

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

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

Vol. 11, No. III, July 1974

“Reveal Thyself ! Thou
only art Reality, Oh
Arunachala !”

— *The Marital Garland
of Letters*, verse 43

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(A QUARTERLY)

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meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala !”

— *The Marital Garland of Letters*, verse 1

Vol. 11

JULY 1974

No. III

CONTENTS

	Page
EDITORIAL :	
Tradition -- <i>Viswanatha Swami</i>	135
Advaita -- <i>Arthur Osborne</i>	139
Hindu Ethics -- <i>D. S. Sarma</i>	140
Where are you Going ? If so, Why ? -- <i>Ronald Rose</i>	141
The Central Principles of Hinduism -- <i>Dr. Karan Singh</i>	144
Faith -- <i>Cornelia Bagarotti</i>	145
Means and Ends -- <i>Sadhu Arunachala</i>	146
The Breath of Nature -- <i>Fr. Thomas Merton</i>	147
Sri Bhagavan A Bhakta Too -- <i>N. N. Rajan</i>	148
An Episode in the Life of Sri Ramakrishna -- <i>Jagannath Chatopadhyaya</i>	149
Life and Death -- <i>Lama Anagarika Govinda</i>	150
The Spirit of Religion -- <i>Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao</i>	151
Prayer and Meditation -- <i>K. Padmanabhan</i>	153
The Teachings of Pujoyapada	154
Sanatana Dharma and Religious Conversion -- <i>H. H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Swami</i>	155
Have Mercy -- <i>Dag Hammarskjold</i>	158
How I Came to the Maharshi	159
Garland of Guru's Sayings -- <i>Sri Muruganar</i>	161
Sri Yogaswami of Jaffna -- <i>An American Devotee</i>	163
Jnana of Mukti According To Madhva -- <i>H. J. Noranba, S.J.</i>	167
Shiva -- <i>K. S.</i>	169
Stories from Yoga Vasishtha -- II : Punya and Pavana	170
Glory of Arunachala	174
Vidura's Wisdom	177
The Beginning and the End -- <i>Wei Wu Wei</i>	178

CONTENTS -- (Contd.)

	Page
Book Reviews ..	179
Ashram Bulletin ..	185
Introducing . . . <i>Sri T. A. J. Pillai</i> ..	192
List of Life Members -- Sri Ramanasramam	194
List of Life Subscribers -- The Mountain Path	196
Letters to the Editor	
-- Replies by <i>Lucia Osborne</i> ..	197

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— Editor.

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The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

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

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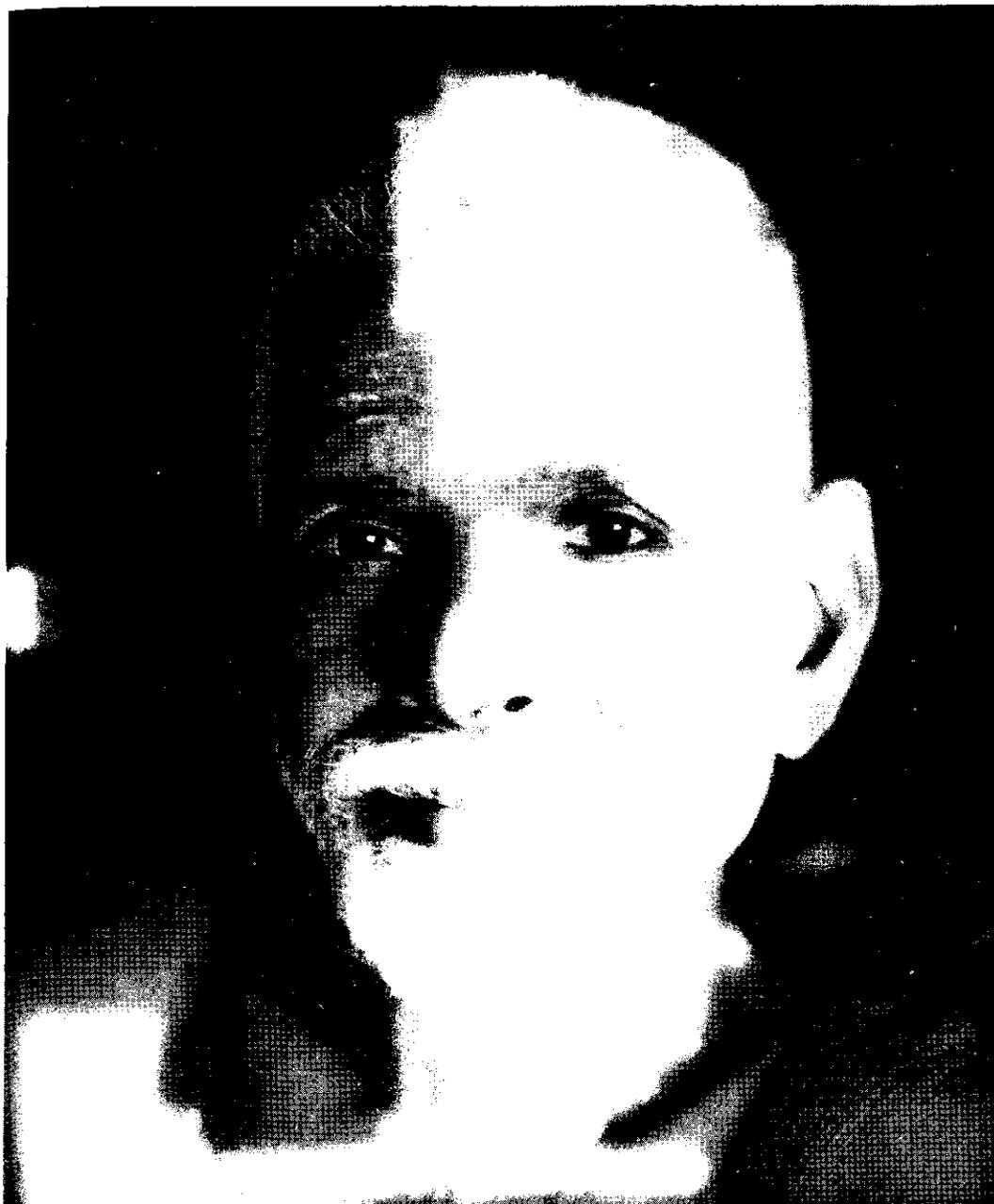
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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

is dedicated to

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi



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Vol. 11. No. III, July 1974

TRADITION

BY tradition is meant here the knowledge of timeless and transcendent truth handed down by those with direct experience of it to seekers fit to receive it. The way to it also is meant, as every aspirant has to experience it anew for himself. This spiritual tradition, still current and fresh, begins from pre-historic times. We have a record of it in the Vedas and Upanishads. It is found continued in works of a later period, the *puranas* and other religious literature. We find its unbroken continuity up to our own time through the works and recorded talks of authentic seers. Their very lives shine forth as an illustration of and commentary on this perennial tradition. As the head and origin of this tradition stands the youthful figure of Dakshinamurti who elucidated in absolute silence to Sanaka and other elders the truth of the One indivisible Self of all. Earnest devotees have had, even in our own times, the same experience of speechless revelation in the self-effulgent Presence of the Sage of Arunachala.

We find in the Vedas texts like the following :

“It is one Existence, one Reality (*Ekam Sat*) known by different names”.

“He is reflected in every form and even the reflection assumes a seeming individuality. God goes on assuming endless forms and endless are His rays”.

Editorial

By Viswanatha Swami

“He Himself is the Earth and Heaven”.

“There is nothing other than Him in the Universe”.

“All this, the past, present and future, are the Supreme Person (*Purusba*). He is the Lord of Immortality.”

“He who knows Him becomes immortal even here. There is no other way to that state of supreme felicity”.

“The Supreme Lord is the Light of the Universe”.

“He who recognises the Dweller in the Heart gets in tune with Ultimate Reality.”

“He (the Supreme Being) is, really, *Rasa*, the Essence of all ; only by attaining this *Rasa* one becomes blissful.”

Coming to the Upanishads, the *Isa Upanishad*, begins :

“That (the unmanifest) is the Absolute and this (the manifest) also is the Absolute. From that Absolute this got manifested. The Absolute having manifested This still remains the same”.

“Whatever there is in the universe is pervaded by the Lord. Understanding this go through life unattached to anything mundane.”

And we have the four cardinal texts of ultimate Vedantic experience,

“I AM Brahman”,

“That Thou Art”,

“This Atman (Self) is Brahman”, and

“Awareness (absolute) is Brahman”.

He who, by the Grace of the Guru, has understood the import of these *Maha Vakyas*, is never more distracted by anything for other than that Reality nothing else exists. The same truth is expressed by the Upanishadic text :

“He who sees all beings in the Self and the Self alone in all beings, he is no more disturbed (by the false sense of differentiation).”

We find this tradition of *Brahma-Vidya* passing on from Master to disciple when the latter is competent to receive it by virtue of his inner purity and one-pointed aspiration, as in the episode of Narada (the seeker) and Sanatkumara (the teacher) in chapter VI of *Chhandogya Upanishad*. Narada (not the Narada of the *Puranas*) who had mastered all relative knowledge, but had not attained Peace thereby, goes in search of a Teacher who could reveal to him the Supreme Secret of the Infinite Self. Sanatkumara tells him : “Where there is something else seen, heard or known, all that is finite. Where there is nothing else seen, heard or known that is *Bhuma*. *Bhuma* alone is bliss. There is no happiness in the finite”. *Brahma-Vidya* is termed here as *Bhuma Vidya* (Awareness Absolute). Moreover it is said here that the aspiration for purity brings about a steady mind which alone can seek Reality ; and that Sanatkumara cuts the knot of the heart of the seeker and reveals to him the Reality beyond the veil of ignorance.

The very name Sanatkumara is significant. It means Ever-young. For the knower of Brahman there is no decay or death ; he remains for ever as the Immortal Self. Sanatkumara is also known as Skanda (Subrahmanya), the Teacher of *Brahma Vidya* and the Son of Siva.

Death puts an end to everything. What is beyond death is the subject matter of the *Kathopanishad*.

“There is the ultimate good and there is the immediate pleasure. The man of discretion ponders over it. He who chooses the ultimate good attains life’s goal and he who prefers pleasure misses thereby the main purpose of life.”

“No one who has not turned away from evil ways, no one who is not calm, no one who is not one-pointed in his quest and free from distraction, can reach the Self by intellectual acumen alone.”

“This Self is understood neither by hearing lectures, nor by sharp intelligence, nor by vast study ; whomsoever It (the Self) chooses, he understands It and to him It reveals Itself.”

“That which all the Vedas consider as the Supreme State, that which is the aim of all austerity, spiritual earnestness and aspiration, and that in quest of which *Brahmacharya* is practised, that I shall tell you in brief. That is OM (AUM).”

“This is the immutable Brahman, the Supreme Self. Knowing this, one lives in glory in the World of Brahman”.

Brahman itself is here described as the World of Brahman, as also in the following texts :

“The stainless *Brahma-loka* is for them whose quest for Truth is one-pointed and free from all distraction.”

“It is for them, in whom there is no crookedness, falsehood or deceit.”

That the constant witness, the Pure Awareness, behind the three changing states of waking, dream and deep sleep is in reality the transcendental Self, is the significance of OM (AUM) and the silence following it (*amatra* or *ananta-matra*). That is the Supreme Auspiciousness beyond all duality (*dwaitasya upasamah, Sivah*).

Coming to *sadbhava* (spiritual effort) in Vedic Tradition, we see that very early in life one is initiated into spiritual life with the *Gayatri Mantra*, which means : “We meditate upon the adorable Light Supreme of self-fulgent *Savita* who illumines and activates our intellect.”

Savita literally means the Sun, but the real meaning is the ultimate source and origin of all, that which dwells in every heart giving life and light to every individual. Another Vedic *mantra* says : “He who dwells in the heart of the individual and he who shines in the Sun, He is one and the same.”

The following passage from Ch. V. of *Sri Ramana Gita* will be helpful in understanding the significance of *Gayatri*.

“The Heart is to the body what the Sun is to the world. The mind in *Sahasrara* is like the orb of the moon (in the world). As the Sun gives light to the moon, even so this Heart gives light to the mind. A mortal absent from the Heart perceives only the mind, just as the light of the moon is perceived at night in the absence of the Sun. Not perceiving that the true source of light is one's own Self and mentally perceiving objects as apart from oneself, the ignorant one is deluded. The Jnani present at the Heart sees the light of the mind merged in the light of the Heart like moonlight in day light. The wise know that the superficial meaning of *Prajnana* (Awareness) is mind and its true meaning is the Heart. The Supreme is nothing but the Heart.”

Meditating upon this central spiritual truth from early boyhood, one gets established in it by the time one is mature and is about to enter life in the world. During the period of student life one is taught by the Guru, by example and precept, the cardinal virtues one has to follow in daily life. During the stage of the house-holder (*grihastha asrama*) one leads a life of service to all, never swerving from the underlying Reality, the one Self of all. One teaches students and trains them in spiritual life. The closing part of one's life is devoted to total meditation and absorption in the Supreme Self. Thus the tradition emphasizes perfect attunement with the Supreme Self throughout one's life from beginning to end.

We have already noted that *Japa* is the starting point of *sadbhava* in tradition. Whether it is the *Gayatri*, or any other *mantra* or Name of God, it is not a mechanical repetition of a *Mantra* or Name; it is to be practised with understanding and inner search of its significance. Together with it, one studies the scriptures under the guidance of the Teacher, reflects and contemplates upon the truth of the Supreme Self. All distractions of the mind are conquered thereby, understanding goes on deepening and one

gradually gets in tune with the inner Self, one's own reality. *Japa* ends in *dhyana* (meditation) and *dhyana* leads to direct experience. One will find that there is no difference between *dhyana* and self-enquiry when the mind becomes introvert.

Coming from the Vedas and Upanishads to the *Puranas*, each with its special characteristics, we have the first and foremost Epic Poem of excellence, the *Ramayana* by the sage Valmiki. Valmiki, it is said, reached his spiritual stature by total absorption in the Name of Rama. The main theme of this first of the *Puranas* centering around Rama, an incarnation of Mahavishnu, is adherence to truth and one's main duty in life. Rama is the heroic example held up before us to be followed in our daily life. And then the *Mahabharata* by the Sage Vyasa is the most outstanding and fascinating of the *Puranas*, depicting as it does the whole of human life in its various aspects and the quest for the right way of living (*dharma*). In it we come in contact with all types of characters, spiritual stalwarts (like Bhishma, Vidura and Yudhishtira), and Sri Krishna, the Master Yogi and the Lord of Yogas. And the *Bhagavad Gita* is the cream of the *Mahabharata* throwing light on every problem of life. All approaches to Truth -- Karma, Bhakti, Yoga and Jnana -- are dealt with in this masterly work. It is no wonder, therefore, that it is looked upon as the common scripture of all humanity, and its appeal is universal. All our great spiritual teachers have commented upon it or quoted from it as authority for their statements. Bhagavan Sri Ramana too has, at the request of some devotee, chosen 42 verses from the various chapters of the *Gita* and re-arranged them in a sequence of his own. When He was asked for the most important verse He pointed to one, (X. 20), which says :

“Oh Gudakesa (Arjuna)!¹ I am the (one) Self dwelling in the heart of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all beings”. And He has ended the selection with two verses from Ch. XVIII of the *Gita* which mean :

¹ *Gudakesa* means, one who has conquered sleep i.e. one who is spiritually alert, discarding lethargy.

“The Supreme dwells in the Heart of all beings, seated on the wheel of life, revolving them all by His mysterious Power.”

“Completely surrender yourself to Him alone. By His Grace, you will gain Supreme Peace and the Abode Eternal”.

Thus all our wise ancestors are upholders of the perennial Tradition. In matters of doubt one is asked (in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*) to go to the wise attuned to the Self within and attuned to all life around, broad-minded, generous and intent upon supreme *dharmā*. One is asked to observe their way of life, their behaviour, and get instructed thereby. We find all ancient teachers of repute basing their teaching on the Vedas, Upanishads and other sacred lore, commenting upon them and extensively quoting from them. In the last century we find Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa treading the traditional way, being himself an embodiment of everything sacred and lofty in Tradition. And in our own times, many of us have had the good fortune of seeing and moving with Bhagavan Sri Ramana, a seer of authentic spiritual experience who beheld in His Heart, in a flash, in His seventeenth year, the Reality of the Supreme Self and was ever established in the ultimate Reality thenceforward. But He too has sung devotional Hymns in praise of Arunachala, the Heart of the Universe, at the request of His devotees and from their standpoint. These poems inspired by devotional fervour and filled with the Light of Jnana are not mere literary compositions. He gave in His twentyfirst year His own teaching *Who Am I?*, being answers to some questions of a devotee. His *Upadesa Sara* (Essence of Instruction) is an epitome of the successive steps of spiritual effort and the elucidation of ultimate Reality, all within thirty brief verses. In His *Forty Verses on Existence*, we find a clear and compact exposition of the Supreme Self and the method of Self-enquiry. The *Supplement* to it, being partly His own compositions and partly translations from other sources, provide helpful explanations and instructions to aspirants. He has translated into Tamil prose and verse some works of Sankara, *Vivekachudamani* and *Atmabodha*,

and two works from the *Agamas* dealing with Advaita Vedanta.

Chanting of Vedas and Upanishads, begun in His presence with His approval, is still being continued at the Ashram in front of His Samadhi. He often said that the vibrations from the chanting of inspired utterances like *Tevaram* and *Tiruvachakam* help one in meditation. He used to walk round Arunachala Hill, considering it as the visible manifestation of Siva, and encouraged others also doing the same. He blessed with His touch the installation of a *Sri Chakra Meru* (the top-most *yantra* of Tantric tradition, representing the universe with its centre, the indivisible Siva-Sakti) within the *Sanctum* of His mother's Samadhi. This Sri Chakra continues to be worshipped in the traditional way even now.

Bhagavan Sri Ramana was available to all at all times. Anybody could sit near Him and meditate, or talk with Him. His very presence filled the atmosphere with blissful peace. He sat with devotees and visitors and partook of the same food at meal time. There was no sense of otherness, no differentiation at all, in His proximity. Cows, dogs, monkeys and birds shared His universal love. Every one felt spiritually uplifted and spontaneously purified in his presence. Such is Tradition and such is the life of one established in Ultimate Reality, the One indivisible Self of all, the One Goal of all spiritual effort.

Various steps are needed to help aspirants forward in various stages of spiritual growth. It is true that the earlier steps become unnecessary and drop off by themselves as one progresses, but it will be the height of folly to dismiss the whole of tradition as 'nonsense'. The light of Truth is like the Sun open to all and yet the secret of its use has to be learnt from the living leaf. This traditional learning of the open secret is the sole hope of common humanity, enveloped in ignorance and distracted by doubts. Like the light of Love in the home, tradition provides for both progress and security, both freedom to grow and the Peace that passeth understanding.

ADVAITA

By Arthur Osborne

HINDUISM contains a number of *darsanas* or doctrinal viewpoints. These are not rival sects, as in Christianity or Buddhism, but viewpoints all of which are recognized as legitimate, each providing the theoretical groundwork for a different type of path. According to a man's understanding and temperament he may be drawn to a more or less direct path, and each path has its own theoretical basis. A Guru usually expounds one such viewpoint and guides his disciples along the path that is based on it and he may even, for their sake, proclaim it the best or the only perfect path, but if questioned he will admit the legitimacy of others also. For instance, Sri Ramana Maharshi in modern times taught the doctrine of Advaita and the path of Self-enquiry based on it, but if some devotee found this too arduous and preferred a less direct path he would confirm that that also was good.

The ultimate and most direct viewpoint, the very quintessence of Hinduism, is the doctrine of Advaita or non-duality. This is, roughly speaking, the doctrine that Being is One. I say 'roughly speaking' because even this is too limiting a definition from a strictly philosophical point of view. The word 'Being' is objected to as too definite, suggesting a comparison with or exclusion of non-being, while the word 'non-dual' is preferred to 'one',

With all the differences and similarities of the great faiths of the East and West, there is a point esoterically when they converge : " I and my Father are One ", " In the beginning there was Allah and nothingness beside Him and now He is as He was ", the doctrine of *anatta* taught by Buddha ; Thatness or Suchness which is also a void of all conceivable things or ideas. In Hinduism it is the doctrine of Advaita of which Arthur Osborne gives us a clear and succinct viewpoint avoiding lengthy dissertations in his book, *Buddhism and Christianity in the light of Hinduism*.

since the conception of 'One' may suggest limitation by the existence of some 'other' outside the 'One'. "It is the beginningless, supreme Brahman which is said to be neither Being nor Non-being." (*Bhagavad Gita*, xiii, 12). That-which-is is finite ; and there can be nothing outside Infinity or it would not be infinite, being limited by the exclusion of what was outside it. To put it mathematically : infinity minus x is a contradiction in terms, since the exclusion of x makes the first term finite. Similarly, to speak of an Infinite God and of other beings outside God is a contradiction in terms, a mathematical absurdity. God is either finite or Non-dual.

How then, it may be asked, according to this doctrine, can one account for the universe and all its beings ? They are simply manifestations of the Being, having no separate individual reality, subtracting nothing from its Infinity when coming into being and adding nothing to it when reabsorbed, mere reflections of one aspect or possibility of the Being that is their Essence, like one man reflected in many mirrors. "That Being which is the subtle Essence is the Self of the whole world. That is the Truth. That is Atma. That Thou Art." (*Cbandogya Upanishad*, 6-8-7)

The truth of this is to be felt in the heart.

HINDU ETHICS¹

By D. S. Sarma

***Dharma* or the moral code is not to be followed mechanically but with due discernment in various situations of life. Such moral regulation of conduct is bound to improve one spiritually and lead to emancipation, eventually.**

HINDU ethics is entirely subordinate to Hindu metaphysics. Ethics is the science of human conduct and character. It is a study of what a man ought to do and ought to be. The latter is more important than the former. For conduct is only an outward expression of character. A sense of duty presupposes a virtuous disposition. But both what a man ought to be and what he ought to do will ultimately depend upon the general relation of man to the universe in which he finds himself. The purely moral question of oughtness depends upon the wider question of the end and aim of human life. In other words, the question of what man ought to be or do should give precedence to the question of why he ought to be or do such and such a thing. The Hindu sages therefore rightly made their ethics entirely subordinate to their metaphysics. Rightly were they more interested in the problem of ultimate Reality than in the problem of human conduct.

Their insight led them to the conclusion that the ultimate Reality in the universe is pure Spirit -- pure Being, Consciousness and Bliss -- the One without a second. It is the One that appears as the many, when viewed through the framework of time and space, just as white light appears as a band of many colours when looked at through a prism of glass. The infinite, undivided and indivisible Spirit seems to become sundered into finite Spirit and matter, into *atman* and *anatman*, here below giving rise to a hierarchical order of beings ranging from rocks, plants, animals, men and gods to the Supreme Godhead. This law of spiritual progression in creation is one of the fundamental postulates of Hindu speculative thought. The Hindu view of human history, human society and human individuality is all based on this law. Progress

¹From *Renascent Hinduism*. Published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.

everywhere is to be judged in terms of increasing spiritual values. The Hindu thinkers called the consummation of these values in God, *moksha*. It is a liberation which takes place not in time, but from time. It is an awakening of the slumbering or dreaming to its own reality. It is from this metaphysical view of the universe and man's position in creation that the Hindu sages derived their ethics.

God's being is the goal of man's becoming. If God's being is the state or *moksha* or absolute freedom of the spirit beyond time, the process of man's becoming in time is Dharma or the gradual realization of that freedom. We may therefore say that Dharma is only *moksha* in the making. It is the moral law leading to the final emancipation of man. It is half divine and half human. Being divine, it demands obedience, and being human, it is subject to change and progress with knowledge and experience. And its validity always depends upon the extent to which it promotes *moksha*. In other words, Dharma is the transcript of *moksha* in the time-process and under human conditions. It is the law which has ultimately to fulfil itself in spiritual freedom beyond time. On earth, it has to exercise itself in regulating men's lives before it emerges into the heaven of *moksha*. This is the significance of the terms used in the famous Hindu formula of *dharmartha-kama-moksha* describing the fourfold end of life. *Artha* means wealth and *kama* means desire. The acquisition of wealth and the gratification of desires are to be permitted only within the bounds of Dharma or the moral law. No man is to be permitted to acquire possessions and indulge in passions beyond what is good for himself and for the society in which he lives. Both as an individual and as a citizen one should follow Dharma and thus qualify oneself ultimately for *moksha*. Thus the formula of *dharmartha-kama-moksha* gives us in a nutshell the Hindu view of life here and beyond. Dharma is what a man ought to do and *moksha* is the reason why he ought to do it.

Dharma in its widest sense is the law of one's being. But in a restricted sense it

Where are you Going? If so, Why?

By Ronald Rose

Once, during an election campaign in my home town when we were being bombarded with posters and slogans proclaiming the merits of the rival candidates some bright citizen scrawled on the blank wall: 'Who are you for? If so, why?' This impressed me so much that all the contestants lost my vote.

An American devotee came to take leave of Bhagavan on the eve of his return to the United States.

Devotee: "Bhagavan, tomorrow I have to leave. I am going back to America."

Bhagavan, (gently): "You are not going anywhere".

Devotee, (in great confusion): "But Bhagavan, my passage is booked — the boat leaves Madras the day after tomorrow".

Bhagavan, (gently but more emphatically): "You are not going anywhere".

Devotee, (waking up): "Ah, that! Yes, yes, ! Ha Ha !"

Bhagavan, the embodiment of Self Enquiry is still here to wake us up if we pay attention to Him. So what excuse have we for persisting in imagining that we are going places?

connotes the moral law. In this sense it is a peculiarly human attribute. The sub-human world has no morality, because self there has not yet become an organized unit aware of itself or aware of good and evil. Morality implies a conscious conflict between good and evil, between the ideal and the actual. It is based on self-consciousness

which is absent from the sub-human world. Up to the level of humanity the evolution of the spirit is involuntary. With man it becomes a voluntary process. Morality therefore begins with man. Apparently it also ends with man. For when he attains *moksha*, or, in other words, when the individual self has expanded into the universal Self, evil ceases to exist and morality loses its meaning. Dharma then transcends itself and becomes *ananda* or blissful perfection. Morality is only the straight and narrow gate through which man has to pass before he ceases to be man and goes beyond.

It will be seen, therefore, that when we attribute morality to sub-human creatures we exalt them to the rank of man, and in speaking of the moral attributes of the Supreme Spirit we are bringing it down to the level of man, that is, we are entertaining an anthropomorphic conception of the Deity. Rightly, therefore, does Hinduism, while attributing to Isvara, the personal God, all moral qualities in their perfection -- such as mercy, justice and love -- carefully exclude them from Brahman, the impersonal Absolute, which is to be described only in negatives 'not this, not that'.

Dharma may, therefore, be described as the unique privilege of man. It is the heavenly light vouchsafed to him for his guidance through his long journey from the animal to the divine. The light at first is something external coming to him from the society in which he finds himself, from the inspired scriptures of his race and from the example of the saints and heroes who have gone before him. But it soon becomes an internal light, an inner voice fore-shadowing the sovereignty of the spirit within. When the spirit is well established in man, Dharma ceases to be a mere set of rules and regulations or a mere catalogue of virtues, but the will of an independent ethical personality -- a *Dharm-atma* -- who becomes a shining light to all men.

Taking into account this process of illumination we may say that the dharma of an individual depends upon various factors. Firstly, it depends upon the characteristic

beliefs of the community in which he lives and of the age to which he belongs. The dharma of a civilized man is different from that of a savage. We cannot judge a man of the Middle Ages according to modern standards.

Again on the question of duelling, an Englishman of the 18th century cannot be judged according to the standards of an Englishman of the 19th. On the question of killing animals for food, the standards of the vegetarian society are different from those of the non-vegetarian society. On the question of war, the standards of a pacific civilization are different from those of militarist civilization. Instances like these can be multiplied.

Secondly, man's dharma depends upon his profession and the position he occupies in society. A soldier's duty is different from a doctor's, a teacher's duty is different from a pupil's and so on. In ancient India where professions were mostly hereditary every caste was supposed to have its own *Varna-dharma*. But in modern society where professions are not hereditary, there cannot obviously be any caste duties but only professional duties.

Thirdly, a man's dharma may also depend upon the peculiar circumstances in which he is placed. Even a truthful doctor has to encourage a dying man with hopes of recovery. We have frequently to set aside a lower law to observe a higher law or rather have to sacrifice the letter of the law to the spirit of it.

These three are external factors. But there are also some internal factors. For instance, it is the duty of every man to develop to the fullest extent the gifts with which Nature has endowed him and utilize them for the benefit of all. One may have a genius for music, another for mathematics, a third for business organization and a fourth for scientific research. Each man has to cultivate his own individual gifts for the benefit of the society in which he lives. And that society may be said to be the ideal one in which every individual is made to occupy the position to which he is entitled by his own natural gifts and endowments.

Again, a man's dharma depends upon the stage of inner development which he has reached. What is right and legitimate in one's youth may not be so in one's old age. What is dharma in one period of a man's life may become adharma in another period. The duties of Prince Gautama became different when he became the Buddha. As a prince his duty was to learn how to rule his kingdom, but after his illumination his duty was to renounce the world and become a wandering Teacher. Thus what may be called the relative dharma of a man depends upon various factors, some of which are external and some internal.² Nor did Hinduism recognize any Church with absolute power pretending to embody dharma in itself and competing with the State in its jurisdiction over men. In the history of Hinduism it was not the State or the Church, but the great Rishis, saints and sages, that from time to time adjusted the dharma of their age to the growing ideas and needs of the time.

If dharma, as we said above, is the transcript of *moksha* on earth, if its purpose is ultimately to raise man to the level of God, it is obvious that the span of human life is all too short for the fulfilment of its object. Most men in the world are yet too near the animal level, and very few of them seem to make any progress in the direction of the goal in their lives. So if the huge cosmic drama is not to end in a fiasco, if the great fight between *atman* and *anatman* on various levels of being is not to prove a drawn game, physical death must not mean the end of the soul's battle, but only a change in the soul's equipment. The fight must go on elsewhere, either on earth once again or in other worlds, either in another body or perhaps a series of bodies till the goal of creation is reached.

Thus it is their metaphysical view of life that led the Hindu thinkers to formulate the well-known moral law of karma, according to which, 'as a man sows, so shall he reap' either in this life or in the life after death. God does not sit in judgement on our thoughts and actions on some distant future day in thunder and lightning, but here and now through the law of retributive justice

which is brought into the moral world of the invariable sequence of cause and effect that we see in the physical world. Just as whenever we put our hands into the fire we burn our fingers, so also whenever we think evil thoughts or do evil deeds we degrade ourselves. What we are at present is the result of what we thought and did in the past, and what we shall be in the future will be the result of what we think and do now. The texture of our souls will depend upon our own weaving at the loom of time. According to the law of karma, the mental and moral tendencies which the soul acquires in a particular life as a result of its motives and actions work themselves out in suitable surroundings in the next. And new sets of tendencies are acquired which again seek a new environment after that life is over. This process called *samsara* goes on through countless lives, till the soul is lifted out of time and gains *moksha*. Thus, according to Hindu thinkers, *samsara* is a vast educational system where the master allows his pupils to educate themselves by experiencing the natural consequences of their thoughts, desires and actions, while He is always present to supervise, help and save.

But ethical perfection, even if such a thing is attainable, is not the same as *moksha*. For, on the ethical plane, the self is always an individual, however purified it may be. But in *moksha* a higher step has to be taken and the self should divest itself of its individuality. Moral excellence is like a boat which enables us to cross the dark waters of *samsara*, but to reach the other shore we have to step out of the boat, that is why Hinduism says that by mere good works alone one cannot attain *moksha*. Good works only purify the soul. But the purified soul has to overcome its own individuality and merge itself in the Self of the universe either through self-forgetting love or through transcendent vision. It has to pass beyond the region of mere morality, beyond the dualism of good and evil, in fact, beyond all pairs of opposites to the One ineffable Being — *Santam, Sivam, Advaitam*.

²The factors are (1) yugadharma; (2) varnadharma; (3) apaddharma; (4) swadharma in its deepest sense and (5) asrama dharma.

The Central Principles of Hinduism¹

By Dr. Karan Singh

THERE are five fundamental concepts which constitute, as I see it, the core of this great religion. These are :

The oneness of the human race : The Rigvedic concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the world as a family) is now becoming a reality. With supersonic travel around the corner and the extraordinary growth of global telecommunications and space technology, the world is shrinking before our very eyes and a concept which came to our rishis in a flash of inspiration has now assumed global relevance. The growing gap between man's destructive ability and his capacity for constructive co-operation poses a serious threat to our continued existence and, unless we start in fact looking upon mankind as a single family cutting across all divisions of race and nationality, political ideology and religious denomination, it will not be possible for our race to survive for long.

The divinity of man : The Upanishads have a marvellous phrase for the human race, *Amritasya Putrab* (Children of Immortality). This implies that every human being, regardless of where he lives or what beliefs he professes, enshrines a spark of the divinity that pervades and permeates the cosmos. In this view, man is not merely a fortuitous conglomeration of atoms, but embodies a divine

Being strong at the core, Hinduism is still a vital force today. Its emphasis on the importance of direct spiritual experience as opposed to mere theorisation is one of its distinguishing features, as the author points out.

principle which makes the enjoyment of human dignity and the possibility of spiritual evolution his birthright. The divinity of God is now no longer a sufficient slogan ; if God exists, He is by definition divine and His divinity hardly needs reiteration. Today we must move on towards the concept of the divinity of man and, flowing therefrom, the inalienable dignity and irreducible value of the human individual.

The essential unity of all religions : "Unity" rather than "tolerance" -- because tolerance is an essentially negative concept implying a somewhat grudging agreement to let religions other than one's own continue to exist. This is not enough ; what is required today is an active acceptance of the doctrine put forward in the Rigvedic dictum ; *Ekam Sad Vipraah bahudha vadanti* (Truth is one, the wise call it by many names). Indeed it is the concept that all religions are so many different paths leading to the same goal, rather than a rejection of religion itself, that forms the true foundation for secularism.

Religions provide the broad conceptual framework and the psycho-spiritual motivation within which can develop the eternal mystery of communion between man and the

¹ Extract from an article published in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, dated 21-10-1973.

divine, and the Hindu view of religion has always accepted and welcomed all movements growing towards God. Viewed thus, religion can become a great unifying force in a world still riven by suspicion and hatred, rather than the source of conflict that it has so often been in the past.

The reconstruction of society : Hinduism makes it quite clear that it is the duty of each individual to work for the betterment of society, *Babujana sukabaya, babujana bitaya cha* (For the happiness of the many, for the welfare of the many) and to combine this with self-realisation : *Atmano mokshartham jagat-bitaya cha*.

The primacy of spiritual experience : A key factor in Hinduism is the primacy that it has always accorded to spiritual experience rather than intellectual disputation and theorising. This is of the utmost importance today when men and women, particularly the younger generations, are searching, not for theories, but for an actual method of coping with the challenges of modern living.

Hinduism has always stressed that religion is a truth that has to be lived in the growing light of the soul, not argued in the endless darkness of mental disputation. The Gita, for example, says quite clearly that for a man of enlightened wisdom the scripture are as superfluous as a well in the midst of a flood. Sri Ramakrishna puts it more bluntly when he says that loading scriptures on an ass does not make him enlightened. Hinduism postulates a clear-cut goal of spiritual realisation and emphasises that every life-situation provides an opportunity to move towards that goal. All the circumstances of our lives, happy or unhappy, pleasant or unpleasant, are to be welcomed as so many opportunities to develop inwardly.

It is also significant that where spiritual achievement is concerned, Hindu society, despite its often rigid fragmentation, has always offered the highest reverence to the seer regardless of any other consideration.

These principles are central to Hinduism, though by no means its exclusive property. They are based upon the spiritual attainment of seers and mystics, and are crucially relevant to the present predicament of man as they

FAITH

By Cornelia Bagarotti

Faith is complete surrender of one's own separated ego and will to that of unity with God. This is a radical step which places man in a new relationship to his fellowman, his destiny, his own body and his ego. In essence he now takes in the Christ forces and says as did the Christ to the Father "Thy will, not mine, Oh Lord".

When this has become a constant and permanent attitude, the illusion of duality will disappear and the eternal Self will be experienced. Prayer and faith are the first reliance upon and surrender to God. Abandoning all previous fears and reliance upon material things, Man turns to God.

I am a leaf on the river of Life.
Under me, Around me, Over me,
Within me
The Heavens reflected life.

provide that firm bedrock of inner values upon which alone an integrated superstructure of material welfare, social cohesion and intellectual emancipation can be raised.

If religions today remain bound within the shackles of narrow orthodoxy they will become increasingly irrelevant to the rising generations, leaving man with an inner void which no amount of material progress will be able to fill. The great strength of Hinduism has been that, based as it ultimately is upon direct spiritual realisation rather than scripture and dogma and lacking as it does any rigid ecclesiastical structure, it has always been open to creative reinterpretation.

Remarkable personages have through the ages not only kept alive the basic tenets of Hinduism but, by reinterpreting them to successive generations, kept it in a state of constant relevance and significance.

MEANS AND ENDS

By Sadhu Arunachala

THE modern world would seem almost to justify means by ends. I have never lived under a dictatorship and so have no first hand experience of these regimes but it would seem they consider any means legitimate so long as the ends can be achieved.

How is it possible for anything to produce its opposite? How can hate produce love, violence non-injury, or war peace? And this is where the present mad race for armaments is so absurdly fallacious, while each nation is so swift to justify its own part in it, because of fear of its neighbour. So fear breeds fear and the endless cycle turns slowly on its axis.

But Bhagavan was insistent on means and taught that we should leave the ends to look after themselves. He was essentially an individualist. 'How can you help the world until you have helped yourself?' he would ask. 'Don't worry about what other people are doing or saying, you have quite enough to do in worrying about yourself.' 'You want to reform the world, do you? First reform yourself and then it will be time enough to think about the world.' It was always the same. Perfect yourself and the world will automatically be found to be perfect. And did not Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa teach exactly the same in his day?

If asked about Self Realisation, what it was like, or what would be our state in the future, Bhagavan would always reply: 'Why worry about something in the future? It is the here and now which are important. You are Self-realised always but only ignorant of

Right means are always essential for securing right ends in activities like social reform. However the real reform is of the one within to be brought about by living in the present and being Self-aware, as Sri Ramana taught.

the fact.' The *Now*, the present moment, is the important thing, not some mythical future, because space and time are only modes of individuality; for the Self they do not exist, only 'Now' exists.

Materialists imagine that possession brings happiness. Increase the number of gadgets to the maximum, give abundant food and luxury, and life will be bliss. But they are looking frantically without for what can only be found within. This seems to be the fault of most people today. They imagine that things and situations in themselves give happiness; they constantly try to repeat experiences which once caught them in a mood of receptivity and, constantly failing to find what they so ardently desire, become disillusioned in consequence.

'It's all right for you, but who is going to help the poor suffering world?', one hears on every side from the reformers.

But it would be useless to point out to them that for all their efforts they have made a pretty good mess of things up to now; that to try and help others before you have succeeded in helping yourself is, to say the least of it, futile; that this senseless search for ends is waste of time and that means and ends are really one. For has it not been said: 'The search itself is the goal?' Which summed up is just 'Be'. Don't spend your time looking to the future, but realise *here* and *now* that you are *always* the same, the Self.

Actually there are no *ends*, for there has never been a beginning!

THE BREATH OF NATURE

By Father Thomas Merton

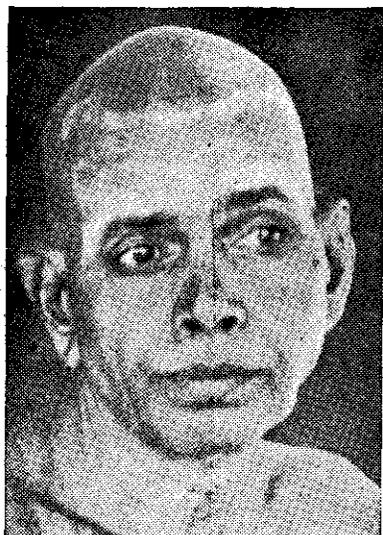
When great Nature sighs, we hear the winds
Which, noiseless in themselves,
Awaken voices from other beings,
Blowing on them. From every opening
Loud voices sound. Have you not heard
This rush of tones ?

There stands the overhanging wood
On the steep mountain :
Old trees with holes and cracks
Like snouts, maws and ears,
Like beam-sockets, like goblets
Grooves in the wood, hollows full of water :
You hear mooing and roaring, whistling
Shouts of command, grumbings,
Deep drones, sad flutes.
One call awakens another in dialogue.

Gentle winds sing timidly,
Strong ones blast on without restraint.
Then the wind dies down. The openings
Empty out their last sound.
Have you not observed how all then trembles
and subsides ?

Yu replied : I understand :
The music of the world sings through a
thousand holes.
The music of man is made on flutes and
instruments.
What makes the music of heaven ?

Master Ki said :
Something is blowing on a thousand
different holes.
Some power stands behind all this and
makes the sounds die down.
What is this power ?



Sri Bhagavan A Bhakta Too

By N. N. Rajan

Bhakti and jnana are paths leading to the same goal of realising the non-dual Self and there is no contradiction whatever between them, as Sri Bhagavan has often clearly explained. One could see that He was a true Bhakta as well as a perfect jnani.

BHAGAVAN Sri Ramana Maharshi is as much a *bhakta* as a *jnani*. From His own statements we clearly understand that a true *bhakta* can be a *jnani* and vice versa. The one common factor in both is the extinction of the ego. It is said that *bhakti* is the mother of *jnana* and hence there is no inherent antagonism between the two.

We have witnessed that while passages and poems of famous saints were recited, Bhagavan was moved to tears on many occasions and could not restrain them. When He Himself was reading to others' passages from devotional works He used very often to get choked with emotion and stop reading and talking for some time.

Though He was an *advaitin* of the highest order He never discouraged *bhakti*. *Bhakti* here denotes supreme devotion or *parabhakti*. It does not stand in the way of *jnana*. His appreciation of unity in diversity did not make Him indifferent to *bhakti* or any other *sadhana*. In the state of *parabhakti* there is no separate entity or individual apart from God or the Self. This kind of *bhakti* leads to the complete extinction of the ego. All distinctions cease to exist. The sense of devotion is not destroyed in the Self-realised state.

Knowledge of God and love of God are ultimately one. Pure knowledge and pure *bhakti*, lead to one and the same state of egolessness. We should see their inter-relation and their common goal. A *jnani* realises Brahman which is beyond all triads like knowledge, known and the knower, whereas a *bhakta* realises that love, lover and the Beloved are one and the same. Whatever may be the mode of approach the ultimate goal is the realisation of non-dual Oneness.

An Episode in the Life of Sri Ramakrishna

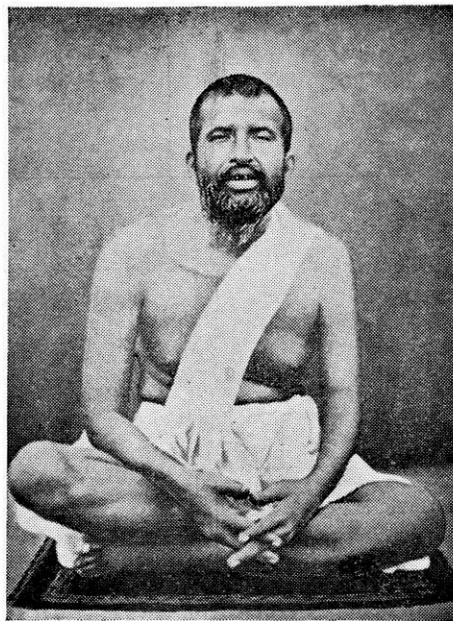
By Jagannath Chatopadhyaya

THOUGH Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's simplicity and love of truth are well known, very few people know that even as a child of nine he possessed an unflinching iron will and determination to practise what he thought was right.

Sri Ramakrishna was born in 1836 in a poor orthodox Brahmin family in the village of Kamarpukur in rural Bengal. As Jesus Christ was born in a stable, Sri Ramakrishna was born in a lowly hut set apart for husking paddy. His mother, Chandra Debi, had a good friend and constant companion in Dhani, who belonged to the blacksmith caste. Dhani was a childless widow and acted as midwife at Chandra Debi's delivery.

It was natural therefore that she regarded the charming baby of Chandra Debi as her own child and loved it with her whole heart. The child was given the name of Gadadhar, and he became the favourite of everyone, specially the women, in the neighbourhood. To Dhani, Gadadhar was the apple of her eye and he too loved her as he loved his mother. Dhani was overwhelmed with joy when, at the time of his *Upanayana* (sacred thread) ceremony, Gadadhar readily accepted her suggestion that he should receive his first alms (*bbiksba*) from her hands instead of from his own mother.

For an orthodox Brahmin family in those days, the investiture of the sacred thread was considered an important ceremony which marked a new birth and the beginning of a new chapter. He now became a full-fledged Brahmin or *Dvija* (twice born) and when this important event happened in the life of young



Gadadhar, he was only nine years old. His father having passed away, the whole responsibility of celebrating this ceremony naturally fell upon his elder brother and guardian, Ram Kumar.

On the eve of the ceremony Gadadhar informed Ram Kumar that he had already assured Dhani that he would accept the first *bbiksba* from her, regardless of her caste. Ram Kumar was shocked to hear this proposed outrage on the social norms then prevalent. By every possible means he tried to persuade his brother to follow custom, but Gadadhar was adamant. He was quite prepared to sacrifice his Brahminhood and forgo the *upanayanam* ceremony. To carry out this determination, Gadadhar shut himself up in a room and bolted it from inside. This unusual event created a sensation in the locality.

A friend of the family, one Dharmadas Saha, came forward as a mediator and managed to convince Ram Kumar that it was permissible even under the *shastras*, for a neophyte Brahmin to accept the first *bbiksba* from someone other than his mother, even if of some other caste. Ram Kumar then relented and the ceremony was duly celebrated.

LIFE AND DEATH

By Lama Anagarika Govinda

**Life acts as the springboard for death
and death for life until both are transcended
in the final state of Oneness.**

Why do ye flee from death,
ye who are fond of life? --
Is not in death the source,
from which life ever springs
And into which we daily must retreat
to find new strength? --
Just as an arrow is drawn back
before the shot.

The further we draw back
the arrow's shaft,
The greater is the range and power
of its flight.
But neither force nor arrow
can decide
The aim, for which they are created
and employed.

But when the aim is reached
and Oneness is attained,
Then neither bow nor arrow
is of use ;
And life and death are meaningless
and fused
Into the timeless presence of eternity :
The other shore is gained !

THE SPIRIT OF RELIGION

By Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao

A STUDY of human psychology discloses that man cannot face himself and makes a terrific attempt to run away from himself. He is most ill at ease when he is face to face with his desires, ambitions, lusts and emotions. He does not succeed in running away from them for they keep on haunting him in his dreams and sleep. Wherever he goes he carries his mind with him.

The central problem of man is the war between what he sees as his ideal, and the distractions of his daily life. The result is as Duryodhana says: "I know what is *dharma* but I am not able to act up to it; I know what is *adharma*, and I am not able to desist from it." In the *Bhagavad Gita* Arjuna asks Krishna why man acts the wrong way in spite of his desire to the contrary. St. Paul echoes Arjuna's question: "... the good that I would, I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do." St. Augustine explodes in dejection: "I know not how it is, that an object of desire becomes more seductive when it is forbidden."

This attitude can only be set right by spiritual life. No substitute can work for it. Mankind falls into two main categories -- that of spiritually-centred people (*daivi sampat*) and those who are egoistically self-centred (*asuri sampat*). The Gita describes the latter as the aggressive type, which suffers from a terrible

Material advancement tends to push religious values to the background.

The author discusses the consequences of this trend.

pride about its autonomy and achievement, and strives for power and possessions usually at the cost of others. They are intolerant of all opposition and tend to revel in their successes, considering mere technological advances and their restless way of life as 'progress'. All reflection is banished as speculative non-sense. Peace and quiet are anathema to them. They seek to fly from themselves rather than go inwards in search of serenity and true happiness which is our birthright. This is the condition of the modern man who has no religious outlook to bring order into his life.

Some men seek to forget themselves by indulgence in drink, drugs and sex, and others by plunging themselves into work, hobbies or active sports. But such escapism is a form of sickness and is self-perpetuating. There is nothing to temper the outgoing ego. What is needed is the transcendence of the ego in God-vision. This is the supra-personal way of religion.

In the present state of society, the function of religion is discussed in a spate of books, some lauding it and others decrying it as an opium of the mind. But religion and faith are inherent in human nature. As Pascal says simply: "Man's mind naturally believes and man's heart naturally loves." Therefore the attempt to banish religion from the minds of men is impossible. Religion can be criticised and declared unverified and hence

untrue ; but if God is denied and cannot be found within our hearts, man will kneel down before an earthly dictator . Man's choice is not between different types of faith. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan truly observes that the age of faith is always with us ; only the object of our faith changes. We depart from one creed only to embrace another.

Science and technology have brought us a geographical unity and made the world a close neighbourhood. We may devote a great deal of our time and energy for improving communications, raising the standard of living and developing industry, but these alone will not make it become one world in the hearts and minds of men, unless we can avoid the seven major evils of civilization neatly enumerated by Gandhiji, namely : Politics without principles ; pleasure without conscience ; commerce without morality ; worship without sacrifice, wealth without work, knowledge without character and science without humanity.

To bring about a radical change in human nature, we needs must accept and practise a religion. This alone can give us the necessary vision, goodwill and energy for the emergence of a world community. But modern man seems to have lost all faith in religion and even in his fellow man. He fails to see any meaning in life, apart from its hedonistic aspects. God is not considered 'reasonable', and philosophers ask the question, 'Is God dead?' Organised religion is of little help in the matter and asks us to surrender our reason and accept dogmatic assertions. Intolerance, hypocrisy, and involvement in state politics have caused people to distrust such institutions -- to the detriment of religion as a whole.

The religions of the world have all to face the challenge posed by materialistic humanism and atheistic communism. They should turn to advantage their common power, and not lose themselves in fratricidal conflict.

Most people in India are genuinely spiritual and regard all religions with respect. No Indian claims that his faith is in possession of the complete and exclusive truth. It is easy for an Indian to enter into the spirit of other faiths and try to understand them as his own.

Religion is a total commitment and not fractional living, and its experience cannot be explained in terms of reason or logic. It has to be sustained and kept alive by the ethical effort of man. The genuinely religious man expresses his sense of responsibility, his concern and commitment in action. He *lives* his religion. He never seeks escape from the call of duty. He worships the Lord by serving His fellow beings. The words of Jesus keep the true vision before us :

"Whosoever possesses worldly goods and notices his brother in need, and shuts his heart against him, how can love of God remain in him? If a man says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar ; for how can he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, love God whom he has not seen?"¹

A Chinese philosopher has said that production without possession, development without domination and action without self-assertion is the Chinese ideal. In their quest for livelihood they do not forget the quality of life. They do not clutch at things with a miser's grasp, but sit loosely on their possessions. They exhibit in their life perfect courtesy and exquisite manner and are gentle to all in speech and action.

The *Gita* describes such people with detachment as living like a lotus in the water, untouched by sorrow or joy, and regarding a lump of gold and a clod of earth with equal eyes.

The man of true religion seeks both dharma and moksha ; he seeks on the horizontal plane, a harmonious way of life for all, inspired by justice and love, and vertically -- the bliss of beatitude. The question is how to do it. "The way is to penetrate into the depth of one's own religion, in devotion, thought and action. In the depth of every living religion there is a point at which the religion loses its importance, and that to which it points breaks through its particularity, elevating it to spiritual freedom and with it to a vision of spiritual freedom in other expressions of the ultimate meaning of man's existence."²

¹ St. John's Gospel.

² *Christianity and Encountered* by Paul Tillich (p. 97).

PRAYER AND MEDITATION

This article deals with methods of prayer and meditation. The highest prayer is seeking union with the Divine.

By K. Padmanabhan

PRAYER is a special prerogative of the human. The wisdom and reason in man establishes through prayer communion with God, the Supreme. It is the First breath of divine life, the pulse of the believing soul. Prayer is the greatest solace for the afflicted and the suffering.

There is no nation or community that does not practise prayer. It may take several forms, have varied elements constituting it, and may also yield the expected results. But the ultimate aim of all prayer is the attainment of everlasting peace or permanent bliss, *moksha*.

Resorting to prayer, one feels a sense of purification, an elevation of the mind towards contentment and peace. Congregational prayers, *bbajans*, group worship and rituals in temples have their own effect. Time, posture, environment and mental state provide the conditions conducive for prayer.

All forms of prayer, be they for temporal blessings and material comforts, or for intellectual and moral enlightenment, for spiritual growth or intense aspiration for union with God, are efficacious in their own ways, if rightly offered. Petition, intercession, adoration and contemplation are different forms of

prayer. The Lord says in the *Gita*: "Of four kinds are the righteous who worship Me, Arjuna: those who suffer, those who seek knowledge, those who seek material benefit and the enlightened". (VII-16)

The highest prayer is said to be the most passive. This is inevitably so, for, the less there is of self, the more there is of God. He is aware of your needs. He loves you much better than you love yourself. You neither know what to ask of Him or how to ask. Fenelon rightly advised: "Be silent, offer yourself up in sacrifice, yield yourself to Him, have no other desire than to accept His Will, and pray to Him to teach you how to pray. Let your prayer be an asking, a seeking, nay, a knocking for more light, greater spiritual wisdom and greater discernment. Seek God only for the purpose of God Realisation. Go to Him expecting Him and Him alone." "Prayers are not wishes, not a beggar's plea for alms, not whisperings meant for human ears, not nice displays of grandiose words and vocal charm. Prayers are quiet communion wherein man speaks and God listens, and while God speaks, man listens," according to Swami Rajeswarananda. The simplest and the most universal form of spiritual exercise

is the repetition of the Divine Name, *japa*, in a manner or phrase best adapted, so long as God's existence is affirmed and the soul's dependence on Him is acknowledged. Selfless one-pointedness of will, thought and feeling is attained and the subconscious mind is elevated, to result in 'integral intuition'. Mere concentration on a conventional divine form would entail missing the God concealed in it. Distractions would be there in plenty. One should not get disheartened by them. It would be futile to fight them. With a continuous effort to shift attention, it would become possible either to circumvent them or benefit by them. Such would be 'intellectual meditation' without discursive thinking, discrimination and analysis.

Constant practice of such 'intellectual meditation' would lead the mind to become active within while being inactive on the surface. It is the activity in the depths of mind that frees. It is impossible to stop the activity of the mind. Give it full scope. There would then be redirection of attention and flow of energy from without to within — the 'inward gazing'. While it remains perfectly still or tranquil the mind would be most active in realisation — the realisation of the mind itself as the pure and undifferentiated essence, the highest *samadhi*.

Do not wait to commence meditation after you control the mind. The mind has to be steadied rather than controlled. Better do both at the same time. For the meditation to be a successful exercise it should be pure and inward-turned; this is possible only when the mind gets objectified and there is absolute awareness of its nature. In this way one becomes aware that the mind is but a continual flow of thoughts and images.

The *Vishnu Svatpadi Stotra* of Shri Sankara carries the prayer that the Lord should destroy such evil qualities as pride and going after the mirage of sense-objects, and fill the mind with compassion towards all. And Sankara says, "(Just as) the wave belongs to the ocean and not the ocean to the wave; I am yours, You are not mine."

Such prayer is to experience oneness with Him!

THE TEACHINGS OF PUJYAPADA

(Jain Monk of 4th Century)

Body, house, wealth and wife,
sons friends and enemies —
all are different from the soul.
Only the fool thinks them his own.

* * *

From all directions come the birds
and rest together in the trees :
but in the morning each goes his own way,
flying in all directions.

* * *

Death is not for me. Why then should
I fear ?

Disease is not for me. Why then
should I despair ?

I am not a child, nor a youth, nor an
old man —

All these states are only of my body.

* * *

Time and again in my foolishness
have enjoyed
all kinds of body and have discarded
them.

Now I am wise !

Why should I long for rubbish ?

* * *

The soul is one thing, matter another —
that is the quintessence of truth.
Whatever else may be said
is merely its elaboration.

*Sanatana Dharma and Religious Conversion*¹

By **H. H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Swami**
(Sankaracharya of Sringeri)

A European (referred to as Mr. A. in this article) once approached the late Sankaracharya of Sringeri about the possibility of foreigners getting converted to Hinduism. Impressed by the Sankaracharya's unique blend of rational wisdom and flowing eloquence, the visitor left firmly convinced that the only way for him to embrace Hinduism was to return home a better Christian.

The essence of the significant discussion with His Holiness is reproduced here. It is extracted from the book *Dialogues with the Guru* by R. Krishnaswami Aiyar, who acted as interpreter on this occasion. All the dialogues were recorded between 1925 and 1927 while the Sankaracharya was touring extensively in South India.

Sri Bhagavan has referred to Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati with veneration.

¹ From *Dialogues with the Guru* by R. Krishnaswami Iyer, published by M/s. Chetana Ltd., Bombay.



H.H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati

Mr. A. : Swamiji, may I know if you are prepared to take converts to your religion? Personally I find such worth in it and I have known very many friends who so love your philosophy and religion that they would like to call themselves Hindus, if that were possible.

His Holiness : The Hindu system of philosophy and religion is bound to attract all thinking minds, but we do not take in converts.

Mr. A : If you think that your system is an invaluable one and is bound to be useful

to all mankind, does it not follow that you must be prepared to take in converts ?

H.H. : Not necessarily. Conversion is possible or necessary only when the person who desires to be a convert does not already belong to the religion to which he desires to be converted.

Mr. A. : How is that ? Do you mean to say that no formal conversion is necessary as those who desire to be Hindus are already Hindus by virtue of that desire itself ?

H.H. : No. I mean that all are Hindus irrespective of their desire to be called Hindus.

Mr. A. : How can that be ?

H.H. : Hinduism is the name that has now been given to our system, but its real name has always been *Sanatana Dharma* or the Eternal Law. It does not date from a particular point of time or begin from a particular founder. Being eternal, it is also universal. It knows no territorial jurisdiction. All beings born and to be born belong to it. They cannot escape this law whether they concede its binding force or not. The eternal truth that fire burns does not depend for its validity upon our allegiance to it. If we accept that truth, so much the better for us. If we do not, so much the worse for us. In either case the law is there - immutable, universal and eternal. Such is *Sanatana Dharma*.

Mr. A. : If then the Hindu *Sastras* are to be taken as the guide for all humanity and if all persons born are in your view born in your religion, how do you account for the prevalence of other faiths ?

H.H. : It is their fault that they do not recognise that they are but aspects of the *Sanatana Dharma*. The highest teachings of any other religion do find a place in our religion and are but a phase of the ordinary law laid down there.

Mr. A. :But again my initial difficulty in understanding the need for, rather the fact of, several conflicting religions, all purporting to point out the path to the light, remains unsolved.

H.H. : I told you that the principle of *adbikara* or competency rules the world. As there are various gradations in competency,

there are various faiths suited to those particular gradations.

Mr. A. : I can quite understand this. But no religion is prepared to admit that it is intended for people of a particular grade alone. In fact every religion claims to be the highest and the only true one.

H. H. : Suppose a young boy is simultaneously asked by four persons issuing independent commands to light a lamp, to trim the wick, to fill the oil can and to put out the lamp. He will be in a hopeless mess and will not at all know what to do If a fifth gentleman turns up and says 'Bring me a pair of scissors', he is adding one more command to the already existing four. The boy is already perplexed by the four contradictory commands. Now he has to choose from among five . . . If however, this gentleman is kindly disposed towards the boy and wants to help him out of his difficulty and if the boy with true faith turns to him for help, the gentleman has to tell him emphatically 'Bring me the pair of scissors. You need not obey the other commands' Similarly any religious teacher claiming to give practical guidance to those who have faith in him has necessarily to say, 'Do as I ask you to do. Ignore the commands of others'.

Mr. A. : That means the religious teachers adapted their teachings to the calibre and competency of the people who came to them for guidance and to the circumstances of the times when they lived. In other words their teachings were only relatively true, though perhaps the teachers were themselves aware of the absolute truth. In determining what to teach and what not, they were guided more by diplomatic expediency than by unswerving regard for truth.

H.H. : Rather, they were guided by the needs and competency of the people. As I mentioned once before, a cup of cold water gives comfort to a healthy man when he is thirsty, but is positively harmful to the man laid up with fever

Mr. A. : How then is one to know whether a particular truth enunciated by a teacher is the absolute truth or only the relative truth ?

H.H. : Why do you want to know it? Is it to determine the relative superiority or inferiority of the several teachers or is it to obtain for yourself a practical guide for regulating your life?

Mr. A. : What then, Swamiji, is your practical advice to me?

H.H. : You believe in God?

Mr. A. : I do.

H.H. : You believe in the wisdom of God?

Mr. A. : Certainly.

H.H. : You believe that the wisdom will be impressed in every act of God?

Mr. A. : Of course.

H.H. : You grant that that wisdom must be apparent even in giving you birth?

Mr. A. : It must be.

H.H. : God then had a purpose, a wise purpose, in giving you birth?

Mr. A. : I should think so. Even my birth, insignificant though it be when compared with the vast interests of the world, cannot be purposeless.

H.H. : God had a purpose, a wise purpose, in giving you birth as the child of a particular set of parents?

Mr. A. : There must be. I do not believe in chance.

H.H. : What more patent purpose need be sought after to explain your being born of Christian parents than that in God's view Christianity was the best suited to one of your competency? The Lord in His supreme wisdom can well be relied upon to judge what is the religion best suited for us. . . . Why should we ignore this gracious mercy of the Lord and try to do the impossible by comparing the relative values of the several religions?

Mr. A. : I have tried to understand Christianity and follow it to the best of my lights but very many doubts are cropping up now and then and I have not been able to meet anybody who can solve them. That is why I wanted to study other religions.

H.H. : Doubts can never be solved unless you approach the persons who have not merely studied their religion but are daily living it. For the purpose of trade you are prepared to cross the seas and explore the air, but for the purpose of Truth you want the teachers to

come to your door and solve your doubts for you. The attitude that religion is an interesting side-aspect of life must go. If once you realise that religion is life itself and not an aspect of it, you will begin to explore the entire world earnestly for a proper teacher. He is ever available and is but waiting for a symptom of real earnestness in you. I am not prepared to believe that there are no such teachers in Christianity. They may not be in the ordinary world of strife, or they may even be, as strife cannot injure them. Go therefore in search of such true Christians and ask them in true humbleness of heart to solve your doubts. They will do so in no time and you will find that God, in spite of your doubts, was after all justified in making you the child of Christian parents.

Mr. A. : I cannot sufficiently thank you, Swamiji, for your kind words of advice. Please allow me to confess that when I came here I had no idea that I would be going away from you with a sincere desire to be a better Christian. But that is the desire which you have inculcated in me. If your aim is to make a Christian a better Christian, a Hindu a better Hindu and so on, your religion is certainly more catholic than I thought it was. In parting may I have your gracious blessings?

H.H. : Blessings are the monopoly of God and we must all pray for His gracious blessings. Please let me once more point out to you that God has already blessed you with a good physique, a virile mind and a keen intellect. An artist howsoever capable, provided though he may be with the finest of colours and the finest of brushes and even though he may have thought out the finest of subjects, cannot paint a picture on vacant air. He does require a stable background -- be it a canvas or a wall -- however crude and worthless. Don't waste your gifts therefore on airy speculations as to the relative values of the various religions. Apply your God-given gifts on the stable background of your God-chosen faith Christianity. When the painting is completed and you contemplate its beauty, the background will fade away from your view of its own accord. But not till then. Remember that!

HAVE MERCY¹

By Dag Hammarskjöld

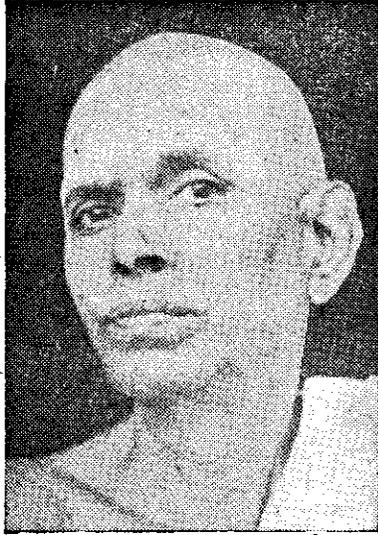
Have mercy
 Upon us
 Have mercy
 Upon our efforts,
 That we
 Before Thee,
 In love and in faith,
 Righteousness and humility,
 May follow Thee,
 With self-denial, steadfastness and courage,
 And meet Thee
 In the silence.

Give us
 A pure heart
 That we may see Thee,
 A humble heart
 That we may hear Thee,
 A heart of love
 That we may serve Thee,
 A heart of faith
 That we may live Thee,

Thou
 Whom I do not know
 But Whose I am.

Thou
 Whom I do not comprehend
 But Who hast dedicated me
 To my fate.
 Thou --

¹From *Markings*, his private diary.



Major General V. N. Parameswaran Pillai, O.B.E., retired from service as G.O.C., Travancore-Cochin State Forces in the year 1950. Even while in service he had a deeply religious bent of mind and he used to visit holy places and personages. After retirement he made a pilgrimage to all holy places in India and to Kailas-Manasarovar.

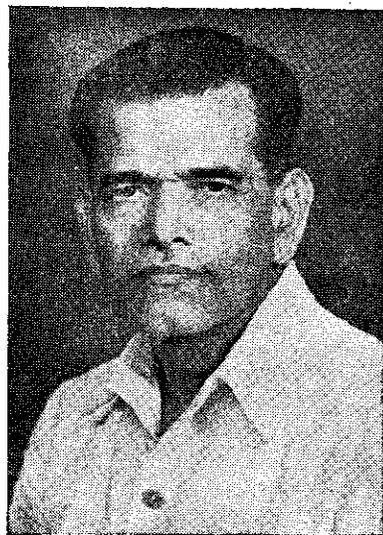
He was initiated by Sri Sivanandaji Maharaj of Rishikesh when he visited Trivandrum in 1950. Sri Swami Purushottamanandaji Maharaj of Vasistha Guha gave him *sannyasa diksha* in 1958. Since then he is known as Swami Paresananda. He has his own Ashram at Kanyakumari, Neyyathinkaray and Trivandrum where he lives these days.

How I Came to the Maharshi

By Swami Paresananda

IT was in the year 1936 that I had the good fortune of having darshan of Sri Bhagavan. I had heard about Him before, and was longing to go to Tiruvannamalai but the opportunity never came till then. This is how it came about.

I was then a Captain in the Travancore State Forces and an A.D.C. to His Highness the Maharaja. His Highness and the Royal Mother had been to Madras from where they paid a visit to Sri Ramanasramam on the counsel of the Dewan, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, who was a devotee of Sri Ramana Bhagavan. I came to know of this when Their



Swami Paresananda

Highnesses returned to Trivandrum and was wondering whether it was not my bad luck that I was not taken as A.D.C. on that tour. In the meantime, one morning, my friend Sri I. S. Narayana Pillai, the Controller of Stationery, who was a devotee of Maharshi, informed me over the phone that he was starting for Sri Ramanasramam the next day and asked whether I would like to join him. It was his general practice to inform me whenever he went to some place of pilgrimage and I had accompanied him to many places. But this time I was not confident of getting permission from His Highness at such short notice and I replied him that I would not be able to go with him.

Mysterious indeed are the ways of Bhagavan! A few hours later, when I reported for duty at the Palace, His Highness said, of his own accord, that if I also wanted to visit Sri Ramanasramam I could go. Yes, His Highness knew very well that I was fond of visiting religious places and saints. This sudden and unexpected permission made me speechless for a few seconds. I felt it was all due to Bhagavan's grace.

Sri I. S. and I reached the Ashram the second day. My companion was a frequent visitor, so everyone knew him. He introduced me to the *Sarvadbikari*, Sri Niranjanananda Swami, who made arrangements for our stay. Then we proceeded to the Hall for Sri Bhagavan's darshan. Bhagavan was reclining on a couch, turning to one side. The Hall was almost full with visitors from various parts of the country and from the west. As we entered the Hall, the scene brought to my memory *stokas* from *Dakshinamurti Stotra*. I felt Dakshinamurti Himself was reclining on the couch. I. S. took me to a vantage point, sitting where we could see the Maharshi without any obstruction. Bhagavan noticed us. After a while He sat up and beckoned to me. We did not know whom He was summoning and, as I was a stranger, my companion thought he was being called and he got up. Bhagavan signalled 'No'. Others enquired whether this or that person was meant by pointing to some persons sitting nearby but the answer was in the negative.

At last I was pointed out and Maharshi nodded assent. Everybody was surprised and became curious about me. I was also surprised. I approached Him immediately, placed the flowers and fruits I had brought, and prostrated myself before Him. He beckoned to me to come nearer and gazed at me for a while and smiled. Then He told his attendant: "Bring that book". It was brought and Maharshi presented it to me. It was a Malayalam translation of Maharshi's Tamil work: *Gitasaram*. I was overwhelmed with joy and devotion. After a few seconds Maharshi took the book from me, made some corrections in His own hand and then handed it back to me touching my hand, I considered myself highly blessed to receive Maharshi's Grace in this manner.

Then it was time for the mid-day meal. We were also invited, so we entered the dining hall. Maharshi asked me to sit in the opposite row, just facing Him and I did so. While eating, he enquired tenderly: "How is the preparation?" and so on. I replied that everything was very nice. Again He said: "Take enough rice, curry, etc. Eat slowly" and so on, and asked the servers also to give me more curry etc. Throughout He was talking to me only in the dining hall and this made others wonder who this favoured one might be. As for me, I had had various such experiences before and I felt that it was all due to some merit accumulated in past lives. "Omnipresent and Omniscient as He is, Maharshi understands the heart of every one", this belief of mine was confirmed.

My friend I. S. was a regular visitor to the Ashram but Maharshi had never spoken to him. When I received such favours from Him, it was natural for I. S. to feel that there was something lacking in him. Maharshi could easily understand this. The same day he presented a book to I. S. also and made him feel deeply gratified.

More than thirty-seven years have elapsed but the whole thing is still green in my memory. *And the Book that Maharshi gave me, corrected in His own Hand, is still with me. I keep it as a sacred Treasure!*

Garland of Guru's Sayings

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

380.

The property of body, ego and *jiva*
Is but decay and death ; that of the Self
Is sorrowless existence true.
Wisdom lies then in calm abidance
And readiness to welcome death
At all times with an equal mind.

381.

Nought but the knowledge of the Self
can end
Birth which comes from ignorance of the
Self
It is only true awareness which dispels
The dense maya that the five sheaths are
oneself
That can bring freedom from attachment.

382.

Great knowers recognize no other bondage
Than the endless rising movements of the
mind
And right enough they find release
Nowhere but in the total death,
Leaving no trace behind,
Of every movement of the mind.

383.

The individual self is but the mind
Drunk with and reeling under the heady
notion
That it is bound. This very mind
When it stands steady,
Pining for nothing and of nothing proud,
Becomes the Self supreme.

384.

Ending this vast, external wandering
Of the mind enquiring "Who are you ?"
And "Who is he ?", 'tis best to quest
Within, unceasing, eager, keen,
For one's own self and ask
"Who am I ?"

385.

When with the keen, unceasing quest
Of "Who am I" one penetrates
The centre of oneself,
The ego false fades out, true Being
Rises clear and puts an end
To this wonderful diversity.

386.

Once we raise the question "Who
The questioner is", all questions based
On duality dissolve ; the question
"Who the questioner is" becomes
The Brahmastra which destroys the show
Of separateness born by black nescience.

387.

Investigating who perceives this false
External world of sense, bring to an end
The frisking ego's mischief. This is how
Abidance in supreme awareness
Comes to the heart and freedom to oneself.

388.

The *jiva* searching "Who in truth am I"
Subsides as the true Self without an 'I'.

389.

The method of Self-enquiry is to turn
The outward-going mind
Back to its source, the Heart,
And fix it ever there, preventing
The rising of the empty 'I'.

390.

Without abiding in calm solitude
As the supreme awareness in the Heart,
To tear oneself away and look for truth
Here, there and elsewhere in the external
world
Is like a search midst raging flames
For a diver in deep water sunk.

391.

Those who don't enter the region of the
Heart
And there confront the Self in the five
sheaths hid
Are not true seekers of the Self, but only
Industrious students answering out of books
The questions raised by books.

392.

In the steady peace of the still mind
With breath within the Heart restrained
And all five senses merged in one
In such keen, centred knowledge know
Pure, flawless being as awareness.

393.

One who has wisely chosen the straight path
Of Self-enquiry can never go astray ;
For like the bright, clear sun the Self reveals
Itself direct to whoso turns towards It.

394.

Because we are prone to death and drooping
We set out to overcome the fear of death ;
We have then perforce to cast off languor
Once for all. And therefore for Self-enquiry
No fixed rule is needed.

395.

No object that in time and space appears
Can have existence independent of
That supreme and perfect Being.
Hence no such object serves a purpose
In Self-enquiry. Shun them all.

396.

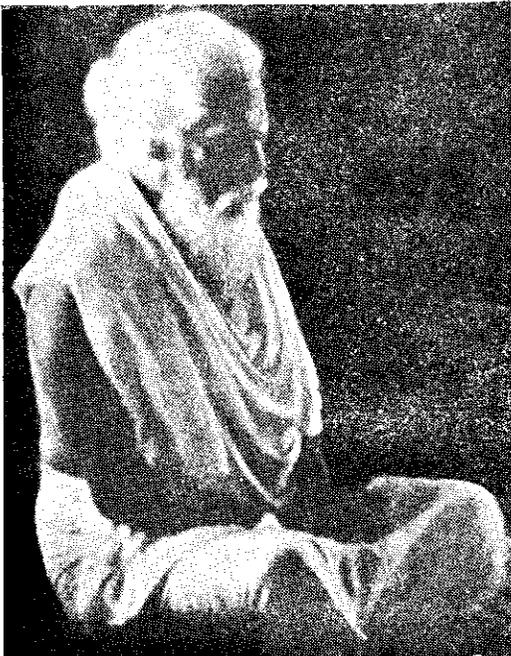
To confront the habitually unregarded Self
With the question "Who am I?"
Such practice, tireless, inward-turned
Of Self-enquiry is alone
The true waging of the war
'Twixt gods and demons.

397.

Whenever any thought arises, do not
Attempt at all to fulfil it. Rather ask
"To whom do all these thoughts occur?"
And start enquiring for the Self.

398.

"To me occurs this thought. Then who
am I?"
Dive deep into the Self with such enquiry.
Back into its source the mind will sink
And thoughts will cease to rise.



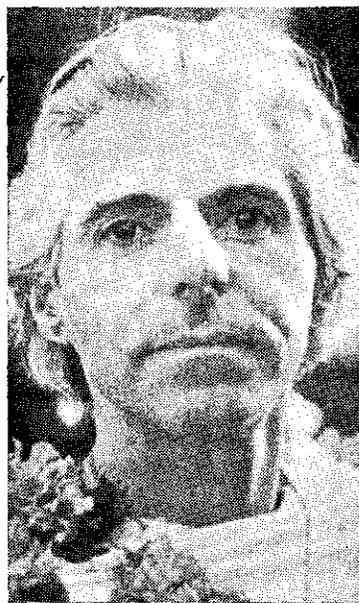
Sri Yogaswami

SRI YOGASWAMI OF JAFFNA

By An American Devotee

We are happy to publish this article
on Sri Yogaswami of Jaffna,
who had darshan of Sri Bhagavan
during his pilgrimage in India.
Master Subramuniya (of Wailua University
of Contemplative Arts,
Kapaa on the Garden Island, Hawaii-96746,
U.S.A.) is spreading the teachings of his Guru,
Sri Yogaswami, in the States.
Master Subramuniya has visited our Ashram
a few times with his followers.

SRI YOGASWAMI (1872-1964), the renowned mystic of Jaffna, was a great spiritual master who provided guidance and brought solace to thousands including foreigners in his lifetime. And today his influence is growing in Ceylon and in the West. In the United States the mission of spreading the message of *Saiva Siddhanta* and generating spiritual awareness is ably carried on by Master Subramuniya on the lines dear to Sri Yogaswami. Master Subramuniya owes his spiritual power to the blessings of Sri Yogaswami received in the unusual manner of a resounding slap on the back, a quarter of a century ago.



Master Subramuniya

Sri Yogaswami was born in Mavittapura, the son of Ambalavanar and Chinnachi Ammal. He went to school but did not continue his studies beyond the seventh or eighth standard. Working for a while as a store-keeper in the Irrigation Department at Kilinochi he became reputed as an honest and efficient worker. In his leisure hours he practised meditation and committed to memory hundreds of devotional

hymns which in later years he recited before his devotees in a very moving manner.

In 1897, he resigned his job and returned to Jaffna. Sri Swami Vivekananda was then visiting Jaffna. And Sri Yogaswami was one among those who went in a procession of welcome. Though exact records do not seem to be available, he must have met his guru for the first time in the same year.

His guru, Sri Chellappa Swami, was unusual in his ways. He begged his food, clothed himself in rags and wandered about as he pleased. He threw stones at admirers and none but a few dared to approach him. No wonder most people misled by such outward appearance hiding the spiritual fire within took him for a mad man. He was usually found in the neighbourhood of Nallur (a suburb of Jaffna) and his favourite haunt was the large building housing the Car of Kandaswami Temple. His instruction was not through elaborate discourses. They were contained in four principal sayings. These *mahavakyas* or cryptic statements are the following :

Oru pollappum illai -- There is no evil
(Nothing is wrong)

Nam Ariyam -- We do not know

Eppavo Mudintha Karyam -- It was all
over long ago (It has ever been perfect)

Muludum unmai -- All is Truth (the whole
thing is true)

The translations of the *mahavakyas* are only approximations and the full import can be caught only intuitively. These sayings of the master are in turn the bed rock of Sri Yogaswami's teaching also.

The master subjected Sri Yogaswami to severe trials. Both used to cook and when it was all over the master sometimes broke the cooking pot just when they were about to eat! He used to take out the disciple apparently for a bath but walk back without it. Sri Yogaswami withstood all this. To him the guru was supreme. However the most remarkable episode in the life of Sri Yogaswami was the rigorous performance of *tapas* for a continuous period of forty days in the immediate presence of his master.

Sri Yogaswami then went on a walking tour which lasted for years. He wandered as an

DHYANA

When the invocation becomes mental where is the need for sound? On becoming mental it becomes contemplation. Meditation, contemplation and mental invocation are the same. When thoughts cease to be promiscuous and one thought persists to the exclusion of all others it is said to be contemplation. The object of invocation or meditation is to exclude varied thoughts and confine to one. Then that thought too vanishes into its source, which is pure Consciousness or the Self. The mind first engages in invocation and then sinks into its own source.

This is certain : worship, incantation and meditation are performed respectively with the body, the voice and the mind and are in the ascending order of value.

—SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

ascetic without any money on hand and depending on chance gifts of food on the way. The Swami visited various temples on this tour and eventually reached Katirgamam. He then returned to Jaffna.

When the guru was about to attain *maha-samadhi* he did not allow his disciples to come near him during his last illness. Sri Yogaswami then repaired to an *iluppai* tree at Columbuthurai on the outskirts of Jaffna. Exposed to the vagaries of the weather he lived under this tree. But eventually he yielded to the loving entreaties of followers and permitted them to build a hut for his use.

Believing that each of the many forms of Hindu practice are designed for a unique and specific purpose he would prescribe temple worship for one devotee, meditation for another, yoga marga for another and so on, as each one came to the Swami with his problems, needs and stage of spiritual development. Therefore, the Swami encompassed the length, breadth, height and depth of *Sanatana Dharma's* spiritual discipline from which each could draw his lesson.

The Swami's method of guidance therefore was varied. He drew no rigid lines of philosophical dogma and often observed that (*Saiva*) *Siddhanta* and (*Advaita*) *Vedanta* are one in the lofty realm where there are no thoughts or concepts. To his humble hut in Columbuthurai hundreds and thousands came over the years to seek his blessings and he would speak in the language each one could understand, not failing to quote the essence of any religious thought which was appropriate or any prophet whose method was the panacea for the ailment. The Swami offered the world a treasure of spiritual teachings of his own. There are countless sayings of great import, phrases of religious significance and songs of deep spiritual experience, many centered around and in devotion to his beloved guru. Sri Yogaswami's songs have been published in a book entitled : *Narchintanai*.

Here are a few extracts from the sayings and songs of the Swami¹ :

"I saw my Guru at Nallur, where great *tapasvins* dwell.

Many unutterable words he uttered, but I stood unaffected.

'Hey ! Who are you ?' he challenged me. That very day his grace I came to win.

If like a child you give yourself to Him, Just like a mother will He care for you.

Foolish it is to call men 'great' or 'small' ; It is hard indeed to comprehend this saying.

It is bliss to control through knowledge, The miscreant mind that treads the senses' path.

Those who know That are That ; Small minds say that it is 'this' or 'that'. Sages affirm that all is Siva's movement ; Then live without forgetting Him, who dwells within this frame.

Those noble souls will mukti win, who know The certainty of the Word that is spoken without a word.

Those endowed with wisdom will come to realise Me,

Whom *devas* and *asuras*, with all their wisdom, cannot know.

Forsaking the mind that what is past bewails,

In the state of silence it is proper to abide.

Even if heaven and earth should break to pieces,

Those who have become That will not be moved."

* * * * *

"We are That. It is not a case of becoming That."

"All that has form must disappear. The mind is also with form, so that too must go."

* * * * *

"See ! All is pervaded by Siva. Then who are you ? Who is your father ? What are all others ? Are they not all Siva ? Are you still in doubt ? Why fear ? Look ! I am with you ! you are with me. All being One and One being all, all remain as they have ever been without any change. Arise ! Learn as you go on !"

* * * * *

"Listen carefully to what I say ! Who are you ? Are you the body ? Are you the mind ? Or the eyes, or the ears, or the mouth, or the nose, or any of the other organs ? No. Why ? We speak of 'our body', 'our mind' and so on, does that not mean that we are separate from the body and mind ? Yes. Then what is my real nature ? I am the Immortal One. God lives in this house built of earth, water, fire, air and ether. Therefore keep the house clean and the mind pure, and conduct yourself with calmness."

* * * * *

During the Swami's travels on foot, he would often meet his devotees along the road. Never failing to offer his blessings at such times, his grace often took the form of a scolding father, an angry god, a wise teacher, a loving mother, or perhaps a playful friend, being as unpredictable as the different needs of the devotees were themselves. But whether they were chased away at the gate, scolded upon entrance, given kindly advice, or treated as a regal agent of Lord Siva Himself, all realized that the Swami was simply acting as an agent of their very selves, issuing forth, without hesitation, exactly as their souls secretly or openly desired and needed. It was this ability

¹ Quoted from *Songs and Sayings, of Yogaswami*. (Sivathondan Society, Ceylon)

to mirror the individual that won for Sri Yogaswami the admiration, awe, devotion and discipleship of the countless many.

Though the Saivite guru is traditionally endowed with divine powers beyond the reach of ordinary human comprehension, it is known that the greatest *siddhi* of all is the power to infuse the desire for Self-Realisation into a disciple and to effect that Realisation through Grace. This is the true purpose of the guru. That this was the Swami's mission is undeniable; yet he was known to exhibit his powers in many subtle and unseen ways to help his devotees ensnared in a tangle of their own creation. He has often taken the impact of their karma on himself and saved many ill or dying persons through his Grace. Yet he never thought of them as anything extraordinary or worth the slightest attention. Therefore he deliberately avoided publicity. To him *Sacred* was *Secret*. Often a devotee would not realize that what had cured him was the work of the Swami until long after it had happened and the emotion of the moment had died down. Though he never encouraged popular glamour for miracles he never failed to help his devotees in need of his help whatsoever.

His devotees held him as a pure manifestation of the Divine. He removed the darkness of anxiety and lit the torch of spiritual wisdom in their hearts. He was to them a mother, father, friend, teacher, Guru and God, Lord Siva Himself. He lived for 92 years. For most of those years he reigned as the living presence of Siva throughout Ceylon, respected and loved by both the Sinhalese and Tamil communities.

After living for many months with the people who knew him closely and dearly, I find that no amount of praise is capable of sufficiently describing him, as no amount of love would adequately express the feelings evoked by him in the hearts of his devotees. It was this devotion, strong, pure and uncontaminated that I experienced time and again through which I became acquainted, however distantly, with his overwhelming presence and radiance that still permeates the ancient holy ground upon which he walked, talked and moved about as Siva incarnate!

THE HUNTING

'Within the Temple of my Body, within the breast where the altar is, the Horse of Mind is prancing about. What lasso must be used to catch this Horse? To what post must it be tied? What food must be given it? What drink would it have and where must it be put for warmth? The Lasso is Singleness of Purpose; the Post is Meditation; its Food is the Guru's Teaching; its drink is the Stream of Consciousness; and the Enclosure for it in cold weather is The Void. For Saddle use the Will; for Bridle the Intellect; its Girths are Fixedness and its Headstall and Nosebands are The Vital Airs. Its Rider is Mindfulness; the Helmet that he wears is Altruism; his Coat of Mail is Learning and Contemplation. On his back is the Shield of Patience and in his hand the Spear of Aspiration. By his side hangs the Sword of Intelligence; his Arrows are the shafts of Universal Mind made straight by absence of hate and anger and barbed with the Feathers of Four Great Virtues, tipped with the Arrowhead of Keen Understanding. The pliant Bow is Spiritual Wisdom fixed in the Aperture of Right Method and the Right Path. These Arrows drawn to the Full Extent of Humanity, when shots fall among all the nations; and they strike those who are Faithful and kill the Selfish Spirit. Thus are all Evil Passions overcome and protected is all mankind, our kindred. The Horse gallops along the broad Plain of Happiness with the state of Buddhahood as Goal. Behind it it leaves Attachments to the things of the world, ahead of it lies Deliverance'.

from *The Life of Milarepa*



Sri Madhvacharya

JNANA OF MUKTI ACCORDING TO MADHVA

By H. J. Noranha, S.J.

RIGHTLY has the system of Madhva been called dualism. Whereas the other Vedanta systems try by hook or crook to demonstrate that diversity is but a secondary, accidental or even a merely apparent, attribute of Reality, Madhva proclaims mutual diversity or otherness to be at least as essential to Reality as unity.

Madhva maintains that the mutual difference between various beings is necessary and final. Things are diverse by their very nature. What characterizes anything as being, characterizes it by the very fact as distinct from anything else: "By seeing what Devadatta is, I see also that he is not a jar or another man."

Such is the testimony of our outward senses working within their own sphere, where therefore their authority cannot be challenged either by inference or by Scripture. For Scripture lives on that authority since it presupposes the correct audibility of words and inference, to be of value, must rest on sense perception or on Scripture.

But such especially is the intuition of our inward sense, that self-illuminating spiritual perceptiveness or witnessing of our soul, which reviews the working of our other *pramanas* (sense-perception, inference and scripture), sanctions or rejects their evidence and is thus the supreme arbiter of the true and the untrue. "What has been ascertained by the witness can never be challenged" and "No *pramana* has equal power with intuition." (*Tattwadyota* and *Anuvyakhyana*) Differences then are as numerous as existing beings. And these are infinitely numerous — the material objects being of course numberless, but even more so the souls. For there are souls outside matter, there are also souls constantly going out of matter through *mukti* and all the different energies of matter are controlled by various *devas*.

These differences are permanent: "Never anywhere has anything been seen to become other than it was. . . . Whatever has been perceived as other, how could one ever see it

as identical?" (*Anu*) Beings remain essentially what they are or they cease to be.

Still all these innumerable differences can be classified under five general heads:-- the otherness of souls from Isvara; the otherness of soul from soul; the otherness of matter from Isvara; the otherness of souls from matter and the otherness of one material substance from another. This five-fold difference is eternal, unbeginning and endless. Being a permanent attribute of what it affects, it is absolutely inseparable from it. If we see it as but a mode, this is due to the ineffable power of Isvara who can unite in perfect identity a real variety of aspects.

The numberless beings can also be classified. The main classification is that of independent and dependent. The independent being fully exists of itself and by itself. The dependent supposes the existence of a being distinct from itself. Isvara alone is independent. All other beings depend on Him even the highest, whether in the unconscious order -- *prakriti* and *pradhana* which is the substrate of all unconscious manifestations -- or in the spiritual order -- the highest spirit, Lakshmi, consort of Isvara and controller of all the conscious or unconscious creation. (*Tattva*.)

No doubt the substance of the dependent beings is not drawn out of the substance of Isvara. In other words, God is not their material cause. "Hari is the root of the world as its efficient cause, and not as undergoing change. As the soul of the seed is without changing the principle of the shoot or as the father is the principle of the son's body so is Hari also principle, undergoing no mutation". (*Chando. Bhasya*)

But if Brahman is not the material cause of the world, He is its cause in every other possible way. Although not its evolving cause, He must yet be proclaimed its whence and source. For if the world does not arise out of Him, it arises out of what is entirely His, resting on Him and acting but by Him.

Utterly distinct from all things Hari is their supporter and ruler present in them all.

Manu's Law for Sannyasins

He should not wish to die,
nor hope to live,
but await the time appointed,
as a servant awaits his wages

He must show no anger
to one who is angry.

He must bless the man who curses him . .
He must not utter falsehood.

Rejoicing in the things of the spirit, calm,
caring for nothing, abstaining from
sensual pleasure,
himself his only helper,
he may live on in the world, in the
hope of eternal bliss.

Unchanging, unchanged by matter, without material body, He has yet an eternal and resplendent immaterial organism made up of spiritual senses, eyes, ears etc. spiritual *manas* and *abamkara*, spiritual head, hands feet etc. so transcendent that we cannot reach a perception of them even through the highest yoga, although they may be manifested through the Lord's grace.

If Hari creates, it is, says Madhva, out of the exuberance of His joy -- that fulness of joy which marks Him off from every other being -- "just as a man who is mad dances because he feels happy" Hari plays at creation because He needs or finds pleasure in the play.

Nor is Isvara supreme and free agent in creation alone. He is also the prime and most potent cause of all the actions of creatures. *Prakriti*, of course, which is by itself inanimate, and other unconscious things, are completely under His sway. But even the soul is a mere puppet in His hands: "Just as a resolute man jerks a wooden doll limb by limb so the Lord moves all these creatures. The soul is indeed conscious, but on account of its dependence it can no more act of itself

than can a stone." Isvara not only begins our actions He brings them to their conclusion.

Isvara, keeping an eye on the fitness and deeds of each soul, envelopes it with the *gunas* of *prakriti* evolved into various internal and external organs, senses and subtle and gross body adapted to each and creates in the soul the illusion that it informs these and these alone. The soul is thus deluded into believing itself an independent little whole, the ruler and master of a microcosm. As all the modifications of its body are now reflected on it in the same way as the redness of a rose is reflected on a crystal nearby, the soul deems bodily pains and sorrows its own. It loves and hates and desires and is thus "nailed to the wheel of samsara." The whole process is real, although it leads to two false conclusions: that the soul is independent and that it is essentially connected with a body.

All then that the soul itself has contributed to its bondage is but its inborn fitness and unfitness — for which it is not responsible — and its past deeds — for which it was responsible in so far as the Supreme ruling of the Lord left it free. According to these, although not because of these, its present fate has been meted out to it by the Lord.

Since bondage depends primarily on the wish of the Lord, it is clear that release can only be obtained through His good will and grace: "The grace of Bhagavan is the one means of *mukti*". The means to obtain grace is *bhakti*: "Neither knowledge nor works are the cause of release from *samsara* . . . No one is released owing to prominent knowledge without *bhakti*. By *bhakti* alone one knows Him, by *bhakti* alone one sees Him, by *bhakti* alone one reaches happiness. For "whomsoever the Lord chooses that one obtains Him." Pleased by his love, the Lord cuts off the chain of his deeds.

In concluding we may say that the essential joy of *moksha* is in the service of Hari, a service which henceforth is not a means but an end. In this service all the released persist without end, each one satisfied with his lot and none jealous of the greater happiness imparted to others. This in short is the *jnana* of *mukti* according to Madhva.

SHIVA

(From the Kashmiri of
Paramanand)

By K. S.

To behold Shiva, die and be born again
Shut fast the body's window. Turn the mind
Inward to starve and be confined.
Be merged in stillness beyond joy or pain,
Aware without remembrance or forgetting.
Lost in the Void, the Ground
Of being and non-being. Be
The self-effluent Sun that knows
No rising and no setting.

From this calm seeing flows
A rill of love that fills
Each fibre of your being,
Sweet, fragrant oil that feeds
The flame that burns all creeds
And deeds, all thought, all self-hood,
Leaving nought but brightness,
Brightness!

Open wide the windows now.
Let the new mind, the soul made whole,
Go where it will. It cannot go
Where Shiva is not.

STORY OF PUNYA AND PAVANA

Vasishtha said :

WRONG notions are the seeds of all delusions and the origin of all misfortunes. One ceases to entertain them the moment one sees (i.e. realizes) the Supreme Being. The Self reveals itself in due course to one who is always contemplative like Janaka¹ and sees the transitoriness of the world. Those who are afraid of *samsara* will not be saved by the gods or ritualistic acts, riches or kinsmen. Personal effort is necessary.

When one ceases to hold the narrow view, namely 'I am this person' (i.e. Siva an expansive and all-pervading being takes its place. When the night of the idea, 'I am surely this person' comes to an end, the dawn that is one's own all-pervading effulgence manifests itself. Accepting certain things and rejecting others constitute the bondage of the mind, nothing else. Do not become sad over the things to be discarded, nor fond of those which are to be accepted. Leave aside all ideas of acceptance and rejection and remain steadfast and even-minded. Desirelessness, fearlessness, inherence in the eternal Self, feeling of equality, steady wisdom, indifference to everything, cheerfulness, friendliness towards all beings, contentment, kindness, pleasing words -- these qualities are found in the sage who is free from all ideas of acceptance and rejection as well as latent tendencies (*vasanas*). The net

of latent tendencies woven with the threads of thoughts is spread out in the ocean of *samsara* to catch the fish of the unwary. Dear one! Cut it to pieces with the sword of your understanding and scatter the pieces like clouds dispersed by the wind. And then inhere in the Self. After cutting down the mind with the mind like a tree cut down with an axe, attain the pure state and abide there firmly. Whatever you may be doing, whether standing or walking or sleeping or waking or breathing or rising or falling, always clearly remember that this world is unreal and renounce all desires. The mind being inert by nature depends upon the self which is Intelligence, just as a cat which is eager for meat depends upon a lion in the forest. The follower of the lion eats the meat procured by the valour of the lion. Similarly the mind grasps the objects revealed by the power of pure Intelligence.

If you hanker for sense-objects you will become the possessor of a mind and be subject to bondage. If you do not care for them you will have no mind and you will become free. Think 'I am not an object of knowledge' and remain steadfast in the Supreme Heart. Be like the infinite and pure space. Know that you are always the pure Awareness which lies between the seer and the world that is seen. Reject the objects of taste, the taster and the feeling of taste which

¹ See the *Story of King Janaka* in the last issue.

lies between the two. Be what you (truly) are. Reject the experiencer, the objects of experience and the act of experiencing which lies between the two. Be what you (truly) are. Cut down the unholy 'I'-concept with the sword of the clarity of 'not-I'. Do not be affected by sorrows and joys. Transcend *samsara* in their manner.

Sri Rama said : O Bhagavan ! Your words are very wise, for you are asking me not to entertain the concept of an ego. If I were to reject the 'I'-concept I will also be renouncing the concept that I am the body. When the 'I'-concept perishes the body-sense will necessarily perish like a great tree whose roots are sawn off.

Vasishtha said : Renunciation of latent tendencies (*vasanas*), O lotus eyed One, is of two kinds, namely that of concepts and that of the objects of perception. 'I am the possessor of these things, they are my life breath, I can never exist without them, nor can they exist without me' -- when firmly-rooted notions like this are replaced by the thought 'I do not belong to anything, nor does anything belong to me', and when, with a tranquil mind, one performs actions in a light mood, one abandons the tendencies connected with concepts. If one is free from all ideas of difference and thoughts of 'I' and 'mine' in the body whenever he performs action, one casts off the tendencies connected with objects of perception.

One who abandons playfully (i.e. lightly) the companion that is the ego-sense as well as concepts is said to be a person liberated even while alive (*jivanmukta*). One who has got rid of his latent tendencies along with their root cause and attained equanimity, O Raghava, know him to be a person liberated from the objects of perception. O Raghava ! Each of these two kinds of renunciation leads one to Liberation. Those who have achieved either of them have attained the state of Brahman and are free from misery. He who does not rejoice or grieve when joys and sorrows come one after another, is said to be a liberated person. He who has no likes or dislikes towards pleasant and unpleasant objects but goes about like one asleep, is said

to be a liberated person. One who is not really affected by joy, envy, fear, anger, desire and meanness is said to be liberated even while alive. One who, in his waking state, is free from mental concepts as in deep sleep and is always cheerful like the full moon is regarded as a liberated person.

O Raghava ! Desires arising from latent tendencies connected with external objects constitute bondage. Those which are free from such tendencies constitute liberation. The desire 'let this become mine', O Raghava, is like a claw and is bondage.

Great souls attain the highest state by always giving up the desires mentioned above. Abandoning all ideas of bondage and liberation, sorrow and joy, existence and non-existence, remain like the ocean when it is calm. O Rama ! In the mind of a thinking person there arise four kinds of conviction. One is, 'From head to foot I have been formed by my mother and father.'² This is due to defective thinking and leads to bondage. I am beyond all concepts and more minute than the end of a hair,' is the second. This conviction occurs to good souls and leads them to Liberation. 'I am the indestructible Self of all the objects in the world' is the third conviction. O Raghava, this also leads to Liberation. 'This world is always unreal and devoid of objects like empty space' this is the fourth conviction. This also leads to Liberation.

The first of these is the desire (i.e. conviction) which leads to bondage. The other three are pure desires (i.e. true convictions) found in those who are liberated even while alive. O noble soul ! Hold on to the conviction 'I myself am every thing' and you will not grieve again. What is called the void (*sunyam*) or nature (*prakriti*) or Maya or Brahman, or Consciousness or Siva (the auspicious one), or the Person (*Purusba*) or the Lord (*Ishwara*) is the Eternal Self (*Atman*).

The power of the one Supreme Being manifests itself as the dual and the non-dual and

²I am this body brought into existence by the parents.

playfully creates the world. Do not be affected at any time by losses and gains or sorrows and joys of yourself or others. One who has sought refuge in the transcendental state, one whose mind is calm as the full moon and is neither excited nor elated, does not feel unhappy in *samsara*. One who is kind and merciful to friend and foe alike and always performs the action which falls to one's lot does not feel unhappy in *samsara*. One who does not rejoice or hate or grieve or desire anything and is free from all ideas of pleasant and unpleasant does not feel unhappy in *samsara*. One who talks suitably and sweetly to every person and understands the feelings of all beings, does not feel unhappy in *samsara*.

O Raghava ! Adopt a comprehensive view characterised by the abandonment of all objects of contemplation, live in your innate self liberated even while alive and thus play your part in the world. Abandon all desires inwardly, be free from attachments and latent tendencies, do everything outwardly and thus play your part in the world. Be outwardly active but inwardly inactive, outwardly a doer but inwardly a non-doer and thus play your part in the world. Renounce the ego-sense, keep the mind pure and clear like the sky, be as if you were asleep and thus play your part in the world. Let your conduct be sweet and pleasing. Follow the worldly usages but renounce inwardly everything and thus play your part in the world. Cultivate desirelessness inwardly, but outwardly appear to have desires, be inwardly cool and outwardly hot (i.e. agitated) and thus play your part in the world. Do not entertain false notions such as 'this is my kinsman, that is a stranger, I am this person, and you are that person'. Only persons of narrow minds think 'this is my kinsman, that one is not'. People of broad minds look upon the entire world as their family. It is owing to the delusion caused by one's many and varied previous lives in this world, that ideas of kinsman and stranger arise. Really all the three worlds are related as well as non-related to one. An old story is narrated to illustrate this. It relates to the discussions which took place between the two

sons of a sage who lived on the bank of the Ganges.

In this land mass known as Jambudvīpa there is a forest-clad mountain named Mahendra. In a broad valley (of this mountain) beautiful as a jewel set with precious stones there lived a wise and noble sage of great austerities. This sage named Dirghatāpah who was an embodiment of austerities had two sons, beautiful as the moon. Bearing the names of *Punya* (*lit.* merit) and *Pavana* (*lit.* sacred), they were like Brihaspati's two sons each of whom was named Kacha. The sage lived with them for many years. In course of time *Punya* the elder of the two in age as well as noble qualities became a wise man. *Pavana* remained half-enlightened like a lotus at day-break. He was so stupid that he could not attain the goal and was always wavering like a swing.

In course of time the sage Dirghatāpah was overtaken by time, the cause of all things. He felt no joy in living. He became decrepit and at last abandoned his body in a cave of the mountain like a bird abandoning its nest or a porter laying down his load. Like the scent of the flowers entering the sky he entered the state beyond all desires and thoughts which is characteristic of the conceptless mind.

Upon the death of the father *Punya* calmly attended to the funeral rites while *Pavana* was overcome by grief. He wandered about the forest glades weeping, unmindful of his elder brother. After performing the funeral rites of his father, *Punya*, that man of exceedingly righteous conduct, went into the forest and approached *Pavana* who was sunk in grief. On seeing him *Punya* said :

"Child, why do you mourn excessively and blindly like this? Your father who was the foremost among the wise has attained his own supreme state known as Liberation. Why do you grieve for him when he has attained his real state? You have had thousands of fathers, mothers, sons, and relatives in your previous lives. Every one has them in his lives. If you mourn the loss of the father, mother and some of this life why do you not mourn those of your previous lives? In the broad desert of ignorance the hot mirage-water

of one's latent tendencies, agitated by waves of good and evil acts, takes numerous forms. This world is sustained by concepts such as relatives, friends, sons, love, hatred and delusions. These are only names. If you regard one as a relative he becomes a relative, if as a stranger he becomes a stranger. Bondage is like poison mixed with nectar. It depends upon one's thoughts. When there is only the one all-pervasive Self, how can there arise ideas such as 'this is a relative, that is a stranger'?

"Child, beginning with the body which is a cage of bones and a collection of blood, flesh, and so on, enquire within yourself 'Who Am I?'. Truly neither you nor I exist. The concepts *Punya* and *Pavana* are false. You had many relatives born among the deer in various sacred places. Why do you not mourn them? You had many relatives among the lions on the tall peaks of the mountains. Why do you not mourn them? In the country of *Dasarna* you were born as a wild monkey of a tawny colour, in the *Tushara* country as a prince, in the *Pundra* country as a jungle crow, in the *Haihaya* country as an elephant, in *Trigarta* as an ass, in *Salva* as a dog, again as a bird on a *Sarala* tree. In this country called *Jambudvipa* you have already lived hundreds of thousands of such lives. In this *samsara* innumerable fathers and mothers pass away like the leaves of a tree. Remember that the Self transcends all ideas of existence and non-existence, as well as old age and death. Do not grieve like a fool. Child, cast off this dirt of delusion immediately with the help of a noble mind free from the impurities of desire and the recollection of the pure Self experienced in the lotus of the heart. If you do so you will be happy."

When *Pavana* was advised by *Punya* in this manner he became fully enlightened like the earth at sunrise. These two sages, who had reached the father shore of learning and wisdom, wandered about thereafter in that forest till the end of their days. As stated above, there are countless relatives belonging to one's previous lives. Should we continue to love them or should we cease to love them?

Thought grows with thought as fire with fuel. When one stops thinking thoughts die like fire without fuel. Get up, arouse yourself, O *Raghava*! Mount the chariot of the conceptlessness and look on the sorrowful world with the eye of generous pity.

The state of Brahman is in oneself. It is freedom from desire and misery. O *Mighty of Arm*! One who realizes this will not be deluded again even if he is a stupid person. One who chooses discrimination for a friend and reason for a noble mistress will not become deluded by fancies. Nothing except one's own courage and non-attachment to worldly objects and relatives is of any use in raising a person from the sad predicament (of *samsara*). One should therefore carefully direct one's mind in the proper direction and overcome all obstacles with the help of detachment, study of scriptures and cultivation of noble qualities.

That which can be achieved with the help of a mind full of noble qualities cannot be achieved by all the riches in the three worlds or treasuries filled with gems. When the mind is full (of bliss) the world will seem to be overflowing with nectar. Surely the earth is covered with leather for one whose feet are protected by shoes. The mind which is not distracted by desires attains perfection when it is free from attachment. It increases with desires like the waters of a lake in the autumn.

The heart of one who is distracted by desires becomes worthless like the hollow of a tree; it becomes dry (i.e. hard) like the ocean swallowed by *Agastya*. The full moon is not brighter, the ocean of milk not fuller and the face of *Lakshmi* (the goddess of beauty and prosperity) not more beautiful than a mind free from desires. The evil spirit of desire spoils a man like a streak of cloud across the moon or a solash of ink on white plaster. O *Noble One*! Conquer all your desires, be free from the bonds of *samsara* and become released inwardly. If the chains of the mind consisting of silly thoughts are broken, who will not become free?

(to be continued)

GLORY OF ARUNACHALA

ARUNACHALA MAHATMYAM

PART II

CHAPTER I

GLORY OF SACRED PLACES

VYASA said : The ascetics (*munis*) who lived in the Naimisa forest asked Bhagavan Soota : Of all places sacred to Siva which is the best? Please tell us.

Soota said : O Ascetics ! I shall tell you what sage Markandeya formerly learnt from Nandikesvara. Listen. Markandeya said to Nandikesvara : Nandikesvara ! I carefully listened with devotion and faith to the story of Madhyamesvara narrated by you. Deva of Devas ! Ocean of Kindness ! Please continue, I entreat you humbly and reverently. There is nothing unknown to you in the three worlds. It is described in all the Vedas and Puranas as well as elsewhere that this Earth is the place most suitable for those who wish to attain Svarga (heaven) and liberation. All karmas (religious acts) which are efficacious have been prescribed for (those who live on) it. It has been explained by you that their results are of three kinds, namely (1) wordly pleasures (2) pleasures of Svarga and (3) Liberation (*kaivalya*). The first two will come to an end on the expiry of merit (acquired by a person), but the third does not depend upon karmas. Therefore it will not come to an

end. It has been stated by you that pure (true) knowledge is the only means of attaining it.

However, pure knowledge cannot be acquired by all embodied beings. Which is that place where that knowledge can be acquired without book learning, by merely worshipping Siva? Although knowledge, yoga, action (*kriya*) and service (*charya*) are prescribed for all persons, the Agamas of Siva have no hold over their minds. Please therefore tell me which is that place where pure knowledge arises by following very few religious injunctions, the place, where even stupid persons can obtain excellent results by merely putting on the sacred ashes and rudraksha beads and meditating a little on Siva. Which is that place where all residents overcome obstacles and attain knowledge without any conscious effort? At which place do even the worst men, the lowliest of animals and inanimate objects attain excellence? Having said this Markandeya and the other ascetics fell down in prostration at the lotus feet of Nandikesvara, the knower of all scriptures (*sastras*).

CHAPTER II
DESCRIPTION OF PLACES AND
TIRTHAS (HOLY WATERS)
SACRED TO SIVA

Nandikesvara said : O Best of Ascetics ! There is one place which corresponds to your description and which exists as the best of all sacred places for the welfare of all beings movable and immovable. It is ordained by the Lord (Isvara) that individuals should be born in different wombs according to their karma (acts done in previous lives). What you desire to know should prove beneficial to them. Otherwise they will not obtain liberation from samsara even after the lapse of a crore of aeons (*kalpas*). A little unfructified karma and a little knowledge binds them, again and again to the wheel of birth and death. There is no escape from it. Is there any means other than absolutely pure knowledge to escape from the womb ? I have already described generally the places which are sacred to Siva, the benefits derived by residing at those places and the names of the Rishis. Some live on the banks of the Ganga, the Sarasvati, the Yamuna, the Sona, the Narmada, the Godavari, the Gomati and the Haimavati (name of Ganga before it reaches the plain). Others live on the seashore, or on islands, or in the sacrificial halls erected on the bank of the Sindhu or at the spots where rivers enter the sea or on the banks of the Krishna, the Tungabhadra, the Upaveni, the Pennai, the Kaveri, the Vaikai, the Tamraparni, the Mandakini, the Sipra (the river at Avanti), the Sarayu, the Murala, the Airavati, the Yadukangshi, the Kanyakumari, the Tamasa, the Varuna, the Vipasa, the Sata-

druti, the Charmani, the Bhimarati, the Bindusaras, the Pampa, the Bhairavi, the Kausiki, the Maliri, the Gandhavati, the Manasa, the Achhoda, the Indradyumna, the Manikarnika, the Varada, the Patala Ganga, the Saravati, the Lohati, the Kalama, the Vitasta, the Chandrabhaga, the Surala, the Payoshni, the Madhumati and the Pinakini Kasi, Panchakrosa, Avimukti, where Isvara is worshipped along with goddess Visalakshi, and Kapalamochana, the place sacred to Kalabhairaya, are particularly sacred. Those who die at Sri Kasi become Rudras.

Gaya and Prayaga are stated to be places where one attains everything (spiritual). Offering balls of rice to the manes of one's ancestors (*pitrs*) at these places is pleasing to them. We have also heard that Kedara, where the Asura (demon) in the form of a buffalo was killed by the Goddess, is a place of great spiritual sanctity to men. Badarikasrama, where Tryambaka accompanied by the Goddess was worshipped by Nara and Narayana, confers merit on worshippers. Maheswara carrying the veena named saranga and accompanied by the goddess is worshipped by you at Naimisa. Amaranath is also very sacred. Isa abides at Omkar in the company of goddess Chandi. I have already told you about the great place known as Pushkara. Rajogandhi Deva abides (i.e. is installed) there in the company of goddess Puruhoota.

Similarly Astadesa and Raticha are installed at Ashadi. Mundi Deva and goddess

Dandika Devi at Dandimundi ; Lakulisa and the most auspicious goddess named Ananga at Lakula ; Paresa and goddess Bhooti at Parabhuti ; Sukshmesa and Sukshmesvari at Aral-esvara ; Sankara and Mangala at Gaya ; Sthanu and Sthanupriya at Kurukshetra ; Ugra and goddess Ugra at Kanakhal ; Swayambhu Siva and goddess Swayambhuvi at Talaka. I have already described Attahasa where Surya worshipped Siva and attained the Supreme goal of his life. Krithivasa, the abode of Krithivasa, which is superior to Kailasa ; Srisaila containing Sri Mallikarjuna and Bhramaramba worshipped by Brahma with the aim of becoming capable of creating the world ; Kalahasti containing Sankara, the bee-faced God and Bhringamukharalakambika worshipped by Vyasa and Kancheepura sacred to Ekamresvara, the God embraced by Kamakshi while engaged in austerities and containing the lines imprinted by her bangles. Nataraja is being worshipped by Patanjali at Vyaghrapura in the Tillaivana (Chidambaram) ; the broken tusk of Airavata (Indra's elephant) grew again when it worshipped Siva at Tiruvenkadu. Sri Rama installed Sri Ramalinga at Sethu for expiating his sins. Siva is being worshipped at Jambukesvaram for the welfare of the (whole) world. Isvara is always present at Vriddhachala on the bank of the Manimukta. At Madhyarjuna Siva who is accompanied by Gauri grants all boons. Those who die at Somanatha are not born again. At Siddhavata the effulgent linga (Iyotir Linga) is worshipped by Siddhas. Hari worshipped Valmikesvara at Kamalalaya and obtained Lakshmi (for his consort). Brahma and Vishnu worship Siva even now at Tirukazhukundram for attaining Liberation. The Lord of Parvati will be at Dronapuri in a boat during the great deluge which comes at the end of Kaliyuga. In olden days Indrajit installed Siva in the temple at Brahmapura on the bank of Aryapushkarani. At Srikoṭi, the temple of wisdom, people worship Chandramaulisvara to expiate their sins. Parasurama worshipped Siva at Gokarna ; he did not care even for Svarga. If one worships Siva at Tripurantaka one need not fear *naraka* (hell). Devotees who worship Him at Kalanjana become sinless and are released from

Samsara. At Priyalavana Ambikapati created a sea of milk for the sake of Upamanyu who wanted milk. At Prabhasa He bestowed upon Gaurisrisutra who worshipped Him everlasting benefits. Daksha worshipped Isvara at Vedaranya with the object of expiating the sin committed by him and attaining Liberation. Those who worship Isa at Hemakuta need not fear rebirth. At Venuvana Ambika manifested herself as a pearl inside a bamboo. It is a place where one's sins are expiated. Jalandhara is the place where Jalandhara performed austerities and thereby became a leader of Ganas. At Jvalamukhi the goddess worshipped Kalarudra. Heramba worshipped Siva at Patravata and became Ganapati. At Nyagrodharanya, Kala and Siva vied with each other in dancing. Anjaneya worshipped Mrityunjaya at Gandhamadana. Panini became a great grammarian by worshipping Sambhu at Goparvata and obtaining His grace. At Veerakoshta Valmiki became a great poet by the grace of Siva. At Mahatirtha Siva taught the Vedas to Brahma, Vishnu and others. Indra obtained his Vajrayudha (thunderbolt) at Mayavaram. At Madurai on the bank of the Vaikai, Sundaresvara stands gloriously even in the kaliyuga (age of kali). At Kumbakonam goddess Ganga manifests herself in the month of Masi by Siva's grace and removes all sins. Skanda obtained at Trvambaka the weapon called sakti with which he killed Taraka. Trisanku, who was born in a low caste, worshipped Siva at Sripatala to purify himself. Sambhu pierced Yama (the god of death) at Kadambapuri on your (Markandeya's) behalf. Siva bestowed his grace upon Patikantha at Avinashi. At Rakta Kanna He granted to Mitra and Varuna the boon by which they were saved from rebirth. Vairochana Mahabali worships Siva at Hatakeswara while living in the Patala (nether world). Kailasanatha is a place liked by Siva ; Kukera worships Him there.

"You have now listened to all that I said. What more do you wish to hear?" When Nandikesvara said this to Markandeya, that ascetic placed his head upon Nandikesvara's feet with devotion and prayed.

(To be continued)

VIDURA'S WISDOM

Vidura said (to Dhritarashtra)

“O KING, You are a wise man, a man of discrimination, do not become despondent. Do not behave like the ignorant. You know that, along with your sons, numerous kings who were your allies have also perished. This is due to fate. The Lotus-born God (four-faced Brahma, the Creator) has ordained that everyone who is born shall also die. If one ponders over the turning of the wheel of Time one will not give way to sorrow. Just as people discard their worn-out clothes and don new ones, so also the souls (*jivas*) exchange old bodies for new. These bodies are not eternal. Only Isvara (God) is eternal. All sentient beings die, are born again and die again. Why should one feel joy or sorrow over this? One does not know when this universe came into existence, nor does one know when it will come to an end. There is no beginning or end to the sports (*lila*) of the Lord who is without beginning or end.

“When you first came into this world, whence did you come? Consider also where you are going after this. Do you think that you will not die? Were those people your sons (before they were born)? How can you treat them as your sons now? Those who came later departed earlier and those who came first stay behind. They are like logs of wood floating down a swift river, sometimes coming together and at other times drifting apart. Wayfarers often gather at a public resthouse to spend the night or take shelter

from rain or sun. They spend their time talking to one another and then they go their ways. The question of who should go first and who should go last does not arise at all. Birds come flying from all directions to a tree and, after resting on it for some time, fly away in various directions. Nobody laments this. Dry leaves are blown by the wind into a heap and are dispersed again by the wind.

“Similarly human beings come together according to their karma (the result of their deeds in this and past lives). They part from one another when the karma is fulfilled. Some are regarded as fathers, some as mothers, some as beloved wives, some as sons, some as friends. This is all due to the delusion of the mind and is extremely wonderful. All ideas of elders, youngsters, and so on, are queer if one thinks about it. Playing the parts of relatives and friends people spend some time in joy and love according to their karma. They then go away one day or another, each his way. Why should one regret this? Some fruits become mature and ripe before they fall from the trees. Others fall down even before they come out of the flowers. Some leaves turn yellow before they fall, others when they are still tender. Our bodies are like bubbles on the surface of water. They are seen one moment and disappear the next moment.

“O king, you are blind. How shall I explain all this to you? One has to see with the inner eye and you surely possess that. Know that none of these is eternal. I shall tell you what is eternal. It is the Lord who is the son of Devaki (Krishna). He is the Supreme Being, the root cause of the world and the sole Reality. He is Absolute Knowledge and Bliss, one without a second. Meditate on His lotus feet in your heart. You will attain Liberation. Overcome desire, anger, greed, delusion, attachment, fear, joy and sorrow. Control the mind and the senses. Be always contented, truthful and straightforward. Be an unswerving devotee of the Lord”.

On hearing these words of Vidura Dhritarashtra was consoled.

THE BEGINNING AND THE END

By Wei Wu Wei

ANY one thinking, as an entity, about himself, as an entity, which entity has no existence other than as a concept in 'his' mind, is wasting 'his' time no matter what 'he' may do. He is still a supposed subject regarding himself as a supposed object -- and is not whole.

'Majesty', said Bodhidharma to the Emperor of China, 'there is no doctrine, and nothing holy about it'. When a monk came to Hui Hai three hundred years later and asked to be instructed in the doctrine, Hui Hai replied, 'I have no doctrine to teach you'.

Why is there no doctrine?

Because there is only the understanding that there is no entity to be 'enlightened' or 'liberated' by a doctrine.

That is the beginning, because without that understanding any method, practice, or teaching is at least a waste of time, and only reinforces the illusion of such an entity. And it is also the end because the profound understanding of that is the only 'enlightenment' there could be.

What, then, could there be to teach, and who is there to be taught?

'I have no mouth, so how can I speak', said Hui Hai; 'The Buddha taught for forty-nine years, yet no word was spoken', said Huang Po; 'I travelled a thousand *li*, yet I have never taken a step', said another.

All such statements point to the same essential understanding, which is the beginning and the end.

BOOK REVIEWS

MESSAGE OF THE FOUR VEDAS, Being the Essence of Hinduism : By Basudeo Bissoondoyal. Pub. : Orient Longman, New Delhi. First published in 1972. Pp. 80. Price : Rs. 7.50.

In this book, the author has aimed at bringing 'the wisdom of the Vedas within the reach of the common man by summarising the main texts.' He has been guided by what he finds to be the need of the hour. "Perhaps at no time", he says, "has the wisdom of the ancients been in so great demand as it is now when man has no peace of mind although he may be proud of the material progress achieved of late." "For such wisdom", he finds, "one must go, among others, to the four Vedas of the Hindus." Only an easy translation, he thinks, "can bring the Vedic verses within the reach of the man in the street." In pursuance of this aim the author has selected 346 verses (mantras) out of over 20,000 in the four Vedas, and classified them into 51 sections with a title for each.

The author has followed his aim with a fair amount of success. The Vedic texts quoted substantially represent much of what the Vedas have to say about the principles that should guide Man's secular and spiritual life. The English translation should be intelligible to those who have a working knowledge of the language. The main issues have been discussed without undue subtlety; the reader is not invited to take sides in a controversy. The size of the book is suitable for the common reader.

The translation of the verses is not the author's own, nor the work of a single person. "The verses culled from the Vedas," it is said, "are mainly those that are quoted" (from the Vedas) "by orientalist and historians."

Sometimes the author is found to make a choice of translations, available to him. For example, in translating a Vedic sage's prayer for sweetness in his voice so that he can speak the glorious word (*vaak* of the Veda) before the masses of people (Texts Nos. 6 & 106) he does not follow the eminent orientalist R. T. H. Griffith, according to whom the sage was thinking of a speech he would himself deliver before the people. Here Prof. Bissoondoyal accepts another translation giving the correct meaning of *vaak*. He however accepts elsewhere (No. 113) Griffith's translation of *daasa* not as 'servant', but as 'slave', though there is no evidence of slavery or slave trade in Vedic India.

In the same context the word 'arya' is translated as 'Aryan' for which the word is *aarya*; 'arya' means 'kind'. 'Aryan God' is tribal, whereas 'kind God' is universal. Griffith's translation, 'gentle Lord' does not do justice to the original.

The title and subtitle of the book confirm the famous saying of Manu : "All the Vedas are the root of religion." The author of *The Message of the Four Vedas* is guided by the confident belief that all the four Vedas contain fundamental truths about the higher life of man, and as such the book supports Manu's claim, in respect of religion not only in India but in the world as a whole. The author takes his stand on 'universal patriotism', with the support of Vedic texts (See Nos. 7-9). In his editorial notes he quotes passages, similar to some of the Vedic texts, from later religions and other sources, intended to show "that much of what has been thought and said during the last twenty centuries have their parallel in the Vedas."

We congratulate the author on these as well as on his collection and classification of texts from the four Vedas. His reference to Prof. Theine of the Ubinyen University who said in a speech : "In the Vedas we see man attempting to lift himself above the earthly existence" (p. 13) illustrates, like other quotations in the footnotes, the reaction of enlightened foreigners to Vedic wisdom which the author has ably interpreted here. He has rightly emphasised Vedic universality and the fundamental Vedic value, Truth (*Satya*) and Eternal Law (*Rita*) which form the basis of the higher ideals of human life.

PROF. A. C. BOSE

ŚAIVISM IN PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE : By K. Sivaraman. Pub. : Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, Patna, Varanasi (1973). Pp. 687. Price : Rs. 65.

Dr. K. Sivaraman, formerly of the Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, Banaras Hindu Uni-

versity and now Professor at the University of McMaster, Montreal, Canada, has published his thesis submitted for the doctorate in Philosophy of Banaras Hindu University as the book under review. With a Master's degree in Tamil of Annamalai University, another in Philosophy of the University of Madras, he joined the Banaras Hindu University, in 1947. Being in close touch with Prof. T. R. V. Murti, and other Sanskrit scholars of the B. H. U., Dr. Sivaraman studied Śaivism in a very comprehensive manner. He availed himself of opportunities to study in American Universities like Harvard so as to view Śaivism in the light of Phenomenology, Existentialism and Christian Theology. Equally at home in Tamil and Sanskrit sources of Śaivism, Dr. Sivaraman has given us in this sumptuous volume a veritable feast. He has taken up for comment or criticism in appropriate places the work of H. W. Schomerus on *Śaiva Siddhānta* — a book in German published in 1912, which gives a systematic account of *Śaiva Siddhānta*.

Dr. Sivaraman has devoted nearly a third of his work to exposition of the concept of God under the headings: *The Existence of God, God as Cause, God as the only Cause, God as the Lord of cosmic functions, God as the Moral Sovereign and God as Will and Being*. This is followed by three chapters dealing with Bond (*pāśa*). The self (*paśu*) is dealt with in the context of knowledge and of spiritual life (*mokṣa*). The chapters on valid and non-valid knowledge and self-validity of knowledge and Revelation relate to the Epistemology of Śaivism. There is a glossary of technical items running to 25 pages. Notes and References covering about 200 pages are a mine of valuable information. The bibliography is exhaustive and up to date.

The book under review bears not only the stamp of wide and deep scholarship but also of the conviction that Śaivism has an abiding value. It is refreshing to see that Dr. Sivaraman is able to show that Śaivism does not suffer by comparison with other systems of philosophical and religious thought but actually contributes to the total illumination. Above all, his dedication of this book to his father is not only a mark of filial devotion but also an acknowledgement of the living source of his inspiration. We look forward to many more works from the pen of Dr. Sivaraman.

DR. V. A. DEVASENAPATHI

KULĀRĀVA TANTRA: By M. P. Pandit.

Pub.: Ganesh & Co., Madras-17. Price: Rs. 10.

Kulārāva Tantra has an important place in the literature of that branch of the Tantra Shastra which adores the Supreme as the Divine Mother.

More particularly, it is the authoritative text of the Kaula school which is considered to be the inner esoteric circle amongst the Shāktas. "Inside, the worshippers of Sakti, outside, the adorers of Siva, in public, the votaries of Vishnu, the Kaulas roam about the world in different guises", says the Tantra.

What is meant by Kula? Kula means family; it is the family of triad *tripuṭi* in creation, — the knower, the knowable and the knowledge, the measurer, the measurable and the measure, etc. In truth, it is the eternal family of Siva and Sakti immanent in all creation. Kula is where the earth principle merges, the pit of Kula, *Kulakuṇḍa*, as it is called, the base support *Mulādhāra* in all beings and is the house of the potential force, Sakti. *Akula*, which is not kula, above the earth principle is at the summit, in the thousand petalled lotus, *sahasradala kamala*, the seat of Siva. The interplay of Kula and Akula, the union in harmony of Siva and Sakti, *sāmarasya* is the avowed object of Kulachara and the followers of this path are the Kaulas. As this is primarily a path of Yoga and takes in essence the tenets of other schools like Dakshina, Vama and Siddhanta, the Tantra proclaims that there is no other practice superior to Kaula, *Kaulāt parataram nahi*.

And this path of Yoga is not the usual one of otherworldliness, abandoning man and world to find God. Here, in life one has to see God and all experiences and enjoyments become a part of the Yoga, *bhogo yogāyate*. All that is spread out, by a reversal of consciousness has to be gathered back to its original source and experienced in essence.

Elucidating this yogic discipline, Kulārāva Tantra covers wide ground. The futility of ordinary life, the greatness of the Kula Dharma, the various methods of worship, Mantras, occult practices, the place of Guru in the scheme of things, the esoteric significance of seemingly repugnant articles of worship, the code of conduct — all these are expounded with authority and precision. In short "the Shastra of Kula is none other than the Shastra of the Veda, *vedātmakam idam śāstram vidhi kaulātmakam priye*."

From the introduction of Arthur Avalon, we learn that he intended to publish a translation of the text, which he could not do in his time. This has now been ably fulfilled by M. P. Pandit whose writings on Tantra Shastra are noted for their spiritual clarity and authentic exposition. Many an ambiguous passage in the text becomes clear after reading his rendering in English. His Readings, as he modestly calls his rendering, are sufficient in themselves for the correct appreciation and compre-

hension of the text; so much so, one does not miss the Sanskrit original which has been omitted in the edition.

S. SANKARANARAYANAN

BUDDHIST MEDITATION: By Edward Conze.
Pub.: Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. Price: 75 Sh.

It is a measure of the excellence of the book that it should have run into as many as four editions since it was first published now 16 years ago. Consisting of selections from the *Path of Purity* by Ashwaghosha, it approaches the subject from diverse angles and goes into minute detail — a feature that might strike as somewhat artificial in such a living and dynamic subject like Meditation. However, the selections provide a useful background to the Buddhist methods of mental *dhyana* and are grouped under the themes of Faith, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom.

Topics for meditation, positive and negative, those that lead the mind naturally towards contemplation of higher truths of Eternity and away from the objects of bondage in temporal and spatial limits, are discussed threadbare. Under Mindfulness are described various types of concentration on the thinking processes, emotions, breathing, the life-force, the body etc.

The best portions are those that deal with Trance, *samadhi*, whose "function is based on the assumption that our mind consists of two disparate parts, — depth which is calm and quiet, and a surface which is disturbed. The surface layer is in perpetual agitation and turmoil. There exists, however, a centre which is quite still, at the bottom of the mind, beyond both the conscious and the unconscious mind . . . the turmoil is caused in the main by three agents: the senses, the passions, wants and desires, and discursive thinking. In order to conquer these enemies of spiritual quietude it is therefore necessary to withdraw the senses from their objects . . . to cease wanting anything; and to cut off discursive thinking."

Dr. Conze's note on the hiatus that exists between these methods of meditation and the modern systems of psychotherapy is highly instructive.

THE VEDANTIC AND THE BUDDHIST CONCEPT OF REALITY: By Ramachandra Jha.
Pub.: Firma Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta-12. Pp. 152.
Price: Rs. 30.

Both Shankara and Nagarjuna have rendered commendable service in giving philosophical blood to the systems of Vedanta and Buddhism. The author analyses the contributions of these two nota-

ble thinkers on the concept of Reality and draws parallels between them. Their respective interpretations of the revealed reality are presented with clarity. While summing up the position of Nagarjuna, he states: 'Nagarjuna's Madhyamika philosophy is based on the Buddha's theory of the Middle Way or way between two extremes of indulgence and self-mortification. His theory of sunyata or emptiness tries to explain the relativity of the things which do not have any self-existence. His theory of pratityasamutpada or dependent origination explains the interrelatedness of the phenomena. Things do not exist absolutely but relatively.'

He underlines the characterisation of the phenomenal world (*samsara*) as unreal in both the Vedantic Absolutism and the Middle Path of Buddhism. So too their ultimate preoccupation with the experience of the transcendental reality (*adhyatmika satya*) beyond the bounds of the empirical. The final realisation in the Advaitic system is indeed one of bliss but whether it is so in the other system is debatable. The stress there is on *nirvana*, extinction. There are differences of interpretation on the precise character of this *nirvana*.

M. P. PANDIT

THE COMMON PHILOSOPHY: By Robert H. Peterson. Price: \$ 8.50.

EXISTENTIALISM AND CREATIVITY: By Mitchell Bedford. Price: \$ 12.50.

EDUCATION AS EXISTENTIAL POSSIBILITY: By Gari Lesnoff-Caravaglia. Price: \$ 7.50.
(All published by the Philosophical Library, New York).

The call for philosophy not only comes from the urge among men to secure an ultimate, final reduction of what the real content of existence is but from a deep-rooted desire welling up within man to know the whole of his being in all its fullness of meaning. Not content with knowing what life is, it has a passion to probe its meaning as well. There was a time, a few centuries ago, when mankind forced back upon itself to work out its own earthly problems, found the answer in the medieval church or temple, which undertook to fulfil the task of society as largely that of bringing down the divine will on earth. This internal harmony was disturbed with the event of rationalism which, with its tool of empirical analysis and study, has let loose the world of technology. The latter may have brought man to a level of civilisation hitherto unheard of, but he is facing an abyss threatening to obliterate him from the face of the earth. It is in such times

of crisis that the persistent call within man to recover himself and express his spiritual reality in its own dimension of truth asserts; and Dr. Peterson's book is timely in as much as its title affirms, calling upon philosophy to become common — to be a tool which reveals not only man's being but his need of being.

The book is not a compendium of philosophical positions but a thorough examination of what they have brought to bear on the question of existence. The author, therefore, examines first the philosophical naturalism as exemplified in Dewey's "Reconstruction in Philosophy" and Nagel's "Logic without Metaphysics" before coming to the existentialist's answer found in Marcel and Jasper. The highlight of the book is a detailed analysis of Teilhard de Chardin's *magnum opus* where he emphasises the method of arriving at a truly philosophical conception of man by profound understanding of the matter of the universe in its most minute form and comprehending it in its most subtle detail. By the very nature of the abstruse subjects dealt with and the profundity of its speculations the book seems to be intended for the uncommon reader.

Quite unlike in style and content is Dr. Bedford's book which compares and contrasts the concept of existentialism as developed in the writings of Kierkegaard, Sartre, Pöppel and Jaspers. Only these four are selected as the most representative existentialists of the modern period, Marcel, Heidegger and Tillich being omitted from the scope of the study. Existentialism traces its connections to pre-Socratic thinkers who were concerned with the problem of "Being". It is a creed of decision, commitment and action, whereby man finds true life and reality by the response of his whole being in relation to his life and circumstances here and now, with a rejection of theory and reason. One could sense in it an association with that species of philosophy which holds that the ultimate reality is will and purpose.

Dr. Bedford examines the educational implications of existentialism by a close scrutiny of Ralph Harper's dissertation on the subject in the 54th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education entitled "Modern Philosophies and Education." After analysing the educational theories of the four giants of existentialism selected by him, the author collates the material for a broad outline of liberal education, "which frees man from his own anonymity, and seeks to clarify in his mind the confusions which may prevent man making authentic choices."

As existentialism has its roots on the Continent, it has only touched the periphery of British philosophical consciousness. Naturally little mention is

made in English literature of its impact on education, especially of the contributions of Italian existential thought. This gap is ably filled up by Gari Lesnoff-Carravaglia in her exposition of the philosophy of Nicolo Abbagnano, the chief exponent of Italian existentialism. The latter has himself contributed an Introduction to this valuable book where, referring to the kaleidoscopic whirl of present day events in which man is caught up as an insignificant entity, he explains his philosophy in a nutshell:

"Should we take a close look at ourselves and our environment, that is, at the person who we are and wish to be, at the world which science projects for us or the one we experience in everyday life, at the societies of our fellowmen, we would certainly not discover an inevitable All or Nothing. Rather, we would find that we are always struggling, risking, choosing in one way or another, or correcting choices already effected, but which no longer are open to repetition. Only if we take into account the fact that such is our existence, can we proceed with some probability of success, accepting all the while the attendant responsibilities."

The English reading public is indebted to the author for her lucid interpretation of the Italian's philosophy as also to her comparison between Abbagnano's exposition and the French and German existentialism as exemplified in the writings of Sartre and Heidegger.

HINDU PLACES OF PILGRIMAGE IN INDIA :

By S. M. Bhardwaj. Pub. : Thompson Press (India) Ltd., Delhi. Price : Rs. 48.

Whether it is the antique Sumerian reverently ascending the steps of the Ziggurat to reach the gate of heaven, the multitudes of Muslims from diverse parts of the world undertaking the Haj to Mecca or the devout Jews and Christians visiting the Holy Land, religion has provided the basis of pilgrimage by offering the reward of soul purification and/or the attainment of mundane rewards. This immemorial custom has been immortalised by the bard in the opening lines of the "Canterbury Tales".

India has never lagged behind in this practice, for as everyone is familiar with the author's observation in the Introduction : "The institution of pilgrimage to holy places (*tirtha-yatra*) is an ancient and continuing religious tradition of the Hindus." Numerous are the sacred centres distributed throughout the country attracting millions of pilgrims all over the year. It is this important mechanism of gigantic nation-wide religious circulation of Indian population that forms the research study by the author, who is a member of the Department of Geography

at Kent State University, Ohio; and by conducting first-hand field investigation, he has set the pattern of Hindu pilgrimage in the proper historical-cultural context. Further, as the character of places and spatial organisation lie at the core of geography, the nature of circulation generated by the pilgrim centres has been treated aptly as a problem in cultural geography.

The various maps illustrating the pilgrim spots described in the *Mahabharata*, the *Puranas* and later sources highlight the association of Hindu sacred places with flowing water, which seems to be a spatial expression of the pervasive concept of ritual purification by bathing. There is no doubt that these sacred centres not only reflect the vitality, resilience and syncretism of Hinduism but have served all during the centuries as golden bonds knitting the linguistically diverse population socially, culturally, and spatially at different levels.

SECRET SPLENDOUR : By Charles Earnest Essert.
Price : \$ 6.

FOR A FUNDAMENTAL SOCIAL ETHIC : By
Oliva Blanchette. Price : \$ 7.50.

THE DUALITY OF PHYSICAL TRUTH AND
CAUSE : By John Davis Lines. Price : \$ 6.

(All published by the Philosophical Library, New York).

The rapid growth of cults which give new interpretations to the old doctrines, the great interest in the development of psychic powers, the prevalent search for faith-cures and the wide-spread demand for esoteric literature are sufficient proofs of an increasing quest among many people today for a new religion, which is more dependable than reason, and more satisfying than the cold hypothesis of science and the formalised concepts of the church. An approach to such a new faith is offered in the four essays comprising the "Secret Splendour", where it is cogently argued that although one cannot discover Cause, Life, Intelligence through scientific or philosophical methods, one can however fathom the seemingly Unknowable through increased awareness or a greatly heightened sensitivity.

Mr. Essert, who had little regard for formal education and had experienced life first-hand by serving in the war and working in factories, fields, stores, circuses and carnivals, has convincingly found that the key to the understanding of Truth lies in man's recognising his arrested psychic development and in realising that intellectual consciousness is not Life's

supreme achievement. Beyond the intellect is the vast, unknown region of the Soul with faculties and powers of unimaginable magnitude, which enables one to contact and comprehend the Infinite. What we know is only a semblance of Reality and it is a wondrous world of Reality, a world of eternal existence and infinite power. Like Arjuna in the XI chapter of the *Gita*, the author talks of the revelation he had of "a Being of magnificent radiance, without form in the accepted sense of the word, but nevertheless a Radiance which was knowable as Being." Between the nameless Radiance and the core of his own being there was a wordless communion filling him with an ecstasy, which could only be described by the words : praise and adoration.

This world of infinite splendour, says the author, is the very thing which Jesus called the Kingdom of Heaven and "identical in its fundamental nature with the *illuminating* experiences of St. Paul, St. John, Mohammed, Ramakrishna, Kabir and others."

This book deserves to be in the hands of all earnest students of the spiritual path, as it deals with the basic questions : "Who am I? What am I apart from this name, this body, this mind? Why am I here? Where did I come from? Where am I going? And what is the purpose of all this struggle? For, queries of this nature pave the way for direct illumination; and the answer comes only to those who are ever seeking, asking and knocking and never to those who think they know.

* * *

As philosophy has for long been confined to a narrow groove confining itself only with the abstraction of ethics, one would naturally wonder whether it is equal to the broader task of social criticism by taking a more concrete idea of meta-ethics than has been prevalent in linguistic analysis. Oliva Blanchette, an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Boston College, has attempted here to develop a perspective for the articulation of moral judgments in actual history. As a purely analytical approach is insufficient for this task, a more dialectical method has been adopted to focus attention on the concrete exercise of moral judgment. This is the role of social sciences, which have also for long from Bacon to Weber remained purely theoretical by being concerned only with what *is* and not what *ought* to be. The author tries, what the various kinds of abstract formalism have failed to do, the unification of social sciences with moral philosophy. Citing an instance, the professor distinguishes between justice and friendship and at the same time points out their dialectic unity in the exercise of moral judgment.

Beginning with the essay on responsibility as the actual form of our moral consciousness in our new awareness of social order, the author discusses the fundamental principle of moral judgment in the concrete and proceeds to the core of the subject, namely, the common good, justice and friendship, authority and law as principles of judgment or as a dialectic of principles, but all framed within the context of responsibility and revolution. The author contends that although a fundamental social ethic cannot fill out the idea of the common good, it can work at keeping the idea as open as possible to every dimension of history which itself is no mean achievement.

* * *

Quite in contrast to Essert's view, John Lines takes the stand of a systems analyst by emphasising in his book that it is possible to understand the physical reality without resorting to a premise of the supernatural. Dismissing the physical spiritual dichotomy aside, the author categorises human needs as natural physical needs and brain-originated needs by developing, with the help of a series of rotations and formulas, a physical world view where the needs are connected with a physical agency and the relative properties thereof.

ARGUS

WHAT IS RELIGION? : By T. B. Pahljanani.
Pub. : Vedanta House, 92, 6th Main Road, Chamarajpet, Bangalore-18. Price : Rs. 1.50.

Col. Pahljanani introduces himself by describing his condition before making contact with his guru, Swami Chinmayananda. "Even after a few years of retirement from service I had no idea whatever about religion. My acquaintance with God and religion was next to nothing. This I am constrained to find to be almost universally the case."

It is for those who find themselves 'in the same boat' that he has written this brief, 74-page introduction to Advaita Vedanta based on the teachings and writings of his master.

The author's simple, succinct exposition of his subject, illustrated by arresting similes is essentially practical. He is not writing for those who wish to acquire a little philosophy but for those who want to do something about it and he has made an excellent job of it.

Inevitably in a booklet of this size written for 'beginners' there are oversimplifications. Made in the interests of clarity they do not detract from its value.

I quote just one passage which may be read to advantage not only by 'beginners' :

"Hankering after sadhus and mahatmas (except at Satsang) expecting miracles or God-sends is of no avail, for they cannot change your *prarabdha*. Saints can however read your *prarabdha* and bless you accordingly. You have no right to expect special favours or partiality from God. Ask for no material gain. Pray only for His grace to give you strength to bear your *prarabdha*."

PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY AND THE IMAGE OF MAN : By N. A. Nikam. Pub. : Somaya Publications Ltd., Bombay. Price : Rs. 30.

This is a collection of 18 essays by one of India's most distinguished philosophers. Most of them were read to academic audiences at famous seats of learning throughout Europe and the U.S.A.

This however need not deter those of us ill-equipped to grapple with the language and subtleties of professional philosophy. The subjects the author has chosen are of general interest to all who have an enquiring mind and he discusses them in a language free from technical jargon we can all understand. His viewpoint is always that of a cultured Indian which, to the western reader should give an added interest.

In his opening essay he discusses his idea of the philosopher's role which, as one writing from a genuine tradition, can never be one simply of speculation for speculation's sake.

"To 'awaken' ignorance is to teach, and the philosopher is essentially, a teacher. He teaches you to become aware of that which you think you do not know, but which, in fact, you know and have never denied, viz., the Self, Atman, as the Upanishads say. . . . Philosophy as awakened ignorance 'inquires' into That to which it is awakened, and, as the *Katha Upanishad* says : 'Stop not.'"

As the title indicates the essays range from such topics as 'Detachment and the courage to Be' 'Appearance and Manifestation' to 'Individual and Society in Indian Social Thought', 'Prejudice and the limits of Tolerance' and 'Man is the Measure of All Things : Metaphysics or Myth?'

Our notions of such everyday concepts as Disinterested Action, the classless society and Tolerance are a little woolly — and I think this is the case with most of us. Professor Nikam can help us to define and understand their implications more clearly.

The essays are all short and very readable. The author supports his argument with quotations from Sri Ramana Maharshi on several occasions.

RONALD ROSE



'Venkatoo'

THE event was celebrated with great eclat by the voluntary efforts and desire of his friends and devotees of Sri Bhagavan, who from among them formed a Committee¹ for the purpose in recognition of his untiring services to the Ashram and the vast improvements brought about. A large gathering of devotees, relations, friends and distinguished visitors were present and took part in the celebrations.

Familiarly known as 'Venkatoo', Sri Venkataraman was called to the Ashram, with his family, in 1938. After the demise of his father, Sri Niranjanananda Swami, who was till then the *Sarvadhikari* of the Ashram, he succeeded him in 1953 as the Manager-President. Though a householder, by virtue of his stay and training in the Ashram, he became a selfless, efficient and devoted worker for the welfare of the Ashram and the devotees of Bhagavan.

ASHRAM BULLETIN

Ashram President's Shashtiabdapurti Celebrations

The *Shashtiabdapurti* — completion of the 60th year — celebrations of Sri T. N. Venkataraman, President, Board of Trustees of Sri Ramanasramam, came off on May 23, 1974.

The religious part of the function started on March 18, 1974, with the performance of *Mrithyunjaya japam* (2,50,000) by six *vaidiks* and terminated on April 27, 1974, the purpose being purification in general and expiatory against all adverse planetary influences. On May 10, a Sri Chakra Puja was performed at the Mathrubutheswara Shrine. From May 13 to 19, the *parayana* of the whole of Yajur Veda was done by five expert *vaidiks* and this was concluded with *Rudra Yashti Homa* performed on May 22.

On May 22, Brahmastri Krishna Bhagavathar of Bangalore gave a *Harikatha* on 'Vathsala Kalyanam',

¹The 'T.N.V. Shashtiabdapurti Committee' consisting of the following members: Sri D. S. Sastri, Dr. T. N. Krishnaswamy, Sri K. K. Nambiar, Sri N. Balarama Reddiar and Sri R. L. Purushothama Reddy.

an important portion from Mahabharatha, which lasted till late in the night.

On May 23, 1974, the day of the function, 'Mangala Nivas', the residence of the President, was the scene of a large gathering of invitees, friends and relatives. After the preliminary religious function of *Kalasa puja*, *japa* and *homa*, the *abhisheka* of Sri Venkataraman and his partner in life was done with the holy waters of the Ganga and other holy rivers of India. This was followed by *mangalya sutra dharamam*. All those younger in age prostrated to the couple and received their blessings; while they themselves bowed to the elders gathered there and received their blessings.

The rituals completed, the couple together with the gathering went to the Ashram and prostrated to Sri Mathrubuthewara and to Sri Bhagavan and received their blessings. In front of Sri Bhagavan's Shrine of Grace, on behalf of the devotees and friends and in the name of the 'T. N. V. Shashti-abdapurti Committee', Sri R. L. Purushothama Reddy, its Convener (who stepped in as Convener in the place of Sri S. P. Mukherjee, who passed away on 9-4-74) made a speech explaining the origin and work done by the Committee and requested Justice

Sri K. S. Venkataraman (Judge, Madras High Court) to present a 'purse' collected for the occasion to Sri T. N. Venkataraman.

Sri K. S. Venkataraman addressed the audience and explained the glory of Sri Bhagavan's teachings and emphasised the need for the maintenance of the growth of the Ashram as a 'centre for the diffusion of spiritual knowledge' and commended the tireless efforts of Sri T. N. Venkataraman in keeping up the tradition of the Ashram, in line with the injunctions left by the great Master.

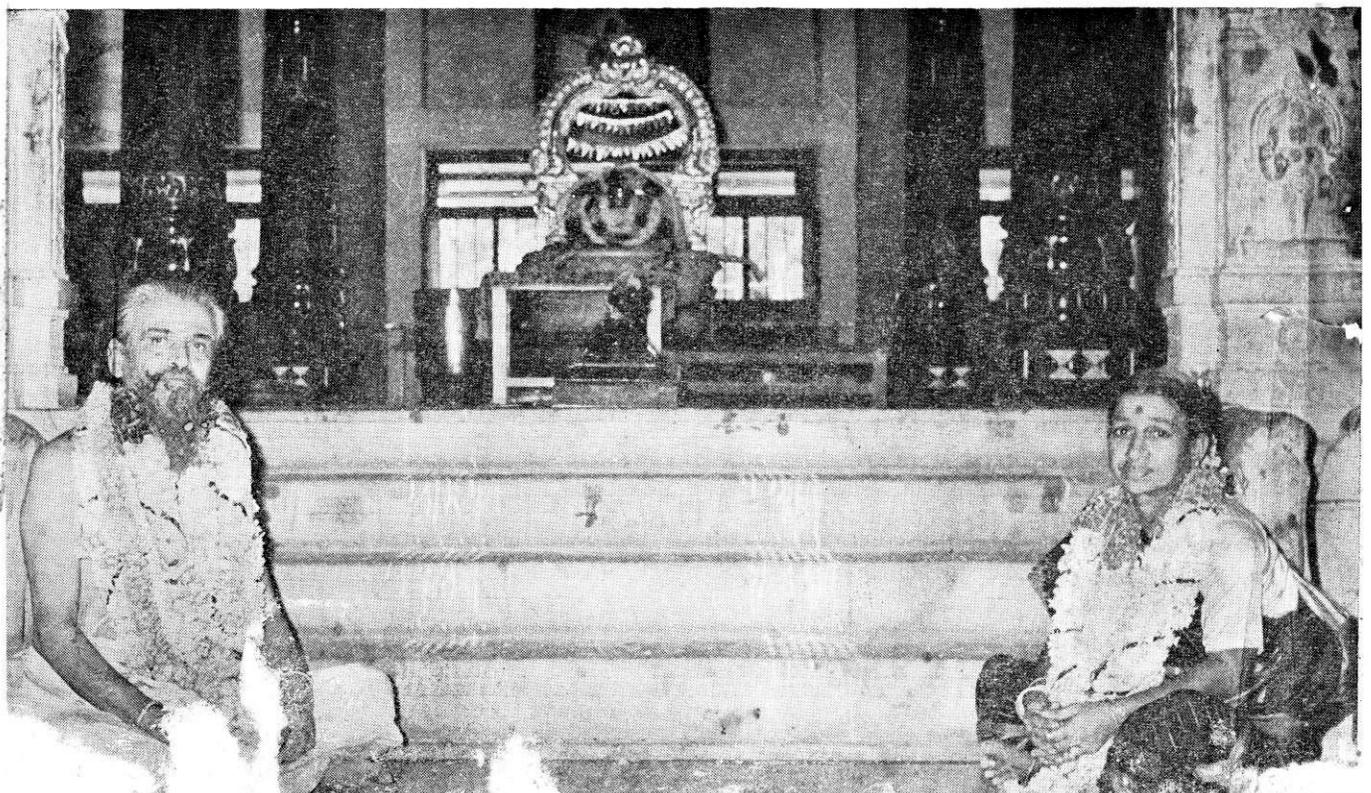
Immediately after the presentation of the 'purse', Sri Viswanatha Swami released a Souvenir — VENKATOO-60 — specially brought out for the occasion, containing beautiful coloured photos of the Master and informative articles.

A *bhiksha* was offered, to all assembled, in the Ashram dining hall. In the evening there was *bhajan* by Brahmasri Jagadeesa Iyer.

We are publishing an article specially contributed for the occasion by Sri M. Natesan, retired High Court Judge, Madras, who is a close friend and admirer of Sri T. N. Venkataraman and who was the Ashram lawyer in all the litigations :

NF

Sri T. N. Venkataraman and Smt. Nagalakshmi at the Shrine of Sri Bhagavan





Srimathi & Sri T. N. Venkataraman



'The Abhishekam'

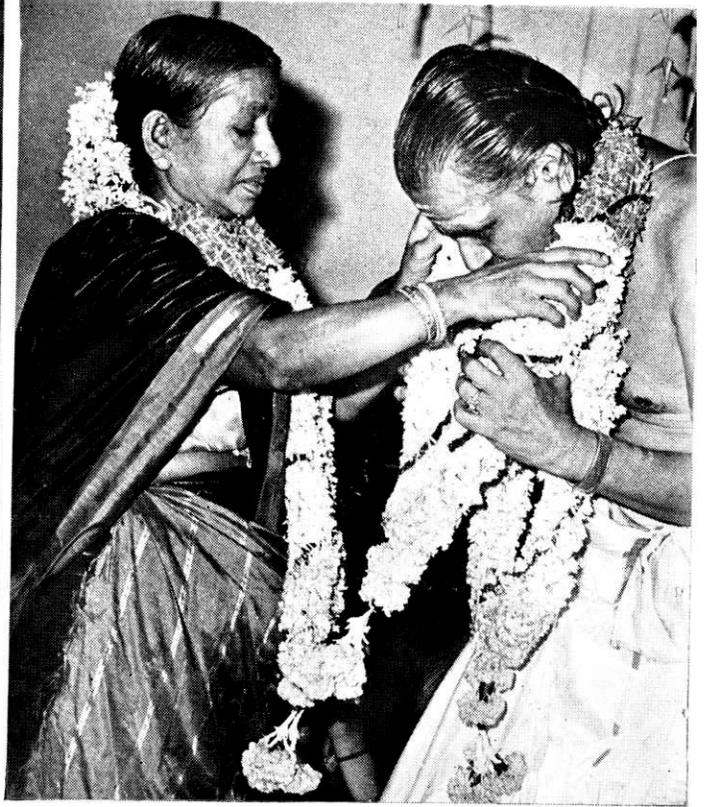
At Sri Ramanasramam entrance

Receiving prasadam at Bhagavan's Shrine



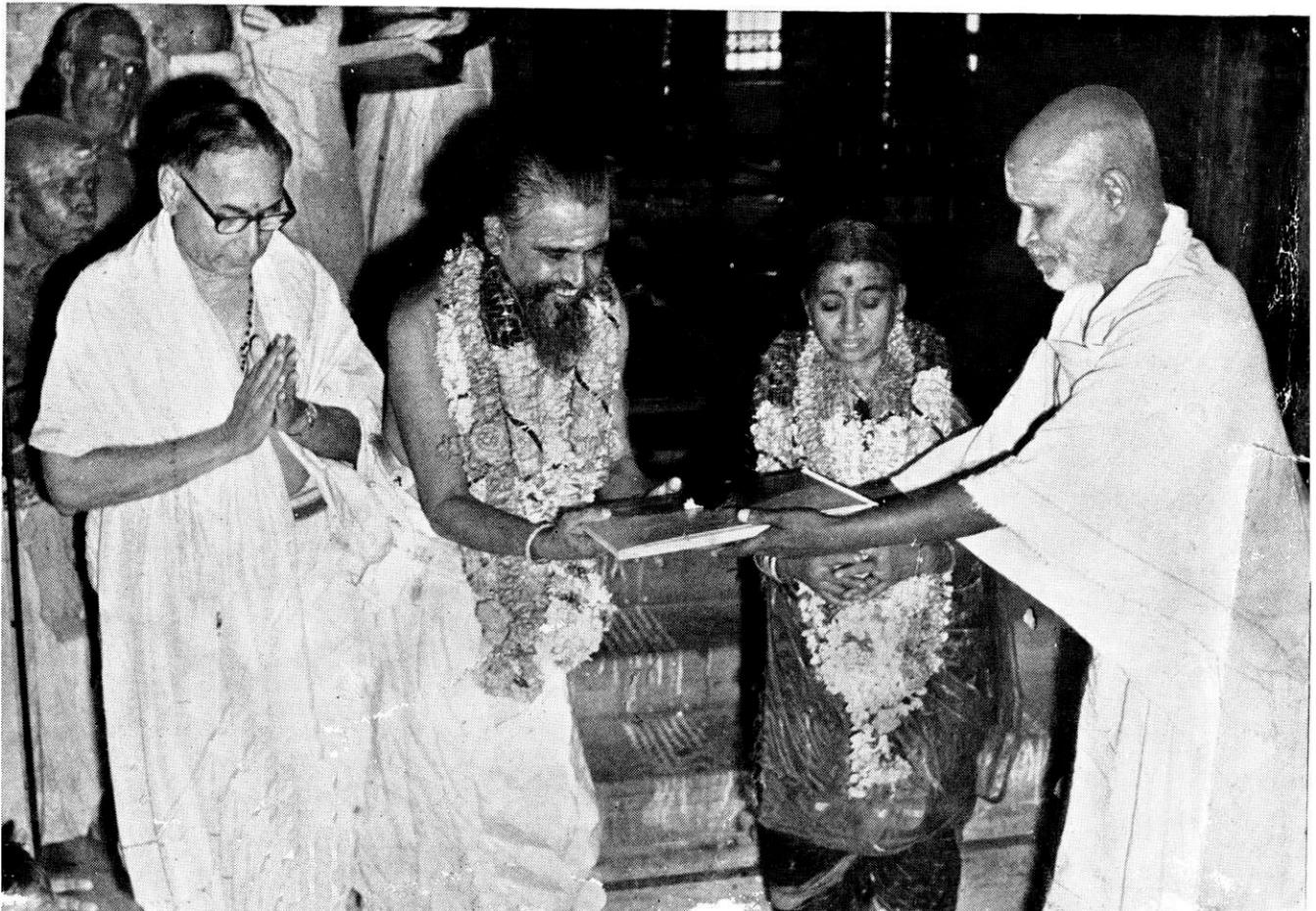


Justice Sri K. S. Venkataraman presenting the 'purse'



Exchanging garlands

Sri Viswanatha Swami releasing the Souvenir "Venkatoo—60"





Sri T. N. Venkataraman and his family

A Tribute

By M. Natesan
(Retired High Court Judge)

Sri T. N. Venkataraman — 'Venkatoo' as he is affectionately referred to in the Ashram — that brings before me a genial, ever alert and active figure in the service of the Ashram! On the *Brahma Nirvana* of Sri Bhagavan, there was gloom all round and apprehensions as to how the Ashram would work. A visit today would show that the Ashram continues to be the haven of illumination to enquiring minds and of peace and solace to storm-tossed souls, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or nationality. And to no small measure is that due to the efforts of Venkatoo.

To any one conversant with the confusion, conflicts and claims, that for a while pervaded after the *Brahma Nirvana* and how there came about a peaceful transformation in the management stabilizing and securing for the continuance of the Ashram as a centre for the diffusion of spiritual knowledge and a place of sanctity, the zeal and tireless striving, which any discerning observer may see in Venkatoo in the cause of the Ashram, will be no surprise. For, Venkatoo joining those that strove to make the hallowed place for ever a centre for emanation of spiritual knowledge and a refuge for those that look for spiritual solace, quietly sacrificed a valuable personal claim from the mundane point of view. All the properties of the Ashram, as stated in the

WILL of Sri Bhagavan, belonged to Bhagavan. The validity of Bhagavan's WILL itself was questioned. Venkatoo's father had taken *sannyasa*. Venkatoo could have made a forage and claim to the properties themselves as heir. A moot question would have been whether even if the WILL was valid, the endowments provided for in the WILL were only private trusts. Without questioning or setting up any claim, Venkatoo agreed to the formation of an Association registered under the Societies Registration Act and made the Ashram with all the properties of Bhagavan a public institution!

Another incident which has impressed me about the service of Venkatoo to the Ashram happened, when I was at Tiruvannamalai in connection with the examination of some of the ashramites as witnesses before the Deputy Commissioner of Hindu Religious Endowments in the enquiry started by the Endowments Board treating the Mathrubutheswara Shrine of the Ashram as a Hindu temple. On the day fixed for examination of the witnesses, Venkatoo's aunt — Sri Bhagavan's sister, affectionately addressed by all of us as *Athai* — passed away. He had to cremate her. Notwithstanding the imperative call of duty to the family, Venkatoo saw to it that the enquiry was not delayed. After performing his arduous duties, he managed to be present for the enquiry in time to give the necessary instructions.

It is said, when during the drafting of the WILL of Sri Bhagavan a suggestion was made for the appointment of trustees to take up the management of the Ashram, and Sri Bhagavan expressed that: "trustees would take no real interest in the running of the Ashram which they will use as a milch-cow for

their own ends. It would be better that those who are tied to it permanently by blood and sentiment be given the permanent management."

Venkatoos has not betrayed the trust that Bhagavan reposed. In the High Court case referred to above, the learned Judge said: "Even the provisions in his will relating to the continued management of the shrine and Ashram after him by his *sannyasi* brother, Niranjanananda Swami (*Sarvadhikari*) and that line of descent, were clearly prompted by a concern to retain his abode at Tiruvannamalai as a spiritual centre, not for self-glorification or the security of dependents." The readiness with which Venkatoos, on the suggestion of the Court during the hearing in the High Court, agreed to a Scheme under Section 92, C.P.C., also shows the interest which Venkatoos evinced in the proper functioning of the Ashram.

My *pranams* to Sri Bhagavan on this happy occasion, my best wishes to Venkatoos for decades and decades of selfless service in the cause of Ashram! May Bhagavan continue to shower His Grace on Venkatoos and the Ashram that the Ashram may stand out for ever like the Hill of the Holy Beacon, rising above all dust and din giving hope and solace to mankind!

* * *

ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA

The members of the Arunachala Ashrama (Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi Centre, Inc., 342, East 6th Street, New York City, N.Y. 10003, U.S.A.) report the following:

"Devotees, seekers and visitors who wend their way to ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA in New York City and its branch in Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, Canada,¹ experience the Living Presence of Bhagavan Sri Ramana in their Heart. We are sure that it is the Grace of Sri Bhagavan that enables us to do our bit to keep these centres of Sri Bhagavan functioning well. Although none of us have seen Bhagavan Sri Ramana during His life-time, yet we distinctly feel Him as Pure Awareness in our Heart by means of His method of Self-Enquiry — *Who Am I?* Following His teaching, we make the environment reverberate with His mantra '*Arunachala Siva, Arunachala Siva, Arunachala Siva, Arunachala*' and the *Guru Mantra*, '*Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaaya*'!

In the Nova Scotia branch of Arunachala Ashrama the day is begun with recitation of Hymns for half an hour, followed by half an hour of chanting of His Name. Then we meditate in silence for half an hour or more and conclude with the reading of passages from Sri Bhagavan's teaching.

Sri Bhagavan's *Brahma Nirvana* Celebrations

The Twenty-fourth *Brahma Nirvana* of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi was duly celebrated on April 20, at the Ashram, with the usual pujas, poor feeding, etc., amidst a large gathering of devotees, many from distant parts of India and abroad.

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

In April this year we celebrated the 24th anniversary of Sri Bhagavan's *Brahma Nirvana* along with the celebration of the completion of the first decade of 'Arunachala Ashrama'

Hundreds of devotees and visitors come to Arunachala Ashrama and we extend them a warm welcome, talk to them about Sri Bhagavan and give them books on the teachings of Bhagavan (published by the parent Ashram, Sri Ramanasramam). Though our Ashramas are small in size and we are but insignificant instruments of Sri Bhagavan, He works His miracle of making everyone, resident or visiting, feel His constant and abiding Presence in the hearts of all!"

NEW RAMANA CENTRE AT U.S.A.

Yet another group of Bhagavan's devotees branching off from the Arunachala Ashrama Centre in New York City is the 'Arunachala Ashrama South', situated in the deep South of the U.S.A. in Brooksville, Florida. The Centre presently consists of three resident-devotees — James Earley, Corinne Earley and David Kahn — and several others from nearby towns; it is beautifully located in the hilly region of central Florida, on a small farm in the quiet countryside. The devotees feel the continued guidance and unfailing Grace and support of the Master, as when the Centre was first opened in His Name. Highly valued also is the benefit derived from asso-

¹ see, October, 1972 issue, p. 288.



Arunachala Ashrama South, Brooksville, Florida, U.S.A. Seated left to right: James Earley, Corrinne Earley, David Kahn

ciation with Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawat, with whom they keep in close contact.

This 24th *Brahma Nirvana* Anniversary of Sri Ramana brought a wonderful blessing for the devotees there. They were fortunate recipients of two large colour portraits of Sri Bhagavan, gifts from Sri Ramanasramam. These will assuredly aid and inspire them in their daily 'growing closer' to Him, through His lustrous gaze, and subtle influence. For this blessing, their hearts are overflowing with gratitude to our beloved Master, Bhagavan Sri Ramana and thanks to Sri Ramanasramam.

The Aradhana itself was duly celebrated with devotional singing, group meditation and readings, and the sharing of Bhagavan's prasadam.

The members of Arunachala Ashrama South send their warmest love and best wishes to all devotees everywhere, and extend an open and hearty welcome to all who may wish to join them!

* * *

BOOK ON RAMANA RELEASED

Respectful homage to Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi was paid in Poona, Maharashtra, on Buddha Purnima, May 6, 1974, when the publication of a new book: *An Offering to Ramanachala*,¹ was attended by a large and select gathering.

The book was written by Sri S. R. Pantsachiv, Raja of Bhor, who has been writing under the pseudonym 'Alone-Udonath'. He had written in

1972 a book to explain the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi and J. Krishnamurti (reviewed in our issue of April '74, p. 111). The new book is also intended to place before the followers of the two sages the common factors of their teachings.

Prof. Shivajirao Bhonsle, Principal of the Mudhoji College, Phaltan, who presented the book to the public, greatly appreciated the author's attempts to point out the similarity of their teachings and complimented the author on his unique style of writing on such a vital and highly philosophical subject.

The meeting was held at night but a large number of devotees attended despite the late hour. Sri S. T. Puranik, former Head of the Department of Journalism, Nagpur University, Nagpur, presided over the meeting and praised the efforts being made by the author and his publishers: M/s. Vanita Prakashan and M/s. Shankaraji Narayan Prakashan, Poona, to spread the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi and J. Krishnamurti.

* * *

RECEPTION TO SMT. SURI NAGAMMA

Reception was held to honour Smt. Suri Nagamma, author of *Sri Ramanasrama Lekhalu*² at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, by Sri Ramana Jayanthi Celebration Committee on Friday, June 7, 1974 evening. Miss H. K. Boman Behran and Sri G. H. Daswani sang *bhajan* songs in Hindi, in praise of Sri Bhagavan and Puja was also performed. Smt. Leelavathi Munshi graced the occasion. Smt. Suri Nagamma spoke briefly and chanted *Upadesa Saram* of Sri Bhagavan accompanied by Sri P. V. Somasundaram and Miss H. K. Boman Behran. Devotees were very pleased to meet the distinguished guest.

* * *

OBITUARY

S. P. MUKHERJEE

With deep regret and sorrow we record the sad news of the demise of SRI S. P. MUKHERJEE, one of Sri Bhagavan's staunch devotees who had made Arunachala his home. He passed away after a sudden and brief illness, following a heart attack, on April 9, 1974, at the age of 66.

He first visited the Ashram in 1951. Drawn by his immense devotion to Sri Bhagavan, he, with his wife, became a frequent visitor. His silent Guidance and Grace he ever received. As he would say,

¹ the book has 111 pages and is priced at Rs. 3.
² *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam*, translated into English by her brother, Sri D. S. Sastri.

to one like him who had not seen Sri Bhagavan, this was a remarkable change in life. He felt drawn to Sri Bhagavan like a moth in darkness by the brilliance of light.



Sri S. P. Mukherjee

In his earlier days he came across Sri Naga Baba of Puri and the Swami blessed him on his desire to retire early from his vocation — as an engineer in a reputed firm in Calcutta — and settle down in the Ashram area at the foot of a Hill. Sri Mukherjee did retire in 1960 and build a cottage 'Upasana' on the Hill slope adjacent to the Ashram where he and his wife continued to reside since. Jovial in outlook and of affable manners he was a genuine friend of all who knew him; and the great interest he took in all Ashram activities and the welfare of its management was abiding and total. A good speaker, he never failed to take part in all public functions held at the Ashram. As such, he participated in the 'T. N. V. Shashtiabdapurti Committee' as its Convener and tirelessly worked in that capacity till his last breath. He was a bosom friend and great admirer of Sri T. N. Venkataraman.

Informed of Sri Mukherjee's illness, his daughter, son-in-law, grandson and other relatives arrived from Bengal and they stayed on till his end. His son-in-law, Sri B. N. Chatterjee, who was with Sri Mukherjee in a hospital at Vellore, records the following:

"During the period of his stay in the hospital even in the midst of physical agony he was as witty and humorous as ever. Quite a number of times I have found him meditating. Before every attempt at meditation he used to bend down with folded hands towards Sri Bhagavan. He used to talk a lot, although he was forbidden to do so, and it was always on Sri Bhagavan. One day, when he was groaning in agony of chest pain, I asked him impatiently: 'You are a devotee of Bhagavan, why don't you ask Him to relieve you of your pain and cure your disease?' He answered: 'To Bhagavan all these are immaterial. He can bless us with the Knowledge of ultimate Truth!' A few days before his death he was getting quieter. One evening he was sitting on his bed with eyes closed. Seeing him uncommunicative, I tried to

draw him into some conversation. But he felt very disturbed at that and told me: 'Let me listen to Bhagavan, He is waiting to tell me something!' One night, about four days before his death, he drew me towards him and told me whisperingly: 'I have now a wonderful experience never felt ever before! I shall tell you about that later on.' The next morning, when I reminded him of his promise he made a gesture with his hand indicating that he would tell me about it later on. But he was unable to talk after that. I am positive he should have seen Bhagavan!"

His body was brought back to his home, 'Upasana' from Vellore and the obsequies took place at the foot of Arunachala in the presence of his close relatives, friends and Ashramites. His sudden and unexpected demise is widely mourned by his relatives, friends and devotees of Bhagavan. We offer our deep condolences to his wife, daughter and all other members of the family.

My he rest in eternal peace at the Lotus Feet of the Master, Sri Ramana Bhagavan!

SUBBALAKSHMAMMA

We also regret to announce the demise of another old devotee, VARANASI SUBBALAKSHMAMMA (see, *Ashram Bulletin* of October 1967, p. 341), in her village near Nellore, Andhra Pradesh on June 3, 1974. She has rendered service in the Ashram kitchen for many years during Sri Bhagavan's days.

May her soul rest in peace at the Feet of Sri Bhagavan!

THE MOUNTAIN PATH LIBRARY

New Additions

- Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen*: By Nancy Wilson Ross. Faber and Faber, 3, Queen Square, London. (£ 1.30)
- Views from the Real World*: (Early talks) By Gurdjieff. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York. (\$ 10.95)
- Thousand days with Rajaji*: By Bimanesh Chatterjee. Affiliated East West Press Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi. (Rs. 20)
- Incense Sticks*: By Krishnananda. Shanti Ashram, Bhadrans, Via. Anand, Gujarat. (free on request)
- Message of the Four Vedas*: By B. Bissoondoyal. Orient Longmans Ltd., New Delhi. (Rs. 7.50)
- Mystic Art of Ancient Tibet*: By Blanche Christine Ol Schak and Geshe Thupten Wangyal. George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, Museum Street, London. (£ 10.50)

Whether or not the results of meditation are obtained is of no importance. The essential is to arrive at stability ; it is the most precious thing that one can gain. In any case one must trust with confidence in the Divinity and await His Grace without impatience. The same rule applies equally to *japa* ; *japa* pronounced even once is a benefit, whether one is aware of it or not.

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

Hindu Places of Pilgrimage in India : By S. M. Bharadwaj. Thompson Press India Ltd., 29, Netaji Subash Marg, Delhi. (Rs. 48)

Kularnava Tantra : By M. P. Pandit. Ganesh & Company, Madras-17. (Rs. 10)

The Vedantic and Buddhist Concept of Reality : By Ramachandra Jha. Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 257-B, Bipin Binani Ganguly Street, Calcutta-700012. (Rs. 30)

Nietzsche : By R. J. Hollingdale. Blackie & Son (India) Ltd., 103/5, Walchand and Hirachand Marg, Bombay-1. (£ 1.50).

The Ten Principal Upanishads : By Shree Purohit Swamy and W. B. Yeats. Faber & Faber Ltd., 3, Queen Square, London. (£ 0.65).

The Penguin Krishnamurti Reader : Edited by Mary Lutyens. Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex, U.K. (£ 0.35)

Classics in Chinese Philosophy : Edited by Wade-baskin. Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York-10016. (\$ 20)

An Offering to Ramanachala : By Alone-Udonath. Vanita Publication, 121, Shukravar Peth, Poona-2. (Rs. 3)

Outlines of Jainism : By Gopalan. Wiley Eastern Private Ltd., New Delhi. (Rs. 12)

Vaishnavism of Samkaradeva and Ramanuja : By H. V. Sreenivasa Murthy. Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-7. (Rs. 25)

Buddhism in India and Abroad : By A. C. Banerjee. The World Press Private Ltd., Calcutta. (Rs. 25)

Mental Development in Daily Life : By Nina Van Gorkom. From the author Konijnenlaan, 49, Wassenaar, Netherlands.

Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice : By Vajiranana Mahathera. M. D. Gunasena & Co., Ltd., Colombo, Ceylon. (Rs. 12)

The Nasadia Sutra : By M. R. Desai. Principal, Desai Publication Trust, Gokhale College, Kolhapur. (Rs. 2)

The Flute : By Prof. P. Sambamoorthy, The Indian Music Publishing House, G. T. Madras. (Rs. 3)

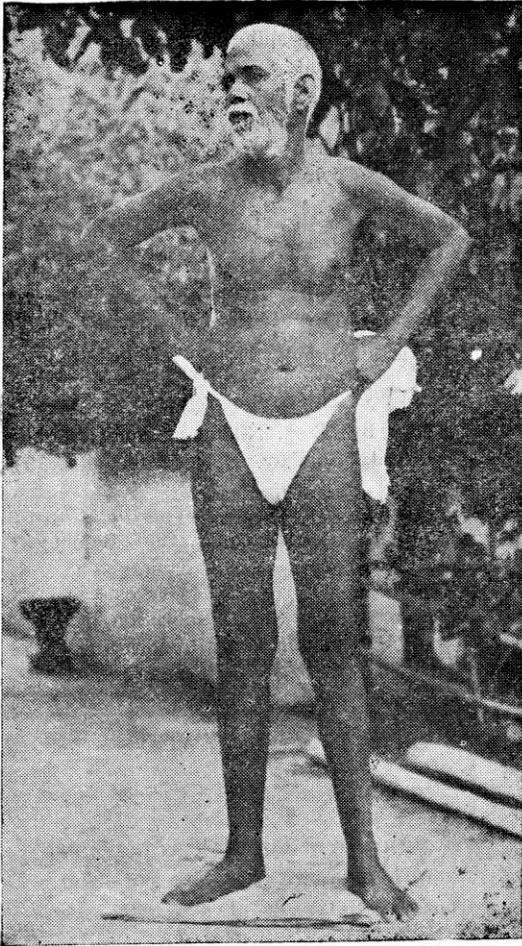
Image of Man : By N. A. Nikam. Somaiya Publication Pvt. Ltd., Bombay, New Delhi. (Rs. 30)

Rabboni : Life and Teachings of Jesus the Christ : By Anthony Kirk, Chetana & Co., Bombay-1. (Rs. 24, \$ 5, £ 2)

The Way of the Buddha : By Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi. (Rs. 30).

We turn our mind outwards the things of the world and are therefore not aware that our real nature is always invocation. When by conscious effort, or invocation, or meditation as we call it, we prevent our minds from thinking of other things then what remains is our real nature, which is invocation. So long as you think you are the name and form, you cannot escape name and form in invocation also. When you realize you are not name and form, the name and form will drop off of themselves. No other effort is necessary. Invocation or meditation will lead to it naturally and as a matter of course. Invocation which is now regarded as the means, will then be found to be the goal. There is no difference between God and His name.

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI



INTRODUCING...

Sri T. A. J. Pillai

Far away in the Fiji Islands physically but ever tuned to Sri Bhagavan and the Ashram inwardly Sri T. A. Jambulingam Pillai, a devotee of fifty years standing is a class by himself. During his long association he has never failed to do his mite for the Ashram. The Ashram therefore greatly values its contact with this lovable and simple devotee who has done much for the religious movement in general and the Ashram cause in particular in the country of his adoption.



Sri T. A. J. Pillai

An Indian by birth he migrated to the Fiji Isles in 1913. He worked as an Accountant there for sometime before being recruited to the Fiji Civil Service. Sri Pillai married one Pappammal and was blessed with children. He then came into contact with a Yogi, Sadhu Kuppuswamy, whom he immediately adopted as his guru. Sadhu Kuppuswamy was steadfast and rigorous in his practice of yoga and highly devoted to Sri Bhagavan Ramana. He had also seen Him in his vision. At the request of Sri Pillai his guru actually stayed with him for some years.

Sri Pillai was highly religious from his early years and particularly devoted to Lord Nataraja (Siva). In his spiritual effort he was helped by his master. In 1923 his wife passed away and in that hour of grief the master advised and insisted that Sri Pillai should go to Sri Bhagavan for peace. In obedience to this command Sri Pillai made the trip to India. Even the very first *darshan* of Sri Bhagavan thrilled him and made an indelible impression upon him. It was Karthikai Deepam Day and seeing the radiant face of Sri Bhagavan he was filled with extraordinary bliss and peace!

Sri Pillai during this trip to India married again and returned to Fiji. Dhanalakshmi, his second wife, was also highly devoted to Sri Bhagavan and helped in bringing out His life account in Hindi.

Sri Pillai's second trip to India strongly advised by his master did not come off before 1934 and

this was even more memorable for he now had the chance to get close to Sri Bhagavan and have his doubts cleared. The words uttered by Sri Bhagavan when he took leave of Him at the conclusion of his stay had a great impact on him. Sri Bhagavan said that He was not confined to the body, it didn't matter whether he (Pillai) lived in Fiji or elsewhere, or even on another planet; He would be with him always and therefore he could live anywhere in peace.

Consistent with his usual record of service to the Ashram, Sri Pillai took an active interest in the shashtiabdapurti celebrations of our President. He volunteered to distribute the relevant literature to devotees in Fiji and contributed his mite towards the success of the function.

We wish this remarkable devotee many more years of life of devotion and service!

FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS

GURU POORNIMA (Vyasa Puja)	Thursday	4- 7-1974
KRISHNA JAYANTHI (Gokulashtami)	Saturday	10- 8-1974
NAVARATHRI FESTIVAL (commences on)	Wednesday	16-10-1974
SARASWATHI PUJA	Thursday	24-10-1974
VIJAYADASAMI	Friday	25-10-1974
DEEPAVALI	Wednesday	13-11-1974
SKANDA SHASHTI	Tuesday	19-11-1974
KARTHIGAI DEEPAM	Thursday	28-11-1974
SRI BHAGAVAN'S JAYANTHI	Monday	30-12-1974
PONGAL	Tuesday	14- 1-1975
CHINNASWAMI ARADHANA	Monday	27- 1-1975
MAHA SIVARATHRI	Tuesday	11- 3-1975
SRI VIDYA HAVAN	Friday	21- 3-1975
TELUGU NEW YEAR DAY	Saturday	12- 4-1975
TAMIL NEW YEAR DAY	Monday	14- 4-1975

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Replies by LUCIA OSBORNE

SRI BHAGAVAN'S PRESENCE

I am reading and translating for myself and some of my friends Mr. Osborne's book *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge* (in German) with great pleasure.

I think of you all so happy and so greatly fortunate to have lived with Sri Bhagavan, listened to Him, conversed with Him and above all been silent with Him.

Please remember me and my husband and our great devotion to Sri Bhagavan when you sit in that hall where He spent so many years with you. . . . For me He is still alive. I wish very much to become one of His disciples. Is it possible? According to His promise: 'I am not going away, I am here.' I believe that it is possible.

ZDENKA, K.,
Czechoslovakia.

RAMANA MAHARSHI AND THE PATH OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE in German is an abbreviated version of the original in English but it contains what is essential.

Just as before, you can be in Sri Bhagavan's Presence if you turn to Him in the heart. We were sometimes reminded by Sri Bhagavan not to pay too much attention to His body. The real Ramana is all-pervading abiding in everybody's heart and not limited to the body. He is always with you. All that is necessary is to remember Him as constantly as possible. He is alive for all sincere devotees and it is now possible to be His disciple just as before. It depends on you and your devotion. The outpouring of His Grace may become

even more evident for those who have not seen Him. Again we will repeat Christ's assurance which applies here also: 'Blessed are those who have seen and believe but more blessed are those who have NOT SEEN and believe.'

L.O.

* * *

TURN TO THE CENTRE

Sometimes I feel great pressure on the top of my head as if a very heavy weight was pressing it down. It can be unbearable. . . . I also experience periods of barrenness and despair at being utterly forsaken. . . . I try to dig myself out almost gritting my teeth in effort and then comes that pressure on my head. A vicious circle. What am I to do? . . .

A devotee far away and desperate.

In SADHANA many experience periods of barrenness and despair. Great saints also go through such experience. What about the dark night of the soul of which St. John of the Cross speaks? But on the crest of the oncoming wave following depression one may go much higher. Look at the sea. A shallow depression does not rise very high with the wave. The best thing for a spiritual swimmer is to go underneath all the waves (of thought) and let them pass over one's head. Underneath the waves all is quiet. This can be accomplished with the VICHARA. (Self-enquiry).

Pressure on the head may be the result of too strenuous effort. Just concentrate on the spiritual heart listening to its vibration and let go all effort or slow it down in a steady unhurried even flow. Whatever distress befalls a SADHAKA, turning to the centre, the heart, to Bhagavan, is bound to help.

L.O.

* * *

HIS GRACE

. . . I have silently tried to understand the path of Self-enquiry and by the Grace of Bhagavan I have begun little by little to understand the mystery of His teaching. I have collected all his works and I must say that they are wonderful. His photos are beyond description. There is life in every picture and to look at His picture makes one feel His Presence and sorrows turn into peace. He is the embodiment of simplicity and Divine Grace which is everpresent. . . . If one knows oneself one will know Bhagavan; but for this Bhagavan's Grace is required.

A devotee from Ceylon.

Quite so. The very desire to know oneself is already the result of Bhagavan's Grace. We are never out of its operation. Bhagavan says 'Surrender will make one understand Grace'. All that is necessary is to know its existence.

L.O.

* * *

WORLD AND ME

Bhagavan says that when we are asleep the world does not exist but it does exist for others. What about it? I want a straight answer. Does the world exist or doesn't it?

A puzzled devotee.

Bhagavan quotes the Vedanta expressing the same view that the cosmos springs into view simultaneously with the seer. There is no detailed process of creation. This is said to be instantaneous creation the same as in a dream where the experiencer springs up simultaneously with the objects of experience. People on the point of death have sometimes experienced the world as if fading out as on a screen, with their own consciousness of it. When as you say others say that the world exists while it does not for you, still you have to be there to hear it and know it. Without you where are the others? To conclude, Bhagavan states that the world is unreal if viewed as apart from the Self and real if viewed as the Self. A wise man sees the world only as a manifestation of the Self and it is immaterial to him if the Self manifests itself or ceases to do so. When the world appears one is advised to find out to whom it appears. If one can hold on to the substratum of the 'I' on which it appears all doubts will vanish.

L.O.

* * *

ON HAVING FAITH

Does having faith imply duality or division? It means worshipping or relying on some superior being, so it is against the advaitic view. Am I correct?

DAVID, U.

Faith need not be in the sense of worshipping or relying on some other being, but faith and belief in Oneness of Being and the possibility of realizing It. It is not even that a seeker realizes it but that It is realized and fulfilled in him or rather that it shines forth everpresent as it is when the obstructions hiding it are removed or when the illusory nature of the obstructions is known.

L.O.