



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

The Mountain Path

Vol. 14, No. III, July 1977

Rain Thy Mercy on me
ere Thy knowledge burn me
to ashes, Oh, Arunachala.

—*The Marital Garland
of Letters, verse 55*

Publisher :

T. N. Venkataraman,
President, Board of Trustees,
Sri Ramanasramam,
Tiruvannamalai.

*

Editorial Board :

Sri Viswanatha Swami
Sri Ronald Rose
Prof. K. Swaminathan
Dr. K. Subrahmanyam
Sri M. C. Subramanian
Sri Ramamani

*

Managing Editor :

V. Ganesan,
Sri Ramanasramam,
Tiruvannamalai.

*

Annual Subscription :

INDIA		Rs. 10
FOREIGN	£ 2.00	\$ 4.00

Life Subscription :

Rs. 125	£ 15.00	\$ 30
---------	---------	-------

Single Copy :

Rs. 2.75	£ 0.60	\$ 1.25
----------	--------	---------

*

Owing to heavy depreciation in the value of £ (Pound Sterling), the subscription has to be raised to £ 2/- from 1.50. We hope the subscribers in the Sterling area will not mind.



THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

"Arunachala! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart. Oh Arunachala!"
—*The Marital Garland of Letters, verse 1.*

Vol. 14

JULY 1977

No. III

CONTENTS

	Page
EDITORIAL : Spiritual Awakening ..	137
To Bhagavan — V. S. K. Aiyer ..	140
On the Non-teaching of Sages ..	141
— <i>Wolter A. Keers</i> ..	141
The Maharshi and the Mahatma ..	145
— <i>Morarji Desai</i> ..	145
Ramana and Gandhi — <i>A. Ramaswami</i> ..	147
Garland of Guru's Sayings — <i>Sri Muruganar</i> ..	149
Dionysius The Areopagite — <i>Gladys Dehm</i> ..	151
The Wordless World — <i>S. Mohanaraman</i> ..	154
Sri Maharshi's Grace in Words ..	155
Nāyanmārs — <i>Dr. V. A. Devasenapathi</i> ..	157
The Incredible Sai Baba — <i>Arthur Osborne</i> ..	160
The Mechanism of the Conceptual Universe ..	163
— <i>Wei Wu Wei</i> ..	163
The Apostles Peter and Paul — <i>T. Dorcas</i> ..	164
Swami Ramanagiri — <i>K. C. Sastri</i> ..	167
How I came to the Maharshi ..	168
— <i>Rosalind Christian</i> ..	168
Saint Francis of Assisi — 'El Povereilo' ..	170
— <i>M. Shaul</i> ..	170
Swami Sivananda Sarasvati ..	175
— <i>Dr. K. Subrahmanyam</i> ..	175
<i>Stories from Yoga Vasishtha — XIII :</i>	
Story of Bhagiratha — <i>Translated by M. C. Subramanian</i> ..	177
Sri Ma Anandamayee — <i>Madan Mohan Varma</i> ..	180
J. Krishnamurti : "Timeless Being" (His Life and Teachings) — <i>R. Viswanathan</i> ..	182
Search Within — <i>Ray Angona</i> ..	185
A Dream Comes True — <i>Evelyn Kaselow</i> ..	187
Glory of Arunachala — <i>Arunachala Mahatmyam</i> — <i>Tr. by M. C. Subramanian</i> ..	190

The Arunachala Hill picture in the cover page was drawn by Sri Bhagavan Himself.

CONTENTS — (Contd.)

	Page
Mother Durga — <i>Dilip Kumar Roy</i> ..	192
Introducing . . . <i>Dr. W. Radhakrishnayya</i> ..	193
Book Reviews ..	194
Ashram Bulletin ..	203
Life Subscribers — <i>The Mountain Path</i> ..	210
Life Members — <i>Sri Ramanasramam</i> ..	211
Letters to the Editor ..	213

Contributors are requested to give the exact data as far as possible for quotations used, i.e. source and page number, and also the meaning if from another language. It would simplify matters. Articles should not exceed 10 pages.

All remittances should be sent to the MANAGING EDITOR and not to the Editor.

— Editor.

To Our Subscribers

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

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

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

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

3. FOREIGN SUBSCRIBERS can send their subscription by International Money Order, British Postal Order or by Bank cheque or draft payable in India, U.S.A. or U.K.

The subscription rates are for despatch of the journal by *surface mail* to all parts of the world.

If despatch by AIR MAIL is desired the following additional annual amount should be remitted :

AIR-MAIL SURCHARGE

	£	\$
I. Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Pakistan, Ceylon ..	1.00	2.00
II. Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, West Germany, Italy, Greece, Japan, Netherlands, East and South Africa, Egypt, France, Great Britain, Sweden ..	2.00	4.00
III. North, Central and South America, Canada, New Zealand, Fiji, Hawaii ..	2.50	5.00

(All the above surcharges are over and above the annual subscription.)

The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

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

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

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

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

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

THE MOUNTAIN PATH
is dedicated to

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi



The Mountain Path

Vol. 14. No. III, July 1977

EDITORIAL

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

A PROPER atmosphere at home is usually the first aid for the beginning of spiritual life in youngsters. If the parents and elders at home are spiritually-minded, children spontaneously follow their example. And as they grow up, the study of scriptures and the lives of saints helps them to understand and follow the Path Divine. Usually the way to the Supreme Self is gradual, beginning with the aspiration for it and following of the paths of Karma, Bhakti, Yoga and Jnana, with emphasis on one or more of them combined according to individual predilection, choice and development. Ganapati Muni, the inspired poet-disciple of Bhagavan Ramana, says in his *Uma Sabasram*, "Mother Divine, Consort of Siva! One gets your glance of Grace by selfless dedicated work or by incessant *japa* or search within or self-surrender".

Though spiritual unfoldment is usually gradual and slow on account of the accumulated distracting tendencies of individuals it occurs all on a sudden in some. The explanation is that the spiritual urge already developed in them was dormant on account of some impediment or other and that it shines forth on the removal of that obstruction.

Here, for us, in Tiruvannamalai, a remarkable instance is the sudden transformation of Arunagirinatha by the operation of Divine Grace. Sex was his great distraction and when he went to the extreme limit of it, he himself got utterly disgusted with his wretched life and jumped down from the top of one of the

towers of the Temple of Arunachala to get rid of it. He did not know what happened but found himself miraculously saved from certain death and utterly transformed as well that very moment. He was born anew and excellent devotional poetry in praise of Subrahmanya, the Son of Siva, known as *Tiruppugazh*, gushed forth from him and he went on visiting various sacred places, thrilling with his songs the band of devotees who followed him. Of the potency of those songs, Bhagavan Ramana has once said: "One need not know the meaning of these songs; their mere sound-vibration will lift up one spiritually". These songs and the other poetical works of this saint contain all the wisdom of sacred lore, besides poetical excellence and devotional fervour.

There is a small temple of Subrahmanya beneath that tower, constructed in commemoration of this thrilling event and we find the image of Saint Arunagirinatha also installed there. It is noteworthy that devotees gather together and celebrate this great event of Divine Grace on August 15 every year.

We are reminded here of Bilva Mangala, the author of *Sri Krishna Karnamrita*, and others who had a similar sudden transformation by the operation of Divine Grace.

We have an instance of one word from the Guru bringing about spiritual awakening in the disciple that very moment. It is interesting to note here that the Silence of the Heart is known as the One Word. Sadasiva, later

known with the appellation *Brabmendra*, had renounced worldly life just when he was about to enter it and sought the Feet of Paramasivendra for spiritual illumination. Though he had understood the Way and was following it, his intellectual brilliance stood as an impediment. He was often found engaging himself in keen argument and debate regarding the interpretation of scriptural texts. His Master, Paramasivendra, saw this and to wean him from it, said : "Sadasiva ! Won't you shut up ?" That very moment Sadasiva became silent within and without. He became so unconscious of his body that he moved about stark-naked and was taken by many for a mad man. When people reported to Paramasivendra the sad plight of his disciple, he said with a sigh : "When shall I be mad like him ?" We find this stated in a Hymn in praise of Sadasivendra by Sri Nrisimha Bharati Swami of Sringa-giri, himself a well-known spiritual stalwart. It is worth recalling here that this great Pontiff of Sringeri Mutt had great regard for Bhagavan Ramana's unique spiritual attainment even in early boyhood.

Sometimes the erring mortal is redeemed by means of unbearable suffering. The case of the Saiva Saint Appar is an instance. When he, in early life, took a wrong track utterly unintended and unsuited for him, he got an unbearable stomach-ache and returned home to see his saintly sister, Tilakavati, who had dedicated herself to the worship of Siva. She pointed to him his error and advised him to surrender himself utterly to Siva. Her words were like nectar and Appar immediately took refuge in Siva and the stomach-ache disappeared like a bad dream on one's waking up. Appar began his pilgrimage singing hymns in praise of Siva. Wherever he went or stayed, he used to clean the precincts and pathways of temples. And so, service of fellow-beings constituted part of his life of devotion.

Appar is known by the name *Tirunavukkarasu*, which means Lord of Poetical Utterance. His hymns are grand, melodious and melting the heart. He was greatly loved and adored by the boy-devotee of Siva, *Tiru-Jnāna-Sambandhar*, who was fed with the

Milk of Grace by the Mother Divine, when he was but a child of three. He was born to bless others, he had no problem of his own and he is looked upon as an Avatar of Subrahmanya. In this context, it is interesting to note that Appar is traditionally identified with Ganesa, the elder son of Siva.

Bhagavan Ramana also was seen by Ganapati Muni as Skanda (Subrahmanya) in human form and praised as such in *Sri Ramana Gita*, a redaction in melodious Samskrit verse of Ramana's teachings. Any one who has studied Bhagavan's life could easily see the absence of any serious *sadbana* in it, as he was evidently born for the redemption of others. Born with the remembrance of Arunachala, he happened to go through an account of the Lives of the Tamil Saints. A touch of Divine Grace transformed him and within a few minutes he realised his true identity as the immortal Self, absolutely beyond death and travail. Called to Arunachala when he was but a lad of seventeen, he remained there unknown and silent for many years until some earnest seekers discovered his greatness and many resorted to him in course of time for peace of mind and spiritual enlightenment. Prominent among the early devotees was Ganapati Muni who after initial preparation through the discipline of incessant *japa* got his instantaneous glimpse of the Self Supreme at the feet of his Master Ramana through his teaching of the search for the Source in a very few words. The great Silence behind those words did the miracle. When the disciple is ready the Master's Grace prevails.

We are reminded here of the four spiritual aspirants, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara and Sanatsujata, who went about in search of enlightenment, uninterested in anything else, met Siva Himself seated under a banyan tree wrapt in Supreme Silence and got illumined immediately. That aspect of Siva is well-known as Dakshinamurti, the Lord facing the South. In every Temple of Siva there is the image of Dakshinamurti and His four disciples seated in front of Him. This aspect of Siva revealing ultimate Reality through Silence is described in the well-known verse :

*Chitram vata-taror moole
Vriddāh Sishyā Gurur yuvā
Gurostu moumam Vyākhyānam
Sishyāstu cbbinna-samsayāh*

“What wonder is this under the banyan tree ! The disciples are old and the Guru is young. The exposition of the Guru is in Silence and lo ! the disciples are utterly rid of all doubts.”

Visitors would have noted that there is an image of Dakshinamurti just before arriving at the entrance to Sri Ramanasramam.

Bhagavan Ramana's teaching too was mainly in Silence. Acharya Sankara has explained the significance of Dakshinamurti's teaching in his *Hymn to Dakshinamurti* and Bhagavan Ramana has rendered it into Tamil verse. Devotees of Ramana are fond of the Samskrit verse meaning, “We bow to the line of Gurus beginning with Dakshinamurti and coming through Sankara to Ramana (of our times).”

*Dakshinamurti sārāmbhām
Sankarāchārya madhyamām
Ramanāchārya paryantām
Vande Guruparamparām*

GRACE OF GOD

Devotee : Jiva is said to be bound by karma. Is it so ?

Maharshi : Let karma enjoy its fruits. As long as you are the doer so long are you the enjoyer.

D. : How to get released from karma ?

M. : See whose karma it is. You will find you are not the doer. Then you will be free. This requires grace of God for which you should pray to Him, worship Him and meditate on Him. That karma which takes place without effort, i.e., involuntary action, is not binding.

Even a jnani is acting as seen by his bodily movements. There can be no karma without effort or without intentions (*sankalpas*). Therefore there are *sankalpas* for all. They are of two kinds (1) one, binding—*bandhahetu* and the other (2) *mukti-hetu* - not binding. The former must be given up and the latter must be cultivated. There is no fruit without previous karma ; no karma without previous *sankalpa*. Even *mukti* must be the result of effort so long as the sense of doership persists.

— from *TALKS*, p. 108.

To Bhagavan

By

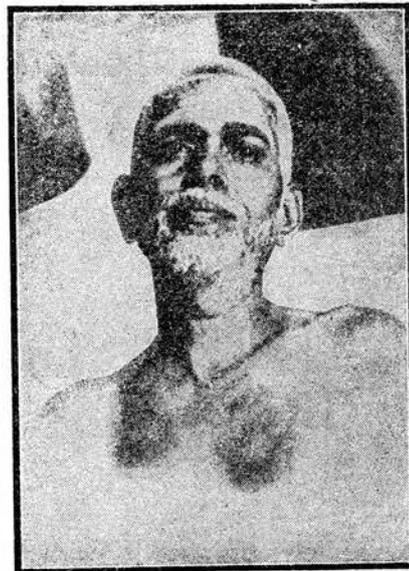
V. S. K. Aiyer

Bhagavan, when you were but sixteen
 Your thirst for knowledge was so keen
 That with a mind bold and serene
 You needs must scan the realm of Death.
 You stilled your senses, held your breath,
 And delving deep into your heart
 You found the fulness without part
 And even as an untaught youth
 Faced and embraced the ultimate Truth
 That Being is but one, not two,
 And the body is not you.

Dissolving thus your separate soul
 In the bright light of Brahman whole
 You reached in one step the far goal
 That all mankind must some day gain
 Whatever the labour and the pain.

And richly endowed with Mother's grace
 For renaissance of the human race,
 You hearkened to your Father's call
 To spread your happiness to all.
 You left your people, home and town
 And travelled to the Hill of Dawn,
 The spirit's centre of the earth,
 Renewing its promise and old renown
 That a thought of it snaps the bonds of birth.

And here you abide from year to year,
 The seed of future humankind
 Embodying bliss and calm combined,
 And teaching thro' silence, smile and tear
 All creatures come from far and near
 Who have eyes to see and ears to hear,
 That the Kingdom of God is our's already,
 Here, now, at hand, for us to live in,
 If only we look straight and steady
 With egoless transparency



At the simple truth which is no fancy
 That all of us are one,
 One single Being-Awareness-Bliss.

Some call you Muruga and some Siva,
 And some the Sun illumining ever
 The cloudless infinite inner sky.
 The Eye behind each human eye,
 You are the universal I
 That shines as I in every 'I'.

Since we know that nothing is
 But this Being which is Bliss
 The shoreless ocean of your grace,
 Let us bow in deep devotion
 To you, the splendour in each face,
 And learn to live for ever and move
 As worship, friendly service, Love.

On The Non-Teaching of Sages

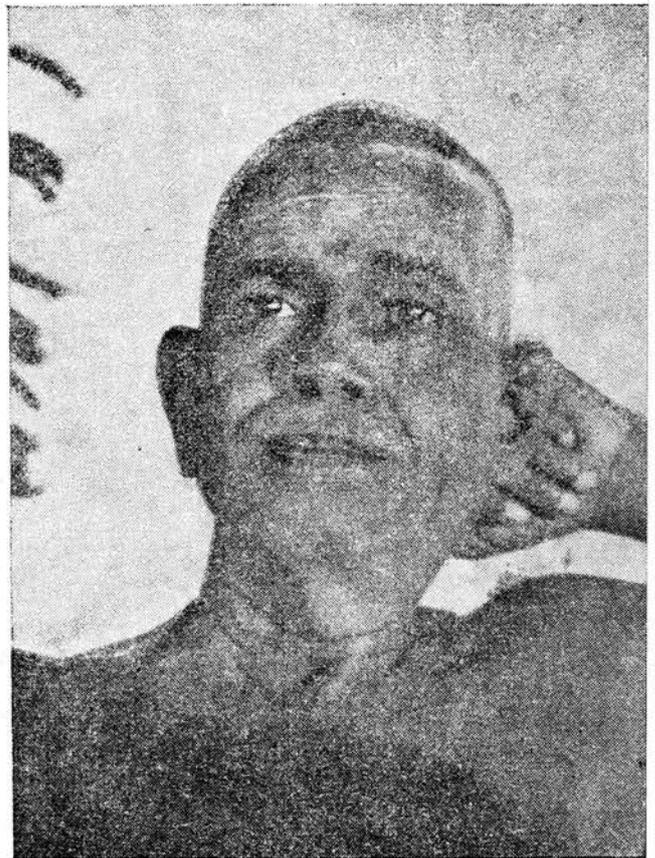
By
Wolter A. Keers

ONE must not see Sri Ramana Maharshi or any other great Master as a person dispensing some teaching or the other.

A great Master is freedom itself, being itself, truth itself. When somebody who believes himself bound comes into the presence of one whom he regards as the great Master, then a very deep change occurs. He is like a man who, armed with a torch, enters a deep cave where darkness has reigned for centuries. But with the arrival of the torch, this darkness is dispelled instantaneously, however old it may have been.

The same thing occurs when the ignorant man goes to ask an authentic sage for his teaching. In reality the sage has no teaching. But on the one hand the seeker's darkness is dispelled immediately by the sage's presence; and on the other hand, words may come from the lips of the sage, directed to the body, the head, the heart and the Impersonal in the visitor. This does not happen because the sage wants it: in the sage there is no personality to will this or that, not even the wish to improve the visitor. The sage is love itself, which means total acceptance. In him there is no condemnation, even if on some occasions his words may be severe. This love and this total acceptance, in short this clarity, is what brings about the change in the person who believes himself to be bound.

On the other hand, in most cases, words, many words, are needed to dispel the visitor's doubts. That is because doubt, fear, greed, vanity, laziness and all such "*tamasic*" qualities have been created by words, and mainly by using the word "I" to indicate the body, the activities of thought and feeling, and so on. But that does not make



the sage or the guru into someone with a teaching. What appears to you as some great Master's teaching is merely the "translation into words" of what the visitor has to see to eliminate the illusion that he is or has an ego or some such thing. That is why the same sage may say different things to different people. Everyone gets as much as he can chew, but the end is the same. The authentic guru, who is love itself, has nothing to gain and nothing to lose. To the eyes of the

stunned disciple this love may reveal itself as incomprehensible kindness or any other respect that will confront the seeker with his true being. The apex of love, to me, is expressed in the *Gita* where Sri Krishna says that he will come to meet you on whatever way you go out to seek Him. That is love. The greatest man in the world takes the trouble of going out to meet the worm that I believe I am . . . And then the miracle occurs. In Shankara's words : "The Guru creates equality between himself and the disciple." He does not rule over us as a dictator, he does not exploit us, he only gives. His nature is love, and the nature of love is to give. It is not an attitude of the guru — it is the very nature of the Harmony that he is, as wetness is the very nature of water.

This having been said, it should be added that, in the Hindu tradition, talking about the free one is taboo, and with very good reason. If you do, you fall into the same trap as most religious people : you do not talk about the free one as he really is, but about your perception of him — of the image you make of him. You are like the theologians who fail to see that when they talk about God, they merely talk about the image they have made of "Him". To some it is a terrible shock to discover one day that what is indicated by the word 'God' is not an image in my or in anybody else's head, even as I myself am not an image in my own or in anybody else's head.

So by talking about truth, the sage, the guru, 'God' and so on, you run the risk of falling into the trap of degrading the ultimate into a mere image, into a concept. That is why it is better to keep silent. And if I talk about it, it is because I do not know from where. The only thing I may tell you is that there is no gentleman in my head who produces words. Whatever words come out of this mouth, they are not mine. On such words there cannot be any copyright.

Nor do I try to explain things. Ultimately there is nothing that can be explained. If somebody "explains" that two equals one plus one, my counter-question is : And what

is one ? That is the final question. If you know what 'one' means, you are free. But no great teacher can explain it to you in the terms of thought, diversity, dispersion, fragmentation. He can merely invite you to let go your standpoint of an illusory thinker, and if you listen to his words, you will find yourself suddenly and without an effort at a distance from all these things you call 'I' : Suddenly and without an effort your standpoint has been changed. What seemed subject turns out to be object. And in the end you find that this new position and the old object — 'I'-s — are all mere movements in the stream that in its unchanging reality is nothing but what you are : freedom, harmony, being itself, completely free of thought and therefore completely free of any limitation whatsoever.

So there is no such thing as a sage, a free man. If I may put it this way ; from his own point of view he is freedom itself, not a body. But if the visitor sees a body and calls that a sage or a guru, it is because he believes that he himself is a man or a woman, and he sees others on the corresponding level.

The moment you discover, un-cover, freedom within yourself, you see that you are one and the same freedom as the sage is. There is only one freedom, only one absolute, or, in the language of images, there is only one infinite. The sage is that. You are that. Not as a personality, but as that in which hundreds and thousands of personalities and egos arise and dissolve, whether you call them by your name or by other names.

Once you are this freedom, consciously, without a trace of a feeling that you are or have been something else, you will discover that any name is your name. That is another way of pointing at what freedom is. But it is no description ! And no explanation !

In every authentic approach, something like a Trick is used to expose your own trickery. Sri Ramana Maharshi's Trick is asking you : What wants an explanation ? Of course, it is a Trick with a capital T. This Trick leads straight to the ultimate question.

It is the intellectual in you that desires to get a neat reply. You desire to have the unlimited explained in terms of what you have learnt, in terms of your memory.

That is not possible. Memory is a fake — it is a stupid trick that makes you believe that a present image happened some time ago.

You seek what you are, because you claim that you do not know it. From that point of view, all you know is memory. How can you hope to find what is eternal presence by means of an optical illusion that makes the present appear as if it were the past? How can you find the Unknown as long as you look for it in the field of the known?

True, Sri Ramana Maharshi said it is the best known of all things. On other occasions he also said that it is the only thing you know. Ultimately even ignorance, pain, madness, cruelty, all these things we have learnt to fear and avoid, are nothing but the Self: *is* nothing else.

But no man or woman, no illusory personality will ever find truth or freedom. Truth, freedom, love, the Self, the I-I, That, which to the personality will remain unknown forever, will reveal itself as the only thing you have ever known, the moment you as a personality-feeling disappear.

In other words, what Sri Ramana Maharshi said is the final truth. But don't interpret it as if it were an invitation to that ego to swallow the infinite and consider itself a sage or a free person.

There can be no path to go, and if we talk about a path to freedom, it is only because words must be used and we all have the feeling that we must *do* something in order to find out what we are. We shall continue to seek satisfaction as long as even a little bit of feeling remains that we are somebody. We shall seek happiness either by making love or by living as an ascetic; by eating pleasant food, or by fasting; by working hard or by retiring into stillness . . . it all depends on our luggage. But we shall continue to seek happiness in hundreds of directions, until we

have finally understood that we are the happiness that we seek.

I once had a friend with very thick lenses in his spectacles. Once the Master who was guiding him told my friend, jokingly but very serious at the same time: "Take off your glasses, and look properly!" That is the whole thing summed up in one image. If you call that 'doing something', you may. But to me it rather appears as non-doing; as ceasing to look in the wrong direction, as stopping to mistake objects for a subject, as ending the illusion that you are a doer, a thinker, a body or mind . . . all this only by looking properly.

It does not matter how we call things. Truth, freedom, love, is omnipresent. It will come to meet us on whatever way we have set out to seek it. Whatever form it may appear to have in the beginning, in the end the revelation will dawn that you yourself are what you have so ardently been looking for.

Some may be shocked when we use the word 'trick' about someone like Sri Ramana Maharshi. That is because the word is also used, in the sense that someone tries to benefit at the expense of someone else. But the sage has nothing that could make him richer or poorer. He *is* everything.

Perhaps the word 'Trick' may be clarified by telling you something I heard a great Master in Europe say, recently: "You go to a Guru, expecting that you will finally get the wonderful spiritual food that you have been hankering after for so many years. The dishes you expect are beyond description. But great is your surprise when, instead of feeding you, he takes out your stomach, until nothing is left of you . . .".

The Master is never what you imagine him to be, for he is by definition un-imaginable. Now, people came to Ramana Maharshi. He was — if I may use another comparison — like a birdcatcher, who would say: "Wonderful bird, look at this marvellous and efficient branch I am to show you. It is called 'Who am I', and it is really a highly efficient branch. Why don't you sit down on it?"

But when you did, what happened? You died!

When you sat down on His branch, looking around for this 'I', you discovered that it slipped through your fingers like air, and looking ever more closely, you discovered that there was no such thing as an 'I': that it was a spurious entity, mere vapour. You would have panicked, were it not that the Great Birdcatcher was watching you all the time, looking right through you. And His presence somehow, in an indescribable manner, gave you the absolute certainty that although there was no 'I' to be found anywhere, yet you were not nothingness. Then, in this discovery, illusion was undermined forever. The illusory ego had received its mortal blow. But the Birdcatcher remained with you, and took you to a place, deeply within yourself. Then what happened? Trick number two! That place, (looked at from the outside you would locate it near the heart) turned out to be a non-place when you entered it from the inside: suddenly you were non-space, non-time, non-causality.

Even today, after 25 years, I find it difficult to talk about it, but this is what happened to me and to many others.

The Catcher had caught you and killed you, although in the gentlest of ways, with an indescribable smile on His face.

Love — that love that is Knowledge — is the only real killer. Seen from the outside, one must say that love and knowledge must go hand in hand. Seen from the inside, these two words represent the same indivisible experience that we are.

But love as a feeling is not yet real love, although it may take you there. The feeling of love changes into ultimate love when knowledge shows that it is not *my* love: that love does not have a proprietor and does not want to benefit. Its nature is giving, giving alone. When that is understood, you begin to give everything you are, until nothing of the projected 'you' remains. Then and then only are you Love Itself, far beyond sentiments, which alone is Knowledge.

The abbess Matrona said, "It is better to have many about thee, and to live the solitary life in thy will, than to be alone, and the desire of thy mind be with the crowd."

from *The Desert Fathers*
by Helen Waddell

*

*

*

D. : Can *advaita* be realised by *japa* of holy names; say Rama, Krishna, etc. ?

M. : Yes.

D. : Is it not a means of an inferior order ?

M. : Have you been told to make *japa* or to discuss its order in the scheme of things ?

Silence.

— from *TALKS*, p. 60

The Maharshi and the Mahatma

By

Morarji Desai

[In this issue devoted to masters of karma, bhakti and jnana, we have great pleasure in reprinting this article by Shri Morarji Desai, Prime Minister of India. It originally appeared in Ramana Manjari, a Souvenir brought out by Ramana Kendra, Delhi, in 1968, when he was Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Kendra.]

MY first visit to Sri Ramanasramam took place in 1935 when few of the present buildings had come up and the Maharshi himself was not so well-known as he came to be in later years. On that occasion I stayed in the Ashram for a day and sat in the presence of the Maharshi for an hour or more, during which I felt complete inner peace. I asked no question for I felt no need to ask any. But that hour of perfect stillness in that silent presence has been for me a precious memory ever since. Before I took leave of him I had the privilege of having a meal with him. The experience of that visit convinced me that here was a realized soul and that the ideal of "action in inaction" as propounded in the *Gita* is really attainable.

Though we all know that wars begin in the minds of men, we find most people working for peace through outward acts without attaining inner peace. Wars occur because there is greed, a desire to own more than one's legitimate share of the world's goods. Unless the real spirit of religion is understood and lived up to and inner peace is established in the minds of people, we cannot establish peace in the world. Peace is not cessation from war, but a positive sense of unity with and concern for others. This is the goal which I am confident men and nations shall reach one day. But even if we fail to reach it, the goal is well worth striving for, because if we cease to move in this direction the



Shri Morarji Desai

causes of conflict will go on increasing and the world will get worse and worse, not better and better. If we all seek peace within, the world will one day become a real human society. Unless fear and greed disappear, unless we cease to cast envious eyes on others' possessions or talents or status in life, unless every person in every country achieves internal peace, unless every denominational religion respects other religions and deepens and enriches its own spiritual experience without claiming superiority over others, the real religious spirit, a consciousness of the oneness and the common destiny of mankind will not

prevail against fear and greed and we cannot build a real human society on earth.

The first step is to turn the searchlight inwards, learn our own faults, recognize our own infirmity and set about reforming ourselves. If instead of doing this we assume airs of superiority and try to reform others, even if we do it in the name of peace, we shall be creating an atmosphere of conflict rather than of peace. In the realm of spirit there is no room for greed or fear or conflict, no room for self-assertion or exclusiveness. We in this country have always accepted *anekantavada*, the possibility of many points of view, and have therefore gone far beyond toleration which is only a form of patronage involving a sense of superiority and inferiority. We respect other persons because we see reflected in them the same self or spirit that animates us. We say "*atmavat sarvabhuteshu*" — I must act towards all living things as I expect them to act towards me.

It is from this recognition of the unity of all beings that the doctrine of non-violence arises. It is only in a state of non-violence that one can respect others. It is only when one respects others that one can have an atmosphere of equality where peace can reign. Peace, to my mind, is the main function of all religions. Whoever has inner peace will also spread outer peace. But when a religious community wants to spread its ideas merely to increase the number of its followers, strife results. This aggressiveness will have to be given up by the organized religions, if true religion is to function through the imperfect instruments that we are.

Science has advanced so much that we can now ensure that nobody is in want. But science is at the same time multiplying the engines of destruction. Unless we arrest this and spiritualize our public life and social relations, we shall not enjoy the benefit which modern science and the new methods of communication and social organization can give to mankind. In order to make science and technology serve mankind, a positive and

dynamic peace is vital. This spiritual strength has got to be acquired through the *sadhana* of sacrifice, not by aggression or aggressiveness.

The innumerable activities of Mahatma Gandhi during his long political career both in South Africa and India never disturbed his own inner peace or the peace of the people among whom he worked. The *shakti* that he developed was the outward expression of the *shanti* which he cultivated through prayer and dedicated, selfless service. It is good to remember the essential link between *dharma* and *moksha*, between *karma* and *jnana*. In the *Talks with Ramana Maharshi* occur some revealing comments on Mahatma Gandhi's thought-free state and complete self-surrender. On August 18, 1938 when Babu Rajendra Prasad was taking leave after a few days' stay in the asramam and asked for a message from the Maharshi to be conveyed to Gandhiji, the answer was: "*Adhyatma shakti* is working within him and leading him on. That is enough. What more is necessary?" Again on September 20, 1938, when some Congressmen had plied the Maharshi with questions about the success of the freedom struggle, he declared: "Gandhiji has surrendered himself to the Divine and works accordingly with no self-interest. He does not concern himself with the results but accepts them as they turn up. That must be the attitude of national workers." The Congressmen persisted and enquired: "Should we not know if our actions will be worthwhile?" Again the Maharshi said: "Follow the example of Gandhiji in the work for the national cause. 'Surrender' is the word."

The relation between these two giants has been well described by the poet Sarojini Naidu in these words: "We have two *mahāns* in India today. One is Ramana Maharshi, who gives us peace. The other is Mahatma Gandhi, who will not let us rest one moment in peace. But each does what he is doing with the same end in view, namely, the spiritual regeneration of India."

RAMANA AND GANDHI

By

A. Ramaswami

MAHARSHI RAMANA was a jnani and Mahatma Gandhi was a karma yogi. The former saw the whole universe in himself and the latter saw himself in the world. God came and revealed Himself to one, the other followed Truth in order to reach God step by step.

One did not stir out anywhere from where he was, the other wandered all over the world. For one the world was where he was, for the other the world became his home. Both of them taught our traditional wisdom; neither claimed originality. Yet each in his way reconstituted and strengthened the tradition.

They reached a high spiritual state without any human Guru; yet they emphasised the indispensability of a Guru in one's spiritual pursuit. Both were universal in their outlook,



and rose above any narrow loyalty or blind attachment to their own faith. People from all over the world sought them and their teaching spread out to every nook and corner of the world.

Both were noted for the regular performance of allotted tasks, excelling even westerners in their regard for punctuality. They were their only equals in maintaining purity and cleanliness within and without. In the presence of both it was the experience of

visitors that their doubts got automatically solved. They meted out equal treatment to all, recognising no one as superior. Yet their first attention was to the needy.

One vied with the other in austerity of living. Both utilised used covers, one side blank papers, old pins and clips and many other things, which most others would throw into the dust bin.

The whole world was one big family for them. They themselves scrupulously followed all the regulations laid down for the conduct of their respective Ashrams.

One wore a mere cod-piece and the other only a towel and yet how dignified and impressive they looked !

Both of them were *sthitaprajñās* above any idea of ownership and attachment to anything mundane. When they left the world their only material possessions were most inexpensive things such as a towel, walking-stick and a pair of sandals.

It is indeed remarkable that both of them were born in the same country and about the same time.

With the advent of these great souls India regained her lost glory. Each laboured in his own way to recreate a Bharat worthy of the ancient seers.

One became a jnana-yogi by a single dynamic experience of Reality, the other became a servant and saviour of his people by refusing to accept personal humiliation (when he was forcibly removed from a first class railway compartment in South Africa at the command of a white man).

Gandhiji took this personal insult as symbolic of his country's humiliation in being ruled by a foreign power and put an end to it by a life-long effort based on truth and non-violence.

In the case of Ramana, it was a sudden fear of death, faced and conquered then and there, that made him realise the natural immortal state of jnana. And so Ramana's spiritual effort and its culmination took place in a matter of minutes on the first floor of his Madurai home.

Ramana and Gandhi had inner peace and hence they were successful in spreading it outside. Their *shakti* so active in the world during and beyond their lifetime was an outward manifestation of the *shanti* in their hearts. It may be noted that Maharshi said that *adhyatma shakti* was working within Mahatma Gandhi and was leading him on. One was an embodiment of *Shanti* or Stillness, the other of *Shakti* or movement.

Both helped to break down the barrier between intellectual and popular Hinduism, between jnana and Karma, between the classes and masses.

Neither Ramana nor Gandhi encouraged escape from *swadharma*. Both recognized the value of social bonds and international fraternity, and regarded the sense of equality as the mark and measure of moral excellence.

Gandhi's Karma was rooted in jnana ; Ramana's jnana was the sun which gave light and warmth for its growth.

Each watched with friendly interest the experiments of the other in relating jnana to Karma and Karma to jnana. The Maharshi's jnana is pure Vedanta, the Mahatma's Karma is applied Vedanta. The aim of both is the elimination of the one and only evil, the ego's attachment to its separate identity and its alienation from universal Being.

When followers like Shankarlal Banker, Rajendra Prasad or Jannalal Bajaj felt depressed or confused, Gandhi sent them for spiritual refreshment to Sri Ramanasramam. Ramana commended to national workers Gandhi's example of self-surrender and selfless action.

Both warned people, against using bhakti as a means of escape from their normal and social responsibilities. Thus they both conveyed to their contemporaries the true Vedantic teaching of Sankara and Ramanuja.

Both merged in the universal Light on a Friday.

Gandhi was a modern Hanuman who loved and served Sri Rama and taught us the *dharma* which should govern our private and public life. Ramana was a modern Skanda. Guhesa, who revelled in the *ananda* of Father Siva and showed the inward path to *moksha*.

Garland of Guru's Sayings

By SRI MURUGANAR
Translated from Tamil by
Prof. K. Swaminathan

588.

Instead of sporting proud and joyous
In the blissful sea of the supreme
Siva-experience, worthless people
Wallow in the mire despised
Of pleasure in the pit of flesh and blood.

589.

Sense-pleasures sought by passion-blinded
people
Are fit only for contemptuous rejection
By those who long to taste the rich,
ripe fruit
Of Bliss supreme immeasurably sweet.

590.

One is food oneself. Not knowing this,
If one imagines one eats food
One is consumed by food and is reduced
To being but food for an insatiable hunger.

[Eating to satisfy hunger and being content is
natural bliss. Pandering to the taste and eating
for enjoyment makes one the slave of insatiable
desires.]

591.

The food we eat eats us. Those who
know not
Th's truth desire and eagerly enjoy
Earthly pleasure thinking that they eat it
[While really they are being eaten by it.]

[Desire for sense-pleasures increase by indulgence
and alienates us from our true being. Instead
of our eating food and keeping alive, food
consumes and kills us.]

592.

As fire when it is fed with ghee
Leaps up and up erect, unquenched,
Desire too when gratified
Rejoices and revives in strength.

593.

Not only the sting, but a glimpse, a thought
Of the serpent Desire is fatal. And hence
Nothing we know is more terrible than
The senses, the venomous snake
With its five-fold fang.

594.

Non-existent Maya, this alone,
Pretending to be real and powerful makes
Fools of even the cleverest folk and smiles
Inwardly with wonder at its own success.

595.

When one beholds the light within the heart,
What matters it if darkness reigns without?
The densest outward darkness cannot hide
The true, self-luminous light within the heart.

596.

To say that a mosquito with mouth open
Can swallow up and then spit out the sky
Is much less foolish than to say that transient
Maya void, inert, can hold or bind
And then set free the Self, Awareness bright.

597.

If the heart, the fullness of Awareness,
Is the sole Truth, is not dense Maya
But a lie? How strange that, stung
By that false, mind-made Maya,
Jivas should swoon and die?

598.

Looking at perfect jnanis who are That
And asking "How can they who eat
and walk
Be That?" poor body-bound fools only
parade
Their folly as if it were excellent wisdom.

599.

The innocent girl-bride thinking that
Betrothal is conjugal union
Is full of joy. Even so the learned
Who have yet to turn within and taste
true bliss
Claim that the verbal wisdom which they
prattle
Is *advaita jnana*.

600.

Those who from books have learnt about
The truth supreme esteem themselves
Supreme in wisdom, fail to seek
The Knower and taste the bliss of Self,
But test and measure the silent sage.
What folly this!

601.

Those who lacking strength to know
Themselves as they are here and now
Still labour hard to dig up facts
About their past and future lives
Are like a new-born infant trying
To jump and capture its own shadow.

602.

Those whose minds falter as they face
Their being at this present moment
Would cogitate and figure out
their possible state at some remote
past or future time.

3.

What strange wisdom this of people
Who do not care to thoroughly search
And find now who they are today
But struggle hard to know the truth
About their being before they were born
And after they are dead.

604.

"Does Siva's advent purify
The mind or does He come because
The mind is pure?" inquire idiots
Who sadly err in seeing two
Actions where there is only one.
To such we have no answer. Sorry.

605.

Those who with minds far from mature
Yearn for sense-pleasures and wallow
in them,
Why should they seek, why should they join
The company of saints whose conquest
Of the senses is complete and final.

606.

Jivas afflicted, tossed about
Each by his own deeds, good and bad,
Are but dream-figures that arise
Live for a while and then subside,
In the one true Self, the wondrous sky
Of pure Awareness.

607.

Swerving from the true Self that knows
No fear, one falls into vile birth
And like a lock snipped off the head
Loses all worth.

608.

Failing to know oneself and stand
Firm as the Self, that lofty Mountain,
To drift forlorn is like the Tenth Man
Counting others and forgetting
The one he should begin with.

609.

If instead of keenly questing
"Who am I?" within the heart,
The source of thought, and recognizing
And being thence for ever, one
With Siva shining as the Self,
One swerves from one's true nature
And suffers, it is one's own folly.

Dionysius The Areopagite

By
Gladys Dehm

DIONYSIUS is a pseudonym. It is therefore more correct to call Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite.

It is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts xvii. 34), that one known as Dionysius the Areopagite became converted to Christianity by Saint Paul when he preached in Athens.

Not very much is known about this man except that he had made a journey to France and was the founder of the Abbey of St. Denis.

The 'Divine Names' and 'The Mystical Theology' were written by him and were considered important works, reflecting the influence of Plotinus whilst retaining, however, a Christian outlook.

Although well known and widely read in the East, the works of Dionysius the Areopagite became known to the West only when Johannes Scotus translated the Greek texts at the behest of Abbot Hilduin.

The books written by Dionysius describe his own mystical experiences; he cannot be considered therefore as a mere philosopher or theologian.

Dionysius stresses the negative aspect of mystical consciousness. Here, the metaphor of 'absence of light' is widely used to denote the *via negativa*, whilst the metaphor of light is used to denote the positive side. Hence, the 'dazzling darkness' is the mystical union.

In the mystical consciousness positive and negative exist side by side. On the negative side is Nothingness, the Void; on the positive there is the Divine One, the Absolute. The negative aspect becomes a Way leading to divine at-one-ment, and it is this negative Way which Dionysius experiences whilst climbing to the Summit. The incomprehensible Self is

said to be 'not this, not this' in the Upanishad, so too with Dionysius.

He emphasized the futility of trying to comprehend the Godhead with the intellect. No definitions exist which can be applied to the Absolute One. God is the 'Super-essential Obscurity'. God is 'neither order, number, nor loftiness, or smallness, or inequality, or equality . . . It is not inactivity nor immovable, or still — It has no power, is neither light nor force, and does not live, neither is it life; nor is it individual essence, or everlasting, or time . . . nor is It Oneness, neither Goodness nor Godhead. It belongs neither to existence nor non-existence.'

Dionysius goes on to explain that although God is beyond all definitions, He remains nevertheless the CAUSE. This is clarified in the 'Divine Names'. Although God is not good, He is nevertheless the Cause of all power. God is the Cause of the empirical characteristics which exist in the world.

To Dionysius God is the Cause of all causes, although He remains Nameless.

What is the Divine Obscurity?

Thou Blessed Trinity, above all Godhead, Being, and Love! Thou that teachest Christians in Thy celestial sagacity! Be Thou our guide to that summit of thy mystical knowledge most luminous and beyond wisdom, where the ultimate, pure and immutable secrets of celestial Truth remain unseen in the dazzling darkness of the secret Silence, outshining all splendour with their intense obscurity, and according to our blinded intellects the absolutely impalpable and unseen loveliness of glories which surpass all fairness! So— is my prayer meant to be; and thee, beloved Timothy, I advise you, that in the diligent application of mystical contemplation,

thou discard the senses and the operations of the intellect and all those things which the intellect and the senses are able to apprehend, and all things in this empty world.

. . . . We pray that we may be brought to this Obscurity which is beyond Light, and that we may enjoy the Beatific Vision through the deprivation of knowledge and vision, and in no longer knowing or seeing we may come to know of that which remains beyond understanding and apprehending (for when our faculties are cast aside there emerges true understanding and vision), and that we may make an offering unto Him who is beyond all things . . . We must now make the distinction between the negative method and positive affirmations.

All qualities must be put away from us so that we may come to a stark understanding of that Unknowing which in all existing things is enveloped by all objects of understanding, and that we may begin to behold that superessential Obscurity which is veiled by all the light which is in existing things.

. . . . Once again, in our ascent we state that It is neither soul nor mind, nor that It possesses the imaginative faculty, reason, conjecture nor understanding; neither is It any motion of understanding or reasoning; neither can It be said to be that which reason can define, neither can the understanding behold It, since It is neither number, nor orderliness, nor highest, nor smallness nor equality, nor inequality, and because It is not able to be moved neither in activity, nor still, and is powerless, and is neither force nor light, and lives not neither is It life — It possesses no personal essence, neither everlastingness nor time, neither can It be apprehended by the understanding — It is neither truth nor knowledge; neither Ruler nor sagacity; It is not one nor unity, neither Godhead nor Goodness; It is not a Spirit as the term is understood by us since It is neither Sonship nor Fatherhood, neither is it any thing that either we or any other creature can have understanding of — It does not fit into the pattern of existence or non-existence. Beings who exist do not appre-

hend It as it truly is . . . for while being affirmative or negative to those orders of beings that come close to It, we cannot be either affirmative or negative towards It as It lies beyond all statement since It is the unique and perfect Cause of all things, surpassing all negation by the lofty eminence and absolute simplicity of Its nature — beyond limitation and retaining freedom from them all.

The Divine Names

We learn these mysteries from the Sacred Scriptures, and thou wilt discover that in almost all the sayings of the sacred authors the Divine Names make reference in a Revelation which is symbolised in Its Emanations which are beneficent.

Considering Divine things we realize that the Supreme Godhead is highly praised as being One, a Unity — this through the pure unity of Its indivisibility which is supernatural. It is from that Source (as from a unifying force) we reach unity, and through the supernal joining of our many and individual qualities are put together each into a Divine Oneness, and are together in Divine unity. It is known as the Trinity because Its supernatural fertility is made known by a personality which is Threefold, it is from this that all Fatherhood both in heaven and earth exists and derives Its name. It is named the Universal Cause because all things come into being through Its grace; and It is named Wise and Beautiful because all things which are incorrupt bear within themselves a harmony which is Divine and a beauty which is sacred . . . In all the other Divine Revelations taught by our inspired oracles in the occult tradition, and revealed through mystical interpretation which have been given to us, we too have received initiation: having understanding of these things in our present lives (in accordance with our powers) through the holy veils of that loving goodness which the Scriptures and Traditions have wrapped about spiritual truths in a worldly terminology, and essential truths in a terminology drawn from Being, giving to that which is shapeless and formless both shape and form, and by the use of various symbols

The Wordless World

By

S. Mohanaraman

Let the fire of knowledge burn
Fed by Bhakti,
Making all things alien once
One with itself.

Let greed, envy, lust, despair
Into the fire disappear ;
Let desire, good and bad, that rocks
Back and forth — the *jula*-play —
Die in the endless Shānti
Of Awareness pure, serene.

Let him who sowed the karma reap it.
Let him who yearned for Fire-works
(Ending, alas, in din and smoke)
Revel in it.
Let him who is impelled to act,
Be led away, down from the top,
To the multi-coloured worlds below.

Words, words, and words again.
From top to bottom
All, alas, are words.

What is the use of all this imagery ?
One has but words to chew and grind,
Words make us happy, make us sad.

How long, O Mother, would you leave me
To wander, lost in the wood of words ?

Let me remember me
In you alone.
Let me see and love all, all,
As you alone.

Words but come and go,
Experience too comes but to leave
One more forlorn.
Only you and I abide,
I in you or you in me,
And in this oneness Peace and Bliss.

No thought, no word.
The Creator thought (and the world evolved)
And spoke (and the Vedas emerged).
Away with this Primal Folly !
Away with thoughts and words.
Words conjure emotions, emotions impulse,
And impulse action and
Further action — Till the echo is louder
Than the Voice !
The One multiplies into the Many,
The Harmonious Whole is shattered
Into discordant parts,
O for a world without words !

Sri Maharshi's Grace in Words¹

Devotee : Jiva is said to be bound by karma. Is it so ?

Maharshi : Let karma enjoy its fruits. As long as you are the doer so long are you the enjoyer.

D. : How to get released from karma.

M. : See whose karma it is. You will find you are not the doer. Then you will be free. This requires grace of God for which you should pray to Him, worship Him and meditate on Him.

The karma which takes place without effort, i.e., involuntary action, is not binding.

Even a *jnani* is acting as seen by his bodily movements. There can be no karma without effort or without intentions (*sankalpas*). Therefore there are *sankalpas* for all. They are of two kinds (1) one, binding — *bandha-hetu* and the other (2) *mukti-hetu* — not binding. The former must be given up and the latter must be cultivated. There is no fruit without previous karma ; no karma without previous *sankalpa*. Even *mukti* must be the result of effort so long as the sense of doership persists.

* * * *

A crowd had gathered here during Christmas.

D. : How to attain Unity Consciousness ?

M. : Being Unity Consciousness how to attain it ? Your question is its own answer.

D. : What is *Atman* (Self), *anatman* (non-self) and *paramatman* (Supreme Self) ?

M. : *Atman* is (*jevatman*) the individual Self and the rest are plain. The self is ever-present (*nityasiddha*). Each one wants to know the Self. What kind of help does one require to know oneself ? People want to see the Self as something new. But it is eternal and remains the same all along. They desire to see it as a blazing light, etc. How can it be so ? It is not light, not darkness (*na tejo, na tamah*). It is only as it is. It cannot be defined. The best definition is 'I am that I AM.' The *Srutis* speak of the Self as being the size of one's thumb, the tip of the hair, an electric spark, vast, subtler than the subtlest, etc. They have no foundation in fact. It is only Being, but different from the real and the unreal ; it is Knowledge, but different from knowledge and ignorance. How can it be defined at all ? It is simple Being.

* * * *



Dr. Mohammed Hafiz Syed, a Muslim Professor of Persian and Urdu in the University of Allahabad, asked : "What is the purpose of this external manifestation ?"

M. : This manifestation had induced your question.

D. : True. I am covered by *maya*. How to be free from it ?

M. : Who is covered by *maya* ? Who wants to be free ?

D. : Master, being asked 'Who?', I know that it is ignorant me, composed of the senses, mind and body. I tried this enquiry 'Who?' after reading Paul Brunton's book. Three or four times I was feeling elated and the elation lasted sometime and faded away. How to be established in 'I'? Please give me the clue and help me.

M. : That which appears anew must also disappear in due course.

¹ from *Talks*, pp. 108 to 112 & 116 to 118.

D. : Please tell me the method of reaching the eternal Truth.

M. : You are *That*. Can you ever remain apart from the Self? To be yourself requires no effort since you are always *That*.

* * * *

Another impatient questioner elaborated long premises and finished asking why some children die a premature death. He required the answer not to satisfy the grown-up ones who look on, but the babies who are the victims.

M. : Let the victims ask. Why do you ask and desire the answer from the standpoint of the child?

* * * *

An educated man asked : Is there an Absolute Being? What is its relation to the relative existence?

M. : Are they different from each other? All the questions arise only in the mind. The mind arises with waking and subsides in deep sleep. As long as there is a mind, so long will there be such questions and doubts.

D. : There must be stage after stage of progress for gaining the Absolute. Are there grades of Reality?

M. : There are no grades of Reality. There are grades of experience for the *jiva* and not of Reality. If anything can be gained anew, it could also be lost, whereas the Absolute is eternal — here and now.

D. : If so, how do I remain ignorant of it?

M. : For whom is this ignorance (veiling)? Does the Absolute tell you that it is veiled? It is the *jiva* who says that something veils the Absolute. Find out for whom this ignorance is.

D. : Why is there imperfection in Perfection? That is, how did the Absolute become relative?

M. : For whom is this relativity? For whom is this imperfection? The Absolute is not imperfect and cannot ask. The insentient cannot ask the question. Between the two something has risen up which raises these questions and which feels this doubt. Who is it? Is it the one who has now arisen? Or is it the one who is eternal?

Being perfect, why do you feel yourself imperfect? Such is the teaching of all the religions. Whatever may be the experiences the experiencer is one and the same.

'I' is *purna* — perfection. There is no diversity in sleep. That indicates perfection.

D. : Being perfect, why do I not feel it?

M. : Nor is imperfection felt in deep sleep. The 'I' in sleep being perfect, why does the waking 'I' feel imperfect? Because the one who feels imperfect is a spurious offshoot, a differentiation from the Infinite — a segregation from God.

D. : I am the same in all the three states. Did this ego submerge me or did I entangle myself into it?

M. : Did anything come up without you?

D. : I am always the same.

M. : Because you see it, this appears to have come up. Did you feel this difficulty in deep sleep? What is new now?

D. : The senses and the mind.

M. : Who says this? Is it the sleeper? If so he should have raised the question in deep sleep also. The sleeper has been lost hold of, some spurious offshoot has differentiated himself and speaks now.

Can anything new appear without that which is eternal and perfect? This kind of dispute is itself eternal. Do not engage in it. Turn inward and put an end to all this. There will be no finality in disputations.

D. : Show me that Grace which puts an end to all this trouble. I have not come here to argue. I want only to learn.

M. : Learn first what you are. This requires no *sastras*, no scholarship. This is simple experience. The state of *being* is now and here all along. You have lost hold of yourself and are asking others for guidance. The purpose of philosophy is to turn you inward. "If you know your Self, no evil can come to you. Since you asked me I have taught you."

The ego comes up only holding you (the Self). Hold yourself and the ego will vanish. Until then the sage will be saying: "There is." — The ignorant will be asking, "Where?"

D. : The crux of the problem lies in "Know Thyself."

M. : Yes. Quite so.

NĀYANMĀRS (Devotees of Siva)

By

Dr. V. A. Devasenapathi

EXAMPLE is better than precept. It is not what a person says, but how he lives and what he does that influences his fellowmen. This is true especially in the fields of philosophy and religion. We may go through the works of great teachers and gather their ideas, but they may have little impact on our lives. On the other hand the lives of sages and saints exercise a pervasive influence. We feel purified, at least for the time being, as we go through them. These biographies purify the mind and spirit even as a bath cleanses the body.

Saivism of Tamilnadu, known as *Saiva Siddhānta*, reckons the *Tirutondar Puranam* as one of its twelve important sacred works. This work is popularly known as the *Periya Puranam*. Actually it is *Periyar Puranam* as dealing with the lives of *periyar* or great persons. Their greatness results from their total conquest of egoism, the sense of 'I' and 'mine'. Their lives are illustrations of the fulfilment of the prayer of Ramana Maharshi's song: "Root out my ego, Arunachala Siva!"

It was perhaps his innate appreciation of their lives that made him as a lad stand in reverent admiration before their images in the Madurai temple. Observing that the stories of the *Periya Puranam* and the images of the sixty-three *Nayanmars* which he (the Maharshi) had seen in the temple took on a new significance after his great experience, Professor Swaminathan calls attention to the Maharshi's recollection of his experience years later: "After the awakening to the new life I would go alone and stand before Siva or Minakshi or Nataraja or the saints for long periods. I would feel waves of emotion overcoming me. The former hold on the body had been given up by my spirit; the spirit therefore longed to have a fresh hold and hence the frequent visits to the temple. I would stand before Isvara and

occasionally pray for the descent of His grace upon me so that my devotion might increase and become perpetual like that of the sixty-three . . . I prayed I should have the same *bhakti* that they had".¹ Earlier the Maharshi had come across a copy of the *Periya Puranam* — and he was "overwhelmed with joy as he read the stories of the sixty-three saints who had obtained the grace of Siva".²

The *Periya Puranam* is based on Sundaramurti Swami's *Tiruttondartogai*. It is significant that Sundaramurti, after mentioning the names of individual saints, mentions nine groups of saints. One of these groups is 'the devotees beyond'. These saints are beyond the geographical and chronological limits within which the narrative moves. In other words, Sundaramurti would like to include all the devotees of the Lord, no matter where and when they lived — they are devotees of all places and of all times.

The *Periya Puranam* also draws upon a slight elaboration of the *Tiruttondartogai* contained in Nambiandar Nambi's *Tiruttondar Tiruvandadi*. The *Periya Puranam* deals with the lives of three out of four great *Samaya-charyas*, viz., Tirugnanasambandhar, Tiru-Navukkarasar (Appar), and Sundaramurti. Manikkavachagar's life is not dealt with, possibly because his name does not figure in the original list.

It is interesting to note that not only the devotees of the Lord are spoken of but also the devotees of the devotees. This is a matter that calls for a little reflection. Is it right to worship (i) the devotees and (ii) the devotees of devotees? Should not worship be reserved only for the Lord? As if in answer to these questions, there is a prefatory narrative in the

¹ *Ramana Maharshi*, by K. Swaminathan, pp. 9-10.

² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Periya Puranam. Sage Upamanyu, who is well aware of Siva's all-transcendent nature and who rejoices in the bliss of Siva, is seated on a slope of Kailasa, surrounded by innumerable devotees and yogins. He raises his hands in worship at the sight of a great effulgence and tells the assembly that it is Sundaramurti going up to the Lord. He is asked why he, who worships only Siva and no one else, should pay obeisance to Sundarar. He replies, 'Nambi Arurar (Sundaramurti) who has embraced the Lord with his heart, is worthy of our worship'. Here then we have a clear instance of the worship of devotees and of the devotees of devotees, all of whom are persons completely redeemed from egoism. Their heart is so completely given to the Lord that there is no room in them for anything else. Those who worship the devotees worship only the Lord enshrined in their hearts. These devotees are, so to say, the living and moving temples of God.

It is in such total and all-embracing love of the Lord that the devotees (*Nayanmars*) have lived their lives. The object of love being infinite, the modes of love are also unlimited, rising above distinctions of sex, age or class. The love that actuated the devotees stretches all the way from apparently simple and easy modes to those startlingly beyond human range. The later-day Pattinattar, himself known for his great renunciation, exclaims :

"Incapable I am of cutting up my son and feeding You —
 Incapable of renouncing (the claims of) youth stung by the taunt of a woman,
 Incapable of plucking out my eye to transplant, within six days (of knowing the Lord),
 How then can I become a servant of the Lord of Kalatti?"

The references are to Siruttandar, who slew his son ; to Tirunilakantar, who gave up sex in youth ; and to Kannappar who gouged out both his eyes.

The story of Kannappar has moved the hearts of devotees down the ages. Sankara and Manikkavachagar have sung in high praise of this saint. A hunter-prince, unacquainted with scripture and philosophy, Kannappar was overcome by all-consuming love for an image

of Siva. He offered raw meat to the Lord, which saddened the temple priest, who was unaccustomed to such unconventional modes of worship. When the priest prays to Siva about this, Siva tells him : " Listen ! We shall tell you what his state is. All his actions are dear to Us. Know this to be his real state".

In order to show how sincere Kannappar's love was, the Lord causes bleeding in one of the eyes of the image. Kannappar, trying in his distress all known remedies to stop the bleeding, suddenly thinks of transplanting one of his eyes. To his great joy the bleeding stops. But the joy is short-lived, as the next moment, there is bleeding in the other eye of the image. Without a moment's hesitation, Kannappat proceeds to pluck out his other eye for transplantation. Manikkavachagar sings :

"There was no love in me like Kannappar's when
 He, my Sire, saw this. me, poor
 Beyond compare, in grace He made His own."

There are other accounts of devotion in the *Periya Puranam* which are likely to cause us dismay or revulsion. Yet behind all these terrible or disgusting stories shines the one bright light of love for the Lord. If one loves the Lord or His devotees one withholds nothing. To draw the line anywhere, would be to deny love. Love gives up everything, including the self. So nothing whatever is held back. The great devotees surrendered themselves, their near and dear ones, and all possessions completely.

There are accounts in the *Periya Puranam* which are not startling and yet, in their own way, reveal the same spirit. Pusalar Nayanar,³ for example, wishes to build a temple to the Lord, but does not have the necessary money. Undaunted, he proceeds to build the temple mentally. From the planning to the construction, everything is meticulously attended to, as in the case of an actual building. When the construction is completed, the Lord appears in a dream to a chieftain in Kanchipuram who had actually constructed a temple and tells him that He would not enter that temple because He wanted to enter the temple cons-

³ See January, 1966 issue, p. 17.

tracted by Pusalar Nayanar. The chieftain makes a trip to Tiruniravur, where Pusalar Nayanar lived, to discover that the Lord was pleased with the saint who had built the temple only mentally.

Siva, the embodiment of the pure I-AM awareness, transcends all dualities, which are only mind-made. He is the Being which includes non-being, the light beyond darkness, the goodness and beauty whose mere shadows are evil and ugliness.

It is only to the eye of love that the strange secret of such devotion reveals itself. Ramana Maharshi could see the compelling beauty of the Nayanmars' love and, what is more, he wished all the world to know such love. May we then, pray to Maharshi to open our eyes and hearts also to understand truly the lives of Saints, whatever their clime and time !

*His frame is all composed of love for us.
All His knowledge is but knowledge of us.
All His actions, all are dear to us.*

Fate or Free-will?

.....

“ Are only important events in a man's life, such as his main occupation or profession, predetermined, or are trifling acts in his life, such as taking a cup of water or moving from one place in the room to another, also predetermined ? ”
I asked.

Bhagavan : Yes, everything is predetermined.

I : Then what responsibility, what free-will has man ?

Bhagavan : What for then does the body come into existence ? It is designed for doing the various things marked out for execution in this life. The whole programme is chalked out. ‘ Not an atom moves except by His Will ’ expresses the same truth. As for freedom for man, he is always free not to identify himself with the body and not to be affected by the pleasures or pains consequent on the body's activities.

— from *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, p. 99.

THE INCREDIBLE SAI BABA¹

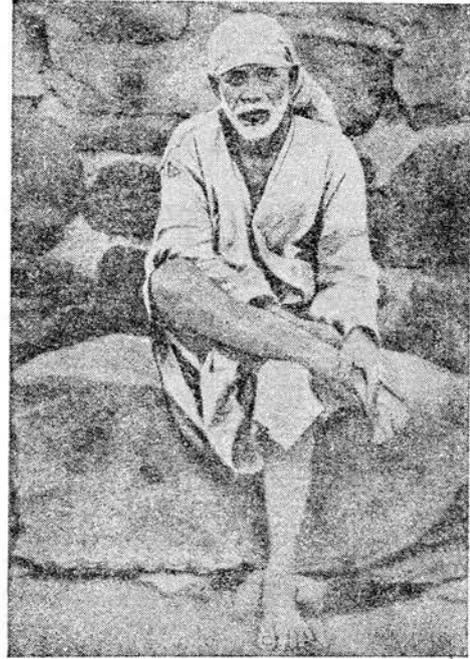
By
Arthur Osborne

SRI SAI BABA of Shirdhi never wrote a book. His behaviour was bizarre. And he flaunted his miracles with the reckless exuberance of a child. No easy Saint to introduce to the modern reader.

Not only did he not write books; he did not read them either. He did occasionally instruct a devotee to read some religious or scriptural work, but for the most part he discouraged them from reading. 'People hope to find Brahma in these books, but it is *blbrama* (confusion) not *Brahma* (God) that they find there.'

There is nothing unorthodox in such a statement. Some basic theoretical understanding is necessary except in very rare cases, but continued accumulation of theoretical knowledge does not help towards spiritual understanding. Indeed, mental study can distract a man from the more arduous task of spiritual effort with the false allure of an easy alternative. Particularly in this age, when such floods of books are churned out, is it a danger. Sri Ramakrishna also neither practised nor enjoined scholarship. Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, though enormously erudite, wrote in a derogatory way of book learning. 'It is the unlearned who are saved rather than those whose ego has not subsided despite their learning. The unlearned are saved from the unrelenting grip of self-infatuation, from the malady of a myriad whirling thoughts, from the endless pursuit of (mental) wealth; it is not from one ill alone that they are saved'. (*Forty Verses*, Supplement, v. 36).

The unlearned state described here means, of course, not mere ignorance but the simplicity and integrity of mind which Taoism extols, which Christ designated as 'like a little child', which Islam implies in the illiteracy of the Prophet. It is not incompatible with learning; nevertheless learning



cannot produce it and absorption in learning can destroy it.

For years it was doubted whether Sai Baba was even literate; certainly nobody supposed that he knew Sanskrit. Then one day he gave an exposition which showed learning as well as the perspicacity and rough humour natural to him.

A devotee was massaging his legs and feet, chanting to himself the while in an undertone. Sai Baba asked him what he was muttering.

'A Sanskrit verse', he replied, not suspecting that Sai Baba knew enough scripture to want a more precise answer. However, he asked what verse.

'A verse from the Gita'.

¹ Extract from : *The Incredible Sai Baba*, published by M/s. Orient Longmans, Bombay.

'Say it aloud'.

The devotee then recited in Sanskrit verse 34 of chapter IV : 'Know that by means of prostration, enquiry and service, the *Jnanis* (Enlightened) who have realized the Truth will teach you *Jnana* (Knowledge)'.

'Do you understand this, Nana?' Baba asked him.

'Yes'.

'Then tell me the meaning'.

Nana gave a free rendering in the vernacular but Sai Baba was not satisfied. 'I don't want a paraphrase ; I want the strict grammatical meaning, with case, mood and tense'.

Nana gave a literal translation, wondering the while whether Baba knew anything of Sanskrit grammar. He soon found out.

'In *tatviddhi*, what does *tat* stand for?' Baba asked him.

'*Jnana* (Knowledge)'.

'What knowledge? Knowledge of what?'

'The knowledge referred to in the previous stanzas'.

'What does *pranipat* mean?'

'Prostration'.

'And *pat*?'

'The same'.

'If they meant the same would Vyasa² have added two unnecessary syllables?'

'I don't see any difference between them', Nana admitted.

Baba left that for awhile and passed on to the next point. 'What does *prasma* mean?'

'Asking questions'.

'And *pariprasna*?'

'The same'.

'Then if they both mean the same was Vyasa off his head to use the longer?'

'I don't see any difference'.

'Next point. What does *seva* mean?'

'Service, such as I am doing now in massaging your feet'.

'Nothing more?'

'I don't see what more it can mean'.

'We'll leave that too. Next point. Krishna tells Arjuna to get *Jnana* (Knowledge) from *Jnanis* (the Enlightened). Wasn't Krishna himself a *Jnani*?'

'Yes'.

'Then why does he send Arjuna to others instead of giving him *Jnana* himself?'

'I don't know'.

'Wasn't Arjuna a *jiva* (being) and therefore an emanation of *Chaitanya* (universal Consciousness)?'

'Yes'.

'Then how can Knowledge be given to what is already an emanation of Consciousness or Knowledge?'

Sai Baba then interpreted the verse to mean that it is not *Jnana* (Knowledge) but *ajnana* (non-knowledge or ignorance) that the Guru gives.

Nana, now thoroughly bewildered over what had seemed to him a straightforward verse, asked Sai Baba to expound these points.

He explained. 'The verse tells us how a disciple is to approach his Guru in order to attain Realization. He must completely surrender body, mind, soul and possession to the Guru.³ That is the prostration referred to. The enquiry must be a constant quest for Truth, not questions asked out of mere curiosity or for a wrong motive, such as to trap the Guru. The motive must be pure desire for spiritual progress and Realization. Then the service is not mere physical service such as massaging. For it to be effective there must be no idea that you are free to give or withhold service ; you must feel that your body no longer belongs to you since you have surrendered it to the Guru and it exists only to do him service'.

Then followed a catechism on the Guru giving ignorance.

'Isn't Brahma pure Knowledge or Being?'

'Yes'.

'And everything else non-Being or ignorance (non-Knowledge)?'

'Yes'.

'Then the speech of the Guru is not Brahma or Knowledge?'

'No'.

'Then you admit that what the Guru says is not Knowledge but ignorance?'

'It seems so'.

² The legendary author of the *Mahabharata*, the epic in which the *Bhagavad Gita* is an episode.

³ Sai Baba himself did not demand the surrender of the property of his disciples ; it is a question of attitude of mind : there must be complete readiness to surrender all.

'Then the Guru's instruction is simply a piece of ignorance used to remove the disciple's ignorance, just as we use a thorn to remove another thorn from the foot, isn't it?'

'I suppose so'.

'The disciple is a *jiva* (being) whose essential nature is Knowledge, isn't he?'

'Yes'.

'Then there is obviously no need to give him Knowledge but simply to remove the veil of ignorance that hides the existent Knowledge. This, of course, is not to be done at one stroke, since the disciple is immersed in age-old ignorance and needs repeated instruction, perhaps through life after life. And what is the nature of this instruction through speech about what is beyond speech? Isn't it like removing a cover? Ignorance conceals the pre-existent Knowledge just as water plants cover over the surface of a pond. Clear away the plants and you have the water. You don't have to create it; it is there already. Or take another example — a cataract grows on the eye and prevents a man from seeing; remove the cataract and he sees. Ignorance is the cataract. The universe is the efflorescence of the indescribable *Maya*, which is ignorance; yet ignorance is needed to illuminate and dissolve this ignorance.

'Divine Knowledge is to be realized, not taught. Prostration, enquiry and service are the methods by which to obtain the Grace of the Guru.

'It is an illusion to suppose that phenomena are real. That is the screen of ignorance which hides Knowledge. Tear it off and Brahma or Knowledge will shine forth.

'Ignorance is the seed of *samsara* (birth and death). Put the medicine of the Guru's Grace on the eye and the screen of *Maya* lifts, leaving only *Jnana* (Knowledge). *Jnana* is not something to be attained, it is eternal and self-existent. On the other hand, ignorance has a cause and an end. The root of it is the idea that the devotee is a separate being from God. Remove this and what remains is *Jnana*.

Small Drops of Eternity

By Ira

THE sage appears before the seeker as the embodiment of Truth. He is said to have transcended the limitations of individual existence, and he is heard to say that he is not the body that appears and that he is indeed the Egoless One.

For the observer this seems to contradict the testimony of his own senses, so questions arise. Thus he enquires, and thus he is answered:

Q.: If you are egoless, then for what reason do you persist in reacting to this world by answering questions?

A.: I do not answer questions. I only seem to be reacting to the world for you because of your bondage to the ego. What you speak of as 'my reactions' are perceptions your ego makes of this body. I am not this body.

Q.: From whence then comes what seems to be this instruction you give me, if you are not the body but the unqualified Self?

A.: Regard this instruction you seem to receive from the sage as small drops of the Perfect Self you are leaking through the sheath of your ego, and follow them as clues of Truth until the ego dies in you and you realize that the sage and his instructions do not exist and that unalloyed happiness is *all*.

'Now the question why Krishna referred Arjuna to other Gurus instead of giving him *Jnana* himself. Did Krishna consider other *Jnanis* separate from himself or their teaching different from his? No. So their teaching is his and there is no difference.'

The Mechanism of the Conceptual Universe

By

Wei Wu Wei

WHAT is looking when an eye sees? An eye does not look: it is a passive receptor of light-rays. Each organ employed in the mechanism of vision is purely receptive: retina, optic nerve, cells, and grey-matter. Surely it is 'mind' — whatever that may be, and it is only a presumption, unidentifiable — which translates these impulses into form and colour. The resulting image is interpreted as such by memory, without which no form could have significance. But looking does not appear to be a part of that process: it can be a volitional impulse. Looking is not an essential or indispensable part of vision.

If we analyse 'hearing' we will find that 'listening' is not part of the mechanism of hearing, nor is 'touching' an element of the mechanics of contactual feeling. In the remaining two senses a single word covers both aspects though one sense of the term is independent of the mechanism of sensation. Thus sensorial perception itself is passive, and only the interpreting of it is active.

Therefore it must necessarily be 'mind', whatever that may be, which perceives sensorially, in the positive manner whereby objects are not only seen but are cognised, and whereby the whole phenomenal universe is re-cognised as existing in relation to what cognises it. Mind thereby is revealed as the subject of all objectivity, and all objectivity is revealed as a conceptual elaboration based on memory. What the senses perceive can never be known except as the interpretation by mind of stimuli the nature of which is otherwise not only unknowable but also unimaginable by mind itself.

It follows that to regard the conceptual universe as anything but a theoretical creation of mind, based on memory of perceptions antecedent in a time-sequence, and their previous interpretations, is entirely without justification. The Universe, based exclusively on

nerve-stimuli, is a structure of imagination, of image-making in mind, itself forever unknowable, and its very existence at best a conjecture.

Note: There does not seem to be any reason to suppose that the visual or tactile interpretation of sensory perceptions bears any necessary relation to the assumed objects thereby 'created'. A 'table' might just as well be perceived as a complex of vibrations, a sound, a smell or flavour, what we call a 'force-field', or any other conceptual phenomenon soever. The story of the blind man asked to describe an elephant, and the result of his efforts, pertinently illustrates this point.

Note 2: Uninterpreted perceiving should be the non-volitional functioning called *prajñā* which returns us to its static or potential aspect called *dhyāna* (which is what-we-are). Thus pure perceptive awareness, uninterpreted (undiscriminated) would seem to be this same process, and this should be why 'sudden' — and so 'pure' (objectless and non-volitional) — sense-perceptions can open the way to awakened vision, as is often described in the records of the Masters.

It may be recalled that 'Hearing' rather than 'Seeing' was particularly recommended by the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara as the sensorial gateway to Awakening, and the one by means of which he himself had found integration with his noumenal nature. He proclaims it as the simplest and most efficacious. Pure hearing is *Prajñā*.

Lao-tzu said: "He (the Sage) looks without seeing", which Chuang-tzu confirmed in the words "(whereas) the eyes see without looking". The terms so translated may seem to be confusing, but the word 'looking' is subjective, whereas 'seeing' what is without, is objective.

'Within-seeing' is what matters: is it not 'BEING'?

The Apostles Peter and Paul

By
T. Dorcas

SIMON or Symeon was the name of that intimate disciple of Jesus who would come to be known among Christians as Peter. He was married to the daughter of Aristobulus, brother of Barnabas. They had a daughter named Petronilla.

According to Strom 7-11, Peter's wife died a martyr's death before her husband's eyes.

In the Epistles of Paul much of Peter's life may be gleaned. From these Epistles we learn that Peter was the first Apostle to see the risen Christ.

Peter went to Samaria with the disciple John after the Apostle Phillip had laboured there. Peter's healing abilities were made manifest on his travels. Aeneas, a sick man who lived at Lydda, and who had been lame for eight years walked again when Peter told him: 'Jesus Christ heals thee, arise.' At Joppa Peter raised Tabitha. Another, named Eutychus was also brought to life following his accident. Many other healings were performed by Peter.

Peter was called to follow the Master whilst he laboured as a fisherman on the shores of Galilee. He heard Jesus say: 'Come ye after me and I will make you to become fishers of men.' Andrew, James and John were Peter's comrades, and they accompanied him when he decided to heed the divine Call.

In the Gospel of Saint Mathew we learn that Jesus walked upon the water, and that Peter sank beneath the waves when he tried to do likewise. This could serve to illustrate how the one who has faith is able to walk on the troubled sea of life, and the one who has no faith goes down unless he calls to the Lord for aid.

Peter, James and John were the disciples who accompanied Jesus into the house of Jairus.

Peter brought up a net heavily laden with fishes at the command of Jesus, after a hard night's toil had produced nothing. This signifies the capture of human souls which Peter would make through the will of the Saviour.

To Jesus' query: 'Who do ye say that I am?' Peter made answer: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' This confession of Peter's at Caesarea Phillipi met with his Master's approval: 'flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but by My Father.'

When Jesus revealed his coming Passion to his disciples, Peter reproved his Master. He was rebuked by Jesus for his impulsive words.

When Jesus was brought to the palace of Caiaphas Peter was asked whether he was a disciple of the Nazarene. He denied his Master thrice. Then, broken-hearted by the consciousness of his guilt, Peter went aside and wept bitterly.

Of the character of Peter it may be said he was impulsive as when he tried to walk upon the water. He was observant as witnessed by his noticing the 'withering of the fig tree.' He was humble, as is evident from his confession in Luke 5-8, 'I am a sinful man'. He possessed a practical and impetuous nature. A devoted disciple, his heart was filled with solicitude and love for his Master. The kernel of Peter's personality is revealed by his faith in Jesus. He had gratitude, reverence and an unconditional trust in his Master, and in his heavenly Father. His soul was impressed by the words and personality of Jesus. He experienced a religious hunger and possessed a religious receptivity which found rest and satisfaction in Jesus' loving heart.

Under the influence of Jesus, Peter was capable of raising up, purifying and spiritualising the political and national ideas which he, as a Jew, had cherished regarding the Messiah, so much so that he was able to recognise Jesus as the real Messiah.

Peter was steadfast and trustworthy as is evidenced by the name Cephas given him by Jesus. That he possessed a remarkable personality is certain, for he held a leading place among the disciples conferred upon him during Jesus' lifetime. After the resurrection, this position was maintained in still greater measure. Peter had been able to grasp the true inwardness of the universal religion which Jesus expounded, and outstripped James who was still held back by the power of ancient custom.

Of Peter's life outside Palestine we have data taken from the Church Fathers and other legendary works.

Widely accepted is the statement that Peter laboured in Rome and met martyrdom there.

Dionysius, bishop of Corinth (approximately 170 A.D.) is an early authority on Peter's sojourn in Rome. This passage is taken from a letter of Dionysius addressed to the Church of Rome: 'So by this weighty rebuke ye have gathered together that planting made by Peter and Paul of the Romans and of the Corinthians. For, these two have planted us in our Corinth, and have likewise instructed us; after having taught together in Italy, they have undergone martyrdom at the same time.'

Paul

Although not one of the original twelve, Paul became an Apostle of Jesus at a later date. He became one of the most zealous of them all. 'Saul, who is also called Paul', was of pure Jewish descent, of the tribe of Benjamin. He was born at Tarsus in Cilicia. In the fourth century tradition named his birth-place as Giscala, the last of the fortress-towns of Galilee.

Paul was educated at Tarsus which was a great seat of learning.

Gamaliel, grandson of Hillel, was head of the school of Jewish theologians which Paul attended.

Paul learnt the trade of tent-making; this employment was of Cilician origin, since the canvas used to make the tents was woven from Cilician goat-hair.

Clement of Alexandria and Origen imply that Paul had been married and had become a widower. Tertullian states Paul was a celibate.

Paul's youth was pure and guileless.

In his outward life Paul was stimulated by the sense of the law of God. He sought to vindicate the honour of God by pursuing with fanaticism the persecution of heretics. He undertook this persecution as an obligation and sacred duty.

Caught in a very frenzy Paul 'breathed threatening and slaughter.'

When Stephen was stoned by a howling mob, Paul was present, watching the proceedings with righteous zeal flaming in his heart. He describes his activities as having 'made havoc' of the community at Jerusalem. Paul's persecution of heretics spread from Jerusalem to Judaea, Samaria and Galilee. Not content with the limits of Palestine, Paul sought and obtained from the authorities of the synagogue permission to go to Damascus. On his way there occurred an event of tremendous importance for all Christendom. Paul became a Christian by a personal revelation of Jesus the Christ. Paul writes of this encounter: 'It pleased God . . . to reveal His Son in me.' (Gal. 1. 16).

After this heavenly intervention in his life, Paul the persecutor became transformed into a fervent believer, one who never ceased to believe and to preach that he had 'beheld Jesus'. This vision of truth enabled Paul to 'preach him among the Gentiles'.

Paul writes of his life after his conversion: 'I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia.' (Gal. 1. 16).

From 'Arabia', Paul returned to Damascus, and there began a long series of 'perils from his own countrymen'.

It is believed that Paul did not enter Jerusalem until three years had passed after his conversion. His purpose in going to Jerusalem was to see Simon Peter with whom he remained fifteen days.

When Paul left Jerusalem he journeyed 'into the regions of Syria and Cilicia,' where he preached the gospel. He established a new centre of Christian life at Antioch.

Paul recalls his experiences in his Epistles. He was scourged in the synagogues, beaten with lictor's rods in the Roman courts, suffered shipwreck, experienced the 'night and day in the deep', the 'perils of robbers', and 'perils in the wilderness'.

Peter accompanied Paul when he returned to Antioch. Harmony was established between them and Peter 'did eat with the Gentiles.'

Macedonia next came into the field of Paul's endeavours. At the great military post of Phillipi, Paul's first convert was a Jewish proselyte named Lydia.

Persecution dogged Paul's footsteps in Europe, as it had done in Asia.

At Phillipi an infuriated prophetess saw in Paul's preaching a threat to her witchcraft, so she set her Gentile employers loose on Paul. They treated him very badly. Consequently, Paul left Phillipi to arrive at the great seaport and commercial city of Thessalonica. Paul worked among the Gentile workmen there. He 'worked night and day that he might not burden any of them.' At Thessalonica, the Jews were hostile to his teachings.

Paul's stay in Athens did not prove very successful. Paul's converts were chiefly among the Gentiles. Although some belonged to the wealthy classes, the majority were numbered among the lowest levels of society, the 'foolish', the 'weak', the 'base', the 'despised'.

Paul lived among the poor. Here he plied his trade of tent-making. It was an arduous

life. He suffered from the physical distress of cold, hunger and ill-usage. Timothy, however, brought him good news. The converts of Thessalonica were steadfast and true. Silas and Timothy brought Paul some material aid. The Jews began to become hostile.

Having lived about two years at Corinth, Paul decided to go to Ephesus, where there lived a vast mixed population. There, Paul knew a life full of hazards and hardships.

To the spiritual communities founded by him Paul sent his companions, wrote letters and paid visits. He kept the inner flame alight by his zealous paternal care.

Paul went to Corinth for the third time where he was the guest of Gaius. It was there that the Apostle wrote the greatest of his letters, the Epistle to the Romans.

Departing from Corinth, Paul and his comrades took a round about route along the coasts of the Aegean sea. At length he reached Jerusalem. Here he preached of the 'righteousness which is of faith'. Tradition adds Spain to the itinerary of Paul. Finally, Paul went to Rome.

The place and manner of Paul's death remain uncertain. Some writers, however, assert that Paul suffered martyrdom at the same time as Peter, at Rome. The 'Martyrism Pauli' in Zacagni, gives details, and the 29th June 66 A.D. as being the date of Paul's death.

The Acta Pauliet Theclae tells us that Paul was 'stout, close-browed, small in stature; that he possessed a countenance full of grace; that at times he appeared like a simple mortal, and at other times he had the countenance of an angel.' 'Paul remained the spiritual kinsman to the other disciples of Jesus.'

Paul spoke of this higher gnosis. Within him burned a holy flame which was proof of great sincerity. Truly, this noble Apostle 'spoke with the tongue of Angels'.

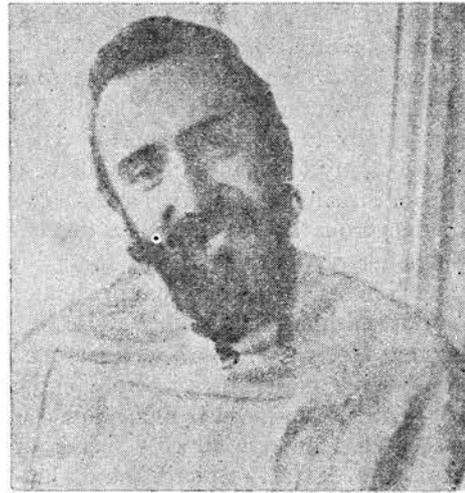
Swami Ramanagiri

By
K. C. Sastri

SWAMI RAMANAGIRI was one of the blessed disciples of Bhagavan Sri Ramana who realised the Self following the path of *Atma Vichara*. His *sadhana* was for a *mandala* (40 days) only and on holy Sivarathri day in 1949 realisation came to him. "On that day I became a fool", was his favourite way of describing the event. To remove the least trace of ego he used to allude to himself as 'this fool' instead of "I".

Born as the only son of very rich parents in Sweden in June 1921, he chanced to come across a copy of Swami Vivekananda's *Raja Yoga* when he was still a child. He read it avidly and began to practise it. He got *siddhis* which astounded his school master and classmates. Time only whetted his desire to come to the land of yoga. Opportunity came to him at the end of the war. He came to India in 1945 and enrolled himself as a student of Philosophy in Benares Hindu University. He soon realised that study could make him only a pundit and that practice or *sadhana* was what was really necessary. He gave up studies and a holy person of Benares gave him *sannyasa diksha*.

Thereafter he made intense *sadhana* visiting all the holy shrines in the North and Himalayas. On his pilgrimage of South India he visited Arunachala (Tiruvannamalai) and was at once drawn by the 'great magnet' — *Bhagavan*. He wanted to practise *Atma Vichara*; but a doubt arose in his mind whether he could give up the path shown to him by his *diksha guru*, and follow one who was not his guru. The *diksha guru* made him know that Sri Ramana was his real Guru and should be followed. Being a ripe soul, his *sadhana* was brief, though intense. Self realisation dawned on him just in a span of 40 days (on 26-2-1949 — *Maha Sivarathri* day)



Swami Ramanagiri

through the grace of Bhagavan, to whom he had surrendered himself absolutely.

After the *Brahma Nirvana* of Bhagavan, he lived in Madras for a short time and friends there persuaded him to stay in Madurai and later at the foot of Sirumalai Hills (about 20 miles away); he moved as Bhagavan directed him in a vision. Here he spent most of the time in bliss with little consciousness of the body or body's needs. Consumption which had started when he was at Madras returned, and ultimately it consumed his body on May 23, 1955.

His body has been interred at the foot of Sirumalai Hills in what he had named *Ramana Padam*. A Siva Linga is installed as directed by him. Twice a year (on the day after *Sivarathri* to mark his enlightenment and again on May 23 of *Jeshta* month, on which day he attained *Mahasamadhi*) poor people are fed at the Ashram. On each occasion more than two thousand people assemble and pay homage.

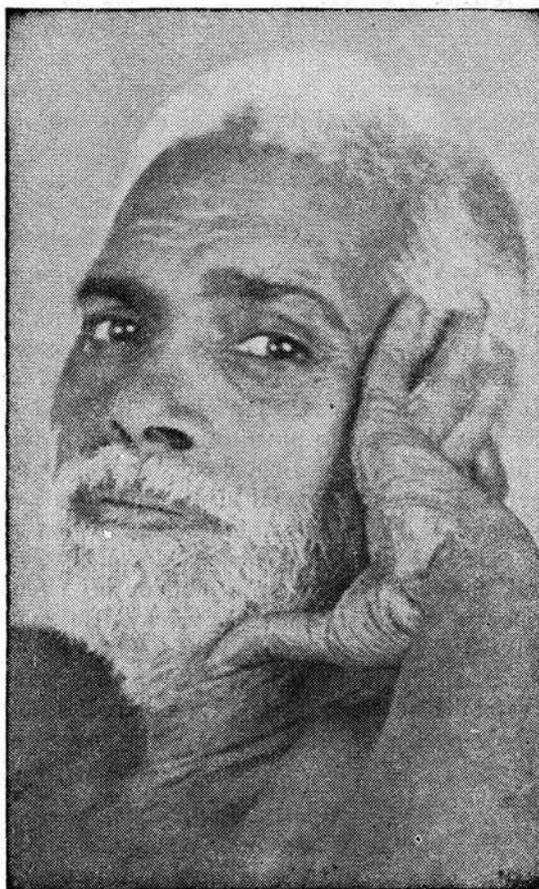
How I Came to the Maharshi

By
Rosalind Christian

AS several devotees have rightly remarked, the correct title for any such essay should be 'How the Maharshi came to me', rather than the other way round. This applies more especially to me than some others, for I live in a country (England) thousands of miles away from Tiruvannamalai. It is a small country whose dangerous and rocky coast demands a great number of warning lights for shipping. Three such lights are visible from my home, and it is an astonishing sight to see these beacons shining out across miles of water, rock and surf as, on the most bitter, stormy and treacherous nights, they answer one another, flash by flash. What an apt allegory this is of the power of a great rishi to pierce the darkness of ignorance — a power which annihilates time and space. So, as I see it, the Maharshi's finger of Light touched me before I was aware of his name or even knew of his existence.

One night I had a dream ; a dream, which, though very short was of extraordinary clarity and beauty, quite unlike the usual half-real meanderings I was used to. In my dream I saw a strip of rich material laid out before me. It had a glowing sheen and an indescribable richness of colour. On this cloth lay a tiny piece of fluted branch or twig. This as I watched, spell-bound, turned into a most attractive and elegant little key ! I remember thinking as I rose up through layers of sleep into full consciousness, 'What a strange power must exist inside me to perform such an effortless trick before the mind's eye — something no film camera could do'.

The memory of this dream was exceedingly vivid and I pondered a great deal over the colour of the fabric I had seen — a rich terracotta red. Did it speak of the soil of our mother, Earth? Did it speak of the *mulādbāra chakra* said to be red¹ and which I



endowed with this same rich colour? I was puzzled but could find no solution. To find no point or meaning in a dream which seemed so full of vibrant power was sad and disappointing. Several months later, perhaps more than a year, a friend gave me two books. 'This is the guru for you', she said — or something of that sort. I mentioned one or two great names known to me and was surprised, even amused,

¹ See Gnaneswarananda Swami's Study of Kundalini Yoga in *Vedanta for East and West*, No. 97.

at the way she brushed them aside with a gesture of her hand. The two books were *Ramana Arunachala* and *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self Knowledge* by Arthur Osborne.



Rosalind Christian

I ought perhaps to give my thanks here to Arthur Osborne whose dedicated work presented the Maharshi to the western reader. It is a rare gift indeed to be able to interpret one culture to another especially on the spiritual level. For me, as for so many others, to meet Bhagavan was immediately to love him : and to love implies to follow so far as one is able. I had come, though I did not know it at first, to Arunachala, the Red Hill,² whose effulgent, glowing light is Siva incarnate. Thus part of my dream was fulfilled though there was much more to come.

² *Talks*, p. 215.

Arunachala, they say, is a wish-fulfilling hill, and Arthur Osborne tells us how he was cautioned as he made his first pilgrimage round the hill to be careful *not* to wish for anything. 'Anywhere else', he writes, 'the saying would have sounded absurd. . . . But Bhagavan sought, like Buddha, to free us not so much from our misfortunes as from the wishes and desires, the fears and the attachments which make misfortunes possible.' And yet I have read elsewhere that Mr. Osborne in his younger days had longed to be a poet and that this yearning was at last fulfilled when as a devotee of the Maharshi, and as editor of *The Mountain Path*, he found both the subject and the vehicle of poetic inspiration. Arunachala is a wish-fulfilling hill ! Mr. Osborne had already wished, it seems, before he ever set foot on its slopes.

My condition is almost the same for even as a child I longed to be an archaeologist. I was prevented : the war came and other work and ties grew up. Now under Bhagavan's guidance I have become something of an archaeologist here in Scotland on my own. Not, I hasten to say, an archaeologist in the ordinary sense — I have not the training — I merely look at the relics of Scotland's ancient peoples in the light of Maharshi's teaching. As I look, the stones and sculpture of the ancient Celts take on a deeper meaning ; and not only the stones, but the stories and customs that are linked with them.

A great rishi is the *key* to each and every religion — and he alone. This, I take it, was what my dream was telling me — putting me on the alert and saying, 'Be ready : something is coming your way. Don't miss it or a whole life-time will have been thrown away'.

"*Samadhi* transcends mind and speech and cannot be described. Even the state of deep sleep cannot be described ; the state of *samadhi* even less."

— SRI BHAGAVAN

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI—'EL POVEREILO'

By
M. Shaul

FRANCESCO BERNADONE, son of Lady Pica Bernadone, a French noblewoman, and Pietro Bernadone a wealthy Italian cloth merchant, was born in Assisi in 1182. He died in 1226 and was canonized two years later.

Francis of Assisi is known for his extraordinary tenderness for all living creatures, yet he did not attain such heights of love without undergoing ordeals, sacrifices, denials and a self-discipline which borders on the incredible. Following the tradition of all lovers of God, he did not win his crown without experiencing the unbearable pain of the Via Dolorosa.

As a youth Francis led a gay, carefree life where his popularity won him many friends. Possessed of a fine voice he often sang the chivalrous songs of the troubadours whom his mother had so vividly brought to life when recounting their lives. Her influence over her son was great, and it was in the French tongue that Francis sang.

Four years after the Germans were ousted from Rocca, Assisi and Perugia were at war. Francis prepared to defend Assisi together with his companions. They suffered defeat and were made to march through the town of Perugia by their triumphant conquerors towards an imprisonment which lasted one year. Throughout the ordeal Francis retained his cheerfulness and optimism. When the prisoners were released and sent home Francis became critically ill, but he rallied to see the Spring of 1204 when he celebrated his twenty second birthday.

Once again, as of yore, Francis clad himself in costly apparel and mingled with a merry band of youths. Nevertheless, Francis savoured little of his former contentment. Restless, he volunteered to go to the aid of the Pope in the South of Italy. Moved by impulsive gene-



St. Francis

rosity Francis gave his magnificent clothes to a poorly clad knight who accompanied them on this venture.

That night, Love divine framed these words: 'Francis, who can do better for you, the Lord or the servant?' When Francis answered that it was the Lord who could do better, the Voice continued: 'Why then, do you leave the Lord for the servant?' Francis asked: 'Lord, what wouldst Thou have me do?' He was told: 'Return to your country and you will be told what to do.'

Courage forged the decision to obey, and Francis turned away from what he had taken to be his mission to fulfil one as yet uncertain and wholly unknown. He rode back to Assisi where he was met with jeers, jibes, ridicule and more, from the very people who had cheered him on his way but a few hours before. His

family did not understand him, except his mother, for maternal love never questions.

It was one evening returning after a feast that Francis experienced an inner stirring which he described to his companions as: 'I am in love with a bride richer and nobler and more beautiful than you have ever beheld.' He was silent when the others laughed good-naturedly.

In a mysterious way that which Francis had formerly shunned, he would now be moved to embrace with tenderness. Lady Poverty!

Always generous, Francis had given away clothes, money, belonging to the poor, yet he had never truly *looked* at them. Now his vision penetrated the outer foul-smelling rags, deformed limbs, pitched, emaciated features — discovering something quite different. An indefinable aura of holiness began to manifest in these aspects of human suffering.

Following the advice of the Bishop of Assisi who was his confessor, Francis undertook pilgrimages, and it was in Rome that he took off his beautiful clothes, exchanging them with those of a beggar. Struggling against the fastidious shrinking within him, Francis donned the coarse cloth and began to subject his human frame which he termed 'brother-ass'.

Returning to Assisi, Francis prayed earnestly, waiting with stoical fortitude for the Way to be further pointed out. With startling suddenness Love came to set the Seal upon a heart already so well prepared.

Near the leper hospital of San Salvatore, Francis was accosted by a leper. As in the past, a loathsome horror of the disease rose within Francis, but a powerful Force moved him towards the unfortunate creature, compelling him to place a coin in the sufferer's hand, and then this done, to take the decaying hand and place his lips upon it. Love transformed the putrid flesh into the wound of the crucified Christ — and in the terrible plight of the leper Francis read the anguish of the whole of humanity. Grace lit the spark of love within the pure heart of Francesco Bernadone

so that in a brilliant, blazing Light a new Vision was granted him — Compassion caused him to embrace the leper and give him the kiss of peace.

The lepers became the special objects of his love. He worked among them, amidst the poor, the wretched. From his labour of love was born one of the most beautiful love-songs to God.

**'Lord, make me an instrument of
Thy Peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may seek
not so much to be consoled as
to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to
eternal life.'**

This prayer would one day be answered in all its fullness, yet Francis had still to pass through the fiery furnace of Trial and Tribulation.

One day, in the small Church of San Damiano, Francis was told: 'Repair My Church which thou seest in ruin.'

With characteristic fervour Francis made haste to obey the divine Voice. He hastened to his father's business, sold some cloth, and forthwith brought the money to the gentle old priest who was in charge of the dilapidated Church. The latter, conscious of the young man's good intentions, nevertheless refused the money, as Pietro Bernadone had not yet been informed of the deed. Francis, undaunted, placed the money on the window-sill and remained with the priest, praying in the quiet solitude surrounding the little frequented chapel.

Then he went resolutely homewards where his father flogged him severely and placed him in a basement, manacled. When the enraged parent left home, the mother tended her son.

The anger of Pietro Bernadone did not end there. He had his son appear publicly in court and charged him with selling without permission the cloth belonging to his father.

Bishop Guido gravely pronounced Francis guilty.

Francis refunded Pietro Bernadone. Before the people of Assisi who had gathered to witness the case, Francis renounced his worldly inheritance, stripping himself of his clothes as a symbol of his detachment from everything pertaining to his earth-life. Clad only in a hair-shirt, he severed the bonds which bind father and son in flesh and blood, to establish his kinship with God, the Heavenly Father.

Gently, Bishop Guido laid a cloak about the shoulders of the slender youth, and Pietro Bernadone, heart-sore, won the case and lost a son.

Clad in the homely garb of a poor man Francis set about repairing the Church of San Damiano. With happy heart he poured out his soul in song, and the people, infected by the radiant joy of the young man, brought building materials for the broken-down Church. Work progressed, and the frail body of Francis performed prodigious tasks as he restored the Prayer-Grove.

Finally the work was done. The Church was rebuilt.

To Francis came Bernard Da Quintavalle, one of Assisi's merchant princes, and Peter Cathanii, Doctor of Law.

When they told him they wished to remain with him, Francis took them to the Church of San Nicholas where he opened the Bible three times.

The first words came to them from St. Matthew's Gospel. 'If thou wouldst be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow Me.'

The second admonition was taken from St. Luke: 'Take nothing for your journey, neither staff nor scrip nor bread nor money, neither have two coats.'

Finally, St. Matthew's Gospel once more indicated the way: 'If any man will come

after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.'

Francis said: 'Brothers, this is our life and rule for ourselves and for all who will join our company'.

In the peaceful Silence the three prayed. From this Silence was born the Franciscan Order.

On the subject of prayer Francis taught his brethren: 'Without prayer there can be no good wrought in the service of God.' Prayer, he told them, was not only for hours of contemplation whether it be in the woods or secluded cells, but for always and therefore in all places.

'Pray unceasingly', he exhorted them, 'Whether walking or sitting, within doors or without, in toil or in leisure.' This required a training which called for heroic perseverance.

Francis himself was a magnificent example of 'a praying heart'. He spent night-long vigils in inclement weather weeping for the Passion of Christ; shedding tears of anguish for the Light of the World 'Who came unto His own, yet His own received Him not'.

On his journeys Francis conversed with all creatures. It happened that walking towards Bevagna with Angelo and Maseo, he came upon many birds. Turning towards his companions Francis told them: 'Wait for me here whilst I go and preach to my little sisters, the birds.' A multitude of birds gathered about him and listened in reverent silence as the slightly built man lovingly communed with them.

Towards lambs Francis displayed a marked affection, for they were the symbol of the sacrifice of Christ. Whenever possible, Francis saved lambs destined for the slaughterhouse by giving a cloak or whatever other garment he could part with.

The taming of the wolf of Gubbio is well known. Arriving at the small town of Gubbio in winter Francis found the inhabitants in a state of terror because of the fierce wolves who prowled about their dwellings. One wolf was particularly vicious. Against their entreaties Francis went forth alone to hold converse with 'brother wolf'. The latter prepared to attack

the man coming towards him when he was told: 'Come hither, Brother wolf; I command thee, in the name of Christ, neither to harm me nor anyone else.' The wolf lay down at Francis's feet, and a pact was made between them, sealed when the great wolf put his paw into the hand of the man. Before the unbelieving gaze of the villagers Francis led the now tame wolf to Gubbio where he told the inhabitants to feed the wolf who had promised henceforward to harm no living creature. The wolf kept his pledge, and in the old Church in the city, San Francesco della Pace, was found the skeleton of a large wolf where it had been buried.

Francis rode on a donkey towards Mount Alvernia where the birds broke out in delighted song at his coming. There, in the stillness, Francis prayed earnestly, isolating himself from the brethren who had accompanied him. He bade Brother Leo bring him bread and water once a day, making certain, however, to call first and receive a response before coming to Francis.

While Francis lived withdrawn from the others, a falcon befriended him, keeping maternal watch over him both night and day. A deep affection grew between Francis and the falcon.

On September 14th the Feast of the Holy Cross, Brother Leo beheld Francis surrounded by light and communing with an invisible Presence. There, in that quiet glade, the Beauty of divine Love was transferred on to the human frame. As the soul had been received in ecstatic union, so the temple-made of flesh bore the wounds of Christ.

Francis told his brethren of these divine imprints, but it was Leo alone who saw the stigmata as Francis required help to bandage them.

The frail body of Francis, worn out by austerities and tireless preaching, healing, travelling, now began to show signs of on-coming death.

With great tenderness Francis took leave of the brethren who were remaining at Mount Alvernia. 'Farewell', he said, 'I am going

away but my heart stays with you. To thee, O Mother of the World, I commend these sons of mine. Farewell, holy mountain. Farewell, dear Sister Falcon, and thank you for your kindness to me'.

Riding on a donkey, Francis wept as he turned towards the Portiuncula where Elias received him with unexpected warmth. Elias the erstwhile rebel, now took charge of the dying man, treating him with a love which was wholly beautiful in its tenderness. Francis was determined however to force 'brother ass' beyond human endurance, and he did active work among the lepers, the sick, preaching and healing tirelessly.

Elias, anxious about Francis's eyesight, arranged for the Pope's physician to treat his beloved Master.

Obediently, Francis submitted to the unbearable torture which the leech applied in the effort to cure him of his malady, but to no avail. Francis became totally blind for a while.

At San Damiano Francis bade farewell to Clare who gave him a gift which she had fashioned for him — a pair of soft sandals for his wounded feet, but Francis's pain became more intensified. Clare looked upon the tortured face of her beloved Francis, and the two noble hearts, united as one in their love of God, faced the physical parting with the serenity of saintliness.

Francis remained at San Damiano six weeks, then he undertook the journey to Rieti very slowly.

Seeking to alleviate his pain a physician inflicted unbearable agony upon the already suffering Francis, by wishing to cauterize his upper cheek. None of the brethren could bear to witness this treatment, and Francis faced the red-hot iron held in the doctor's hands alone. Making the sign of the Cross, Francis gazed at the blazing fire and said: 'O Brother Fire, be courteous to me, for I have always loved thee'. He then submitted to the searing agony which followed. The treatment was unsuccessful. Another cure was sought, this time by piercing both ears with a red-hot iron. Once again the pain was endured but no cure resulted.

With lucid mind and peaceful heart Francis wrote letters to holy Clare and to others, exhorting them to persevere in the spiritual journey towards Blessedness.

At forty two years of age Francis was taken to Siena in the Spring where a severe haemorrhage brought him nigh to death.

Aware that death was very close, Francis had confirmation of this from the doctor, and prepared with sublime serenity to 'welcome Sister Death'.

There followed a period of intense suffering.

The Brothers Leo and Angelo were asked to sing the Canticle of the Sun which Francis had composed. When they had done so, Francis added the last verse :

'Praised be my Lord for our sister, the death of the body, from which no man escapeth. Woe to him who dies in mortal sin.

Blessed are they who are found walking by Thy most holy will, For the second

death shall have no power to do them harm'.

Francis's body was subjected to yet more pain which the sufferer described as a sickness which 'were it to last three days, is more grievous than any martyrdom'.

As Elias knelt with broken heart at his bedside, Francis crossed his arms to bless this man who had caused him so much suffering.

The Franciscan Order uses this symbol of the crossed arms according to the reverence it deserves. Together with this symbol are the words used by Francis when he blessed Elias : 'As far as I can and more than I can'.

In the year 1226, Francis asked to be taken to his beloved Portiuncula. Although blind, he lifted his emaciated face to the gentle breeze and delighted in the September weather.

On October the fourth, Francis said : 'Welcome, Sister Death', adding, 'She is to me the Gateway of Life'.

That evening Francis sang the 142nd Psalm and left this world, sublime to the end.

There were two old men living together in one cell, and never had there risen even the paltriest contention between them. So the one said to the other, "Let us have one quarrel the way other men do." But the other said, "I do not know how one makes a quarrel." The first said, "Look, I set a tile between us and say, 'That is mine', and do thou say, 'It is not thine, it is mine'. And thence arises contention and squabble." So they set the tile between them, and the first one said, "That is mine", and the second made reply : "I hope that it is mine." And the first said, "It is not thine : it is mine". To which the second made answer, "If it is thine, take it". After which they could find no way of quarrelling.

— From *The Desert Fathers* by HELEN WADDELL

Swami Sivananda Sarasvati

By

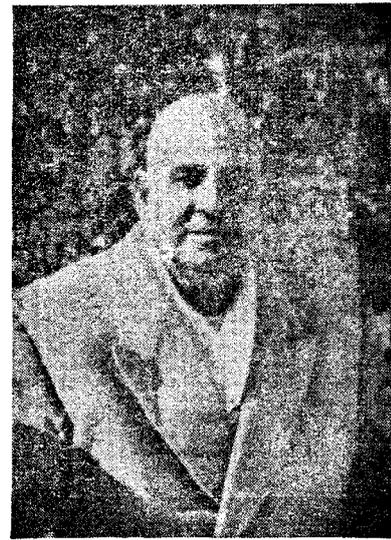
Dr. K. Subrahmanyam

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA SARASVATI radiated love wherever he went. His gospel was one of action and compassion. His one aim was to 'spiritualise' the activities of all and towards this end all his speaking and writing were directed. He wrote over 300 books on a variety of subjects for *sadhakas* at various levels. He wrote individually to thousands of his devotees clarifying their doubts, encouraging them with words of wisdom. Many derived energy from this spiritual dynamo. His appeal was to all, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or race.

Adverting to the need for man's spiritual education, he said: "In this age of atomic armament, racial hatred and policies of national greed, organised exploitation, international exclusiveness, intolerance and distrust, one's task is not so much the alteration and transformation of the patterns, policies, and plans of the governments of the nations of the world as much as the creation of a great world-enveloping movement for mass spiritual education and for the purification and the transfiguration of the nature and the personal propensities of the individual. The paramount importance and the indispensable necessity of the moral, ethical and cultural refinement of the individual personality upon a world-wide scale is to be realised first and foremost. For the prime and fundamental unit of all wider groups like class, race, nation and human society the world over is the Individual Man."

He visited different parts of India in 1950 to spread his 'yoga of synthesis'; it was a synthesis of *bhakti*, *jnana* and *karma yoga*. About his tour of the country he says:

The object of my tour
is to disseminate wisdom,
Knowledge of Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga,



Swami Sivananda Sarasvati

Japa Yoga and various other Yogas ;
To fill the world with *Ram Nam*, and
Sankirtan Dhwanis ;
To awaken the masses
From the slumber of ignorance ;
To teach the students and others
the methods
To maintain *Brahmacharya* and
A high standard of health —
Such as the practice of *asanas*, *pranayama*
and Yogic Kriyas.

In 1953 he convened the World Parliament of Religions in Sivanandashram, Rishikesh.

The *Divine Life Society* he established aims at disseminating spiritual knowledge by (a) publication of religious and philosophical books ; (b) propagating the name of the Lord through Conferences and spiritual discourses ; and (c) establishing Yoga Centres and educational institutions. The society also aims at

helping the disadvantaged in society by educating them and rendering medical assistance. In such work members of *Ramana Kendra*, Delhi and *Divine Life Society* join hands and gain much by mutual help.

Swami Sivananda touched life at many points and whatever he touched became spiritualised. He moved with all. He had great compassion for the lowly and the lost. He spent his entire life trying to kindle the divine spark in all. He appealed to all to shake off lethargy and tread the spiritual path. He wanted them to rise 'to a new life, a life of egoless action, of selfless service, of devoted love in which you are aware only of the Essence in all beings and not the separating adjuncts of names and forms'. In a fervent appeal, he once said :

" Arise, Awake. Look with a different vision at this marvellous world. The Lord has created it for your sake only so that you may serve Him in all, that you may love Him in all, and thus realise Him, the glorious Omnipresent, Omniscient Being who is the Soul of your soul, the Life of your life, the resplendent Light that dwells in the innermost chamber of your heart. The Lord can heal all the sick people in the world, in the twinkling of an eye ; but He has let there be suffering in the world in order to give you an opportunity to serve all and thus realise your oneness with Him dwelling in all. The Lord can make everyone rich and free from want in less than a second ; but He has let some be poor, in order that your heart may flow towards them in charity and love, and find there, in those very poor people, the Supreme Lord seated in all His Majesty waiting for you to discover Him. This is the supreme purpose of creation. Open your eyes,

LET

By L. P. Yandell

Lay by —
 Let go —
 Lean back —
 Let be —

Seeking the SELF
 is "self-seeking".
 For YOU ARE THE SELF
 you seek.

YOU are the Star
 you seek to follow
 YOU are the Truth
 you seek to find.

ETERNITY

There is no beginning
 or ending to NOW.
 AND I AM NOW !

now. Let not a single opportunity to serve, to love and give, pass. Only if you serve, love and give, will you truly understand the technique and the glory of meditation !"

Swami Sivananda was one in whom the love of God overflowed in acts of compassion and love. He raised our sights from things temporal to things eternal. It is in stillness, in the creative stillness of silence, that we can know God. And this knowledge is the true beginning of the service of His creation.

"The fear of death arises only after the 'I'-thought arises. Whose death do you fear? To whom does the fear come? So long as there is identification of the Self with the body there will be fear."

— SRI MAHARSHI

STORY OF BHAGIRATHA

Translated from Sanskrit by

M. C. Subramanian

Vasishtha said to Rama :

WITHDRAW your mind from everything and pacify it. Do the work which is given to you dispassionately. Be calm. Make the mind a sky, serene and vast. Look on all things with an equal eye. If one is steady of mind and adjusts oneself to the circumstances, one can, like King Bhagiratha, accomplish even the impossible.

Rama said : Please describe the remarkable qualities of Bhagiratha's mind which enabled him to bring the Ganga down to the earth.

Vasishtha said : Bhagiratha was a most righteous king. He was like a round *tilak* mark on the forehead of this sea-girt earth. Like the wish-fulfilling gem on the beautiful face of the Moon he gave to suppliants more than what they hoped for. He made his relatives in the nether world (*Pātāla*) attain the world of Brahma with the help of the Ganga. Even when he was a young king he used to ponder over our sorrowful sojourn on earth. He developed extreme dispassion and this made him thoughtful. Such dispassion and thoughtfulness in youth is rare like a creeper in a desert. Resorting to a solitary place he began to think about life on earth which is so irrational.

He said to himself : "Night follows day endlessly. Action produces only gains and losses which are useless or harmful. One should attain that which will leave nothing else in the world unattained. Action which enables one to attain it is the truly good action. All other acts are like cholera (as they lead to further and further acts). An intelligent man should feel ashamed of doing the same thing every day like one ignorant or a child".

Then one day, when he was extremely agitated by the fear of *samsara*, he approached his Guru Tritula when he was alone and asked him : "Bhagavan ! when will our frightful miseries in the form of birth, death, delusion and so on come to an end ?"

Tritula replied : "O King ! When one knows the perfect, all-pervading and absolutely unconditioned Being by cultivating for a long time an attitude of equality towards all, one's miseries will come to an end, one's knot-like concepts (like the ego) burst, one's doubts be cleared and one's acts (good and bad) cease to produce results. What one should know is the Self which is pure Consciousness. It is eternal and all-pervading. It neither comes into existence, nor ceases to exist."

Upon this Bhagiratha said : "O Best of Sages ! I know that only the all-pervading taintless, tranquil and pure Consciousness exists and that the body and the rest do not exist at all. But my knowledge does not remain steady. How am I to be constantly aware of Consciousness only ?"

Tritula replied : "When, with the help of the wisdom (described below), the mind remains in the space in the heart, non-distinct from the Self, it becomes all. The individual self (*jīva*) does not come into existence. Non-attachment, absence of self-identification with son, wife, home and so on, constant equanimity of mind amid desirable and undesirable events, constant awareness of the Self which is not different from Consciousness, resort to solitary places, distaste for the society of men, constant adherence to the knowledge and perception of philosophical truths — all these constitute wisdom (*jnana*) ; what is different

from these is ignorance. The wisdom which rises on the extinction of the ego is the medicament for the disease of *samsara*. It puts an end to attachment and hatred."

Bhagiratha asked : "How is one to give up the idea 'I am the body' which is as deep-rooted as a tree on a mountain?"

Tritula replied : "You must make efforts and give up all thoughts of sense-enjoyments and attain the expansive (perfect) state. The ego will then disappear. Until the machine-like cage of shame, etc. is completely smashed to pieces the ego will remain. If you renounce all this (i.e. shame, etc.) and remain steady the ego will disappear and you will realize that you are yourself the Supreme State (Being). Get rid of all preconceived notions, be fearless, have no desires, give away all your valuable possessions keeping nothing for yourself, be free from the sense of ego, give no thought to your body, beg your food and forget even me (your Guru). If you can do all this you will attain the highest state."

Upon this Bhagiratha decided to put into practice his Guru's teaching, but he continued to discharge his (kingly) duties. After some days, however, he performed an *agnishtoma* sacrifice at which he gave away, in the course of three days, all his lands, cows, horses, gold and everything else that he possessed to worthy brahmins and poor relatives. He had now only the clothes he was wearing. Finally he gave away his kingdom to an enemy across the border. When the latter took possession of his kingdom and occupied his palace Bhagiratha left his country with only a loin-cloth and became a silent ascetic. Being a bold man he lived in villages, towns and forests where no one knew him or had heard of him. In a short time he became utterly dispassionate. Through rigorous self-control he became tranquil and found repose within himself.

Wandering about the land Bhagiratha one day found himself by chance in his own city, now in the possession of his enemy. He begged his food at the houses of his former subjects and ministers indiscriminately. They recognized him and honoured him. They were all sad. Even his enemy begged him to take back

his kingdom. But Bhagiratha would not accept anything except his food. After spending some days in the city he left it, amidst the lamentations of the populace, and went to another place.

While he was living quietly and peacefully, finding delight in himself, Tritula, his Guru, happened to come there. He welcomed the Guru and both of them lived together for some time in forests, mountain caves, villages and towns. The Guru and the disciple were now equal (in spiritual understanding). They were, however, tired of keeping their bodies alive. They said to each other : "Why should we keep these bodies alive? Again why should we discard them? Let them remain or not as they are destined to."

Having come to this decision they wandered about from forest to forest. They were not particularly happy or unhappy over anything. Nor was their state anything between happiness and unhappiness. *Siddhas* (beings with supernatural powers) who were pleased with them offered them wealth, horses and other royal paraphernalia. They offered to teach them how to attain the eight supernatural yogic powers. But Bhagiratha and his Guru looked upon all these as no better than trash.

After some time it so happened that the king of a certain kingdom had been snatched away by death whose natural prey he was. As he was heirless his subjects were in search of a noble and virtuous person to be king in his place. When they saw Bhagiratha, they recognized him and induced him to go with them and be their king. Like the water of a lake replenished by the rains he immediately regained his dignity and mounted the royal elephant amidst the acclamations of his soldiers and subjects who were all shouting "Victory to Bhagiratha, the emperor of the world" until the mountain caves reverberated with the tumult. And he reigned over them.

But soon his old subjects who had also lost their king came in search of him and (finding him ruling a kingdom) said to him : "O King ! He whom you formerly made the king in your place has been swallowed by death, as a

piece of soft flesh by a fish. Therefore please be good enough to come and rule your kingdom again. It will not be proper on your part to reject the petition of suppliants who have come to you."

Bhagiratha acceded to their request and (in due course) became the emperor of the entire

earth surrounded by the seven seas. He was the same to all, calm, silent, dispassionate and free from envy. He discharged his duties earnestly and joyfully. He underwent severe austerities and brought the Ganga down to the earth and thereby enabled his ancestors to attain salvation. The path of glory first trodden by Bhagiratha became a model for the world.

On Reading Swaminathan's "Ramana Maharshi"¹

.....

By
Punasu Balakrishnan

Great spirits have in our midst sojourned of late ;
 He of love, worship, trance and ecstasy,
 Crying to Mother a child importunate,
 Ramakrishna, seeking God through *bbakti*,
 Over human knowledge soaring far above ;
 He of *Ram-dhun* and action, Gandhi, who trod
 The stony path of *karma* to freedom and God,
 Action among men co-terminal with love ;
 And he, Ramana, hunter of the ego, still
 In the moveless centre, son of Siva,
 Set on self-enquiry, heir to *Jnana*,
 To Bliss beyond all knowing, ripeness red
 Bursting into love, heart illumining head,
 Like the beacon fire on moonlit Aruna Hill.

¹ Published by National Book Trust, India and available from *Sri Ramanasramam Book Depot*.

SRI MA ANANDAMAYEE

By

Madan Mohan Varma



SRI MA ANANDAMAYEE is a unique saint, inasmuch as she was practically *born* so. In her very childhood she showed extraordinary signs. Her parents were deeply religious. They married her into a noble family at the early age of twelve, perhaps with a view to making her life happy, so to say; and when she went to her husband's home, she discharged her household duties in a most selfless manner. While performing such duties there, as earlier in her parent's home, she would often fall into a trance. Her husband, Sri Ram Mohan Chakravarty, later known as Sri Bholanathji, soon realised her spiritual greatness and was deeply impressed by her lofty character. She lived with Sri Bholanathji "as a daughter lives with her father", to quote Ma's words. Sri Bholanathji

subsequently became her disciple! Her ecstatic life became well-known, and people began to flock to her for *darshan*.

The late Sri Jyotish Chandra Roy — popularly known as Bhajji, and one of her closest devotees — has said in his book, *Mother as Revealed to Me*, that Sri Ma herself — when asked who she was — observed that before her appearance in her present form, she had been the same as she was now, and the same she would be in future.

Swami Dayananda of the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal asked Sri Ma: "Mother, what are you in fact? What is the nature of your samadhi?" Mataji replied: "Well, it is for you to decide the question. All that I can say is that in the midst of all apparent changes of state in body and in mind, I feel, I am aware, that I am ever the same; I feel that in *me* there is no change. Call it by any name you like."

The late Mahamahopadhyay Sri Gopinath Kaviraj, a renowned scholar and *yogi*, summed up his impressions of Mother as follows: "She is too near us to be seen in her proper perspective; we shall have to rise up and attain breadth of outlook to study her properly. What is really needed is to feel that she is Mother and that as mere children we cannot be expected to know Her as She is, but only as She shows Herself to us in response to our prayer."

Paramahansa Yogananda, founder of the Self-Realisation Fellowship in the United States, has devoted a whole chapter to Sri Ma in his famous book, *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

There are well-authenticated stories also of 'miracles' occurring around her from her early years.

Well, Ma could not hide her spiritual perfume, and many spiritual aspirants began to flock to her. Among her admirers and followers gathered men and women from all parts of India, and many Westerners as well.

Asbramas were established in many places in North India, and the number of *sadbakas* grew. Ma was also invited to various spiritual functions at different places where many aspirants derived inspiration. The main *Asbramas* are located in Dehra Dun, Hardwar, Almora, Vrindaban, Varanasi, Vindhyachal, Naimisharanya, New Delhi, Calcutta, Rajgir, Puri and Poona.

Even now, when she has crossed the age of 80 and her body has become frail, she constantly tours about for the benefit of spiritual aspirants.

The *Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society*, with headquarters at Varanasi, organises spiritual functions and brings out publications — a quarterly journal, *Ananda Varta*, as well as books. The Society also runs a big Charitable Hospital at Varanasi.

As regards her teachings, Ma does not give discourses or propound any theories. Even the books recording her teachings, such as *Matri Vani* and *Words of Sri Ma Anandamayee*, simply record what she said in response to enquiries by aspirants or in dictating answers to letters addressed to her. Even so, some selections from the same are given below for the benefit of readers :

"It is man's duty to meditate upon the One Reality.

Put your trust in God and let your mind be engaged in japa and meditation.

The true aim of life is to realise God. God alone is Truth, Happiness, Bliss. Do not desire anything except supreme beatitude, the bliss of Self.

Karmas accumulated for ages and ages, sins and desires, are wiped out by God's sacred name. Just as lighting a lamp illumines a cave that has been in darkness for centuries, even so the gloom of numberless

births is annihilated by the power of the Divine Name.

The Call of the Divine must be felt as a compulsion. A man who hears this call leaves all behind, even as a dry leaf falls from its branch.

Do not neglect the search for your real Home.

Depend on Him absolutely. In whatever circumstances you may find yourself, sustain the remembrance of Him only.

Company of saints, sages and seekers after Truth will help to awaken one's interest in the Real.

One should dedicate to the Supreme every simple action of one's daily life.

Either melt the sense of separation in devotion or burn it away by knowledge (Jnana).

By virtue of the Guru's power every thing becomes possible.

There are two types of pilgrims on life's journey : One like a tourist, keen on sight-seeing, wandering from place to place, flitting from one experience to another for the fun of it ; the other treading the path that is consistent with man's true being and leads to his real Home."

The above extracts from Ma's teachings should be sufficient to reveal the greatness and universality of her spiritual message.

Ma holds Bhagavan Ramana in great esteem. She sometimes sends some of her devotees to Arunachala for quiet meditation. She herself visited Sri Ramanasramam in 1952, and expressed great appreciation of the spiritual atmosphere of the place. To the *Ramana Darsan*, a Souvenir published by Ramana Kendra, Delhi in 1972, she gave the following message :

Bhagavan Ramana loves the Self,

revels in the Self and is ever

content. His very nature is benediction,

and outpouring of Grace. He is all names,

all forms, all actions and yet nameless,

formless, actionless. God alone is. He

is all-creative, self-luminous and ever

present. The light is discovered by

sustained service with mind and heart

turned towards it. May aspiration find

fulfilment. May your auspicious effort

bear fruit.

J. Krishnamurti: "Timeless Being"

(His Life and Teachings)

By

R. Viswanathan¹

(The late Dr. Annie Besant is gratefully remembered in India for her invaluable services to the country in several spheres — educational, cultural, political and social. Rich tributes have been paid to her personal qualities — integrity, courage and sense of human dignity. However only passing notice has been bestowed upon yet another of her achievements, perhaps her greatest. This was her discovery of J. Krishnamurti at a very young age, adopting him and proclaiming him as a future World Teacher. In this she revealed her prophetic judgement which has stood the test of time.)

HERE are a few known facts about Krishnamurti's early life. He was born in a poor Brahmin family at Madanapalle in 1895. He was the eighth child of thirteen of whom only two survived to adulthood. His father was a Theosophist and widower. After retiring from a small government post, he took the family to Adyar (Madras), headquarters of the *Theosophical Society*.

It is reported that one early morning Dr. Besant and the late Charles Leadbeater were sitting on a balcony at Adyar, facing the beach where they saw two young boys playing in the waters. Dr. Besant then asked a gardener to prevent the boys reaching the deep. The gardener brought the boys before Dr. Besant who looked at Krishnamurti's face intently for a while, then embraced him saying: "Here is the future World Teacher." Leadbeater too accepted the declaration.

Krishnamurti was then taken to England where competent teachers were engaged to impart him education in several relevant subjects and languages.

About that period under Dr. Besant's lead, an *Order of the Star in the East* was formed with Krishnamurti as its head. The object was to spread the teachings all over in the years to come. Dr. Besant busied herself meanwhile to provide all outer paraphernalia for her Ward's comfortable living which in-



J. Krishnamurti at the age of 30

cluded a 450-acre plot in Ojai (Southern California, U.S.A.).

When he was barely 30-31 years Krishnamurti was ready to deliver his message to the

¹ of Bangalore.

world. For two or three years he gave 'Camp Fire' talks to eager Theosophists assembled from forty countries of the world thirsting to hear and imbibe his message.

In about three years from then, when Krishnamurti was 33, he dissolved the *Order of the Star in the East*. In his speech to thousands of Theosophists, Krishnamurti explained his reasons for dissolving the organisation.

"You cannot bring the mountain top to the Valley. If you would attain to the mountain top, you must pass through the Valley, climb the steps unafraid of the dangerous precipices. You must climb towards the Truth, it cannot be 'stepped down' or organised for you. Interest in ideas is mainly sustained by the organisation but organisation only awakens interest from without. Interest which is not born out of Love of Truth for its own sake but aroused by an organisation is of no value. The organisation becomes a frame-work into which its members can conveniently fit. They no longer strive after Truth or the mountain top but rather carve for themselves a convenient niche in which they put themselves or let the organisation place them and consider that the organisation will thereby lead them to Truth". Krishnamurti also gave away the properties and huge funds that had been collected from all over the world on behalf of the 'Order'. It is reported that Dr. Besant herself accepted the 'Messiah's' action without question and with good understanding.

About Krishnamurti's life thereafter, Maurice Frydman, later known as *Bharatananda*, wrote thus : "His is a timeless being, a voice of clarity and deep concern." Krishnamurti is truly universal. He is free from all self-identification, conscious or unconscious, with family and friends, with country, race or religion, with anything physical or mental. Literally and fully has he realised in himself the truth of the ancient saying, 'This is not me. This is not me. There is no mine in it'. By refusing to be anything in particular he became the Whole."

Devotee : I worship an idol.

Maharshi : Go on doing so. It leads to concentration of mind. Get one-pointed. All will come right in the end. People think Liberation (*moksha*) is something outside them to be sought for. They are wrong. It is only knowing the Self in you. Concentrate and you will get it. It is your mind that is the cycle of births and deaths (*samsara*).

— TALKS, p. 31.

His teachings : Krishnamurti often emphasises that his sole purpose is to make man absolutely, unconditionally FREE. For this, man should acquire self-knowledge for without self-knowledge there can be no basis for thought. By Self-Knowledge he means the thorough understanding of the working processes of the total mind — the conscious and the unconscious. The unconscious mind plays a major part in our life, it shapes our thoughts and feelings, and brings about various kinds of conflicts. He says : "Without knowing the unconscious you may talk about God, about Prayer, War, Peace, the atom bomb — but it will have very little meaning. In the unconscious are rooted not only the every day responses of the individual but the collective responses of the race to which you belong". He offers *Awareness* as the most effective means of resolving the unconscious, that means to be *Aware* of all our thoughts, feelings, actions, from moment to moment without any opinion — 'choiceless Awareness' as he would have it. Just be aware, do not justify or condemn any thought or feeling and thereby create an illusory, mischievous censor. This practice when it becomes natural will reveal and dissolve the unconscious. It has great healing and revealing powers.

Krishnamurti, who has been called a 'non-Guru', invites us to solve our fundamental

problems in the only way in which they can be solved, for and by ourselves. No book, ancient or modern, no Guru, no organisation, no system, can lead us to Truth. On the contrary these are impediments. He says that Truth is not a static thing and if we would have it with our minds heavily conditioned, the result would be frustration.

He begins all his talks with an emphasis on proper listening. Usually people project their own views and opinions even while they listen and thereby get nothing new.

The actual, the present, is alone important. The past and the future should not be allowed to destroy WHAT IS — the present. For this reason he does not approve of Ideals which are of the future and only lead to postponement. Transformation can be, has to be, in the present — the only real moment.

Love, Krishnamurti maintains, is the only panacea for the ills of the world. The mind should be in a state of Love, not dependent on persons, things, ideals. "A mind that has come to the stillness of Wisdom shall know being, shall know what it is to love. Love is neither personal nor impersonal. Love is love, not to be defined or described by the mind as exclusive or inclusive. Love is its own eternity ; it is the real, the supreme, the immeasurable".

In these and similar strains, the voice of Krishnamurti, now 82, beckons man to correct himself, know himself, to approach life ever with freshness and newness. He asks us to



J. Krishnamurti at the age of 82

trust life, not fear it. Life never betrays, only by himself man is betrayed.

As Claude Bragdon wrote : " Krishnamurti's teaching will seem anarchic and destructive only until the perception comes that his blows are aimed at our fetters, until we realize that life unconditioned by personal fears, ambitions and desires is not a void but a plenum '.

A brother asked Abbot Sisois, saying, "I know this of myself, that my mind is intent upon God." And the old man said to him, "It is no great matter that thy mind should be with God : but if thou didst see thyself less than any of His creatures, that were something."

— From *The Desert Fathers* by HELEN WADDELL

SEARCH WITHIN

By
Ray Angona¹

THIS morning Dadaji (Dilip Kumar Roy) discussed the need for both *sadhana* and Divine Grace. As he was speaking Didiji (Indira Devi) went into *bhava*, swaying gently, unnoticed by most of us. She opened her eyes and said in a voice choked with emotion: "I have heard a song." Dadaji wrote it down and afterwards translated it for us. The song was about Krishna's departure for Mathura and how one is ferried across the turbulent Jumna.

After the song was written, Dadaji again began talking, but Didiji was again in *bhava* — even deeper than before. A minute later she opened her eyes, glistening with tears.

"What have you seen?" Dadaji asked. The whole group of us sat watching spell-bound, in pindrop silence.

Didiji began in a tearful, childlike, emotion-packed voice: "There is a lady with a key searching for the door to the Lord's Abode. She knows everyone in the town and all the houses but she is oblivious to them all. She is going from door to door, but the key just wouldn't fit in any lock. She is trying so hard to find the right door but is completely disoriented. However, she goes on and on. Suddenly some people she knows accost her and distract her attention. She drops the key. Oh, how she searches madly for it but now it's lost, lost! She never should have let her mind get distracted like this, even for a second.

"Now she's in despair, helplessly running hither and thither, when suddenly a sadhu appears in front of her. He is a wonderfully radiant sadhu. He says: 'Forget about the key and the door. Think only of the Dweller within. You want only the Dweller.' She wanders on but cannot find Him and finally plops down under a tree, weeping, when the sadhu reappears and says: 'The door you are



Dilip Kumar Roy

searching for is in your heart where He dwells. Search *there* for Him.'

"She looked deep, deep, deep into her heart. She entered into the inmost sanctum of her heart. Suddenly she . . . I heard the music of the flute, the sweet clear notes of the flute. Oh, how she . . . I thrilled. I followed the music up and up on the wings of ecstasy."

Didiji paused, tears falling down her cheeks while a smile played on her lips. The thirty of us were still, sitting transfixed — spell-bound.

Dadaji broke the silence. "How about the Flutist? Did you see the Flutist?"

Didiji seemed to laugh and cry simultaneously, clapping her hands exultantly. "The Flutist. No. No. When you hear that magic Flute, what need have you to see the Flutist? His job is only to play the Flute."

¹ Hari Krishna Mandir, Poona.

Dadaji thanked her and commented : "We are all blessed to have this parable from her. This is authentic mysticism. She is a born mystic — a rare phenomenon." Then he went on to add : "Indira started giving these parables in 1949 at Sri Aurobindo Ashram, altogether some 25 or 30 have come so far. They are inspired by Mira but Indira identifies herself so completely with her that sometimes she says "she", sometimes "I", as you must have noticed. I have written down a few of these parables. We must also write down this one, as it has a meaning. We search and search outside in vain for the door to the Lord's Abode, the key is our *sadbana*, but eventually we transcend even that. Only when we are at the end of our tether, Divine Grace descends.

The door is not outside at all, but inside our heart where the Lord dwells. All the great saints say that He is in our heart. Sri Aurobindo said, 'The heart is closer to Him than the intellect.' It is true that these things are realised by the mass of men more readily through the fervour of devotion than by a strenuous effort of thinking, but that is as it must and should be, since the heart of man is nearer to the Truth than his intelligence."²

Ramana Maharshi and Sri Ramakrishna followed the path of the heart and not the mind. The Vedas hold that the heart and not the head is the repository of *satya* (Truth) and *shraddha* (Faith).

² *Foundations of Indian Culture*, Ch. III.

On Talks with "Sri Ramana Maharshi"

By

A. K. Devaraj

The word *Sadbana* means practice with effort. The path of Self-enquiry would normally demand a lot of effort — almost superhuman. But Sri Bhagavan has bequeathed to us in His intimate grace a handy aid which renders the *sadbana* almost effortless. This *vade mecum* is the *Talks*.

How does reading of the *Talks* help the *sadbana* ?

(1) Reading the *Talks* again and again one gets a taste of *videhatma buddhi*. We are only too familiar with *dehatma buddhi* i.e. identifying ourselves with our bodies. Our human problems, beginning with those of food, clothing and shelter and leading to the more complex psychological problems, stem from this identification. A taste of *videhatma buddhi* i.e. identity with Awareness, is experienced while reading the *Talks*.

(2) Paul Brunton, Dr. Syed, Humphreys, Cohen, Jamanlal Bajaj, Rajendra Prasad, Osborne, Pierce, Major Chadwick and many others have spoken of the immense peace felt in the presence of Bhagavan. As we read the *Talks*, we too feel this Presence by our side.

(3) If the path of self-enquiry is supported by repeated reading of the *Talks* one gets more and more *prajna* firmly rooted in pure Awareness.

Again the *Talks* need not be read systematically from the first page to the last ; it can be read at random. It is ideal as a bedside book. It is a perennial source of joy and peace. One always finds something new every time it is read. This is why translation of this monumental work in many languages both Indian and foreign is imperative. A fitting occasion for release of many translations would be Bhagavan's Birth Centenary which falls in January 1980.

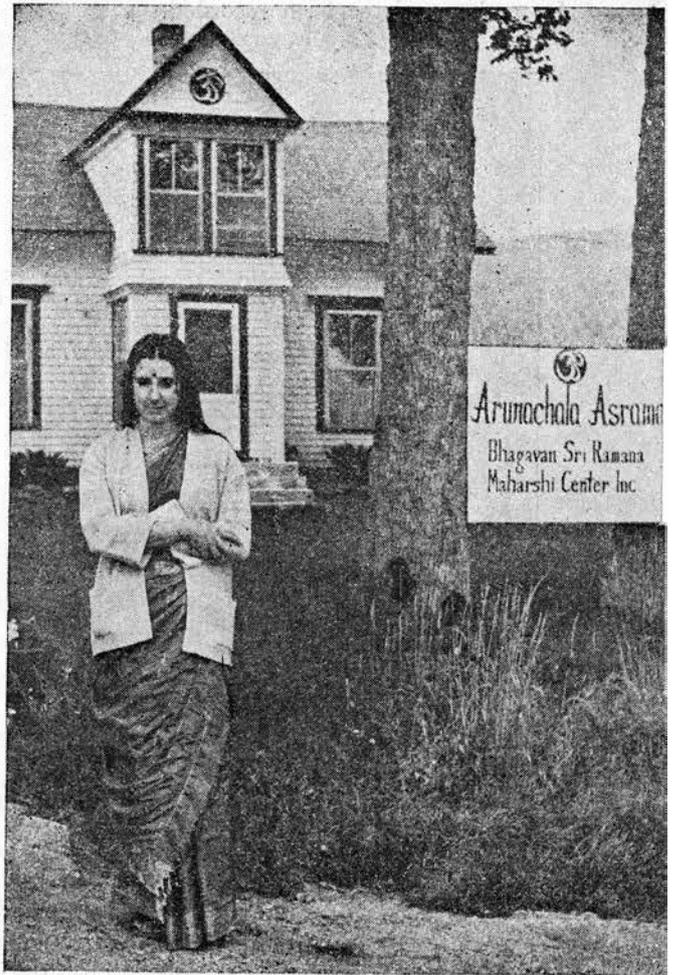
A DREAM COMES TRUE

By
Evelyn Kaselow

IN the heart of New York City's Lower East Side on Sixth Street near First Avenue there is a small, unobtrusive storefront meditation center known as **Sri Arunachala Ashrama**, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi Center, Inc. Few are the people who pass across the threshold for the nightly practice and fewer still are those who stay, yet the doors are wide open every evening at seven for every one wishing to come.

The history of the Center in New York City is the life story of Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat, the man who sits faithfully on the ashrama floor chanting and singing his devotional hymns every night, since December 7, 1966. On several occasions, from the time the ashrama began, no one would come and the man would be alone in the ashrama singing with open heart. He was intoxicated like a madman or a drunkard with his dream of having a residential ashrama in the open-air surroundings "where people from Wall Street can sit on the grass." Also the dream of building a temple on Fifth Avenue in honour of the great sage and holy man of modern India, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, continued to rise in his heart.

Many friends would come to the small and peaceful ashrama and join the life of practice for a few years or a few months and then leave to pursue their personal plans and dreams. Sri Bhagawat would continue his spiritual practices with the firm conviction that disappointments and broken plans come only to make us strong and fit for the future. In this way, through the many struggles and heartbreaks of eight years, the dream grew in strength along with the courage and fortitude of this man who had travelled in his early youth from a small Indian village to America.

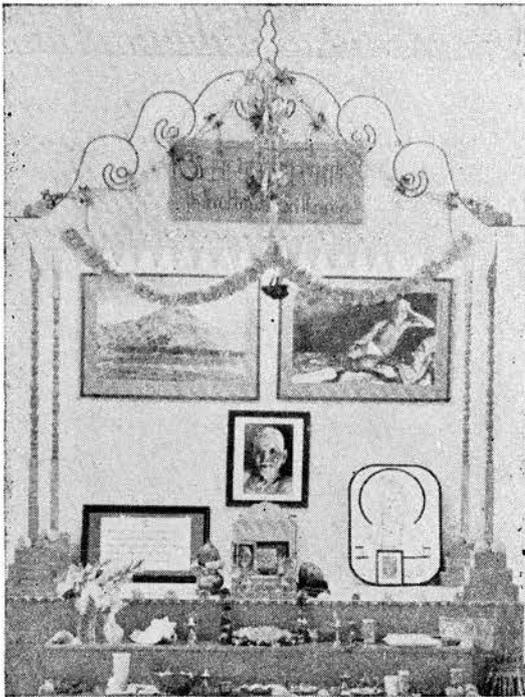


Miss Kaselow in front of the *Ashrama* in Nova Scotia.

Renowned throughout the Eastern world as a great sage in the line of Dakshinamurti and Sankara, Bhagavan Ramana was throughout His life, and even after continues to be, the Father and Mother of thousands of devotees all over the world. Not only those who knew

Him alive, but also those who resorted to Him after His *Brahma Nirvana* in 1950, continue to feel His inspiring presence in their lives.

As a mere boy of 16 He got spiritually enlightened and left his home, in Madurai, drawn to the Feet of Arunachala for good. Although Sri Bhagavan's teaching was mainly in silence, His responses to His devotees from far and near have been recorded.



The *sanctum sanctorum* aesthetically decorated.

It is due to the presence of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi in the life of Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat that the dream of *Sri Arunachala Ashrama* for devotees of the Western Hemisphere came into being.

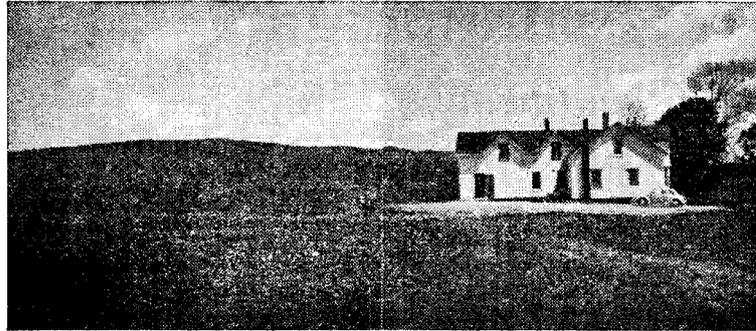
In the fall of 1970, a young couple from New Jersey, Joan and Matthew Greenblatt, both only 19 years old, entered the ashrama and joined the life of the nightly spiritual practices with much devotional fervour. Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat himself wondered how such a thing could be. Until then, the

young couple had had no idea of the path that was awaiting them. Among friends, they visited a few yoga centers, group meetings, religious discourses and so forth. Not until they came to *Sri Arunachala Ashrama* in New York City did they feel the inner awakening which transformed their lives, turning the mind inward to the eternal Source of joy.

Drawn by the spiritual practice of nightly recitation, chanting and sitting in silence, as well as the warm and simple devotional nature of their new friend Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat, Srimati Jnanadeviji and Madhavaji Maharaj (Joan and Mathew) would come and come again until their daily life and the life of service to the ashrama merged.

In the autumn of 1971, a modest offer came from a friend to buy a small farm in Nova Scotia. Without a second thought, the couple became the instruments of Divine Grace in the life of Sri Bhagawat. Within twelve hours of giving notice that they would go in search of the residential ashrama, the young couple was driving North in a yellow Volkswagen given as a wedding present. Without being deterred for a single moment they drove straight to the benefactor's home near Halifax, Nova Scotia, only to find that his enthusiasm for the new country retreat had diminished.

The young couple soon found themselves along in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia with all their savings in traveller's cheques and the brand new car. As they found all the people to be friendly in this foreign land, they went knocking from door to door asking each person they met about farms for sale. Every evening they would return from their search to the home of an elderly couple, the Taylors of Clarence, Nova Scotia. As the search for the country retreat continued, the feeling began to grow in the minds of the young couple that the farmhouse, where they returned in the evening for warm food and conversation, was their own home. The Taylors had been planning to sell their land and retire to town life at an indefinite date.



Ashrama picturesquely situated

This is how the couple, with no money of their own, came to put a down payment on the farm of 140 acres at the foot of the northern mountain range in the peace-infused Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia.

With this trip the work of fund-raising began for Srimati Jnanadevijji and Sri Madhavaji Maharaj who begged and borrowed from each person they knew and many they never knew before. Nevertheless, all the efforts at raising the several thousand dollars needed to pay for the farm bore no fruit until a month before the appointed date to go North in the spring. At last, in the form of gifts and donations, the funds came in. With exuberance the life of spiritual practice and the hard work of converting a farm into the residential ashrama for all children of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi began.

From the end of April, 1972, the young couple and a friend, Sri Dinesha Dayalu (Dennis Hartel of Tonawanda, New York), have been working full time to make the farm a home for all sincere devotees, friends, aspirants and children of the universal Spirit who come to its door. The work both in New York and Nova Scotia continues with all faith, energy and dedication by the Grace of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi who infused His devotee, Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat, with the dream of the country retreat where

all would be welcome. (Permanent residence cannot be taken up until the aspirants spend a year of practice and service at the Sixth Street Center.)

The country ashrama is dedicated to living the simple life of hard work and whole-hearted practice of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's teaching of Self Enquiry of "Who am I?" and total surrender to the divine Presence in our human lives. Every evening at 7 and morning before dawn, Sanskrit hymns and chants resound with the sweetness and clarity that comes directly from the heart. This is followed by silence, then the reading of teachings, and, finally, the serving of *prasad* (food). All are welcome, and visitors are asked to have three hours at their disposal for their stay.

We can only pray with gratitude for the blessings heaped upon these frail instruments. All praises be to Life Universal in the form of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi who has brought the dream of the man from the backwoods of India, Sri Bhagawat, into realization.

"To those who are self-attuned and who worship Me with loving devotion, I give that union with understanding, whereby they come to me."

— *The Bhagavad Gita*, Ch. X. v. 10

Glory of Arunachala

Arunachala Mahatmyam

Translated from Tamil by

M. C. Subramanian

CHAPTER XXII

THE BENEFITS OF CIRCUMAMBULATING THE ARUNA HILL AND THE STORY OF VAJRANGADA

Markandeya said :

SIVANANDA (one who has the bliss of Siva) ! Lord Nandikesvara ! I have listened with great joy to your narration of the glory of the Red Hill. But how did Vajrangada, the Pandya King, show his indifference to this Hill and how did he regain with difficulty his prosperity through Its grace ? Again how were the Vidyadharas named Kantisali and Kaladhara saved by the Lord of Arunachala from the curse of Durvasa ?

Nandikesvara replied :

Son of Mrikandu ! It is on account of your steadfast devotion to the Lord of the *Bhutas* (Siva) that you have become immortal (*chiranjivi*). Listen, I shall describe to you both the events connected with the Red Hill about which you have asked me. In days of yore there lived a Pandya King, named Vajrangada. This earth was like a puppet in his hands. He always followed the *dharma* and was just, dignified, skilful, patient, calm, humble and intelligent. He was an observer of the vow of monogamy, a worshipper of Siva, a lucky person and a man of virtuous conduct. After conquering his enemies he ruled over all the kingdoms from Kedara (in the Himalayas) to Setu (in the extreme south).

Once he set out hunting, mounted on a noble horse, and entered into a forest which extended as far as Arunachala. Seeing a fine civet cat he desired to capture it and urged his

horse towards it. The cat fled round the Sona Hill from left to right with the speed of the mind. When the horse also did so the king fell down overpowered by weariness. Like a person who is thrown out of Svarga (Heaven) after enjoying the fruits of his good deeds the king fell down and lost his senses. He said to himself : 'How did I, for no reason, lose my strength ? Where is the horse which carried me ? It is not to be seen'. Pondering thus he became confused and bewildered. At that moment there appeared a light in the sky like a flash of lightning. Even as he looked at it the cat and the horse left their bodies on the earth and rose into the sky (in the form of celestial beings) wearing crowns, car-rings, necklaces, bracelets, and upper and nether garments of yellow silk. The king stood looking at them in wonder. They showed their bright forms as if to remove the darkness of his confusion and said, 'O King, do not grieve. Know that we have both been thus transformed by the glory (grace) of the Sona Hill.'

At this the king became cheerful and asked them humbly with clasped hands : 'Who are you ? How did the three of us become connected to one another ? Please tell me. Is it not the nature of great souls to protect those who are helpless ?' Upon this Kaladhara, at the command of Kanthisali, turned to the king and said : 'O King, We were formerly (i.e. in our previous lives) vidyadharas. We were mutual friends. Once both of us went to the wood on the Meru Mountain on which Durvasa was practising austerities. It cannot (ordinarily) be reached even by the mind (i.e. even thought of). But we penetrated a long distance into it. Flowers were blooming everywhere,

Although humble we were ignorant. Kantisali proudly roamed about noisily hither and thither in a garden of flowers. I was attracted by the scent of the blossoms and began to pick them. At that moment, the sage Durvasa who was seated on a tiger skin under a Shandiya tree and glowing by virtue of his austerities like a blazing fire, looked at us with quivering lips and knitted brows as if he would scorch all those who were before him. We trembled. He said : " Who are you unmannerly fellows : Why are you so arrogant ? You have become moths in the blazing fire of my anger. Even the Sun and the Moon dare not set foot in this sacred wood meant for my austerities. It is reserved for the worship of Siva alone. The wind shall not blow in it, nor shall bees enter it. The sinner who desecrated this place by walking through this sacred place shall be born as a horse and carry others. The other who was enamoured of sweet scent shall become a civet cat at the foot of a hill ". In this wise he cursed us.

On seeing the Rishi who had hurled the thunderbolt of a curse, (on us) we were alarmed and humbly surrendered ourselves to him. We prostrated ourselves before him and, holding his feet with our hands, said : " Your curse is terrible. It will not go in vain. Kindly tell us when and how it will come to an end ". Seeing our distress that king of sages took pity upon us and mercifully became calm. Turning to us he said : " Fools ! The curse cannot be lifted by any act except that of circumambulating the Aruna Hill. Once upon a time when Mahadeva was sitting in state with Indra, Upendra, the Dikpalas and others adoring him, a wood nymph named Nandana offered him a fine fruit. Gajanana (the elephant-faced god) and Shadanana (the six-faced god), being boys, both desired to have it. But their father kept it concealed in his hand and said : " I shall give it to him who goes round the world first ". Hearing this Skanda hastily started going round the world. Vinayaka, on the other hand, went round the Aruna Hill and quickly came and stood before (his father). The latter appreciated Vinayaka's intelligence and, after smelling the top of his head (as a mark of affection), gave him the fruit. He also con-

ferred upon him a boon which made him thereafter competent to fulfil all the wishes of his devotees. Turning next to the Devas and others in the Assembly Siva said : " He who circumambulates with devotion the Sona Hill which is my form attains a form like mine (sāroopya). He becomes the Lord of the entire world and reaches the highest state ".

Having fallen into the ocean of anger of the extremely irate sage and being tormented by the black (Kalakuta) poison of his curse we took birth as a horse and a civet cat on the earth.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE STORY OF KALADHARA AND KANTISALI

Kaladhara continued :

" **T**HIS Kantisali was born as a horse in Kambhoja and became your mount. I became a civet cat and roamed about the foot of this Hill. We were fortunate enough to circumambulate it as a result of your desire to hunt. You are a great soul. But, as you circumambulated on a mount, you met with this misfortune. As we went on foot we regained our old state. O Indra among Kings ! Although we were born of animal wombs yet we were liberated in this manner as we came into contact with you. We shall now go to our region. May you be fortunate." Thereupon, with clasped hands, the king made his obeisance to Kaladhara and Kantisali who were on the point of returning to their own region, and said : " You have been rescued from the sea of your curse. What about my release ? When I think about it I feel miserable. My life breath seems to be departing from me. The might of Fate is clear ".

When he spoke thus Kaladhara and Kantisali said : " Listen carefully to what we say about the manner of your release. Make the mind pure, control it and surrender it to Siva who is the cause of the creation, sustenance and destruction (of the world). You have clearly realized from what happened to us

that the Lord of the Aruna Hill is a repository of compassion and that His glory is great. Circumambulate the Aruna Hill on foot. Worship the Lord of Aruna (who is fond of civet) with flowers smeared with civet. Build quadrangles and towers according to your ability. You will gain your object. You will

become superior to Puru, Māndhāta, Nābhāga, Bhagīratha and others."

After speaking these words they rose up (into the sky). Vajrangada who had listened to their words had no longer any doubt. He became devoted to the Lord of the Aruna Hill.
(*To be continued*)

MOTHER DURGA

By Dilip Kumar Roy

(*Translated from my own Bengali poem. The metre is blank verse*)

Your Grace alone can grant us, Mother, the vision
Which sees in every creature on earth a friend.
None is an alien. Only we must learn
To acclaim all as our cherished and blessed kin.

Step by step we ascend the heavenly stairs
Until we reach your temple where we win
The eye of light and power to transcend
Mortality and hear athrill your call
To outgrow our world of self and march to attain
The supernal consciousness and see the deep
In the drop, till we, lo, find ourselves transformed
Rid of our trammels for ever. And then we hear
Your angel choir chant : " If you'd meet the Mother's
Pure all-fulfilling heart of Grace on earth,
You must first recognise that it is She
Who exhorts us to be pilgrims of the stars,
And sons of strength to flower out together."

But alas, your admonition we pass by
So all our aspiration comes to nought
And your inviolate harmony peters out
In strife and din and clamours. So we must
Achieve the redeeming contact of your light
Through love of all you have made and sent in love
To grow and work and yearn to your Infinite Bliss.

You sing : " My children, so near and dear to me,
Hail not the world's husk — turn to my kernel bliss,
Which alone can change a derelict into a seer.
And remember : you only evolve through give and take
With others in your mystic pilgrimage
Here below and not in some far-off Heaven."

INTRODUCING....

....Dr. W. Radhakrishnaya

BORN in Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh in 1902, son of a supervisor of Schools, Sri Radhakrishnaya lost his father when he was but a child of three. In the same year he was nearly drowned in the temple tank at Tiruchanoor during a visit there, and was saved almost miraculously by his newly married sister and another bride.

His mother educated him in spite of her poor circumstances, and he completed his High School and then his Medical course, the latter with distinction.

Then he spent his entire medical career as a Rural Medical Practitioner, serving the suffering poor with devotion, and naturally, became very popular.

He had vaguely heard of Sri Ramana Maharshi even before the thirties, that he lived near a Hill in a place called Tiruvannamalai, wore nothing but a Koupeenam, reared cows etc., but for long he never knew where that place was. He happened to see His photo by chance in 1933.

In 1946 when attending a philosophical discourse he heard for the first time that Sri Ramana Maharshi was Sankara of our times



Dr. W. Radhakrishnaya



since His teaching was the same as that of Adi Sankara. An intense desire to see the Maharshi arose in him and it got fulfilled in February 1947. When returning to Pakala from Tirupati by train, he met two friends who said they were going to Tiruvannamalai, and he joined them without a second thought and had darshan of the Maharshi.

This visit was a turning point in his life. Though nothing was spoken during the visit, the benign look of the Maharshi made a tremendous impact on him and he became a devotee for life. He named his house in Pakala as *Ramanalaya*, i.e. The Home of Ramana. His regular visits to Bhagavan enriched him spiritually. He is one of those silent devotees of Bhagavan who treasure the blessings of the Master secretly within their hearts. Very devoted by nature, his surrender to the Master is remarkable.

Dr. Radhakrishnaya has been a regular visitor for the past many years never missing a single important function in the Ashram, like *Jayanti*, *Aradhana*, *Kartigai Deepam*, etc. After retirement, he now lives at Bangalore solely devoted to Sri Bhagavan.

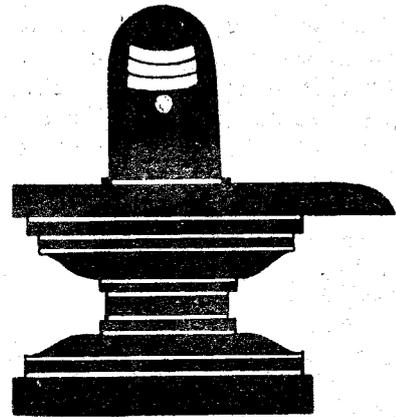
BOOK REVIEWS

SAIVISM AND THE PHALLIC WORLD (in 2 vols.) : By B. Bhattacharya. Pub. : Oxford and I.B.H. Publishing Co., 86, Janpath, New Delhi, 110 001. Pp. 1048. Price : Rs. 150.

The author, who is the Principal of Ashram College, San Fernando, Trinidad, has taken up the subject of the Linga-Phallus controversy for a very detailed study. His conclusive conviction is that Saivism is not at all phallicism; the phallic in Hinduism was infiltrated into it by the primitive, proto-Indo-Mediterranean and Greco-oriented influences; though this is an historical fact, it is an entirely denounced fact in enlightened Hinduism which never could assimilate it; the phallic came in handy only for adoption by the 'left-hand' practitioners, who, anyhow were looked down upon by the Hindu majority; the widely prevalent Saiva schools like the Tamil Siddhanta, Karnataka Basava cult and Kashmiri Saivism are based on the noblest and purest in philosophy and religion; the Siva-Sakti conception is the Saivic equivalent of the Samkhyan Purusha-and-Prakrti which is "beyond the pale of phenomenal manifested sex"; the two-in-one hermaphrodite Ardhanārisvara is the "very antipodes and antithesis of the primitive fertility cults"; the Lingam with its Sakti-pattam is but the symbol of *Nada* and *Bindu*; the Western criticism of Linga as phallic is only an over-simple and instant analogical confusion of sublime metaphysical issues with very superficial phallic similarities, on the part of uninitiated 'scholars' with their "lamentable lack of information and more lamentable want of patience and sympathy."

The author's conviction gains more weight from the fact that he has perfect sympathy with the primitive worship of sex. He says he is not snobbish or prudish to decry sex, but reveres this central principle of libido as the most powerful force in the drama of creation. Anyhow this does not warrant phallic imputations to Linga worship, says he.

There are many refreshing points about the author. He is not a dry, 'scientific' scholar. First of all he is himself a pious Saiva. He is alive to the supra-rational and experiential aspect of Hinduism. He says that he has himself had mystic experiences. He believes in (and explains beautifully) the concept of Guru, the efficacy of *mantra*, *yantra* and *taura*. He is aware of the essential role of Grace. To him "Mysticism is the ultimate in Faith" (p. 299). He does not see with Wester-



Siva Linga

nized eyes and does not regard religion and philosophy as two different fields. He has no regrets for our so-called 'poly-theism' and 'idolatry' but justifies them very satisfactorily. He feels the pulse of Hindu iconography and therefore sees nothing bizarre or grotesque in the various types of Murtis. He can unerringly distinguish between the Karma-theory and Fatalism; between Maya and illusion.

With such an equipment the learned author, who has an artistically sensitive mind and a charming command over the English language often-times bursting into the poetical, executes his task on an 'extensive canvas . . . (drawing freely from) the storehouse of cultural history, archaeology, philosophy, anthropology, mythology, comparative religions, metaphysics, art. . . ." Thus we have two bulky volumes very elegantly printed and got-up, and priced as highly as all such volumes are.

We expect to benefit much from the tomes. Unfortunately, we are disappointed to a great extent.

'The extensive canvas' and its multifaceted ingredients are, of course, there. But the pity is that in no field is there any intensive study — including the central topic of Saivism itself. There is no systematic methodical weaving together of the different strands, but only page after tiresome page of disjointed meandering, proving or disproving nothing. How many digressions, *obiter dicta*, asides, contributing little to the central theme! The author entertains many theories about religion in general and Hinduism in particular. He tries to

bring them all under the Saivic-phallic cover, by repeatedly saying that this subject demands such an analysis of the entire gamut of religion and philosophy. But actually much of this is irrelevant and can safely be cut off without in the least affecting the main topic.

That apart, some of his basic ideas are themselves open to question. There has, undeniably, been much giving-and-taking among the religions of the world, and the highly accommodative Hindu religion has, undoubtedly, absorbed many alien features and made them its own. But, to attribute most of its philosophy, religious tenets, mythology, customs, symbols and rituals (as the author does) to "historical forces of immigration" and to "cultural and geographical contiguity" is far-fetched. The fact is that the author makes a hotch-potch of different cultural histories and twists mystical and mythological stories and principles into ill-patched 'history' to advance his own theories. This makes him say, without any ground whatsoever, that Tarakasura was a Siva leader (p. 28); Kamsa, Jarasandha, Kalayavana, Sisupala and Duryodhana were Agama-Tantrics (pp. 480, 834, 861): "Ravana attempted and succeeded in . . . bringing an end to the Vedas" (p. 838). (According to Valmiki, Hanuman heard the Vedic recitation of the *Rakshasas* in Lanka in the dead of night: *Sundara*, 4-13; Ravana himself was an adept in *Sâma-gâna* and got release from under Kaiâsa by pleasing Siva with *Sâman*: *Uttara*, 16-34 ff.)

With the growth of occultism and theosophy, many even among the West are coming to believe in the various grades of divine and diabolic beings as different from human beings. The author himself admits their residence in the various *avaranas* of the Sri Yantra. Therefore there is no reason why he should identify the Gandharvas, Yakshas, Guhyakas, etc., which the historical Sakas, Mongolians and Tibetans and spin specious theories out of this. (Whenever the Puranas refer to foreign countries, they speak of those peoples as *human beings*, like *yavanas*, *mlecchas*, etc. There is no supernatural appendages to them as in the case of the winged Gandharvâs or horned *Yâtudhanas*).

The most regrettable feature about the book is its prejudice against the so-called arrogance of Brahmanic priest-craft. This prejudice impinges on the author's proper appreciation of the Vedas themselves. This sometimes goes against his own open-minded approach to the Vedic religion. For example: At one place (p. 322) he says: "With the growth of the Vedas and the Upanishads man's metaphysical enquiries penetrated the sublime. . . . (For the Vedic society) life was just a means to realise something nobler, greater, sublimer than

life." Anyhow, when it comes to attacking 'Brahmanism' he attacks the Vedic way too. He tries to show that the Vedic *varna*-division was based on innate attitude and aptitude as against the later Brahmanic caste-by-birth. But have we any evidence to show that there was any authoritative body in the Vedic age to 'test' each individual and ascribe to him the *varna* for which he was fit? Is that possible at all? With rare exceptions, *varna* has always been hereditary — and it can only be so, in order to be practical. No less a reformer than Gandhiji says: "The *Gita* does talk of *varna* being according to *guna* and *karma*, but *guna* and *karma* are inherited by birth. Lord Krishna says: 'All *varnâs* have been created by Me' — *Chatur varnyam maya srstam* — that is I suppose by birth. The law of *varna* is nothing, if not by birth." (*My Varnashrama Dharma*). We may or may not like that. But that does not warrant our twisting facts and fabricating a pure Vedic *varna*-division and a 'later impure Brahmanic casteism.

Blinded by his Brahmanism-phobia, the author seems to be biased against the Vedas themselves. Otherwise one who is deeply moved by the Saivic agamas and rituals will not be 'immune' to the super-sensory import and symbolism of the Vedas. His willed blindness to the sublime symbolism of the Vedas enables him to advance the theory that Yoga, Samkhya, Agama and even Bhakti (*sic*) are non-Vedic, almost anti-Vedic. He does not stop with that. He traces (in his own nebulous, dubious way) their origin to the Tamils, who according to him are non-(i.e. anti-)-Vedic. To him Tamilnad was the headquarters of the Angirasa-Atharva-Bhrgu-Kapila culture of Samkhya, Yoga and worship (p. 815).

As far as we know from disinterested research scholars, ancient Tamil history and the Sangam literature show the Tamils were a highly cultured and civilized people, but not far advanced metaphysically. That is why the *Dravida Kazhagam* adopted rationalism and materialism side by side. But the author, in his anxiety to denigrate Vedic Brahmanism, makes Tamilnad the original home of Yoga and Samkhya too. It was at a later time that Tamilnad scaled the heights of Bhakti and blazed a trail for the other parts of India to follow. But that has nothing to do with Yoga, Samkhya and the deep enquiries into the region of the spirit they imply.

While giving to the Tamils more than their due, he makes very uncharitable and unsubstantiated allegations against Vedic Brahmanism — saying for example, that toleration, brotherhood and equality were unknown to Vedic society and only Saivism ushered them in (p. 310). We refer the author to the great mantras *sam gacchadhvam* (*Rg.* 10-191); 'If we have sinned against a foreigner, from that

sin may Thou release us' (Rg. 5-85-7); the glorious Atharvan mantras accepting heartily all the earth's inhabitants, all variety of men 'with various religious rites according to their places of abode' (12-1-15; 12-1-45). As though the *Gayatri*-chanters were unaware of Grace, the author says, "Saivism by introducing the element of Grace cuts through the vast forestry of Brahmanical casuistry" (p. 695). Another untenable statement is: "It has been traditional for the Kshatriyas to back movements which challenged Brahmanical supremacy" (p. 517). If that were so how did Brahmanism (of the negligible minority) survive down the ages against the combined opposition of the populace and royal authority? As an example of the anti-Brahmanic Kshatriya he cites Sri Krishna of all people, Krishna who according to *Bhagavata* is 'Brahmanya-Deva', Krishna who Himself said: "*Viprān Sāntan namasye Sirasā-asakrt*"! Contradicting himself, the author says that Krishna protected Aryanism against the Agama-Tantrics (p. 480).

(There are other contradictions. The first volume gives us the impression that the non-Aryan Tamils were close to Phoenician stock in their origin; but in Volume II he quotes Col. Waddell to say, "The Phoenicians were Aryans in race and speech"! p. 1016.)

The author's contention is that the Tantras were for all, whereas Vedic Brahmanism was confined only to the first *varna*. But the foremost of the Tantras, *Kulārnavā* (XI-85) proclaims the contrary: "Like the common prostitutes the *Vedās*, *Purānas* and *smṛtis* are for all and sundry; but this *Vidyā* from Sambhu calls for intimate privacy, as would do a lady of class" — quoted by our author himself in page 718!

Another of the author's unwarranted statements is that "work in the Brahmanical order appears to be a stigma, and a sign of the underprivileged low-caste" (p. 732). The truth is poles apart. The very second *mantra* of the opening *Isā Upanishad* says: "Doing works here, live for a hundred years." *Rg Veda* (4-33-11) has this beautiful *mantra*: "Gods befriend none but him who has toiled." Again: "They do not like sloth. They, the unsleeping, punish laziness." (Rg. 8-2-18).

The author's knowledge of Saivism itself is rather shallow. It is amazing that this book does not refer to *Sūta Sāmhita*, one of the basic Saiva-scriptures. The author has made much of minor legends, like the story of Samkhachūda, and stretches them out of all proportion to 'prove' his pet theories.

The book gives little help even in understanding the main texts common to all the Saivic schools. There is no mention of the illustrious *Saumya* (*Sud-*

dha) Saivas who advocated the eight theories of *Aikyavada*, *Bhedavada*, etc., and none of the brilliant *Paddhatis* of the eighteen Acharyas like Ugra Jyoti, Satya Jyoti, Srikantha and Nilakantha. In this book which dwells at length on such extraneous things as the Assyrian and Babylonian minor cults, the great Saivachārya, Sri Renukāchārya and his venerated Arādhyā Sampradāya are not given a single mention! Even the explanation of the thirty-six *Tattwās* is not clear.

That great luminary in the Saivic firmament, Sri Appaya Dīkshita, is conspicuous by his absence. Had only the author studied some at least of the Dīkshita's works on *Siva-tattwa* he would not have ventured such statements as "Siva offerings were taboo to Brahmins for a long time" (p. 637); "Siva has been classified as a *Sudra Devata*" (p. 927). Why go to Appaya Dīkshita? We find even the modern scholars, Monier William and Hopkins quoting from a recension of *Manu Smṛiti*: "*Vi prānām Daivatam Sāmbuh*." In fact, the great Tamil *Tirumurai* hymnists were never tired of calling Siva as *Vediyān* and *Antanan*. But our author, in order to deny 'brahmanya' to Siva, describes His fondness for bath (*abhiseka-priya*) as a non-Aryan trait. In his opinion the Aryan fire-worshippers did not have much to do with water. But we know that ablutions and water oblations were as important in Vedic Brahmanism as fire-rites. The Asvalayins can even forego the fire-rite (*homa*) by performing the symbolic *pani-homa* in the *Srāddha* ceremony, but can never forego or find a substitute for the water-rites of *snāna* and *tarpana*.

The author makes the astounding statement: "Vasistha had struggled for a long while to keep Saivism out of bounds" (perhaps drawing this conclusion from some obscure Purana or Tantra). But it is Vasistha who is the Rishi of not only the hoary *Rg Vedyā Sūkta* beginning: '*Imā Rudrāya Sthiradhanvane*', but also of the *Siva-mantra par excellence*: '*Tryambakam yajāmahe sugandhim pushtivardhanam*'!

It is again a major lapse on the author's part that he explains the 'Hero' of the book — viz., the *Lingam* — only as the *Nāda-bindu* symbol. There is more to it. Two well-known explanations are: (i) the elliptic *linga* is a miniature of the elliptic solar system (or the cosmos) itself; (ii) the coalescence of Agni-Rudra-Siva is represented in the *Lingam* which resembles a shaft of fire. (It was this great shaft of fire that cooled down into the mountainous *Lingam* of Arunachala.)

One can admire Saivism without being unfair to Vaishnavism. Most Hindus would resent such overstatements as, e.g., "What we know as Hindu-India in principally an achievement of Saivism" (p. 795).

We do not know if the census would support his declaration, "Siva happens to be the most popular God of Hindu faith" (p. 550). Elsewhere: "The most liberal form that Bhakti assumed was finalised in Saivism" (p. 499). What of Ramanuja's or Gauranga's *Vaishnavism*? The author himself while dealing with Bhakti has more quotations from Ramanuja and other Vaishnavas than Sivacharyas!

Instead of making such hyperbolic claims he could have explained (as the Kanchi Jagadguru Samkara-charya does) how Saivism is more inclined to Detachment (*Siva-Yoga*) and Vaishnavism to Acceptance (*Vishnu-Maya*).

It is a fault more serious than exaggeration to equate the *Samkarite-advaitins* with Saivas. To Samkara and his followers every divinity is equally a personation of the impersonal Absolute and Siva certainly has no precedence over others. If Samkara has installed Chandra-maulisvara in all his maths, in his *Bhāshyās* he refers to Narayana alone as *Saguna-brahman* or *Isvara*. But our author says (without substantiating, as usual): "Through his (Samkara's) dedicated efforts . . . the masses adopted Saivism as an expression of monistic theism" (pp. 420-1). Denying Samkara's mass-appeal in the very next page, the author quotes from Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: "Samkara's apparently arid logic made his system unattractive and unpopular"! The followers of Samkara are called *Smārtās*, not 'Saivas', as the author states at p. 621.

Fairness in the presentation of facts and arguments is essential in the search for truth. That is why our Acharyas dwell at length on *Purva-paksha* (presenting the opponents' case in detail). Similarly our author should have presented the case of those who make a phallic imputation to Linga-worship. But this he does not. There is only a passing reference to the two scholars Marshall and MacDonell who did so much (havoc, of course) in interpreting Saivism as sexualism. The truth-seeker must not shun certain factors that may be 'inconvenient' to him. It was not only unsympathetic Western scholars who confused the Lingam with the phallus; there is much in our own texts, for example, the story in the *Anusāsana Parva* of *Maha Bharat*. But the author wears blinkers and ignores these *pūrva-paksha* stories and theories.

One is shocked by the author's carelessness in dealing with proper names. So *Basava* (which is a corruption of *Vrshabha*) is always *Vāsava* to him. (As a Bengali, he may be 'authorised' to change the initial 'B' into 'V'. But how does he account for the long vowel?) — The Tamil '*Adiyār*' is '*Ādiyar*'; *Meykandār* is *Moykandar*; *Arulnandī* is *Arundi*; *Arunagiri* is *Anna Giri*; even our well-known Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan is T. M. P.

Madhavan (p. 763); Tamil itself is *Tāmilā* and its Sangam is *Sangamā*!

Factual errors abound; "*Tirumurai* (is) a compilation of Siva hymns by Tirumurai" (p. 561); *Manikkavachaka*, *Appar*, *Jnanasambandha* and *Sundara* are among the 18 *Siddhas* (p. 744)! *Pasupati-nath*, *Kanchi*, *Sringeri*, *Kumbhakonam* and *Chidambaram* are the *pancha-bhuta kshetrās* (p. 172)! When we see such glaring mistakes about things we know, how can we depend on what he says about things we do not know, like the cults and cultures of Sumer, Babylon, Crete?

The book is thus more a monument of showmanship than disinterested scholarship. Though the author has much of value to tell, it is all vitiated by a "lamentable lack of information and more lamentable want of patience and sympathy."

RA. GANAPATI

THE CHINESE CLASSICS: By James Legge. In five volumes, with translations, critical and exegetical notes, prolegomena and copious indexes. Pub.: Hongkong University Press, Hongkong. (Price not stated.)

This voluminous work well-known to all scholars is the fruit of thirty years of labour on the part of a missionary, Mr. Legge, who became the first Professor of Chinese in Oxford.

This was more than a hundred years ago and much progress has been made since then in Chinese studies, leading to the discovery of several errors in Legge's translations. Chinese letters lend themselves to a variety of interpretations and scholars delight in polemics. Indeed some of Mr. Legge's own statements contradict each other. Volume V (*The Book of History*), praised highly by both Confucius and Mercurius, turns out to be the driest and poorest of diary-notes. It is now known that the *Ch'un Ts'ew* text we have is not the original admired by the sages. However Legge preferred to take the text as genuine and concluded that Confucius "had no reverence for truth . . . he shrank from looking the truth fairly in the face." But in Vol. I Legge had paid the highest tributes to Confucius. No wonder in Vol. V, p. 40, he confesses that "China was hardly a less strange country to him than Lilliput or Laputa would be."

The Chinese Classics, long out of print, are now being re-issued. Vols. I and II are revised and Vols. III, IV and V reproduce the original edition. Concordances to new translations by later sinologues have been added. The get-up and printing are excellent. In a future reprint it may be worth while to revise the prolegomena and personal remarks of Mr. Legge, which have little relevance today.

LUCY CORNELSEN

SELF-REALIZATION THROUGH SOHAM SADHANA : By B. G. Vellal. Pub. : Mrs. Kushalappa, Modur Estate, Kadagadal Post, Coorg. Pp. 156. Price : Rs. 9.

Lt. Col. B. G. Vellal is a retired Army Officer and a disciple of Shri Dada Maharaj (G. R. Ambekar) of Pune, himself a disciple of Shri Gajanan Maharaj of Nasik. In this informally written book the author has described his own experiences and those of his friends in the practice of *soham* sadhana. His enthusiasm and sincerity are apparent, especially in the significance he attaches to dreams and visions and to disconcerting events. His warnings against 'wool-gathering' during meditation remind us of Sri Bhagavan's preference for the *Koham* or Self-enquiry method. *Koham* stresses the path and *soham* the goal; but then, in this realm, means and ends are interchangeable, if not identical.

Concentration on the meaning of the word 'I' or the source of the 'I' thought can be viewed either as self-naughting or Self-realization. In either case, the end-result is pure being as contentless awareness. Japa naturally becomes *ajapa*.

K. S.

PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY IN THE ABHIDHARMA : By H. V. Guenther. Pub. : Shambala Publications, 1123, Spruce Street, Boulder Colorado-80302, U.S.A. Pp. 270. Price : \$ 4.95.

Abhidhamma is instruction in the ultimate nature of things. It is marked by several high qualities. According to Asanga these are four : "Being face to face with the highest goal and the nature of Reality; the teaching of the necessary steps to be taken for the attainment of the goal and presenting them from various viewpoints; its standing above the petty controversies about the nature of Reality and its capacity to come to a definite answer; and penetration into the deeper import of the Buddha's teachings."

Clarifications and explanations of the Mind and its states, Meditation, the World we live in, the Path are offered with an eye to the practice of the Teaching. The Path of Seeing Reality is followed by the Path of Practising Reality. They have ten levels to be traversed : *pramudita*, the joyful one, because one recognises that Enlightenment is possible here and now; *vimala*, the stainless one, the stage of purification; *prabhakari*, the illumining one, the stage of clarifying light; *archismati*, the flaming one, the stage where psychological instabilities are burnt away by the flame of spiritual attainment; *sudurjaya*, difficult to conquer, the stage of difficulty in maintaining spiritual maturity of sentient beings; *abhimukhi*, the one which is present, the stage in

which both *samsara* and *nirvana* are found to be simultaneously valid; *durangama*, the one who goes far, the stage where one realises that the path can be trod till the very end; *achala*, the unshakable one, the stage which knows no upsets, Reality being realised to be the same under all conditions; *sadhupati*, the one which has good discrimination the stage where one has an integral understanding; *dharmamegha*, cloud of dharma, the stage where the Cloud of Knowledge covers the whole of being and pours the rain of enlightenment and bliss. (p. 244)

The book contains several hints of practical value to those who do *sadhana*.

THE MESSAGE OF THE BUDDHA : By K. N. Jayatilleke. Pub. : George Allen and Unwin, London. Pp. 262. Price : £ 5.50.

Comprising some of the talks of the author, this volume throws good deal of light on the approach of Theravada Buddhism to the problems of life and after-life. The Ultimate Truth, Revelation, Karma, Rebirth, Good and Evil — these are some of the major topics covered with clarity. On the question of Nirvana, the writer explains how the term has come to mean extinction for some and 'the highest positive experience of happiness' for others. His own understanding is that Nirvana "the Transcendent Reality . . . a state of freedom, power, perfection, knowledge and perfect happiness of a transcendent sort." Obviously it means extinction of the desire-self and revelation of the natural state of bliss in existence.

It is interesting to follow the author in his analysis of how the individual is conditioned but not determined. "We have an element of initiative or freedom from constraint which makes it possible for us within limits to control and direct our future course of samsaric evolution and make the future different from what it may otherwise be."

He rebuts the charge that the quest for Nirvana is a form of escapism. He points out how, on the contrary, those who are engaged in this pursuit calmly face the realities of life and acquire a poise that cannot be disturbed by any circumstance.

A readable book of high thought presented in simple language.

M. P. PANDIT

AHIMSĀ : By Unto Tahtinen. Pub. : Rider and Company, Fitzroy Square, London-W1. Pp. xii+148. Price : £ 4.95 net.

The sub-title of this well-printed and neatly produced book is — 'Non-violence in Indian Tradition', and it provides a systematic and detailed survey of the concept of *Ahimsā* right from Vedic times to the present day. It is an in-depth study of

the evolution of the philosophy of non-violence, embracing ethical, religious and spiritual or metaphysical aspects, not only in the orthodox Hindu thought represented by Vedic, epic and *Purāṇa-Dharma-Śāstra* literature but also *Sāṅkhya-Yoga, Vedānta, Buddhist and Jaina Thought*. The exposition throughout is lucid and richly documented.

The Buddhist stress on compassion, and the Jaina stress on vocal and mental non-violence show how *Ahimsā* was invested with social, moral and spiritual good.

It is also shown how the positive norm of *Ahimsā* is invariably emphasised in relation to other norms like truthfulness, non-stealing, sex-control, forgiveness, purity etc., not only in Upanishadic but Jain and Buddhist literature and how, in the hierarchy of evil, *himsā* leads the rest. The author feels that the positive value of *Ahimsā* was incorporated into Hindu social philosophy by virtue of the pressure of the ascetic tradition. This may be but a half-truth because moral *Ahimsā* as a universal value is as old as the Upanishads at least.

Some chapters are devoted to the exposition of *Ahimsā* in relation to war and crime and sub-human beings; and summary appraisals of contemporary thought on *Ahimsā* by Sri Aurobindo, Gandhi and Vinoba are also provided. The appendix hazards the guess that the Jain idea is pre-Aryan and pre-Vedic. What is of utmost importance is the fact that in the present human quest for peace, only a philosophy of non-violence is of abiding value.

Twice (p. 4 last line and p. 21, last line) the Upanishadic word *tīrtha* has been wrongly translated as 'holy places'. 'Ritual performances' is the meaning more suitable in the context. On p. 84, *ekanta* is mis-spelt as *akanta*.

THE ALANKĀRA-SECTION OF THE AGNI-PURĀNA: By Suresh Mohan Bhattacharyya. Pub.: Firma K.L.M. Private Ltd., 257, B.B.B. Ganguly Street, Calcutta-12. Pp. iv+239. Price: Rs. 45.00.

Though this is a doctoral dissertation prepared as far back as 1947 and printed just now, it will be certainly welcomed by scholars of Indian Poetics since it furnishes for the first time even now, of a critical edition of the *Alankāra-Section* of the *Agni-Purāṇa* after collating nine manuscripts, all from Bengal and Orissa. Though the text itself is a short one of eleven small chapters; and it is nothing more than an eclectic compendium echoing the ideas and even expressions from original writers like Bharata, Daṇḍin, Ānandavardhana, Bhoja and also possibly Kuntaka (because it is stated clearly "yakroktistu bhaved bhāṅyā", VI.31), it some-

times gives new interpretations and ideas. The author has given a close and dependable English translation also of the whole which is useful. But his *resumés* of the concepts have become dated and his idea that *Agni-Purāṇa* is the source-book of all classical treatises on *Rasa, Dhvani*, etc., has been exploded by the researches of scholars in the past three decades.

DR. K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

SELECTED WRITINGS: By Dr. M. V. Krishna Rao. Edited by K. Balasundara Gupta. Pub.: Satsangha Seva Samithi, Gandhi Bazaar, Bangalore-560004. Pp. 199. Price: Rs. 30.

The late Dr. Krishna Rao's essays in this collection cover a variety of subjects and reveal his wide reading perceptive criticism and keen insight into the positive values of culture.

The book opens with an appreciation of Jaya-deva's immortal 'Gita-Govinda'. The author shows that Radha's unquenchable love for Krishna, far from being voluptuous, is the deepest expression of the soul's infinite hunger for peace and bliss in mystical union with the Lord. In 'Religion and Philosophy in Karnataka' the author gives a balanced picture of the religious forces to which Karnataka was exposed through the centuries. Karnataka culture has assimilated the finer elements indifferent faiths without losing its distinctive character. The author elucidates Sukra's views on the art of government and administration of justice, and *Sukraniti* can well be the touchstone of good government. Assessing candidly Purandaradasa's 'Jivesvara Tatva', the author dwells on the saint's deep understanding of human nature and shows how through his songs the saint spreads the *bhakti* cult — devotional self-giving as the path to realization. In Swami Vivekananda, the author sees a 'mahayogin', re-orienting the message of Vedānta with a view to ushering in 'a new manhood and a new type of action'. The author in another essay analyses the Hindu concept of State based on *dharma* and the similarities in the concepts of Aristotle and Plato. *Dharma*, he avows, stands for the highest social good and righteousness in life and conduct, constituents of true progress and happiness.

The book is ennobling and thought-provoking.

U. S. RAMACHANDRAN

SPIRITUAL HEALERS OF INDIA: By Jaya T. Rao Sahib. Pub.: By the author, 1498/11-A, K. M. Puram, Mysore-4. Pp. 155. Price: Rs. 6.

GEMS FROM THE EAST: By H. P. Blavatsky. Pub.: Himalaya Prakasam, 37, 8th Cross, N. R. Colony, Bangalore-560 019. Pp. 84. Price: Rs. 2.50.

IN HARMONY WITH NATURE : By The English Ecology Group. Pub.: The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras-600 020. Pp. 49. Price : 3.50.

SUMMUM BONUM OF LIFE : By the Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religions. Seminar Proceedings 1974. Pub.: The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras-600 020. Pp. 127. Price : Rs. 10.

Lives of the Saints and Sages of India have ever been an inspiration to sincere aspirants. How faith does not come easily but only after a traumatic shock is exemplified in the opening chapter of the book describing the story of Purandaradasa.

Jaya Rao Sahib in the little book details the lives of Spiritual Healers, as she calls them like Kabirdas, Tulsidas Thyagaraja, Ramakrishna, and Ramana Maharshi. A reading of these noble lives is sure to bring solace and tranquillity to any troubled soul.

* * *

A Birthday Book of Precepts and Axioms is a marvellous handbook brought out by Madame H. P. Blavatsky in the last century under the title "Gems from the East". This merit lies not only in the sonorous expression and wonderful imagery but in the profound philosophy of life and altruistic doctrines it contains. Not available to the public all these years, and published once again by the Himalaya Prakasham, every maxim, like musk, captivates by its own fragrance, "and not from being called a perfume by the druggist."

* * *

The English Ecology Group of the Theosophical Order of Service have in a small pamphlet entitled *In Harmony With Nature* explained the dangers that threaten our environment and the abuses that Nature suffers at human hands, sometimes through wanton exploitation which is unforgivable, but often through blind stupidity and neglect. The Group offer suggestions to all alike — whether individual, businessmen, town-council or nation — each one of whom can do a bit to bring back that harmony and that reverence for nature which is so essential to our well-being, nay our survival.

* * *

The Vedantic concept of summum bonum of life, an enlightened view of the *Purusharthas*, is brought out in the Seminar Proceedings organised by the Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion at Belgaum in April 1974. The Jain, the Sikh, the Christian, the Visishtadvaita, the Gita and the Theosophical views on the subject have been explained by the participants at the seminar; and all seem to agree that *artha* and *kama* have to be pursued through *Dharma*. *Dharma* is the intrinsic

value; the pursuit of all empirical and even spiritual ends is through *Dharma*.

ARGUS

* * *

THE KEY TO THE SCIENCES OF MAN : (The "Impossible" Relativity of Value Reactions). By D. G. Garan. Pub.: Philosophical Library Inc., 15, East 40th Street, New York, U.S.A. Pp. 561. Price : \$ 10.

Dr. Garan, the author of this very stimulating book has written two other books on psychological relativity, viz., *Relativity for Psychology* and *The Paradox of Pleasure and Relativity* and his present book *The Key to the Sciences of Man*, expounds the same principle by applying it to Physics and Biology, Psychology and Psychopathology, medicine and education and social sciences like sociology and economics. The author takes his stand on the principle that human behaviour in its entire gamut is only based on man's organic value reactions and that pleasure, inner value or satisfaction by whatever name the final response is described, depends on the restrictions, non-release or negative value reactions. The point elaborated here, as the author himself realises, will be widely regarded as being antithetical to the general scientific pattern. Nevertheless to the unbiased reader, there seems to be considerable force in his well-directed arguments against absolute causation. His central thesis is that human motivation is based on the satisfaction or non-release of impulses dependent on the organism and its sameness. In other words, man in his thought, speech and behaviour is guided only by his organic value reactions. The satisfaction of his physical and intellectual impulses depends on the need for them and this need is proportionately dependent on their intensity. The author criticises human sciences as merely basing themselves on absolute positive value without noting their dependence on negative factors like inhibition or restriction. Though the principle of homeostasis has been recognised by psychologists, no writer till now has made it the basis of the doctrine of the relativity of value reaction. The author applies this principle to several allied branches like neuroses and psychoses, medicine and modern diseases, education, history and sociology and finally to philosophy. The book is very convincingly written except for the chapter on "Humanistic Delusions in Philosophy, Arts and Culture", in which the author describes philosophy as 'self-defeating perfectionism'. Explanations like 'value fixation and cult fixations' do not exhaust philosophy, music and art.

Though startlingly unorthodox, the book is very stimulating and deserves careful reading and reflection.

tion. The thinking here is untrammelled by any inhibitive factor except logic and consistency.

* * *

SAINT ARUNAGIRINATHA : By Swami Anuvandana. Pub. : Pongi Publications, Sri Vaishnavi Campus, Madras-600 062. Pp. 144. Price : Rs. 12.50.

This is a critical exposition of the life of Saint Arunagirinathar by Swami Anuvandana. The author carefully sifts all available historical evidence and concludes that the Saint's birth should have taken place at the beginning of the second quarter of the fourteenth century. The Swami critically reviews the works of the Saint under nine heads, the first and foremost being the *Tiruppugazh*. The description of the saint's yogic *sadhana* is masterly. The suggestion at the end of the chapter that Arunagirinathar speaks of Advaitic experience in his songs requires careful thought. The Appendices and the illustrations greatly enhance the value of the book.

PROF. S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

AYURVEDA FOR HEALTHY LINING — (Indian Science of Medicine) : By Dr. Bhagwan Dash. Pub. : Hind Pocket Books Pvt., Ltd., G. T. Road, Delhi-110 032. Pp. 161. Price : Rs. 6.

The publishers have done a good job in bringing out this neat little paper back, by way of an intro-

duction to the ancient Ayurveda, by an authority on the subject, who is at present Deputy Advisor (Ayurvedic) in the Ministry of Health, Government of India.

Time was, till recently, when the grandmother in the house used to have a small chest of household remedies and could handle competently most of the ordinary ailments of children and adults; while in the present day people rush to Allopathy for expensive treatment which include injections that have become almost a 'must' with doctors as well as patients, for even common complaints.

After giving a useful Introduction to the principles of Ayurveda, and explaining the *tridosha* theory, the author has included a very useful chapter on *Dinacharya* (rules for the regulation of daily life for healthy living). After that he deals with diseases under various heads: those of the respiratory system, skin and hair, blood and cardiovascular system, eye, genital organs, nervous system (including psychic diseases), digestive system etc. Description of diseases includes treatment with simple Ayurvedic remedies most of which are now-a-days available from reliable sources.

Quite an interesting and useful book, inviting the attention of educated laymen for a deeper study of this great 'Science of Life'.

ASWINI KUMAR

FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS

GURU POORNIMA (Vyasa Puja)	Saturday	30- 7-1977
KRISHNA JAYANTI (Gokulashtami)	Monday	5- 8-1977
DAY OF BHAGAVAN'S ADVENT TO ARUNACHALA	Thursday	1- 9-1977
VINAYAKA CHATURTHI	Friday	16- 9-1977
NAVARATHRI FESTIVAL (Commences on)	Tuesday	13-10-1977
SARASWATI PUJA	Monday	20-10-1977
VIJAYADASAMI	Tuesday	21-10-1977
DEEPAVALI	Thursday	10-11-1977
SKANDASASHTI	Wednesday	16-11-1977
KARTIGAI DEEPAM	Friday	25-11-1977
SRI BHAGAVAN'S JAYANTI	Tuesday	27-12-1977
PONGAL	Saturday	14- 1-1978
CHINNASWAMI ARADHANA	Monday	23- 1-1978
MAHA SIVARATHRI	Tuesday	7- 3-1978
SRI VIDYA HAVAN	Friday	17- 3-1978
TELUGU NEW YEAR DAY	Saturday	8- 4-1978
TAMIL NEW YEAR DAY	Friday	14- 4-1978



Sri Bhagavan's Birth Centenary

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

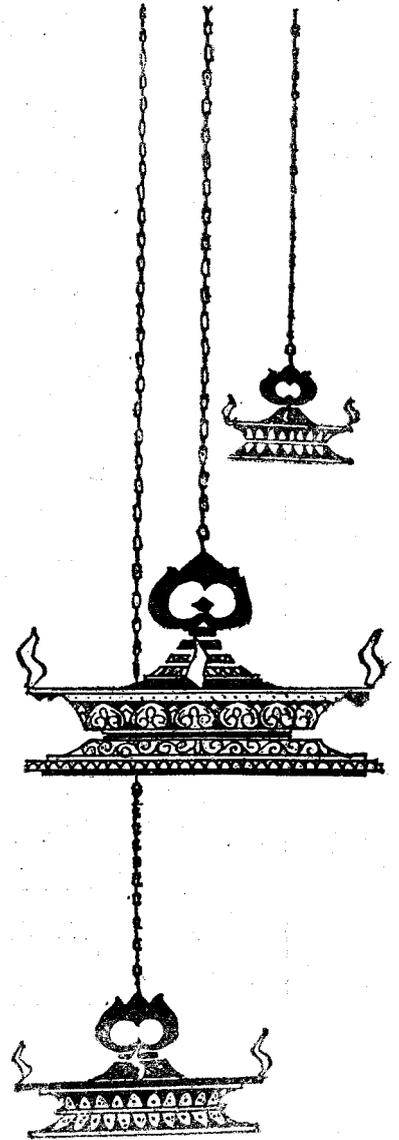
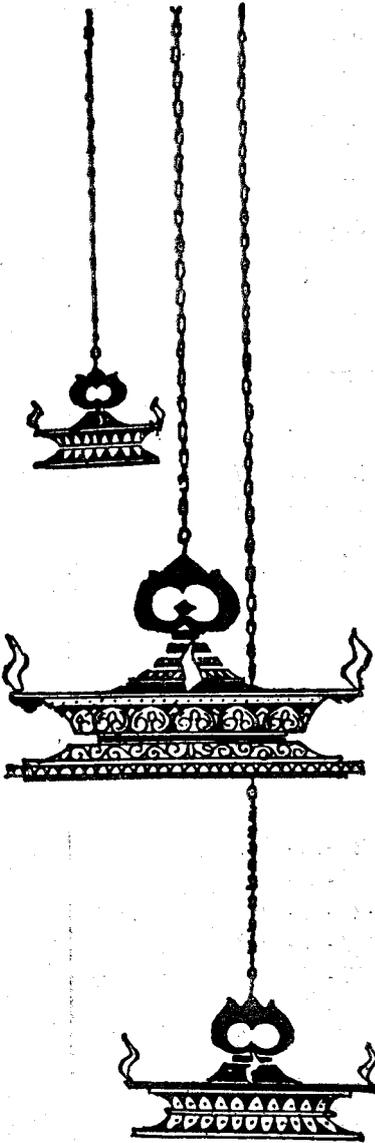
The event is to be commemorated by something concrete apart from publishing a Souvenir, which is also contemplated as one project. Any other project such as new publications, reprints, or fresh translations of works on and by Sri Bhagavan or even any charitable activity, will be appropriate to the occasion.

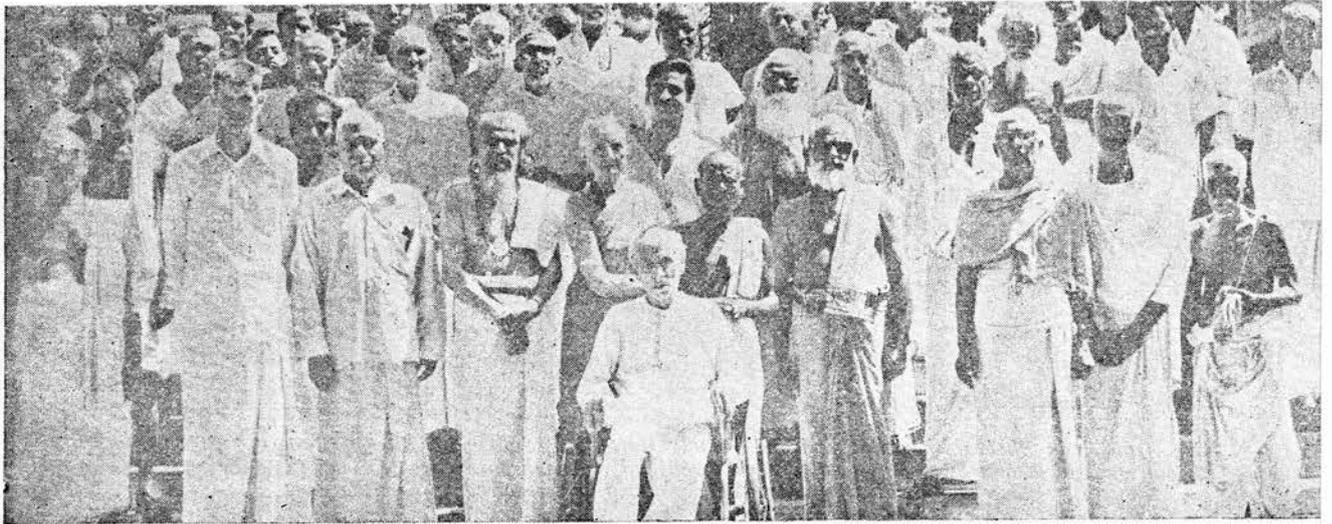
Devotees are requested to send suggestions so that a consensus can be arrived at and activities planned in time.

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

Suggestions may please be sent to :

Sri T. N. Venkataraman,
President, Board of Trustees,
Sri Ramanasramam,
Tiruvannamalai-606 603, South India





The devotees of Sri Ramanasramam are happy to have a group-photo taken along with the devout pilgrims from the United States. Sri Dennis and Sri Bhagawat are seen to the right of the Ashram President, Sri T. N. Venkataraman; and to his left are Mrs. Lucy Cornelssen and Sri S. S. Cohen (in the wheel chair).

ASHRAM BULLETIN

HOMAGE TO THE MASTER

BY DEVOTEES OF "ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA"

Dedicated to the Master, Sri Ramana, and His teaching of *Vichara Marga*, *Arunachala Ashrama* was founded by a humble devotee from Bihar (in India), *Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat*, in New York City on December 7, 1966. With His grace the Ashrama has ever since remained open for all sincere seekers of Truth.

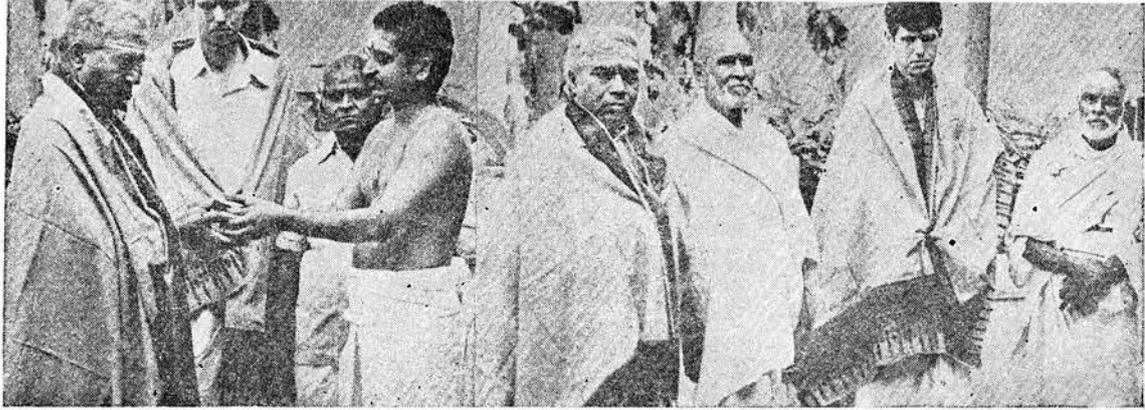
Later, in 1972, in the beautiful Annapolis Valley in Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, Canada, a permanent residential Ashrama blossomed from the main New York City Centre. After this Center was opened, seven members of the Ashrama visited Arunachala in August, 1973.¹ They also then visited Madurai and Tiruchuzhi, so sacred to the devotees of Sri Maharshi.

On September 1, 1975, these devout *bhaktas* opened a temple² for Sri Bhagavan, named *Arunachala Ramana Mandiram*, in Nova Scotia. Sri Bhagawat narrated that when they visited the shrine of Bhagavan at Arunachala in 1973 he prayed that a Temple be built for Bhagavan and that that prayer had been granted by His Grace.

This year, only two devotees from the New York Ashram could visit our Ashram; they are *Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat* and *Sri Dennis Hartel*; they stayed at the Ashram for two months during which

¹ see page 246 of Oct. 1973.

² see page 263 of Oct. 1975.



Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat and Sri Dennis Hartel were honoured with shawls by Sri Viswanatha Swami and Sri Kunju Swami, respectively, on behalf of the Ashram. Our Managing Editor presented some sacred relics to the New York Ashrama, received by Sri Bhagawat.

time they visited Madurai, Tiruchuzhi and also the native place of Sri Bhagawat in Bihar.

During this visit, Sri Bhagawat's constant prayer to Sri Bhagavan was to enable him construct a Temple for Bhagavan in the Fifth Avenue of New York City.

Sri Dennis was very busy taking pictures of the Ashram, the places hallowed by the stay of Sri Bhagavan in and around Arunachala. Sri Bhagawat was busy in contacting the old devotees of Bhagavan and recording their speeches and bhajans. He was particularly happy that he was able to have a closer contact with Sri Ramaswami Pillai this time. A series of talks by him have been tape-recorded.

Our Ashram President, Sri T. N. Venkataraman, honoured these devout bhaktas by duly presenting them shawls through Sri Viswanatha Swami and Sri Kunju Swami, as a mark of appreciation of their laudable services in the distant continent of America. Through our Managing Editor a few sacred relics were also presented to them which would be preserved in the New York Centre and in Nova Scotia. They propose to bring out a comprehensive Pictorial Souvenir on our Master, to be released during the Centenary of Bhagavan. Towards this noble endeavour they propose engaging an expert photographer, who is also a devotee of Bhagavan in U.S.A. We wish them all success.

On their way back they spent four useful days in Bombay, where they were received by Sri A. D. Vazirani Davysons, and Sri P. V. Somasundaram, our representative in Bombay. Sri Bhagawat has written very highly praising the dedication and devotion of Sri Somasundaram. Prominent devotees in Bombay were introduced by him to these devotees from America.

Sri Dennis Hartel writes :

"With Sri Bhagavan's Grace I have been blessed to visit His sacred abode on three occasions. First

being August 1973 for about three weeks. Second and third have been this year itself; in the month of March for three weeks, and again after one month's absence, May 6 to 22, 1977.

"I cannot write anything about *Sri Ramanasramam* that has not been already expressed by so many. But to us there is ever-increasing satisfaction, peace and fulfilment to see how our Divine Master continues to do His work in silence. Just to sit inside the Ashram premises, to touch the stone structures, to witness the daily pujas or see the administrative work go on, is wonderful. Where else in India, or even the world, is such a place which an earnest aspirant may visit, finding all the necessary facilities to immerse himself in spiritual ideals, and where is such a place where our Master's tender care and guidance is so palpably felt. Here one surely finds his mind turning toward Sri Bhagavan.

"Again, I have been blessed to have the wonderful experience of visiting all the places connected with the life of Sri Bhagavan prior to His coming to the feet of Arunachala, that is Tiruchuzhi, Madurai, Tirukoilur and other places. Also in 1973 with a group of devotees from America, we undertook the same pilgrimage. Also all the places connected with and consecrated by Sri Bhagavan here in Tiruvannamalai prior to His final residence at Sri Ramanasramam have been visited along with the places where our Master resided. All the time we remembered Sri Bhagavan's teaching that our real happiness is to abide in Him in the *Heart*. Sri Bhagavan never allows His devotees to lose themselves in this world; He keeps them firmly on the road that leads to Him.

"I have had the rare good fortune to have personal contact with those old and stalwart devotees who have been with Sri Bhagavan since their early youth. What wonderful lessons we find in their very life of complete and total submission to Sri Bhagavan. For a young and new aspirant like myself this

contact is invaluable and I thank Sri Bhagavan for giving me such wonderful opportunities.

"In the *Bhagavad-Gita* (Ch. IV, v. 34) Bhagavan Sri Krishna says :

*'Tadviddhi Pranipatena Priprasnena sevaya
Updekshyanti te Jnanam Jnaninas
tatvadarsinah'*

which means :

*'Know that by earnest surrender, by enquiry
and by service; the wise who have realised
the truth will instruct you in that knowledge.'*

"I have been reminded of this verse time and again in the life of these most marvellous devotees of our Master and I pray to Sri Bhagavan that I may remember this verse always.

"I need not say anything concerning Sri Bhagavan's most wonderful teachings, I know my limitations and inexperience. But I can say this much that from the time Bhagavan came into my life in 1971 no other teaching or Master or practice had any charm or any attraction for me. This, again is due to the benign blessing of our Master.

"Before concluding I would like to express my gratitude to so many. Especially I thank the management which has unreservedly and happily fulfilled all our wishes. All the Ashram workers and employees were a constant source of inspiration and guidance to us. All the old and new residing devotees are Sri Bhagavan's children and servants and our life has been blessed simply to see them; we humbly touch the feet of them all. All this is Sri Bhagavan's work, still continuing by His never-failing Grace and we pray that His guiding Grace may be with us for ever."

* * *

ARTHUR OSBORNE'S DAY

The anniversary of Arthur Osborne's passing away on May 8, 1970, was observed this year at Ramana Nagar as usual at his Samadhi, covered with flowers



TO SPANISH - SPEAKING DEVOTEES

We wish to announce that translations into Spanish of the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi have been undertaken at Arunachala Ashrama, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi Center, Inc., in New York City. All devotees fluent in both English and Spanish languages are invited to lend a hand in this endeavor so that all people of the Spanish-speaking world might profit from the most sublime and beatific teachings and life of Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. Under the supervision of the President of Sri Ramanasramam the work is being done.

Anyone wishing to aid in this endeavor is requested to contact us at :

ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi
Center, Inc.
342 East 6 Street, NEW YORK
New York 10003, U.S.A.
Telephone : (212) 477-4060 ;
854-0322

and garlands, offered by his admirers. Ashramites, old devotees and visitors gathered around it to render homage to the late founder-Editor's memory in silence and prayers and by chanting Mr. Osborne's favourite *Five Hymns to Sri Arunachala*. A *biksha* was arranged by the Ashram on this occasion.

* * *

FIJI CELEBRATIONS

The *Brahma Nirvana* Day of Sri Bhagavan was celebrated and a special Prayer meeting was held at Sangam Sri Maha Vishnu Temple, Labasa, on Friday, April 14, amidst a gathering of devotees. Special pujas and bhajan were conducted under the leadership of Sri T. A. J. Pillai, who has been mainly instrumental in spreading the teaching of the Master in Fiji islands. Sri Pillai is seen second from left in the picture.

BOMBAY JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS

Though belated, the Jayanti celebrations of Bhagavan in Bombay was grandly conducted on March 26, at the Blavatsky Lodge, French Bridge, Opera House. Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. S. Kailasam, Judge of the Supreme Court of India, presided. Speeches on the teachings of Sri Maharshi were given by Mrs. Mani Sahukar and Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje. After according a cordial welcome to the Chief Guest, Sri Nariman Sahukar, Chairman of the Bombay



Justice Sri Kailasam is seen admiring the grandeur of the picture.

SRI BHAGAVAN'S BRAHMA NIRVANA CELEBRATIONS

The twenty-seventh *Brahma Nirvana* of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi was duly celebrated on April 15, at the Ashram with the usual pujas, feeding the poor, etc., amidst a large gathering of devotees, many from distant parts of India and abroad.

This sacred day was similarly celebrated by a gathering of devotees in New Delhi, Calcutta, Poona, Kolhapur, Secunderabad Madras, Nellore and other places.

Jayanti Celebration Committee, accepted a large coloured portrait of Sri Ramana Maharshi, a gift from Sri Ramanasramam to the 'Ramana Centre' in Bombay. Sri P. S. Kailasam unveiled the portrait. Sri G. S. Pohekar, Vice-President of the Committee proposed a vote of thanks. The absence of

"RAMANA MAHARSHI CENTRE, BOMBAY"

Devotees of Sri Bhagavan in Bombay, Gujarat and Maharashtra, are requested to send suggestions to

Sri P. V. Somasundaram,
10/155, Adarsh Nagar, Worli,
BOMBAY-400 025.

regarding the construction of
Sri Ramana Maharshi Centre at Bandra, Bombay.



The devotees who participated in the Bombay Celebrations.



H.H. Jagadguru Shankaracharya Shri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha of Sarada Pitha, Sringeri and H.H. Shri Bharati Tirtha at Ramana Kendra, Delhi. Smt. and Sri A. R. Natarajan are seen officiating ceremonies. The Sringeri Acharya declared open the Reading Room block of the Kendra.

Sri P. V. Somasundaram, who was in hospital due to a scooter accident, was felt very much. His services were praised.

RAMANA KENDRA, DELHI

From April 3 to April 8, *Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje* gave a series of Hindi talks on Sri Bhagavan and his teachings. On all the six days the large audiences listened with rapt attention, as the speaker recalled and reported her talks with Sri Bhagavan and explained the teachings with apt quotations in several languages.

Another series of talks, this time in Tamil, were given from April 11 to April 16 by the famous scholar and author, *Sri K. V. Jagannathan*, Editor, *Kalaimagal*. The first two talks were on Bhagavan's life and teachings and the last four on Muruganar's poems. Marked by eloquence and erudition, the lectures were enthusiastically received by large audiences.

On May 3, *Buddha Purnima Day*, the newly-built Library and Reading Room block were declared open by *H.H. Jagadguru Shankaracharya Shri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha* of Sarada Pitha, Sringeri, who spoke in Hindi and conveyed his blessings.

H.H. Shri Bharati Tirtha spoke in Tamil and released the Kendra's latest publication, an edition of Sri Bhagavan's *Songs*. The new Hall was filled to capacity on the solemn occasion.

On May 15, *Sri Dandapani Oduvar* gave a full-scale musical performance (with accompaniments) based on Sri Muruganar's songs.

On May 19, the devotees and friends of the Kendra gave a farewell party to *Sri A. R. Natarajan* on the eve of his transfer to Bangalore. Sri Natarajan and his family were the life and soul of the Kendra, said Sri C. R. Govindarajan, and Sri Oduvar sang a song of benediction.

RAMANA BHAKTA SABHA, ALWARPET, MADRAS

At the regular Sunday meetings, after *Vedaparayana*, *Sri M. S. Nagarajan* gives talks on Sri Bhagavan's *Five Hymns*.

PILGRIMS

Swami Satyananda Maharshivarlu of Hyderabad, a very old devotee of Sri Bhagavan, on his way back

from Tirupati, stayed at our Ashram for a day, with his group of disciples numbering more than thirty.

* * *

Sri Sohanlal Bhikshu, a disciple of *Sri Vinoba Bhave*, who commenced his *pāda yātra* from Pavnar Ashram in 1973, after crossing over Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka and Kerala reached Tamil Nadu in March 1976. He arrived in Tiruvannamalai on May 4 with his associates and insisted on staying only at our Ashram. During his stay at the Ashram he was very much impressed with its serenity and peaceful atmosphere. The local Sarvodaya Sangha helped the Ashram in looking after this pious sadhu.

* * *

Swami Ramana Thirtha, formerly Sri Thiagarajan of the Chinmaya Mission, has started 'Sri Ramana Spiritual Organisation' (47, Gopal Reddiar Colony, Madras-11) recently. He has been giving lectures and conducting classes on the teachings of Sri Maharshi. His special subject is the book: *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam* of Suri Nagamma. He came to the Ashram with a party of 45 earnest devotees and spent three days in the third week of April, introducing them to the spiritual atmosphere of the Ashram. He again visited the Ashram with a limited number of devotees in the last week of May.

* * *

Sri F. G. Natesa Iyer was a great devotee of Sri Bhagavan and was a pillar of strength to the Ashram in its growth. His grandson, *Sri V. S. Kumar*, who is an engineer with the General Electric Co., in Madras, is a frequent visitor to the Ashram. This time he came with his mother, wife, daughter and son and spent nearly ten days in May. Sri Kumar and family benefited much by this trip, during which time they had the sat-sanga of Sri Viswanatha Swami and others.

* * *

Sri Sadhu Ram of Sri Vaishnavi Shrine of Tirumullaivayil, Madras, who is travelling in South India, giving discourses, bhajans and talks on topics spiritual, with specific emphasis on *sanatana dharma*, stayed in our Ashram in May for a few days. A group of devotees numbering more than forty, belonging to *Sri Shankara Meditation Centre*, Bangalore, were treated to lunch at the special request of Sri Sadhu Ram.

* * *

At the request of our devotee, *Sri J. T. Thadhani*, we invited members (45 persons) of 'The Vasanta Youth Lodge', an association of young Theosophists.

to visit the Ashram for a day and offered them lunch. They, though quite young, liked the peaceful atmosphere of the Ashram very much.

* * *

Sri S. Gurusamy, a very active member of the *Ramana Kendra*, New Delhi, is a staunch devotee of Bhagavan. He does appreciable social service under the auspices of the Kendra and is well recognised too. His love for this Ashram is such that as and when his official duty permits him he goes over to the Ashram with his family and spends as many days as possible. This year too he visited the Ashram in the first week of June, along with his wife and daughter, Miss Kala (who is a good artist and singer) and spent three useful days.

* * *

Prof. T. F. Bidari, Nipani, Karnataka, is an earnest devotee of Sri Bhagavan. In fact, his entire family is devoted to the Master. Every year during his annual vacation he brings his family and spends a few days at the Ashram, immersed in the spiritual atmosphere of Arunachala-Ramana. He with his family stayed at the Ashram for a week in June.

* * *

Prof. K. Swaminathan, with his wife, *Visalakshi Ammal*, and grandchildren, stayed at the Ashram for a few days in the last week of June. *Smt. and Sri R. Venkataraman* accompanied them to the Ashram from Madras, where he has recently been transferred from Bombay.

Added to these, *Smt. and Sri A. R. Natarajan* and their daughters, also joined them at the Ashram. Sri Natarajan has been transferred from Delhi to Bangalore.

Thus there was a happy *sangamam* of active collaborators of the *Delhi Ramana Kendra* at the Source, Sri Ramanasramam.

OTHER PILGRIMS

Swami Tejomayananda (of Sivanandashram),
Rishikesh
Philip Lukosa, Shantivanam
Gokulbhai Soti, Sangli
K. V. Ramanan and family, Asansol
K. Arunachala Sivan, Madras
Mrs. Mala Mangalonkar, Secunderabad
G. N. Murthy, Madras
Dr. K. Subrahmanyam, Hyderabad
M. K. Babu, Madras
V. R. Kothandaraman, Bombay
Mr. & Mrs. J. Jayaraman, Ahmedabad
V. S. V. Mani and family, Tirunelveli

V. R. Lakshminarayanan (Secretary, Ramana Kendra),
Calcutta

Dr. K. Srinivasan, Warangal

K. Ramasubramanian, Karur

Dr. Subhadra, with mother, Madras

C. V. Gopalakrishnan, with family, New Delhi

Ningappa Danappa Hulkoti, Kanivi

'Everest' Sundaram, with son, New Delhi

Eda Saur, Yugoslaviya

N. Kartigesan, Sri Lanka

Bert Schmitz, Holland

George Ellis, Holland

Berfke Meijer, Holland

Walter Braw Schenley, England

Diercka Ilse, Belgium

Jean Clause, England

* * *

OBITUARY

POPATLAL B. KOTAK

It is with a keen sense of loss that we record the passing away from our midst of *Sri Popatlal B. Kotak* at Bombay on May 14.

Sri Kotak was an industrialist, businessman and philanthropist, well-known for his charitable disposition.

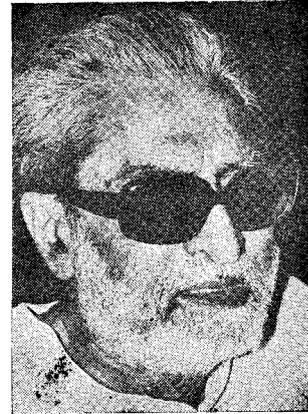
He was a sincere devotee of Sri Bhagavan and as Vice-President of *Sri Ramana Jayanti Celebration Committee* was the moving spirit in all the functions in Bombay to organise and celebrate the *Jayanti* and *Brahma Nirvana* Days of Sri Bhagavan, year after year, for the past three decades.

A genial personality, he was a great supporter of the Ashram and its activities. We convey our condolences to his wife, brothers and relatives.

May his soul rest in Peace at the Feet of Sri Bhagavan.

"We do not know about sleep or dream. But we know about the present state, the waking state. Let us try and understand it. Then all will become clear to us. Who is it that undergoes sleep, dream and waking states? You say we must get out of ignorance and wake into *jnana*. Who is it that has the ignorance, and ignorance of what? When you enquire into the source of 'I', all doubts will be set at rest."

— SRI BHAGAVAN, from *Day by Day*



SRI ASHOK MEHTA VISITS THE ASHRAM

SRI ASHOK METHA who was touring in Tiruvannamalai on June 10, visited the Ashram on the invitation of the *Managing Editor*.

Sri Ashok Metha explained that he was deeply interested in Maharshi's teaching and that his circle of friends in the thirties and forties had very great regard for the sage. It may be recalled that his close friend, *Yusuf Meher Ali*, was at the Ashram for a few weeks, recouping his health, in the presence of the Maharshi. Sri Ashok Metha listened with interest to the details of the working of the Ashram and its management.

During the visit, Sri Metha met many of the inmates of the Ashram. He went round the Ashram and at the Shrine of Sri Maharshi's *Samadhi Prasad* was offered to him. Some publications of Sri Ramanasramam and the Ashram Quarterly, *The Mountain Path*, were presented to him. He was particularly pleased to receive 'The Life of Sri Maharshi' by Arthur Osborne and to note that the Ashram journal deals with the spiritual aspects and truths of all religions of the world.

While taking leave he expressed happiness "that our traditions are well kept up here".

The Mountain Path

Life Subscribers—Indian

ADDITIONS SINCE JULY 1976

Miss Sarada Natarajan, Bangalore
 Mrs. Uma Balakrishnan, Gandhinagar, Gujarat
 V. S. Bole, Bombay
 K. A. A. Raja, Lt. Governor, Itanagar
 Mrs. Nergish H. Parekh, Bombay
 S. Krishnan, Bombay
 J. R. Anantha Raman, Shimoga
 K. Mahadev, Madras
 L. G. Bhat, Holangadde
 J. Bharati Devi, Visakhapatnam
 Rustom M. Unani, Bombay
 Ghanshyamdas Lakhmani, Calcutta
 P. S. Tampi, Ahmedabad
 K. L. Viswanathan, Madras
 R. Venkataraman, Bombay

R. T. Vyas, Bombay
 Murari Prasad Singh, Ghataro, Bihar
 K. Anjaneya Raju, Palakol
 A. K. Sanyal, Calcutta
 B. D. Kapur, Bombay
 Mrs. Dinoo K. Governor, Bombay
 N. B. Medikeri, Shahapur
 B. Umakanth, Bombay
 S. Venkataraman, Bhubaneswar
 Miss Mani Rabadi, Bombay
 S. Balaram Raja, Neyveli
 Kameshwar Deo, Patna
 T. S. Sithram, Bangalore
 H. N. Jhangiani, Baroda

The Mountain Path

Life Subscribers—Foreign

Maha Krishna Swami, Sao Paulo
 Donald Phillips, Sao Paulo
 Waldemar Wiechert, Sao Paulo
 Ina Zell, Ventura, U.S.A.
 Kabal S. Parmar, N. Vancouver, Canada
 Joyce Osur, New York, U.S.A.
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul & Inge Rada, Bern, Switzerland
 Dr. D. V. Kanitkar, Columbia, U.S.A.
 Mary Jane Diamond, Bath, U.S.A.
 S. A. Naimpally, Thunder Bay, Canada
 Mrs. Leona Komoroski, Chicago, U.S.A.
 Maria Proske, Wien, Austria
 Cornel Christaffel, Berlin, W. Germany
 Peter Shumway, Oklahoma, U.S.A.
 Katherine & Jean Le Mee, New York, U.S.A.
 C. L. Counts, Yorktown, U.S.A.
 Gertrude Burke, Queensland, Australia

K. M. Melwani, Singapore
 I. M. Nome, San Francisco, U.S.A.
 Diogenes-Nakis Safilios, Sonthofen, W. Germany
 Dennis Nixon, London
 Vaclav & Anna Musil, Ville de Lery, Canada
 Gaston Kempfner, Paris
 Rachel G. Silveira Correa, Sao Paulo
 Mrs. Rosalind I. Christian, St. Andrews, Scotland
 P. Aurigon, Marseille, France
 Mrs. Albine Drab, Wien, Austria
 Arumugam Thavanesan, Sri Lanka
 S. Sivapatham, Malaysia
 Mrs. Alice B. Roberts, Moonee Ponds, Australia
 Giulio Marigo, Venice, Italy
 Lunsford P. Yandell, Scottsdale, U.S.A.
 Gul Hira, Ridgefield, U.S.A.

Sri Ramanasramam

Life Members—Indian

ADDITIONS SINCE JULY 1976

- C. G. Balasubramanyan, New Delhi
 R. A. Karlekar, Belgaum
 Dr. B. P. Saxena, Pratapgarh
 Dr. N. Rama Rao, Warangal
 S. S. Manian, Perumalmalai
 K. Mahadev, Madras
 R. Venkataraman, Cuddalore
 A. S. Subramanian, Madras
 Shah Hasmukhlal Chimanlal, Himatnagar
 Sri Ram, Madras
 Smt. Kasi Visalakshi, Madras
 G. Ramamoorthy, Kannamangalam
 S. Krishnan, Bombay
 K. Shankara Narayana Rao, Secunderabad
 Mantena Seethayya, Kopallee
 J. R. Anantha Raman, Shimoga
 N. Guru Dutt, Bombay
 Vithal Bhikku Bhandarkar, Kumta
 Mrs. Mohinee Bakshi, New Delhi
 Shivram Narasimha Bhat Gudde, Kalache
 Dr. M. R. Bhatiani, Delhi
 T. N. Chatterjee, New Delhi
 R. M. Purushothama Reddiar, Bahoor
 S. Srinivasan, Bombay
 Balakrishna Anant Mande, Nagpur
 R. Venkataraman, Bombay
 Arjundas Sadhuram, Madras
 T. N. Lakshmi Narayanaswamy, Tiruchirapalli
 B. Kameswara Rao, Vijayawada
 Smt. R. Gomathi, Bombay
 T. P. Chelliah, Rasipuram
 Smt. Annapurni Natarajan, Madras
 N. A. Subramania Iyer, Tiruchirapalli
 B. Rama Naidu, Gudur
 K. K. V. Suryanarayana Rao, Warangal
 M. Rangan, Madras
 Ashoka Finance Corporation, Kolar
 C. V. Subramania Sastry, Betamcharla
 S. R. Subramania Iyer, Jamshedpur
 K. Sundar Rajan, Madras
 N. Radhakrishnan, Kavali
 Mrs. D. Nagalakshmi Swami, Trichy
 Dr. Patel Sarla Chandrakant, Bombay
 V. S. Sundaram, Bombay
 P. P. Narayana Iyer, Bombay
 Vimala R. Karandikar, Poona
 Marthanda Varma, Eleya Raja of Travancore,
 Bangalore
- G. P. Chandrasekhar, Madras
 Arun Varma, Bombay
 Smt. Saroja Sundaresan, Madras
 R. M. Joshi, Madras
 B. Gopalu, Madanapallee
 O. R. Chandran, Madanapallee
 N. H. Thakker, Goa
 N. N. Nayak, Goa
 Bharat G. Babur, Bombay
 M. G. Badal, Bombay
 Shah Aron Varjiwandas, Bombay
 Viswakarma S. T. Muruga Bhushanam, Madras
 C. N. Venkatesan, Madras
 Bhagwandas Uitamchand Alimchandani, Baroda
 C. V. Mallikarjuna Murty, Madras
 Dr. Ravindra Padmanabhan, Madras
 N. Naranaiya, Bangalore
 T. V. S. Mani, Madurai
 Bhai D. G. Karanjgaokar, Varanasi
 B. D. Kapur, Bombay
 R. S. Tandon, Kanpur
 Jivanbhai Bhulabhai Patel, Palsod
 Janki Devi Bhan, Srinagar
 P. Prasad, Vijayawada
 N. Subramanya, Bangalore
 B. Umakanth, Bombay
 S. Venkataraman, Bhubaneswar
 Mrs. P. Chiranjeevi, Calcutta
 K. S. Seshadri, Bangalore
 Dr. Ganesh Laxmikant Koppikar, Bombay
 S. S. Venkataraman, Vellore
 Miss Mani J. Rabadi, Bombay
 Mohan Seshadri, Bombay
 Smt. Mathuram Ammal, Kiranur
 Smt. Pattu Ammal, Mayuram
 Kameshwar Deo, Patna
 Vrajajal J. Vora, Junagarh
 V. N. Vaidhyathan, Madras
 T. S. Sithram, Bangalore
 V. S. Kumar, Madras
 V. Krishnamurti, Madras
 M. Kuppuswamy, Bangalore
 H. N. Jhangiani, Baroda
 J. Jayaraman, Ahmedabad
 Dr. K. Srinivasan, Warangal
 Merla Satyanarayana, Velangi
 S. Venkata Ramanan (Anand), Baroda
 Mrs. V. Atchutam, Bangalore

Sri Ramanasramam

Life Members—Foreign

S. Subramanian, Bahrein, Arabian Gulf
 Kabal S. Parmar, North Vancouver, Canada
 S. A. Nainpally, Thunder Bay, Canada
 Joly Martine, Paris
 Helga Kalldorf, W. Germany
 Maria Proske, Wien, Austria
 Charles Madigan, Malmo, Sweden
 Torrence Ronald McDowell, Dagenham, U.K.

Oswaldo Hartenstein, Basel, Switzerland
 Norman King, West Green, U.K.
 T. Kaniappan, Malaysia
 Mrs. Ursula Muller, Zurich
 Makus Khuni, Switzerland
 Thakurdas D. Melwani, Singapore
 Gul Hira, Ridgefield, U.S.A.

AN APPEAL

to become **Life Members &
 Life Subscribers**

Devotees are requested to enrol themselves as LIFE MEMBERS of Sri Ramanasramam and LIFE SUBSCRIBERS of "The Mountain Path" by sending :

For

SRI RAMANASRAMAM

Rs. 100 In India ; and
 £ 12.50 or US \$ 30 foreign

For

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

Rs. 125 in India ; and
 £ 12.50 or US \$ 30 foreign

Cheques to be sent to

The President,

SRI RAMANASRAMAM

SRI RAMANASRAMAM P.O.,

TIRUVANNAMALAI 606603, S. India

Letters to the Editor

Owing to Mrs. Lucia Osborne's protracted illness, Sri Viswanatha Swami has temporarily taken over this column.

The following letters from earnest devotees of our Master call for no comment. His Presence and Grace are felt by devout seekers all over the world. He is ever available to those who turn to Him.

—VISWANATHA SWAMI

FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA

It was in 1939, before the beginning of the Second World War, that I first heard about Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. At that time in Prague were published three Czech translations, one on India and Sri Maharshi and two little, but very important, publications conveying His teachings.

In those days we were extremely lucky to have from time to time the opportunity to attend the sessions of our spiritual teacher, Mr. Jaroslav Koci, who introduced us into Maha Yoga. In our bookshop, I and my dear wife (she died in 1970), came in contact with all kinds of mystical and religious literature published in the Czech language, but indeed, or perhaps for that very reason, Sri Ramana's direct path of Self-enquiry had for both of us a special and direct appeal, because Sri Maharshi's method frees us from mysteries and false beliefs, concerns itself with the utter Truth and enables devotees to pursue the quest of the true Self, which transcends all creeds and dogmas. Maharshi's teaching got wide distribution and high reputation among Czech seekers. The books were soon out of stock. During the German occupation of Czechoslovakia there was no question of any reprints or new editions. Czech devotees had to procure copies of Maharshi's books made by hand or type-written and this tradition continues till today. Some of us in this country cherish highly every line of Maharshi's sayings.

Continuous practising of Self-enquiry revealed to me that in the background of our being there is something that is functioning as an Observer or Looker on, witnessing all our thoughts and activities.

That means, a man who identifies himself with his body and mind takes over all consequences caused by activities of his body and mind and thus he creates his own karma. But on the other hand one who does not identify oneself with the body and mind becomes aware of the egoless Self, which is absolutely pure and steadily shining like the Sun. So let us be observers of all events and we shall be happy.

Indeed it was no accident that keen interest in Sri Maharshi's direct method of Self-analysis has crossed continents to take strong roots in the hearts of so many of Maharshi's devotees in Czechoslovakia.

—JOSEF NELIBA, Czechoslovakia.

FROM RUSSIA

I received yesterday your precious magazine for April '77 and I am very much obliged to you! Your magazine is particularly valuable to me because of its wide scope, embracing all religions and philosophies. Very good are the Book Reviews (for instance — in this number I found a very interesting review of a book which I intend to buy: *The Findhorn Garden*). I have experience of the influence of spiritual books; they have an atmosphere about them and it has a remarkable influence upon us.

During millenniums India has given birth to many sages and Sri Ramana Maharshi is one of the greatest. I have read from your journal that in 1979, the Birth Centenary of Sri Bhagavan is to be celebrated in a fitting manner. As my contribution for the celebration I intend to write and publish a book about Sri Bhagavan in the international language, Esperanto.

—OLAF LANGSEPP, Estonia, Soviet Union.

FROM CANADA—I

May I thank you (addressed to the Ashram President) for letting me spend useful days at the abode of our beloved Master, where I found great inner peace and strength. To make you understand what this visit meant to me let me tell you:

As a child I had normal religious training at school, but strangely enough, there grew within me a strong urge to see India. Why, I never could explain. During my school years I could not find any satisfying answers to a lot of my questions about God and life. The war did not leave much time to think about all this or about India.

As soon as the war was over, I had a strong urge to leave Europe and I had a chance to make my

home in Canada. There I lost my husband when my son was still very young. From that moment my inner search became stronger and always at the back of my mind was the wish to see India. Though I read a lot of books and got acquainted with different study groups, I was not satisfied. Then I had a complete breakdown due to overwork. During the time of my recuperation I got interested in Yoga and Meditation. I had experienced through meditation that there is an ever-present higher power, but I could not integrate it into my everyday life to find more peace.

Then a great shock in my life caused me great mental and spiritual anguish. But I held fast to my meditation. As the pain of the hurt slowly subsided one night I had a beautiful dream: I was on a boat alone and suddenly there appeared the tall boatman with a greying beard and very understanding eyes. He came towards me and said: "Do not worry, I shall take care of you for the rest of your life". I could not understand the meaning of the dream and so I shelved it. By that time I was in a situation enabling me to go to India and a friend of mine, sharing with me the experience of search and meditation gave me the book by Paul Brunton, *A Search in Secret India*. After going through the book I resolved to go to Arunachala — the Hill of the Holy Beacon — and I addressed a letter to Sri Ramanasramam, Arunachala. What joy, when about a month later, I received a reply! Not only had my letter reached, but I had the reply also that I was welcome at the Ashram. After that I could hardly wait to leave for India.

When I finally reached *Sri Ramanasramam*, it felt just like coming HOME, and when I saw the first picture of Sri Ramana Maharshi, I knew who was the sailor in my dream! In my all too short stay I could not do all I wanted to do. But I found peace and all the answers to my queries and a little girl's desire to go to India got fulfilled thus.

Now, after returning home from India, I have slowly learned to adjust myself to my life here, thanks to the grace of Bhagavan, whose presence I feel so much stronger now. He lifts me up, whenever I falter. I pray, may He have patience with me.

— ELIZABETH M. SCHWABE, Vancouver.

II

Last month I received the January 1977 issue of your quarterly. I really enjoy going through it.

Hail Sri Ramana! Thanks to those who have sat at His feet and are now spreading His Teaching, making it available to those in search of Reality everpresent.

For Truth or Reality or the Self there is no past or future. These divisions of time are in the realm of succession of forms. And in that succession there is the thought of measuring the distance between one particular form and another (space-time). Never is the Self measured or subject to time and space (or change). In silence, there is no beginning nor end. There is beginning and end of speech and thinking, so to speak, projected on to the screen of Silence (Self or the Silent Presence of Pure Consciousness).

How straight to the point was Bhagavan's curt remark: "I am formless"; and "Who beholds the vision?" The vision has beginning and end, *not* the Self, or the Beholder, the Seer. The Self is unborn, immortal; it is the unique *Everpresence*.

— ARTIE L. HAASWYK, Montreal.

FROM BOMBAY

I was groping in the dark for many years though I had read all sorts of books. Though born as a Parsee, I am — evidently due to past *samskaras* — a devotee of Krishna Bhagavan. My nature has been that of a *Bhakta*; I am a loving servant of Lord Krishna.

Last year in February I lost a dear one and my world got shattered. For days together I was lost to the world and numb.

Then suddenly one day I went to a bookshop and was aimlessly looking for a book on Self-Realisation. As I was glancing at the books I got attracted to a book, named *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge* by Arthur Osborne. I bought the book and read it through. Even before beginning the book, Bhagavan's photo in it attracted me so much that I felt at once that this was the end of my search. I at once felt peaceful and at ease. My search had ended. I had found a guru. From that time onwards I automatically seemed to do everything that was found in Maharshi's teachings.

I found at *Chetana Ltd., Bombay*, all the Ashram books. I have made three of them my special study books. I go through them everyday between 5 and 6 a.m. They are: *Maha Yoga*, *Sat Darshana Bhashya* and *Tripura Rahasya*. The rest of the books I read one by one as I find time.

Bhagavan has been gracious to call me to Him and I am sure He will help me to reach the Goal.

— MANI J. RABADI, Bombay.