of the *Eleven Verses on Sri Arunachala*:

"Grant me, wasteful and mad (for Thee), the sovereign remedy of clinging to Thy Feet!"

— Dr. K. C. Rajah, Paris

PERFECT PEACE

Bhagavan, the beaconlight of Arunachala, amidst this phenomenal world of becomings, nameless and austere, is immaculate in the tranquil heights of Self. When you contemplate in the hushed immobile Silence, this seer of immutable Existence-Consciousness becomes the miraculous gate to the Unknown Self-delight, which is beyond.

Bhagavan is a living but ineffable experience. A reality that could only be lived in the depths of one's own being, but untranslatable in poor words. You cannot reduce this experience to any philosophical formula. Relationship with Bhagavan is far from any sentiment, as it is far away from thought.

Intellectual constructions are arbitrary, artificial and vain. His presence is Silence, and perfect Peace. All our words are but prattle; babblings when we venture to speak.

In Silence is the greatest reverence.

— S. V. Subramanyam, Madras

LAURELS - I

You won't believe how happy I am to receive your sacred journal *The Mountain Path* from the Ashram of our beloved *Sad Guru Deva Sri Ramana Bhagavan*.

I am very grateful to you, for your kind words for me and for the appreciation of our work done here in South America, Brazil.

I wish that all blessings of our Sacred *Sad Guru Deva Ramana* be showered on you and all devotees in *Sri Ramana Ashram* for the help that you gave us and for the opportunity that you are giving to the world to know us, and our work here which is the '*Vichara*' of the *Mahrashi*.

"You do not need to prevent other thoughts. In deep sleep you are entirely free from thoughts, because the 'I'-thought is absent. The moment the 'I'-thought rises on waking, all other thoughts rush out spontaneously. The wisest thing for one to do is therefore to catch hold of this leading thought, the 'I' thought, and dissect it—who and what it is—giving thereby no chance to other thoughts to distract one. There lies the true value of the *vichara* and its efficacy in mind control."

— *Sri Bhagavan in GURU RAMANA*, p.77

I thank you again for the lovely reception to me. However, my stay there was unfortunately too short but I felt the grace of *Sri Bhagavan Ramana*. I was also touched by the care with which you receive the devotees that come to your sacred place. I hope to return in the near future, perhaps, this year or next; and if I receive visa for more time, I can stay there, longer.

After *Tiruvannamalai* I visited many places in India, where I talked about *Sri Ramana*. I was in the Ashram of *Indira Devi* and *Dilip Kumar Roy*. She talked about the time when *Dilip* was with *Bhagavan Ramana*.

I was with the great Saint *Dadaji J.P. Vaswani* and saw how much love he feels for *Sad Guru Deva Bhagavan Ramana*. Many times during *Sat Sanga* he talked about *Sri Ramana's* teaching '*Vichara*'.

I would like to give through *The Mountain Path* my greatest thanks to you and all at *Ramana Ashram*, *Vazirani's* family from *Bombay*, *Baba Mahant Ram Singh* from *Nirmal Ashram*, *Rishikesh* and *Dadaji J.P. Vaswani* from *Sadhu Vaswani Mission*, *Pune*, for all the blessings, food, home and all the kind hospitality given to me in the name of *Sad Guru Deva Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi*.

— *Sutra Maha Devi*
Bhagavan Sri Ramanashram,
Sao Paulo - Brazil.

LAURELS - II

I have been reading and re-reading Sri Dwaraknath Reddy's Photo-poem: 'Ashes of Repentance'. It is full of his deep devotion and faith in Arunachala and the Bhagavan who adored Arunachala. Every word of the poem throbs with his joy in the Hill of Grace and the Lord of Compassion.

T.N. Jagadisan,
Malavanthangal.

to Skandashram, Virupaksha cave and your Ramana stories. The words of Sri Kunju Swami are still ringing in my ears. I was touched by his simplicity and expression. Please thank and convey our regards to everyone at the kitchen, especially the person who does not speak and yet communicates very well.

— V. Chandrasekaran, Madras.

LAURELS-IV

LAURELS - III

I do not know how to thank everyone at Sri Ramanasramam for the hospitality. We thoroughly enjoyed our stay (it was a quiet one!) and it has left a very deep impression in our mind particularly memorable was our trek

Purushothama Ramana has been liked by me and my other friends. I congratulate you for collecting personal anecdotes of the Maharshi. A person's greatness is reflected in his day-to-day activities and relationships.

— Ramnandan Mishra, Laheria Sarai,
Bihar.

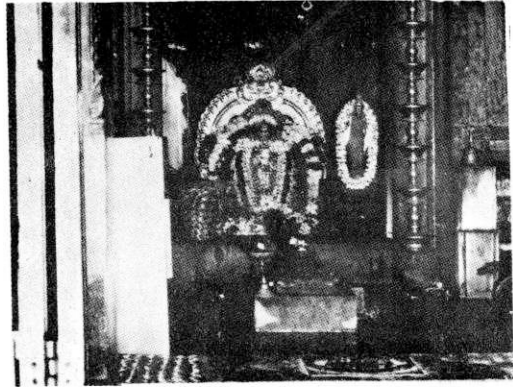
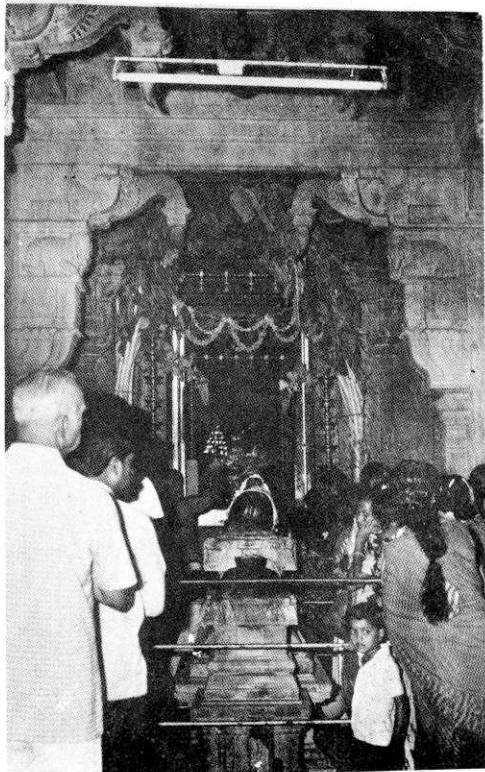
SRI BHAGAVAN'S GRACE

"I remember one instance which seem to me to show that Bhagavan himself used his Grace to ward off evil pre-ordained by *Prarabdha*. A certain Rangayyar, who had been a playmate of Bhagavan in his boyhood days at Tiruchuzhi, kept in touch with him later and became his devotee. Bhagavan, for his part, never forgot the old relationship and was always gracious and considerate to his old playmate. At one time Rangayyar was passing through a very trying time, facing all sorts of difficulties, financial and other. He had been warned by capable astrologers that for a year or so about that time, terrible things would happen to him. After experiencing a few of these troubles at the outset of the bad time indicated in his horoscope he took counsel of Bhagavan, and Bhagavan advised him to come and stay with him for the rest of the period said to be fraught with danger.

"By taking Bhagavan's advice, Rangayyar told me, he came safely through many of his troubles, which seemed insurmountable. Bhagavan impressed on him the desirability of his not leaving his presence even for a few hours during those ten months or so. It would seem as if evil forces were poised ready to pounce on him and seeking some opportunity to do so when Bhagavan's presence would not be there to protect him. During that period Rangayyar had one evening to go so far as the railway station to see off some relative who had paid him and Bhagavan a visit, and even then Bhagavan warned him to come straight back, without loitering anywhere or spending the night in the town. All this I have heard from Rangayyar's own lips. I personally know that Bhagavan's Grace was amply bestowed upon him and that, to the extent to which such a thing can be predicated of Bhagavan, Bhagavan had a soft corner in his heart for him."

— by A. Devaraja Mudaliar in "MY RECOLLECTIONS", p. 103-4

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The sanctum sanctorum
of the Mother's Shrine.

ASHRAM BULLETIN

Adoration To The Mother - Maha Pooja Celebration

Sri Matrubeswara Mahasannidhanam

In 1914 when Sri Bhagavan was at Virupaksha Cave, His mother who was returning from Tirupati back to her native place, broke her journey to see her son. She was having very high fever. The All-knower, Sri Bhagavan, wrote four moving verses in Tamil, wherein He appealed to Arunachala to save His mother. What He wrote came true. The third verse runs:

"Arunachala, blazing Fire of Knowledge,
Enfold my Mother in your light.
Absorb her! What need would there be
For cremation then ?

Sri Kunju Swami and our Managing Editor listening to Sri Dennis Hartel of Arunachala Ashrama, Canada

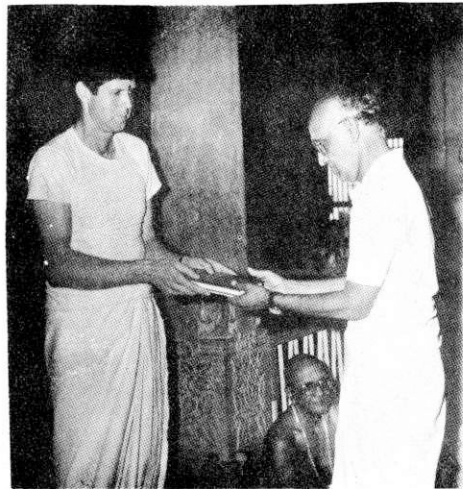




Ramana Music (classical style) by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan, Kumari Sarada

In 1922 when Bhagavan gave *mukti* to His Mother by placing His right hand on her chest and the left hand on her head, He declared that she was not dead 'but absorbed'. In accordance with the injunctions laid down by Saint Tirumular, the *samadhi* of the Mother was constructed. A temple was raised over it. The Linga was given the name *Matrubhuteswara*. Bhagavan in His own hand-writing wrote on the stone tablet '*Matrubhuteswara Mahasannidhanam*'. This Absorption Day is solemnly celebrated, every year, as *Maha Pooja*.

This year too, on May 21, 1987 the *Maha Pooja* was thus celebrated with chantings, *pujas*, speeches and music. There was feeding of the poor on a large scale. Throughout the day, the Presence of the Mother was felt, powerfully, by the devotees.



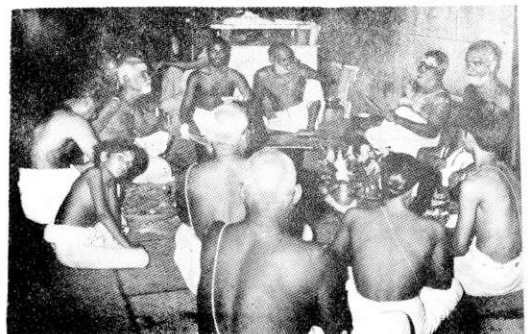
(i)

Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagavata's books: *In Search of Self* and *The Mighty Mahatma* were released on *Maha Pooja Day*. Sri Dennis Hartel releasing these books by giving them to (i) Sri A. R. Natarajan and (ii) Sri K. V. Ramanan.

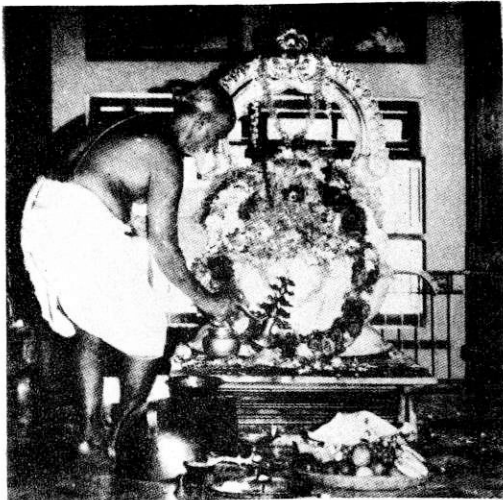


(ii)

Special invocation by learned Purohits on the *Maha Pooja Day*.



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Sri Ramaneswara Mahalingam on the Brahma Nirvana Day

Dr. O. Ramachandraiah receiving the honours from Smt. & Sri V. K. Sharma, who published his Telugu translation of Maha Yoga.



Smt. Aparna Krishnamoorthy receiving the Cassette: Ramana Smaranamulu

SRI BHAGAVAN'S BRAHMA NIRVANA DAY

Sri Bhagavan's last words were "Where can I go? I AM here." This Presence of the Sat-Guru is particularly felt by all at His abode of Grace on His Brahma Nirvana Day, which fell this year on April 25, 1987. There was a large gathering of the bhaktas.

In addition to continuous Vedic chantings from early morning and solemn Pujas in the holy shrine of Sri Bhagavan's Samadhi, a release-function was also held to the delight of the devotees assembled. Our Managing Editor's book 'Be the Self', Ramananjali's Ramana Smaranamulu Cassette in Telugu and Dr. O. Ramachandraiah's Telugu translation of Maha Yoga were released. Dr. O. Ramachandraiah was honoured with a ponnaadai by Smt. and Sri V. K. Sharma, who bore the cost of printing the book and presented all copies to the Ashram for sale by the Ashram Book-Depot.

There was feeding of the poor on a very large scale. The Auditorium and other important shrines in the Ashram, were wreathed in flower-garlands, thanks to the generosity of Sri Ramachandra Khoday of Bangalore!



Sri T. M. Jambulingam, Architect (who is in charge of renovating Sri Sundaram Mandiram and Sri Ramana Mandiram) receiving a copy of Be the Self from the Ashram President.

RAMANA MAHARSHI CENTRE FOR LEARNING, BANGALORE.

Sri Bhagavan's Aradhana Day (Brahma Nirvana) was celebrated on a grand scale at Bangalore by the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, on April 14, 1987.

Sri T. N. Venkatarāman, President, Sri Ramanasramam, graced the occasion. There was a special slide show: 'The Continuous Presence'.



Upanayanam of new entrants to the Veda Pathasala

SRI RAMANASRAMAM VEDA PATHASALA

As reported at p. 57 of our January '86 issue, there have been additions to and renovation of our Ashram Veda Pathasala (which was started in 1938). Most of the old boys had completed their course and the teacher, Sri Ramaswamy Ganapaatigal, also wanted to take up further Vedic studies and hence the set-up almost came to a close.

Thanks to the combined efforts of Sri Mysore Ganapaatigal and Smt. Anuradha, a new teacher Sri Panchavateeswaran has assumed duty and, with new students recruited, the lessons have started again.



Sri Panchavateeswaran.

Most of the boys had to be invested with sacred threads. In consultation with their parents the boys had their Upanayanam at the Ashram itself. The Ashram inmates and residents of Ramana Nagar took an active part in this function on February 11, 1987.

Now, there are thirteen students. They had been to their native villages for the summer vacation and regular classes commenced on June 1, 1987.

SRI RAMANA JAYANTHI

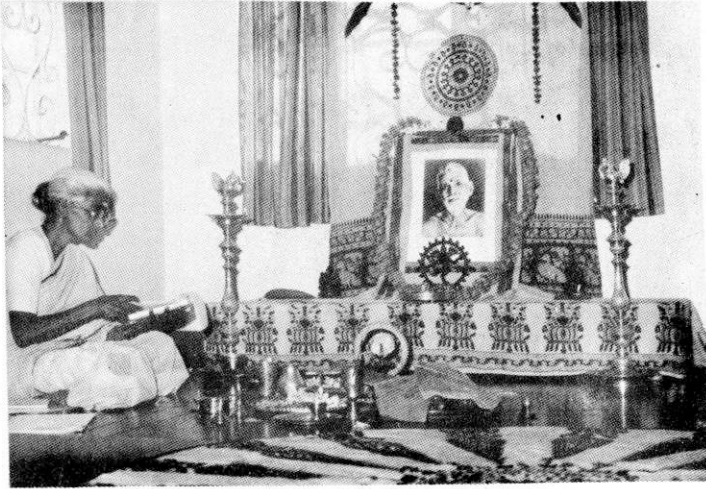
IN BOMBAY

Sri Bhagavan's 107th Birthday was celebrated in Bombay by the Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi Centre, at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, on March 18 and 19.

Sri T. N. Venkataraman, President, Sri Ramanasramam, graced the occasion and inaugurated it by garlanding the large portrait of Sri Bhagavan. Sri S. Sankaranarayanan was the Chief Guest. He spoke on *Sat Darshana Bhaashya* and *Chatvaarimshat* of Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni. The Centre also celebrated on March 21 Sri T. V. Kapali Sastry's Centenary at Gita Mandir Hall of the Bhavan.

AT VIJNANA RAMANEEYA ASHRAM, PALGHAT

Sri Bhagavan's 37th Maha Nirvana Day was observed in a fitting manner at Vijnana Ramaneeya Ashram, Palghat. The function commenced with a *Ganapathi Homam* and was followed by *Sri Ramana Pooja*, *Akhanda Nama Japa* and feeding of the poor. In the evening there was *Gita* chanting, followed by *Ramana Kirtanas* and a *Satsang*, presided over by Sri Swami Sreedharanandaji of Sivananda Ashram; Sri S. Sankaranarayanan spoke.



The beautifully decorated Shrine of Sri Bhagavan; Smt. Savitri Cuttaree

AT MAURITIUS

Sri Savitri Cuttaree, Reduit, Mauritius, reports:

"I thought of you all at the Ashram on the *Brahma Nirvana* Day of Sri Bhagavan which we also celebrated here at home. My nephew, Sri Ramen, who was with me at the Ashram, is in his holiday in Mauritius. In a beautifully decorated Hall we performed the *puja*. Brahma-charini Bhavana of Chinmaya Mission spoke on

the permanent presence of Sri Bhagavan. I recapitulated the teaching Sri Bhagavan gave us during His last illness, that the death of the body made no difference.

"The children accompanied by their teacher sang a few songs on Sri Bhagavan and we all joined in the refrain *Arunachala Shiva*. It gives immense joy to partake in any function of Sri Bhagavan!"

RAMANA MONUMENTS

We are happy to announce that the renovation work at 'Sri Ramana Mandiram', Madurai was commenced on 27-4-1987. The Committee Members: Sri CVS Mani (Chairman), Sri T. M. Jambulingam (Vice Chairman), Sri S. Ramachandran (Vice Chairman), Sri M. Jagannathan and Sri N. Somasundaram (members) visited the Ashram on 23-4-87, along with the necessary plans etc. and placed them on Sri Bhagavan's Samadhi Shrine on 25-4-87 (Sri Maharshi's *Brahma Nirvana* Day), thus receiving His Blessings to commence the renovation work.

We are also happy to announce that the target amounts for the Two Ramana Monuments ('Sri Ramana Mandiram', Madurai and 'Sri Sundara Mandiram', Tiruchuzhi) have already been reached, thanks to the generosity and co-operation of Ramana-bhaktas.

Sri T.M. Jambulingam, the architect, is happy to report periodically to us the stages of progress achieved. He is confident of completing the works within the estimated time.

Ramana Kendra, Delhi

The fifth volume in the series of Sri Muruganar's RAMANA JNANA BODHAM entitled, ANUBHAVA VILAKKAM-III, was formally released at a well-attended function got up on June 7. In the unavoidable absence of Hon'ble Shri P. Chidambaram, Union Minister, who was to have presided over the function, the book was released by Dr. V. Gauri Shankar, Vice-President of the Kendra by presenting a copy to Shri R. Seshadri.

Earlier, welcoming the assembled guests, Shri T. M. Subramaniam, Secretary, briefly outlined



Smt. Neela Mahalingam singing the invocation song at the book-release function.

the Kendra's aims and activities, in particular, the important on-going project of publishing Sri Muruganar's monumental work, *Ramana Jnana Bodham*. Dr. Gauri Shankar, in his speech, expressed his deep admiration of Muruganar's poetry. Shri R. Seshadri, in his scholarly speech in chaste Tamil, dwelt on the greatness of Muruganar and he gave examples from the latest book to bring out the finer points of Muruganar's poetry.

Shri T. M. Dandapani Oduvar, then regaled the audience to a delectable Ramana Music concert, ably accompanied by Sri P. Sundararajan on violin and Sri Manoranjan on mridangam. The function came to a close with a vote of thanks and distribution of prasadam.

* * *

Bhagavan's *Mahanirvana* Day was observed, with due solemnity, on April 14 and on April 25, the actual Samadhi tithi. A large number of devotees participated in the programme of Vedaparayana, recitation and devotional songs, on both the days. Dr. V. Gauri Shankar briefly spoke on Maharshi's teachings on April 25.

On March 29, Venerable Dharmawara, President, Institute Buddalogy, California (USA) gave a talk on meditation which was listened to with rapt attention by a large and appreciative audience.

* * *

Ramanavami was celebrated with customary enthusiasm on April 7. Mother's Day was observed on May 24. Shri A.K. Iyer spoke on the significance of the occasion.

* * *

Bhagavan's Ashthottaram was taken up for discourse at the weekly satsangs.



Prof. M. L. Sondhi and Venerable Dharmawara

ARTHUR OSBORNE DAY

Arthur Osborne's Samadhi Day was solemnly observed at his Samadhi on May 8, 1987, with the chanting of *Aksharamanamai* and distribution of *Prasad*.

OBITUARY

Sri Rani Padmavati Devi



In our issue of April, 1985, on p.124 we had the proud privilege of 'introducing' this pious lady, Sri Rani Padmavati Devi of Khairagarh. After a short illness, she passed away peacefully, at Bhopal at her residence, on April 11, 1987. A few days before her end she had written to our *Managing Editor* praying for Sri Bhagavan's blessings. Her dedication to Sri Bhagavan was exemplary.